**ABSTRACT**

The first language (L1) is generally considered by multilinguals as the one in which they feel more ‘themselves’ in emotional circumstances. Affective socialization in a foreign language (LX) can help speakers develop a similar level of authenticity when using that language. This study is conducted on a sample of 468 migrants living in Anglophone countries who are L1 speakers of Italian and LX speakers of English, the language of the host society. The objective is to verify if the frequency of use for expressing emotions and the perceived emotional resonance of both languages can predict changes in migrants’ self‑perceptions when discussing emotional topics in the LX. Survey data revealed that the emotional resonance of the L1 was the only factor increasing participants’ sense of feeling different when using the LX in emotional conversations. Narratives from 5 interviews and 303 answers to an open‑ended survey question suggested that these self‑ perceptions varied extensively according to the intensity and type of emotion expressed.