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The Emotional Side of Dynamic Assessment: L2 Writing from Vygotsky's Perezhivanie Lens

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Dedicated to my parents, Ebrahim and Jeyran

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative multiple-case study investigated the emotional perceptions of English-as-a-foreign language learners (EFLs) and an English writing instructor as they met online via the Zoom application. Dynamic Assessment (DA) and the Vygotskyan *perezhivanie* notion guided the study. DA is an interactive assessment approach that combines instruction and assessment processes during student-instructor interactions with the goal of diagnosing and developing learners' abilities. As to the perezhivanie notion, Vygotsky (1994) argued for uncovering the particular *prism* through which the individual refracts (i.e., shapes) the influence of the environment, and how she "becomes aware of, interprets, and emotionally relates to a certain event" (p. 341). As the researcher and writing instructor, I held eight individualized sessions with three Persian-speaking English learners to jointly review the essays they wrote alone and re-wrote following our review session. I video-recorded all these sessions.

During these individualized sessions, I utilized DA principles to assist participants in identifying and revising the challenges arising from language usage, as well as essay-level issues such as thesis statement and paragraphing. That is, when assisting participants, I always started with general help related to the issue of focus, and then gradually moved on to more specific and relevant guidance if participants needed more help to identify and self-correct a given error. As such, I adhered to the nature of help as it is characteristic of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development. All interactions took

place in Persian, the participants' and researcher's first language. I used the Geneva Emotion Wheel (GEW) to identify the emotions perceived by the participants and I at the start and end of each session–the identification step. I then interviewed participants about their perceived emotions and took notes on why I felt that way at the two timepoints for each tutorial – the exploration step. I focused on participants' perceptions of why they emotionally experienced a specific situation in a particular way during these interviews.

I discovered that emotions permeated the DA sessions and the participants experienced both positive and negative emotions under six main patterns. The study also showed how the individuals' emotional experiences differed from one another and were sparked by various triggers. Finally, although all three participants acknowledged experiencing negative emotions, they all agreed that these emotions had a positive effect on how they engaged with the mediator as well as with revising their essays due to the instructor's positive language such as praise. My findings hold implications, among other things, for creating optimal learning environments during DA tutorials and investigating the developmental nature of learners' emotional experiences and how they relate to mediation in the ZPD and its effectiveness.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I introduce this chapter by briefly stating the issue this dissertation attempts to address: the function of emotions in language learning. Then, I concentrate on the study's main objective: how English as a foreign language (EFL) students' perceived emotions affect how they interact with instructors' feedback during interactive assessment situations known as Dynamic Assessment (DA). The study's guiding research questions encompass the next subsection. The following sections assert the study's significance, define key terms used in the study, and provide insight into why I decided to work on this particular subject for my dissertation.

Problem Statement

From both modern and historical perspectives, multilingualism—the capacity to communicate in more than one language—is the norm rather than the exception (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). In various contexts around the world, people use multiple languages to engage in daily life and business. Learning a foreign language has thus been a long-standing practical issue (Cenoz, 2013; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Globalization, population mobility across borders, and the introduction and widespread use of contemporary technologies are some of the factors that have significantly impacted the visibility and attention to the multilingualism phenomenon in our time (Cenoz, 2013).

Modern classrooms reflect this multilingual reality. Forty percent of people worldwide attend schools where the medium of instruction is different from the language they understand, according to a 2019 report by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). It is getting harder and harder for supporters of the monolingualism illusion (Pavlenko, 2011) to maintain the erroneous belief that learner populations speak only one language.

The number of people studying English as a foreign language is rising. These students primarily learn English outside of the countries where English is used as the primary language, known as the Inner Circle (Kachru, 1985), such as the USA, Britain, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. Language instruction for EFL students is mainly restricted to classroom settings where their mother tongue is used as the medium of instruction. These students frequently return to their native language after class (Sato & Storch, 2020). EFL students are also less likely to be exposed to situations where they can learn a language naturally, which can hinder their progress. As a result, the language learning process of EFL students in outer and extended circles differs from that of students learning English in an inner-circle nation like the United States in terms of the environment of instruction and the volume of language exposure.

EFL students must invest emotionally in the process in addition to their intellectual commitment if they are to overcome challenges with language learning (e.g., Philp & Duchesne, 2016). For a variety of reasons, learning and using a foreign language threatens students' egos (Ortega, 2013). It takes time before learning to speak in a foreign language with good control over what to say and how to say it, especially for those with

emerging language proficiency. Learners' embarrassment and frustration at not being able to comprehend communication fully and respond appropriately can be overwhelming (Ortega, 2013). Hungarian English majors who participated in Piniel and Albert's (2018) study frequently reported feeling both excited and anxious about learning a new language. Likewise, Dewaele and colleagues (2018) discovered connections between higher scores on attitudes toward a foreign language and higher levels of enjoyment in learning a foreign language, also known as foreign language enjoyment. Emotions, therefore, permeate every aspect of learning a new language.

For EFL students, writing elicits strong emotional responses. Research has confirmed that writing is one of the hardest language domains for them to master (Hirvela, 2013). Not only do learners need to have a strong command of language-related skills like vocabulary and grammar, but they also need to comprehend how various cultures communicate in writing (Connor, 1996). For instance, Marefat and Heydari (2018) noted that due to cultural differences, Persian-speaking English learners frequently write around a topic rather than directly writing about it. Therefore, it is crucial to pay attention to how EFL students feel when they are writing because this has a direct impact on student performance.

Engagement, a term used to describe how EFL students react to the oral and written feedback that they receive from writing instructors on their essays, is particularly influenced by emotions (Ellis, 2010; Han & Hyland, 2019). Researchers concur that receiving feedback may be uncomfortable and result in negative reactions (Semke, 1984; Truscott, 1996). Han and Hyland (2019) point out that feedback is a social tool with

interpersonal and interactional meaning in addition to being a cognitive tool for improving the language or content of student essays. Han and Hyland describe the case of a student who was able to reframe her negative feelings toward teacher feedback to use it to her advantage going forward. Similar to these findings, EFL students in Mahfoodh's (2017) study displayed a range of emotions in response to their instructor's corrective feedback, including happiness and frustration. Consequently, emotions permeate all conversations between EFL students and instructors.

In assessment situations where learners interact with others, such as instructors and peers, emotions play a significant role. Dynamic Assessment (DA) is an interactive assessment approach that combines instruction and assessment processes during student-instructor interactions with the goal of estimating learners' abilities. Lidz and Gindis (2003) outline key principles and assumptions underlying DA: (a) individuals' cognitive abilities can be changed through proper interventions, (b) assessment is an interactive process that includes an embedded learning phase, and (c) the primary goal of assessment is to propose intervention suggestions aiming at enhancing and realizing the learner's latent abilities which are not observable during solo performance. During a typical DA session, the learner and the instructor collaborate to find a solution to a problem that the learner is unable to handle on their own.

With the above in mind, I investigate how EFL learners perceive the mediation they receive from teachers during online, individualized writing tutorials. I also explore how these learner perceptions affect engagement with the offered mediation. I rely on two crucial Vygotskyan (1978; 1994) notions of the zone of proximal development

(ZPD) and perezhivanie (which roughly translates into emotional experience in English, cf. Blunden, 2016; Lantolf & Swain, 2020).

The ZPD construct serves as the foundation for DA. It is, according to Vygotsky (1978), the gap between what a learner can accomplish on their own and what they can accomplish when working with others. ZPD has frequently been interpreted as requiring interactions between experts and novices (cf. Chaiklin, 2003). The ultimate objective of ZPD activities is to equip the novice with the understanding and skills needed to manage a learning situation on their own. Effective ZPD-sensitive mediation is understood in foreign/second language learning and teaching (L2) research to be a function of how it develops and is negotiated in the interactions that take place between a learner or group of learners and their instructor, commonly referred to as mediator (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994). The mediator starts these exchanges with mediation that is broad and general. Thus, the learner still has the chance to attempt to handle the situation at hand with the least amount of external assistance. If the learner does not, the mediator gradually gets more precise and transparent about the incorrect part of the learner's performance. If none of the mediator's suggestions help the learner solve the issue, the mediator will explain the situation and offer the solution.

Vygotsky (1994) was intrigued by the question of the relationship between the individual and social. He argued that the social sphere does not unilaterally molds individuals' mind. Rather, the social influence is indirect. Vygotsky conceptualized the perezhivanie concept to capture the nature of the relation between the individual and the social. The fundamental tenet is that a person's perezhivanie mediates how she interacts

with others (Vygotsky, 1994). As a result, the same social situation affects individuals differently depending on their perezhivaniya (plural of perezhivanie). Vygotsky argued for uncovering "the particular prism through which the influence of the environment on the child is refracted," (p. 341) or how a child "becomes aware of, interprets, and emotionally relates to a certain event." Veresov (2017) goes into more detail about the fundamental idea of refraction to explain what perezhivanie means. Veresov observes that perezhivanie works like a prism. Social situations do not directly affect an individual; instead, they are refracted (or, more precisely, shaped) by the person's perezhivanie. The difference between the refraction and reflection principles is similar to that between a prism and a mirror: a prism refracts, a mirror reflects (Veresov, 2017). As a result, the individual does not directly reflect social influences; rather, these influences first pass through the individual's perezhivanie before having an indirect impact on the individual.

The perezhivanie concept's underlying refraction principle postulates dialectical relationships between the social and personal spheres (Veresov, 2017). Dialectics is concerned with the interdependencies between different facets of a phenomenon (Ollman, 2003; Ollman & Smith, 2008). Our world and its phenomena are not immutable, according to dialecticians; rather, they are constantly changing (Ollman & Smith, 2008). One must capture the alterations and interactions that take place in the world or any aspect of it in order to interpret the endless flux (Ollman & Smith, 2008).

The ZPD and perezhivanie are reflections of Vygotsky's (1978 & 1986) sociocultural theory of mind, which concerns the individual's mental development and its relationship with society. The underlying assumption is that society is where people

develop their minds. Accordingly, the direction of mental development is initially from society to the individual, but as the person matures, it becomes bilateral: “We become ourselves through others” (Vygotsky, 1981, p. 161). Vygotsky (1978) suggested two lines of development to explain the relationship. Basic cognitive abilities, such as an automatic response to a dangerous situation, are related to the natural or biological (i.e., biogenesis) line. Humans and animals share the same developmental trajectory, making it subject to physiological, straightforward laws of development (Lee, 1985; Miller, 2014; Toomela, 2016). The latter is particular to humans and is not subject to fundamental biological laws. How a person internalizes knowledge that was once available on a social level was a central concern for Vygotsky. Through social interaction, a person engages with adults, peers, and objects that serve as sources of cognitive development, gradually moving away from the outside world and toward a gradual internal transformation (Haenen et al., 2003).

Purpose of the Study

This dissertation study is about the largely overlooked emotional aspects of mediator-led interactions that target learner ZPDs during writing sessions with EFL learners. The DA principles are the foundation of these interactions, including the movement from general to more specific mediation and the tailoring of mediation to the needs of learners. Within the field of second language research, DA is gaining momentum. Researchers have used DA procedures in speaking (Minakova, 2020), reading (e.g., Davin et al., 2014), listening (e.g., Ableeva & Lantolf, 2011), and writing (Kushki, Nassaji, & Rahimi, 2022; Kushki, Rahimi, & Davin, 2022; Nassaji et al., 2020;

Rahimi et al., 2015; Shrestha & Coffin, 2012). In their thorough timeline article, Poehner and Wang (2020) provide a summary of more than 70 L2 DA works. Recurring themes are (a) theoretical foundations of DA and its main approaches, (b) DA applications in instructional settings, (c) conceptual advancements in DA, and (d) computerization of DA.

DA is incorporated into L2 (English) writing in a few reports. Antón (2009) used DA to evaluate test-takers' language skills, get involved in their learning process, and track their progress. This was done in the context of a Spanish undergraduate language entry test. Shrestha and Coffin (2012) used DA techniques to improve the academic writing abilities of two undergraduates who did not major in English. In a 2014 study, DaSilva Iddings investigated whether DA procedures could improve elementary English writing students' metalinguistic (i.e., language-related) knowledge. Participants in the Rahimi et al. (2015) study who majored in English showed improved ability to write argumentative essays after a DA intervention. A common finding of these studies is that language learners differ in terms of their potential for learning because they operate off different ZPDs. These studies also emphasize the dynamics of the interactions between mediators and learners.

The aforementioned works provide insight into the ideal circumstances for ZPD interventions over DA sessions, but they only barely touch on the subject of emotions. How emotions affect ZPD interactions, and the results of these interactions is a significant but unaddressed issue. According to anecdotal evidence, students are aware of emotions during DA interactions, and these perceptions have a significant impact on how

well students respond to DA interventions. In interviews conducted after a DA treatment, participants in Shrestha and Coffin's (2012) study frequently mentioned feelings like “relaxed” and “encouragement” (pp. 66-67). Similar to Shrestha and Coffin’s research, Mazzotta and Belcher's (2018) study found that DA procedures led to motivation and confidence in participants. The results show that emotions are crucial to DA, which calls for more research in this area.

Ironically, emotions have received a minor role in L2 DA literature. The process of learning a language involves both mental and emotional effort (Pavlenko, 2013; Swain, 2013). Social interactions and collaborative work, which are essential to ZPD activities and DA procedures, involve emotions as well. It is quite likely that emotions play a larger role in assessment situations where learners interact with the mediator in real-time, such as in DA tutorials. In this regard, ZPD is described by Goldstein (1999) as having an interrelational aspect, according to which ZPD is a shared affective space for collaborative interaction among individuals participating in the given activity. Goldstein contends further that for teaching or learning strategies to succeed, this interrelational aspect of ZPD must be met.

In a similar vein, Wells (1999, p. 331) emphasizes that learning in the ZPD involves the learner’s acting, thinking, and feeling selves. Mahn and John-Steiner (2002) contend that by looking at how emotions are used in ZPD activities, we can gain a deeper understanding of the ZPD construct and its pedagogical implications. According to Mahn and John-Steiner, extending ZPD to include affective issues in particular reveals the construct as a complex system of interdependent systems with interrelated elements that

consist of participants, the participants' experiences of interactions that occur between them, and context. The authors contend that the construction of the ZPD depends on the complementarity between these components, a breach of which, such as problems with negative or positive affect, would cause the teaching and learning zone to contract or, conversely, to enlarge.

Research Questions

This multiple case study, which is framed within Vygotsky's perezhivanie concept, aimed to examine the emotional experience of EFL learners participating in writing tutorials with a mediator who adhered to DA procedures. The following inquiries were used to guide the study:

1. How do participants report that their emotions influenced DA interactions?
2. How does the mediator feel when engaging in DA interactions?
3. How do participants report perceived emotions shape the way they performed during DA sessions?

Significance of the Study

The study theoretically highlights perezhivanie, one of Vygotsky's less well-known concepts in the L2 field. Although specific aspects of Vygotsky's ideas have rightfully received attention, his ideas on the connections between emotion and cognition - the ability to process information intellectually - are comparably unknown despite being of utmost importance (Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002). Perezhivanie, in its essence, embodies the dialectical rationale of Vygotsky; in order to understand a phenomenon, one must look at the various forces that make up that phenomenon as well as how these

forces interact. This is consistent with Vygotsky's theory of consciousness, which holds that emotions are an integral part of consciousness as a whole.

Practically speaking, this research will offer fresh perspectives on the emotional component of the mediator-learner interactions at the center of DA methodologies. The research will be especially helpful to DA practitioners who want to design ZPD activities that will benefit their students and educational goals. As was mentioned above, emotions influence how well learners respond to mediators' mediation. Therefore, DA practitioners should be aware that taking emotional factors into account is just as important as paying attention to other factors that may have the potential to affect the outcome of a DA session.

Delimitations

This study probed the emotions experienced by three Persian native speakers learning English writing while working one-on-one with the researcher. The study examined how participants' engagement with instruction during these tutorials was influenced by their perceived emotions. Participants were all from Iran, an extending circle nation where English is not the primary language of communication. Since writing in English is essential for academic and professional success both domestically and abroad, I chose the Iranian context. Furthermore, what distinguishes the Iranian context from others is limited access to quality courses on English writing in Iran (Naghdipour, 2016; Marefat & Heydari, 2018). One implication is that developing writing skills requires both an intellectual and an emotional commitment. This qualitative multiple-case study utilized interviews as the primary method of data collection, paired with the

Geneva Emotions Wheel to identify perceived emotions. Thematically analyzing interviews along with recognized emotions made up analysis.

Definition of Terms

Dynamic Assessment (DA): An interaction between a mediator and a learner that aims to gauge the learner's current level of knowledge and build on it to aid the learner develop.

English as a foreign language learner (EFL): Students who are learning English as a second language (ESL) are those whose first language is not English.

Mediation: The interaction between the more knowledgeable mediator (usually the teacher/instructor) and a learner, which enables the mediator to diagnose emerging abilities through graduated feedback and to gradually hand over control to the learner as they advance in their abilities.

Mediator: A person who assists the learner during in-person DA tutorials, usually a teacher.

Perezhivanie: The way a learner becomes aware of, interpret, and emotionally connects to a specific event.

Sociocultural Theory (SCT): A theoretical viewpoint that asserts that in order to comprehend how the human mind develops, it is crucial to include the study of human culture and history.

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD): The distance between the learner's actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level

of potential development as determined through problem solving under guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.

Personal Background

My academic and personal history serve as a foundation for my passion for the subject. I personally have a deep connection to traditional Persian literature, especially Hafez's lyric poetry and Rumi's mystical poetry. The most subtle emotion and imaginative content can be found throughout literature. No day goes by that I don't comb my unruly inner world with the finest, most emotional literature, just as I comb my unruly hair every day. I have become more sensitive to the emotional aspects of phenomena, whether they are internal or external to me. Indulging in the emotional sanctuary gives me a break from the harsh realities of the outside world, albeit a temporary one. Literature also contributes to a deeper understanding of reality, one that looks beyond pure cognition to examine phenomena through an emotional-cognitive lens.

The educational environment is one such reality. My experiences as an EFL teacher in Iran have produced both stories of success and failure. The extent to which I would emotionally engage with those various teaching situations, looking back, is a key element of the stories. The more emotionally connected I am to a situation, the more likely I am to succeed. Anecdotal feedback from my students supports this reflection and attests to the important role that emotion plays in both teaching and learning. Students occasionally contact me with an inspirational flashback that is episodic and event-specific and has stuck with them for years!

My personal history and my teaching experiences have persuaded me that accounting for both the cognitive and emotional aspects of phenomena is the key to achieving the best results in teaching. This is especially important in educational settings because they are so charged with emotion. These insights and reflections led to this study, which gave me the chance to investigate the topic in greater detail through principled procedures.

Organization of the Study

The remaining portions of the study are structured as follows. Beginning with a review of the literature on DA in second language research, Chapter II then focuses on how DA has been incorporated into L2 writing. It also contains a selection of literature on perezhivanie, how L2 researchers interpret the construct and how they use it in the L2 field. The methodology that I employ for this study, including different methods and tools for data collection and analysis, is covered in Chapter III. In Chapter IV, I present and discuss the results in distinct subsections for each research question. To contextualize and support reported findings, the sub-sections incorporate qualitative data chunks, such as interview excerpts. Conclusions, study implications, and potential locations for further study are suggested in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

To begin the second chapter, I overview the L2 scholarship in L2 field. Then, I provide an outline of DA and its guiding principles, including an explanation of how DA differs from conventional assessment. Then I discuss the ZPD idea from Vygotsky (1978), which is essential to DA procedures, and locate it within the Vygotskyan general theory of mental development. I next move on to discuss how DA is used in second language (L2) learning and teaching environments. The next section is a review of L2 DA literature, where I focus on how DA has been incorporated into the field of second language (typically English) writing, where DA studies are few. These sections are meant to prepare the reader for the analysis and synthesis of the literature. Dialectics is covered in the chapter's final section because it is crucial to understanding Vygotskyan thought.

Emotions in L2

Generally discussed under the subject of *affect* (for differences among affect, emotion, and feeling, see Lantolf & Swain, 2020), emotions have received relatively scant attention in SLA research (Richards, 2020). Swain (2013) contends, “Emotions have, in general, been neglected in the SLA literature” (p. 195). She ascribes the neglect to (a) the birth of rationalism, (b) the problem of measuring emotions, and (c) the influence on SLA researchers of Chomsky’s innatist and cognitivist arguments about

language. The latter of these prioritizes competence over performance and shows little concern for individual variations between language learners because the emphasis is on language itself rather than the learner as a social being (Mitchell et al., 2013).

One of the earliest affirmations on the important role of emotions in second language learning is Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis–a key component of his second language acquisition theory. The affective filter hypothesis describes the relationship between affective variables and the process of second language acquisition, specifically how acquirers differ in terms of the strength or level of their affective filters. Those with poor attitudes toward second language acquisition will not only seek less input, but they will also have a high or strong affective filter, which means that even if they understood the message, the input would not reach the part of the brain responsible for language acquisition, known as the Language Acquisition Device. Those with more favorable attitudes toward second language acquisition will not only seek and receive more input, but they will also have a lower or weaker filter.

As scant as the current literature on affect is, there is general acknowledgement about the role of affective factors, including emotions, as crucial predictors of learning outcomes (see Imai, 2010). That said, SLA researchers continue to explore the relationship between L2 learning and affect in terms of affective factors, what Pavlenko (2013) has termed the *affective factors paradigm*. As mentioned by Pavlenko, this is evident in the three SLA textbooks of Ellis (2008), Gass and Selinker (2008), and Ortega (2009), wherein affective factors are discussed mainly as individual characteristics to reveal causality relationships between them and L2 acquisition. The so-called affective

factors paradigm has reached its explanatory limit as it lacks a principled theory of affect, emphasizes the linear cause-and-effect explanations between affective factors and learning outcomes in the absence of psycholinguistic explanations about the mechanism of influence, and disassociates affective factors as individual differences from L2 learning social contexts (Pavlenko, 2013).

As such, the affective factors paradigm is not aligned with the recent affective turn in SLA which merges linguistic, psychological, and social aspects of the L2 learning process to understand the affective aspects of language learning: “The recognition of weaknesses inherent in the affective factors paradigm, combined with the growing body of knowledge about emotions in natural and social sciences created opportune conditions for the affective turn in the field of SLA” (Pavlenko, 2013, p. 9). This multi-dimensional approach to the study of affect resonates well with Imai’s (2010) call for a holistic investigation of affect which factors in a wider range of emotions, coupled with respective social aspects.

Vygotskyan sociocultural theory (SCT) can contribute significantly to the burgeoning emotion research in SLA. According to SCT, the social environment is the source of mental development. The theory, in particular, provides a theoretical foundation for explaining the role of emotions in language learning, and avoids dissociating affective factors from their social contexts of occurrence, and represents emotions as an integral component of consciousness as a whole, rather than “a state within a state in the human mind” that conceptualizes emotions as “torn from the united whole, from the rest of man's mental life” (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 328).

Dynamic Assessment

Scholars typically define DA in terms of a set of established qualities due to definitional differences. For instance, Lidz (1995; see also Lidz, 1991) opposes the idea of treating DA like a simple test battery or evaluation method. DA is a concept or an attitude of how to think about evaluation, continues Lidz. Despite variations caused by definitional issues, DA has three fundamental features: (a) it is interactive; (b) it emphasizes learning processes; and (c) it produces unique information (Lidz, 1995). During the evaluation process, the mediator engages with the learners to examine their performance and draw conclusions. By facilitating change, the mediator also aims to disclose learner processes and enhance learning. The mediator concentrates on the learners' involvement with the issue at hand (i.e., the learning process) during these interactive moments. The resulting outcomes describe reasons for learner failure or the ability to achieve something. Therefore, teaching and assessment practices are not independent endeavors; rather they mesh into each other dialectically (i.e., mutually).

To elucidate the above-cited characteristics, scholars typically contrast DA with static, psychometric assessment. In fact, the first sparks of DA came from doubts regarding the static nature of the time-honored intelligence-testing tradition (Haywood & Lidz, 2007; Kozulin, 1998, 2014; Lidz, 1991; Minick, 1987; Tzuriel, 2001). During static assessment, assessors present learners with testing items and record the learners' responses to these items. Assessors also record and assess these responses neutrally without any intervention to change, guide, or enhance learner performance (Tzuriel, 2001). Put differently, teaching and assessment are separate, distinct undertakings. Static

assessment, therefore, is noninteractive. Moreover, static testing does not aim to change learner abilities because its overriding concern is to measure past learning in solo testing situations as accurately as possible. Test outcomes then becomes a yardstick for the mastery of a specific content area. For these reasons, static measures have little to offer about learning processes and underlying reasons responsible for learning difficulties (Lidz, 1991; Tzuriel, 2001). Nor do these measures provide useful information for the development of interventions and the required intensity of the interventions to trigger change (Lidz, 1991; Minick, 1987).

Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is at the heart of DA procedures. Indeed, Guthke and Wingenfeld (1992) call Vygotsky the *father* of DA despite the fact that he never used the term himself. As described in the first chapter, the ZPD refers to the distance between what a learner can accomplish independently and what she can accomplish under adult guidance or during collaboration with more capable others. Whereas independent performance is indicative of a learner's actual developmental level (ADL), aided performance evidence the learner's potential developmental level or ZPD. According to Minick (1987), Vygotsky theorized the ZPD as a framework to predict what learners could attain in the future (i.e., the next or proximal level of development) based on their performance at a given point (i.e., learners' current or actual development). Vygotsky (1978; 1986) argued that to get insights into learners' next developmental levels, one has to analyze the learner's collaborative interactions with others, including teachers and more capable peers. Learners' maturing abilities emerge and can be explored during these collaborative

interactions; abilities that are most revealing about what learners can accomplish next (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986).

In proposing the ZPD, Vygotsky pioneered the diagnostic approach to assessment. The label diagnostic means a ZPD-based assessment generates a nuanced, comprehensive report of what learners are capable of achieving independently and collaboratively (Minick, 1987). Such a report can be utilized to anticipate learners' dynamics of learning and development (Minick, 1987). In other words, to fully grasp learners' developmental path, it is essential to create a ZPD to analyze (a) what learners can do unassisted, and (b) what they can do during collaborative interactions. Vygotsky (1986) noted that a gardener would not be able to truly evaluate his orchard if he examined matured or harvested fruits only; the gardener needs to take account of ripening fruits as well. To create a ZPD, the more capable individual takes the lead during collaborative interactions, assisting the learner "through demonstration, through leading questions, and by introducing the initial elements of the task's solution" and observing the learner's responsiveness to the help provided (p. 204).

As alluded to earlier, DA procedures drastically change the nature of teaching-assessment relationships. Traditional approaches distinguish between teaching and assessment so much so that one would be able to walk into a room and tell whether the teacher is teaching or assessing students. In DA, on the contrary, instruction and assessment are embedded within one another; that is, the two are dialectically connected (Lidz & Gindis, 2003). Depending on specifics of the situation, the teacher might choose to foreground either.

The ZPD construct and the central role social interactions play in creating it reflect Vygotsky's (1986) sociocultural theory. Vygotsky contended that human mental growth originates in the individual's social activities not in his mind. Similar to the conceptualization of the ZPD, Vygotsky suggests two levels of functioning: individual or intrapsychological and social or interpsychological. Uniquely human mental functions such as memory and voluntary attention first appear on the social plane and then on the individual plane. Vygotsky captured the point under his *general genetic law of cultural development*. As the individual masters how to control them via social participation and under the guidance and tutelage of others, she transforms and internalizes these social functions (Wertsch, 1985).

Second Language Dynamic Assessment (L2 DA)

Aljaafreh and Lantolf's (1994) study spearheaded ZPD research in L2 and became a seminal work for DA investigation. The authors studied the relationship between error correction and L2 (English) development. Error correction is the use of pedagogical techniques to help language learners self-correct their errors. Although Aljaafreh and Lantolf acknowledged that error correction is all about adjusting it to individual needs of learners, they argued that adjustments cannot be determined beforehand. Negotiation with learners is essential, Aljaafreh and Lantolf contended, to determining which error correction strategies are most helpful. In some cases, indirect or what they called implicit, correction is sufficient for language learning. While in other cases, only direct or explicit correction works best.

To analyze how error correction influenced language learning, Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) turned to Vygotsky's ZPD. Especially, the researchers attended to how learners increasingly take responsibility for learning after instructors negotiate correction with them. For this purpose, Aljaafreh and Lantolf formalized an error-correction mechanism during ZPD interactions under *graduation, contingency, and dialogue*. Graduated intervention opens with broad (i.e., highly implicit) help and continues with progressively detailed, specific, and concrete help until it becomes clear which error correction strategy works best. Non-graduated correction fails to explore what learners are able to accomplish with and without instructors' mediation (i.e., learners' ZPDs). Mediation is contingent if instructors provide it only when learners need it and withdraw it when learners demonstrate signs of enhanced ability. Aljaafreh and Lantolf noted that graduation and contingency work together to determine whether or not mediation is required and if it is, how to jointly determine its appropriate level in the continuous process of assessing learners' needs and tailoring mediation to it. Soft-tuning mediation to learner needs transpires in the collaborative space teachers and learners create together. This collaboration space is as equally important as the other two conditions. Absent the collaboration and dialogue therein, it would be hard, if not impossible, to tailor mediation.

One aspect of Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) which received substantial attention in L2 literature was how to provide assistance that is sensitive to the learner ZPD. Having worked on grammatical features of articles, tense, tense marking, propositions, and modal verbs with three learners enrolled in an English as a second language (ESL) program, the

researchers created a list of the steps–called the regulatory scale–they had taken to mediate the learners. Ever since, L2 researchers have adopted and adapted the scale (e.g., Rahimi et al., 2015) as a guide for teacher-learner interactions.

Building on Aljaafreh and Lantolf's (1994) study, Nassaji and Swain (2000) compared mediation that took account of learners' ZPDs with one that did not. For this purpose, the authors randomly assigned two female, Korean-speaking learners of English enrolled in a five-week intensive writing course in Canada to ZPD-sensitive (ZPD student) and non-ZPD (non-ZPD student) treatment types. The ZPD student received help following the regulatory scale developed by Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994). That is, help was initially implicit[1] and became progressively explicit in collaborative negotiations depending on the student's responsiveness. The non-ZPD student, on the other hand, received random help–generated from the regulatory scale–in the sense that it did not progress from implicit to explicit prompts. Nor did it involve collaborative negotiations between the tutor and the student. Nassaji and Swain (2000) examined improvements in the two students' knowledge of target forms (English articles) in terms of the number of correct article usages in each composition and final tests, and changes in the amount of instructor mediation the students received within and across tutorials. The authors took as evidence of enhanced performance decreasing number of article errors and the shift toward more independent performance. The researchers displayed instances of improvement for the ZPD student. These instances evidenced the student's need for less

[1]Implicit error correction indicates the presence of an error though it does not specify the exact nature of the error. The teacher might, for instance, underline a whole sentence that contains a subject-verb agreement errors. Unlike implicit correction, explicit feedback directly corrects the learner's error by providing the current answer.

help before he was able to correct subsequent article errors of similar syntactic functions. As to the non-ZPD student, the researchers found that random help was much less helpful – compared to help within the ZPD – in eliciting improved responses on erroneous article usages of similar syntactic functions.

Following the two seminal ZPD studies reported above, Lantolf and Poehner (2004) introduced DA and two approaches to it: interactionist DA and interventionist DA. A fundamental distinction between the two is how mediation is approached. That is, the two differ in terms of the extent of leeway the mediator has to respond to difficulties learners face as well as to pursue concerns as they emerge during the interaction (Lantolf & Poehner, 2010). In interventionist DA, help is highly scripted across a prompting scale of increasing specificity in relation to a problem (such as a linguistic one). The interventionist practitioner, then, is required to go through the scale prompt by prompt depending on the learner's responsiveness. Interactionist DA, on the other hand, is more open-ended and conversational. The mediator has mediatory wiggle room to take whatever measure that seems suitable to push the learner along his/her ZPD "short of giving the answer, although even this might promote development if it occurs at a propitious point in the interaction" (Lantolf & Poehner, 2010, p. 15). Interactionist DA is considered to align more with Vygotsky's ZPD concept as it allows more interpretation of learners' abilities. It is also more representative of Vygotsky's preference for interpretive approaches to assessing learner abilities (DaSilva Iddings, 2014).

Ever since Lantolf and Poehner's (2004) work, DA has been gaining momentum within the field of second language (L2) learning, teaching, and assessment. In a recent

timeline of L2 DA reports, Poehner and Wang (2020) list more than 70 works. These reports have integrated DA procedures into assessment practices targeting various areas, including the four skill areas of listening (e.g., Ableeva & Lantolf, 2011), speaking (e.g., Hill & Sabet, 2009), reading (e.g., Davin et al., 2014), and writing (e.g., Rahimi et al., 2015; Kushki, Rahimi, & Davin, 2022). The literature I review subsequently reports integrations of DA procedures into L2 writing. The review is arranged chronologically, going from early to recent works.

Second Language Dynamic Assessment of Writing

Reports of DA applications to L2 writing are scarce but growing. The first such study is Antón (2009) who integrated interactionist DA into the entry test of an undergraduate Spanish program. Five Spanish majors received DA mediation on the writing section of the program's regular placement test. Participants had three opportunities to revise essays they had written on prompt. Initially, participants tried revisions without any external help. For the second and third revision efforts, participants consulted reference manuals (such as grammar books) and interacted with an examiner, respectively. Participants made most revisions following the independent reading of essays, reference consultation, and examiner consultation, respectively. Details from participants' responses to mediation helped identify those who needed more mediation. Similar to Antón's study, I utilize interactionist DA to mediate my participants. My study is different from Antón as I meet participants online. Also, the present study (a) is not part of a larger language program, as was Antón's, and (b) entails extended interactions with participants that enable me to study the role of emotions during these interactions.

Like Antón (2009), Shrestha and Coffin (2012) utilized interactionist DA to investigate tutor mediation to support academic writing skills, but their participants were two business undergraduates in UK higher education. The researchers were interested in establishing the amount and type of ZPD-tailored tutor mediation which targeted developing academic abilities needed for writing case study analysis, subject-specific essays, and relevant workplace-related reports. Tutor mediation was operationalized as text interaction between the tutor and the students delivered via emails and online group forums. Overall, findings indicated that the tutor employed various and different levels of mediational strategies to diagnose the learners' problem areas, such as applying course concepts to business situations and controlling information flow. Like Antón (2009), Shrestha and Coffin (2012) used interactionist DA though the two studies were conducted in different contexts and pursued different goals. While Shrestha and Coffin's study has an online component as the researchers' mediated participants via email and other online platforms, mine consists of online, face-to-face meetings with participants.

Similar to Antón (2009) and Shrestha and Coffin (2012), DaSilva Iddings (2014) applied interactionist DA procedures to assessing writing abilities, but her participants were much younger--two third-grade Spanish-speaking English learners. The author was especially interested in how the teacher's support with providing metalinguistic (i.e., knowledge about language) knowledge could improve the students' writing abilities. The teacher layered in cycles of DA procedures into the larger design-based approach used by the school. Each DA cycle consisted of multiple sessions and featured (a) an initial traditional, unaided writing test designed for the students' respective grade level, (b) a

follow-up intervention designed based on the students' performance in the initial tests, and (c) an individual writing post-test. Like Antón (2009) and Shrestha and Coffin (2012), the initial test served as a baseline index of the students' writing abilities. The intervention aimed to facilitate a better understanding of lexical and structural similarities and differences between the students' L1 (Spanish) and L2 (English). During these sessions, the teacher adopted Aljaafreh and Lantolf's (1994) regulatory scale to draw the learners' attention to the use of Spanish and English languages and discussed similarities and differences across the two languages including structure and lexicon. Overall, due to the DA intervention, the students showed a deeper metalinguistic knowledge as well as a better conceptual understanding of the English writing at the end of the study. Like DaSilva Iddings' (2014) report, I use interactionist DA in the present study. There are, however, differences. Unlike DaSilva Iddings' young participants learning English writing in the U.S., participants in my study are adults learning English writing in the EFL context of Iran.

Like the previously described studies, Rahimi et al. (2015) also utilized interactionist DA, but in a context similar to that of the present study. Rahimi and colleagues utilized interactionist DA to investigate conceptual aspects related to the ability to write five-paragraph essays in English by three Farsi-speaking undergraduates majoring in English Literature. The mediator held one-on-one writing tutorials with the students, during which he negotiated mediation with students while reviewing essays with them collaboratively. The mediator utilized Aljaafreh and Lantolf's (1994) regulatory scale to guide his intervention. Similar to the studies reported above, findings

of the study showed that the participants varied in terms of where they were along their ZPDs in relation to concepts related to essay paragraphing such as topic sentences and thesis statements. Similar to Rahimi et al.'s (2015) work, participants in the present study are Farsi-speaking learners of English who are developing the ability to write in English. Unlike Rahimi et al.'s study, tutorials in the present study are conducted online over Zoom.

Building upon Rahimi et al. (2015), Nassaji et al. (2020) compared interactionist and interventionist DA approaches to writing with EFL learners. A focal point of the study was to investigate how well the two approaches would reveal underlying reasons for the learners' poor performance in argumentative essays. One of the researchers attended four weekly, one-on-one writing tutorials with the learners. The learners placed in the interactionist group received treatment on problem areas in the form of extended dialogic interactions with the mediator (one of the researchers). The interventionist group, on the other hand, received help based on a five-level scripted, preplanned scale. Findings of the study suggested an advantage for interactionist DA in that it offered a more nuanced insight into the learners' ZPDs; that is, it provided a better diagnosis of the reasons for the problems the learners had with writing argumentative essays.

Nassaji et al.'s (2020) study and the other ones reviewed above help me justify using interactionist DA in the present study. While it should not be taken to devalue interventionist DA, extended interactions that are characteristic of interactionist DA are a better space to explore the emotional side of mediator-learner interactions.

To sum up, existing L2 DA research has not investigated the emotional side of ZPD interactions, as indicated in the literature reviewed above. This is while anecdotal evidence suggests that learners experience a range of emotions during DA interactions. I take up this issue in the next section.

Dynamic Assessment and Emotional Responses

In the L2 field, few studies have utilized perezhivanie as a lens to understand the influence of specific emotional experiences on learner development. Mok (2015) used perezhivanie to explore his learning of Mandarin as L2 through an online language community platform. Mok reported, among other things, increasingly negative attitudes toward the course content of the online platform, causing him to rely on other sources of feedback on his Mandarin. In a similar vein, Swain et al. (2015) turned to perezhivanie to explain the language learning experience of Grace who had felt embarrassed after classmates laughed at her forgetting the English word for cucumber and instead using a word from her first language.

In the context of ZPD, DA, and L2 writing, the perezhivanie literature is scant. Although Mahn (1997) is not specifically framed within DA, it is one of the earliest applications of perezhivanie to writing skills. Mahn studied a group of ESL writers. In their written reflective journals, the students revealed their debilitating anxiety through frequently referencing their fear of making mistakes. This anxiety kept the students from writing and caused frustration because they were stymied in the ability to communicate ideas. “Because I could not express my feelings completely, I feel heavy pressure in my chest,” one of the students wrote. Perezhivanie also informed Poehner and Swain’s

(2017) study. The authors illustrated how attending to the emotional well-being of an ESL student named Nadia helped her become a better writer. Especially, Poehner and Swain mediated Nadia's feelings of frustration, showed her alternative to giving up, and helped her out when she reached an impasse. These studies corroborate Shrestha and Coffin (2012) who reported how participants in their study perceived DA procedures. In their interviews, the learners characterized the DA intervention as "more relaxed," associating it with confidence building. They frequently brought up concepts related to "affect" as a critical aspect of their learning. Additionally, the learners frequently alluded to "patience" and "encouragement" (pp. 66-67) as important attributes of DA. To sum up, the studies indicate that it is particularly important for DA practitioners to take notice of learners' precepting, processing, and reacting to interactions between them, without which it would be hard to meaningfully engage learners in a given situation (Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002).

Perhaps the study most relevant to the present work was Mazzotta and Belcher (2018) in that they were the first to marry DA of writing with a focus on socioemotional responses to mediation. Using an exploratory case study approach, Mazzotta and Belcher investigated two college-level Japanese language learners' socioemotional responses to DA-based mediation on their writing for a total of 15 one-on-one conferences taking place over a one-year period. During these writing conferences, a tutor – one of the researchers – utilized Aljaafreh and Lantolf's (1994) regulatory scale to facilitate the participants' self- correction of their texts during dialogic interactions. Mazzotta and Belcher (2018) note that they made conscious efforts during the writing conferences to

create a caring and supportive atmosphere with the aim of optimizing learning. To collect data, authors administered semi-structured, stimulated recall, and focus group interviews, as well as took observations notes. For stimulated recall interviews, the researchers played selected portions from audio-recorded interactions that occurred during writing conferences to get the participants' thoughts on specific portions. The researchers conducted qualitative content analysis of interview transcripts via NVivo Software. Findings indicated that the DA mediation yielded positive emotions in the participants.

Mazzotta and Belcher (2018) reported their findings under the three themes of (a) *providing affective support,* (b) *conveying mediator confirmation,* and (c) *promoting learner confidence and motivation through perception of accuracy improvement.* As the first of these is concerned, both participants expressed satisfaction with the supportive atmosphere during the writing conferences. The positive atmosphere of one-on-one conferences, for instance, encouraged one participant to write freely and take the risk of using unfamiliar grammar as well as to write about personal matters. As to the second theme, participants took help provided to them during the conferences as indicative of the mediator's confirmation that their contributions were important and valuable. In the eyes of the participants, due to DA procedures (i.e., graduated, contingent help) they felt the mediator was genuinely seeking to understand what they were trying to say in their writing, causing them to see writing as a means of self-expression. Additionally, participants thought the provision of graduated, contingent mediation suggested that the mediator had confidence in their ability to self-correct, which in turn encouraged them to think and invest more in their responses and ultimately produce the correct form. Finally,

both participants reported enhanced confidence and motivation as a result of perceived improvement in producing more linguistically accurate writing following one-on-one conferences.

The Present Study

Extant literature reveals key aspects of DA procedures that remain unexplored. Especially under-investigated is DA interactions from a perezhivanie perspective. As Mazzotta and Belcher (2018) contend, most current DA studies investigate and analyze mediation primarily in terms of how learners cognitively process the mediation offered to them. Rahimi et al. (2015), for instance, zeroed in on DA tutorials as a space to identify areas that gave participants most difficulty. In the same vein, DaSilva Iddings (2014) focused on DA procedures as a tool to raise learners' metalinguistic knowledge, theorizing that increased metalinguistic knowledge would result in gains in writing ability.

As evidenced in the review of the literature, only one study–Mazzotta and Belcher (2018)–has examined emotions in DA interactions so far. Although they discussed *the* socioemotional aspects of mediation, they did not situate their work in Vygotsky's perezhivanie proposal. Instead, the authors' discussion of affect was grounded on a more general version of sociocultural theory, as evidenced in the quote below (Mazzotta & Belcher, 2018): "In contrast to mainstream SLA [second language acquisition] theories' dualistic view of the relationship between affect and cognition, SCT posits that affect and intellect are inseparably connected in a dialectical unity" (p. 52). As Mok (2015) and Poehner and Swain (2017) argue, L2 researchers tend to apply perezhivanie as a

definition rather than as a concept that is grounded in the broader context of the Vygotskyan thinking.

In addition to the above, one concern with this study related to the authors' timing of data collection. Mazzotta and Belcher (2018) used semi-structured, stimulated-recall, and focus-group interviews at different points in the study. They interviewed participants twice: once at the beginning of the semester and once at the end of the semester. With stimulated recall interviews, the authors interviewed one of the participants one year from the starting date of the study. Polio et al. (2006) note that recency is an important consideration in conducting stimulated recalls, contending that "A recall, even with a stimulus, must be conducted relatively close to the event for maximum accuracy" (p 242). The recency question is associated with a vivid and accurate reliving of an original situation (Bloom, 1954, as cited in Polio et al., 2006). Therefore, the long delay between the original event and subsequent interviews may have threatened the trustworthiness of participants' recollections. Moreover, the use of focus groups for reporting on emotions and feelings was questionable because participants may have been reluctant to share or influenced by their peers in the group setting.

With the above as background, contribution of the present study to the literature is fourfold. First, the study adds to the scarce, yet growing implementations of DA in L2 writing context. Second, it investigates DA interactions from a perezhivanie perspective. Implications of a perezhivanie lens for DA-based interventions are direct and consequential. For the most part, interactions that happen during activities targeting the learner's ZPD are inherently emotional because the mediator pushes the learner beyond

their existing performance (Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002). Third, unlike Mazzotta and Belcher (2018) who studies English-speaking learners of Japanese, participants in the present study are Farsi-speaking learners of English. Finally, both the methodology and data analysis procedures, as I lay them out in the third chapter, are directly grounded in Vygotsky's original thoughts and thinking. In terms of methodology, I administer interviews right after each writing session with participants and hence avoid the recency concern. Second, I identify–via the use of a graphical emotions list–the nature of the emotions participants perceive. Relatedly, I go from the emotions to analyze interconnections (i.e., dialectical relationships between various aspects of an event) within DA interactions and how they influence both the mediator's and participants' experience of DA sessions.

Conclusion

The chapter began with an overview of DA and proceeded by reviewing the literature on DA in the context of second language teaching and learning with a focus on L2 writing. Having reviewed the literature, I indicated how the current literature has primarily looked at the cognitive side of DA interactions, paying less attention to the equally important emotional side of these interactions. Contributions of the study to the current L2 DA literature closed chapter. In the next chapter, I lay out the methodological aspects of the work.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss my work's methodological aspects. Throughout the chapter frequently reference Merriam's (1998) key work on qualitative research and case study methods. Merriam provides more thorough and useful guidance on the six dimensions of case study designs–epistemological commitment, definition, design, data collection, data analysis, and data validation–compared to Yin (2002) and Stake (1995), the other two important methodologists in case-study research in education (Yazan, 2015). Merriam's constructivist epistemology, which holds that knowledge is created rather than discovered, is particularly pertinent to my research because it is a tenet of Vygotsky's ideas as well.

Design

I used a qualitative multiple-case approach for participant identification and selection, data collection, and analysis. The study was qualitative because I focused on how the participants (n=3) uniquely perceived emotions and participated in the DA tutorials. Qualitative research, particularly qualitative case studies, is characterized by how people construct reality by taking part in social activities and the meaning they give to their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The investigation of the emotional experiences of three EFL learners (see subsequent section) during interactive assessment

sessions with a mediator further distinguished the work as a case study. The main distinguishing feature of a qualitative case study is object delimitation (Merriam, 1998). The moniker “case” in the context of the current study refers to individual participants and their particular perezhivanie prior to, during, and following DA tutorials with the mediator. Each participant and their experiences therefore functioned as defining variables in the study.

The study used a multiple case design because it involved more than one participant. Initially, I did not intend to generate cross-case conclusions in including more than one participant. To be sure, case-specific conclusions are more important to sociocultural researchers than conclusions drawn from multiple cases. The objective is to identify the uniquely specific aspects of the event being studied rather than capturing its most general features (Vygotsky, 1986). The “original sin” of cognitive research was to ignore the diversity of cognitive skills by assuming that mental faculties are fixed and homogeneous (Levinson, 2012, p. 397). Rather, sociocultural researchers aim to produce an individual or group-specific trajectory and explain how the many elements that make up that process interact (van Compernolle, 2019). However, I ended up comparing the participants based on their perceived emotions to see if there were any patterns in the data I gathered.

Merriam’s (1998) particularistic and descriptive characterizations of case study designs are connected to the aforementioned individual-specific explanation (Merriam, 1998). Because the researcher examines a specific occurrence, occasion, or scenario in depth, a case study is particularistic. I treated each individual participant as a case in their

own place using the particularistic lens. The descriptive perspective was applicable to the current study since it included a detailed account of the phenomenon being studied.

Context of the Study

I used Zoom software to conduct the study online. The participants were Persian-speaking EFL learners. The target language of English is typically only used in educational settings and is not used for everyday communication. An example of an extended-circle EFL context is Iran, where the participants were from. Persian serves as the primary language of communication outside of educational institutions that teach English.

The focal language skill for the study was (English) writing. For Iranian students to thrive academically both inside and outside of the country, they need to develop their English writing abilities. Graduate, non-English major, students need advanced writing skills to publish in national and international journals, whereas English-major undergraduate and graduate students must develop writing skills to complete course requirements, such as written assignments, projects, and exams (Naghdipour, 2016). The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), which are high-stakes English proficiency exams, both heavily weigh essay writing abilities. To meet visa criteria, Iranians who want to leave the nation for better social, educational, and professional prospects must perform well on these language proficiency tests (Naghdipour, 2016).

The hardest skills to learn in the Iranian EFL environment are writing skills, much like in other EFL contexts (Naghdipour, 2016). While there are many online and offline

tools available to learn and improve English speaking, listening, and reading, writing requires in-depth coaching from qualified teachers. Regarding the teaching component, for instance, the majority of Iranian writing teachers in Marefat and Heydari's (2018) study claimed they taught English writing using traditional instructional approaches, such as employing essay templates and strategies to get a passing grade. Marefat and Heydari further noted that cultural differences and first language practices made English writing instruction truly demanding in the Iranian context. The bulk of experienced English writing instructors in the Iranian setting have no specialized training in the subject beyond international certificates to evaluate English writing samples using rubrics. Hence, it is not surprising that Iranian English language students perform less well on the writing section of international exams like the TOEFL and IELTS than they do on other sections. In comparison to the listening, reading, and speaking sections of the IELTS exam in 2019, for instance, Iranian applicants scored the lowest on the writing test (IELTS, 2019).

There are reasons to think that for Iranian EFL students, developing English writing is just as much an emotional process as it is an intellectual one. For one, thousands of Iranian students depart the nation each year to pursue higher education abroad. These students would not be able to enroll in foreign universities if they were unable to meet language competency criteria, particularly those relating to writing. The unpleasant experience that non-English majors go through as they get ready for international English proficiency exams is attested to by my conversations with Iranian friends. Aside from the psychological effects, Iranian applicants must pay high fees for

international English proficiency tests. In 2018, former U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the country from the so-called Iran nuclear deal, which caused a significant decline in the value of the Iranian currency relative to the dollar. Therefore, English writing abilities are essential for Iranian EFL students for academic and economic reasons, which makes the learning process stressful and demanding. Given the foregoing, one-on-one writing tutorials like the DA ones in the study are advantageous. Private tutoring is cost- and effort-effective given the financial and psychological repercussions of failing English proficiency exams.

Participants

Three Persian-speaking learners of English partook in the study (see Table 1). I provide details about each of the participants in the paragraphs that follow.

Table 1. Demographics of the Study's Three Participants

Name	Age	Gender	Field of Study
Soraya	21	Female	Financial Management
Mohammad	22	Male	Applied Mathematics
Amin	42	Male	Material Engineering & Metallurgy

Soraya, the first participant, began taking English classes at several private schools when she was six years old. However, she had just a few setbacks in her quest to learn the language, including taking a break from 2019 to 2021. Her primary goal in learning English was to become fluent enough to move from Iran to an English-speaking country. She stressed that even though she did not have any intentions to take international English language examinations at the time of the study, she needed to get

ready for them soon. The least developed of the four language skills, according to her, was her ability to write in English. Except for the writing assignments that were needed in language schools, she did not practice writing. Additionally, she said that she did not take advanced writing classes. Most of the feedback she received for the few writing assignments she submitted in her language classes concerned grammar and spelling. She considered the offered feedback to be "trivial" and focused on "unimportant stuff," making it ineffective for her overall language learning.

The second student, Mohammad, began studying English when he was twelve years old. For him, learning English would be crucial for his future profession. He asserted that English is the language used for worldwide communication, leading him to believe that language proficiency will be required. At the time of the study, he was taking English lessons at a private language institute at an intermediate level. Mohammad had some prior writing experience, using writing as a way to exercise his vocabulary and grammar. Most of his experiences with feedback came from brief writing tasks in language classes, where the main emphasis was on using writing to learn new vocabulary and grammar. He remarked that the feedback he received in the language lessons he attended was random (i.e., not focused on a specific language item) and direct (i.e., giving the right answer up front), leaving no room for self-correction.

The third participant, Amin, was a faculty member at the major public university in southern Iran. He started learning English at the age of 20. His usage of sophisticated lexical items, complex grammar, and essay writing skills were all indicators of his advanced writing ability. In fact, he had academic writings relevant to his major

published in peer-reviewed international journals. Amin loved to learn and studied English with a zeal, and he thought that writing was challenging and rewarding enough to be worthwhile. Amin had a great deal of experience receiving feedback on his writing. He had a receptive attitude on feedback because it enabled him to further develop his writing. In fact, Amin believed there would be no way to tell whether or not he wrote accurately in the absence of feedback. In an effort to improve as a writer, he read a lot of books and online content on English writing. Amin remarked that he needed to keep getting better at writing for both academic and professional reasons. In regard to the latter, he ran a start-up company and required worldwide communication.

I chose three adult participants using a conventional, nonprobabilistic purposeful sampling method (Merriam, 1998). Because I did not intend to generalize sample results to the population from which they were collected, the sampling is nonprobabilistic. The hallmark of probabilistic sampling, of which random sampling is the most well-known, is generalization. Purposive sampling is the most familiar type of nonprobabilistic sampling since it is a sample that is informative and illuminating about the object of my study. I employed typical sample among several purposive sampling types. According to Merriam (1998), a sample is chosen because it is representative of the average person, situation, or instances of the phenomenon under study.

Regarding the selection criteria, it was crucial that participants could commit to what I asked of them during the study time and attend the four weekly individualized tutorials. Participants had to set aside time to compose essays for joint review during the DA tutorials. As to language and cultural background of participants, they had to be

Iranian EFL students who could speak Farsi.[1] Given my shared language background, this helped me make sense of non-verbal cues and vocally communicated emotions. Ranter (2000) asserted that various culture encodes emotions in various ways. I did not aim to include people with different cultural and language backgrounds because of my lack of knowledge about how emotions are encoded in other cultures.

Participants also had to be able to write in English at least at the low-intermediate level (TOEFL, 2020). An English learner with low-intermediate writing proficiency may produce straightforward written compositions in English on familiar or general topics, following the TOEFL performance criteria. Additionally, according to the test descriptions, learners with low intermediate writing skills have limited ability to develop ideas and use language. Participants with only basic writing skills would make it more difficult to collect data since they might not be able to produce essays. Similarly, highly skilled writers might not offer enough chances for mediator-learner interactions because it is likely that they would not require much help.

I utilized proficiency levels as a selection factor for participation solely. As a sociocultural researcher, I was aware that classifying students according to their proficiency levels was problematic for two reasons. Proficiency levels group different students together based on the assumption that they have similar linguistic skills. This suggests that the functional language skills possessed by these students are equal and balanced. For example, a person who achieves advanced high speaking ability is seen as

[1] In this manuscript, I have used Persian and Farsi interchangeably to refer to the official language of Iran.

being able to employ all linguistic structures in everyday contexts with similar ease or to function pragmatically and socially effectively in all social situation. Contrary to this account, sociocultural theory views mental capacities (in this case, linguistic abilities) as fluctuating both across and within individuals (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978).

I recruited the participants through word-of-mouth recommendations, social networking sites, and messaging apps like Facebook, Telegram, and WhatsApp. In my invitation to participate, I briefly described the study's objectives, proposed timetable, and participation requirements and expectations. I stressed the three criteria I mentioned above in my call. I also made it clear that participants had to have experience with EFL in Iran. Before choosing to include them in the study, I had a Zoom meeting with possible participants to go over the objectives and conditions of the study once more.

Tutorial Sessions

Tutorial content varied depending on whether the session was a review or revision tutorial. The participants completed essays of at least 250 words for each review tutorial. I gave the writers the freedom to write about whatever they wanted. Three days were given for them to submit their writings. After receiving participant essays, I read through them before discussing them with each participant in review tutorials. I did this because I had to decide which topics to emphasize in review tutorials. Additionally, the initial solo review enabled me to prepare by consulting resources like grammar books. I had to decide whether I wanted to focus on linguistic faults or essay-level ones during the solo review stage. Due to time constraints, I was unable to cover both. I focused on treatable language errors and language-related problems since they were rule-governed structures

(Ferris, 1999). Subject-verb agreement, as well as verb tenses, were examples of correctable errors. The so-called untreatable errors, such as word choice or improper sentence constructions, were less governed by rules (Ferris, 1999). I gave thesis statement and paragraphing priority while solving essay-level issues. A thesis statement expressed a writer's point of view on a particular subject and summarized the case they made in the body of their essay. Writing effective topic sentences, which usually came at the beginning of a paragraph, was a key component of effective paragraphing. The most difficult writing abilities to master, in my experience working with Iranian EFL students, were developing strong thesis statements and topic sentences.

Review Tutorial Procedure

A typical review tutorial began with a brief greeting. I continued by outlining what would happen throughout the session. I then asked the participants to use the Geneva Emotion Wheel to identify and label the emotions they were currently experiencing (see section on GEW). I did the same. I made it clear that larger spikes on the wheel indicated stronger perceptions of an emotion. Once the participants and I had noted our perceived emotions, I started going over the participants' essays together. I requested the participants to read aloud their writings during the joint review tutorial. I stepped in and directed the participant's attention to the issues I had previously noted (either treatable linguistic errors or essay-level issues).

I followed the principles of interactionist DA (Lantolf & Poehner, 2004) to assist the participant. As a result, for each area that was highlighted, I started by providing general assistance and then moved on to provide more specific assistance if the

participant did not succeed in resolving the difficult issue at hand. I remained supportive of the participants and promoted engagement throughout the exchanges. I provided a brief summary of the topics we covered and the next steps at the conclusion of each review tutorial. Then I asked each participant to retake the GEW. After each tutorial, I took the GEW once more. I should point out that until after the review tutorial, neither the participants nor I were aware of one another's GEW responses.

Revision Tutorial Procedure

The revision tutorial began and finished with the participants and the mediator marking their emotional states, just like review tutorials did. But there were some variations. I inquired about the participants' rewriting of their essays after DA exchanges during the revision tutorials. I focused more on the participants' perezhivanie while revising their essays. The participants and I went over topics we covered at review tutorials to assess how they had revised their writings during revision tutorials. In order to provide assistance on still unresolved issues, I adhered to interactionist DA principles.

Despite the fact that asset-based instruction promotes emphasizing strengths over deficiencies, pointing out errors during tutorials did not imply a deficit mindset. For instance, mediator assistance always started with the most basic assistance. Before the mediator immediately corrected an incorrect part, the participants were given several opportunities to make their own adjustments. Additionally, the mediator and participant interactions ultimately aimed to improve each participant's independence.

Data Collection Procedures

Each participant in this study completed a weekly essay, underwent mediation, and used a tool called the Geneva Emotion Wheel (GEW) to express their emotions (see Table 2). For each weekly iteration of the cycle, I gave the participants three days to prepare an essay with four to five paragraphs and a minimum of 250 words after asking them to choose an interesting topic on Day One. I made it clear that every essay had to have an introduction, at least two body paragraphs, and a conclusion.

On Day Five, I reviewed essays on my own to get ready for joint reviews of essays with tutorial participants. This solo review allowed me to know each participant's demands and consult grammar or essay writing resources, if needed. The final and busiest day of the weekly iteration was Day Six, when I held two individualized tutorials with participants—tutorials on review and tutorials on revision. I held review tutorials in the morning and revision tutorials in the evening (please note that I already described the typical review and revision tutorials under Tutorial Sessions earlier). The participants revised their writings during the time lapse between the review and revision tutorials. On Day Six, after review and revision tutorials, I conducted two interviews with the participants. Last but not least, I gave the participants access to a Google sheet at the conclusion of the study and asked them to anonymously share their comments and ideas on their experience. For a breakdown of the weekly data collection iteration, see Table 2. A timeline of significant data collection points for the study is shown in Table 3.

Table 2. Weekly Data Collection Iteration

Weekly iteration	Tasks
Day One	Essay topic assignment
Day One-to-Three	Essay write-up
Day Four	Essay collection
Day Five	Solo essay review by mediator Identifying erroneous parts to focus on
Day Six	Review tutorial (morning) Revision tutorial (evening) GEW administration at the outset and end of each tutorial Interviewing at the end of each tutorial

Table 3. Data Collection Timeline over the Study Period

Study Timeline	Tasks
Week 1	Weekly iteration 1
Week 2	Weekly iteration 2 First WDJ
Week 3	Weekly iteration 3
Week 4	Weekly iteration 4 Second WDJ

Data Collection

This study involved primary and secondary data sources. The participants' answers to the GEW and semi-structured interviews served as the primary sources. Post-study reflections, the participants' first and updated essays, and video recordings of tutorials were used as secondary sources. I first discuss primary sources in this part, followed by secondary sources. The research questions for the study are shown in Table 4, along with the tools and data sources I used to find the answers, as I explain in the following paragraphs.

Table 4. Research Questions and Data Collection Tools

Questions (Q)	Instruments	Data Source
Q#1: How do participants report that their emotions influenced DA interactions?	GEW Semi-structured interviews	Primary data source
Q#2: How does the mediator feel when engaging in DA interactions?	GEW Reflections	Primary & secondary data source
Q#3: How do participants report perceived emotions shape the way they performed during DA sessions?	GEW Semi-structured interviews Anonymous reflections Participants' original and revised essays	

Primary Data Sources

The GEW is a graphical self-report scale of emotions that includes discrete terms for each of the 20 emotion families (Scherer, 2005; Scherer et al., 2013). Examples include happiness and dissatisfaction. These emotion families are arranged in a wheel

shape with the axes being defined by the two major dimensions of emotional experience valence (negative to positive) and control/power (low to high). Different-sized circles are used to symbolize the five proposed degrees of intensity from low (toward the center of the wheel) to high intensity levels (toward the circumference of the wheel).

Geneva Emotion Wheel (GEW)

Using the GEW, I determined the emotions that the participants felt during the tutorials (see Appendix A). At two times during each tutorial, I asked participants to write down the name of an emotion, or emotions, that best characterized their current emotional state: (a) at the start of tutorials after opening greetings, and (b) at the end of tutorials— I noted my own perceived emotions at the beginning and conclusion of each tutorial. Until we finished the lessons, neither the participants nor I were aware of one another's responses.

I was aware that because the GEW is mostly utilized by cognitive-minded psychologists, I ran the risk of leaning toward an approach that had no shared epistemological ground with Vygotsky's holism. Having said that, I used the tool to prompt the participants' reflections on their tutorial experiences. As will be discussed later, the participant replies then served as the basis for the interviews.

I did not define the emotions on the GEW for the participants. The GEW does not define them either. I gave examples for each emotion when discussing the instrument with the participants in a session before data collection. I made sure that those examples were pertinent to the goal of the study. For instance, I used the following to instantiate Fear: "The teacher had zero tolerance for grammar mistakes in class. Students have

always been concerned about making grammar mistakes because of this. Fear is present in this situation."

Semi-Structured Interviews

I used semi-structured interviews as the study's primary data source (see Appendix B). Because they are open-ended and conversational, semi-structured interviews enable in-depth access to respondents' opinions and understandings of a topic (Merriam, 1998). Moreover, researchers using semi-structured format can probe interviewees whenever new ideas are brought up. Probes are additional queries or remarks made in response to an earlier query.

I scheduled two interview sessions after the joint review lesson and after the revision tutorial on each tutorial day. The participants' perceptions of their own emotions during tutorials were key to the main interview questions, which centered on their responses to the GEW. Let's say that a participant's response to the GEW showed that they were "disappointed" with their writing session with the mediator. The first interview question would then read as follows: "You selected Disappointment to best represent your experience of the session today. Could you elaborate on your comment and clarify the specifics of what made you feel let down?" I further raised the subject of fluctuations in the participants' perceived emotions and their causes.

The mediator's observations of the participants during tutorials served as one of the sources for interview questions. The mediator paid attention to the body language of the participants, including their facial expressions and the language they used when speaking with the mediator. Take, for instance, a participant who, in response to the

mediator explaining something, nods his or her head sideways as a signal of rejection. Then, an interview question would be: “While I was discussing X, you were turning your head sideways. May I ask why?”

The participants' mother tongue, Persian, was used during the interviews. Studies show that when stories are presented in the original language in which they occurred, they have a stronger emotional intensity (Javier et al., 1993; Marian & Kaushanskaya, 2004). Furthermore, conducting interviews in Farsi prevented potential communication problems brought on by insufficient English proficiency. When participants are not sufficiently fluent and the researcher speaks the same first language as the participants, Pavlenko (2007) recommends collecting data in the participants’ native language.

To gather high-quality interview data, I adhered to Friedman’s (2012) recommendations. Friedman recommends avoiding the use of yes/no questions in favor of open-ended ones. Additionally, it is important to avoid asking the interviewee questions that (a) direct them toward a certain type of response, (b) are overly complicated and inquire about multiple topics at once, and (c) are difficult for them to understand.

Secondary Data Source

Anonymous Reflections

To anonymously gather the participants’ views, reflections, and reflections about their entire experience, I made a Google document and distributed it to them. I made it clear that their participation was voluntary. The participants were given the chance to communicate ideas that they otherwise would not have expressed in order to prevent any

negative repercussions, such as the worry that they would no longer be able to take part in writing tutorials. Despite my encouragement, none of the participants shared anything other than what had been discussed in the interviews.

Participants' Original and Revised Essays

Participants' initial drafts (those reviewed during review sessions) and revised drafts (those reviewed during revision sessions) were recorded by me. The recordings allowed me to identify how the participants interacted with the revision process and to track the changes they made to their essays by comparing these essays.

Video Recordings

I used Zoom's recording feature to video-record all of the tutorials with the participants on video. My observation notes were supplemented with the video recordings, which made it more straightforward to analyze the participants' verbal and nonverbal behavior. For the purpose of storing these video recordings, I made password-protected files for the participants.

Data Analysis

The way I analyzed my data was consistent with SCT and all of its notions, including perezhivanie, which were described in detail in Chapter II. Thus, data analysis differed from current qualitative research standard coding schemes, including those in L2. The SCT principle that meaning is socially constructed and changes across individuals and their sociocultural contexts is not well reflected by the coding conventions currently in use. In fact, according to Packer (2018), researchers lose a lot of subjective and contextual significance when they condense qualitative content into generalizable, objective categories and themes.

Most analytical approaches to qualitative data tend to focus on two main practices: abstraction and generalization (Packer, 2018). The former separates wholes into distinctive components and removes them from their original usage context in order to find commonalities. Only when they remove and decontextualize commonalities are researchers able to generalize across cases. These researchers, then, view individual cases not as "wholes or unities but as collections of features or properties. It is as though when I look at a chair, I see not a whole object but a collection of legs, surfaces, and colors that just happen to be together" (p. 85). Such content analysis conflicts with SCT principles. SCT justifications aren't really about constitutive parts. Instead, they focus on the whole, how that whole relates to its individual parts, and how those basic parts interact with one another.

This holism is best demonstrated by Vygotsky's emphasis on the perezhivanie concept and the analytical unit. In favor of a method that divides a phenomenon into units, Vygotsky (1986) rejected the analytical approach of breaking a phenomenon down into its components. Unlike elements, units do not lose the characteristics that make up the whole perezhivanie is one example of such a unit that Vygotsky used:

> *An emotional experience [*perezhivanie*] is a unit where, on the one hand, in an indivisible state, the environment is represented,* i.e. that which is being experienced - and emotional experience [perezhivanie] is always related to something which is found outside the person - *and on the other and, what is represented is how I, myself, am experiencing this,* i.e., all the personal characteristics and all the environmental characteristics are represented in an

> emotional experience [perezhivanie]; everything selected from the environment and all the factors which are related to our personality and are selected from the personality, all the features of its character, its constitutional elements, which are related to the event in question. So, in an emotional experience [perezhivanie] we are always dealing with an indivisible unity of personal characteristics and situational characteristics, which are presented in an emotional experience [perezhivanie]; everything selected from the environment and all the factors which are related to our personality and are selected from the personality, all the features of its character, its constitutional elements, which are related to the event in question. (Vygotsky, 1994, p. 342, original italics)

Importantly, Vygotsky (1994) pointed out that perezhivanie considers the attributes and characteristics of the individual that influence one's attitude toward a specific situation. Vygotsky added that not all an individual's constitutional traits are equally and fully responsible for influencing how she responds to a given situation. Given this, it is important to find out which of these constitutional characteristics have played a decisive role in determining the children. More significantly, Vygotsky emphasized that the key to the entire process is the individual's understanding and awareness of a particular event or situation.

With the aforementioned information as the backdrop, I based my data analysis on Vygotsky's (1994) original ideas regarding perezhivanie. Analyzing my data, I focused on understanding how different aspects of a situation—most notably the emotional experience of that situation—influenced one another. In the context of the

current study, a situation was defined as tutorials or segments of a tutorial in which the perezhivanie of the participants affected the operation of other components, such as interactions with the mediator and engagement with the mediator's assistance.

In particular, I used a two-step data analysis procedure: identification and exploration. The identification step focused on identifying the emotion(s) that participants experienced at the beginning and end of a tutorial. To accomplish this, I administered the GEW to both the mediator and the participants at the two timepoints, with the goal of gaining an initial understanding of perceived emotions. After identifying the perceived emotions, I moved on to the exploration phase, where I investigated what caused the mediator and participants to perceive the emotions, they marked on the GEW. For this purpose, I interviewed the participants about their perceived emotions and took notes on why I felt that way at the two timepoints for each tutorial. I focused on the participants' perceptions of why they emotionally experienced a specific situation in a particular way during these interviews. I looked for connections between the various elements of a situation to account for the mediator's and the participants' perezhivanie. In the following section, I will go over data analysis for each research question.

Research Question #1

How do participants report that their emotions influenced DA interactions? I started with the participants' answers to the GEW to respond to the question. Regardless of the response, I questioned participants about how they interpreted the emotion(s) they indicated on the GEW and how that interpretation affected how they interacted with the mediator. I also inquired as to what led them to experience the emotions they stated to

have. One participant might indicate “anger” on the GEW with the “highest intensity,” for example. The follow-up interview question will be to the effect: “How did your feeling of anger influence the way you interacted with the mediator during the session?”

Research Question #2

How does the mediator feel when engaging in DA interactions? I began by answering the question using my own responses to the GEW. In my reflections, I paid close attention to the factors that contributed to my perception of the emotion or emotions that I noted on the GEW.

Research Question #3

To answer the question, I focused on the participants’ responsiveness to mediation during tutorials and their engagement with revising their essays following review tutorials. I began my interview with the participants by asking them about the emotion(s) they indicated on the GEW. The reason(s) for the participants’ perception(s) of an emotion(s) during tutorials and how those perceptions affected their revising process were important interview questions.

Mediation Guides

I adhered to the general rule (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994) of starting with the broadest prompt so that participants could self-correct and moving on to more precise, detailed assistance depending on participants’ responsiveness. If the participants’ self-corrections did not result in improvements, I gave the correct answer and included an explanation for the correct answer. The second chapter's overview of the literature illustrated the popularity of Aljaafreh and Lantolf’s mediation guide among L2 DA

researchers. Due to practical considerations, I did not use the original form of the guide. The guide has 12 levels of mediator assistance and using it for every error that calls for mediation takes time.

Concurrent Data Collection and Analysis

In the current investigation, I simultaneously collected and analyzed data. Data collection and analysis occurring at the same time is frequent in qualitative research. The simultaneous process is an expression of qualitative researchers' advocacy for emerging designs (Yazan, 2015). Concurrent analysis enables the researcher to modify and reformulate her understandings of the data and participants as needed (Merriam, 1998). The dynamic nature of social interactions and developing cognitive capacities make the simultaneity component of qualitative research pertinent to SCT.

Researcher Bias

I used member checks and peer review to reduce any potential effects of my dual function as researcher and mediator on the validity of findings (Merriam, 1998). Regarding member checking, I gave each participant a random selection of interpretations and asked them if they were plausible to them. I used Zoom to conduct the member check. I gave the presented portion sufficient context, verbally described to the participants how I interpreted it, and solicited their opinions. I used the same procedures for peer review. I set up a meeting with an applied linguistics researcher with experience in qualitative research for this reason.

I was prepared for the possibility that the participants wouldn't be open to genuinely discussing their experience with me as a researcher and mediator. To address

this concern, I made it clear to the participants that I valued their sincere opinions and highlighted that their positive and negative emotions were equally important. Furthermore, I reassured them that my dedication to providing high-quality mediation during lessons would not be affected by their sincere thoughts.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the chapter presented the study's methodology in detail. It began with a description of the study's context, went on to include information about DA tutorials, data collection techniques, and tools, and ended with a description of how I analyzed the data and the steps I took to minimize any potential negative effects of my dual role as researcher and mediator on the validity of results. My findings are reported and discussed in the next two chapters.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Introduction

In this chapter, I report the study's findings in response to the three research questions: How do participants report that their perceived emotions influenced DA interactions? How does the mediator feel when engaging in DA interactions? How do participants report perceived emotions shape the way they performed during DA sessions? I provide an overview of the main findings across the three participants for each research question. I use relevant segments from interviews to back up reported findings further.

Please note that I capitalized the first letters of the emotions named by the participants and listed on the Geneva Emotion Wheel (GEW). These emotions are Pleasure, Contentment, Interest, Relief, Admiration, Stress, Hope, Sadness, Happiness, Motivation, Shame, Joy, Satisfaction, Overwhelming, Confidence, Disappointment, Fear, Pride, Anxiety, Gratitude, Confusion, Nervousness, and Passion. As explained in Chapter Three, I displayed the GEW at the beginning and end of every review and revision session to determine which emotion(s) best captured how they felt during these sessions.

Emotions Influencing Dynamic Assessment Interactions: The Case of Participants

To answer the first question, I interviewed participants to find out the emotions they experienced during the review and revision sessions and how these emotions affected their interactions with the mediator. I address this question in two sub-sections. Under the first sub-section, I present the six salient patterns of emotions that I found across the three participants (see Table 5, Table 6, & Table 7). In the second sub-section, I show how the participants' interactions with the mediator were impacted by these perceived emotions. Related to this, I found that the perceived emotions did not prevent the participants and the mediator from interacting effectively during the tutorials even though not all of these emotions were positive. Moreover, the participants reported that their negative emotions had subsided while their positive emotions had increased after review and revision sessions.

Table 5. Emotions Perceived by Amin

Weekly Tutorials		Perceived Emotions	
		Participant(P) 1: Amin	
		Pre-session	Post-session
Week 1	Revision	Pleasure (4[1]), Contentment (4), Admiration (4), Sadness (2)	Pleasure (5), Contentment (5), Admiration (5), Sadness (1)
	Review	Contentment (5), Interest (5), Pleasure (5), Admiration (5)	Interest (5), Contentment (5)
Week 2	Revision	Contentment (5), Fear (2), Anxiety (3), Admiration (5), Gratitude (5)	Relief (5), Calmness (4)
	Review	Interest (5), Contentment (3), Stress (2), Pleasure (4), Admiration (5)	Interest (4), Pleasure (4), Stress (0), Contentment (5), Admiration (5), Pleasure (5)
Week 3	Revision	Contentment (4), Interest (4), Admiration (5)	Motivation (5), Pleasure (5), Disappointment (2)
	Review	Passion (5), Interest (5), Joy (4), Contentment (5), Admiration (5)	Happiness (5), Passion (5), Interest (5)
Week 4	Revision	Admiration (4), Pleasure (4), Contentment (3), Joy (4), Pride (5)	Admiration (5), Pleasure (5), Contentment (4), Joy (5), Pride (5)
	Review	Admiration (4), Pride (4), Pleasure (4)	Admiration (5), Pride (5), Pleasure (5)

[1]Five spikes on the GEW are used to indicate the level of emotional intensity. The perceived intensity of the emotion increases with the size of the spike. Numbers in the table represent spikes.

Table 6. Emotions Perceived by Mohammad

Weekly Tutorials		Perceived Emotions	
		Participant(P) 2: Mohammad	
		Pre-session	Post-session
Week 1	Revision	Interest (4), Pleasure (3)	Relief (5), Admiration (5)
	Review	Interest (5), Pleasure (5), Happiness (5)	Pleasure (5), Interest (5), Happiness (5)
Week 2	Revision	Interest (5), Pleasure (5), Fear (2)	Relief (5), Pride (5)
	Review	Interest (5), Pleasure (5)	Relief (5), Pride (5)
Week 3	Revision	Sadness (2), Interest (3), Shame (1)	Sadness (2), Relief (4)
	Review	Interest (4), Pleasure (4)	Interest (5), Pleasure (5)
Week 4	Revision	Other (Confusion, 2), Interest (4)	Satisfaction (4), Hope (4), Relief (4)
	Review	Sadness (2), Overwhelming (2)	Relief (4)

Table 7. Emotions Perceived by Soraya

Weekly Tutorials		Perceived Emotions	
		Participant(P) 3: Soraya	
		Pre-session	Post-session
Week 1	Revision	Interest (4), Stress (4)	Relief (4), Hope (5), Stress (1)
	Review	Relief (5), Confidence (5)	Disappointment (3)
Week 2	Revision	Fear (4), Pleasure (5)	Relief (5), Pleasure (5)
	Review	Relief (4), Pleasure (4)	Relief (5), Pleasure (5)
Week 3	Revision	Interest (5), Confusion (3)	Relief (4), Shame (4)
	Review	Other (Nervous, 5)	Relief (5), Confidence regained (5)
Week 4	Revision	Interest (4), Fear (3)	Shame (4)
	Review	Fear (3)	Satisfaction (4)

Participants Perceived Varying Degrees of Interest at the Outset of most Review Sessions

A pattern emerged across all participants in that they each entered the tutorials feeling interested, as shown in the following excerpts. Soraya, for instance, expressed her Interest to attend the session at the start of the first review session [March 7] by saying, "I wanted to learn new things and identify my mistakes." According to the interview excerpts, Soraya remained interested throughout the study period:

> I was very excited to meet again; something between Pleasure and Joy [Second pre-review session, March 14]. I guess there are a lot of mistakes in the essay. So, I really enjoy locating and fixing them. Whether and how my writing has changed from earlier essays is something else I'm interested in [Third pre-review interview, March 21]. These session piqued my interest. Before even writing about the topic, I really wanted to read up on the subject and I wanted to see how well I wrote about it [Fourth post review interview, March 28].

As evidenced by these interview excerpts, Soraya had a learning orientation to the DA tutorials. Due to this, Interest was her primary pre-review emotion. She enjoyed learning new language tips and trying out different essay formats, but she also feared making mistakes in any way. Throughout the tutorials, Soraya's continued Interest posed a challenge to the mediator. Soraya was interested in learning, but she also approached language study and writing with a perfectionist and frequently unrealistic attitude. There was a mismatch between her language proficiency and the expectation of writing an error-free essay. I subsequently explain this point.

Mohammad, like Soraya, showed Interest throughout the tutorials. At the beginning of the first review session, he stated that he "was intrigued because [he] was about to learn new things and identify [his] errors" [First pre-review interview, April 7]. Throughout the second and third review sessions, Mohammad kept expressing his interest: "I was especially interested in knowing how well I performed as I wrote this second essay" [Second pre-review interview, April 14] … "I [am] still motivated and interested in learning English and how to write" [Third post-review interview, April 21]. Mohammad was drawn to the DA lessons because they helped him achieve a larger objective–that is, learning English and improving his writing abilities would be crucial for his future academic and professional success.

Amin attended the tutorials with Interest, much like Soraya and Mohammad, with the difference that he expressed Interest in both the review and revision sessions. At the outset of the first review session [April 7], he stated, "Your feedback on the first session [the pilot session preceding the first review session] was very helpful, and it made me eager for today's first review session." At the beginning and end of the third revision session, Amin showed great Interest, as clear from the except:

> I was passionate to revise the essay after we discussed it in the previous session. I read up on the subject, consulted various sources, and worked on the essay's structure. The revision also included some new grammatical structures that I tried out and I'm interested to see how well I used them in this revised essay. [Third post-revision interview, April 21]

Amin had made significant changes to the third essay, as he noted in the above-cited interview excerpt. He had inserted a rebuttal paragraph[2] in the essay in addition to changing the topic sentences and thesis statement. Furthermore, Amin's use of the passive voice also improved. He utilized more passive verbs in his essay after employing them improperly (three times) in the previous essay. Despite the mediator's explicit mediation, he continued to struggle with passive structures in all DA courses because he kept utilizing them in novel situations and sentences.

The three participants all experienced Interest as a major emotion throughout the tutorials, as shown by the aforementioned excerpts. While Soraya and Mohammad exhibited Interest primarily during review sessions, Amin listed Interest as a major emotion experienced during both review and revision tutorials.

Participants Perceived Stress, Anxiety, and Fear at the Start of Review and Revision Sessions

The participants' emotions at the tutorials were not just Interest; they also felt Stress, Anxiety, and Fear at the outset of the review and revision sessions. As for experiencing Stress, Soraya did so to varying degrees at the start of the first review session, as shown below:

> I was anxious about making mistakes and/or failing to grasp the main points covered during the session at the same time. This issue led to some anxiety. Despite this, I didn't feel the stress was excessive because I didn't feel, for

[2] To present a fair and convincing message, writers may need to anticipate, research, and outline some of the common positions (arguments) that dispute their thesis. If the situation (purpose) calls for authors to do this, they will present and then refute these other positions in the rebuttal section of their essay.

> instance, that these sessions were a necessary part of a course, the results of which would be noted in my academic records. I was therefore relieved, which helped me learn more effectively. I felt relieved, which made it easier for me to learn. [First pre-review interview, March 11]

Soraya felt stressed out at the start of the second review session as well, noting: "At the beginning of the session, I was fearful because it had been a while since the first time we met and I had the fear of not remembering everything and of making errors" [Second pre-review interview, March 14]. As I previously said, Soraya was a perfectionist when it came to learning languages, which caused her to worry (and become frustrated, as I will explain later) about her essay and any potential mistakes. At one point in the study, she disclosed that this perfectionist mindset was brought on by prior language instructors who would not upset their pupils with sincere feedback because they were afraid of losing students at their language institute. Soraya's stress for the second review session was understandable because the errors in her first essay were *basic*, which was frustrating for her. These were subject-verb agreement, wrong lexical items and incorrect verb forms, as well as underdeveloped paragraphs and lack of a thesis statement.

Likewise, Amin indicated Stress at the second review and revision sessions, saying, "I'm a little stressed because I'm not sure if my revisions are accurate. However, it's still less than [the stress] I was feeling at the start of the second review session" [Second pre-revision interview, April 14]. The mediator had an extensive discussion with Amin while reviewing the second essay regarding his essay structure. It was not clear, for

instance, how the body paragraphs of his essay connected backed to the thesis of his essay. Compared to Soraya and Mohammad, Amin had more experience in essay writing. He had taken three courses on essay writing in preparation for IELTS[3] (The International English Language Testing System).

In addition to Stress, Soraya and Amin were Anxious in some of the tutorials. Soraya, for example, reported being Anxious at the beginning of the first review session, as shown in the interview excerpt:

> I wanted to learn new things and identify my mistakes, so I was eager to attend the session. That said, I was anxious about making mistakes and/or failing to grasp the main points covered during the session at the same time. This issue led to some anxiety. [First pre-review interview, March 11]

Soraya reported a debilitating level of Anxiety for the third revision session, as she explained in the following excerpt. Soraya erroneously used the possessive apostrophe in the third essay. She confused a possessive apostrophe[4] for a plural S, as was made evident through conversations with the mediator. Soraya was unable to fix the issue even with the mediator's most explicit hint. This dented Soraya's confidence:

> It [Soraya referring to the grammatical mistake of confusing possessive –'S apostrophe for a plural S] made me lose faith in myself. For this reason, I was

[3] For non-native English speakers, the IELTS is an international standardized assessment of English language proficiency. The argumentative writing tasks I employed for my study are comparable to those found on international English proficiency exams like the TOEFL and IELTS. Applicants are asked to agree or disagree with a contentious prompt.

[4] An apostrophe is used in a possessive form, like Esther's family or Janet's cigarettes, and this is the use of the apostrophe which causes most of the trouble. The basic rule is simple enough: a possessive form is spelled with 's at the end.

> meticulously going over various sections of the essay time and again. While revising, for instance, I asked myself what if the revision turned out to be incorrect again? What if there were other uncaught errors in the essay? As a result, I struggled to write because I was unsure of the changes I was making to the essay. [Third post-revision interview, March 21]

The fact that Soraya had incorrectly revised the possessive structure we discussed in the review session confirmed her Anxiety: "I had made the same error in the first draft," she said. Soraya's excessive Anxiety was somewhat unwarranted because, contrary to what she claimed, she had not made numerous errors in the essay.

Similar to Soraya, though on fewer occasions, Amin felt Anxiety. In the start of the second review session, Amin was anxious as he "[had] made a lot of revisions [to the second essay], and [he couldn't] wait to see if they [were] accurate" [Second pre-session interview, April 14]. Although Amin had also made language-related improvements, the majority of these changes had to do with paragraphing, particularly crafting concise and focused topic sentences. Amin stated during the same interview that the Anxiety stemmed from insecurity regarding his ability to construct topic sentences. Although he struggled with topic sentences throughout the entire study, he realized that it would take time and practice to master the ability: As a result, he stated that he "no longer felt anxious about it."

Beside Stress and Anxiety, all three participants reported experiencing Fear at some point during the study. In Mohammad's case, Fear rather than Stress predominated. At the beginning of the second review session, for example, Mohammad felt fearful as he

revealed in the following comment: “Concerning the initially felt fear, I experienced it when you asked if I had written the essay myself. I was a little concerned because I was unsure of what that meant. Was that a compliment or a criticism? I kept speculating” [Second pre-session interview, April 14]. Once contextualized, the interview extract makes sense. In fact, the mediator questioned Mohammad about whether he had written the essay himself at the beginning of the review session. The essay was unlike the first essay Mohammad had written. This second essay was substantially longer than the first one and significantly better in terms of essay organization. Although not all of the paragraphs had been fully developed, each one had a distinct topic sentence. The mediator was in a state of disbelief since the improvement felt so great. As Mohammad correctly noted, the mediator's remark was vague, which made Mohammad fearful.

In contrast to Mohammad, who experienced Fear as a result of the mediator's ambiguous remark, Soraya experienced Fear as a result of “making mistakes again or making new ones” [Fourth pre-review session, March 28], as she stated at the beginning of the fourth review session. Soraya's predicament was more similar to Amin's, who feared about the veracity of his revisions.

The participants perceived Stress, Fear, and Anxiety to different degrees and for different reasons, as is evident from the aforementioned excerpts. While Soraya and Amin both claimed to have felt stressed and anxious, Mohammad did not feel this way despite having moments of Fear similar to those described by Soraya and Amin but for a different reason.

Relief was a Significant Post-Review and Post-Revision Experience for Participants

After the review and revision sessions, all three participants felt relieved. Soraya, for example, made the following comment at the end of the second review session:

> Despite [the initial stress], I didn't feel the stress was excessive because I didn't feel, for instance, that these sessions were a necessary part of a course, the results of which would be noted in my academic records. I was therefore relieved, which helped me learn more effectively. I felt relieved, which made it easier for me to learn. [Second post-review interview, March 14]

Even though Soraya had a learning orientation in DA lessons, as was previously mentioned, she had a low tolerance for making mistakes. As a result, Soraya expressed her relief from the stress she had been under in both of the interview snippets that are given here. This is made more obvious in the second passage, where she mentioned making fewer mistakes than she had during her prior session as a reason to feel relieved:

> After the session, I saw a drop in my errors although this essay was lengthier than the first one. I made fewer errors and the errors we reviewed weren’t too terrible. So, I felt fully relieved and overjoyed. The initial Pleasure also increased at the end of the session to the fullest extent. [Second post-review interview, March 14]

Similar to Soraya's experience, Mohammad described in the following passage how it felt like taking a “sip of cold water” when the mediator did not find mistakes in his essay:

> Every time you read my essay aloud, I keep checking to see if every sentence is perfect. When my sentences are perfect, it’s like taking a sip of cold water—a

> feeling of relief and enjoyment. All in all, I'm positive about it. [First post-review interview, April 14]

Although the second essay was longer than the first and still had errors like verb-subject agreement and passive clauses, its structure, particularly in terms of paragraphing, had been improved. Mohammad continued to make similar remarks following the third review session, saying, "Even though the topic [whether or not boys and girls should be educated separately] was very difficult for me, I feel I performed well and I'm relieved that you were satisfied with it" [Third post-review interview, April 21]. Here, Mohammad alluded to the mediator's praise of his ongoing improvement in essay writing, as evidenced in the second and third essays, despite the fact that he thought the third writing prompt was difficult.

Amin's experience was comparable to Soraya's and Mohammad's in terms of the Relief emotion. The only interview portion where Mohammad expressed relief after being unsure of the changes, he made to the second essay is the following excerpt:

> Because I was unsure if my revisions were accurate, I feel much better than I did at first and am much calmer. I learned a ton of new things, just like in previous sessions, and I can't wait to edit this essay tonight. [Second post-review session, April 14]

Perhaps Amin's orientation to the DA tutorials is what caused him to report Relief less frequently than the other two participants. He did not feel anxious or afraid when he entered the DA tutorials, with the exception of the second review session. Amin clearly

stated that learning should be the main objective of assessment and feedback[5]. Because of this learning orientation, he did not experience Stress and Anxiety as frequently as the other two participants experienced in the first place, to be relieved of afterwards.

As instantiated above, Relief was a strong post-session emotion for all three participants. While two of the participants—Soraya and Mohmmad—explicitly mentioned feeling relieved, Amin described it in a different way.

Participants Felt Pleasure at the Beginning and End of Review and Revision Sessions

According to the comments made by the participants below, the experience of Pleasure emerged as a crucial component of the tutorials. Soraya had increased Pleasure at the conclusion of the second pre-review interview, despite having an "initial fear" of forgetting the material covered in the previous session and of making mistakes, as shown in the following excerpt. The greater Pleasure was anticipated because Soraya had made fewer mistakes in the second essay and could correct some of them with the mediator's help:

> I was very excited to meet again; something between Pleasure and Joy but the initial Fear made me not fully enjoy it. After the session, I saw a drop in my errors although this essay was lengthier than the first one. I made fewer errors and the errors we reviewed weren't too terrible. So, I felt fully relieved and overjoyed.

[5]Amin was an Associate Professor in a large public university in Southern Iran (see the Methodology chapter).

> The initial pleasure also increased at the end of the session to the fullest extent. [Second pre-review interview, March 14]

Similar statements about the emotion of Pleasure were given by Mohammad. The next section is taken from his remarks about his emotions at the beginning of the second review session, when he singled out one of the mediator's supportive remarks regarding a few of the clearly expressed and grammatically sound lines he had used in his essay. In fact, Mohammad was so encouraged by the mediator's positive comment that he decided to modify the essay to add more sentences that were like the ones the mediator praised. He accomplished this in the revised essay:

> The thought of those times when you would remark, 'This is a nice sentence! Great job Mohammad!' was very pleasant. I was therefore inspired to write more sentences similar to those you praised me for in order to become even more inspired. [Second pre-revision interview, April 14]

Unlike Soraya and Mohammad, Amin did not often mention Pleasure in the interviews, but he marked it as a frequently perceived emotion on the GEW instrument during review and revision sessions. For instance, he stated he was highly motivated at the beginning of the second revision session [April 14] because of his growing Pleasure "in anticipation of learning" as a result of the previous three sessions. Amin was given the opportunity to self-correct when the mediator went through each essay with him during those sessions. The mediator's progressive help frequently failed to persuade Amin to correct inaccurate parts. However, Amin acknowledged that the opportunities for self-correction provided to him led to his deep learning.

Gratitude, Admiration, Pride, Contentment, Gratitude, and Satisfaction were Primarily Post-Review, Post-Revision Emotions

The three participants were all satisfied with the tutorials. Although there were instances in which participants expressed Gratitude and Admiration at the start of all sessions, Pride, Contentment, Gratitude, Satisfaction, and Admiration were emotions that were primarily post-review and post-revision experiences. These emotions were associated with the participants' appreciation for the mediator's assistance throughout the sessions as well as them being proud of their own work. Despite there being some pre-session instances, the majority of the participants' expression of these emotions occurred post-session.

The case of Soraya was particularly intriguing with regard to the satisfaction emotion. She felt Satisfaction in the last session with the mediator due to a shift in her error tolerance threshold. As was previously noted, Soraya had minimal tolerance for mistakes in her essays, which frequently resulted in negative emotions like Frustration, Disappointment, and Shame. The Satisfaction emotion was a welcoming change for Soraya since it encouraged her to take risks and, as a result, she tried new language structures in her essay and acknowledged the importance of mistakes in language learning. In fact, the mediator purposefully emphasized the value of language mistakes as key to language learning throughout the DA tutorials with Soraya, as well as the necessity of developing a more accepting attitude toward making mistakes:

> Despite the fact that I still worry about making mistakes, I feel satisfied. As you correctly pointed out [in reference to the mediator's previous remarks], it is

> essentially impossible to learn a new language without making mistakes. I can now take risks without worrying as much about how I will feel if I fail thanks to this idea of openness to errors. [Fourth post-revision interview, March 28]

Mohammad echoed Soraya's comments at the conclusion of the second revision session, feeling proud and satisfied that he had corrected every mistake that had been brought up. Amin also made similar remarks. But Amin, on the other hand, was more outspoken about how much he was satisfied with his own performance, as well as how greatly he valued the mediator's dedication and compassion throughout the sessions. In what follows, Amin described these emotions in the following interview excerpt:

> Your feedback on the first session [the pilot session preceding the first review session] was very helpful, and it made me eager for today's first review session. So, I felt Joy and Contentment. I also appreciate the way you patiently and encouragingly reviewed the essay with me and explained things. [Second post-revision interview, April 14]

The mediator helped Amin during the first session with two instances of subject-verb agreement, four incorrect uses of the passive voice, and essay structure. Amin was particularly happy to learn about passive voice and how it differed from active voice.

As showcased above, the participants expressed Gratitude and appreciation during their interviews for both their own efforts and the mediator's considerate actions throughout the tutorials.

There were Moments When Participants Felt Disappointment and Shame

Not all of the emotions that participants felt during the sessions were positive. They acknowledged having experienced Shame and Disappointment, albeit to varying degrees and for various causes. More negative emotions were shown by Soraya than by the other two participants. On the GEW instrument, Soraya indicated Shame to characterize her post-review emotion for Weeks 1 and 3, the reason being her low tolerance for making errors in general and what she called "basic" errors in particular. Soraya received mediation on language-related issues in her essays throughout these two weeks, including subject-verb agreement, the distinction between "it's" and "its," and possessive apostrophe usage. She considered these errors to be basic errors. Her essay structure was also mediated by the mediator. After the first revision session, she experienced a similar sense of Disappointment, albeit for a different reason. As alluded to in the following excerpt, Soraya felt disappointed because of the mediator's comment at the end of the session. The mediator informed Soraya that her revision had improved to an acceptable level at the conclusion of the revision session, "but there was still room for improvement." This last comment frustrated Soraya, as evidenced in the following interview excerpt:

> I'm disappointed because I had assumed the essay would be perfect, but now I see that, while it is acceptable, it is not flawless. I have no idea what other mistakes or problems there might be in the essay that we did not review, which slightly disappointed me. [First post-revision interview, March 11]

According to Soraya, “basic” grammatical errors and poor essay structure made her feel ashamed, as she stated in the following interview excerpt:

> I felt ashamed because I made such a basic error [Third post-review interview, March 21]. You have repeatedly explained the organization of paragraphs and essays in previous sessions, so I kind of felt ashamed. Despite this, I still have a hard time with it, and I don't think I'll ever be able to get it right [Fourth post-review interview, March 28].

Mohammad also brought up the issue of feeling embarrassed by linguistic mistakes. In his third essay, Mohammad acknowledged feeling ashamed after realizing he had twice used the incorrect proposition:

> I experienced shame as a result of the fundamental error [wrong proposition with the structure be going to] I made and was unable to correct. In general, I get anxious when I make simple errors. But it's likely that I made that error because I had a bad day. [Third post-review session, April 21]

Similar to Soraya and Mohammad, Amin did not hide his Disappointment with poor essay structure at the conclusion of the third review session: “I'm so disappointed that I didn't structure the essay properly. I should have continued using the same format as my previous essay.” Amin had written his previous essays in the standard format (five paragraphs). But in the third session, he employed a format that he had learnt a long time ago. As a result, the essay structure was jumbled up, leading to Disappointment.

To sum up, I used excerpts from interviews in this first section to show the range of emotions the participants acknowledged experiencing throughout the sessions. In what

comes next, I demonstrate how the participants' interactions with the mediator were influenced by the emotions they perceived (see Table 1). To do so, I draw upon excerpts from post-session interviews with the participants.

Participants Reported Perceived Emotions Positively Affected Their Interactions with the Mediator During DA Sessions

One main finding emerged from my analysis of the interview content regarding how the participants' reported emotions affected their interactions with the mediator. All three participants reported that the emotions had a positive impact on their interactions with the mediator, despite the fact that not all perceived emotions were positive, as described earlier. The participants cited the mediator's compassionate and caring behavior as a major reason their interactions with the mediator were not negatively impacted. That is, contrary to what one might expect, the participants reported that their negative emotions arising in the DA tutorials did not interfere with their interactions with the mediator or their commitment to the task at hand. In fact, two of the participants–Mohammad and Amin–consistently indicated on the GEW wheel that their positive emotions grew, and negative emotions diminished (see Table 1). This was not the case with Soraya. She experienced Disappointment and Shame in some of these sessions, despite reporting increased positive emotions in post-review and revision sessions (see Table 1). I have included interview snippets in the following section to illustrate main findings.

Perceived emotions, including negative ones, positively impacted participants' interactions with the mediator. In the following excerpt drawn from the second-post

revision interview with Soraya, she described how the mediator's conduct created a comfortable environment for her to not be afraid of making mistakes, discussing errors whenever she made them, as well as raising questions whenever necessary. Discussing errors was something she had not previously done in her prior language learning experiences. In the excerpt that follows, Soraya described how the mediator handled a mistake[6] [the difference between the adverbial and adjectival forms of adjectives, 'easy' in this case] that she had not corrected in the rewritten essay despite receiving the most direct mediation from the mediator in the review session. The mediator provided more instances to illustrate the grammatical point further. Moreover, at the beginning of the session, Soraya initiated a conversation with the mediator about forming a comparative phrase[7] with the adjective "beautiful":

> I feel more at ease and confident that any errors I make in these essays won't result in punishment because of how you helped me. It encourages me to discuss my errors in an open and fearless manner. I've avoided asking teachers about my mistakes in language classes in the past out of fear that she would correct and reprimand me for missing a crucial point. I didn't experience that during our

[6] Soraya confused the adverbial and adjectival forms of the adjective "easy". In this case, the correct form was "easily" as it modified the sentence's verb. Adverbs have a strong connection with adjectives, and both are usually based on the same word. Adverbs often have the form of an adjective + -ly. Despite that, an adjective is a part of speech that modifies a noun or pronoun. Adjectives usually tell what kind, how many, or which about nouns or pronouns. An adverb is a part of speech that modifies another adverb, a verb, or an adjective.

[7] A comparative adjective is an adjective used to compare two people or things. Comparative adjectives are used to say that one person or thing demonstrates a high degree of a quality or is a better example of a quality than the other. Words like taller, smarter, and slower are examples of comparative adjectives.

> sessions. So, I feel free to ask questions whenever I feel the need. [Second post-revision interview, March 14]

Likewise, Mohammad confirmed Soraya's remarks as he explained how he felt that his interactions with the mediator were positively influenced by the emotions he felt. In the following second-week interview excerpt, Mohammad said that his engagement with the task, including interactions with the mediator, improved because he felt "good" about what he and the mediator were doing at the tutorials. He continued to clarify what he meant by giving an insight into his thought processes as he revised his essay, recalling how the mediator's encouraging words had stuck in his mind (more context for this excerpt can be found above):

> It goes without saying that when I feel good about something, like what we're doing here, I listen more intently and take learning more seriously and engage with it more deeply… Our previous meeting was extremely beneficial. Your positive feedback motivated me. I kept thinking about your encouraging words whenever I came to those parts as I revised the essay. The thought of those times when you would remark, "This is a nice sentence! Great job Mohammad!" was very pleasant. I was therefore inspired to write more sentences similar to those you praised me for in order to become even more inspired. Being able to learn keeps me motivated. I made sure to correct every mistake we discussed during the previous session. [Second pre-review session, April 14]

Amin's comments echoes those of Soraya and Mohammad, expressing that his interactions with the mediator and his engagement with the task were both positively

impacted by the emotions he felt during the tutorials. Amin acknowledged that he did not feel good about not being able to come up with a suitable response to the mediator's prompts. With Amin, the mediator's implicit cues did not always work, and frequently, the mediator had to give Amin the most explicit, detailed explanations possible of the problems at hand. The mediator's intervention, nevertheless, gave Amin "a very positive outlook" because it "serves as mental spark" for him:

> I didn't feel too good about it each time you highlighted a portion from my essays and I was unable to come up with a suitable response. Despite this, I enjoy the process because it challenges me to go beyond what I already know and am capable of. Even though I immediately suspect that there should be a problem whenever you mediate, I still have a very positive outlook on it. For me, it serves as a mental spark that I am about to learn something new. [Second post-review session, April 14]

Negative emotions do not always have negative effects on learners, such as disengagement or a lack of Interest in interacting with sources of knowledge, as was previously mentioned. The interview snippets showed that the negative emotions that resulted from the mediator's mediation did not interfere with the participants' positive engagement with the task and the mediator.

Despite some negative emotions related to making mistakes, the participants, particularly Soraya and Amin, pointed out the mediator's compassionate and supportive behavior as having a significant impact on how favorably they perceived their interactions with the mediator. Soraya revealed the following in relation to this:

> What makes me learn is how passionate I'm about learning something. I believe how the teacher acts is crucial for triggering my interest. I feel comforted and at ease when the teacher corrects my errors in a caring, respectful manner, which is what I see in these sessions. This increases my interest in learning and makes me more efficient. [Second post-session interview, March 14]

Similar to Soraya, Amin expressed Gratitude to the mediator for creating an Anxiety-free space during the tutorials, which in turn affected how he thought about the interactions with the mediator. In the second revision session, Amin and the mediator had an extensive discussion about essay organizations and its components, a discussion that came to Amin as a "revelation" about his fundamental writing abilities. In particular, the mediator found that Amin was completely unfamiliar with the idea of rebuttals[8] and how they could back up one's stand in an argumentative essay. Amin experiencing the highest level of interest is not surprising. He admired the mediator most of all for establishing a "zero-fear, supportive learning space," which set the tone for the entire session.

In conclusion, the first research question looked at how the participants' interactions with the mediator were influenced by their perceived emotions. I answered this question in two parts. I started by classifying the perceived emotions that the participants on the GEW indicated. I then used interview portions to explain how their interactions with the mediator were impacted by these perceived emotions. The results indicated that during these sessions, both positive and negative emotions rose and fell,

[8] In order to present a fair and convincing message, writers may need to anticipate, research, and outline some of the common positions (arguments) that dispute their thesis. If the situation (purpose) calls for authors to do this, they will present and then refute these other positions in the rebuttal section of their essay.

respectively. Furthermore, it was discovered that participants' interactions with the mediator were not hampered by negative emotions.

Emotions Influencing Dynamic Assessment (DA) Interactions: The Case of the Mediator

To answer this question, I marked on the GEW how I felt at the beginning and end of every tutorial for all participants. I also wrote down the reasons for my expressed emotions on the GEW. I perceived three main emotions across all tutorials. These were moderate Joy, Contentment, and Relief. Of these, Joy was the overriding pre-session emotion. Contentment and Relief were the most dominant post-session emotions. In some instances, I also experienced Disappointment and Fear. Two things are important to note before going into more details. To avoid bias, I made a conscious effort to use similar motivating words and expressions throughout the tutorials and for all three participants (see below for an exception to this). Examples of this kind of language are “Great job on this paragraph,” “I appreciate how you have crafted this paragraph,” “This is an amazing topic sentence,” “I can see how you're improving with using [a particular language-related characteristic],” “It’s incredibly succinct and straightforward,” and so forth. I also did my utmost to act in a supportive and motivating manner throughout the sessions. I constantly pushed the participants to try out new language structures, reminded them that mistakes are chances for learning, and encouraged them to ask for clarification, when necessary, among other things. For these reasons, even in the few instances where I experienced Disappointment and Fear, I continued to act in a supportive manner.

Before every session, I was Joyful for two main reasons. The first thing that excited me about every session was that it meant I was making progress with gathering data for my dissertation. I had been working on the proposal for a while and could not wait to get data collection rolling. The pre-session Joy motivated me to go over the participants' essays carefully and eagerly and consult multiple resources so that I could provide clear and concise explanations. However, there were a few times when I felt anxious because I was not sure the participants would comprehend in-depth justifications for some of the errors they made. Reduced relative clauses[9] were a case in point, especially when utilized by Amin, who occasionally used advanced grammar in his essays. In these situations, I provided Amin with online grammatical resources for additional self-study.

The emotions of Relief and Contentment that I felt post-sessions were closely related to the initial Joy emotion. As explained above, throughout the tutorials, one of the minor worries I kept having was whether or not the participants would understand my explanations. As tutorials progressed, I became more relieved and satisfied after every session as a result of the participants' buy-in, which was evident in their complimentary

[9] Reduced relative clauses are shortened versions of relative clauses. They are also known as reduced adjective clauses. Relative clauses usually modify a noun or noun phrase in the sentence as in this example, where the word 'table' is being modified: The table that he bought was for his kitchen. In this reduced clause, 'that' is no longer used: The table he bought was for his kitchen. However, it is not always just a matter of omitting the relative pronoun. There are different reduced relative clause rules depending on the sentence involved. Reduced relative clauses are mainly created through the use of: Present participle phrases, Past participle phrases, Past Participles, Prepositional Phrases, and Adjectives and adjective phrases.

comments about the way I mediated them. For instance, when Amin began to use reduced relative clauses, though to various degrees of success, I was ecstatic.

Beyond the positive emotions mentioned above, there were instances of Disappointment and Fear as well. Especially with Soraya, who came in with a perfectionist attitude toward language study and writing, I felt let down. She even stated repeatedly that she could barely tolerate being corrected and had zero tolerance for errors. This was particularly the case with what she called “basic” grammatical errors, instances of which were subject-verb agreement, possessive S, and “its” vs. “it’s”. For these reasons, I had to soften my mediation–especially when I was assisting her with “basic” mistakes to keep her motivated and engaged. Throughout the data collection period, I continued to live in constant Fear that Soraya would eventually withdraw her participation. But Soraya persevered through the DA tutorials and as was previously indicated, changed her perspective on mistakes.

Aside from Soraya’s unique situation, it was disheartening for me to realize that all three participants had a negative attitude toward making mistakes as a result of their unrealistic conceptions of language learning. I kept reminding them that mistakes are a necessary component of language learning and a great source of learning. I kept using myself as an example of a language learner who had once been in their position and held similar, erroneous views. All three participants expressed that they had changed their opinions about errors by the end of the study.

How Participants Reported Perceived Emotions Influenced Their Performance During DA Sessions

To address the question of how the participants' perceived emotions influenced their performance during the DA tutorials, I examined how participants responded to mediation during tutorials and how they engaged with revising their essays. Overall, the mediator's mediation was met with cooperative and attentive responses from all three participants. They also mentioned being very engaged in the revision process. To further explain these points, I have provided excerpts from interviews in the following section.

The Case of Soraya

Soraya was responsive to the mediator's mediation during review and revision sessions both. Even though not all of her attempts were successful, Soraya always responded to the mediator's prompts. In addition to responsiveness to mediation, Soraya showed deep engagement with the revision process, which helped her develop self-assurance. In the following excerpt drawn from her second post-revision interview, Soraya spoke of taking to heart whatever assistance she received from the mediator:

> The [DA] procedures cause me to carefully consider where in the text I may have made mistakes. When you point out any inaccurate information, I take it to heart. I say this because I used to forget what I had just learned after receiving a correction from my language teacher in class. I remember the grammatical and organizational errors we discussed in earlier sessions and how I was corrected when I made them. It persisted, and now it is significantly better for me

> [compared to my previous experience]. [Second post-revision interview, March 14]

Because of the mistakes – such as possessive -'S and missing to be verb – she had made and her uncertainty about whether her revisions were correct, Soraya admitted at the start of the third revision session that she was "extremely nervous" as she was revising the third essay. Her Anxiety was understandable given the protracted conversation she had with the mediator during the earlier review session regarding a grammatical issue [confusing plural-maker S with possessive -'S] that challenged her. Soraya continued to give her full attention to the revision process despite her Anxiety. She explained how her Anxiety had an impact on how she revised the essay, saying the following:

> It [Soraya referring to the grammatical mistake of confusing possessive -'S apostrophe for a plural S] made me lose faith in myself. For this reason, I was meticulously going over various sections of the essay time and again. While revising, for instance, I asked myself what if the revision turned out to be incorrect again? What if there were other uncaught errors in the essay? As a result, I struggled to write because I was unsure of the changes I was making to the essay. [Third post-revision interview, March 21]

The fact that Soraya had incorrectly revised the possessive structure despite the mediator's explicit mediation in the review session confirmed her Anxiety: "I had made the same error in the first draft," she said. Soraya's excessive Anxiety was somewhat unwarranted because, contrary to what she claimed, she had not made numerous errors in

the essay and had revised the ones reviewed in the previous session correctly, with the exception of the possessive structure. In fact, she noted the following when asked how she felt following the revision session: “Now that the essay wasn't as bad as I anticipated, I'm relieved and can tell that my confidence has returned” [Third post-revision interview, March 21].

Throughout the fourth revision session, Soraya continued to feel uncertain and anxious. She nevertheless found “the courage to write”, as she felt more comfortable with making errors and seeing them as learning opportunities. In response to how the emotions she experienced during the review session affected the way she approached revisions; she said the following:

> Because I learned how to write and improve the essay, I felt safe and at ease. Even so, I keep worrying that I'll make mistakes and that the organization won't be perfect as I write. The uncertainty surrounding the revisions I made was the main cause of the stress. Despite that, I had the courage to write because I felt at ease and knew where I was going. I felt more assured and confident as I began the revision for this last essay. [Fourth pre-revision interview, March 28]

Because Soraya was still having trouble generating concise topic sentences and developing them, the mediator gave her essay a thorough review in the fourth review session, which is alluded to in the above except. Despite her ongoing anxiety, the review helped Soraya feel at peace and gave her “the courage to write.”

This increased self-assurance was reflected in Soraya's revised essay. She had significantly revised the essay we had gone over in the previous session, down to the

level of paragraphs. Soraya shared that she felt “satisfied” after the revision session because she had learned new things about the writing process despite her lingering Fear of making mistakes. It is interesting to note that Soraya eventually developed the ability to accept errors and mistakes as necessary components of language learning, thereby reducing the negative effects they might have had on her ability to write. She disclosed the following:

> Despite the fact that I still worry about making mistakes, I feel satisfied. As you correctly pointed out [in reference to the mediator's previous remarks], it is essentially impossible to learn a new language without making mistakes. I can now take risks without worrying as much about how I will feel if I fail thanks to this idea of openness to errors. [Fourth pre-revision interview, March 28]

The Case of Mohammad

Mohammad, like Soraya, reciprocated the mediator’s mediation by responding to the mediation that was provided to him during the DA tutorials. Related to this, he mentioned enhanced concentration and added effort whenever prompted by the mediator. He explained the points in the following interview episode:

> I focus all of my attention on the area of the essay where you pause to try to determine what went wrong. In that situation, I am aware that there is a problem, so I make an effort to find and fix it. It might be reasonable to say that whenever I'm not given the solution and encouraged to find it on my own first, I learn more efficiently. The approach is generally encouraging, and it piques my Interest and curiosity about how I perform. Every time you read my essay aloud, I keep

> checking to see if every sentence is perfect. When my sentences are perfect, it's like taking a sip of cold water—a feeling of relief and enjoyment. All in all, I'm positive about it. [First post-review interview, April 7]

Mohammad went on to say that the mediation he received had a priming effect on him. He had already mentioned elsewhere that when he felt good about something, he would "listen more intently and take learning more seriously and engage with it more deeply [Second pre-review interview, April 14]." As far as the priming effect is concerned, the mediator's suggestions helped him mentally get ready to learn and set off self-correction, as is evident from his explanation:

> When you pause for a few seconds and wait for me to find the error, it primes my brain for learning and helps whatever we discuss stick in my mind forever. I learn better through self-correction. At school, you don't always know why teachers deduct points and learning is not long-lasting. Another positive aspect of these sessions is that I don't worry about making mistakes, which is very beneficial. [Second pre-review interview, April 14]

When asked how he felt revising essays, Mohammad used the "ladder" metaphor: "I'm glad I realized my mistakes, and as a result, I feel quite accomplished. It is comparable to climbing one rung of a ladder" [First post-revision interview, April 7]. Mohammad's altered perception of the role of mistakes in the language-learning process was perhaps his greatest learning experience, which impacted his ability to revise essays greatly. Mohammad came to accept mistakes as essential to language learning as a result

of his positive emotional experience during the tutorials, as he noted at the final review session:

> I write more easily in this fourth session compared to the first. At least I don't make the same errors [such as passive voice and subject-verb agreement] I did before. Initially [at the start of the treatment] it [the writing and revising process] was a very tedious process because I was very slow and would get stuck in every single sentence. But now I can tell that I have made progress. I wouldn't say that I've made significant progress, but the fact that I'm aware of my flaws and mistakes is important to me and constitutes progress in and of itself. I must make a confession. These classes have left me wondering why our language teachers pay such little attention to the mistakes and weaknesses of their students. Speaking from past experience, I've never had anyone point out my mistakes and thoroughly explain why they were incorrect. I've learned how superficial my previous language learning experiences have been thanks to these sessions. [Fourth pre-review interview, April 28]

Mohammad's concluding remark, in which he expressed his Sadness that our meeting was our last, demonstrates how actively he participated in the entire study:

> It is the last time we meet and I doubt if an opportunity like this would ever come across for me again. For me, it was a brand-new experience. In language schools, all they ask you to do is submit a short essay. Nobody would give your essay such feedback, which would prevent you from learning things thoroughly. They just verify that your assignment is finished, and one might question whether he is

> heading in the right direction. These sessions helped me see many things that I would have previously assumed to be true. [Fourth post-revision interview, April 28]

The Case of Amin

Like the other two participants, Amin responded to the mediator's mediation during the DA tutorials. Despite being a professor at a prestigious private university in southern Iran and having a higher academic standing than the mediator, he engaged in all interactions wholeheartedly. For instance, he tried a wide range of responses to the mediator's implicit and explicit prompts and was passionate about every opportunity to test his essay-writing skills. Amin engaged actively with the revision process, much like Soraya, as a result of his satisfying emotional experience during the sessions. The revisions, for example, he made to every essay reviewed jointly with the mediator extensive both at language and essay levels. In the following excerpt drawn from the first post-revision session, Amin used the "toddler" metaphor to describe his Passion for revising the first essay, associating it with heightened Interest:

> Similar to how a toddler learning to walk would not stop moving around, my increased Interest as a result of new learning encouraged me to apply new knowledge in the revised essay. I had the good sense that I had learned something new, something applicable and beneficial. [First pre-revision interview, April 7]

In addition to actively engaging with the revision process, Amin came to embrace mistakes as a necessary part of language learning, as did Soraya and Mohammad. Owing

to this recognition, Amin felt emboldened to try new grammatical structures moving forward. In relation to these, Amin made the following comment:

> I no longer think mistakes are a bad thing to avoid. Through these sessions, I've learned to accept my flaws and errors and to learn from them. Although my essays are not perfect, the most important thing is that I am learning… It [that errors are natural] inspires me and gives me the confidence to try out new grammatical structure in the future. [Second post revision interview, April 14]

Amin's third revision process, as illustrated in the following interview excerpt, demonstrated this active engagement as well as creative language use:

> I was passionate to revise the essay after we discussed it in the previous session. I read up on the subject, consulted various sources, and worked on the essay's structure. The revision also included some new grammatical structures that I tried out and I'm interested to see how well I used them in this revised essay. [Third pre-revision interview, April 21]

Amin expressed his Happiness at the conclusion of the third revision session "because [he had revised] the essay properly [in terms of structure," Third post-revision interview, April 21]. Considering that the revised essay still had a flawed counterargument paragraph, Amin's overall Satisfaction is significant. Even so, he was unfazed by it and said he needed to revise the flawed paragraph even though the mediator did not ask for any further revision, as shown below: "I must return to the revised essay and correct the problematic paragraph. I'm glad the essay's other sections were

acceptable. I am aware that there is much work to be done, but I believe I am improving [Third post-revision interview, April 21."

Amin's positive emotional experience resulted in what he called creative thinking in addition to the aforementioned points. From this angle, Amin's account is comparable to Mohammad's mental priming because both claimed to have experienced increased mental activity as a result of having to come up with a solution on their own, albeit with the mediator's help. Regarding this, Amin remarked the following:

> Because you're assisting me in improving my thinking, I believe this method of assistance is very beneficial. In fact, you push me to think creatively so that I can recognize the mistake as it happens. I'm not bothered in the least by the fact that you provide assistance in a trickle-down fashion. Instead, I believe that learning is more in-depth and makes me feel good, which inspires me. [Fourth post-revision interview, April 28]

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study's findings showed that emotions permeate learning environments. These emotions permeate learning environments, suggesting that emotions may have significant effects. The three participants experienced a wide range of emotions, and these emotions in turn had various impacts on them. Not all of the emotions they claimed to have felt were positive ones. This, however, did not compromise how they interacted with the mediator in the tutorials. These satisfying emotional encounters led participants to actively participate in the tutorials with the mediator. Additionally, as a result, participants reported higher levels of engagement with

subsequent revision tasks, showed increased mental activity, and had a different perspective on the value of errors in language learning. I discuss the results in the following chapter in the context of the pertinent literature.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the study's key findings in light of the literature. I rely on Vygotsky's original concepts and ideas to discuss my findings, as well as the few works that have taken a perezhivanie[1] perspective on L2 learning and teaching. After reminding the reader of the study's goals and research questions, I discuss the study's key findings. I do not address each research question under separate sections because doing so would lead to repetitious and unnecessary overlaps. I close by deliberating the study's implications for both L2 DA practitioners and researchers.

Study Purpose, Research Questions, and Key Findings

The purpose of this research was to look at how participants' and the mediator's emotions during DA lessons influenced how they interacted with one another. The study also studied how emotions impacted the participants' performance during DA sessions. I primarily relied on interview data gathered to answer these questions.

Findings and Discussion

There were three key findings of the present research. First, I found that emotions permeated the DA sessions and the participants experienced both positive and negative

[1] The plural form is perezhivanie (Blunden, 2016).

emotions under six main patterns. Second, my study showed how the individuals' emotional experiences differed from one another and were sparked by various triggers. Third, although all three participants acknowledged experiencing negative emotions, they all agreed that these emotions had a positive effect on how they engaged with the mediator as well as with revising their essays.

When viewed in the context of the role of emotions in L2 learning, the study's findings are consistent with previous research. Above all, the study's findings support the mainstream recognition in L2 of emotions as significant predictors of learning outcomes (see Imai, 2010). More specifically, the study's findings support Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis, which states that learner attitudes determine how much language input is sought. Meanwhile, the study's findings show that attitudes are collaboratively constructed and subject to change. In fact, recent L2 research on emotions has shifted to what emotions do socially and how they affect language learning through interactions (Richards, 2020). Accordingly, L2 scholars increasingly understand emotions as "a sociocultural experience primarily determined not only by individual characteristics but also by relationships and social contexts. They are not merely something that we 'have' but something that we 'do'" (p. 2).

These results are consistent with Vygotsky's (1994) claim that the impact that any given situation or any aspect of that situation–DA tutorials in this study and the emotions that the participants reported they perceived–will have on individuals is determined by their emotional experiences (i.e., perezhivanija) of that situation. This means that the environment does not unidirectionally and deterministically impact the individual.

Instead, like a prism, the individual actively refracts (i.e., reshapes) the impact of the environment (Veresov, 2019; Vygotsky, 1994) as the individual forms a relation with it. The study's participants all had their own distinct emotional experiences during the DA tutorials, illustrating this agentive, refractive role for the individual. They varied in terms of the emotions they experienced as well as the triggers for those emotions. Take Fear as an example. Soraya experienced Fear because of repeating previous mistakes again or making new ones, as opposed to Mohammad, who felt Fear as a result of the mediator's unclear comment. Amin, on the other hand, feared the veracity of his revisions. Even when the reported emotions, like the perceived Fear I just described, were the same, the intensity was not. For instance, at the beginning of the second review session, Mohammad and Amin both reported experiencing low degrees of Fear (2 out of 5 on the Genova Emotions Wheel), but Soraya felt high degrees of Fear (4 out of 5). Hence, it is the unique emotional experience of the individual that shapes the meaning and implications of a situation. As I explain in the next paragraph, a range of factors go into the process of perezhivanie, causing individuals to work through an experience differently.

The concept of refraction can explain the participants' diverse emotional experiences throughout the DA tutorials as each attempted to regulate their emotional reactions to the mediator's assistance. In fact, Vygotsky contended that the only way to explain the impact of the environment on the individual is to know the relation between the two (Vygotsky, 1994). Vygotsky further argued that one can establish the factors that contribute to the individual's attitude toward a specific situation by considering their

emotional experiences. Some of the factors that may come into play during the refraction process include the person's attitude and orientations, background, and motivations, to name a few. The results of this research provide supporting evidence for the Vygotskyan assertion that "all the personal characteristics and all the environmental characteristics are represented in an emotional experience [perezhivanie]" (p. 342).

One of these factors which played a significant impact on the participants' emotional experiences of the DA tutorials was their orientations toward language learning. Soraya is a case in point to discuss here. While being eager to learn, Soraya nevertheless approached writing assignments and language learning with a perfectionist and frequently unrealistic attitude. As eager as she was, her language skills and the demand for a flawless essay fell short of each other. Because of this, she frequently experienced Frustration and Fear whenever the mediator pointed out an erroneous portion in her essays. Amin and Mohammad, in contrast to Soraya, had learning-oriented and forward-looking attitudes to learning languages, respectively. These positive attitudes prevented the two from becoming as frustrated as Soraya anytime the mediator initiated an interaction with them on a portion of their essays. So, learners' learning orientations and attitudes come into play during DA tutorials and play a critical role in learners' emotional experience.

The Impact of the Mediator's Encouraging Language on Participants' Emotional Experience

This study also demonstrated that the mediator's encouraging language, such as praising, used throughout the DA exchanges had a substantial impact on the learners'

emotional experience. All three participants acknowledged that even negative emotions did not stop them from engaging with the mediator and revising their essays as a result of this component of the mediator's mediation. The Vygotskyan (1994) idea, which holds that an emotional experience is an indivisible unit of all personal and situational characteristics, may help to explain this finding. Each of these characteristics is important as long as it is relevant to the situation at hand. I have turned to this point subsequently.

The mediator's language was one of the crucial characteristics impacting the overall success of DA tutorials as well as the participants' engagement with the revision process. As demonstrated in the interview data, one of the hallmarks of the DA tutorials was the mediator's language, which included using encouraging words whenever the participants tried to respond to the mediator's assistance. In fact, it could be argued that this aspect of the mediator's mediation acted as a buffer against any negative outcomes that might have resulted from the participants' unpleasant emotional experiences during the DA tutorials, such as a lack of interest in the revision process or complete apathy and withdrawal from the study. For instance, Soraya claimed that the safe, stress-free environment created by the mediator inspired her to talk about her errors in a genuine, courageous way. The mediator's words of support, such as "Great job, Mohammad!" were motivating and enjoyable to Mohammad. Amin also praised the mediator for working with him on the essays throughout DA lessons in a patient and encouraging manner. These comments are consistent with those made by the participants in Shrestha and Coffin's (2012) work who frequently mentioned concepts related to "affect" as a critical aspect of their learning and frequently alluded to the mediator's "patience" and

"encouragement" as important attributes of DA. Hence, the mediator's language and encouraging behavior is a crucial aspect of the situational characteristics that form a unity with learners' personalities and qualities, a unity that determines the success of a given intervention.

The finding on the mediator's influence on the participants' emotional experience as well as on the participants' engagement with the revision process is consistent with the previous literature. Research has shown that learners respond to mediation emotionally and caring and supportive environments facilitate learning and risk-taking behavior (Mazzotta & Belcher, 2018), help overcome fears of making errors (Mahn, 1997; Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002), and mitigate against learners' frustration and giving up (Poehner & Swain, 2017). All three participants offered rich thoughts and comments that are consistent with the literature I just reviewed.

The findings of the study seem to counter claims that overlook the role of affective support. Poehner (2008), for example, commented that "providing affective support may have many positive effects for learners, but it does not take a leading role in development the way mediation does when it is attuned to learners' ZPD" (p. 80). The findings confirm that effective support is integral to mediation and can determine the success, or failure for that matter, of mediation. Hence, emotional fine-tuning is just as crucial as any other components of a mediation package because writing in a second language is a task that causes a lot of anxiety (see Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002). Every attempt the participants made to respond to the mediator's mediation was purposefully complimented by the mediator throughout the study. One could argue that in order for

students to handle emotionally taxing learning activities like writing more skillfully, mediation must be combined with encouragement. This assertion is supported by data showing how the mediator's emotional support affects the participants. Since the tutorials made her feel “at ease,” Soraya developed “the courage to write.” Mohammad claimed that the mediator's assistance had a “priming impact” on him, assisting him to mentally prepare for learning and initiate self-correction. Additionally, Mohammad employed two metaphors that amply illustrated his perception of the DA lectures. He compared his emotional experience to taking a pleasant “sip of cold water” whenever his sentences were error-free. He went on to utilize the image of “climbing one rung of a ladder” to describe his sense of accomplishment after learning his mistakes during the DA lessons. Like Amin, Mohammad used the “toddler[2]“ metaphor to describe his passion for revising his essays. Amin also felt emboldened to try new grammatical items as he came to embrace mistakes as a necessary part of language learning, as did Soraya and Mohammad. All these comments demonstrate how attuned a mediator must be to learners to maximize learning.

ZPD as a Relational and Emotional Environment

The study’s findings support the notion that the ZPD is a relational and emotional environment that requires optimal coordination among its many constituent parts. In this study, the participants, and the mediator each had distinct emotional experiences brought

[2] Similar to how a toddler learning to walk would not stop moving around, my increased Interest as a result of new learning encouraged me to apply new knowledge in the revised essay. I had the good sense that I had learned something new, something applicable and beneficial. [First pre-revision interview, April 7]

on by a specific set of factors. Despite these differences, the mediator and the participants were able to work together more effectively as they progressed toward the end of the study. The mediator's sensitivity to the participants' emotional experiences was necessary for mutual coordination. Due to this sensitivity, the participants were able to let down the initial guard and that's where the first cracks in their strict, idealistic understandings of writing as an error-free practice appeared a result, they began to perceive writing in a second language differently and became more willing to take risks when they were writing, an instance of expanded ZPD (Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002). These findings clearly support Mahn and John-Steiner's (2002) call for an expanded understanding of the ZPD through analyzing the role of emotions in ZPD activities. According to the authors, the ZPD is a complex web of interrelated elements which include participants, the participants' experiences of interactions that take place between them, and context. The complementarity that exists between these components, according to the authors, is crucial to the construction of the ZPD; any breach, such as negative/ positive affective disturbances, would lead to a reduction in, or expansion of, the teaching and learning zone. This understanding of the ZPD echoes Vygotsky's claim that we always deal with an indivisible unity of personal traits and situational characteristics in an emotional experience (perezhivanie). Therefore, if a complementary relation between all constitutive components forms, ZPD interactions, such as learner-mediator exchanges in DA lectures, are more likely to be successful. One key, facilitating aspect of this complementarity is the mediator's acts and behaviors such as providing emotional support.

Implications

L2 DA research has advanced greatly since the seminal articles Anton (2009) and Poehner and Lantolf (2004). However, L2 research is just now beginning to investigate how emotions affect the effectiveness of mediation during DA sessions (Mazzotta & Belcher, 2018). This is a long-waited development in L2 DA research because emotions are central to Vygotsky's general psychology theory: "The affective and volitional tendency stands behind thought. Only here do we find the answer to the final 'why' in the analysis of thinking" (Vygotsky, 1934/1987, p. 282). I have outlined the implications of this work for L2 DA researchers and practitioners in the next section.

Implications for Research

Vygotsky did not live long enough to fully expound on perezhivanie. As a result, it is still in its infancy and serves as a "tantalizing notion than a concept with clear meaning and import to those who hope to draw on it" (Smagorinsky, 2011, p. 339). Using perezhivanie as a theoretical perspective and practical tool to analyze DA interactions is thus fraught with uncertainties and reservations, especially for novice researchers. Aside from the difficulties associated with theoretically defining it (see Veresov, 2019), perezhivanie is difficult to operationalize for research purposes such as the current study. The operational definition is difficult to address, particularly in a capitalist society where regimented methodologies are expected and valued. Given the foregoing, the study's findings and implications should be interpreted in light of the paucity of literature on the subject, as well as the inherent difficulties of incorporating perezhivanie into DA.

One area that merits further research is the developmental nature of learners' emotional experiences and how they relate to mediation and its effectiveness. Findings of the study showed that the participants' emotional experiences become more manageable toward the end of the study. L2 DA will benefit from studies that examine this aspect of learners' emotional experience; that is, how interactions between the mediator and the learner(s) help the learners regulate their emotional experience in a positive direction. Regarding this line of research, it will be interesting to examine the interconnections between practice and learners' emotional experiences. Will practice makes learners' emotional experiences more positive automatically? In not, then, researchers need to explore the emotional experiences of various learners to identify the flows and ebbs in their emotional experiences and the underlying reasons for these fluctuations and how they can be connected to the offered mediation.

Future research can also look at how students experience emotions in actual classroom environments. Learners voluntarily took part in the study. The voluntary participation meant poor performance at the DA tutorials did not have real, punitive implications for them. Soraya, for example, mentioned in her first pre-review interview that she did not experience excessive stress because these sessions were not an essential component of a course, the outcomes of which would be recorded in her academic records. One may logically reason that learners feel more authentically when the educational tutorials they attend have real, practical repercussions, like losing points. For instance, it would be intriguing to look at how the same learner might feel emotionally in various scenarios depending on what would be at stake if she performed poorly in DA

tutorials. Such a study would utilize qualitative data collection methods, such as interviews, and have a comparative design to allow for nuances to be identified.

Moreover, future studies can look at whether emotional experiences of learners differ from one language item to another. As the study's findings showed, the participants' emotional experiences varied according to the type of the linguistic item targeted during DA tutorials. For instance, the erroneous use of the articles *a/an* and other basic grammar, including subject-verb agreement, made the participants frustrated. One can assume that once learners believe their linguistic skills are advanced enough to avoid making simple grammatical and lexical mistakes, they are more likely to have unpleasant emotional experiences of making such mistakes. In the same vein, if the given language item is considerably beyond learners' current linguistic capabilities, they might not have as powerful of an emotional experience of it. It should be mentioned that students' judgments of their abilities do not always correspond to their actual capabilities. For this reason, DA encounters can push students to the real limits of their potential, leading to intense emotional experience, as evident in the case of Soraya.

In addition to the linguistic aspect of writing, L2 DA studies can investigate learners' emotional experiences in relation to various aspects of writing. How are different aspects of writing affected by emotions? In the broader second language (L2) corrective feedback field, for example, Conner-Linton and Polio (2014) suggest a 20-point grading scale to assess essays, which subsumes the five aspects of Content, Organization, Vocabulary, Language Use, and Mechanics. One hypothesis is that students may not weigh these factors equally depending on their priorities. This

differential weighing may then moderate students' emotional experiences during mediation sessions with instructors and affects the success of – or failure thereof – the mediation offered. These priorities could be institutional or personal. Some language learners, for example, may concentrate on using a wide variety of lexical items in their writing as a personal goal. So, it is likely that mediation on this aspect of their writing results in a more intense emotional experience. For learners who concentrate on organizing their writing better because that is what will be tested on for a specific purpose, mediation on organization might be the main trigger of emotional experience. Hence, learners' priorities can moderate their emotional experience of the mediation offered to them.

L2 scholars can also study the emotional experiences of DA practitioners while they mediate learners. Researchers can investigate optimal ways and practices those educators can adopt and modify to regulate their emotions when they arise during interactions with students. Practitioners attend DA tutorials with the content knowledge needed to provide mediation when necessary. But real-time emotional experiences—including those of learners—are not readily predictable, which makes it difficult to plan ahead how to tackle these moments. Johnson and Golombek's (2016) *responsive mediation* recognize L2 instructors as whole persons, whose complex interplay of cognition and emotion ought to be recognized. While the difficulties, conflicts, and excitement instructors encounter might serve as growth points (Johnson & Golombek, 2016), the emotional experiences that arise in teaching situations, including DA tutorials, can compromise the quality of instructor mediation if left unchecked. Until further

research is conducted to investigate emotional regulation, instructors must keep in mind that their interactions with students are fraught with emotion even though these emotions may not always be apparent.

Finally, it is imperative to expand the focus of L2 DA by including emotions and studying them from a perezhivanie lens. In their seminal work, Lidz and Gindis (2003) point out that the DA research carried out in Russia since Vygotsky's time has emphasized and elaborated the emotional and motivational components of DA, whereas Western developers of DA continue to focus on the cognitive aspects of it. Reviewing DA studies in Russia, Belopolskaya and Grebennikova (1997, as cited in Lidz & Gindis, 2003), for instance, noted that researchers in these studies differentiated participants based on (1) whether motivation was primarily internal or external, (2) whether the children demonstrated a need for moderate or strong stimulation, and (3) whether the children demonstrated well-developed or underdeveloped self-esteem in the experimental situation. One of the most important findings from the review, according to Lidz and Gindis (2003) was the demonstration that the nature of participants' "emotional anticipation" of the task performance process was a determining factor in task performance. According to these studies, task performance during DA starts with the appearance of emotional anticipation, which may facilitate or hinder the expression of intellectual abilities (Belopolskaya & Lubovsky, 1992, as cited in Lidz & Gindis, 2003).

These and related studies demonstrate that investigating the emotional-cognitive content of learners' mental activity [in collaborative spaces] is helpful in developing diagnostic instruments such as DA that more fully and accurately assess intellectual

abilities and potential, providing more specific information about learning problems (Lidz & Gindis, 2003). Therefore, expanding the scope of DA, including L2 DA, to explore both emotional and cognitive content of the interactions more is imperative. Such an expanded understanding of DA is also necessary as it is more in line with DA as a holistic assessment approach that allows for observing individuals on cognitive, affective, and behavioral levels as well as the interrelation among these levels of functioning (Tzuriel, 2001). By attending to the emotional-cognitive content of interactions, L2 DA scholars can discriminate between those interactions that promote such development and those that do not, assuming that all interactions are not equal.

Collaborative or assisted performance indicates how matured the learner's mental abilities are. The main focus for collaborative interventions is to find evidence for maturing mental abilities (Lidz & Gindis, 2003). That is, to determine the developmental status of the learner. It is by targeting these maturing mental abilities that the mediator can trigger development in the learner, pushing them along their ZPDs. By attending to the emotional-cognitive content of the interactions between the mediator and the learner(s), L2 DA scholars can discriminate between those interactions that promote development and those that do not, assuming that all interactions are not equal. As Vygotsky notes,

> [Thought] is not born of other thoughts. Thought has its origins in the motivating sphere of consciousness, a sphere that includes our inclinations and needs, our interests and impulses, and our affect and motions. The affective and volitional

> tendency stands behind thought. Only here do we find the answer to the final 'why' in the analysis of thinking. (Vygotsky, 1934/1987, p. 282)

Future research can explore the connections between the learner's perezhivanie of collaborative performances and how it impacts the learner's course of development. One relevant line of enquiry, for instance, can focus on identifying interactive situations or aspects of these situations that shape the learner's perezhivanie positively and examine how this facilitates development.

Implications for Practice

Firstly, understanding learners' perezhivaniya is key to creating optimal learning environments during DA tutorials. Emotions, as indicated by the findings, permeate language learning situations, especially those that require feedback on learner output such as DA tutorials. Given the prominence of emotions in these situations, instructors' ability to engage students in the learning process entails an awareness of how learners experience and respond to mediation in the classroom (Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002). One way of attaining this understanding is to set aside time in face-to-face tutorials to talk with learners directly about their emotional experiences and how they affected their performance. Insights gained from these sessions can help instructors to adjust the way they provide feedback to better account for the emotions of their students when they are in tutorials.

Secondly, instructors can profile learners' emotional experiences before, during, and after feedback-giving sessions over an extended period of time–say over the course of a semester–to track changes in emotional experience. Perezhivanie, according to

Vygotsky (1986, 1994), evolves as individuals mature, just like other aspects of development. By creating a profile of their learners' emotional experiences, instructors can track and examine the changes in these experiences over time. Instructors can examine these profiles to find relationships between the areas targeted by feedback and connect them to the emotional experiences experienced by learners. For example, instructors would benefit from knowing how feedback on complex grammatical structures is associated with a specific emotional experience. It is likely that learners experience frustration during face-to-face tutorials because the grammatical structure targeted is beyond their current linguistic abilities. Such insights can assist instructors in deliberately deciding to reinforce or modify the feedback-giving behaviors that cause learners to have pleasant or unpleasant emotional experiences, respectively. Hence, instructors can use the insights they gain from these profiles as a benchmark to judge how well student-specific mediation works and whether there is need for changing mediation accordingly.

Thirdly, instructors need to utilize positive language such as praise when conducting DA tutorials. Previous research has demonstrated that feedback can potentially cause discomfort and result in unfavorable emotions (e.g., Semke, 1984; Truscott, 1996). Considering that the focus of DA tutorials is mostly on problematic areas, DA tutorials can be stressful and discomforting, as reported by the study's participants. Instructors should balance fault-finding and complimenting in order to decrease the potential discomfort and stress involved with receiving punishment. Teachers can be more effective mediators by using encouraging language like words of

affirmation and upbeat remarks. After all, learners think and feel at the same time (Lantolf & Swain, 2019; Prior, 2019) and emotions influence key processes such as attention, concentration, cooperation, and reasoning (Lantolf & Swain, 2019). The use of encouraging language helps influence these processes positively.

Fourthly, DA tutorials are embedded inside the overall learning context rather than being isolated learning opportunities. In order for these tutorials to be successful, teachers must establish a strong rapport with learners as part of a welcoming, loving, and encouraging learning environment. Such an environment is not punitive, fosters risk-taking behavior, and increases active engagement in DA tutorials. The core of DA, the zone of proximal development, has an interrelational aspect to it, as rightly noted by Goldstein (1999, also see Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002): a shared affective space for collaborative interaction among learners participating in a particular activity. The interrelational aspect enables entry into learners' ZPD, according to Goldstein, who goes on to suggest that achieving this interrelational aspect of ZPD is a requirement for teaching or learning strategies to succeed (Goldstein, 1999). This interrelational aspect, however, is not detached from the atmosphere that permeates the entire learning environment. That is, “The relationship between the students and the teacher clearly determines the character of the context for language use and acquisition” (Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002, p. 58). As a result, creating a supportive learning atmosphere helps DA tutorials succeed.

Finally, the emotional experiences of instructors during DA tutorials are just as significant as those of the learners. In assessment situations[3] like DA tutorials, where instructors and students converse in real-time about a specific section of learner output, emotions play a significant role. Instructors, for example, can find it frustrating to observe students failing to recognize and correct a specific language-related error despite receiving the most detailed mediation. These emotional experiences may affect how well teachers cater to students' needs during mediation. One strategy to lessen the negative effects of such circumstances is for teachers to keep a reflective journal monitoring their emotional experiences throughout DA sessions and assess whether or not these affected how they interacted with students. Moreover, to prevent compromising mediation in upcoming tutorials, instructors may find it helpful to do perception checks with learners.

To conclude, I summarized the study's major practical implications for L2 DA practitioners. In addition to outlining implications, I offered helpful advice for teachers on how to make the most of mediation in DA tutorials. Even though I discussed the implications separately, they are interconnected. Creating the best learning environments involves using positive language and developing relationships. All these factors are significantly influenced by the instructors' emotional experiences and their ability to control how those experiences may affect the mediation they provide during DA sessions.

[3] As it integrates assessment and teaching into one integrated process, DA is unquestionably not a solely assessment approach. That is to say, unlike traditional assessment methodologies and procedures, the goal of assessing learner capacities in DA is not to gauge prior learning. DA is forward-looking since it concentrates on capabilities that have not yet completely matured. The goal of DA procedures, in addition to having an evaluation component, is to help learners learn.

Limitations

Because of its primary focus on the effects of perceived emotions on interactions between the participants and the mediator, this study did not investigate the link between participant-mediator interactions and essay outcomes. Emotions permeated the DA tutorials, according to both the mediator and the participants. Excerpts from interviews showed how participants' engagement with revising first drafts was influenced by their emotions. The mediator's ad-hoc and subjective evaluations of essay revisions, for example, indicated increased word counts and enhanced quality of linguistic and non-linguistic–such as paragraphing–areas targeted during the DA tutorials. While the mediator's impressionistic evaluations of revised essays are valid from a DA perspective, well-defined evaluation criteria could have yielded more thorough and systematic conclusions in terms of the five aspects of content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics (see Conner-Linton & Polio, 2014). Last but not least, I acknowledge that the participants might not have felt fully comfortable to confide in me as the mediator exactly how they were feeling and why. Despite these limitations, the present study can be seen as a first step that has enhanced our understanding of the influence of emotions on interactions that transpire between learners and DA practitioners in the context of second language teaching and learning.

Conclusion

To sum up, while cognition is important, emotions are also significant and can disclose just as much about a phenomenon—in our case, the effect of emotions on the relationships of three Persian learners of English essay writing. Unlike the hesitancy in

L2 DA research to consider a leading role of emotions in mediation (e.g., Poehner, 2008), the findings of the study illustrate that it is important to recognize that emotions can catalyze and determine the fate of mediation and its significance for learner development.

APPENDIX A

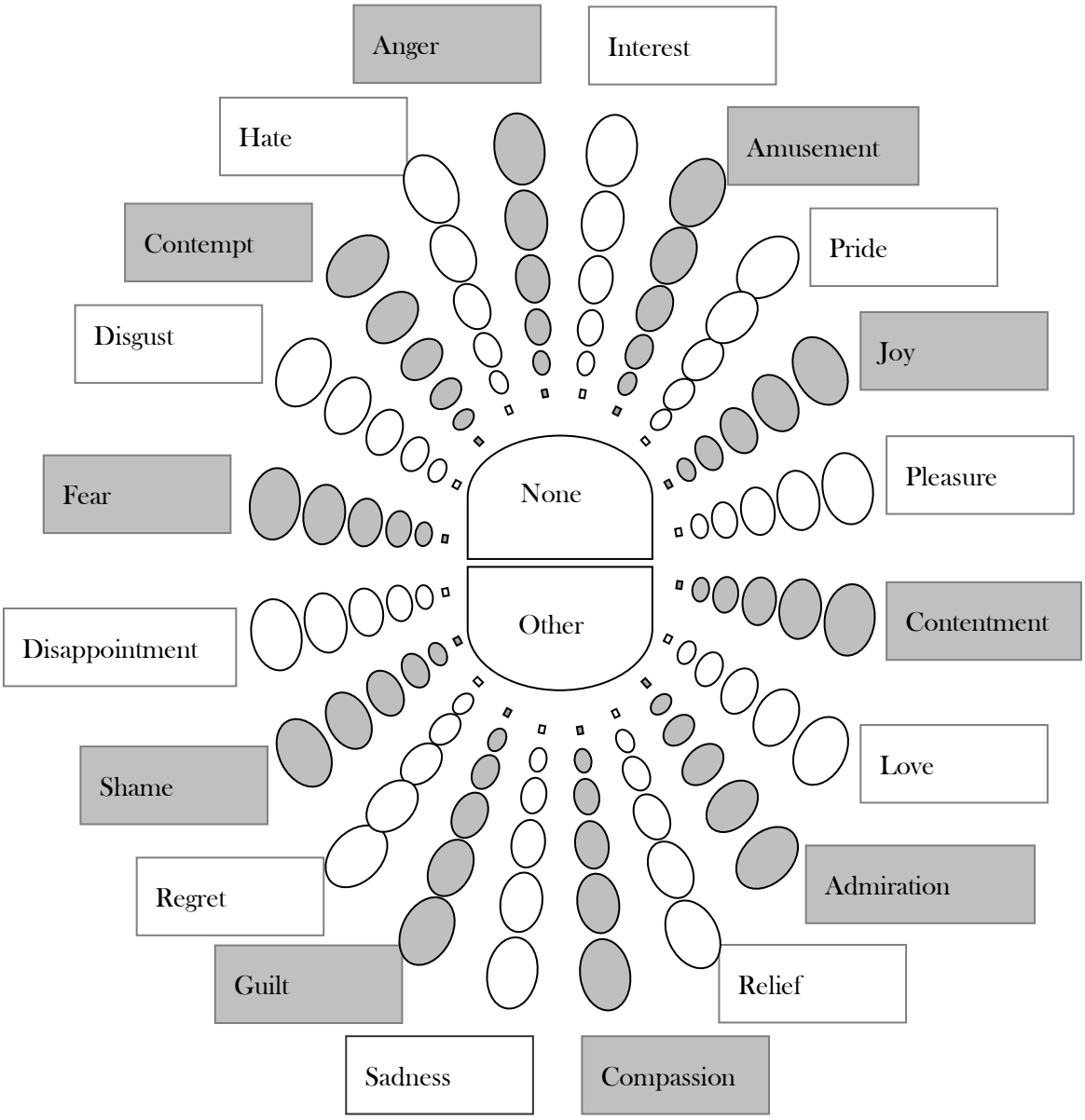
GENEVA EMOTION WHEEL (VERSION 3.0)

This instrument, called the *Geneva Emotion Wheel*, is used to measure as precisely as possible the emotion you experienced during the interactions with the mediator while being at the DA tutorials.

In order to make it easier for you to report the type of emotion you experienced; 20 different emotions are arranged in a circular fashion on the following response sheet. Please note that the words provided often represent a large "emotion family" and may thus refer to a whole range of similar emotions. Thus, the Anger family also covers emotions such as rage, vexation, annoyance, indignation, fury, exasperation, or being cross or mad; the Fear family includes anxiety, worry, apprehensiveness, fright, or panic. Some of the words, such as love, hate, or guilt, can be used to refer to long-term affective states; but in this case checking those labels means that you have had a salient temporary feeling that belongs to the families of Love, Hate, or Guilt.

First identify approximately what the event that produced the emotion meant to you and choose the emotion family that seems to best correspond to the kind of feeling you experienced when this happened, even though the words on the sheet may not capture all facets of your experience. Then determine with which intensity you experienced the respective emotion and check one of the circles in the "spike" corresponding to this emotion family -- the bigger the circle and the closer it is to the rim of the wheel, the stronger your emotional experience would have been. Different intensities often correspond to different members of an emotion family. Thus, irritation can be considered a less intense emotion belonging to the Anger family and anxiety a less intense emotion belonging to the Fear family. For less intense emotions, please check one

of the smaller circles in the spike. If the emotion was very intense, please check the largest circle of the spike.



APPENDIX B

CORE QUESTIONS FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

A) To describe your today session, you chose [here I will mention the name of the emotion or emotions chosen on the GEW] as best reflecting your experience of the session. Can you elaborate on your response and explain what made you to feel disappointed?

B) While working on the [here I will refer to a specific portion of a writing conference], you said [here I will consult my notes and remind the participant of what they said, or the non-verbal behavior they showed]. Can you tell me why you said so?

C) The emotion(s) you felt during the writing session is different from that you indicated after the revision session? May I ask what caused the change?

D) What would you like changed in terms of the way I help you during writing conferences the next time we will meet?

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