内容摘要

本文拟就运用皮亚杰关于情感发展的建构主义理论从宏观上分析情感在外语学习中的作用。

西方哲学中的理性主义传统一直在人们对情感的认识上产生着深远的影响,情感长久以来被置于次于理性的地位。最近几十年心理学领域的新发展逐渐把情感置于一个显著位置。哲学和心理学领域思潮的发展变化都深刻地影响着情感在外语教学研究中地位的发展变化。外语学习中的情感因素也从过去被忽略的状况中解脱出来而受到越来越多的关注。人本主义教学理论的提出把情感和性格作为关注焦点,克拉申(1981)把情感研究的论述揉进自己的五大假说理论,提出情感过滤假说,意义深远。但总的来说,人们对情感在外语学习中作用的研究仍缺乏系统理论性,皮亚杰建构主义的情感发展理论为我们提供了一个新视角。

建构主义这个名词源于这样一个观点:知识是由个体建构的。建构主义认为人总是将个人意义带入自己的认知世界。皮亚杰是认知发展心理学领域的主要人物,他的学说影响最深远的一面是他所强调的学习过程的建构性。建构主义认为,个体一出生便开始积极地从自身经验中建构个人意义,即建立他自己对世界的理解。皮亚杰把心灵的发展看作是已有知识和当前经验不断达到平衡的过程,伴随这一过程的是同化与顺应。智力发展有两个方面:认知发展和情感发展,两者紧密相连不可分割。与认知发展同样的道理,情感发展的过程也是情感图式在不断的同化和顺应中达到平衡的过程。

本文作者试图根据皮亚杰建构主义的情感发展理论勾勒出一个建构主义的理论框架来说明情感在外语学习中的重要地位。这个理论框架包含三个基本要素,即基础、过程以及结果。首先,认知与情感在智力发展中的不可分性构成此框架的基础,因为在外语学习这项智力活动中认知与情感同样是互相影响、互相制约、不可分割的。其次,外语学习的过程同时也是情感建构的过程。学习者的动机、自我概念及控制点都处于不断的建构及重构中。同时学习者对外语、学习本身以及作为外语学习者自己的态度也在逐渐形成。知识的建构伴有情感的建构,情感的建构同时影响着知识的建构。理想的外语学习过程应该使学生经历同时建构积极情感,不断激发学生学习的内在动机,培养良好的自
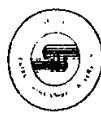
我概念，增强他们的内控感，从整体上培养他们对外语、学习本身以及作为学习者自己的积极态度。再者，每一新阶段的情感同化和顺应将产生更高水平的情感自主，学习者能够更了解自己，更好地进行自我调整，激励自我，增强挫折承受能力。情感自主是情感发展每一阶段的终极产品。合作学习以及建立相互尊重的师生关系都有益于情感自主的发展。这个建构主义理论框架能帮助我们更深入地理解情感的重要性，是我们解决目前存在的厌学情绪、外语学习的工具性或功利性目的以及重知轻情等不良现象的出发点。

建构主义的情感发展理论对外语教学具有重要启示。它是一种全新的视角，它的意义不在于提供一套操作程序，而在于透过这个视角我们能更深刻地理解外语学习的本质，从而更有效地指导教学实践。教师应该把建构积极的情感作为教学目标的一个部分，鼓励情感自主，以使学习者达到"好学"以至"乐学"的境界，最大程度地调动认知与情感双方面的互动，更有效地学习。

皮亚杰建构主义的情感发展理论虽然不够完整，但其中关于认知与情感不可分割性，情感的建构性以及建构过程及阶段的论述为理解外语学习中情感的作用提供了理论依据，同时对当今的外语教学改革具有重大的指导意义。

关键词：　皮亚杰，情感发展理论，建构主义理论框架，情感的作用
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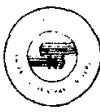
Abstract

The present thesis is an attempt to explore the role of affect in foreign language learning from a constructivist point of view based on Piaget's theory of affective development.

The rationalist tradition in Western philosophy has exerted profound influence upon people's understanding of affect, which has long been accorded a subsidiary role. Recent developments in psychology have raised affect to a prominent position. Changes of philosophical and psychological thoughts have resulted in changes of the position of affect in foreign language teaching and learning research. Affective factors in foreign language learning are receiving more and more attention nowadays rather than being ignored as it was in the past. The humanistic theory has assigned a central role to emotion and personality and Krashen (1981) has put forward the Affective-Filter Hypothesis, both of which are very meaningful for a sound understanding of affect in foreign language learning. However, research made to explore the role of affect in this field still lacks systematicity. Piaget's constructivist theory provides us with a new perspective on it.

The label "constructivism" comes from the idea that knowledge is constructed by individuals. Constructivism holds that individuals bring to their cognition personal meanings. Piaget was the leading figure in cognitive-developmental psychology and the most influential aspect of his theory has been his emphasis on the constructive nature of learning. Individuals are actively involved right from birth in constructing personal meaning, that is, their own personal understanding, from their experiences. Piaget views intellectual development as a continuous equilibration of prior knowledge and present knowledge through the processes of assimilation and accommodation. Intellectual development includes two aspects: the cognitive and the affective, the two of which are two sides of the same coin and therefore inseparable. Affect develops in the same sense cognition develops and affective schemata are constructed and reconstructed to establish equilibrium through affective assimilation and accommodation.

Based on Piaget's constructivist theory of affective development, the present author outlines a constructivist theoretical framework to account for the important role of affect in foreign language learning, including three basic elements, i.e. the foundation, the process and the product. First, the inseparability of cognition and affect forms the foundation of the framework since foreign language learning as an intellectual activity involves both cognition and affect. Second, the learning process is also a process of affective construction, in which learners' motivation, self-concept and locus of control are under constant construction and reconstruction and their attitudes towards the foreign language, the learning itself and themselves as language learners are also gradually shaped. Cognitive construction is accompanied and influenced by affective construction. An ideal foreign language learning process should make learners experience and at the same time construct positive affect, stimulating their internal motivation, fostering their proper self-concept and strengthening their sense of personal control over things and on the whole developing positive attitudes towards the language, the learning and themselves as learners. Third, each new step of affective assimilation and accommodation will result in a higher level of affective autonomy through which learners can better understand themselves, regulate their affect, encourage themselves and face setbacks. Affective autonomy is always the end product. Cooperative learning and the establishment of mutual respect relations between teachers and learners are both conducive to development of affective self-regulation. Within this constructivist framework, a better understanding of the role of affect can be promoted, which is the starting point for the improvement of the present learning-weariness, instrumental and utilitarian purposes in foreign language learning and the imbalance between ignorance of affect and stress on cognition.

The constructivist theory of affective development bears important implications for foreign language teaching. Though it does not provide any set of operational procedures ready for teachers to follow, it is a new perspective on which profound insights into foreign language learning are available and guiding principles for foreign language teaching practice are resulted. Foreign language teaching should embrace affective goals as part of its teaching goals, aiming to

develop affective autonomy so that learners can be fond of learning and eventually enjoy learning. In this way, the interaction of cognition and affect is most utilized for effective learning.

Though Piaget's theory of affective development is incomplete, it provides the ideas of the inseparability of cognition and affect, of the constructive nature of affect and of the process and stages of affective construction, all of which offer a theoretical basis for understanding affect in foreign language learning and a guidance for the foreign language teaching reform.

Key Words: constructivist theoretical framework   Piaget   theory of affective development   role of affect   foreign language learning

Acknowledgements

My sincerest gratitude first of all goes to my supervisor, Professor Shu Baimei, to whom I am greatly indebted for her critical acumen, constant encouragement and patient support throughout the whole process of the writing and modifying of the present thesis. Despite her full engagement in the teaching and research work, Professor Shu has managed several careful readings of the thesis and made illuminating comments and revisions on it, without which the present thesis would not have been what it appears now. I am also most grateful to all the other teachers in the English Department whose excellent lectures and profound insights have bestowed upon me the essence of their knowledge and whose indefatigable pursuit of academic achievement has exerted an uplifting influence upon me in the past seven years. I also owe my thanks to all my friends, classmates and parents who have kindly assisted me all along the way.
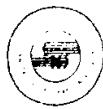
Introduction

Though with a short history, foreign language learning (FLL) research has emerged and flourished during the past few decades since the paradigm shift in education from the "transmission" model to the "communication" model, from teacher-centeredness to learner-centeredness. As an independent discipline, FLL has its own scope of research, searching for answers to questions related to both the learning process and the learner. Of particular importance here is the study of individual learner differences. A range of factors have been identified by researchers as influencing FLL, such as language aptitude, L1 transfer, cognitive styles, affective factors, learning strategies, to name but a few. However, researchers disagree on the main factors that influence FLL and also the way in which these factors are classified. For example, in terms of affective factors, discrepancy is obvious from the table provided by Ellis (1994:472) with factors listed as influencing individual learner differences in language learning in three surveys. Altman (1980) and Larsen-Freeman & Long (1991) do not name affect or affective factors, with the latter claiming in clear words that non-cognitive factors should be accounted in terms of socio-psychological factors and personality factors instead of affect. Though Skehan (1989) lists cognitive and affective factors, they are not clearly defined or contrasted.

Even with the discrepancy, today few would deny the importance of affect in FLL though the recognition of it has not come easy. The pendulum of affect or emotion has swung back and forth in the long history of western philosophy. The ignorance of affect can be traced back to the western tradition of rationalism and has been manifest in the later two major schools of psychology, behaviorism and cognitive psychology with respective focuses on human behavior and cognition, which can mainly account for the emergence of audiolingualism and cognitive approach in language teaching. On the other hand, the stress of affect is largely due to developments in psychology, which have attached more and more importance to the study of affect or emotion. The major psychological schools which assign affect or emotion a central role in human growth and development are psychoanalysis,

humanistic psychology and emotional intelligence. They have led people to probe into their inner beings to find answers to the deepest questions. Education and subsequently foreign language teaching (FLT) have legitimized affect as a focus of attention.

The validity of affect in FLL can be accounted for by the expectation of "educating the whole person" within the broader scope of education and by the affective component inherent in the language learning activity itself. Humanistic techniques and Stephen Krashen's Affective-Filter Hypothesis have attached great importance to affective factors involved in FLL. A definition of affect is proposed by the present author based on a synthesis of several other definitions: affect implies a wide range of concepts and phenomena including feelings, emotions, moods, dispositions, tendencies, certain drives and instincts. Considering the present situation of study in this particular area, the thesis points out a lack of coherent theoretical account for the study of affect in FLL and suggests a constructivist approach to it, mainly referring to Jean Piaget's theory of intellectual development, to be exact, his theory of affective development.

The most extensive discussion of affective development can be found in Piaget's book, *Intelligence and Affectivity: their relationship during child development* (1981). In the book, Piaget takes a basically dialectic approach to intellectual development, viewing it as "having two components, one is cognitive and the other is affective" (Wadsworth, 1996:30). In Piaget's view, there are remarkable parallels between the cognitive and affective development. First affect develops in the same sense that cognition develops. Concerning the relation between cognitive and affective development, Piaget suggests that cognition and affect are actually "two sides of the same coin" and that there is "constant interaction between affectivity and intelligence"(Piaget, 1981:25). The inseparability of intelligence and affectivity means that affectivity speeds up or slows down intellectual (cognitive) functioning without modifying the structures of intelligence (cognitive schemata). Affectivity itself develops in the same sense that cognition develops. Affective schemata are constructed and reconstructed through assimilation and accommodation to establish affective equilibrium. Stages of

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affective development are illustrated in turn. During sensorimotor stage, three affective developments are noteworthy. The first is that feelings begin to play a role in determining means used to achieve goals as well as in selecting goals. The second is that feelings of "success" and "failure" are developed. Children are attracted to activities at which they are successful. The third is that children begin to invest affectivity in others and initial interpersonal relationships begin to form. During preoperational development, feelings come to be represented and recalled owing to representation and language development. Besides reciprocity of attitudes and values between the young child and others emergesas the basis for arising of the first fully social feelings. In concrete operational stage, cooperation among equals becomes a real possibility for children as social relations become more important for their intellectual and affective development. Another major developmental advance in affectivity in this stage is the emergence of autonomous feelings and their eventual products, mutual relations with adults. The concrete operational stage is characteristic of the necessary cooperative social relations with adults (parents and teachers) and peers where children are respected and treated as equals. Affective development during the stage of formal operations is characterized by two major factors: the development of idealistic feelings and the continued formation of the personality.

Constructivism has important implications for understanding FLL. Broadly speaking, Piaget has been most illuminating for his "emphasis upon the *constructive nature of the learning process*" (William and Burden, 2000:21). Besides, "the main underlying assumption of constructivism is that individuals are actively involved right from birth in constructing *personal meaning*, that is their own personal understanding, from their experiences."(Ibid) To be specific, Piaget's theory of affective development provides a coherent theoretical base for systematic study of the role of affect in FLL.

The framework for understanding the role of affect in FLL proposed in this thesis has the inseparability of cognition and affect as the foundation, construction of affect as the process and affective autonomy as the product. The inseparability of cognition and affect in intellectual development indicates that FLL, as an

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intellectual activity, contains processes of construction and reconstruction of both cognition and affect. Learners begin to learn a FL with certain feelings, reconstructing them in the learning process and ending with certain positive or negative feelings toward the FL and the learning itself. So care should be taken to construct positive affect in learners. An ideal language learner has an appropriate self-concept and a proper locus of control. Motivation in a constructivist view is disequilibrium in essence. Interests, feelings of success and cooperation all can motivate learners since they create disequilibrium. Affective autonomy depends on cooperation with both adults and peers. In FLL, cooperative learning is conducive to affective autonomy. Besides, establishment of mutual respect relations between teachers and learners is also crucial for affective self-regulation.

Implications of Piaget's constructivist theory of affective development for FLT are self-evident after discussing those for FLL. Affective goals need be set up for FL learners for healthy affective development along with FLL; disequilibrium need be created by locating sources of interests, providing opportunities of success and promoting cooperative learning among learners; affective autonomy need be encouraged for learners to find their own paths for effective learning and development based on optimal interaction of cognition and affect.

To sum up, Piaget's theory of affective development provides a basically coherent theoretical framework within which a constructivist perspective can be taken to approach affect in FLL. More empirical work needs to be done to test its validity.

The present thesis includes five chapters. Chapter one traces the philosophical and psychological causes for ignorance and stress of affect, defines it in the field of FLL and points out a lack of theoretical systematicity. Chapter two is a detailed presentation of Piaget's theory of intellectual, in particular affective development. Chapter three outlines a constructivist framework for a relatively systematic understanding of the role of affect in FLL. Chapter four is devoted to discussing implications of Piaget's theory of affective development for FLT. The conclusion part stresses that the construction of cognition and that of positive affect is a unity in FLL.
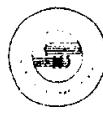
Chapter One The Changing Position of Affect

1.1 Ignorance of affect

1.1.1 Rationalist tradition

Rationalism is the "position that reason has precedence over other ways of acquiring knowledge, or more strongly, that it is the unique path to knowledge." (Audi, 1996:673) The ignorance of affect can find its root in the rationalist tradition in western philosophy. Thinking and feeling had been viewed as polar oppositions---reason on the one hand, and emotion on the other. Compared with logical thinking, affect or emotion had long been considered chaotic, unstable, hard to grasp or explain, immature and not traditionally seen as assisting rational thinking. The tradition of rationalism can be traced back to the ancient Greek and Roman thinkers, like Socrates and Plato, seeking to uncover knowledge and truth. Adopting a rationalist approach, Socrates sought knowledge everywhere---in the streets, the marketplace and the countryside, asking people: What is truth? What is justice? By carefully examining the answers and pointing out logical flaws and inadequate reasoning, he expected that his logical rigorous approach would produce true answers to those questions. Plato contended that sensory information was unreliable and there was a distinction between sensations from our senses and what he called "forms", which were revealed to us through rational thought. In his view, sensations were unstable and were nothing but imperfect representations of reality not to be trusted, while "forms" were real and permanent and truth could only be known through reason and logic.

Psychology as an independent discipline, the "science of the mind", grew out of philosophy and gradually adopted the empirical methods of the natural science. Though psychology has only a short history of about 120 years, it has had great impact on other disciplines as it develops over the years. Of particular concern here is its influence on education, which serves mainly as the thread of discussion for the following part.

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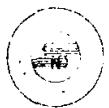
1.1.2 Behaviorism

In the early twentieth century, J. B. Watson advocated that psychology abandon all concern with the mind and study only behavior. As the founder of behaviorism, he set as its goals the observation, prediction, and control of behavior in humans and other animals. The thoughts and feelings of humans were considered to be inaccessible to scientific investigation. Watson saw behavior as a series of responses to stimuli and supposed that all human behavior could be explained in this way.

B. F. Skinner, founder of modern behaviorism and successor of Watson, introduced some new notions among which is reinforcement. In his view, if a behavior is reinforced (rewarded or punished) then the possibility of that behavior occurring for a second time will be increased or decreased. Though there exist some differences, Watson's and Skinner's theories share the definition of psychology as the science of behavior. The implications of behaviorism for education are that learning is a habit-formation process with proper reinforcement by the teacher and that the teacher should provide explicit instructions, etc. The audiolingual approach to language teaching was taken up directly under the strong influence of the behaviorist theory. Learners are passive and directed to respond mechanically to stimuli. Good learning means formation of a set of good habits. No attention is paid to what is going inside the learner. The pattern drilling, dialogue memorization and repetition are clear indications of behaviorism's ignorance of the affective factors involved in learning.

1.1.3 Cognitive psychology

Though behaviorism continues to have a profound influence upon contemporary psychology and education, it is also clear that today cognitive psychology is one of the most dynamic and interesting areas of psychology.

As the "science of mental life", cognitive psychology studies the way in which the human mind thinks and learns. Cognitive psychology has three essential characteristics that distinguish it from behaviorism. First, it emphasizes the study of knowledge, rather than behavior. It is concerned with finding scientific means for
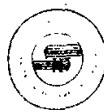
studying the mental processes involved in the acquisition and application of knowledge. For cognitive psychologists, behavior is evidence studied and the goal is an understanding of the mind. Second, it emphasizes mental structure or organization, which is most apparent in the theory of Jean Piaget. Piaget has argued that all living creatures are born with a tendency to organize experience, which provides an impetus for cognitive development. Third, cognitive psychology views the individual as being active, constructive, and planful, rather than the passive recipient of environmental stimulation.

Cognitive psychology has important implications for language teaching methodology. The cognitive theory of language teaching, based on cognitive psychology and transformational grammar, emphasizes the conscious acquisition of language as a meaningful system. Learners are active participants of the learning process, using a variety of cognitive strategies to acquire the language.

Though the cognitive approach to FLL has made great contributions to the understanding of the cognitive process inside the human mind and therefore has great significance to language teachers, like behaviorism, it has paid little attention to affect, which is a rather one-sided view.

To sum up, the traditional focus on "man as a rational being" in philosophy, the influential behaviorist view of learning as a stimulus-response process, and the cognitive view of learning as the workings of internal cognitive mechanisms are not only manifestations of ignorance of affect or emotion but may be part of the reason that can account for the ignorance in FLL research.

1.2 Stress of affect

1.2.1. Psychoanalysis

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), Austrian neurologist and psychologist, the founder of psychoanalysis, develops a theory of the mind that has come to dominate modern thought. Freud's deep division of the mind between unconscious and conscious and between id, ego and superego has helped to make sense of familiar forms of irrationality such as self-deception, ambivalence and weakness of the will.
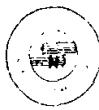
In his view, civilization gets the energy for the achievements of art and science by sublimation of instinctual drives, but the costs to civilization in frustration, unhappiness, and neurosis can be too high. This psychoanalytic interpretation of human nature and human character has provided us with an entirely new perspective on the unconscious human mind, which establishes Freud as a pioneer rebel against traditional psychology and rationalism. Freud's psychoanalysis is an important revolution, which has exerted profound influence upon human thought and self-knowledge. Rationality is no longer considered center of the self or the world and much attention has been drawn to the unconscious, the "irrational " side of human mind.

1.2.2. Humanistic psychology

Though Carl Rodgers' humanistic psychology differs from Freud's psychoanalysis in significant ways, both share a common concern about affect or emotion in contrast with Skinner's behaviorism. To be more exact, Rodgers' humanistic psychology has more of an affective focus than a cognitive one (Brown, 1987:70). His emphasis on self-actualization and "fully functioning person" can well exemplify the affective focus.

Like Abraham Maslow, Rodgers sees human beings as having a natural tendency towards actualization, including the growth and fulfillment of basic potentialities. According to Rodgers, if we are not forced into socially contracted molds, but rather are accepted for what we are, we will live in ways that enhance both ourselves and society. Humans basically need and want both personal fulfillment and close, intimate relationship with others.

The concept of the "fully functioning person "is an ideal, representing the ultimate actualization of the human organism. To function fully is "to function in a total organismic way, integrated and unified; it is not intellectual, self-conscious functioning." (Nye, 1986:115) Rodgers believes that conscious and rational thoughts, on its own and out of touch with the totality of one's inner experiencing, is not an effective means of arriving at life's decisions. He points out at various times that "man is wiser than his intellect". This is not to degrade human ability to

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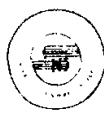
reason but rather to indicate that humans function optimally when they operate as total, unified organisms—open and responsive to all their experiencing—rather than as solely cognitive, self-consciously rational beings.

In terms of education, Rodgers advocates that teachers be "facilitators" of learning, providing an atmosphere of freedom and support for individual development; they should be genuine, accepting and emphatic. Rodgers also stresses that learning should involve feelings as well as an idea; when students respond emotionally as well as cognitively they learn most effectively.

1.2.3. Emotional intelligence

The term "emotional intelligence" was coined by Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer in 1990 as a challenge to the belief that intelligence is not based on processing emotion-laden information. Traditionally, intelligence referred to the ability to acquire and retain knowledge, to "combine and separate" concepts, to judge and to reason, and to engage in abstract thought, a characterization of how well the cognitive sphere operates as opposing to the affective sphere of the mind. The appearance of emotional intelligence is a great breakthrough in human understanding of intelligence and emotion, the two of which have been viewed as opposite. A slightly abbreviated version of the definition of emotional intelligence helps make the significant change apparent: "Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth." (Mayer and Salovey, 1997:5) This definition combines the ideas that emotion makes thinking more intelligent and that one thinks intelligently about emotions. Both connect intelligence and emotion.

Being a fairly new step in the study of human mind, emotional intelligence has gained popularity with both theorists and practitioners. The applications are at home, in school and beyond. Emotional intelligence is to be acquired through good parent-child relation at home, story-reading lessons at school or programmes involving direct teaching.

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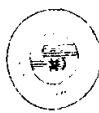
In brief, Freud's psychoanalysis, Rodgers' humanistic psychology and Salovey and Mayer's emotional intelligence have all saved affect or emotion from the neglected and the marginal to the stressed and the central. Except Freud, the latter two adopt a less extreme and even dialectic approach, viewing cognition and affect or emotion as interacting with each other, on which point Piaget would agree. Piaget's constructivist view of intellectual development will be expounded later in detail.

1.3 Defining affect in FLL

1.3.1. Validity of affect in FLL research

The developments in psychology and educational theory have helped give credit for the "affective domain" in education. People have come to recognize that at the heart of all thought and meaning and action is emotion. During the inter-war years, educators began to stress the "education of the emotions". Education was to be more than the training of the intellect or the learning of specific skills. It should be education of "the whole person".

The past few decades have witnessed an ever-increasing concern with affect or emotion in education. As Arnold and Brown (1999) points out, "Although psychologists have traditionally considered emotion to be the Cinderella of mental functions, today a reversal of this trend is evident." Oatley and Jenkins (1996:122) state that "emotions are not extras. They are the very center of human mental life...". The cognitive side and affective side of learning are inseparable and therefore should be "reunited" to construct a firmer foundation for the learning process.

With regard to the validity of affect in FLL, a better starting point would be within the broader scope of education. As van Lier (1994:341) clearly states, "I would like to see the field of SLA anchored in education." The first reason for focusing attention on affect in FLL is, as is mentioned earlier, that FLL as an important part of school curriculum should live up to the expectation of "educating the whole person". Ehrman (1998:166) states that "it has become increasingly
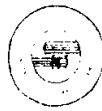
evident that the purpose of classroom learning is not only to convey content information". In this context, Stevick (1998:166) speaks of bringing to language teaching a concern for "deeper aims", for "pursuing new 'life goals'", not just for reaching certain "language goals". Language teachers can also educate learners to live more satisfying lives and to be responsible members of society. The second reason for a focus on affect lies within the activity of FLL itself: it has an affective component. For one thing, learners approach FLL with certain positive or negative affective predispositions. For another, the experience of learning is likely to influence learners' feelings and involvement and leave them with certain attitudes, either negative or positive. Attention to these affective aspects can lead to more effective language learning.

To sum up, using Arnold and Brown's words (1999:3): "The relationship between affect and language teaching... is a bi-directional one. Attention to affect can improve language teaching and learning, but the language classroom can, in turn, contribute in a very significant way to educating learners affectively."

1.3.2. Overview of the study of affect in FLL

As is pointed out by Stern (1992:85), language teaching theorists have been rather slow to recognize the important part that affect plays in language teaching. It was not until the early 1970's did humanistic language teaching theory begin to focus its attention on affect and personality in language teaching, as part of the general reaction against audiolingualism. Moskowitz defines humanistic techniques as those that "blend what the student feels, thinks and knows with what he is learning in the TL. Rather than self-denial being the acceptable way of life, self-actualization and self-esteem are the ideals the exercises pursue. [The techniques] help build rapport, cohesiveness, and caring that far transcend what is already there... help students to be themselves, to accept themselves, and be proud of themselves... help foster a climate of caring and sharing in the FL class."(Moskowitz, 1978:2). He views the needs of being listened to, accepted, understood, cared about and having positive and rewarding relationships as deep-ingrained universal human needs. If these needs are sufficiently met, learning
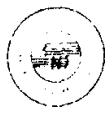
becomes highly rewarding and enjoyable as well. We can find evidence in a series of studies conducted by Moskowitz implementing humanistic activities. (Moskowitz, 1999:179).

Many of the major developments in FLT and FLL during the last three decades have been characterized by considering affect as very central to FLL, for example, suggestopedia, the silent way, community language teaching, Total Physical Response etc. Community language teaching theorists view the learner as an organism, with each new role growing developmentally out of the one preceding. They see the role changes as outcomes of affective crises. Learning is a " 'whole person' process, and the learner... is involved not just in the accomplishment of cognitive (language teaching) tasks but in the solution of affective conflicts and 'the respect for the enactment of values' as well." (La Forge, 1983:55)

The Natural Approach proposed by Krashen and Terrell (1983) takes affect into account in a prominent way. One of the five hypotheses in Krashen's theory of second language acquisition is the Affective Filter Hypothesis, which, in Krashen's words, "captures the relationship between affective variables and the process of SLA by positing that acquirers vary with respect to the strength level of their Affective Filters"(Krashen, 1982:31). He makes the statement that comprehensible input and the strength level of the affective filter are the true causes of SLA. "Those whose attitudes are not optimal for SLA will not only tend to seek less input, but they will also have a high or strong Affective Filter--- even if they understand the message, the input will not reach... the language acquisition device" (Krashen, 1982:31). He also identifies three affective variables related to success in SLA: motivation, self-confidence and anxiety. He provides some affective evidence showing that the activities students found the least anxiety-provoking or non-anxiety provoking seem to be very effective in encouraging language acquisition. He even goes so far as to say that "activities that are good for language acquisition are not anxiety-provoking and those that are painful are not effective... 'no pain, no gain' does not apply to language acquisition" (Krashen, 1991:423)

Presently there is a flourish of the study of the affective domain in FLL with diverse perspectives, "the mainly theoretical, the empirical, the humanistic or the

experiential" (Arnold, 1999:xii), all of which contribute to a better understanding of FLL and greater space for the growth of human potential.

1.3.3. Defining affect in FLL

Up till now much has been said about "affect", the "affective domain" or "emotion", "feeling", yet no clear definition has been provided. There are at least two reasons for the delay. First, it is for the convenience of discussion. Within the wider scope of psychology and education, a preference for "emotion" instead of "affect" seems evident, for example, emotional intelligence, emotional development of children, emotion-centered curriculum, etc. Of course sometimes the two words are considered interchangeable, but most likely "emotion" suggests a vital characteristic specific to human beings while "affect" is a more technical and antique word associated with a person as a psychological being. In the earliest psychological literature, the human mind was considered including three aspects: cognition, affect and conation (motivation). The terms cognition and affect are preserved today referring to the basic two aspects of human mind. Second, the delay is due to lack of agreement on the definition of affect within the narrower scope of FLL. Ellis (1994) provides a table (1994:472) with factors listed as influencing individual learner differences in language teaching in three surveys: Altman (1980), Skehan (1989) and Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991). Ellis (1994:472) points out that "the constructs referred to...are often vague and overlap in indeterminate ways."(1994:471). Apart from that, one thing worth mentioning is that except Skehan (1989), who has coordinated "cognitive and affective factors" with other three factors, the other two, Altman (1980) and Larsen-Freeman and Long do not mention or use the term "affective factors" or "affect" at all, though they nevertheless have dealt with some aspects of affect, such as attitudes and motivation. Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) state clearly that "in our treatment of non-cognitive factors, we will avoid using the word 'affective'. We do this simply because the word is usually associated with feelings and emotions, and what we will be considering does not easily bear such an appellation. "(1991:172) They use socio-psychological factors and personality to refer to the "non-cognitive factors" of
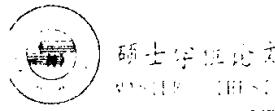
FLL. Ellis's own framework for investigating individual learner differences in no way makes things clearer, listing "beliefs about language learning", "affective states" and "general factors" as subordinates of "individual leaner differences". Therefore there is a great need for a clear definition of affect.

According to *Encyclopedia of Psychology* (Corsini, 1984:32), "Affect relates to and /or encompasses a wide range of concepts and phenomena including feelings, emotions, moods, motivation, and certain drives and instincts." In Oatley and Jenkins (1996:124), "the term 'feeling' is a synonym for emotion, although with a broader range. In the older psychological literature the term 'affect' was used. It is still used to imply an even wider range (compared with feeling) of phenomena that have anything to do with emotions, moods, dispositions, and preferences."

Oatley and Jenkins makes the relation between affect, feeling and emotion clear, with the first having the widest meaning. The present author would combine the two: Affect implies a wide range of concepts and phenomena including feelings, emotions, moods, motivation, dispositions, tendencies, certain drives and instincts.

1.4 The problem

Though the role of affect has been generally acknowledged, the state of affair is not as satisfying as it could be. Especially in foreign language learning, affect is too often than not assigned a subsidiary role as a condition or consequence of the learning process. The present author holds that affective development should be something language teachers deliberately plan for. There is a lack of coherent theoretical account for the legitimacy of affective development in FLL. In this case, a constructivist approach, mainly referring to Jean Piaget's theory of affective development, is suggested to provide a coherent theoretical framework for systematic discussion of affect in foreign language learning.
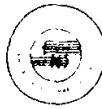
Chapter Two Piaget's Theory of Affective Development

2.1 About constructivism

2.1.1 Basic assumption

Constructivism has been developing over the years and has become particularly influential in the latter half of the twentieth century. The source of the label of *constructivism* is the idea that we build or *construct* our meanings. It centers on how people arrive at the knowledge that enables them to cope with the world. Thus constructivism *is a theory of knowledge-in-the-making or more precisely a theory of how individuals and communities of individuals make sense of the world. It takes various forms, including cognitive-developmental constructivism led by Piaget, personal construct theory originated by George Kelly, social constructivism by Lev Vygotsky, radical constructivism by Glaserfeld, and some other forms.

In the constructivist conception, humans, either as individuals or as collectives, are portrayed as constructive agents, and their meanings and knowledge are portrayed as constructive products. The mind is considered a "creator imposing its categories on what it encounters"(Bruner & Feldman, 1990). An emphasis is put on the generative, organizational, and selective nature of human perception, understanding and memory. The phenomenon of meaning or knowledge is viewed as built instead of passively "received" by people whose ways of knowing, seeing, understanding, and valuing influence what is known, seen, understood and valued. Attention goes to how these ways are acquired and manifested.

2.1.2 Cognitive-developmental constructivism

The leading figure in cognitive-developmental constructivism has been Jean Piaget, who focused his studies on children of different ages, is well known for his constructivist claim that the knowledge structures built by people at particular levels of development influence how they understand their reality at that point in their lives. Piaget's account of cognitive development has drawn considerable attention

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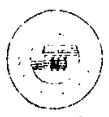
from both psychologists and educators. He saw cognitive development as the product of the interaction of the organism and the environment. The developing mind is viewed as constantly seeking equilibration, i.e. a balance between what is known and what is currently being experienced. This is accomplished by the complementary processes of assimilation, incorporating new elements into existing structures, and accommodation, modifying the structures because of new elements. Working in conjunction, these two processes form the central process of cognitive adaptation. Adaptation is the establishment of equilibrium between the organism and its environment. Much emphasis has also been put upon the cognitive developmental stages, which has characterized Piaget as a cognitive developmental psychologist. Little has been noticed, however, until recently about his account of affective development through the various stages of intellectual growth. One of the reasons for this is that Piaget was primarily interested in determining what knowledge is and how it is constructed by children. Piaget focused most of his research and writing on this question. Thus many came to Piaget's work with the belief that the cognitive aspects of intelligence must be the most important. But in fact his earliest works illustrate the major role of affect in intellectual development, typically in a series of lectures which were later compiled into the book entitled *Intelligence and Affectivity*.

2.2 About Piaget

Jean Piaget's college and university training was in the natural sciences. His main interests originally were in biology. His intensive work in biology led him to conclude that biological development was due not only to maturation and heredity but also to variables in the environment and that it was a process of adaptation to the environment. This contributed to his later view of mental development as primarily a process of adaptation to the environment and an extension of biological development.

Piaget moved from biology to philosophy and eventually to psychology early in his life. He became interested in children's intellectual development and spent the
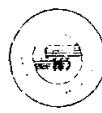
last 60 years of his life gathering an impressive amount of research information concerning mental development. Piaget published over 50 books and hundreds of articles, all written originally in French and primarily concerned with describing and explaining in a very systematic way the growth and development of intellectual structures and knowledge. It is not surprising that his work has had a great impact on education and psychology.

One thing most worth mentioning here is the fact that Piaget as early as in 1918 published an autobiographical novel, *Recherche* (search or research), struggling with science and faith and resolving the conflict between the two by arguing the place for both intelligence (science, knowledge) and values or affectivity (faith) in human development. This theme plays a central role in Piaget's theory as we will illustrate later in this chapter.

As is mentioned, in his lifetime Piaget's publication was so rich that no brief summary could account for the illumination or impact on developmental theorists and researchers. The works concerned here is Piaget's *Intelligence and Affectivity*, which contains the most extensive discussion of affective development.

The book is a volume of lectures delivered by Piaget at the Sorbonne during the 1953-1954 academic year. They represent Piaget's fullest statement not only on the nature of affectivity but also on the relation of affectivity to intelligence throughout development. In his preface to the first English translation of *Intelligence and Affectivity*, Philip A. Cowan writes, "Known primarily for his studies and theory of how children think and how they come to engage in adult-level scientific and philosophical thought, Piaget was also vitally interested in affective development and the cognition-affect interaction."

The book contains mainly three sections. The first section provides some basic conceptions and definitions such as affectivity and adaptation and it also presents the problem: what is the relationship of intelligence to affectivity? The second section accounts for the affective and cognitive function, reviewing three theories of conduct and explaining the notion of structure. The last long section deals with stages of cognitive and affective development, showing parallels between characteristics of cognition and affect at each level. Piaget in his lectures argued

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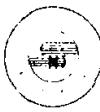
forcefully that affect and cognition were inseparable and that they constitute two different aspects of every sensorimotor or symbolic act.

## 2.3 Piaget's dialectic theory of intellectual development

2.3.1 Four basic concepts

Piaget's system for conceptualizing intellectual development was greatly influenced by his early training and work as a biologist. He believed that biological acts are acts of adaptation to the physical environment and help organize the environment. He also believed that the mind and body do not operate independently of one another and that mental activity is subject to the same laws that biological activity generally is. This led him to conceptualize intellectual development in much the same way as biological development. He saw intellectual acts as acts of organization of and adaptation to the environment.

To understand the process of intellectual organization and adaptation, four basic concepts must be grasped. They are the concepts of schema, assimilation, accommodation and equilibration. These concepts are used to explain how and why intellectual development occurs.

2.3.1.1 Schema

Schemata are the cognitive or mental structures by which individuals intellectually adapt to and organize the environment. As structures, schemata are the mental counterparts of biological means of adapting. The stomach is a biological structure that animals use to adapt to their environment. In much the same way, schemata are psychological structures or processes that adapt and change with mental development. They are not physical objects. Schemata never stop changing or becoming more refined. Indeed, the schemata of the adult evolve from the schemata of the child through adaptation and organization. Thus, intellectual development is a constant process of construction and reconstruction. The processes responsible for the growth and development of schemata are assimilation and accommodation.

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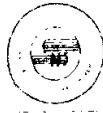
2.3.1.2 Assimilation

Assimilation is the cognitive process by which a person integrates new perceptual, motor, or conceptual matter into existing schemata or patterns of behavior. Put simply, assimilation is the process by which incoming information is changed or modified in our minds so that we can fit it with what we already know. Assimilation occurs all the time. Theoretically it does not result in a change of schemata but allows for the growth of them.

2.3.1.3 Accommodation

Accommodation is the creation of new schemata or the modification of old schemata. It is a process of modifying what we already know to take into account new information. Accommodation occurs when new information cannot be assimilated into existing schemata or when there are no schemata into which the new information can fit. Accommodation results in a change in, or development of, schemata. Once accommodation has taken place, assimilation follows, i.e. the new information is assimilated. Assimilation is always the end product.

No behavior is all assimilation or all accommodation. All behavior reflects both, although some behaviors are more one than the other. Accommodation accounts for development (a qualitative change) and assimilation accounts for growth (a quantitative change); together these processes account for intellectual adaptation and the development of intellectual structures.

2.3.1.4 Equilibration

Equilibrium is a state of balance between assimilation and accommodation. Disequilibrium is a state of imbalance between assimilation and accommodation. Equilibration is the process of moving from disequilibrium to equilibrium involving processes of assimilation and accommodation. Equilibration allows external experience to be incorporated into internal structures (schemata). When disequilibrium occurs, it motivates the child to seek equilibrium (to further assimilate or accommodate). Disequilibrium activates the process of equilibration and a striving to return to equilibrium. Conceptually, cognitive growth and

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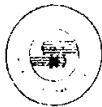
development proceed in this way at all levels of development.

Though all the four basic concepts are accounted in terms of cognitive development, they apply to affective development as well because cognition and affect are united in intellectual functioning and they are "two sides of the same coin" (Piaget, 1981).

2.3.2   Dialectic mechanism in development

There is growing recognition of dialectic mechanism in Piaget's constructivist theory. Piagetian descriptions of development do seem focused more on the intellectual aspects than on their affective qualities. However, some writers have noted that Piaget's theory may contain more feeling than it has been recognized. Cowan's book, *Piaget With Feeling* (1981), emphasizes the importance of the implications of Piagetian theory for moral and social development. Cicchetti and Hesse (1983) called attention to Piaget's often repeated but often forgotten claim that, although cognition supplies essential structures for development, affect or emotion provides the motivational energy. They also pointed out that Piaget's central development process of "equilibration" is emotional as well as intellectual. Children's dissatisfaction with existing solutions to a problem, or their feeling of frustration when new situations cannot be dealt with by their present cognitive structures, may create a kind of emotional disequilibrium, pushing children toward higher levels of cognitive competence, and reorganizing old cognitive structures into a new equilibrium.

In Wadsworth's fifth edition of the book *Piaget's Theory of Cognitive and Affective Development*, he holds the basic position that "in Piaget's theory, intellectual development is seen as having two components, one is cognitive and the other is affective" (Wadsworth, 1996:30). He also presents four plausible reasons for the ignorance of Piaget's affective concepts.

The most convincing evidence is of course found in Piaget's own writing *Intelligence and Affectivity* (1981):

> *It is impossible to find behavior arising from affectivity alone without any cognitive elements. It is equally impossible to find behavior composed only*
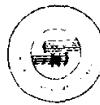
of cognitive elements. (1981:2)

In Piaget's view, there are remarkable parallels between the cognitive and affective development. First, affect develops in the same sense that cognition develops. The mechanisms for construction are the same. Children assimilate experience to affective schemata in the same way they assimilate experience to cognitive structures. Second, all behavior has both affective and cognitive aspects. Discussion in the next part focuses on Piaget's theory of affective development, which has not yet been much noticed as it deserves.

2.4 Piaget's theory of affective development

2.4.1   The problem

Piaget begins his discussion by presenting the problem: what is exactly the relationship between intelligence and affectivity? Though no one would think of denying that there is a constant interaction between intelligence and affectivity, the inseparability of them can mean two very different things. In one sense, it could mean that affectivity speeds up or slows down intellectual functioning without modifying the structures of intelligence. This stimulating or hindering role is indisputable. In the second sense, the inseparability of intelligence and affectivity could mean that affectivity changes intellectual structures and is therefore the source of new knowledge or new cognitive operations. The latter notion was dispelled by Piaget with an example. A particular sense of inferiority in students who are weak in mathematics may temporarily hinder their understanding or retention of the rules of addition but it does not alter the rules in any way. Obviously Piaget takes the first sense of the inseparability of intelligence and affectivity denying affectivity being the source of new knowledge or new cognitive operations.

However, the stimulating or hindering role of affectivity to intelligence is not to be understood as affectivity being static or subordinate to cognition but as a reflection of their interaction. Affectivity itself develops, as we have mentioned, in the same sense that cognition develops. Affective schemata are constructed and

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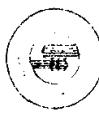
reconstructed to establish affective equilibrium through assimilation and accommodation.

## 2.4.2 Concepts and definitions

2.4.2.1 Affectivity

In Piaget's view, affectivity includes feelings, as well as the various drives or tendencies including "higher tendencies" such as the will. He does not distinguish between affective factors such as emotions or feelings and conative factors such as drives or will because he views the difference between the affective and the conative to be only a matter of degree.

2.4.2.2 Adaptation

We have expounded the concept of adaptation mainly in terms of cognitive development. All behavior is adaptation and all adaptation is the establishment of equilibrium between the organism and its environment. We act only if we are momentarily disequilibrated. Such disequilibration may be felt as awareness of the unique affective impression, need. Behavior stops when this need is satisfied and this return to equilibrium is indicated by a feeling of satisfaction. There is no nutrition without alimentary need, no work without need, nor any intellectual act without a question or without a gap being felt and therefore without disequilibrium or need. All this indicates that there is an affective dimension to the general characteristics of behavior, the fact remains that the notions of equilibrium and disequilibrium have fundamental significance from the intellectual as well as from the affective point of view.

If adaptation is examined from the point of view of assimilation and accommodation, this same lack of dissociation between cognitive and affective factors is apparent. Assimilation is that aspect of adaptation which conserves form or organization. Accommodation is that aspect which modifies form as a function of the external situation. Both notions apply to forms of behavior and thought as well as to organic structures.

The affective aspect of assimilation is interest in that it enriches existing

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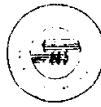
schemata; the cognitive aspect is understanding. Accommodation in its affective aspect is interest in the object in as much as it is new. In its cognitive aspect, accommodation is the adjustment of schemes of thought to phenomena.

2.4.3 Stages of affective development
2.4.3.1 Sensorimotor development (0-2 years)

Piaget distinguishes mainly four stages of intellectual development and puts "intellectual structure and the levels of affective development in parallel, stage by stage." (Piaget, 1981:12)

Piaget carefully described cognitive and affective development during the first two years of life, which he termed as the sensorimotor stage. Six periods are further divided. In terms of affective development, the first period (0-1 month) is one of reflexes and instinctual drives and other inborn affective reactions. There are no true "feelings" or differentiated affective reactions. In the second period (1-4 months) and third period (4-8 months), two kinds of feelings develop and are considered the "first acquired feelings": joys, sorrows, pleasantness and unpleasantness linked to perceptions and differentiated feelings of contentment and disappointment linked to action. During the fourth period (8-12 months), two affective developments are noteworthy. The first is that feelings begin to play a role in determining means used to achieve goals as well as in selecting goals. Things that are useful in attaining goals come to have value to the child. Second, children begin to experience "success" and "failure" from an affective point of view. Feelings associated with particular actions or activities are preserved. Children are attracted to activities at which they are successful. In periods 5 (12-18 months) and 6 (18-24 months), children begin to invest affectivity in others due to the cognitive differentiation of the self as an object and others as objects. Likes and dislikes for others are established, and initial interpersonal relationships begin to form. Thus the affective world of the 2-year-old is very different from that of the newborn.

2.4.3.2 Preoperational development (2-7 years)

During the preoperational development, the first fully social feelings arise.
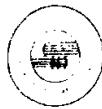
Representation and particularly spoken language are instrumental in the development of social feelings. Representation allows for the creation of images of experiences, including affective experiences. Thus for the first time, feelings can be represented and recalled. In this way, affective experiences come to have an effect that can last longer than the experiences themselves.

> *Representation and language allow feelings to acquire a stability and duration they have not had before. Affects, by being represented, last beyond the presence of the object that excites them. This ability to conserve feelings makes interpersonal and moral feelings possible.* (Piaget, 1981:44)

With the capacity for reconstruction of the cognitive and affective past during preoperational development, behavior can assume an element of consistency that was not possible before representation. With the reconstructed past an element in current behavior, affect is less tied to immediate experience and perception than it previously was. Behavior can become a bit more stable and predictable. Feelings have the potential of becoming longer-lasting and more consistent as preoperational development proceeds.

Piaget contends that the basis for social interchange is reciprocity of attitudes and values between the young child and others.

> *These considerations lead us to see liking other people not so much as the consequences of the enrichment that each partner draws from the other but as a reciprocity of attitudes and values.* (Piaget, 1981:45-46)

This form of exchange---reciprocity--- can lead to each party valuing the other person (mutual respect). Each is appreciated by the other in some way. In subsequent interactions, the values derived through reciprocal actions are not lost but are represented and remembered. Because these prior value placements are retained, as representations, future exchanges are more likely to anticipate positive (or negative) affective experiences.

2.4.3.3 Development of concrete operations (7-11 years)

Piaget (1963) attached clear importance to the social relations among children
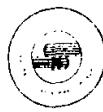
for intellectual and affective development. Because children's relations are among equals, *cooperation* becomes a real possibility. Piaget described children's relationship with peers as the ideal context for cooperation. His reasoning was that peers would, on the average, have to cooperate to get along since their relationship was based on symmetrical reciprocity. Though children have the potential to interact socially with one another as equals, typically they interact with adults as if they (the children) are inferiors (unilateral respect). Conflicts between children are overcome only through genuine cooperation, in which they form a common sense of social solidarity. There is a reliance on processes that require the cooperation of others and is based on mutual understanding that results from children's communicative exchanges of ideas.

A major developmental advance in affectivity during the concrete operational period is the emergence of autonomous feelings and their eventual products, mutual relations with adults. Piaget (1981) writes:

> The notion of autonomous... means that it is possible for the child... to elaborate his or her... own norms, at least in part. After seven or eight years of age, the child becomes capable of making his own moral evaluations, performs freely decided acts of will, and exhibits moral feelings, which in certain cases, conflict with feelings seen in the heteronomous morality of obedience (unilateral respect). (1981:65-65)

Autonomy of reasoning is reasoning according to one's own constructed set of norms. It evaluates rather than automatically accepts the preformed values of others. In addition, autonomous reasoning considers others as well as the self. Autonomy is self-regulation.

Mutual respect is an agent in the development of autonomous thought that appears during this stage. Until around age 7 or 8, children regard adults with unilateral respect (respect for authority). Children's morality is primarily one of obedience. Mutual respect is respect between "equals." Children can develop mutual respect only after they become able to see someone else's point of view. According to Piaget (1963),

> Mutual respect grows out of exchanges between individuals considered as

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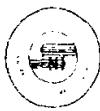
equals. It presupposes, first of all, an acceptance of common values, particularly with respect to the exchanges themselves. Each partner evaluates others from the point of view of these values and is subject to the other's evaluation in such a way that one again finds in mutual respect the combination of sympathy and fear belonging to all respect. In this case, however, fear is not fear of a superior power as with unilateral respect, but becomes fear of losing the esteem of those who the subject, himself, esteems...obedience as in unilateral respect is, in fact, replaced by the autonomous observation of norms. (1963: 46-47, from Wadsworth, 1996)

Cognitive and affective autonomy grow out of children's efforts towards self-regulation. The act of constructing knowledge, assimilation and accommodation, is self-regulation and is autonomy in action. From birth, children strive to make sense of their experiences, to assimilate the world around them, and to be autonomous in their construction of cognitive and affective knowledge. Thus autonomy can be viewed as a habit of action that children can begin to develop early on.

A key period in the continuous development of affective autonomy is during the concrete operational stage, when children normally move from a view of moral reasoning based on unilateral respect to a view based on mutual respect. Cooperative social relations with adults (parents and teachers) and peers where children are respected and treated as equals are necessary.

2.4.3.4 Development of formal operations (11-15 years)

During the stage of formal operations, affective development is characterized by two major factors: the development of idealistic feelings and the continued formation of personality.

As cognitive development reaches an upper limit with full attainment of formal operations, so does affective development. The major affective constructions during the stage of formal operations build on those of the concrete operational stage. The development of normative feelings, autonomy, and will during concrete operations leads to the construction of idealistic feelings and the further development of
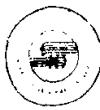
personality during formal operations. Idealistic feelings reflect themselves in the emergence of abilities to reason about and to think about the hypothetical---the future---and to reflect on one's own thinking. "Henceforth intelligence will be able to operate not only on objects and situations but also on hypotheses and, therefore, on the possible as well as the real" (Piaget, 1981:69). Personality formation has its roots in the child's organization of autonomously constructed rules and values. Personality reflects the individual's efforts to adapt to the social world of adulthood as well as change it. It is, in part, a submission of the self to discipline.

2.4.4   Relation between cognitive and affective development

Throughout the book *Intelligence and Affectivity*, Piaget suggested that cognition and affect are actually "two sides of the same coin" and that there is "constant interaction between affectivity and intelligence".

> *It is impossible to find behavior arising from affectivity alone without any cognitive elements. It is equally impossible to find behavior composed only of cognitive elements. ...it is obvious that affective factors are involved even in the most abstract forms of intelligence. For a student to solve an algebra problem or a mathematician to discover a theorem, there must be intrinsic interest, extrinsic interest, or a need at the beginning. While working, states of success or failure may occur; and finally, the student may experience aesthetic feelings stemming from the coherence of his solution.* (Piaget, 1981:2)

Piaget argued that affect is related to the function of intelligence---acting as an energizing force emerging from the disequilibration between assimilation and accommodation. Cognition provides the structure for this energy. Affect is likened to the gasoline that activates the car, while the engine provides structure for the energy and direction of the car's motion. Affect as "energetics" can combine with cognitive structural schemes to focus the individual's interest on a specific thing or idea. Because it influences an individual's choice of whether to exert intellectual effort, affect serves as a regulator of action. Because it influences the choice of specific goals, affect also plays a role in determining values. By regulating action

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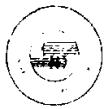
and determining values, affect influences our tendency to approach or avoid situations; in turn, this influences the rate at which we develop knowledge, accelerating it in some areas, slowing it down or preventing it in others. Affect is the gatekeeper. To put it in simple words, with regard to intellectual development, we are concerned with two aspects of affect. One aspect is the motivation or energizing of intellectual activity. "For a structure of knowledge to function, something must turn it on, determine the effort to be expanded at each point, and turn it off." (Brown and Weiss, 1987:63) The second aspect is selection. Intellectual activity is always directed at particular objects or events. Interest, along with "likes" and "dislikes", is one common and powerful example of affect at work influencing our selection of intellectual activities.

2.4.5 A summary

According to Piaget, intellectual development has two components, one is cognitive and the other affective. They are united in intellectual functioning. All behavior has both cognitive and affective elements. Piaget outlines the developmental stages from birth through adolescence, showing parallels between characteristics of cognition and affect at each level. For instance, stable feelings about specific people do not begin to arise until the fourth sensorimotor stage (at about six months of age) when the infant has constructed the scheme of the permanent object. This means, Piaget suggests, that there is necessarily a cognitive aspect of the infant's development of attachment. Later, in the preoperational stage beginning at about two years of age and extending over the next five years, the development of symbolic representation and language leads to the formation of stable concepts. The structural underpinning of these concepts also allows feelings to acquire stability over time. Still later, in the stage of concrete operations beginning at about seven, the child's ability to construct classification hierarchies is accompanied by the emergence of a stable value hierarchy. This hierarchy represents the first emergence of what Piaget describes as the conservation of feelings. At the same time, we observe the beginning of a new level of moral judgment. Piaget believes that moral judgments are highly affective in nature. Each

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of these examples illustrates Piaget's hypothesis that there are systematic shifts in the form as well as in the content of affect as the child matures. He uses these and other examples to reinforce his argument that these shifts in affect are attributable to the structural properties underlying each new cognitive stage. "Piaget's theory is one of the few truly developmental theories of emotion and motivation." (Piaget, 1981:xii)
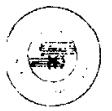
Chapter Three Understanding the Role of Affect in FLL

3.1 The present situation of China's education

3.1.1 Phenomena

Nowadays in China we strongly advocate quality-oriented education and all-around development of students and we have already taken steps towards such goals. But what does "quality-oriented" or "all-around development" really mean? There exist some misconceptions. For example, many kinds of study interest groups are set up mainly aiming to utilize extracurricular time for school subject learning such as English, physics, etc. in China's primary schools and secondary schools. It can not be denied that students may learn better among peers, however when they are forced to join in the study groups for one reason or another, they are possibly going to be confronted with hotter peer competition and suffer from greater peer pressure. In that case, extracurricular study groups are only adding to their mental burden whose negative effect can be far-reaching. Misconceptions are also manifest in parents' intention of making children versatile, for example, able to play the piano. Weekends are just continuation of weekdays for children who are escorted by their parents to and fro all kinds of training centers. It is little wonder then that students are considered to be the most tired group in real life. The proposal put forward to lessen students' burden has been paid too much lip service to; the school bags of many primary students have not been less heavy. Under such disguises of quality-oriented education and all-around development, a sense of learning-weariness is growing stronger because children's nature is suppressed, school is a battlefield and there is little real enjoyment or happiness.

Besides the prevailing learning-weariness, among students grow strong instrumental and utilitarian purposes of learning. Though some students are weary of learning, they keep working hard with the belief of and hope for a bright future in their mind. Parents are often heard saying earnestly and tirelessly, "Study hard now so that you can find a promising job in the future." It sometimes works and motivates students to make great efforts in learning, but the instrumental and

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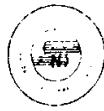
utilitarian purposes can be too overwhelming not to be misleading in that students consider it the only purpose. Some students work hard for fame and wealth whereas some others cannot be motivated by such an aim so far away from reality. Learning therefore takes place either for external rewards or as a meaningless but inescapable process. In the former case, it takes the form of knowledge or skill acquisition. Students' abilities such as to face real-life problems, to deal with interpersonal relationships and to regulate their emotions, which are all crucial to their future cannot be properly developed. It is not learning that will *last*. In the latter case, there is no enjoyment and they feel no internal need to learn; learning is no more than a torture to undergo. It is damaging to both students' mind and body. In addition, the number of only children is increasing. They are taken special care of in the family and used to being the center of focus. They strive to outdo others in everything in school and are sensitive and easily get hurt.

On the part of the teachers, they have focused more on students' knowledge acquisition than affective development. Like parents, teachers' stress on the instrumentalism and utilitarianism of education has contributed to the distortion of students' normal affective development. Some may argue that schools do give a place for students' normal education, for example, organizing study *interest* groups and keeping the good tradition of moral education. However sometimes study groups are an excuse for assigning heavier tasks and moral education does not always work because of losing contact with reality. Students' affect is taken only as a means to better develop their cognition, not as an organic part of educational objectives. The unhealthy imbalance of stress on cognition and ignorance of affect cannot live up to the expectations of an ideal education in which students develop as a whole person. Apart from that, some teaching content and method are rather old and cannot stimulate students' interest, not to mention to develop their creativity. And their individuality has long been ignored in the examination-oriented atmosphere.

3.1.2 Causes

There may be many reasons behind all these learning-weariness, instrumental
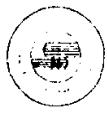
and utilitarian purposes of learning and imbalanced cognitive and affective education. Here we just mention two of them. One comes from the society and the other from education itself.

China's present educational situation is to a great extent determined by its economic development which on one hand poses challenges to education and stimulates its rapid development and on the other hand causes new problems, especially a blindness in employment for higher educational degrees. Diplomas have become the employment standard of first importance and seem in direct proportion to one's wealth and social status. The number of the educated who become unemployed is increasing and there is a tendency for some university students to be confronted with the possibility of unemployment on their graduation. To avoid this kind of employment crisis, many graduates choose to pursue a master degree and some bachelors in some less-noticed majors decide to obtain a doctorate degree, all of whom are after a promising future. The situation forces one from primary school to get at high scores and climb up as high as possible in the educational ladder for a satisfying occupation in the future. The trend is the price we pay for economic development. It intensifies the competition in education and adds pressure even to primary school students. It also exerts profound influence on teaching and learning in classroom where instrumental and utilitarian purposes grow, taking the place of pursuit of meaningful educative values. A shallow formula is formed, that is, from learning, to taking exams, going to schools of a higher grade, obtaining a diploma and eventually to attaining a good job. To meet the greater educational demands, expansions in scale and number of university enrollment have been carried out. Because of limited educational fund, the increase in quantity nevertheless has to be at the sacrifice of quality which degrades the internal educative value of diplomas. At the same time, the level of demanded diploma for specific jobs is being raised in some unreasonable way. Both the degradation of educational quality and the rising demands for higher diplomas are harmful for healthy running of both economic and educational systems.

Besides the side effect of economic development for education, the negative effect of education itself is not to be ignored as an important cause for its own
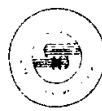
developmental problems. It may be hard to accept the inability of education to cultivate people' mind and its closedness, conservation and isolation. However they are the undeniable facts of the negative effects of education. Firstly, China has not freed itself from the fetters of examination-oriented education whose focus is to impart knowledge, not to educate students as a whole person in an all-around way. Students are not systematically trained affectively to face all kinds of possible challenges and changes, which is essential for them to live in the competitive society, to love life and to shoulder responsibilities for themselves and others. Then the closedness, conservation and isolation of education are reflected in the separation of cognitive and affective components, which also results in alienation between people. Another reflection is the strong tendency of "talent education" in which only students with high achievements are attached great importance to. Those who are less achieved, less adapted to the environment or different from others are ignored, blamed or punished. An American psychologist and educationist pointed out that if the teacher offers help in case of difficulty or trouble, 95% of the students can learn well. A large portion of the potential of each student is indeed hidden unexploited. The essence of education does not lie in imparting knowledge or skill but encouraging, arousing and stimulating. The affective factor can be decisive in successful education.

3.1.3 New directions

New demands of society for all-around developed qualified personnel have stimulated the development of education. Modern education in the real sense puts its emphasis on cultivating students' creative spirit and power and their emotional capacity of self-awareness, self-encouragement, self-regulation, etc. in daily life. To realize the ideals of modern education, the first thing is to change the concept of education. People have come to realize that intelligence is not the only factor that decides success or failure. It was reported that a twelve-year-old boy who had shown high IQ in his early ages lagged behind quickly after entering university because of self-complacency and eventually went home. Affective factors like motivation, interest, will and affective self-regulation are all indispensable elements

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of success. Einstein, looking back on his career, concluded that he had no gift but strong curiosity for things. Specialized knowledge is far from enough; education has to help students understand life values and generate positive emotions to overcome all difficulties.

The notion of lifelong education has been put forward both to meet social demands and to get closer to ideal education. Lifelong education is education throughout one's life and beyond school education. Its goal has reached far into the affective domain surpassing the traditional domains of knowledge and skills. It emphasizes active farsighted learning which not only means to grasp and use knowledge and skills but more importantly to adapt actively to the environment, to discover problems and solve them in a creative way, to learn how to learn, how to survive, how to understand and care about others. With the guidance of the idea of lifelong education, school education should and must stimulate learners' desire to continue learning. The desire is not instrumental or utilitarian, but affective. Students learn not merely for their own or society's interest, but more importantly for positive pleasant learning experiences, which is a more lasting and profound motivator.

The affective education in China has developed over the last decade. One of the most noteworthy forms is "enjoyable education" which was initiated to reduce learning-weariness and learning-tiredness. In the experiment of "enjoyable education", different schools set up different specific goals while they share one thing in common, that is, aiming at all-around development, creating an environment in which teachers enjoy teaching and students enjoy learning. In this way, their mind and body are developed harmoniously which improves the quality of education. In terms of course design, special attention has been paid to "potential courses" which refer to experiences imparted consciously or unconsciously to students through the educational environment. For example, the experimental schools stress harmonious teacher-student relationships, sound and progressive class construction and beautification of school environment. These potential course factors are positive and make students experience pleasantness, thus enjoy learning and hold an enterprising spirit. "Enjoyable education" has produced good effects

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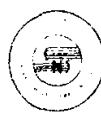
but it is still in experiment. Before implementing it in wider areas, further efforts need be made to develop a coherent theoretical framework to guide its practices in every aspect.

3.2 Understanding Affect in FLL: a Constructivist Framework

The prevailing learning-weariness and instrumentalism and utilitarianism of learning have not been generated in one day. They remind us that learning is not only cognitive but also necessarily affective. Piaget's theory of intellectual development provides us with profound insights into the growth of human mind and the nature of learning. In terms of FLL, we propose a constructivist framework based on Piaget's theory for a comprehensive view of affect. First, a correct understanding of the inseparability of affect and cognition forms the foundation of the framework. Second, the foreign language learning process is also a process of construction of affect in which students' motivation, self-concept and locus of control are under constant construction and reconstruction. Third, each new step of affective assimilation and accommodation will result in a higher level of affective autonomy through which students can better understand themselves, regulate their affect, encourage themselves and face setbacks. Affective autonomy is always the end product.

3.2.1 Inseparability of Cognition and Affect as the Foundation

Cognitive psychologists have made great contributions to the understanding of the internal processing mechanisms for FLL but only assigned a subsidiary role to affect. The mind is seen largely as a computer with high complexity and sophistication, inputting, processing, outputting and retaining language data in an orderly predictable way. Human beings, however, are essentially emotional. Piaget's theory of cognitive and affective development not only depicts a more accurate picture of intellectual development but also points to a more balanced orientation in education.

FLL as an intellectual activity involves both cognition and affect and is a unity

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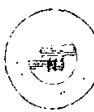
of the two. The inseparability of cognition and affect forms the foundation for affective development. In other words, affective development is only possible in the parallel construction and reconstruction of cognition and affect and interaction of the two, for, as Piaget pointed out, shifts in affect are attributable to the structural properties underlying each new cognitive stage. Every stage of affective development of language learners involves cognition, for example, the learner's sense of high self-efficacy does not come out of nothing but gradually from his experiences of coping with learning tasks. And each stage of cognitive development is accompanied by affective development. For example, the learner's feeling of personal control over things strengthens when he achieves the learning goals he has set for himself. This in turn will encourage him to pursue higher goals. In a word, affect is as important as cognition and cannot be separated from it, which is fundamental in a Piagetian perspective of affect in FLL.

3.2.1.1 Parallel construction and reconstruction of cognition and affect

By "parallel" we mean "simultaneous, at the same level" instead of "not interacting". One of the most enduring aspects of Piaget's work has been his emphasis upon the constructive nature of the learning process. In contrast to more traditional views which see learning as accumulation of facts or development of skills, the main underlying assumption of constructivism is that individuals are actively involved right from birth in constructing personal meaning, that is their own personal understanding, from their experiences. In other words, everyone makes their own sense of the world and the experiences that surround them. The process is one of cognitive and affective construction and reconstruction through assimilation and accommodation. When learners learn a new language, they are not only actively involved in making their own sense of the language input and tasks but also of the learning experience itself. They have begun with certain feelings, for example, curiosity. If the learner finds it challenging as well as rewarding and feels that there are still unknown areas for him to explore, interest in the new language may develop and accompanying it may be a sense of high self-efficacy. Otherwise, feeling of boredom or low self-efficacy may be generated. FLL from the very
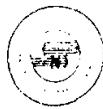
beginning is never without affect and is indeed a process of affective construction and reconstruction, which to a great extent influences cognitive construction and reconstruction. Teachers as well as learners need be aware of the affective side of FLL, striving to promote healthy development of both cognition and affect.

3.2.1.2 Interaction between cognition and affect

According to Piaget, affect is gasoline and cognition the engine, affect acting as an energizing force activating cognition and cognition providing the structure for the energy and direction of the force. The metaphor does vividly reflect the interaction between cognition and affect. Affect has a profound influence upon cognitive development. It can speed up or slow down the rate of development. It determines what contents intellectual activity focuses on. Affect is the gatekeeper. Though it does not itself modify cognitive structures, it can influence which structure becomes modified. At the same time, affect is not subsidiary; it develops in the same manner cognition develops through affective assimilation and accommodation.

In FLL, the way we feel about ourselves and our capabilities can either facilitate or impede our learning. Oxford and Shearin (1994:21) point out that learners must believe they have some control over the outcomes of the learning process and they must feel a sense of effectiveness within themselves if they are to make the effort necessary to learn the new language. On the other hand, disappointment with one's performance can lead to reduced self-efficacy and also may result in anxiety that gets in the way of learning. In a word, if favorable affective conditions prevail, learning is likely to be more successful, which will in turn help the maintenance of positive affect or even origination of more favorable conditions and therefore facilitate further learning. Learners need not only create favorable affect but overcome the inevitable problems of negative affect. In other words, language learners need employ distinct affective strategies, for example self-talk to lower anxiety, encourage themselves or take control of their emotions, since affect influences the use of cognitive processes and vice versa. Apart from that, FLL should also legitimize learners' affective development and do not
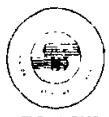
consider it as irrelevant to language learning any more.

3.2.2 Construction of Affect as the Process

Many people believe that the affective aspects of human life arise from some internal source in a more or less predetermined form. Piaget believed that affect is no more preformed than is intelligence itself. As we have mentioned, in Piaget's view, there are remarkable parallels between the cognitive and affective. Affect develops in the same sense that cognition develops. The mechanisms for construction are the same. Children assimilate experience to affective schemata in the same way they assimilate experience to cognitive structures.

Marcia Mentkowski and Associates (2000) writes:

> *In designing developmentally appropriate learning experiences, educators recognize the affective or emotional dimensions as central to learning. They do not segment learning as a cognitive process or set aside the development of empathy or a tolerance for ambiguity. Emotional development is not just a condition, input, outcome, or consequence of the learning process, it is something educators deliberately plan for. A sound learning process involves the learner's career and personal aspirations, prior learning and experience, maturity, subculture and family situation, to name a few.* (2000:227)

In FLL, learners start with certain affective schemata. As their construction of knowledge takes place, their affect also develops. The essentially personal learning experience is greatly influenced by and meanwhile influences the ways in which individuals view the world and their perceptions of themselves within the world.

3.2.2.1 Motivation: disequilibrium

Constructivism views motivation for construction of knowledge to be largely an internal affair, responsive to the external environment but not directed by it. In Piaget's theory, children are motivated to restructure their knowledge when they encounter and attend to experiences that conflict with their predictions. Piaget called such an occurrence disequilibration and the result of it, disequilibrium. Affect
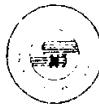
plays the central role in determining what is attended to. Affect is the gatekeeper and determines whether the gates are open or closed. Open gates invite attention and disequilibrium; closed gates preclude attention and disequilibrium. Affectivity which includes feelings, interests, drives, tendencies and values, "constitutes the energetics of behavior patterns whose cognitive aspects refer to the structure alone. There is no behavior pattern, however intellectual, which does not involve affective patterns as motives" (Piaget and Inhelder, 1969:158). In Piaget's conceptualization of intellectual development, the affective and the cognitive both play key roles.

3.2.2.1.1   Interest

Interest is the source of disequilibrium and hence the motivator of learning. In FLL, learners feel interested in the exploration of knowledge. To explore in itself is interesting. So it is of vital importance to involve learners, for example as problem solvers, in active learning experiences. Interests are not necessarily from the content of learning but more importantly from the way of learning. Teachers often complain about the difficulty of choosing interesting learning materials but are unaware of the fact that how to learn is a prerequisite for consistent interest in the learning activity. Interests come from the internal of the learner, or in other words, are reflections of the learner's internal needs resulted from disequilibrium. However, some of the schools have become places where all kinds of activities are arranged in time not according to students' needs, which results in a waste of their time and a mismatch of course learning and students' interests. Teaching begins before interest is aroused or ends before interest is still present.

3.2.2.1.2 Success

Language learners need constantly feel a sense of success (success in their own definition) to maintain motivation in learning. At issue here is not just success in construction of knowledge, but also the affective consequences of nonsuccess or "failure". Children who fail repeatedly or do less well than their knowledge suggests they should come to dislike the content they are unable to understand. They develop negative feelings about the content and potentially about themselves

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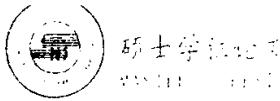
as learners. At the worst, gates close. On the other hand, the sense of success comes from their capability of meeting challenges. Robert Kegan (1994) writes:

> *People grow best where they continuously experience an ingenuous blend of support and challenge.... Environments which are weighted too heavily in the direction of challenge (cognitive demands too high) without adequate support are toxic; they promote defensiveness and contrition. Those weighted heavily towards support without adequate challenge are ultimately boring; they promote devitalization. Both kinds of imbalances lead to withdrawal or dissociation from the context. In contrast, a balance of support and engagement leads to vital engagement.* (1994: 42)

The tasks designed for language learners should take their prior knowledge into consideration. Not all tasks language learners accomplish will bring them the feeling of success. They cannot be too easy. If intermediate learners are often asked to practice dialogue repetition, they will be rather bored and demotivated. If beginners are required to give a free speech, they may feel too much frustrated to be willing to continue their study. Constantly experiencing nonsuccess or failure will only result in self-doubt and affect develops in the negative. A well-designed task is challenging but not too demanding. Krashen's construct "i+1" is really constructive in nature, reflecting a natural routine of development, taking into account of both the cognitive and affective aspects of foreign language learning activity.

3.2.2.1.3   Cooperation

The increased attention to and expanded use of cooperative learning in FL classroom result from a shift from an emphasis on teacher-centered to learner-centered classroom and from transmission-oriented to participatory or constructivist knowledge development.

Cooperative learning among language learners is essential for their development and learning because it requires social interaction and negotiation of meaning among heterogeneous group members engaged in tasks in which all group members have both something to contribute to and learn from the other members. In a well-structured cooperative task, there is a genuine information gap which is an
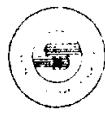
important source of disequilibrium.

Besides, peer support can be a powerful motivator for shy, insecure or even uninterested students. In cooperative groups, individuals know that they can get feedback and assistance in making their contributions as clear, relevant and appropriate as possible. This, in turn, can motivate them to continue to try, especially when peers encourage and support their contributions. Long and Porter (1985) found that group work increased student motivation. Cooperative learning involves task or reward structures which better ensure that all members of the group will participate and do so at their own level of proficiency. Resource, goal and reward interdependence contribute to motivation, and enjoyable activities encourage participation as well.

In Piaget's theory, motivation is an internal affair associated with disequilibrium. Though not external, disequilibrium can be provoked by external events, for example, social interaction and collaboration. Learners' interests reflect their disequilibrium, and, in Piaget's view, its merit being at the center of educational activity.

3.2.2.2 Self-concept

Self-concept is a global term referring to the combination of all of our perceptions and conceptions about ourselves which give rise to our sense of personal identity (Williams and Burden, 1997:97). Many researchers have focused on specific aspects of self-concept such as self-image (the particular view we have of ourselves), self-esteem (feeling of self-worth), and self-efficacy (beliefs about capabilities to cope with the learning challenge and succeed). An individual's self-concept will have considerable influence on the way in which he or she learns. If a person has a negative self-concept as language learner, then it is likely that he will feel a sense of embarrassment at using the language and will avoid risk-taking situations or initiating conversations in the foreign language. The lack of confidence, the accompanying nervousness or even fright would lead to his dislike of the subject and possibly more negative self-concept as language learner. If a person has a positive self-concept, they are likely to set themselves more optimistic goals, to
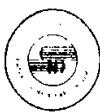
engage in situations which involve risks and to seek out opportunities to use the language. A proper sense of self-efficacy is built on learners' success in the learning process. A learner who constantly suffers from failures (no matter how others consider them insignificant) will hardly gain any sense of his own effectiveness in this particular field. This in turn will undermine his self-esteem. The learning process will be facilitated if the learner has begun with positive feelings, for example curiosity, which will in turn be enhanced with better performance results. If the learner has begun with negative feelings such as fear, measures should be taken to overcome it, for example by constant encouragement, providing chances of success, etc. Otherwise it will form a vicious circle impeding both FLL and healthy affective development of the learner.

3.2.2.3 Locus of control

One of the most significant aspects of affective construction is the development of beliefs about control over life events. This sense of personal control over what is happening is called locus of control (Findley and Cooper, 1983). Those who tend to feel personally responsible for life events are termed "internalisers" and those who tend to believe that events are determined by forces beyond their control, for example fate, luck or other people are called "externalisers". People's locus of control is relatively stable but open to change by means of structured interventions.

As to foreign language learning, those with a high internal locus of control show strong tendencies to seek information and use it appropriately in problem-solving tasks, to be active and assertive and to exhibit a high degree of exploratory behavior and excitement about learning. On the contrary, those showing high externality tend to be relatively passive, compliant, nonexploratory and inattentive. A positive learning environment can contribute to the establishment of proper locus of control (most clearly established during adolescence). Foreign language learning in one sense is also a process of locating locus of control. Studies (Wang, 1983) have shown that learners who are provided with opportunities of self-management are more likely to assume responsibility for their own learning. For example, the learner may set realistic personal learning goals for his own path

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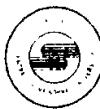
of development, evaluate the effort in and outcome of learning and make some adjustment concerning the learning goals if necessary. In this way he can learn to take responsibility for his own learning.

3.2.3 Affective Autonomy as the Product

Intellectual autonomy has a cognitive and an affective component. Both are important and they are functioning inseparably. Intellectual autonomy has to do with making intellectual choices for oneself, with learning how to make decisions. It is self-regulation. It is charting one's own course of inquiry and action by following one's disequilibrium. It is about learning how to self-regulate, to control and direct the self efficiently, effectively and responsibly.

Intellectual development is self-regulated. The transformation (assimilation and accommodation) of experience results in new constructions. This process is not directed from the outside, but from inside. It proceeds not by internalizing the external in a direct way, but through disequilibration followed by assimilation and accommodation of experience selected. The outcome is constructed or reconstructed knowledge. The control mechanism is internal. In Piaget's theory, the most efficient and well-adapted construction occurs when the control mechanism is autonomous, or allowed to have its own way; that is, to respond to (assimilate) the source of disequilibrium. The control mechanism is affective, with unconscious feelings, tendencies and inclinations functioning as gatekeepers for what experiences affect intellectual development. The process is one of self-regulation.

By affective autonomy we refer to the capabilities of self-awareness, self-regulation of feelings and emotions, self-encouragement and flexibility in face of setbacks. Each new step of affective assimilation and accommodation will result in a higher level of affective autonomy which is always the end product of affective development. This kind of affective self-regulation can promote both affective and cognitive growth.

In the affective realm, the continued development of affective and cognitive autonomy and healthy self-regulation depends more on the establishment of cooperation with others, including reciprocity of feelings and mutual respect

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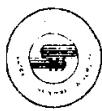
relations.

Affective autonomy arises out of mutual respect relations. These relations are first established with peers and later with adults (if all goes well). Affective autonomy thus has its course in the social activities of children and is based in freely chosen cooperation.

Affective autonomy leads to cooperative social action and interaction based on the desire to do what is right, fair, just and responsible for others and oneself. Affective autonomy incorporates one's constructed values and an accompanying sense of obligation (imposed by the formation of the will) to act on those values. A morality of cooperation comes to exist, not because it is imposed, but because it is a freely constructed value, a recognition at some level that cooperation works and is adaptive. Affective autonomy is the basis for what many call self-discipline because it is a guide for behavior selection that is grounded in one's constructed values and a sense of obligation to those values.

Intellectual autonomy is important because it permits children and adults to learn how to most efficiently find paths for effective learning and development, to function as problem solvers. This is what we mean by learning how to learn. It also works to create a disposition of self-confidence and thus to keep gates open to new possibilities. The concept of autonomy has traditionally been associated with individualism. This is not surprising because autonomy was born in the rationalistic tradition of eighteenth-century Europe. Claims have been made, however, that autonomy should not necessarily imply total independence. Little (1991) shows that second language learner autonomy presupposes *interdependence* because language development requires interaction. Nedelsky (1989) recognizes the inherent tensions in "the idea of autonomy as both originating in oneself and being conditioned and shaped by one's social context". Furthermore she notes that the capacity for autonomy is unlikely to exist without a feeling of being autonomous and claims that this feeling is the best guide to understand the structure of those relationships which make autonomy possible. Nedelsky sees autonomy as "a capacity that exists only in the context of social relations that support it and only in conjunction with the internal sense of being autonomous" (1989:25).

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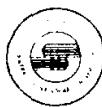
Chapter Four Implications of Piaget's theory of affective development for FLT

Constructivism is not a pedagogical theory though it can serve as a useful referent for education; no straightforward recipe for teaching practice can be derived from constructivism. As Benttencourt (1993) also points out: "Practice is never a simple application of general rules to concrete situations, and theory is never the simple abstraction---generalization from practical situations to general schemes. Practice and theory, like knowledge and experience, stand in a relation of mutual adaptation, of mutual questioning, and of mutual illumination." (Bentley, 1998: 241)

Although Piaget's theory of intellectual development is not a theory of education, it does provide a theoretical base for analyzing educational practices and the extent to which they are consistent with developmental principles. As a part of adaptation to the world around them, children normally construct cognitive, affective and social knowledge. All would agree that optimizing children's cognitive, affective and social development is a worthy goal; cognitive development cannot be the only goal of education. Currently, in some schools, education is almost exclusively about skill acquisition and content learning. Learning in the schools is organized in such a way that natural learning processes tend to be thwarted, impeded, or subverted. Development, so denied, often results in closed gates, bad affect, boredom, and mindlessness among students and teachers.

The Piagetian vision is that educational practice and development need not and should not be at odds. The constructivist belief is that when compatibility exists, the learning of skills and content along with the child's natural development are enhanced. Constructions are more authentic. The compatibility between development and the content and skill goals of school learning can be ensured only if schools and teachers ensure it. It does not happen by accident. Constructivist theory is a vision of how to accomplish this.

Piaget's theory is not to tell teachers what to do and cannot be reduced to a set of operational procedures. It is one perspective on which to reflect what can be used

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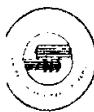
to aid teachers in understanding children and evaluate why they do or do not learn in school. Educators who come to understand Piaget's work find their own autonomously selected ways to integrate the principles into their dealings with children. Some work, some do not work and provoke further active reflection. The intellectual autonomy of teachers is as important as the autonomy of her students.

4.1 Constructing positive affect: affective goals

The dialectic mechanism of intellectual development, i.e. parallel construction and reconstruction and interaction of cognition and affect legitimizes the pursuit of both cognitive and affective goals. However, as the Violinist Yehudi Mehudi has pointed out, education today is directed towards training learners' thinking rather than their emotions. He stresses there is a need to create a voice to give a vehicle for emotion and calls for a change in the present educational system. The situation of foreign language teaching is no exception of that. Stern (1992) identifies three major affective goals of FLT: second language learning competence, sociocultural competence and language learning, which is an excellent reflection of the major role of affect and interaction of affect and cognition in FLT.

4.1.1   Second language competence as an affective goal

Competence has an affective component. The foreign language beginner is normally conscious of the strangeness of the new language, which often arouses an emotional response. They would feel puzzled, frustrated, confused or sometimes amused, attracted and pleased. One affective objective of language teaching must be to overcome any sense of rejection of the language on the part of the learner, to encourage first tolerance and acceptance of the linguistic forms and features and eventually a feeling of familiarity and liking for them.

The learner should also be encouraged to cultivate not only an intellectual understanding of what is obligatory, possible, or permissible in the new language, but an intuitive sense of "right" and "wrong", in other words, a feeling of being at home in the language. An intuitive sensitivity should not only be cultivated in

relation to linguistic forms; it applies equally to stylistic, social and cultural features of language use. Gradually, the learner should acquire the emotional associations of language shared by the speech community. Lastly, it is part of the affective goal that the learner should engage in target language activities, and that he should do so with positive feelings; that is, the teacher should encourage the learner to use the language willingly and even with enjoyment.

Affective outcomes in relation to the second language can be represented by a continuum from the very negative to the very positive. It is clear that to achieve its goal a language course should be designed to cultivate neutral to positive attitudes. In the early stages the characterization of attitudes under "neutral" seems appropriate and one would expect successful learners to move towards the positive end as they progress. A course need not necessarily lead to a very positive evaluation, which, in many instances, may be regarded as excessive. On the other hand, a course which leads many students to a negative or very negative evaluation must be considered, on the affective score, a failure. The consequences of such negativism for public attitudes to the language should be considered a matter of serious concern.

4.1.2   Socio-cultural competence as an affective goal

Culture and society as an affective goal cannot be strictly separated from language as an affective goal. The desire to communicate, identify, or integrate with members of the target speech community is both an important objective in its own right and a concomitant of language learning success. In the first place, it is an important task of language teaching to orient learners towards the speech community whose language is being studied. A language course can cultivate mild or strong interest in one or several speech communities, or it may be conducted as if the people whose language is being learnt did not exist.

In their attitudes to people in the foreign language community and their ways of living, learners are likely to go through different phases which parallel their affective development in relation to the language. To begin with, students may experience a sense of strangeness, particularly over aspects of life which are

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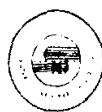
different from those they are accustomed to at home. The lifestyle may initially be as puzzling as the language. The goal should be not only to promote an intellectual understanding of the social rules that guide the target society, but to enable students to identify or empathize with that society or individual members of it. Negatively, the opposite would be for the language learner to dissociate himself from the target language community and its members and, at worst, to despise them or laugh at them. Developing a positive outlook towards the culture of a community whose language we are studying does not mean that we should be totally uncritical, nor that we should accept all features or aspects of life in that society. But, to begin with, it is more important to understand and empathize than to sit in judgment, either positively or negatively. Excessive adulation is as much to be avoided as severe condemnation.

It would be difficult to learn the language of speech community one totally rejected. An exclusively negative approach to the speech community and its life can hardly be considered an appropriate goal. If it occurs as an outcome of a language program, it can only be regarded as a regrettable result which should be remedied. At the end of the continuum, excessive and uncritical adulation of a speech community on the part of an over-enthusiastic teacher is not likely to be accompanied by a positive outlook among students; more probably it will produce unexpected negative effects, antagonizing students, and perhaps lead to the rejection of the speech community. A neutral, non-judgmental, or positive orientation should be viewed as the most constructive socio-cultural goal to pursue.

4.1.3 Language learning as an affective goal

Finally, bringing the learner to approach the language learning task itself in a positive spirit and with an appreciation of what is involved can also be regarded as an affective goal. The learner should be prepared to take the steps needed to learn the language successfully, to co-operate with the teacher and to overcome difficulties, and eventually to study the language independently and to continue to learn even after the stimulus of an organized course is no longer available.

The three affective goals proposed by Stern can be summarized as the
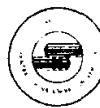
development of three sets of attitudes; language teaching should cultivate positive attitudes to the target language, to the speakers of that language, and to the self as learner.

4.2 Motivating learners: creating disequilibration

As we have mentioned earlier, constructivists view motivation for construction of knowledge to be largely an internal affair. To the extent that educators are interested in helping children acquire knowledge, they must develop methods that encourage disequilibrium and permit children to carry out, in their own ways, the reestablishment of equilibrium through active methods (assimilation and accommodation). A part of the constructivist teacher's job is to recognize what provides disequilibrium or curiosity for learners and how to use that in a valid way. Another part of the job is to create disequilibrium where there is none.

A case in point is to make good use of interests. Most of us recognize the power of our interests to spark efficient learning. When pursuing our interests, often outside of a school setting, we put great energy and enthusiasm into what we do and learn. FL teachers have not seriously pursued the potential of language learners' interests for facilitating the developmental goals and skill and content goals they want learners to strive for. Interest is a topic that has been paid too much lip service to in FLT. Piaget argued strongly for using learners' interests for improved learning (1970):

> The new school (constructivist school), ... appeals to real activity, to spontaneous work based on personal need and interest. This does not mean ... that active education requires that children should do anything they want, ... it requires above all that they should will what they do; that they should act, not that they should be acted upon. Need, the interest that is the resultant of need, ... that is the factor that will make a reaction into an authentic act ... .The law of interest is thus ... the sole pivot around which the whole system should turn. (1970:151-152)

Interests, unique to the individual child, often reflect disequilibrium and are

affectively charged sources of motivation. Learners are interested in learning what is meaningful for them and learning it in the way that is meaningful for them. It is of value in FLT to legitimize and make productive use of interests. Interests can be viewed as part of the learners' emerging lesson plans for their personal development. Although learners' interests and teachers' curricular goals rarely fit neatly, creative autonomous teachers can find ways to cultivate students' interests, allow students to pursue their interests and accomplish the teachers' goals as well.

4.3 Encouraging affective autonomy

Intellectual autonomy, with both a cognitive and an affective component, is important because it permits learners to learn how to most efficiently find paths for effective learning and development, to function as problem solvers. This is what we mean by *learning how to learn*. It also works to create a disposition of self-confidence and thus to keep gates open to new possibilities. Clearly, and contrary to the views of some, Piaget's notion of autonomy is not an individualistic, nonsocial concept. Fully developed, it is an individual's disposition that values cooperation with others, mutual respect relations, and shared values made one's own.

Affective autonomy arises out of mutual respect relationships. These relations are first established with peers and later with adults. In a FL classroom, what is crucial for encouraging learners' affective autonomy goes to the establishment of a healthy teacher-learner relationship. The teacher-learner relationship does not necessarily have to be one of the controller and the controlled but does permit negotiation between the students and the teachers that leads to a recognition of the students as legitimate members of a decision-making body concerning their learning.

The language learner who is highly self-autonomous is able to control his feelings and emotions, encourage themselves in difficulties and hold a positive attitude towards setbacks. He also feels internally motivated for learning and is eager to learn and enjoys learning.
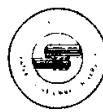
Chapter Five Conclusion

We have begun our discussion with an overview of certain philosophical and psychological schools of thought that have in significant ways influenced our understanding of affect or emotion, with particular regard to the role of affect in FLL. Different treatments of affect necessarily reflect differences in the understanding of it. Though it has drawn considerable attention from both theorists and practitioners, affect has been more often than not assigned a subsidiary role in FLL as a facilitator or debilitator. Besides, work done in this area is of a great variety on one hand, and lacks in systematicity on the other hand. To fill in this gap, Piaget's theory of intellectual development, to be more specific, that of affective development, is introduced to provide a coherent theoretical base on which a fuller understanding and investigation of the role of affect in FLL and FLT are possible.

Constructivism, whose major claim is that we construct our meanings or in other words we make our own sense of the world, has shed light on and caused a fundamental change in education. Knowledge is no longer seen as transmitted but constructed by individuals. Constructivism has been classified mainly as a school of cognitive psychology, in contrast with information-processing, connectionism etc. Jean Piaget known for his constructivist theory of cognitive development has indeed made great contributions to human understanding of themselves. However, little attention has been paid to the other aspect of his constructivist theory which is no less illuminating, i.e. theory of affective development, which together with that of cognitive development forms a unity of the theory of intellectual development.

With regard to FLL, it involves the whole person and the process is characterized by dialectic development of both cognition and affect. But for a long time it has been reduced to a process of skill acquisition and content learning. Despite the occasional stress on affective factors, they have been treated as subordinate and irrelevant to the goals of language learning. Throughout it all we have found it rewarding studying the role of affect in FLL employing Piaget's theory of affective development. According to Piaget's affective developmental

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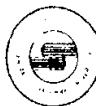
stages, affect not only stimulates or hinders cognitive development but also develops in the same sense cognition develops. Affective schemata are constantly constructed and reconstructed through affective assimilation and accommodation to establish affective equilibrium. As for the relationship between cognitive and affective development, Piaget argues that it is impossible to find behavior arising from affectivity alone without any cognitive elements or behavior composed only of cognitive elements. Piaget's theory gives credit for affective development of its own right. Accompanying cognitive development is a process of affective development.

A constructivist framework has been put forward by the present author, embracing the inseparability of cognition and affect as the foundation, construction of affect as the process and affective autonomy as the product. Language learners construct and reconstruct their self-concept and adjust their locus of control in the learning experience. They need be motivated to restructure their knowledge. In Piaget's theory, motivation is in essence disequilibrium. Learners are motivated if they feel disequilibrated. Interest, success and cooperation can all create disequilibrium and hence motivation for construction and reconstruction of knowledge. Learners who develop high affective autonomy in the process tend to be fond of learning and enjoy learning.

Language teachers, taking a Piagetian perspective, would set up affective goals for language learning, create disequilibrium by various means and encourage learners' affective autonomy.

Piaget's theory of affective development contributes a lot to the legitimization of affect in education and hence in the field of FLL and FLT research. Still there is much room for improvement since it is incomplete mainly due to Piaget's later cognitive focus of research. The present thesis is only a beginning to explore the great potential of affect in FLL from a constructivist perspective; it would be worthwhile if it could serve to draw more attention to and stimulate more research into this area.
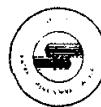
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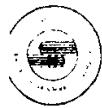
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