

Chapter 2

Emotion Universals—Argument from Nature

2.1 Universalism in the Psychological Research on Emotions

Although anthropologists included emotions in the scope of their research, the subject has always been a minor one for them. Emotions only mattered as one of the factors influencing the formation of the language and culture and regulating behaviors within investigated communities. In psychology on the other hand, emotions have been one of the major subjects of interest since the formal inception of the discipline. Throughout its history the scholarly thinking about emotions in psychology followed the typical pattern of back and forth of opposing ideas gaining and losing ground in what was considered the scientific mainstream. Apart from the period when the behaviorist and neobehaviorist models of human psyche dominated psychology, the subject of emotions enjoyed a remarkably steady status as one of the definitional aspects of human nature (Averill 1983). In the second half of the twentieth century emotions all but took center stage owing mainly to the academic and popular appeal of Paul Ekman's theory of universal basic emotions. The late twentieth and early twenty-first century theories of emotion formed the new mainstream of psychological research. And while these theories stood up on their own on the strength of empirical evidence, they often sought validation in other disciplines and in the past, mainly in the works of the forefathers of their discipline, Charles Darwin, William James, and Wilhelm Wundt. What follows is a historical overview of the development of contemporary theories of emotion. Their roots are traced back to the forefathers of modern discipline of psychology, through the reductionist paradigms of the twentieth century to the revisionist-integrative approaches of the twenty-first. The discussion of models of emotion processing will be left for Chap. 4, while here I will focus specifically on the formation of emotion theory within psychology and how that was influenced by anthropology.

2.1.1 *The Great Pioneer—Charles Darwin’s Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals*

The first study of human emotions which approached the subject in a focused and systematic manner actually predates the emergence of psychology as a discrete scientific discipline. Published in 1872, *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals* by Charles Darwin remains one of the most prescient documents of its time regarding emotions. It embraced the mental, physiological, and expressive aspects of emotions and anticipated many of the issues that would trouble and divide the nascent science of psychology for decades to come (Hess and Thibault 2009). Darwin was very firmly a product of his times, a gentleman scientist with a keen interest in a number of disciplines in the broadly understood natural sciences ranging from geology to medicine. The knowledge he gained from these various disciplines allowed him to create a uniquely, for his time, comprehensive and forward understanding of human emotions and their origins. Although his method of collecting data¹ (Darwin 1872) leaves a lot to be desired from the position of modern scientific sensibilities, the insights into the nature of emotions Darwin gave his contemporaries are decidedly astute from the selfsame point of view.

Darwin considered human emotions from the perspective of his own theory of descent with modification,² and *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals* hinges entirely on a complete acceptance of the theory. He saw a clear continuity from the more whole-body visceral manifestations of emotion in animals distantly related to humans to the more detached and psychologically elaborate human emotions. Modern interpretations of Darwin’s work pay a lot of attention to his in-depth analysis facial expressions of emotion, to the detriment of his work concerning a broad spectrum of other nonverbal expressions of emotion. Among other telling examples, Darwin described dancing as an almost primal manifestation of “joy, high spirits, love, tender feelings, devotion.” He listed physiological reactions beyond full conscious control, such as crying as expressive of “suffering of body and mind,” suggesting the psychosomatic nature of emotional causality. He even mentioned various aspects of speech tone characteristic for the expression of certain emotions, such as “choked up voice” accompanying different manifestations of *anger*. While he did focus on the face naturally as the most expressive body part engaged directly in communication, Darwin already appreciated the visceral, broadly somatic nature of the emotion experience and perception.

Certain ideas presented in *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals* foreshadowed the shape of things to come in the psychological study of emotions.

¹Though correspondence with scientists and artists around the world.

²In deference to Darwin’s cautiousness, I will use his preferred term for the process. Contrary to the popular belief, he did not like the term “evolution”. He hardly used it in any of his writings on the subject, and it did not appear at all in his major work on the subject, *On the Origin of Species* (1859).

There are indications in the book that Darwin understood that how emotions are experienced vs. how they are expressed are two interrelated but discrete problems. Likewise, he observed that while humans experience emotion recognition in others as easy, they struggle to put names to the emotions or verbally define them. Psychologists, being humans, would valiantly try and inevitably fail to come to a consensus on the definition of “emotion” for decades to come (see Kleinginna and Kleinginna 1981 for equally informative and entertaining historical review of the existing definitions). Darwin believed that both social processes that would later become known as socialization and enculturation, as well as biological and neural processes play important roles in emotion mechanisms. Social psychology of emotions rested on the former while theories such as Ekman’s basic emotions sought validation in the latter.

Finally, Darwin proposed that there exist a range of innate emotions, inherited by modern humans from our animal ancestors through descent with modification. He believed that at their core those innate emotions would be panhuman, and suggested that their existence could be proven by comparing the evidence from the Western world to evidence collected from remote preferentially preliterate cultures. The idea that emotions are universal and the universality can be proven by comparing the literate and preliterate emotional expression, particularly in the face would become the principal direction of the modern emotion research led by Paul Ekman. Researchers, however, tend to focus so fiercely on the chance of discovering a universal principle that they often overlook the crucial caveat Darwin had ascribed to this postulate. The caveat was that languages vary immensely in their patterns of emotional expressions and universal basic emotions could be used as a sensible *tertium comparationis* to make meaningful discrimination of the varying characteristic of emotional expressions across languages (Darwin 1872). In other words, Darwin’s ideas appear to have more in common with those Edward Sapir than those of later reductionist theorists of emotion who claim for themselves Darwin’s intellectual legacy regarding the nature of emotions (Ekman 1998).

Darwin was not a psychologist, but he was the first scientist of the modern age to tackle emotions as an actual object of serious scientific scrutiny. His broad and varied education alongside the means and time afforded by his social status allowed him to conceive a holistic and largely coherent theory of emotions. This theory grounded itself in both social and physiological sciences and thus anticipated many of the problems future researcher of emotion would face. Though there is no indication that this was his intention, Darwin’s theory of emotions predicted both the central focus and the direction psychology would eventually take in their empirical pursuit of the core nature of emotional phenomena. Much to the detriment of the import of *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals*, the book would gradually come to be read only selectively in a manner betraying confirmation bias. Only recently did the whole of Darwin’s work on emotions start going through a modest revival, with all of its depth and subtlety coming to be appreciated. Yet it remains to be seen if his confidently drawn catalog of bodily expressions (other than the facial kind) of emotion can find empirical confirmation in the psychological research of emotional expressions.

2.1.2 The Forefathers of Psychology: Wilhelm Wundt and William James

The period between Darwin and the mid-twentieth century neobehaviorist dip of scientific interest in emotions was a busy time for psychology. For one thing, the discipline was formally conceived as a discrete discipline of social sciences. It earned the recognition of the Nobel Prize committee. It produced two prominent scholars who would forever after bear the laurel of the forefathers of psychology: Wilhelm Wundt and William James. With the works of those two men the psychology was legitimized as a true scientific discipline with a solid theoretical foundation and a drive toward experimental verification of claims. Owing to them, psychology was an empirical science since its inception. Wundt and James would start psychology and watch it grow into maturity in a rapidly changing world. The first half of the twentieth century was a time of great social and ideological turmoil. During this time, as psychology was establishing itself, the geopolitical scales would tip in favor of America making it the leader in world economy, science, and popular culture alike. Popular culture itself would start playing a role in how academic ideas formed and how they were pursued from the selection of research questions to the question of ethics.

Both Wundt and James lived out the most productive periods of their lives at the turn of the twentieth century. Hence, their work by and large sits half-way between Darwin's broad and holistic ideal of a nineteenth century gentleman scientist and the fragmented and highly specialized multiverse of modern science. Wundt and James were—to put a modern term to good anachronistic use—interdisciplinary in their approaches, drawing ideas from multiple disciplines such as physiology and medicine to explain the investigated psychological phenomena. But they also identified themselves primarily as dedicated psychologists and while their opinion of the nature of psychological processes differed, they had a lot in common. Both majored in medicine, though neither took up the practice, both specialized in philosophy and physiology before psychology. Both used their training in medicine and physiology to ground their claims about the human psyche in the ultimate universal principle of human biology (Goodman 2013; Kim 2014). Both men, in true nineteenth century scholar fashion, took interest in the buzz academic subjects of their period. Wundt engaged in politics with unfortunate consequences for his good name, as his theories of culture and society were adopted by the early twentieth century German nationalists' "virulently anti-Semitic" rhetoric and policies (Kim 2014). James risked his frail health by venturing into the Amazonian forest on a naturalist specimen collection expedition with the geological superstar of the day, Louis Agassiz (Goodman 2013). And in true twentieth century scientist fashion both Wundt and James had sweeping and complex but thematically focused visions of what their newfangled discipline of psychology encompassed. Likewise in true twentieth century scientist fashion each had highly idiosyncratic ideas about what emotions were and what role they played in the human psyche, and these ideas would prove enduring in the course of emotion research later on in the twentieth century.

2.1.2.1 The Great Teacher—Wilhelm Maximilian Wundt

It would hardly be an overstatement to say that the title of the father of psychology has been used so often with respect to Wilhelm Wundt that it has almost lost all of its weight. However, in the case of Wundt, even fully appreciated the title barely hints at the magnitude of his influence upon the young discipline of psychology he helped create. Throughout an incredible 65 years of active and prolific career he produced an estimated 53,000 pages of publications, supervised, and promoted 186 Ph.D. dissertations, and established the first experimental psychology laboratory in the world. Crucially, he also he persuaded his university to recognize his laboratory as such, which was a first for any type of social science (Kim 2014). Even by the demanding standards of his day, rich though it was in voluminous scientific outputs, Wundt was in a class of his own. His charisma and innovations were nothing short of formative inspiration for William James, who even used some of Wundt's works in his lectures. Wundt's students would staff many of the newly forming psychology departments in universities in both Europe and the United States.

Wundt's theory of emotions was remarkably progressive, especially in hindsight. Wundt postulated that psychology was the only discipline which could intimate the nature of the human psyche competently with all the strictures of the scientific method (Wundt 1902). By implementing the scientific method he believed he would equip his discipline with the kind of tools that would make its data-driven conclusions valid. He also believed emotions to be vitally important aspects of the human psyche and that they influence significantly how humans think and act (Wundt 1894). The investigation of emotions was therefore of vital importance for psychology as well, and meant that understanding human emotions would help us understand human behavior. The latter was particularly important since Wundt proposed that emotions can and often do influence our thoughts and behavior subconsciously. He differentiated between emotions, of which we were consciously aware and feelings of which we were not (Wundt 1894). Not incidentally, this distinction presaged the inevitable dispute between psychologists regarding the primacy of affect versus cognition in emotional processing exemplified by the debate between Zajonc (1980) and Lazarus (1984).

Wundt's idea of the nature of emotions an intriguing subject. Unfortunately, he never consolidated his thoughts on the matter the way James did, rather he would reflect on it in his many publications. The idea emerging from his writings is quite complex and appears to anticipate several crucial developments in emotion research. Wundt proposed, echoing Darwin that certain emotions are innate, defined by human physiology. He elaborated that idea by proposing that each of these emotions has its dedicated facial expression, likewise innate (Wundt 1894). This was in line with the classic argument from nature, a fundamentally universalist idea which would become the heart of Paul Ekman's basic universal emotions theory much later. On the other hand Wundt embraced the argument from nurture as well, stating that culture and socialization play equally important role in shaping human emotion expressions. And yet he believed there ought to be a sort of universal principle controlling the emotion processes. For him the principle was that

whatever the variation in the form of expression, all emotions were at their somatic origin *sorrow* and *joy*. For him those two were core emotions from which all others developed. He would go on to specify that hedonic “pleasure” and perceived “intensity” thereof can be universally determined for all human emotions (Wundt 1902). This idea would later bloom into the dimensional theory of emotions.

Wundt’s idea about emotions was thus that they are complex phenomena which ontologically come from *sorrow* and *joy*, all have the fundamental properties of hedonic “pleasure” and “intensity.” All emotions are innate, but they are also all subject to the social-cultural molding. For select innate emotions there exists innate facial expression configurations which are likely universal for all mankind. Emotions are a vital aspect of human psyche, and hence also the study of psychology. Psychology is an empirical science and obeys the scientific method. These were Wundt’s convictions, and this is the kind of perspective and knowledge he imparted upon his many students. Some of his ideas, such as the converging influences of both nature and nurture upon emotion expressions are only now gaining widespread acceptance within the revisionist-integrative models such as the conceptual act model (Barrett 2011). Others have been implemented widely in various reductionist emotion perception theories. Following closely in his footsteps but on the other side of the Atlantic, William James would become to American psychology what Wundt was for Europe.

2.1.2.2 The Great Writer—William James

William James is a deservedly revered father figure for American psychology. However, his influence upon the development of psychology as a discipline was of an entirely different kind than that of Wundt. James opened the first experimental psychology laboratory in the United States and he wrote and lectured on psychology and an impressive range of other subjects, but this is about the extent of similarities between the two men in terms of how they influenced their successors. James is prized for his signal contributions to philosophy and psychology, but also to linguistics and sociology (Parajes 2002). His take on the philosophical idea of pragmatism, first proposed by Charles Sanders Pierce, had a definite influence on his concept of psychology as a scientific discipline. James exercised his intellectual influence over psychology mainly through writing, specifically through his magnum opus *The Principles of Psychology*. Ordered by the publisher Henry Holt, the book was intended to become a college psychology textbook (Goodman 2013). The process of writing the book took James 12 years, broken up by bouts of chronic depression and neurasthenia³ which plagued James all his life (Parajes

³Neurasthenia was a frequent diagnosis at the time and it remains a recognized medical condition until today. World Health Organization’s International Classification of Diseases (ICD) defines it as a psychosomatic disorder characterized by mental and physical fatigue, distractedness, stress-related drop in immunity, often accompanied by depression and emotional instability. Although James suffered greatly from this disorder, it likely saved him from being drafted to participate in the American Civil War (WHO 2015).

2002). The result was a two-volume creation of twelve hundred pages total, made unique as much by its comprehensive scope as by its literary value.⁴ It was published in full in 1890 and has not really been out of print since.

The Principles of Psychology exemplifies James' introspective method of "doing psychology." James used the evidence of his own senses and his immense knowledge on a variety of subjects in equal measure. He was a voracious acquirer of knowledge, traveling repeatedly to the antebellum Europe, then the capital of world learning to take stock of the cutting edge of science himself (Goodman 2013). He took interest in the recent developments in neurology and physiology, and both appear to have influenced his understanding of emotions. James proposed that emotions are temporally complex phenomena which progress from an automatic physiological-behavioral reflexive reaction to a stimulus into cognitive awareness and conscious control. The reason or conscious awareness and control can, in moments highly charged with emotion, be overwhelmed and become a "passive spectator" to the powerful physiological-behavioral emotional displays (James 1890). However, he also believed that in most cases reason can suppress and modify the automatic emotional outbursts (James 1893). He believed this cognitive-affective balance of power in human expressions of emotion to be a product of adaptive fit, an idea borrowed from Darwin (James 1890). Furthermore, James postulated, in contrast to the leading neurological theories of the time, that emotions do not have dedicated centers in the brain (James 1890). This may seem obvious, since his definition of emotion prioritizes preconscious somatic reflexes, which are neurologically dispersed. But solid evidence for this idea (e.g., Panksepp 1998) and wide acceptance of it in psychology (e.g., Zimbardo et al. 2009) only came a century after James first proposed it.

For Wundt there were two distinct affective phenomena—the preconscious feelings and conscious emotions. For James there was one phenomenon, emotions, which progressed in time from a preconscious to a conscious state of awareness. While these definitions are not entirely incompatible, James' idea allows for a more complex and dynamic system of emotional reactivity. There is some indication in James' work that he believed emotional excitation to be a continuous state, never fading completely, merely rising and falling in intensity and conscious perceptibility in response to stimuli. And the stimuli could be both external, coming from the objective reality, and internal, coming from the inner world of thoughts and memories. The emotions that can be thus evoked by such stimuli were of two kinds. One was a limited set of "coarse" emotions—primal, innate in the Darwinian sense, powerful and well defined in terms of bodily expression. These

⁴All of the James children were seemingly bound for excellence in literature. William's brother was the popular writer Henry James, and his sister was the now increasingly appreciated diarist Alice James. William himself was deeply dissatisfied with *The Principles*, however, despite the praise heaped upon it. Wilhelm Wundt praised it as literary tour-de-force, but he was also mostly condescending regarding its portent for psychology; as he put it: "It is literature, it is beautiful, but it is not psychology" (Parajes 2002).

are, according to James: “*anger, fear, love, hate, joy, grief, shame, pride, and their varieties*” (James 1893). Any and all other emotions of more intellectual or aesthetic nature are much less defined, more subtle and ambiguous both in perception and in expression. Significantly James believed that it would be hard to determine a set of necessary and sufficient requirements to define specific emotions in a way that would apply to all human beings. Emotions were profoundly subjective and subject to so much variation within individuals that establishing a definition of an exemplary prototypical emotion would be, for all intents and purposes, impossible (James 1890).

Intriguingly, James was aware of the existence of potentially nonequivalent emotion terms in different languages, but he did not pursue the subject. His focus was on the mechanisms commanding emotional processing, not on the names human imagination might have given them. He understood emotions as ubiquitous, ever-present and continuous phenomena, not of transient but temporally dynamic nature. The emotions in his understanding were a constant but not constantly conscious presence in our lives, perceptions, and thoughts. James observed that emotions vary in intensity of perception and expression that their expression is partially subject to conscious control. And though he understood the deep subjectivity and possibly the cultural variability of emotions, he attempted to classify them according to innateness and intensity. Crucially, he put forward the idea that emotions are primarily automatic somatic reflexes. This idea would become the foundation of what later became known as the James–Lange theory of emotion.⁵ This theory in itself would become a staple of theoretical psychology rhetoric, but it would be the idea of discrete “coarse” emotions that would have the strongest impact on emotion research. This, however is a topic to be discussed in the context of Paul Ekman’s theory of universal basic emotions.

2.1.3 Between the Dawn and Rebirth—From the Forefathers to Paul Ekman

William James died in 1910 and Wilhelm Wundt followed 10 years later. With them went any serious or dedicated effort for emotion research. Many factors contributed to such state of things. For one thing, even for Wundt and James emotions were but one of the many aspects of human psyche that psychology should investigate. For another, psychology was still a young science at the beginning of the twentieth century, when scientific consensus or consistent methodology for the entire discipline did not yet establish themselves. Furthermore there was the

⁵Professor Carl Lange specialized in medicine and investigated emotions from the perspective of outward expression, while James tackled it from the internal, psychological perspective. Both appear to have come to very similar conclusions about the primarily somatic nature of emotion at around the same time. Hence the name of the theory honors them both in equal measure (Titchener 1914).

global historical context. Psychology as a discipline was barely off the ground when it was subjected to the interbellum political agenda. The Great War was an unprecedented traumatic event for the global population on every level—physical, economical, emotional, and psychological. But those in the know in the world of politics knew the Armistice was just that, a temporary and uneasy truce. The world would go to war again, and that meant keeping up the fighting spirit of the already bled nations. For example, cases of active suppression of research on what was then known as shell shock and what is now usually called posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are fairly well documented (Jones et al. 2007). In plain terms, psychologists had plenty to do without investigating emotions, and investigating subjects that would highlight the reality of emotional trauma was not favorably looked at by the powers responsible for research funding.

The psychology mainstream took a deliberate turn toward topics of empiricism and behaviorism, both of which had a great potential for legitimizing psychology in the eyes of the general public. Behaviorism and neobehaviorism which ruled the mainstream psychology between the 1920s and 1950s considered emotions no more than an “intervening variable” (Averill 1983). However, several signal developments both in theory and laboratory practice in emotion research did take place in this period. The 1920s saw the development of the Cannon–Bard theory of emotion in critical response to the James–Lange theory and landmark experiments by Watson and Landis. Walter B. Cannon and his doctoral student Philip Bard were dissatisfied with the James–Lange postulates that the physiological sensation should precede conscious cognitive awareness of emotion (Cannon 1931). Their idea was that the physiological excitation and conscious awareness in response to a stimulus occurred simultaneously and that constituted emotions. Present-day critics point out that the main weakness of the Cannon–Bard theory was its over-extension. Cannon and Bard modeled their theory on experiments with decorticated animals expressing a limited range of basic emotions (*anger, fear, joy, and disgust*), but extended their theory to humans and all emotional states (Dror 2014). While the contemporary criticisms are solid, the Cannon–Bard theory of emotions stands as both an important step in emotion theory and a signal of one of the perennial problems in the field: the definition of emotion. Both Cannon and Bard were primarily physiologists, James and Lange were primarily psychology-oriented, and their postulates reflect their training and their fundamental disagreement on what “emotions” actually are.

John B. Watson’s fear conditioning experiments published in 1920 (Watson and Rayner 1920) illustrated the fact that not all emotional reactions are innate. In what is now known as the Little Albert experiments Watson demonstrated that fear can be evoked in response to completely harmless and unthreatening stimuli through basic Pavlovian conditioning, and that conditioning is subject to generalization. Landis (1924) provided initial empirical evidence toward the existence of dedicated and specialized facial expressions for discrete emotions through a series of inventive but disturbing tasks, one of which included the participants cutting off the heads of live rats. Both Watson’s and Landis’ experiments were landmarks in

terms of research methodology and garnered some infamy regarding the ethics in their research conduct.⁶ The fact of the matter was, however, that ethical standards in human subjects research at the time did not yet exist. The landmark of raising ethical awareness in this area came much later in the form of the Tuskegee syphilis experiment (Skloot 2010) which ran between 1932 and 1972. However, psychology as a discipline was coming of age and once again the Henry Holt publishing company hand a hand in setting educational standards. In 1938, Robert Sessions Woodworth's *Experimental Psychology* came out and became one of the main psychology textbooks for a fresh generation of psychologists. Comprehensive and thoroughly practical, the book emphasized functional knowledge and empirical skill, and due to its status soon became known as the "Columbia Bible"⁷ (Winston 1990). Among its educational merits, the book contained several ideas that would be picked up and developed once emotion became the mainstream of psychology research in the second half of the twentieth century. Most notably, Woodworth postulated six basic emotions corresponding to discrete facial expressions (Woodworth 1938), an idea later pursued and elevated by Paul Ekman.

The 1940s was a rather quiet period for emotion research in psychology, though overall the academic world went through a crucial transformation. While the hint of a global power shift had been in the air ever since the end of the Great War, in the late 1940s the shift became complete. Both the economic and the academic leadership shifted to the United States. Studies of great importance in neuropsychology and traumatology were at the time being carried out in the USSR by Alexander Luria (Luria 1947), but they remained largely isolated from the global academic world behind the Iron Curtain. The center of gravity for the study of psychology and emotions lay in the USA. 1950s and early 1960s again saw crucial developments that would prove influential upon the shape of the things to come. In 1954, Harold Schlosberg proposed a three-dimensional theory of emotions, which postulated that however varied emotions may be, it should always be possible to determine three properties, or dimensions, of their affective meaning. These dimensions, conceptualized as continua, were *attention-rejection*, hedonic *pleasantness-unpleasantness*,

⁶Watson's experiments and Little Albert's reactions were captured on film and can easily be obtained today from a variety of online sources. The video allows us to assess the commendable coherence and consequence with which the experimental procedure was conducted. However, the video also reveals the disturbing levels of distress Albert was subjected to, and an analysis of study background reveals that no informed consent from the child's parents was ever obtained. Landis' experiments were a model of effective emotion evocation, but the procedures involved in the evoking stage and in subject recruitment were highly questionable. One of the procedures to evoke disgust had the participants take a live rat and cut its head off with a kitchen knife. The subject screening was so poor it allowed the participation of a teen referred to Landis' Psychology Department with an initial diagnosis of emotional instability. Both experiments are today often featured in research ethics seminars as examples of various facets of unethical research conduct in Human Subject Research.

⁷Prior to being published fragments of the textbook circulated among the Columbia University students, who found it of great value in their study of psychology. Hence the name "Columbia Bible".

and *sleep-tension* related to physiological arousal (Schlosberg 1954). The same year saw Brown and Lenneberg's attempt to operationalize linguistic relativity as an experimental hypothesis. Two years later in 1956 *Language, Thought, and Reality* was published (Whorf 1956), and in 1958 the process of vulgarization of the anthropological principle of linguistic relativity was cemented by Brown's formulation of its deterministic reinterpretation (Brown 1958). Finally, 1956 was the year of the MIT *Symposium on Information Theory* during which Noam Chomsky presented his paper "Three models for the description of language." This and the papers by Miller and Newell, and by Simon collectively mark the intellectual beginning of new chapters in linguistics and psychology. In psychology they started the subdiscipline of cognitive psychology (Eysenck and Keane 1995), and in linguistics they started the so-called "Chomskyan Revolution" (see Chap. 3).

The 1960s would become the decade when emotions started garnering more and more attention from psychologists as well as neurologists and specialists in related fields. In 1962, Stanley Schachter and Jerome E. Singer reworked the James–Lange and the Cannon–Bard theories of emotion into a new one now bearing their names. They were struck by the variety of emotions and emotion-like phenomena (moods, feelings) which made defining emotions such an elusive goal (Schachter and Singer 1962). They came to the conclusion that cognitive appraisal or labeling was the key to emotional perception. What made an emotion was a state of arousal specific for that emotion with a certain cognition and a label imposed upon it. Cognitive awareness of what a given physiological arousal is caused by allows us to consciously interpret that arousal as a specific emotion appropriate for a given situation. Their theory was the culmination of several decades of emotion theory and research, still rooted in physiological reasoning, but already making use of the evidence for neurochemical reactivity of emotions.⁸ This theory was on the cusp of a new wave in psychological mainstream. Jerome E. Singer was instrumental in the rapid rise of cognitive psychology, the new subdiscipline kick-started in 1956 at the *MIT Symposium of Information Theory*. That subdiscipline would now take the mainstream and focus increasingly on emotions as objects of both research and theoretical work. This trend would peak toward the end of the decade with seminal works on facial expressions of emotion by Paul Ekman. It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that the next four decades would revolve around Paul Ekman and his universal basic emotions—sometimes agreeing with him, sometimes battling his uncompromising universalism.

2.1.4 *The Universalist—Paul Ekman*

Few psychologists in history could boast quite the level and scope of academic, professional, and even popular success that Paul Ekman has achieved. His idea of six universal basic emotions recognizable from the face regardless of cultural or

⁸They used epinephrine/placebo injections and suggestion manipulation to evoke different emotions from the same neurochemical/physiological arousal.

linguistic differences had an undeniable appeal in the second half of the twentieth century in the boom period of emotion research due to its simplicity, easily definable aspects and straightforward nature that translated well into the language of research hypotheses. His Facial Action Coding System (FACS) remains to this day one of the finest tools for the meticulous description of facial expression in existence (Sayette et al. 2001), and has found multiple uses in matters of US national security and defense as well as in commercial environments (Fischer 2013). His ideas about facial cues of deception have even been popularized in lay consciousness through TV shows such as Fox's *Lie to me* (Fischer 2013), and through his popular honors such as being named one of the TIME Magazine's top 100 most influential men in the world in 2009 (Taylor 2009). The majority of the honors he has received were on behalf of his work on deception, but his research on the nature of emotions also left a great and lasting impact on the discipline of psychology. In its fundamental form, his theory of universal basic emotions went from strength to strength. From a break-out new idea in 1969, to an introductory psychology textbook standard in the 1970s to canon understanding of emotions in psychology in the late 1980s (Russell 1994). Well into the twenty-first century his theory was so entrenched in the mainstream psychology of emotions that it became referred to as *the standard view*.

Ekman's early publications on the nature of emotion showed a mild reconciliatory position between Woodworth's early categorical view and Schlosberg's early dimensional view (Ekman and Friesen 1967). They also focused, true to Darwin's description of the matter, on a broad range of body language expressions of emotions (Ekman 1965). This almost noncommittal and broad position was then brushed aside by a much more focused and radical idea in 1969. That year the "Pan-Cultural Elements in Facial Displays of Emotion" (Ekman et al. 1969) appeared in *Science*, presenting the results of one of a series of studies of facial expressions conducted among the Fore people of Papua New Guinea. The results indicated that there exists a range of universally recognizable facial expressions for a limited range of basic emotions. These expressions are innate, universal and universally recognized regardless of cultural or linguistic differences. These basic emotions postulated from the start were: *anger, fear, disgust, sadness, surprise, and happiness* (Ekman et al. 1969). The premise here was boldly stated, simple, and translated well to the language of research hypotheses, which increased its appeal to prospective emotion researchers. The initial formulations of this universalist theory of emotions were not radically opposed to issues of linguistic or cultural relativity, which were treated as peripheral to the theory. Still, explicitly and implicitly, Ekman's theory was built as a critical response to the anthropological findings supporting relativistic effects through evidence of cultural specificity of emotion. In the course of his long and prolific career Ekman's attitude to this cultural specificity alternative to his universalism would vary from disdainful (Ekman 1998)⁹ to positively vitriolic (Ekman 1994a).¹⁰

⁹This was, somewhat ironically, in an Afterword to an edition of Charles Darwin's *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animal*. The disdainful comments were directed at the notable anthropologist Margaret Mead.

¹⁰His acerbic response to Russell's detailed critique of his work.

Regardless of his attitude, however, Ekman could not negate the large and growing body of evidence for certain degree of variability and cultural and linguistic relativity in emotional phenomena. Anthropological evidence of relativistic effects in culture- and language- specific emotion expressions was both solid and compelling. Apart from the evidence from remote cultures such as the Ifaluk or the Utku, there was the evidence of high variability of emotion concepts and their use within languages. Wallace and Carson (1973) tallied around 2,000 English dictionary items with emotional meaning while documenting different patterns of their use depending on the users' professions. The simplicity and focus of Ekman's universalism, it quickly became apparent, were both its strength and weakness. The theory was simple, but to account for all emotional phenomena it would need additional provisions. To address this issue in 1992 Ekman clarified some of the details of his original study with the Fore, reporting that he and his collaborators found various facial expressions for given emotions. For example, they found "more than 60 expressions" for *anger* alone (Ekman 1992). Facial expressions varied within categorical boundaries of basic emotions in a type/token fashion that is the 60 expressions were all tokens of one type: *anger*. The variability was caused, explained Ekman, by display rules which governed how and what emotions can be overtly expressed in what social situations (Ekman 1970). Regarding the variability of emotion terms, Ekman firmly declared his theory refers to the psychosomatic phenomena, not the labels conventionally used to refer to them. He used the terms as useful simulacra for the discussion of the underlying emotional phenomena (Ekman 1994b). The different related terms for emotions, he believed, were conceptually arranged in a prototype-like fashion with the basic emotion terms in the prototype position (Ekman 1994a). Only the terms for basic emotions bore the necessary and sufficient semantic characteristics to be prototypes.

The necessary and sufficient criteria for what constitutes the actual psychosomatic and expressive phenomena of emotions were a more difficult subject. Although the pool of six basic emotions—*anger*, *fear*, *disgust*, *sadness*, *surprise*, and *happiness*—never changed, both the total number of "basic emotions" and their definitions fluctuated over time. The initial number of criteria categorizing an emotion as basic was nine (Ekman 1992), but it shifted to seven (Ekman 1994a), then to eleven (Ekman 1999), only to peak at 12 (Ekman and Cordaro 2012). The criteria changed from simple requirements that each emotion has its dedicated and distinct facial expression to including specific appraisals in emotion perception, and concurrent existence in other primates. As he fought his critics and adapted his theory to the new evidence conflicting it, Ekman shifted his position from a radical denial of the existence of any "non-basic" emotions (Ekman 1992) to one where such emotions existed and fulfilled his categorical criteria only partially (Ekman 1994a). As the number of inclusion criteria grew so did the catalog of the basic emotions. It started with six (Ekman et al. 1969), then it doubled (Ekman 1992), then jumped to 15 (Ekman 1999), to culminate implicitly in an even larger number as Ekman (2003) declared the existence of 16 of positive emotions alone. All in all, although in its late form Ekman's universalist theory accounted for the majority of affective phenomena, it lost much of its simplicity and focus which made it so initially appealing.

The fundamental idea behind Ekman's theory of emotions remains that there exists a universal principle behind emotions. The principle dictates that there are at least six discrete emotions with dedicated facial expressions which are panhuman and universally recognized. There is a certain variability in these facial expressions caused by display rules, but these variations fit within the discrete emotion categories in a type/token fashion. The variability of emotions terms is explained through prototypical structures of emotion concepts with the basic emotions occupying the prototype positions. The necessary and sufficient criteria for basic emotion category inclusion vary depending on the version of basic universality, but the initial basic six emotions are always included in the final tally of basic universal emotions. Ekman's theory of emotions shows multiple but highly selective influences. He echoes Darwin, Woodworth, and James in his postulate of dedicated facial expressions for discrete emotions, but rejects Darwin's observation of cultural and linguistic influence on emotion expression and James' postulate of deep subjectivity of emotions. He believes in absolute universality of basic emotions and actively opposes the anthropological evidence of cultural specificity of emotions, but accepts a degree of variability within his discrete emotions category through display rules. Paul Ekman's universal theory of emotion is a powerful one, and there is a substantial body of evidence in its favor, but it is also fairly radical and continues to attract a lot of criticism from multiple fields and angles. The theory dominated much of the psychological research of emotions in the late decades of the twentieth century. It continues to define the field today, though in a different character. The critics and revisionists of Ekman's theory have been increasing in number and strength of arguments, all backed with solid empirical evidence. Starting in 1980s and continuing to this day the new theorists and researchers of emotions have dethroned Paul Ekman's universalism from the position of the ultimate answer¹¹ to the problem of emotions to a theory which is simply not entirely and ultimately right.

2.1.5 *Resistance and Revisionism—The Post-ekmanians*

Just as Paul Ekman's universal basic emotions theory was making its way towards becoming mainstream, alternative theories were being developed on the fringes. Beginning in the 1960s with Magda Arnold's appraisal theory and culminating in the revisionist theories of the 2010s, there were several things that the researchers in these alternatives to *the standard view* had in common. For one thing, all of them addressed crucial questions of the self, culture, language, and context in the perception and expression of emotions. In acknowledging these factors in emotion processing, by their own admission (Russell 1991), they were returning to

¹¹Ekman stated outwardly his desire to give the ultimate answer quite unequivocally: "My goal was to settle the matter [of defining what emotions are] decisively" (Ekman 1998).

positions very much like the original anthropological formulation of the linguistic relativity principle. For another, they all appeared to admit that the problem with Ekman's theory was not that it was wrong. The problem was that it was not entirely right, not the "decisive" one Ekman believed it to be. Virtually all of the advanced versions of the integrative approaches to emotion developed at the turn of the twenty-first century would include Ekman's model on some level as a component of a much more complex emotion recognition system. With the exception of the early works on the appraisal (Arnold 1960) and the dimensional theories of emotion (Schlosberg 1954), all of the alternatives to Ekman's theory formed in a more or less open opposition to it. As Ekman's theory grew into its mainstream position as the standard view, these alternatives took peripheral positions and with time took on a less critical and more revisionist character. The major alternative/revisionist theories were the appraisal theory, the dimensional theory, and the integrative theory of emotion.

2.1.5.1 Appraisal Theory of Emotions

In definitional terms, appraisals may be one of the more elusive concepts in emotion theory. The first comprehensive definition of appraisals was put forward by the psychologist Magda Arnold (1960) and it was, by all accounts, an ambitious attempt to resolve the issue of the entanglement of cognition and emotion. Arnold's theory of emotions was still rooted in the long standing tradition of grounding psychology of emotions in physiology, but it innovatively extended into the behavioral and pragmatic dimensions. For her emotions were temporally and structurally dynamic cognitive-affective states whereby an initially evoked physiological arousal is filtered through appraisals and cognitively framed. Emotions could be evoked by objects interpreted in relation to the perceiving self. Depending on whether the appraisals would frame a given object as "positive" or "negative" an approach or withdrawal behavior might be aroused in the self, subject to renewed interpretations and reappraisals. Appraisals, according to Arnold, are a kind of set of evaluative filters which direct our interpretation of perceptual input in accordance with our knowledge and experience gained in the course of socialization and enculturation. Appraisals are automatic, typically unconscious, but possible to be accessed consciously, and they govern action potentials for approach and withdrawal. Action potentials in turn signify a kind of mobilization, readiness for action depending on the ultimate outcome of appraisal/reappraisal evaluation. Appraisals alone can evoke action tendencies and behavior. And, according to Arnold, they cause emotions. Without physiological arousal in response to an object in relation to self and evaluated through appraisals emotions cannot exist (Arnold 1960). Arnold's appraisals thus have more in common with the kinds of learned automatic mechanisms postulated by Damasio (1994) than with conscious, laborious processing of whys and wherefores of any emotion-evoking object.

There are obvious similarities between the James-Lange theory of emotions and Arnold's appraisal theory. Both have resolved the dual cognitive-affective nature

of emotion perception and expression to the satisfaction of their own postulates. However, for many emotion researchers this Cartesian philosophy relic still formed the axis of a divisive argument over the primacy of affect versus cognition in emotion processing. The most prominent figures in this great primacy debate were Robert Zajonc and Richard S. Lazarus. Interestingly enough, in hindsight their theories were not so much at odds as differentially focused on select aspects of Arnold's appraisal theory (Kappas 2006). Invoking Wundt, Zajonc postulated primacy of affect, which he defined as the state of automatic and irrevocable hedonic evaluation of an object evoking the affect. This evaluation was an ontologically primal to any conscious cognitive mechanism and thus remained primary to cognition (Zajonc 1984). In interpersonal communication the naturally affective non-verbal channel of communication coincides with the typically cognitive verbal channel and thus both permeate each other continuously. And yet Zajonc, much like Lazarus believed cognition and affect to be only partially codependent (Zajonc 1981; Lazarus 1981). Lazarus countered Zajonc, placing what he emphatically called cognitive appraisals in the primary position (Lazarus 1981). Like Arnold, Lazarus postulated that emotions were relational in nature and that relational nature defined cognitive primacy for him. The self for Lazarus was in continuous evaluative relation with reality and appraisals, because they were socially and conventionally acquired, were cognitive in nature (Lazarus 2006). Hence cognitions were primary to emotions. Against the background of Arnold's work, Zajonc, and Lazarus' debate really is a mere issue of semantics and of the varying definitions of "cognition" and "emotion" (Kappas 2006). Still, whichever side researchers took in the debate, the appraisal theory continued to be developed and perfected, even though some of its claims only begun to find empirical confirmation in the 2000s.

The appraisal theory of emotions has its arguably greatest champion in Klaus R. Scherer, who has been a powerhouse for the theory for almost half a century and the author of one of the more advanced models of emotion within the appraisal framework (see Chap. 4). Scherer's theory of appraisal is advanced and reconciliatory in nature, very skillfully weaving evidence from both psychology and anthropology to try and explain the cross-cultural variability of emotions (Scherer and Wallbott 1994). Scherer defines appraisals as series of perceptual filters of evaluative and subjective nature, which give shape to the stream of stimulation from the objective reality (Ellsworth and Scherer 2003). These appraisal filters range from the very ontologically primitive and universal (e.g., hedonic pleasantness, arousal) to the very complex and socially culturally variable (e.g., power, identity, justice). The more primitive appraisals constitute what Scherer calls "push" factors in emotions which condition the reflexive physiological arousal in emotions. The more advanced appraisals in their turn constitute the "pull" factors, which mold the spontaneous emotional expressions into forms which are socially acceptable under given display rules (Scherer et al. 2011). Together the various appraisals working continuously constitute our conscious awareness of self. According to Scherer the self is a relational emotional entity formed from a mixture of inherent and universal psycho-physiological factors and culture-specific high cognitive factors structured much like the Maslovian model

of basic needs (Scherer 1997). The “backbone of the appraisal system” is the hedonic pleasantness and activity, both also recognized as fundamentals in dimensional theories of emotions and referred to as valence and arousal respectively (Ellsworth and Scherer 2003).

All in all, appraisal theory is a theoretical bridge between anthropological evidence of emotion diversity and psychological evidence of emotion universality. It explains in psychological terms what Sapir meant by relativity, but avoids confusion by not referring to language as a defining factor. While connections between the structure of language and the configuration of appraisals can be extrapolated from the preferential use of emotion naming or recall tasks (Ellsworth and Scherer 2003), language was never the focus of the appraisal theory. On the contrary, because the theory embraced the cultural and societal factors in the development of the self-constructing appraisals, it also left room for virtually limitless variability of emotion terms. It was a theory which explained the mechanism of the Whorfian limitation on the perception of reality, but instead of grammatical habituation they used a perceptual habituation as the explanatory principle. And yet there remained the issue of language and how the habituated perceptions of emotions may influence or represent emotional realities of various cultures and to what degree are those realities comparable or universal. That question, as well as the matter of operationalizing the appraisals would be addressed directly by the dimensional theory of emotions.

2.1.5.2 Dimensional Theory of Emotions

Dimensional theory of emotions goes all the way back to Wundt and his idea that all emotions ultimately derive from two main sources: *sorrow* and *joy* (Wundt 1902). He conceived of this derivation in ontological terms, but he also believed the basic meanings of *pleasure* and *arousal* could be determined for every emotion in existence. This idea was expanded upon by Schlosberg, who believed there to be not two but three basic dimensions of meaning for every emotion. There was the hedonic pleasure and arousal, referred to as *pleasantness-unpleasantness* and *sleep-tension* dimensions respectively, but also what could be called an action potential dimension of *attention-rejection* (Schlosberg 1954). By including the lattermost dimension Schlosberg approximated the appraisal theory more than what would later normally be thought of as dimensional theory. The next step for the dimensional theory would come in the mid-90s. In 1994 Margaret M. Bradley and Peter J. Lang proposed a three-dimensional approach with the basic dimensions of valence (pleasantness), arousal (intensity), and dominance. Dominance referred roughly to the level of perceived control over an emotional reaction (Bradley and Lang 1994). The three-dimensional scale has been widely applied since in the form of Self-Assessment Manikin (SAM) to evaluate large databanks of stimuli for emotion research.¹² The most advanced and best developed version of the

¹²For example in the International Affective Picture System (IAPS) Bradley et al. (2008) or the International Affective Digitized Sounds (IADS) (Bradley and Lang 1999).

dimensional theory came in James A. Russell's works on Minimal Universality and core affect (Russell 1995).

There are many similarities between the appraisal and dimensional theories of emotion with one crucial difference which shifts the focus of the theory. The concept of self in appraisal is relational, the emotional self existing in relation to objects evoking the emotions. In dimensional theory, the self is predicated on deep psychological subjectivity in the Jamesian spirit. Russell considers emotions phenomenologically as psychosomatic constructs of the mind. These constructs are complete and consist of the physiological arousal associated with a given emotion, a catalog of objects, contexts, and situations that can evoke that emotion, as well as the names of emotions (Russell 2003). Russell and his collaborators have found that the names of emotions are critical in the processing of emotional expressions—one's own and others' (Lindquist et al. 2006). Concepts of emotion are not in any way unique on the level of mental representations. They are, according to Russell, organized prototypically, with classic fuzzy boundaries overlapping both with other emotional and other nonemotional concepts (Russell 1983). Such approach allows Russell to explain both the cross-cultural variability of emotions and polysemy of certain emotion terms (Russell 1991). This overlap also means that for Russell emotion terms, however important, remain merely "guideposts" to meaning (Russell and Barrett 1999). Still, from those "guideposts" we can infer a lot of the culture, history, and environment that had shaped both the psyche and the language of the people who use them. By making this argument Russell circled back to the fundamentals of the Whorfian relativity in its original form, though as a psychologist he was still not very comfortable with the idea (Russell 1991). Russell's definition of emotions is thus almost organic and because it is predicated on the idea of subjective experience and constructed phenomenologically it is also easily adaptive in application.

Despite his views seemingly approaching the positions of linguistic relativity, Russell was himself his own kind of universalist. A significant portion of his ideas about the universal vs. culture-specific nature of emotional experiences formed in the course of his detailed and systematic revision of *the standard view* of emotions (Russell 1994). The main point of disagreement between Ekman and Russell on the issue of universality of emotion was that of degree. For Russell emotional experience was universal on the level of two primal dimensions of valence and arousal, distinct but subjectively experienced as a uniform sensation (Russell 2003). Because emotion terms are "guideposts" to emotion, Russell deduced those basic dimensions from multiple semantic scales of affective meaning converging statistically on valence and arousal exactly (Russell and Mehrabian 1977). The two dimensions correlated with evidence from physiology and could be determined for every emotion in virtually every language (e.g., Russell et al. 1989). Russell called the subjective experience of these two dimensions as a single affective state "core affect" (Russell and Mehrabian 1977). Core affect expressed in valence and arousal are, according to Russell, the minimal degree of universality in emotional expressions and experience across cultures, which is what constitutes Russell's Minimal Universality.

Russell's definition of emotions is quite unique, as it does not fit any one scientific framework. There are elements from various schools of psychology, such as Jamesian subjectivity, the appraisal perspective, Ekmanian universalism, as well as aspects of anthropological linguistic relativity. Russell considers emotions as an epistemological phenomenon existing and permeating various levels and planes of reality: the psychological, physiological, social, cultural, and linguistic. At the same time, every aspect of his theory and of his model of emotions, the circumplex (see Chap. 4) is backed by solid empirical evidence. Within Minimal Universality Russell accepts the universal nature of emotional experience within its evolutionary and physiological roots expressed in the conscious experience of core affect. What dimensions of meaning extend beyond the core affect are subject to relativistic effects and can be used to measure and operationalize cross-cultural variability of emotions. But he also observes that just because language is a late ontological aspect of emotional experience, it does not mean language is meaningless for how we perceive and express emotions in ourselves and others. Emotion terms are part and parcel of emotion concepts and they influence how we acquire and implement those concepts. From another perspective emotion terms are "guideposts" pointing the informed interpreter toward the correct emotional meaning. Thus, the language of emotions is both the medium and a constitutive part of emotions. Still his theory of emotions within the dimensional framework explains what emotions are, but not exactly how they become what they are. That detail would be worked out by Lisa Feldman Barrett and her collaborators within the Conceptual Act Theory (CAM) of emotions.

2.1.5.3 Integrative Theory of Emotions

The mainstream of psychology has been dominated by *the standard view* since the 1970s. All other theories of emotion were being developed on the fringes, some as continuations of older ideas such as the appraisal theories, others as a critical response to the reductionism inherent in the standard view. James A. Russell was among the first to openly and systematically question the hegemony of *the standard view* and propose an empirically grounded alternative. However, his work of Minimal Universality and core affect already hinted on a bigger idea of operationalizing the phenomenological space beyond the core affect into a new kind of theory and model of emotional processing. This idea would be fleshed out by another great revisionist of Paul Ekman's theory—Lisa Feldman Barrett and her team. The crux of this new idea was to combine the empirically backed aspects of various theories of emotion from multiple disciplines and create a complex integrated research framework that could at last produce a consensus on the nature of emotions. The idea grew in part from the dissatisfaction with the reigning reductionist paradigms and in part from the increasingly vocal revisionist movements systematically reexamining both the methods and the conclusions of *the standard view* (e.g., Elfenbein and Ambady 2002a, b). Barrett's Conceptual Act Theory stands as one of the most advanced examples of the integrative approach to date.

Barrett's definition of emotions has a lot in common with that of Russell, but focuses significantly more on the causal mechanics of emotion processing. Emotions, according to Barrett (2011), do not exist inherently as discrete phenomenological entities but are constructed ad hoc based on existing knowledge and past experiences. We are born with certain physiological primitives, mainly sense of valence and arousal, which ensure our survival. Core affect works continuously, like a kind of hedonic barometer for self-preservation. Then in the course of social learning, and the acquisition of language and cultural norms we add upon those primitives. Further, more complex appraisals help us build the concept of self and of the situation we are in, and through language we learn to name particular configurations of core affect, complex appraisals, and contexts as particular emotions. We store our knowledge of such instances with their labels of emotions terms in long term memory and learn to deploy thus acquired knowledge when necessary (Barrett et al. 2011). Emotion, says Barrett, is a temporally complex construct, whereby core affect is excited by an external object. Our minds then quickly match the situational antecedents to our catalog of emotion concepts stored in long term memory. This matching produces what we subjectively experience as a specific emotion, whether it be one of Ekman's basic six or any other. This matching may be imperfect, activating selected parts of concepts thus giving us a clear emotional sensation which may, however, be hard to exactly define or name. The "Conceptual" of "Conceptual Act Theory" thus stands for the overlapping appraisals and memory matching with the sensations from core affects which in combination produce the psychosomatic sensation of emotion. The "Act" stands for the ad hoc nature of the emotion construction (Barrett 2006).

In this definition of emotions words play a role in the process of social learning, as they form something between the Russelian guideposts and the Ekmanian simulacra—labeled directories into which all relevant knowledge of a particular emotional episode is stored (Barrett 2011). Within those directories knowledge is organized prototypically with classic fuzzy boundaries between emotional and nonemotional concepts. At the same time emotion words are entrenched as parts of the emotion concepts they refer to. Barrett's team has shown that by semantic satiation with an emotion term the access to the entire emotion concept that term refers to can be blocked (Lindquist et al. 2014). Language is thus at the heart of what Barrett calls an emotion paradox. Human beings are extremely good at experiencing and perceiving emotions, but find it extremely hard to name them exactly. There is always a margin of error, a gray definitional area in determining and naming an emotion. This is because the names we have for emotions point our minds to a fuzzy concept which may overlap with another emotional or nonemotional concepts. In the mental lexicon, there can be no such thing as a discrete category with firm boundaries, postulates Barrett (Wilson-Mendenhall et al. 2011). Because of this the standard view claim that *anger*, *fear*, *sadness*, *happiness*, *disgust* and *surprise* constitute not only discrete but universal categories is too radical (Barrett 2006). Even if equivalent names for these emotions can be found across cultures, they may not occupy equivalent conceptual prototype positions or have the same antecedents, associated display rules, etc. Barrett thus points out the

English-centricity of *the standard view* and its six-way division of the basic emotions. She also points out how the high levels of cross-cultural agreement on this division is a methodological artifact of the preferential use of forced choice paradigms with the predefined and imposed six basic emotion categories as the options to choose from (Barrett 2011).

Barrett's Conceptual Act Theory thus accepts Minimal Universalism as its core. It reduces the rank of the basic Ekmanian emotions from the central universal constructs to one of the many emotions acquired by English speakers in the course of their socialization and enculturation. It determines the nature of emotion paradox and explains why it exists, thus possibly creating a path toward a general consensus on the definition of emotions. It integrates and explains the role of language in the acquisition, formation and processing of emotions in transparent terms. It demonstrates the problems of cross-linguistic nonequivalence and functional distribution of certain terms in everyday use. It postulates boldly that emotions do not exist as inherent categories beyond the limits of Minimal Universalism, but are constructed as concepts in the course of socialization and enculturation. The subjective experiences of emotion in turn, are constructed ad hoc based on our acquired knowledge, experience, and culture. The model based on this theory is one of the most complex and inclusive of all proposed to date. Including elements from the appraisal theory, the dimensional theory, *the standard view*, as well as from anthropology and linguistics, the Conceptual Act Model (CAM; see Chap. 4) is the culmination of the protracted argument over the multiple dichotomies of emotion research and emotion theory (see Lutz and White 1986).

2.1.6 Conclusions—Emotional Universalism

It could be said that the history of emotion research and theory in psychology is one of continuous deconstruction. Initial ideas proposed by Darwin, Wundt, and James were broad, rich in detail and clipped with multiple conditional caveats that captured the nuances of emotion processing on multiple levels. These ideas were then picked up fragmentarily, often out of context and dropping all the carefully placed caveats. Emotion research and theory faced the same struggles and challenges to its scientific legitimacy as their parent discipline did. The tight balance between ethics and high ecological validity and effectiveness of research possibly came the longest way since Landis' knives and rats. And the theory went from positions in which both language and culture were embraced as factors in emotion research through wholesale rejection and denial of both, back to reconciliation again. Emotion research itself went from introspective theory of the forefathers through the reductionist paradigms of experimentation of the physiologist-psychologists of early twentieth century to a solid dynamic of data-driven models and theory. The models were probably the most valuable concepts applied to the theory and practice of emotion psychology, as they structured and guided the research on emotions and simplified the process of proposing and testing hypotheses. The

theory and research in emotion psychology thus swung from broad construction to narrow reductionism and deconstruction back to broad construction again, with an ever-increasing emphasis on empiricism.

2.2 Between Specificity and Universalism—Conclusion

If there is a conclusion to be drawn from the dichotomy of universalist versus culture-specific nature of emotions it is that emotions are not an easy object to investigate systematically. Mainly because they are not a coherent phenomenon that obeys simple laws and yields to structured description. They can be considered on many levels from the biological through the psychological to the linguistic-cultural, and the truth of their nature could not be determined on any single one, but across all these levels and on their intersections. Anthropologists observed the cultures, languages, and behaviors and inferred the probable principles of human psychological makeup that might govern them. Psychologists have postulated and proven the existence of certain psychological constructs that cause certain emotional reactions and behaviors. Each discipline approached the subject in its own way and ultimately reached similar conclusions. Anthropology found that culture and language are reflections of our partially universal mental and emotional reality. Psychology found that culture and language influence how our thoughts and emotions work. The stable tradition of anthropological research on emotions in the pure, non-vulgarized tradition of linguistic relativity principle produced a substantial and compelling evidence of expressive and perceptual diversity of emotional phenomena. Psychology struggled from holistic to reductionist to integrative approaches to emotions, searching all the while for the elusive universal principle of emotional expression and reluctantly embracing the evidence for emotion variability.

The reconciliation between the two disciplines is a fact in all but name in the latest integrative theories and models of emotional processing. And yet there is at least one unresolved issue between the two—the issue of language. However defined, language is a slippery issue. Emotions manifest themselves in communication with people, in interaction with the objective reality, or with a memory of or future projection of such communication or interaction. And they manifest themselves through verbal and nonverbal channels. We speak with our bodies and with our voices, and these acts of speech are usually the doorways to understanding underlying emotion for both psychology and anthropology. It is therefore curious, that the discipline whose domain is language does not appear in the history of emotion research. Linguistics is indeed the great absentee from the historical debate on the nature of emotions, despite the fact that virtually all research on emotions is in some way and to a significant degree language-based. Whether considering emotion terms guideposts, simulacra, or parts of concepts, the linguistic labels for the underlying processes always played a significant role in psychological investigation. In anthropology language was one of the objects of investigation

from syntax through semantics to pragmatics. And yet actual formal linguistic analysis is absent from both disciplines. Linguistics has, however, developed a number of concepts, tools, and methods which could disambiguate many gray areas of emotion research where language is involved. It has the capacity to complement anthropological analyses and psychological models. Therefore, before turning to psychological models of emotions (Chap. 4), I will discuss the great absentee, linguistics, and how it can help explain what emotions are (Chap. 3).

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