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**Internship in a Primary School:  
a novice teacher's emotions**

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## **Internship in a Primary School: a novice teacher's emotions**

### **Abstract**

This paper deals with the effects of teacher emotions on their teaching and on the learning situation, therefore it addresses directly the existing literature on teacher emotions, emotion management (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010; Schutz and Zembylas 2009) and emotional display (ibid.) and how these factors might affect the teaching practice and how emotional displays might affect learners.

The study also addresses my specific emotions as a novice teacher during a 150-hour internship in a primary school as assistant to two English language teachers, and part of the study involves my feelings of anxiety while teaching and how I overcame them, therefore further literature included in the study is the research in student teacher anxiety sources (Merç 2011; Young in Klee 1994), foreign language teacher anxiety (ibid.) and 'Foreign Language Anxiety' (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, p.125).

The focus of my work is twofold and its scope addresses on the one hand the teaching emotions and practices of the two English teachers I assisted during my internship period, the first part of which was devoted to observation and field notes taking, and on the other hand a second part where I helped teachers with reading activities and here I focused on my emotions, how they affected both myself and the learners and how they were related to the presence of the English teachers.

My research is a qualitative one and I gathered data through the collection of field notes in a diary during lessons and then through 'cognitive reframing' (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.89) back at home, a time during which I expanded on the notes taken, I gathered the main key-topics and deepened my knowledge about them through a bibliographical research in the existing literature. The diary served both for the emotions and emotional displays of the two English teachers I assisted, but also for my own emotions while engaging in reading activities with children. I also realized that my emotions changed and evolved through time and that I managed to overcome my anxiety with some strategies taken from the existing literature on teacher emotions and teacher anxiety sources research (Young in Klee 1994).

The conclusions brought forth by my study refer to the research-topics of teacher emotions and emotional displays and how anxiety (in the forms of 'oral communication anxiety', 'stage fright', 'Foreign Language Anxiety', 'fear of negative evaluation' and 'fear of failure') can affect teaching and how it can be lessened and overcome (Young in Klee 1994).

My paper addresses these issues and stresses how and why there is a strong bond between the job of teaching, especially as regards novice teachers, and emotions, and how emotion management is of vital importance in the field of teaching, especially in primary schools where young learners are very sensitive to emotions.

## Introduction

This paper was written to respond to the need to contribute to the research in teacher emotion and to address this problem from the point of view of a novice teacher teaching English as a foreign language in a primary school during a University internship. Here it must be pointed out how the researcher was not doing an internship meant to end up in preparing her for becoming a teacher, but she was doing a 150-hour internship for didactic purposes as part of her University curriculum, but the conditions and experiences that she lived during the internship reflected many aspects of the novice teacher's job, so the researcher decided to establish a parallel between her experience and the one of pre-service teachers, and this is why the researcher in this paper refers often to her internship experience as that of novice language teacher.

The main stimulus that fostered the creation of this study was the researcher's curiosity of which emotions were dominant while teaching a foreign language and how to deal with several anxieties raised by performing in public such as 'oral communication anxiety' (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986 p.127) and 'stage fright'(ibid.) alongside 'Foreign Language Anxiety', and a parallel problem question was which strategies could be adopted in order to overcome these negative emotions and reframe them as opportunities to learn from one's own emotions to improve both teaching and learning.

Therefore the main focus questions addressed by this dissertation are:

- a) Why are teacher emotions significant in the teaching profession and what is their role in teaching?
- b) What is the effect of teachers' emotional displays upon both the novice teacher and upon the primary school pupils?
- c) Why are 'emotional intelligence' (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.16) and 'emotional contagion' (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.139) relevant in teaching?
- d) What are the dominant emotions of a novice English teacher while organizing and performing reading activities for children?
- e) What are the sources of anxiety for novice teachers and how can they deal with them through some strategies taken from the literature on teacher anxiety?
- f) Why does the experience of being a novice language teacher make it possible to trace a link between the 'Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale' (Horwitz, Horwitz

and Cope 1986, p.129), the 'Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Scale' (Ipek 2007 cited in Merç 2011, p.81) and the 'Foreign Language Student Teaching Anxiety Scale' (El-Okda and Al-Humaidi 2003 cited in Merç 2011, p.82) as regards some fears and anxieties experienced?

The main motivation of this study is to demonstrate why teacher emotions must not be underestimated or separated from the teaching profession, why they are part of the everyday job of teachers that are liable to be emotionally drained at times, if they are not careful about their emotional fatigue and they do not manage their emotions well. This study has also the purpose to prove how emotional displays in the classroom can affect teacher emotions and the attitude and motivation of pupils. Finally this paper shows how anxiety is one of the emotions experienced by novice teachers and how it can be an opportunity to learn, not only a negative emotion, and how there are strategies that teachers worldwide can adopt to cope with their nervousness related to the teaching profession, with important implications for both teachers and learners.

The main findings of this research are the fact that 'surface acting' (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.81; Hochschild 1990; Groth et al. 2006 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.57) and 'deep acting' (ibid.) have different impacts on learners and teachers themselves, and that 'deep acting' is more effective for both teaching and learning, since it aligns teachers' external performed emotions with the inner ones, and this allows increased well-being for both teachers and learners.

The study shows also how caring has a relevant impact on learners, and how teachers showing a deviation from caring can negatively affect pupils' sense of self-worth and self-image and impair the learners' emotional balance.

It is also reported how 'emotional intelligence' is a precious skill in language teachers, and how one of the English teachers proved to possess it and her pupils seemed to benefit from it and were more successful in learning than other learners with a different English teacher.

There have been also several examples of 'emotional contagion' between teachers and learners, both positive and negative contagions, depending on the English teacher and her emotional displays (that is, 'surface acting' vs 'deep acting'), which have a relevant impact on learners' emotions and eagerness to learn.

It is shown how 'cognitive reframing' is an effective technique to gain back one's own emotional balance and to see emotionally threatening episodes from a different perspective and how this can be a precious tool for both novice and experienced teachers.

The main difficulties encountered are related mainly to the bibliographical research in teacher emotion and specifically they are related to the following areas:

- a) How to investigate the topic of teacher emotions and which focus questions I needed to address in order to narrow the scope of my research;
- b) How to find good material upon teacher emotion research, since this is a relatively new area of research and there is not much material around;
- c) Find material upon novice teacher emotions and anxiety, since most of the literature focuses on expert teachers and only few studies focus specifically on student teachers and training programs;
- d) Find material upon teacher anxiety sources and student teacher anxiety sources since most of the research on anxiety relates to learning focuses on learners, following Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope's research on 'Foreign Language Anxiety'.

## Chapter 1. Literature review on teacher emotions

This chapter will analyse the main topics related to the research in teacher emotions which are relevant for this study and that will be reprised briefly in the final chapter on the discussion of the findings of my internship experience.

### 1.1 The role of emotions in language teaching

Research on teacher emotion highlights how emotions are associated with and have important implications for teachers' work, development and identity (e.g. Liston and Garrison 2004; Zembylas 2005 cited in Schutz and Zembylas 2009). More research is needed in this field since teacher emotion is a relatively new area of research and, to date, there has been no systematic indication of which aspects of teacher emotion are to be studied and researched in order to be theorized (Schutz and Zembylas 2009) and to serve as a guideline for researchers or any expert or teacher who wants to deepen the existing knowledge in this area. New research has to be done in order to get a better idea of the factors that cause emotion to affect teachers' lives and the teaching and learning environment (ibid.).

#### 1.1.1 Research on teacher emotions

The term 'emotion' is defined by Hochschild as "an awareness of four elements that we usually experience at the same time: appraisal of a situation, changes in bodily sensations, the free or inhibited display of expressive gestures and a cultural label applied to specific constellations of the first three elements" (Hochschild 1990 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.56). However, usually emotions do not last a long time, they are linked to a specific stimulus and they are opposed to 'moods', which are on the other hand "more enduring, more diffuse and less related to specific stimuli" (Frijda 1993 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.56).

In recent years there has been a growing interest regarding the role of emotions in education (e. g. Boler 1999; Linnenbrink 2006; Nias 1996; Schutz and Pekrun 2007; Schutz and Lanehart 2002; van Veen and Lasky 2005 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) and this is attested by a considerable body of international research regarding the importance of emotions in teachers' management of teaching and learning in the classrooms (Hargreaves 2004, 2005; Nias 1996; Schutz and Pekrun 2007; van Veen and Lasky 2005; Zembylas 2005 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009), relating mostly to the positive and negative effects on teachers' motivation, self-

efficacy, professional identities and job satisfaction of pupil behaviour (Hargreaves 2000 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009), leadership, classroom and school climate (Leithwood 2007 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009).

A deeper research in this area is to be done because of the key-role that emotions play – both positive and negative – in the classroom, liable to affect firstly student learning and teaching practice, but also the school climate and the quality of education (Schutz and Zembylas 2009).

Another reason in order to focus on the causes and effects of both positive and negative emotions in teaching is the fact that this profession has been rated as one of the most stressful ones in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Kyriacou 2000; Nash 2005 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) and according to Day and Qing (in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) what is needed is a focus on the role of positive emotions in supporting teachers' positive qualities and strengths, their care for the children, their commitment and motivation (Schutz and Zembylas 2009).

'Teacher burnout' (Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.4; Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.70), caused by 'emotional draining' (Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.22) and stressful emotions experienced during their job, is one of the main causes of teachers leaving their profession (Jackson et al. 1986; Maslach 1982; Morris and Feldman 1996 Schaubroeck and Jones 2000 cited in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) and Schutz and Zembylas (2009) affirm that some reports estimate that 'nearly 50% of teachers entering the profession leave within the first 5 years' (Alliance for Excellent Education 2004; Ingersoll 2003 cited in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.3). Such figures are appalling and should make us think and realize how often the teaching profession is perceived as a rational activity with a consequent underestimation of its complexity and of its emotional nature (Shutz and Zembylas 2009).

Slegers and Kelchtermans (1999 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) give support to the idea that emotions play a key role in the construction of teachers' identity: they argue that teacher identities do not include only the technical and emotional aspects of teaching (i.e. classroom management, pupil test results and subject knowledge) and their personal lives, but also "the result of interaction between the personal experiences of teachers and the social, cultural and institutional environments in which they function on a daily basis" (Slegers and Kelchtermans 1999 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.16).

From this perspective, emotions are seen as the chief link between the social structures in which teachers work and how they act:

The connection is never mechanical because emotions are normally not compelling but inclining. But without the emotions category, accounts of situated actions would be fragmented and incomplete. [...] Emotion is directly implicated in the actor's transformation of their circumstances, as well as circumstances' transformation of

the actor's disposition to act. (Barbalet 2002 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.17)

A direct consequence of all this is that teachers' feelings and perceptions about how they feel about their professional identity relates to their sense of well-being (Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009). This has to be taken into consideration and not neglected since nowadays teachers can find themselves teaching in environments hostile to their well-being and that might impair their emotional balance (ibid.).

Thus teacher emotions and identity are interconnected, as Zembylas argues (2005 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009); scholars regard teacher identity as continually evolving, but the professional roles associated with teachers are seen as fixed and thus Meyer (in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) argues how the development of teachers' identity is dependent upon whether the individual decides to include or exclude his or her emotions from his or her role expectations.

In particular Flores and Day (2006 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) discovered that teachers' identity is shaped around three elements mainly: pre-service education, personal history and school culture.

It is thus important to deepen the research in teacher emotion and in the affective aspects of teaching, since it does not only reinforce the link between emotion and cognition, but it also reminds us that the teacher's effectiveness relies both upon the head (cognition) and upon the heart (emotion), and it is by the blending of the two that teaching effectiveness is created (Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009). To exclude either is to exclude part of the core of the teaching profession.

In a research by Day et al. (2007 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) there is a figure that maps out the interconnections between teachers' professional identities, life phases and their well-being, effectiveness and commitment both perceived and in terms of measures of pupils' progress and attainment.

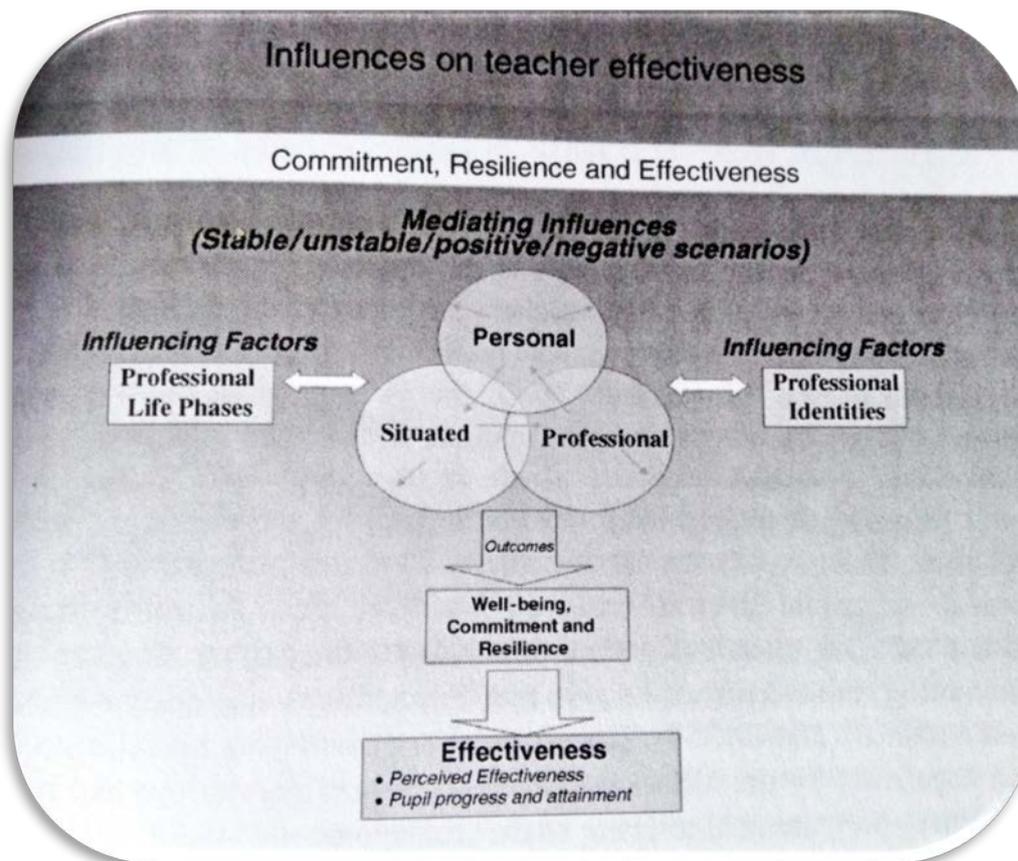


Fig. 1 taken from Day et al. (2007) cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas (2009).

Day et al. (ibid.) argue that well-being, commitment and resilience are obtained only if there is a positive balance on teachers' professional life-phases (promotion and responsibility tasks vs unsupportive and indifferent environment) and professional identities (perceptions of well-being and efficacy vs isolation, stress, demotivation and 'burnout'). They also argue that if the positive factors outnumber the negative ones there is a general sense of well-being and a consequent perception of self-efficacy; if not, teaching stress and negative emotions are present, and this may lead to 'burnout' in the worst situations (ibid.). Ultimately they affirm that when effectiveness is perceived by the teacher, this is also confirmed by pupil progress and attainment (ibid.).

Day and Qing (in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) argue also that there are three truths about teachers' emotional worlds:

- (1) their observable behaviour (their emotions) may mask their feelings. In other words, it is impossible for others, however much "emotional intelligence" they may have, to manage teachers' feelings. However, they may create conditions which either help or hinder in managing these [...];
- (2) the emotional content of their lives in schools and classrooms may have short and longer term consequences for how they feel about themselves and others and how they behave [...];
- (3) like the vast majority of human beings,

teachers' goals in life and work are to experience pleasure rather than pain as part of a continuing process of seeking adjustment to changing contexts or scenarios rather than attempting to maintain a fixed point of balance. (Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.18)

To sum up, what Day and Qing (in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) point out is that any attempt to understand emotional well-being is a relational process, and there are factors that can seem to be spies of well-being but that can be masks beyond which other emotions are being concealed, so what appears on the outside is not absolute, but relative (*ibid.*). The very heart of this tension is to be found in the dynamic relation between the context and activities in which teachers are engaged and their psychological, cognitive and emotional resources.

A good insight into positive and negative emotions is given by Fredrickson's (2001, 2004 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) 'broaden-and-build' theory on positive emotions. According to him the sense of well-being in an individual is due to a subset of positive emotions – joy, interest, contentment and love – which “function as reserves that can be drawn on later to improve the odds of successful coping and survival” (Fredrickson 2004 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.18).

The researcher also argues that by focusing on positive emotions individuals may “transform themselves, becoming more creative, knowledgeable, resilient, socially integrated and healthy individuals” (*ibid.*). According to Day and Qing (in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) this process of transformation is influenced positively or negatively mainly by the peculiar context in which teachers work and by the effectiveness of their emotional 'self-management' (Goleman 1995 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.21).

A study on teacher emotions done by Damasio (2004 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) brought forward three possible emotional 'tiers' or 'settings' that are crucial to teachers' work: “(1) background emotions (not moods); (2) primary emotions and (3) social emotions” (*ibid.*, p.18).

A reasonable suggestion is that teachers' well-being has both a key-role in the individuals' capacity to apply these emotions and is in itself likely to be affected by these emotions (Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009).

For example, an impairment of a teacher's well-being can affect his or her capacity to read others' background emotions, that is, to be able to detect the emotions of pupils or colleagues, such as excitement, edginess, tranquillity, energy or enthusiasm, for example (*ibid.*). In ideal conditions, as Damasio points out, “If you are really good, you can do the diagnostic job without a single word being uttered” (Damasio 2004 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.19).

As regards primary and social emotions, Damasio affirms that the former ones include “fear, anxiety, anger, disgust, surprise, sadness and happiness” (Damasio 2004 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.19) whereas the latter are more context related than primary emotions and include “sympathy, embarrassment, shame, guilt, pride, jealousy, envy, gratitude, admiration, indignation and contempt” (ibid.).

Damasio defines background emotions as opposed to moods. He believes that most of the time we are not experiencing primary or social emotions, but low-grade background feelings such as “fatigue, energy, excitement, wellness, sickness, tension, relaxation, surging, dragging, stability, instability, balance, imbalance, harmony and discord” (Damasio 1999, p.286). If we experience a certain background emotion frequently and for a sustained period of time then it becomes a mood, and this is the basic opposition between mood and background emotion (ibid., p.341).

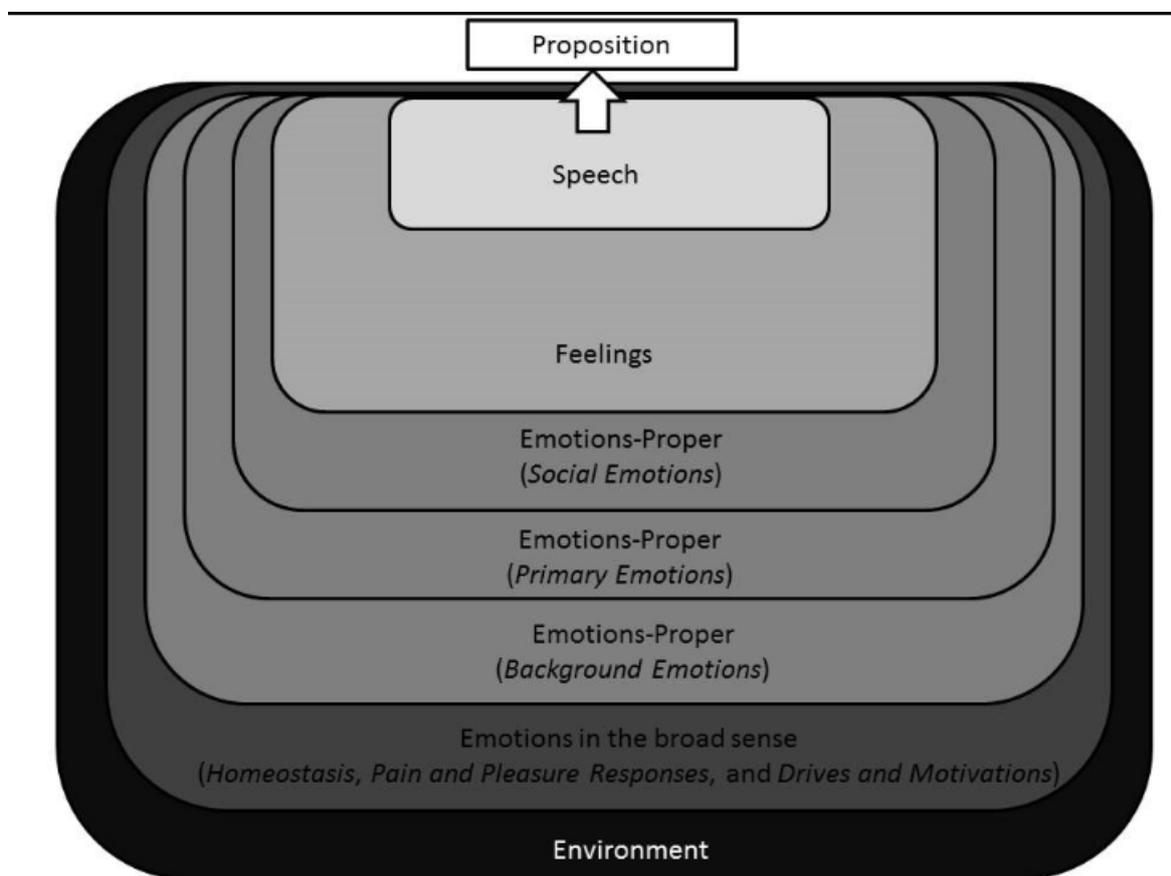


Fig. 2 taken from Damasio (2004) cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas (2009).

In order to ‘read’ each other well, Hargreaves (Hargreaves et al. 2001 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) states that teachers and pupils need to achieve a strong relationship, so that emotional engagement and understanding can occur. He adds that this means that teachers are making an emotional investment in their interactions and they are ready to set emotional goals that they hope

to reach through hard work (*ibid.*). Finally the researcher concludes that the fulfilment or lack of fulfilment of these goals is entirely dependent on the outcome of these relationships and interactions. Hargreaves (Hargreaves 1994, 1998 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) states how, for example, falling short of their own or others' moral standards in a fundamental way may cause shame and guilt in teachers. In a research by Day and Qing (in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) it has been found out that pupils associate good teachers with positive social emotions such as sympathy and praise (related to gratitude and admiration), whereas bad teachers cause feelings of guilt and embarrassment in learners.

So teachers have to adopt a specific emotional display at work and need to have a good 'self-management' of emotions.

### 1.1.2 Emotion management: "Emotional Labour" vs "Emotion Work"

The term emotion management<sup>1</sup> refers to our regulation of the precursors of emotions, for example when we revise the appraisal of a situation or event, modifying the observable physiological signs of emotions or inhibiting our emotional displays (Gross 1998; Hochschild 1983 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009).

Emotion management is also defined by Gross (1998 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) as "the process by which individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience and express these emotions" (*ibid.*, p.57).

Zembylas (2005 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) argues how emotion management at work can take on many forms, such as "suppressing emotional reactions, exaggerating them, or modulating their expression" (*ibid.*, p.57). Consequently the regulation of one's own emotions involves a personal effort to express certain emotions only when one is expected to do so according to the rules of some organization or society (Hochschild 1979 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009).

According to Oplatka (in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) emotion management is embedded in the teaching profession. Hargreaves (1998 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) argues that in teaching this is particularly evident when teachers interact with learners (Hargreaves 1998; Nias 1989; Oplatka 2004 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) and this is what Zembylas (2005

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<sup>1</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'emotion management' has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) and by Schutz and Zembylas (2009).

cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) points out as regards emotion management strategies in teaching:

Emotion management strategies are often used as a natural aspect of teaching and learning without problematizing them in any way. Thus, emotion management over time becomes part of a teacher's habitus. (Zembylas 2005 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.60)

Hargreaves (1998 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) reminds us how emotion management, if teachers are not careful, can lead to 'burnout' and 'emotional draining' in times of excessive demands as nowadays, and this can be due, according to Beck and Kooser (2004 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009), to the tension felt because of a discrepancy between one's commitment to care and his or her professional role.

In particular, Strazdins (2002 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) states that the potential effects of emotion management upon individuals depend on the quantity and frequency of the pleasant or unpleasant emotions experienced – and research points out that only the latter ones impair emotional health and can lead to 'burnout'.

'Emotional labour' (Callahan and McCollum 2002 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.58) in the literature on teacher emotion has been associated with 'emotion work' in the distinction between the two concepts done by Callahan and McCollum (*ibid.*). The two researchers argue that 'emotional labour' indicates the emotions employees are required to display as a part of their job and for which they are paid, whereas 'emotion work' refers to the emotional practice of individuals who decide to manage their emotions for their personal benefit without any kind of valued compensation (Callahan and McCollum 2002 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009). Therefore according to Callahan and McCollum (*ibid.*) 'emotional labour' is under the control of the organization, whereas 'emotion work' is managed by the individual.

A useful distinction here is also the one between 'surface acting' and 'deep acting' (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.81; Hochschild 1990; Groth et al. 2006 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.57).

A good example to stress this distinction is how employees who have to sell a product decide to behave in order to persuade a client to buy it: if they simply modify their appearance without changing how they actually feel (i. e., faking) this counts as 'surface acting', whereas if they also try to summon and evoke the desired emotions and they try to genuinely express them (i. e., to express true emotions) this is called 'deep acting'.

Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) state how 'surface acting' can lead to 'emotional dissonance' (*ibid.*, p.82), that is the friction felt between one's actual emotions and one's displayed emotions

(Abraham 1998 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009), and this friction can cause ‘work strain, anxiety and depression’ (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.82).

Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) stress how ‘deep acting’ causes our behaviour to be aligned with our deeply held values, and therefore Barsade and Gibson (2007 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010) suggest that this practice is healthier than ‘surface acting’, because ‘deep acting’ does not require us to control our emotions and to play a role, and therefore it prevents emotional exhaustion and it causes ‘less stress and burnout’ (ibid., p.82).

Forrester (2005 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) states that it must be kept in mind that the ‘emotion work’ that lies behind all ‘emotional understanding’ (Hargreaves et al. 2001 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.76), caring and emotional displays is a sort of ‘non-work’ (ibid., p.60) for teachers, because they do not receive any economic compensation for such displays and they aren’t compulsory role elements (Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009).

An individual’s display of emotions, in Winograd’s words (Winograd 2003 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009), mirrors the whole of a person’s experience, involving “[...] culture, gender, race, class, education and personality” (ibid., p.62), and in educational environments effective teachers are associated with emotional displays characterized by “passionate commitment and feeling positively towards children” (Blackmore 1999; Oplatka 2004; Prosser 1999 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.61).

Moving now onto the elements shaping emotion management, in the existing research on teacher emotion there have been found four categories of determinants so far (Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009), and these are:

- a) The culture of teaching (cultural influence in emotion management and display, varying across different cultures);
- b) Emotion rules (i. e., social, institutional and cultural norms, standards and regulations);
- c) Gender (teachers’ expected emotional displays are related to historical gender-expectations related to women such as self-control and emotional restraint and such expectations are transmitted also to male teachers);
- d) Various determinants, such as expected pupil outcomes, teacher seniority, organizational climate and the support (or lack of support) from the headmaster regarding teachers’ needs also determinates the teachers’ display and management of emotions.

Cornelius (1996 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) argues that it is very important to note how emotions and emotional displays are coded differently and perceived in various ways in distinct cultures, and so teachers' reactions to specific emotions are not universal, but tied to their cultural background and to their personal beliefs about teaching and about their role.

So emotional display in teachers is not just about personal willingness to do something, but is tied to cultural influences (Hargreaves 2000; Nias 1999; Zembylas 2003 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009). What exerts a significant influence upon teachers' emotion management and display is also the specific culture of the teaching profession: a primary school teacher is not expected to teach and display the same emotions a high school teacher does. Elementary education is supposed to be a "culture of care, love, concern, affection and other possible emotional displays towards children" (Hargreaves 2000; Nias 1989, 1999; Noddings 1984 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.63).

### 1.1.3 Emotion and cognition as interdependent factors in teaching

In this paragraph I will highlight the relevance of emotion and cognition as interdependent and cohabiting factors in teachers' lives, pointing out that they need to be investigated and researched more as elements influencing and shaping each other and I will explain why they are significant in teachers' mental lives.

#### *1.1.3.1 Introduction to the interdependence between cognition and emotion*

Every person is emotionally and cognitively bilingual. (Pons, Rosnay and Cuisinier 2010, p.237)

This quotation taken from Pons, Rosnay and Cuisinier (2010) sums up these researchers' determination in opposing the dialectal opposition and general tendency in research to consider emotion and cognition as distinguished concepts that according to them has to do, on the one hand, with the two concepts' long history of being thus regarded and, on the other, due to the fact that affective sciences, devoted to the study of emotions, moods and feelings are relatively young and still not very widespread, and so more research is needed to study the link between cognition and emotion.

Pons, Rosnay and Cuisinier (2010) stress how the general tendency in studies examining cognition and emotion is to regard the latter as something not directly implied by cognition, but as a factor affecting, interfering with and at times impairing cognitive processes.

Before diving deeper in the interconnections between cognition and emotion, some definition of these concepts is needed, and there has been much debate in the research about how to define these terms properly.

According to Pons, Rosnay and Cuisinier (2010) cognition refers to “the different forms of knowledge [...] that we have and [...] to the mental functions [...] making the acquisition, storage, retrieval, transformation and use of this knowledge possible” (Pons, Rosnay and Cuisinier 2010 p.238).

These mental processes then are seen as interconnected “processes of the mind [...], the body [...] and the culture.” (ibid., p.239).

As regards emotions, the researchers define them as “feelings directed to [...] persons, things and situations, both real and imagined.” (ibid.) Emotions can vary in intensity and can be pleasant or unpleasant, but they are distinguished from sensations or body arousals in that they are characterized by intentionality. The link between emotion and cognition relies in the fact that also emotions are seen by the researchers as “interrelated states and processes of the mind [...], of the body [...] and of the culture” (ibid., p. 239).

The researchers (Pons, Rosnay and Cuisinier 2010) provide as example that emotions have a cognitive content how we react in front of an angry dog: the object of an emotion (for example a fierce dog) and the beliefs upon which that emotion is founded (I fear the dog because it can injure me) have a conceptual relation to that specific emotion, that means that an emotion can trigger cognitive processes that make us remember we have to stay away from an angry dog for example, since it can harm us.

Turning now to teaching and to how emotion and cognition are significant in this field, Pons, Rosnay and Cuisinier (2010) tell us how some studies reveal that anxiety can impair cognitive processes related to metacognition. They provide as example how some students report having difficulties concentrating on the input given by teachers due to the raise of a sort of ‘wall’ in front of them (ibid.), and this is relevant to my paper because I experienced something similar, that is, anxiety affected my concentration and ability to deliver proper output and retrieve information from my brain while teaching as a novice teacher in the primary school due to my ‘oral communication anxiety<sup>2</sup>’ and due to the unpredictability of the improvisation stressor during my interactions with learners.

Pons, Rosnay and Cuisinier (2010) add that novice teachers are more liable than experienced teachers to experience anxiety as a specific emotion at the start of their job and they conclude that the emotional landscape of a teacher can affect significantly the affective climate of the class.

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<sup>2</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘oral communication anxiety’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

### 1.1.3.2 Novice language teacher cognition

What is language teacher cognition, before diving deeper in the topic?

Borg (2003 cited in Golombek and Doran 2014) defined it as “what language teachers think, know and do”, omitting significantly any reference to emotions and feelings, as has been noted by Golombek and Doran (2014). However, the researchers (ibid.) highlight how some kind of emotional background is needed in their study, and in general as regards novice teacher cognition, because of the relevance and the role of prior language learning experiences to teachers’ beliefs about teaching and their instructional decisions, not to be underestimated in language classrooms.

Golombek and Doran (2014) explicitly express how emotions and feelings are not subdued to but on the same level as teacher thinking and doing, thus stressing the direct interrelations between the two concepts, weighing the same on the scales of teachers’ lives.

In one of their studies Golombek and Doran (2014) stress three focal points, relevant also for the present paper and for my experiences during my internship, since my emotions affected my cognition to some extent, as will be explained in a different section of this paper:

- a) Emotion and cognition are regarded as in an interrelated relationship and influencing one another in novice language teacher learning and on the same level as teacher activity;
- b) Reflective journals are an opportunity for educators to have an insight into novice teachers’ emotional experiences;
- c) Emotional experiences narrated by novice teachers are seen as capable of suggesting to educators cognitive growth opportunities that can be used to channel teachers in the right direction offering feedback and support.

According to the researchers the first step to recognize the importance of the link between emotion and cognition in teaching is to understand the relevance of novice teachers’ ‘lived emotional experience’ (Golombek and Doran 2014, p.103), also known as ‘perezhivanie’ (Vygotsky 1994 cited in Golombek and Doran 2014, p.103). To explain better what a ‘lived emotional experience’ or ‘perezhivanie’ is, the researchers (Golombek and Doran 2014) explain how learners, whether students or student teachers, when exposed to experiences in a new environment, activate their system of prior beliefs and experiences related to what they are going to do (prior beliefs about learning or teaching, for example). Their system of prior beliefs will shape their way of acting (their teaching methodology, for example) according to the emotional refraction of the prism of ‘perezhivanie’, that is, “a cognitive and emotional reciprocal processing of previous and new experience” (ibid., p.104), a perfect

definition to sum up what a novice teacher experiences in a new environment, and how relevant the baggage of previous experiences in teaching or learning is for him or her.

The cognitive process going on during ‘lived emotional experiences’, according to Golombek and Doran (2014), implies that previous episodes of a specific situation occurring in front of the individual will influence and have an emotional relevance to what he or she is experiencing at the present moment; consequently the emotions regarding the past episode will have an impact on how the present experience is regarded, and such emotions have the power to create a reinterpretation, adjustment or worsening of how the same episode evoked by the present situation was perceived until that very moment by the individual. This is why it is believed that ‘lived emotional experiences’ of novice teachers can be very precious in understanding the link between emotion and cognition, and this is why such duality is relevant and not to be underestimated as regards teachers’ mental lives. Moreover, as the researchers point out (Golombek and Doran 2014), if novice teachers are not capable of being emotionally self-regulated and of controlling their emotions, they can end up being overwhelmed and dominated by them and this can make them struggle in their teaching and impair their development as teachers.

Peirce’s (1998 cited in Golombek and Doran 2014) study on the ‘indexicality’ (ibid., p.105) of emotions describes the relevance of emotions in the process of mental development, and it can be useful in the context of links between cognition and emotion in teaching to understand better the concepts of ‘cognitive congruence’ (ibid.) and ‘cognitive dissonance’ (ibid.).

According to this researcher, positive emotions can point out ‘cognitive congruence’ – that is, “a match between the ideal (desired outcomes or internal conception of what teaching should be) and the real (actual activity)” (ibid.), whereas when there is a ‘cognitive dissonance’ due to a friction between real and ideal, negative emotions are likely to be experienced by the novice teacher.

Such emotional responses can be seen as signaling both areas of possible cognitive growth (for example improve even more teaching methodologies that are already successful) or fields where further development is needed (for example when pupils’ behaviour related to our teaching does not match our expectations and so we need to change our approach).

Golombek and Doran (2014) stress how “emotion, cognition and activity continuously interact and influence each other, on both conscious and unconscious levels, as teachers plan, enact and reflect on their teaching” (ibid., p.105).

In their study Golombek and Doran (2014) analyze the experience of a student teacher asked to write a reflective journal based upon her emotions while teaching and to email it weekly to her educator.

I quote this study because the student teacher participating in it shares several emotional and personality traits with me, such as:

- a) Perfectionism;
- b) High and unrealistic self-standards to reach quickly related to ideal models of teaching and caring;
- c) Need to be appreciated by students;
- d) Anxiety and insecurities about her own potential and legitimacy as a teacher.

In conclusion, as the researchers (Golombek and Doran 2014) point out, the novice language teacher is in a vulnerable position at the very start of his or her job and with not enough expertise in teaching upon which to hold on when faced with challenges and ‘cognitive dissonances’. Therefore Golombek and Doran (2014) stress how novice teachers are likely to envision frictions between the ideal and real regarding teaching, and such frictions will foster emotional responses and teachers need to check their emotions and become self-regulated in order not to let these emotions overwhelm and dominate them.

#### 1.1.4 The “Call to Teach” and self-efficacy

Day and Qing (in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) affirm that for many teachers their engagement in their profession is nothing more than “a proactive and positive response to an inner emotional call” (ibid., p.25). The presence of such inner motivation as the ‘call to teach’ (ibid.) is desirable in future teachers, since according to Day and Qing (ibid.) it fosters positive teacher emotions. Apart from providing teachers with a sense of purpose and helping them manage their feelings and emotions, this sort of vocation fills them with “determination, courage and flexibility” (Hanson 1995 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.25).

Another vital factor for good teaching, as Bandura (1997 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) points out, is self-efficacy and, in the researcher’s words: “perceived self-efficacy is concerned not with the number of skills you have, but with what you believe you can do with what you have under a variety of circumstances” (ibid., p.26). In case of teachers, self-efficacy is their capacity to promote students’ learning and “bring about desired outcomes of students engagement and learning, even among students who may be difficult or unmotivated” (Tschannen-Moran et al. 1998 cited in Hoy and Spero 2005 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.26).

Edwards (2005 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) states how another important factor affecting teachers’ well-being is the ‘relational agency’ (Edwards 2005, p.168) of teachers, i.e. “a capacity to align one’s thought and actions with those of others in order to interpret

problems of practice and to respond to those interpretations” (Edwards 2005 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.27). Day and Qing argue that ‘relational agency’ helps understand how teachers manage emotions (ibid.).

Nowadays the significance of teachers’ ability to manage their emotional life is widely accepted and recognized and there is a growing awareness that it is necessary for teachers’ capability to prove effective (Day et al. 2007 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009).

Moreover, Johnson (2004 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) reminds us that:

[...] anyone familiar with schools knows that stories about the easy job of teaching are sheer fiction. Good teaching is demanding and exhausting work, even in the best of work places. (Johnson 2004 cited in Day and Qing in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.29)

#### 1.1.5 ‘Relational Agency’

Edwards (2005) states that ‘relational agency’ implies a steadiness in giving and accepting support from the people around us.

‘Relational agency’ according to the researcher (ibid.) recognizes also the need for teachers to be responsive and address the learners’ needs and problems as part of their daily duty and performance, so that ‘relational agency’ becomes part of their teaching identity and it develops as a skill to be taken into consideration when evaluating student teachers’ performance, apart from the curriculum planning and lesson delivery.

Another point brought forward by Edwards (2005) is how ‘relational agency’ can create an improved example of professionalism seen not simply as “a matter of induction into established practices” (ibid., p. 179), but also as a means to approach and discuss problems, from different points of view, so that people bringing new resources to the project are recognized as resources themselves, and in this way learning becomes enriched by the new elements brought by others and becomes in itself a resource for other people (ibid.).

Ultimately Edwards (2005) believes that inside the practice of teaching, and in particular inside teacher training, “a capacity to work with others and to negotiate meanings should be seen as valuable and not evidence of weakness” (ibid.).

### 1.1.6 Teaching as emotional practice

Research on pre-service teacher emotion is scarce (Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009); this is why I try to sum up a review of the existing reflection concerning pre-service teachers' feelings entering the "emotional practice of teaching" (Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p. 74).

With the term "emotional practice" (ibid.) I am referring to Meyer's (in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) thought that emotional processes are everyday experiences that teachers have to deal with in order to understand themselves, relate with others and manage these relationships.

The teacher training period is a phase of learning for the teacher on a double level: theoretical and practical. This calls to the mind Denzin's (1984 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) statement that emotional practices are rooted in interactions with other people that occur at two levels: the practical and the interpretative. Denzin's (ibid.) definition is ideal for student teachers since they are instructed about both the theory and practice of their profession, and are prompted to think over and over again during their training about whom they are teaching to, the manner in which they practice their job and they also need to show good time management skills.

Meyer (in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) stresses how the initial emotional experiences of student teachers, whether positive or negative ones, bear significant implications for the future career of the student teachers, and so it is important that research focuses its attention upon student teacher emotions and their experiences during the teacher training period (ibid.).

During the teacher training period teachers can choose whether to include or exclude their own emotions in their practice, and Swanson (1989 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) points out that this has an impact on their identity and development. In particular Swanson stresses how "socio-emotional relationships" (ibid., p.74) – such as with mentors and students – affect teachers since these experiences bring together teaching experience and school culture.

Meyer (in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) stresses how the problem with teachers is that nowadays they end their teacher training and start teaching without a proper competence and awareness of teacher emotions and of their profession's constraints, usually neglected by research, more focused on pedagogy and management. Consequently, when teachers try to reformulate their identities to fit better with the circumstances and requirements of their job, they focus mainly on the methodological aspects of teaching, neglecting the emotional and motivational spheres. Meyer (ibid.) argues that this happens because it has been given insufficient attention to increase student teachers' awareness about how to avoid falling into attitudes and practices that are threatening to one's emotions and motivations, the core of teaching itself.

O' Conner (2008 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) proposes the creation of a literature base for teacher education that grants to emotional practice a central role in the shaping and development of teachers' identity and careers, and that it acknowledges how emotional practice occurs in various school settings.

Hargreaves (2000 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) argues that the ever changing context of teaching can cause teachers to either mask or invent emotions in order to match the demands of the new context they find themselves in.

Teachers need also to be understanding and tolerant of their students' emotions to be able to interact and make decision successfully according to Hargreaves (Hargreaves et al. 2001 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009), and so they need to be provided with 'emotional understanding'. But what is 'emotional understanding' exactly? Hargreaves reviews Denzin's (1984 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) concept of 'emotional understanding' saying it occurs when we interpret current situations through a comparison with past emotional experiences (ibid.). Meyer (in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) states also how another key element for the success of teaching are interactions with pupils, and here 'emotional understanding' is a key concept, since it is the tool teachers need to be aware of the students' emotions and their different personalities and to learn how to approach them and fulfill their needs, which is very important when planning lessons, evaluating and creating curricula. In this way teachers attempt to create a bridge between their needs and those of their students (ibid.).

'Emotional understanding' is also connected with care, as suggested by Meyer (in Schutz and Zembylas 2009), who states that care is one of the many ways in which 'emotional understanding' can be shown by teachers to pupils. However the researcher reminds us also how care can have costs, and at times it can be labeled as one of teachers' weaknesses: some caring teachers in a survey by Isenbarger and Zembylas (2006 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) affirm how they were told by their colleagues that they were "too soft, [...], too sensitive" (ibid., p.76) and how they needed to "toughen up" (ibid.) and that they "take everything so seriously" (ibid.).

However the caring teachers in the study done by Isenbarger and Zembylas (2006 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) stated how stopping caring would have meant stopping being teachers and they persisted in their philosophy throughout their career.

Noddings (1984 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) argues that the act of caring spreads on various aspects of teaching, since it sustains connections and a willingness to respond to others in a flexible and sensitive way and it allows to establish significant relationships; Rogers and Webb (1991 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) state that caring is shown while encouraging dialogue and showing sensitivity and flexibility to students' needs and interests and

according to Hargreaves (1998 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) it provides a comfortable and safe environment. Prosser (1999 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) states how caring calls forth happiness in children and makes them feel cared for and finally caring means to feel love towards pupils (Nias 1989 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009).

Beck and Kooser (2004 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) state that caring goes beyond programs or policies, it ultimately requires attention to the personal sphere of students.

Goldstein and Lake (2003 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) stress the key role of caring in teacher education:

Caring is often taken for granted and under-discussed within teacher education. [...] We need to develop an orientation toward teacher education in which pre-service teachers' pre-existing beliefs about caring and teaching are called into question. (ibid., p. 89)

Similarly, all this leads us to the bittersweet conclusion provided by Hargreaves (1994 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) who states that “the more central the care is to a teacher, the more emotionally devastating is the experience of failing to provide it” (ibid., p.66).

#### 1.1.7 Student teachers' emotional tensions

Knowles and Holt-Reynolds (1991 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) point out that “as pre-service teachers talk about and explore their future role as teachers, they frequently speak of their own experiences as students as if those experiences were prototypical” (ibid. p. 79).

Lortie (1975 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) states the following lines regarding the teacher training period:

The way most beginners are inducted into teaching leaves them doubly alone: they confront a 'sink-or-swim' situation in physical isolation and get only occasional cultural support in the process. (Lortie 1975 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p. 79)

According to Meyer student teaching is an ideal opportunity for testing teacher identity and emotional practice, since it represents a period when the student teacher can explore his or her professional role, feeling the emotions associated with teaching and experimenting the various professional roles.

However, Meyer (in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) reminds us it is also a period during which student teachers are evaluated and scrutinized and this can lead to emotional tensions, defined by Meyer “as a reoccurring conflict between unpleasant emotions and pleasant emotions that are juxtaposed around

the same reoccurring situation or issue” (ibid., p. 81). In her research Meyer (ibid.) discovered that student teachers experience mainly three emotional tensions during their teacher training period, related to their relationship with the students or mentors:

- a) Finding autonomy in relation to their mentor (need for independence vs need for support);
- b) Competence and fulfilment (teaching in a way that promotes student learning in a personal way vs adopting a teaching method mirroring the control and the expertise of the mentor teacher);
- c) Building relationships with students (joy vs pain in the emotion management needed to create relationships with students).

Re-elaborated from Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas (2009).

Regarding the first tension, it is interesting to take a closer look at the personal opinions about self-perceptions of the sources of negative and positive emotions of one of the student teachers involved in Meyer’s research (Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009):

Negative emotions were often caused by the lack of support that I felt I was getting from my mentor teacher. It was often frustrating work with her because I did not feel like I was getting the support I needed during this student teaching process. (Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.83)

One student teacher in Meyer’s study (Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) also reports how she made an effort to ignore the negative emotions focusing on the positive ones:

While the positive emotions have made me realize [...] I am excited to begin my teaching career, the negative emotions leave me feeling unsure of my abilities. It is hard to be around others that are so confident in their teaching every day while I am still learning – makes me feel like I am not living up to their expectations [...]. I have ignored the negative feelings [...] but the thoughts are still there in the back of my head [...]. The positive feelings have a stronger impact on my lessons, as I feel the students can see how excited I am to teach them, and have enabled me to connect with the students. (ibid., p. 83)

Concerning the second tension, about teachers looking for a personal teaching method differentiated from the one the mentor tries to channel them into, from Meyer’s study (ibid.) it came out that some

student teachers felt they were not trusted and given enough autonomy by mentors, whereas others were surprised they were given responsibilities and trusted teaching very early.

To give two contrasting examples about teachers' reaction to the perception of a lack of trust, I will briefly report and compare the student teaching experiences of Claire and Marie from Meyer's study (*ibid.*).

Claire's journal entry expresses her feelings of not being trusted by her mentor: "[My cooperative teacher] is going to have a hard time letting go – I hope she is able to trust me eventually" (Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.81).

Claire's anxiety and negative emotions affected how she interacted with the mentor; she could not find the courage to ask if she could do certain things at times, due to the fact she did not feel she was trusted. Even when given more responsibility, anxiety did not abandon her and she was nervous because still she felt she was not supported. She decided not to share how she felt with her mentor and the anxiety underlying their relationship showed she was uncertain about her professional role as student teacher.

On the other hand, Meyer states how Marie (Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) was determined to find her own independence even when not feeling supported. She did not like that at midway through her training period her mentor continued to stop her and intervene during lessons, or how her mentor disapproved her grading method, but Marie did not miss any opportunity to make her own decisions and instructional choices when there was a chance. There were times when she decided to hide her feelings just as Claire did, though.

As Meyer pointed out, "Claire and Marie both illustrate how student teachers try to fit into role expectations and also how they resist them" (*ibid.*, p. 82). These examples reflect different emotional practices adopted by student teachers trying to cope with their demanding and not always supportive mentors while finding their role as student teachers.

As regards the tensions underlying relationships with students, an interesting example is given by the words of a teacher from Meyer's study (Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) when asked which emotion surprised her the most. "All of them! I have never been that emotional with kids in the past [...]. I have never been so attached to kids before" (*ibid.*, p. 87).

This reaction, Meyer (*ibid.*) argues, stresses how the teacher was not aware at all of the emotional range experienced by teachers every day during their job, because her training did not focus on the emotional aspects of teaching but on the formal and methodological sphere.

In particular, Hargreaves (2000 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas, 2009) points out how elementary school teachers are more liable to experience strong personal and physical emotions with

learners, since they spend most time during the day with children and they are in a continual interpersonal contact with them.

## 1.2 The emotionally intelligent teacher

Powell and Kusuma Powell (2010) argue that emotions are important because they drive our attention in terms of priorities – that is, they manipulate the scope of our attention as to what we focus on and what we decide to ignore of the world around us (ibid.).

The researchers also state that what has a strong emotional impact on students is the affective climate of the classroom that, though it cannot be fully controlled by the teacher, it is shaped upon the teachers' verbal and non-verbal behaviour, display of emotions and moods affecting the students' emotional balance, either in a positive or negative way (ibid.).

### 1.2.1 “Emotional Intelligence”

As has been seen already and confirmed by Powell and Kusuma-Powell's words (2010), ‘emotional understanding’ is one of the major elements that create an effective teacher, and where there is a want of ‘emotional understanding’, there will be a misunderstanding of the students' behaviour, abilities, and a neglect of their needs and feelings, and these factors can result in negative marking, but also – and more importantly – in a lowering of the students' motivation, commitment and will to learn and engage in the lesson.

In order to be emotionally understanding, an individual needs to be emotionally intelligent, as argued by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

What does it mean to be emotionally intelligent?

The phrase ‘emotional intelligence’ (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.16) first appeared in the work of Reuven Bar-On (Bar-On and Parker 2000 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010) in the 1980s, then it was conceptualized by Meyer and Salovey (1997 cited in Powell and Kusuma Powell 2010) and it was finally popularized by Goleman (1995 cited in Powell and Kusuma Powell 2010).

According to Goleman (ibid.) ‘emotional intelligence’ is made of five elements: “self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, social awareness and relationship management” (ibid., p.17).

Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) argue how these factors are kept on the periphery of the curriculum and education programs, and one of the purposes of this paper is to argue how they should have a central role in the curriculum for the benefit of both teachers and learners.

Powell and Kusuma-Powell (ibid.) state that two assumptions have to be made in order to clarify why it is thought that teachers need to be emotionally intelligent:

- a) The first one is that a more efficient and effective student learning is promoted and prompted by emotionally intelligent teachers, who are able to create more serene classrooms than their limited EQ<sup>3</sup> colleagues;
- b) The second premise is that any teacher can develop ‘emotional intelligence’.

Research by Ginott (1995 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010) shows how emotions influence teachers’ work in the classroom and can affect students’ emotions and learning:

I’ve come to a frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. [...] As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child’s life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be defeated or de-escalated, and a child humanized or dehumanized. (Ginott 1995 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.17)

Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) argue how emotionally intelligent teachers are also able to cope with stress better than their limited EQ colleagues, since ‘emotional intelligence’ allows them to think about different ways to cope with negative emotions and to address difficult situations they find themselves in. The researchers admit that in general it is not easy for teachers to manage emotions in an effective way on a daily routine: they have to “make between four hundred and one thousand decisions in the course of an average day in the classroom. Most of these decisions are on-the-moment choices. They are spontaneous, and there is no time for thoughtful reflection” (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.25).

Focusing now on what ‘emotional intelligence’ is in terms of skills and abilities able to promote a serene learning and teaching environment, Goleman (1995 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010) provides us with a definition of ‘emotional intelligence’ as a blending of five factors:

- a) ‘Self-knowledge’ (ibid., p.21): teachers must have a good degree of ‘self-knowledge’ to recognize their strengths and weaknesses and must regard failures as opportunities to learn;
- b) ‘Self-management’(ibid.) and ‘self-regulation’ (ibid.): it is important for teachers to be aware of their emotions and to create, according to Covey (2004 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010), a “distance between the stimulus

<sup>3</sup> EQ: ‘Emotional Intelligence’, taken from Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010, p.8).

and the response” (ibid., p.22), that is, to calmly identify, analyze, manage and regulate emotions before reacting;

- c) Motivation: the engine of any effective teaching and fuel of teachers’ labor and commitment to their profession;
- d) ‘Social awareness’ (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.17): the ability to manage relationships in a way that allows us to be aware both of our emotions and responses to situations and to have a mindsight that allows us to perceive the emotional reactions of others;
- e) ‘Relationship management’ (ibid.): teachers need to learn how to manage interactions; interestingly, recent research shows how the more efficient individuals in doing so have the strong belief that relationships are repairable, and this assumption lies at the very core of ‘relationship management’ (Brooks and Goldstein 2001 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010).

Re-elaborated from Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

What are the advantages of ‘emotional intelligence’?

The answer is provided by Powell and Kusuma Powell (2010): it facilitates learning, and the researchers remind us that it must be kept in mind that teaching and facilitation of learning are not always intertwined. Some important conditions must be there in order to help learners actually understand and learn a new topic, and make new intellectual links and discoveries.

Tyler (1949 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010) wrote more than fifty years ago:

[...] saying ‘I taught them, they [= the students] just didn’t learn’ was as foolish as saying ‘I sold it to them, they just didn’t buy it’. (Tyler 1949 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p. 23)

Emotionally intelligent teachers are able to spread around them positive emotions, so that a serene learning environment takes form. What does research in teacher emotion say about the fact that emotions can be contagious?

Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) claim that ‘emotional contagion<sup>4</sup>’ is “present whenever two or more people are relating well” (ibid., p. 139). Research in psychology also states how this process

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<sup>4</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘emotional contagion’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

occurs often at a subconscious level and it is not acknowledged by the individuals experiencing it, as argued by Barsade and Gibson (2007 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010).

Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) also add that people in the ‘caring’ professions (e.g. medicine, social work and teaching) are more liable to experience ‘emotional contagion’ due to the fact that their job involves a psychological investment in the welfare of those who they try to help (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010).

### 1.2.2 The self-regulated teacher

Recent research upon what features highly effective teachers share shows that the most frequently cited ones are according to Nieto (2005 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010): “strong subject-matter knowledge, pedagogical effectiveness, [...] excellent communication skills [...] [and] emotional self-aware[ness]” (ibid., p.32).

Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) affirm that the teaching profession needs that teachers regulate their emotions. Impulse control allows us to “delay gratification and to anticipate consequences” (ibid., p.76), that is, the consequences of our actions and emotional outbursts.

The first step of ‘self-management’ is the awareness of our emotions and of their direct and indirect impact on others before giving way to the impulse suggested by the emotion itself.

Ekman refers to this as ‘apprehending “the spark before the flame”’ (Dalai Lama and Ekman 2008 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p. 84). This researcher also believes that meditation helps people become more aware of their own emotions:

Most people, unless they engage in a lot of meditative practice, have no conscious recognition that an impulse or spark has arisen before they engage in emotional behaviour, the flame. (ibid.)

Pert (1997 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010) stresses how emotionally intelligent teachers are aware of their emotions as they experience them and they are also aware of the inseparability between cognition and emotions, between ‘mind’ and ‘body’ in the process of learning.

Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) stress how impulse control is an effective strategy to prevent negative consequences related to our experience of negative emotions, since it allows us to identify and block an emotion considered harmful in some way and immediately another emotion is evoked in its place and brought into action, to foster a more positive impact on listeners.

So what are the characteristics of a self-regulated teacher?

First of all, Powell and Kusuma-Powell (ibid.) stress how self-regulated teachers have an internal locus of responsibility for their success or failure, and therefore strongly repute themselves to be the

responsible ones for their achievements or failures, and they are intrinsically motivated by deeply held values. They have a deep sense of hope and optimism, they are unflappable even under pressure and in highly difficult situations and do not yield to negativity. They are tolerant of ambiguity and have a flexible behaviour. Finally, they are innovative and are always looking for new ways and approaches to solve knotty problems (ibid.).

Let us now focus on the main emotions related to problems of ‘self-management’ experienced by teachers, and how to deal with them to be self-regulated individuals.

The first emotion that comes to mind when talking of ‘self-management’, as Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) affirm, is anger, the most crucial emotion teachers must deal with in their job. Depending on how this emotion is managed and displayed by teachers, it can have an either constructive or disruptive impact on learners. Paul Mc Lean (1990 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010) argues that frustration and anger, among other negative emotions, can cause the fight, flight or freeze response on students. Here is when ‘deep acting’ (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.81; Hochschild 1990; Groth et al. 2006 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.57) comes into play according to Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010), regulating anger and aligning our emotions with our deeply held values, so that anger is regulated and becomes an occasion to correct the child, and not an opportunity to give way to our personal venting and frustration (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010).

The most destructive emotion in the relationship between teacher and student, however, is not anger, but contempt, according to Powell and Kusuma-Powell (ibid.). They believe that unlike anger, contempt stresses how the victim has no value or worthiness in our eyes and is not worth of our attention; by demonstrating contempt we damage an individual’s sense of self-worth and self-efficacy and we do not promote student learning. Contempt ‘heralds a complete absence of respect and caring’ (ibid., p.86) and has serious implications for learning and for the sense of self-efficacy in students.

Among the key factors of motivation and satisfaction in the teaching profession, according to Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010), there is “the specific, selfless pleasure that a teacher [...] takes in the success of students” (ibid., p.87), called ‘naches’ (ibid.) in Yiddish, but absent in the vocabulary of the English language.

Focusing now on how to deal with negative emotions, according to Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) denying their existence (‘suppression’, ibid., p.89) or deliberately ignoring them (‘repression’, ibid.) are not effective techniques to overcome unpleasant emotional experiences.

According to them a possible solution is ‘cognitive reframing’ (ibid., p.89), that is, to reach the emotional detachment necessary to look at a potentially difficult or stressful situation from a different perspective; it can be challenging but according to Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) on the long-

term results in less stress than trying to regulate emotions through either ‘repression’ or ‘suppression’ (ibid., p. 89), and it is more beneficial to the individual’s well-being and emotional balance.

All these recommendations and suggestions become even more important when we are faced with clear examples of teachers deviating from the path of caring and ‘self-regulation’ of emotions, as it is the case of the teacher I am going to briefly describe now, and that I witnessed during my internship at the primary school.

On one occasion while I was waiting for tutor B (one of the two English language teachers I was assisting during my internship) to arrive in the classroom, I witnessed the Italian teacher – that I will call C from now onwards – screaming to a child at the top of her voice just because he did not colour a picture as she wanted him to. She kept screaming at him and belittling him repeatedly telling him that was not colouring at all and that he was stupid for not knowing how to colour decently a picture, and then she walked away in a very angry manner, leaving the child shocked and in tears; he both felt ridiculed in front of his peers and was very sorry for not meeting her expectations, and at such a young age he is very vulnerable to emotions such as nervousness and anxiety.

I believe teachers should always keep this in mind while teaching any subject, and should acknowledge a correct opinion about their role as tutors and helpers of children, and not as drill surgeons, as C does. She thinks that being a teacher implies being harsh and correcting every child’s mistake in a stern way, appearing as an authoritative teacher that has to do almost all the teaching and talking in the class, leaving very small room for children’s opinions, initiative or importance as the true protagonists of the learning situation.

The effects of the screaming on the child were easily detectable: he was crying and was terribly anxious; I was so astonished and appalled by what I just witnessed, I could scarcely believe my eyes. Luckily tutor B came after a few moments and she reassured the child after I told her what happened. C had told the child to colour better the picture, and that she did not care whether he had to skip lunch to do so. The English teacher reassured the child and told him to eat while she would colour the drawing for him. It was a sweet and kind thing to do on her part, and I was glad that at least she behaved as a teacher should, as a helper and supporter of children, instead of an authoritative and stern drill surgeon.

The behaviour of C can be defined as a blending of anger and contempt, the most disruptive emotions in the teacher-learner relationship in the classroom, according to research upon teacher emotions (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010).

Whereas anger is seen as something teachers should avoid in the interest of both learners and also themselves (repeated outburst of anger are known to lead to ‘emotional draining<sup>5</sup>’ and ‘burnout<sup>6</sup>’) and because it can distort our perceptions and therefore impair our empathic abilities, contempt is seen as the most disruptive emotion in teaching, since on one hand it makes it clear how there is a total lack of respect and caring on the teacher’s part, and on the other the victim is seen as having absolutely no value or relevance in the eyes of who accuses him or her.

Contempt was present in C’s words when she said how the child was incapable of colouring, how that was not colouring at all and how stupid he was for being so bad at it, all things that could be avoided and rephrased more calmly as a polite and encouraging suggestion focused on the good the learner did and directed to improving his colouring and motivating him by offering him some support and help.

Moreover it has to be kept in mind how contempt prevents student learning from happening, damages the sense of self-worth of the victim and often fosters social exclusion and it can be very contagious, according to Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010), so it is clearly to be avoided and discouraged in learning environments of any kind, even more so in primary schools, where the dominant emotions should be love, caring, ‘affection and other possible emotional displays towards children’ (Hargreaves 2000; Nias 1989, 1999; Noddings 1984 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.63).

Teaching is, and should always be, also in the most difficult situation, an act of love, as Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) state in their research about the impact of teachers’ attitudes and emotions on learners. And I believe that an act of love is desecrated when a teacher screams in front of an innocent child, thinking that in this way he or she will remember to do better next time and not repeat that mistake again.

In conclusion to this section about the relevance of reflection upon and reframing of teacher emotions I want to quote Powell and Kusuma-Powell’s (2010) words about how human beings learn by “reflection upon experience” (ibid., p.29) rather than just from experience:

Experience happens to us; reflection, on the other hand, is the process through which we attempt to make sense out of experience. (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p. 29)

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<sup>5</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘emotional draining’ has been amply dealt with by Schutz and Zembylas (2009).

<sup>6</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘teacher burnout’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) and by Schutz and Zembylas (2009).

### 1.3 Language teacher's anxiety: applying Horwitz's FLA to language teachers

The section on 'Foreign Language Anxiety'<sup>7</sup> (FLA) in my paper has the purpose to summarize the existing research on the topic in order to relate it to FL teachers, and to show how the concept of 'Foreign language anxiety', first appeared in Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) is applicable to novice English teachers, as my internship gave me the chance to experience first-hand, and I also want to stress how the field of teacher anxiety related to FL teaching, still much unexplored, needs to be expanded and researched more thoroughly, since there are affective factors that can impair and therefore damage the teaching situation, if neglected and not taken care of.

#### 1.3.1 Introduction to "Foreign Language Anxiety"

Anxiety is the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system.  
(Spielberger 1983 cited in Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, p. 125)

A distinction is needed between 'general anxiety' and 'specific anxiety', as given by psychologists and reported in Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope's study (1986, p.127). The researchers state that 'general anxiety' is part of the personality of an individual, of someone who feels anxious in a variety of situations, whereas 'specific anxiety' is a kind of state anxiety which interests the individual only in specific situations, such as language learning for example (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986). Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) argue that when anxiety is circumscribed to the language teaching or learning situation, it falls into the category of 'specific anxiety'.

Researchers have shown how language learning is perceived as threatening for an individual's self-perception and identity (Guiora 1983 cited in Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986). In particular, Guiora (*ibid.*) states that language learning itself is "a profoundly unsettling psychological proposition" (*ibid.*, p.125) since it "threatens an individual's self-concept and worldview" (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, p.125). Other researchers argue that some language teaching methodologies imposed on learners can cause them to respond with defensive positions (Curran 1976; Stevick 1980 cited in Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986).

Since language anxiety is related to performance evaluation within an academic and social context, it is important to relate it to three performance anxieties (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986):

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<sup>7</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'Foreign Language Anxiety' (FLA) has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

- a) 'Communication apprehension' (ibid., p.127);
- b) 'Test anxiety' (ibid.);
- c) 'Fear of negative evaluation' (ibid.).

As regards 'communication apprehension', this is defined as follows:

A type of shyness characterized by fear or anxiety about communicating with people. Difficulty in speaking in dyads or groups (oral communication anxiety) or in public (stage fright), or in listening to or learning a spoken message (receiver anxiety) are all manifestations of communication apprehension. (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, p. 130)

The peculiar 'communication apprehension' specific to foreign language learning stems from the personal certainty that one is likely to have problems understanding others immediately and being understood (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986).

'Test anxiety' derives from 'fear of failure' (Gordon and Sarason 1955; Sarason 1980 cited in Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, p.127; Ipek 2007 cited in Merç 2011, p.81). Test-anxious students often have unrealistic expectations and beliefs about test scores, they put exaggerated demands upon themselves and feel that anything less than a perfect test performance is a failure.

'Fear of negative evaluation' can be defined as follows:

Apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively. (Watson and Friend 1969 cited in Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, p.128)

It is similar to 'test anxiety', but it differs from it because it is broader in scope, since it is not limited to test-taking situations, but it may occur in any social, evaluative situation such as interviewing for a job or speaking in a foreign language class (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986).

According to Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (ibid.), however, 'Foreign Language Anxiety' is not simply the transfer of these three performance anxieties to the language class context. It is more complex than that. According to them 'Foreign Language Anxiety' is "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, p. 128).

The researchers (ibid.) argue that anxiety measures typically have not focused on foreign language learning but had wider scopes, and thus did not allow researchers to have a clear-cut definition of what 'Foreign Language Anxiety' was, how to identify it and how to deal with it. Moreover, they

state that very few studies have been done about the subtle effects of anxiety on foreign language learning, and more research is needed in this field.

### 1.3.2 Sources of “Foreign Language Student Teacher Anxiety”

A recent study by Merç (2011) was aimed at finding the sources of foreign language student teachers’ sources of anxiety. These fitted mainly six categories (ibid.): student and class profiles, teaching procedures, classroom management, mentors, being observed and ‘miscellaneous’ (teachers’ beliefs about the learning situation, learners and experienced teachers). In his study the researcher states how:

Language teaching anxiety is a confrontation that must be taken into account as a different but related concept to language learning anxiety as well as a general teaching anxiety. (Merç 2011, p. 80)

This is why in my section about language anxiety I try to establish a link between teacher and learner ‘Foreign Language Anxiety’, even if the connection is not straightforward as it may seem, but it has some points in common.

Shrestha (2009 cited in Merç 2011) stresses how teachers should be sensitive to ‘Foreign language teaching anxiety’ (Merç 2011), in order to detect it and improve their teaching in the classroom (Merç 2011). Horwitz (1996 cited in Merç 2011) argues that although this anxiety does not impact significantly the effectiveness of the teaching methodology, it does have some impact on the well-being and job satisfaction of language teachers, and has to be taken into account.

In a similar study, Kim and Kim (2004 in Merç 2011) discovered the following anxiety-provoking situations for student teachers: when they have to answer unexpected questions, when they have to teach English using the English language, when learners are unmotivated or disinterested in the subject, when teachers have to perform communicative and speaking tasks; when they have to teach to native speakers of English, when the class gets out of their control, when they have to teach English listening, when they are observed by mentors and when they teach English culture.

The main sources of anxiety were related to English proficiency, ‘fear of negative evaluation’ (a feature in common with ‘Foreign Language Anxiety’), fear of being compared to native teachers, lack of knowledge about linguistics and education, lack of class preparation and lack of teaching experience (ibid.).

Another study done by Ipek (2007 cited in Merç 2011) and that ended up with the creation of the ‘Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Scale’ (FLTAS) done to investigate the level of anxiety in Turkish EFL teachers shows how other sources of anxiety for student teachers can be: teaching

students at a particular language level, making mistakes, ‘fear of failure’ and teaching a particular language area.

An example of investigation that aimed at finding similar points between pre-service language teacher ‘Foreign Language Anxiety’ and learner ‘Foreign Language Anxiety’ is a study by Yuksel (2008 cited in Merç 2011) done to investigate Turkish pre-service language teachers’ teaching anxiety in relation with their language learning anxiety. The study also aimed to find out the strategies for coping with teaching anxiety.

Sixty-three pre-service teachers of English answered three questionnaires: the FLCAS<sup>8</sup>, the FLTAS<sup>9</sup>, and an open-ended questionnaire. The nature of student teaching itself with all the elements of the teaching practicum included (e.g. mentors, peers, students to be taught) are also key factors in provoking anxiety in student teachers according to Yuksel (2008 cited in Merç 2011).

A very interesting study concluded with the development of a ‘Foreign Language Student Teaching Anxiety Scale’ (FLSTAS<sup>10</sup>) was done by El-Okda and Al-Humaidi (2003 in Merç 2011). The scale includes 34 items grouped under six categories: “interactions with students (8 items), interactions with peers (5 items), interactions with other language teachers (5 items), interactions with mentors (5 items), planning and written work checking (5 items) and classroom management (6 items)” (ibid., p. 82).

The results of the study point out how there is a moderate level of language anxiety among language student teachers. This leads researchers to conclude that some measures have to be taken in order to lessen the student teachers’ level of anxiety and this responsibility is loaded partly on the student teachers themselves and partly on their supervisors, as Horwitz (1996 cited in Merç 2011) suggested.

Focusing on Merç’s study (2011), the following table shows the results of his research on the sources of EFL novice teachers’ anxiety (ibid.):

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<sup>8</sup> ‘Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale’ (FLCAS), taken from Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

<sup>9</sup> ‘Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Scale’ (FLTAS), taken from Ipek (2007) cited in Merç (2011).

<sup>10</sup> ‘Foreign Language Student Teaching Anxiety Scale’ (FLSTAS) taken from El-Okda and Al-Humaidi (2003) cited in Merç (2011).

*Table 1. Sources of foreign language student teacher anxiety*

<b>Categories</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Students and Class Profiles	142	48,1
Classroom management	58	19,7
Teaching procedures	50	17,0
Being observed	29	9,8
Mentors	11	3,7
Miscellaneous	5	1,7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>100,0</b>

N= Number of Communication Units

Fig. 3 taken from Merç (2011).

It can be seen how there are mainly six categories embodying the sources of student teachers' anxiety, and the highest percentages concern respectively student and class profiles (48,1%) and classroom management (19,7%).

As regards the highest concern for student teachers, this can be seen as either individual student behaviour or class profile, both grouped in the category 'Students and Class Profiles'. Here the anxiety stems mainly from the teacher's feeling of unfamiliarity with the class he or she is going to teach and from the fear of not knowing what is waiting for them in the classroom (Merç 2011).

In particular, it is interesting how Merç (ibid.) points out that sometimes teachers report that feelings of helplessness were provoked by unexpected questions or answers given by the students.

Classroom management and time management are additional concerns for student teachers, according to whom the control of the class is fundamental and means almost everything in a lesson, and upon it depends the very success of the lesson itself (ibid.).

Teaching procedures also are a cause of teachers' anxiety according to Merç's study (2011), sprouting mainly from the fear of teaching either a subject they never taught before or a difficult one.

Language-anxieties related with the teaching procedures were also: "using L2 (English) in the classroom, modifying their language according to students' level, and giving instructions in L2" (ibid., p. 88).

Some personal issues related to physical well-being like being sleepy and tired on the day of practice teaching and a personality trait such as perfectionism were also among the sources of anxiety experienced by the student teachers (Merç 2011).

Another issue that according to Merç (2011) annoys and sparks anxiety in student teachers is the mentors' interference during their lessons, as a novice teacher involved in the study affirms:

It seems that our teacher started to interfere in our teaching. In fact, the teacher's saying what to do and what not to do disturbed me while I was teaching in front of the class. (Merç 2011, p. 88)

Here the main issue according to Merç (2011) is due to the age gap between teacher students and mentors, and often the annoyance is caused by the fact that mentors are rather old and do not adopt innovative teaching approaches, whereas student teachers want to experiment and try new and creative language teaching methodologies and classroom procedures.

On the other hand, the researcher stresses how student teachers find observing mentors enjoyable and beneficial especially when they are given the chance to make comments on their teaching and have a chance for discussion of the classroom events (Anderson, Barksdale and Hite 2005 cited in Merç 2011). Therefore, Merç (2011) concludes that when mentors are more open and flexible about discussing their own classroom applications with their student teachers, it is possible that student teachers will experience lessened levels of anxiety related to their mentors. The overall understanding of the relationship between these two sides should be, then, learning from each other rather than criticism of each other (ibid.).

### 1.3.3 Sources of language anxiety and coping strategies

As Young (in Klee 1994) reminds us, up to now the research on anxiety related to language learning has focused mainly on the learner and the learning outcomes of the either positive or negative effects of anxiety experienced by students, and not on the teacher.

Young (ibid.) examined the sources of language anxiety of both quantitative and qualitative research in this field, and defined a number of primary sources of language anxiety.

The anxiety sources related to the learner pointed out by Young (ibid.) and relevant to my internship experience as a novice teacher because I felt them too in first person are related to personal or interpersonal anxieties and are the following ones:

- a) Low self-esteem;
- b) Self-perceived low ability levels;
- c) 'Communication apprehension';
- d) 'Social anxiety' (Young in Klee 1994, p.31).

Young's review on the literature on anxiety-reducing and coping techniques (Young in Klee 1994) lead to her suggestions on anxiety-reducing strategies that she inserts as possible solutions to be noticed and put into practice by teachers, who can shape their attitude according to them and improve also their sense of well-being. The strategies to fight potentially stressful situations in the class are (ibid.):

- a) Teachers should develop awareness and sensitivity of the role of the teacher as a tutor and a helper rather than a drilling surgeon;
- b) In order to know better their own beliefs and expectations, teachers could complete the 'Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory' (Horwitz 1988 cited in Young in Klee 1994, p.34), a questionnaire designed to identify beliefs about language learning. The results of this tool offer teachers insights into notions about language learning that they bring into class;
- c) Teachers are encouraged to become involved in language teaching workshops and research as a teacher is fundamental in order to be aware of one's own methodologies, for insights into current teaching approaches and for realistic expectations of what students should be able to do at a particular level of language instruction;
- d) Adopt a relaxed, friendly and patient behaviour and a positive emotional display with pupils, so that they feel at their ease and in a serene learning environment.

Re-elaborated from Young in Klee (1994).

#### 1.3.4 The "Cognitive-Affective Filter" in teaching

This paragraph deals with the concept of the 'cognitive-affective filter' (Pennington 1996, p.339), relevant to my paper because Pennington (1996) believes that this filter affects both intake and output in teaching, and that it can impair some cognitive processes that are of vital relevance for the teaching practice and teacher change. The researcher stresses also how, by lowering this filter through reflection, teachers can internalize new concepts and include them in their methodologies, system of values and daily job.

##### *1.3.4.1 Introduction to the concept of the "Cognitive-Affective Filter"*

According to Pennington (1996) the ‘cognitive-affective filter’ can impair intake, mirroring Corder’s (1967 cited in Pennington 1996) view of input and intake:

The simple fact of presenting a certain linguistic form to a learner does not necessarily qualify it for the status of input, for the reason that input is "what goes in", not what is available for going in, and we may reasonably suppose that it is the learner who controls this input or more properly this intake. (Corder 1967 cited in Pennington 1996, p.337)

Pennington (1996) applies this theory to teachers, and input refers to the information that reaches them through the environment surrounding them such as students’ responses to their teaching style, and in general information and new ideas that may not be always aligned with their system of prior beliefs and deeply held values. This material may fail to become intake and if this happens it will not be processed and will not be transformed into output.

The researcher (Pennington 1995 cited in Pennington 1996) also argues that the elements of the external environment that manage to pass through the filter, instead, are successfully internalized by the individual through changes affecting the teacher’s behaviour that will affect his or her learning process and that are absorbed as teaching output.

What acts as a filter for what is taken in as intake and what is discarded in the teachers’ mind? Pennington states it is the teachers’ “pre-existing belief system [that] operates as a sort of filter inhibiting or adjusting new information coming in” (Pennington 1996, p. 340).

Here the researcher draws a parallel with Krashen’s (1982 cited in Pennington 1996) ‘affective filter’ (ibid., p.337), but at the same time she distinguishes the teacher’s filter from it quoting recent research by Schumann (1994 cited in Pennington 1996) upon the ‘affective filter’ (Krashen 1982 cited in Pennington 1996), since Schumann seems to be closer to Pennington’s idea that the emphasis on the filter has to be put not only on affect but also on cognition, stating that “in the brain, affect and cognition are distinguishable but inseparable” (Schumann 1994 cited in Pennington 1996, p.340).

This is also why Pennington coins the term ‘cognitive-affective filter’, with the added adjective referring to cognition.

According to Pennington (1996) this ‘cognitive-affective filter’ thus acts as a psychological barrier rendering some input received by the teacher inaccessible and therefore favouring some kind of input over another.

According to the researcher the more the input is aligned with the system of personal beliefs and deeply held values of the teacher, the more it is accessible for the teacher and it is likely to enter his or her cognitive system and be transformed into intake.

The more it clashes against one's deeply held values and beliefs the less likely it is to become intake and to enter the teacher's cognition and find its place among the practices and applications of the teaching practicum. Such input can have many destinies: it can be filtered out definitely, it can just require more time to enter teacher cognition, or it can be adapted and fitted to align to the pre-existing teacher's beliefs.

#### *1.3.4.2 Reflection in teacher development*

What are the conditions for teachers' reflections to become teacher change?

Pennington writes that teacher change "requires accessible input as well as an interpretive or reflective cycle to process that input and incorporate it into the teacher's system of values and practices" (Pennington 1995 cited in Pennington 1996, p.341).

The phases of teacher change are explained as a cycle of three levels of development by Grimmett et al. (1990 cited in Pennington 1996) who defines them as three levels of reflective practice, based on various reference points upon which teachers' opinion and interpretation of teaching is shaped and modeled after.

The first level has to do with teachers' testing and applying the research findings about teaching or educational theory they have been taught during their training in their classroom practice. It has been defined by Grimmett et al. (1990 cited in Pennington 1996) as "thoughtfulness about action – contemplation that leads to conscious, deliberate moves [...]" (ibid., p. 342).

The second level according to Grimmett et al. (1990 cited in Pennington 1996) is made of deliberate choices about different teaching methods and applications of theoretical ideas; reflection lets teachers anticipate the consequences of their actions, leading them to adopt the choices that fit better with their learning environment.

Finally, the third and last level is based according to the researchers (ibid.) upon internal reflection on the self as teacher and on external experience, that is, reflection here means to gather new understandings of classroom events linked to teacher practice and to learn how to overcome difficulties that have to do with teaching, to be aware of new understandings of the self as teacher and to check, revise and eventually correct assumptions about teaching as a job that were taken as granted. Therefore reflection functions according to Pennington (1996) as the main key to lower the 'cognitive-affective filter', rendering it permeable and more open to new ideas and approaches to teaching, even if these result unfamiliar and new to the individual.

A study done by Pennington (1996) reveals how teachers' modes of interpreting and processing information impacts not only on their methodology of usage of different types of input, but also and not less importantly on how much they find an innovative educational program based on teacher

development effective and aligned with their own deeply held values and significant for their own job and for the put into practice of their ideas and educational theories.

#### 1.3.4.3 Reflective training

According to Pennington (1996) reflective training can help lower the ‘cognitive-affective filter’. The stages of a program shaped on reflective training and based on teacher development should be essentially four, as suggested by Pennington (1996):

- a) Provide teachers with material aimed at instilling in them some changes in the wanted direction;
- b) Teachers then should try to seek information about the impact of their renewed way of teaching by asking colleagues and students through their observation;
- c) An additional stage could be to encourage teachers to deliberately take some time to reflect upon the perceived changes of their teaching collected from the people around them and formulate their own personal reactions to their new teaching methodology;
- d) Finally, teachers can be assisted creating new goals and strategies to implement and consolidate their new understandings, so that the ‘cognitive-affective filter’ will not impair their teaching.

Re-elaborated from Pennington (1996).

An interesting additional stage in such a program, requiring some additional time and availability on the teacher part though, and so not always possible, could be, according to Pennington’s opinion (ibid.), trying to bring to surface the ‘value clashes’ perceived by teachers experiencing the rise of the ‘cognitive-affective filter’ to understand and be more aware of where the problem lies, face it and try to challenge it.

Krashen (1982 cited in Pennington 1996) states how a positive and supportive learning climate fosters a lowering of the ‘affective filter’ and makes it permeable to new intake, and these are the conditions needed in the teaching environment to help not only learners, but also and foremost teachers, who are responsible for the input of learners, to lower their ‘cognitive-affective filter’ by rendering themselves permeable to new input.

I felt the need to mention the highlights of Pennington's article (1996) because I realized I was affected by some kind of 'cognitive-affective filter' during my internship that had a relevant impact on my emotions and cognition, since what I felt at times was that a kind of wall caused by debilitating levels of anxiety (Krashen's 'affective filter') acted as a filter that prevented me from understanding all the input I was given by pupils (a sort of indirect input, in the sense of being aware of their responses in order to shape my approach and methodology). In these situations at times my mind just froze and went blank, so I believe I was partly affected by some filter similar to that mentioned by Pennington (1996), that prevented me from processing all input into intake and from being fully aware of how I needed to change my teaching, at least at the start of my internship; then applying the anxiety-coping strategies and learning how to handle my anxiety helped me to think more clearly and to be more aware of the input given to me and how I could improve my teaching methodology.

#### 1.3.5 Conclusions

Summing up, studies on foreign language student teacher's anxiety found that the main sources of teacher anxiety stem from interactions with students and mentors, classroom management, teaching procedures, the fear of being observed, 'fear of failure' and of being negatively evaluated by others, and thus these anxiety sources share some common points with Horwitz's study on 'Foreign Language Anxiety' (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, p.125).

It is interesting how it has been pointed out by Young (in Klee 1994) that the student teacher training period can be viewed as a period in which teachers are a sort of learner in the mentors' hands and thus they experience similar fears and anxieties related to performance, evaluation and speaking that can cause them to be afraid of making mistakes in front of mentors or of not living up to their expectations.

Merç (2011) points out how the notion of 'Foreign Language Student Teacher Anxiety' (*ibid.*, p.81) is far from having been properly defined in the existing literature, and that it has not been investigated enough in pre-service teacher settings up to now (*ibid.*).

Therefore more thorough research is needed as regards 'Foreign Language Student Teacher Anxiety' to better investigate the sources of anxiety and to plan anxiety-reducing strategies that would help teachers and, consequently, would promote well-being and a more serene and comfortable teaching and learning environment, with optimal learning and teaching conditions.

## Chapter 2. My study

The aim of this paper is to prove how teacher emotions have a central role in teaching and learning situations and how they can shape and influence the behaviour of learners in a positive or negative way.

The main focus questions that this paper addresses and attempts to answer touch the domains of teacher emotions and ‘Foreign Language Student Teacher Anxiety’, and specifically they are:

- a) Why are emotions relevant for teachers, and what is their role in teaching?
- b) What effects do teachers’ emotional displays have upon the novice teacher and upon the primary school pupils?
- c) Why are ‘emotional intelligence<sup>11</sup>’ and ‘emotional contagion<sup>12</sup>’ relevant in teaching?
- d) What are the dominant emotions of a novice English teacher while organizing and performing reading activities for primary school learners?
- e) What are the main sources of anxiety for novice teachers and how can some strategies taken from research on teacher anxiety help them overcome their fears?
- f) How can it be traced a link between the ‘Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale’ (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, p.129), the ‘Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Scale’ (Ipek 2007 cited in Merç 2011, p.81) and the ‘Foreign Language Student Teaching Anxiety Scale’ (El-Okda and Al-Humaidi 2003 cited in Merç 2011, p.82)?

### 2.1 Introduction to my internship

I decided to start my University internship in a primary school due to two factors mainly: on the one hand, I wanted to have some direct experience of how it felt like being a FL teacher in a primary school and to observe how English teachers conduct a lesson and how they interact with children and deal with the doubts of learners; on the other hand I wanted to deepen my knowledge on teacher emotions, in particular on teaching anxiety.

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<sup>11</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘emotional intelligence’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>12</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘emotional contagion’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

Since I am an anxious person by nature, I wanted to see which emotions specific to the teaching situation would affect me while teaching and how I would deal with them.

So I spent my 150-hours internship – that was part of my University curriculum – at the local primary school of my hometown, and I was assigned to several classrooms, covering all grades, from the first to the fifth grade, so I had the opportunity to experience all the different contexts and teaching methods of the English language teachers, and see how the approaches, methodologies and activities done were different and shaped according to the age of the pupils and to the different complexity levels of the subject matter.

My internship was to be a blend of observation and tutoring: I would observe for some hours until I became used to the teaching style of the teachers and to the daily routine of the life of the classroom, and then I would start tutoring the children in English and be their supporting teacher, that is, assistant of the English teacher of that particular classroom.

I had two English teachers following me throughout my internship experience in this primary school, and from now onwards they will be known as tutor A and tutor B. Both were very kind and helpful to me, and solved my doubts and insecurities on several occasions, and their positive and kind attitude helped me and motivated me when I needed support, and enhanced my self-esteem and self-confidence in my work.

Tutor A teaches English and Mathematics in the two 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classrooms, respectively classrooms 3A and 3B. She is very creative and always seeking out new teaching strategies and techniques in order to teach learners new facilitating ways to learn the foreign language and her positive impact is easily detectable in her pupils.

Tutor A is creative and cares about all the different intelligences of the learners and tries always to reach all of them with her activities, several of which are not included in the textbook, and are meant specifically to include for example manual activities, such as creating a love-box on St. Valentine's Day, or a big chart with rhyming words in English, or a song transformed into a role-play, with each learner playing a different animal, that they had to mimic as perfectly as possible, identifying with that animal as long as the song played.

At the end of one lesson towards the end of October the teacher gave each pupil a candy, provided that the child would pronounce correctly "Trick or treat?" and would not give any candy until the pupil pronounced it as best as he or she could. The candy, I must say, proved to be extremely motivating for children. Some of them seemed to have become native speakers for a few seconds. It proved more effective than other techniques some teachers believed were effective in that school, such as screaming or belittling children.

Tutor B teaches English in all grades except the classes 3A and 3B, she is very helpful as well and always ready to help me out. Her teaching technique is more traditional and static if compared to tutor A. Tutor B sticks to textbook activities and exercises, mainly having pupils filling in exercises or doing listening activities involving the repetition of vocabulary or sentences by the learners, who are at different linguistic competence levels in the classroom, and not all of them are enthusiastic or motivated by this kind of repetitive activity.

In particular, during my observation hours I noticed how in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms the most brilliant and committed learners are mainly bored and do not know what to do after they have finished the given exercise. On the other hand, there are pupils who need specific help because they either are not native Italian speakers and so do not always understand the input given by the teacher or else they have learning deficits or are very slow in completing their activity, and need some help by the teacher. One possible solution could be that the teacher helps them with Italian or devotes some time of the lesson to understanding their needs and learning styles, and then arranges at home some specific activities aimed at their peculiar cognitive style and covering the impaired area of their learning deficit, but mainly these learners are just left on their own, and the teacher has to move on with the curriculum and with the rest of the class, and this damages these pupils even more, and does not help their unstable motivation and commitment. Another possibility could be to pair them with the most brilliant mates and let them help one another in a meaningful way.

## **2.2 Aims and methodology**

I planned to gather qualitative data for my research on novice teacher emotions by keeping a daily diary while observing the teachers and the pupils, taking notes of the teachers' and learners' emotions. My methodology focused on taking field notes of teacher emotional displays, personalities and emotion management<sup>13</sup> while teaching and interacting with learners, and consequently also of the effect of such emotional displays on pupils, that is, how the latter reacted, their emotional responses and their consequent behaviour related to the learning situation.

Then at home I revised my notes and added elements that maybe I did not focus on during the lessons due to the haste needed to take notes and me being busy in listening to the lesson and observing the teachers' behaviour. Some things needed to be revised and reflected on in tranquillity to gather additional data about teachers' behaviour, for example, or the impact a certain emotion had on a pupil,

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<sup>13</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'emotion management' has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) and by Schutz and Zembylas (2009).

so later reflection and expansion on the notes collected were also very useful and in themselves additional modes of data gathering and reframing of thoughts and ideas.

As regards the gathering of data concerning my personal emotions during my support teaching hours, these were collected at home during a time of personal reflection on my internship during which I reasoned on making sense out of the emotions I experienced, the emotional reactions of learners who responded to my activities and which aspects of my support teaching style could be improved.

Mine is a mere qualitative gathering of data based upon teacher emotions, 'Foreign language teaching anxiety'<sup>14</sup> and pupils' emotions (the latter one only through the lens of the impact of teacher emotions on them), and the data were collected in daily diaries, and expanded through a later reframing and recollection of emotional experiences and outcomes for the teaching and learning situation, and finally a discussion about the findings was provided, as it will be seen in the final chapter of this research paper.

### **2.3 Personal background**

When I started my internship in the primary school as a support teacher, I was attending my second year of post-graduate specialization course in 'Language Sciences' in the 'Language Didactics Department' at the University of Venice, and I had graduated in 'Foreign Languages and Cultures' in English and Spanish two years earlier. So I already had a good knowledge of language teaching methods due to a 'Language Didactics' course I attended during my first year at University that examined the main themes related with the learning process in children psychology and the roles of motivation, expectation and attribution related to the learning and the teaching situation when it comes to teach a language.

For my internship experience my first year course in 'Language Teaching' and my post-graduation courses in 'Psychological Aspects of Linguistic Education', 'Theories of Linguistic Education' and 'Methodology of Research in Language Acquisition and Teaching' have been very important for me, because they helped me construct my theoretical background of language didactics and methodology, and be aware of the theory behind the teaching process and how a teacher should behave during a lesson, focusing on teaching a foreign language.

In particular in my post-graduation courses I learnt more in detail what it meant to be a language teacher and I was taught about the methodology of teaching, the methodology of conducting either

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<sup>14</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'Foreign language teaching anxiety' has been amply dealt with by Merç (2011).

qualitative or quantitative research, and about the different theories of language education and how learners have to be approached and taught languages, and what the teacher has to care about or watch out for during lessons and I learnt more about the affective realm of education, both from the point of view of the learner and of the teacher.

I learned about teacher emotions for the first time in the ‘Language Teaching’ course, deepened my knowledge of it during ‘Psychological Aspects of Linguistic Education’ where we were given more material about it and where I gave a Power Point presentation about ‘Foreign Language Anxiety’, but still I wanted to have a real life experience about teaching and get in touch with a school to have a better awareness of it, and my University internship was my chance.

## 2.4 My internship activities

At the beginning of my internship I was both excited and anxious. Excited because I could not wait to teach to these children some reading activities I was going to design for them, but also anxious because I was afraid I was not ready to approach and explain English activities to children yet, it was my very first experience of teaching, and I was nervous as to how to deal with children in presenting the English activities.

My anxiety mostly sprang from my fear of speaking in public and, being a support teacher during my internship, I would often have to speak in public, and in a foreign language as well, so I thought that these circumstances would double my anxiety.

### 2.4.1 Introduction to my internship activities

A brief summary of my anxieties during my experience as a novice teacher is due, and this is to be regarded as my personal emotional background from which I gathered data related to the impact of my emotions on the teaching situation as an assistant language teacher in a primary school.

My FLCA mainly springs from the following factors, taken from Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope’s study (1986):

- a) ‘Fear of negative evaluation<sup>15</sup>’ (both by peers and by teachers);

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<sup>15</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘fear of negative evaluation’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

- b) 'Fear of failure'<sup>16</sup>;
- c) Psycho-physiological symptoms associated with FLCA (such as apprehension, worry, nervousness and difficulty in concentrating);
- d) Speaking in a foreign language;
- e) Perfectionism and over-rehearsing for an exam makes me believe that anything less than a perfect performance or mark in a test is a personal failure.

My 'Foreign Language Student Teaching Anxiety' (Merç 2011) is rooted in these factors while teaching to children:

- a) Interaction with pupils;
- b) Interaction with tutors;
- c) Fear of making mistakes in front of or disappointing the tutors;
- d) Fear of not being able to solve problems or manage the improvisation stressor of children's questions (unpredictability of the improvisation stressor);
- e) Perfectionism as part of my personality makes me perceive that any mistake on my part is a failure.

Additional personal fears that are part of my anxious and shy personality are:

- a) 'Stage fright'<sup>17</sup>;
- b) Low and vulnerable self-esteem (especially speaking in public and performing role-plays and oral and communicative tasks, in general);

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<sup>16</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'fear of failure' has been amply dealt with by Gordon and Sarason (1955); Sarason (1980) cited in Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) and by Ipek (2007) cited in Merç (2011).

<sup>17</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'stage fright' has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

c) ‘oral communication anxiety’<sup>18</sup>.

I have listed the aforementioned factors that act as anxiety-triggers in order to give a general idea of the factors that are involved in my study on how and whether the impact of these has a relevant role on my positive emotions and whether the impact of negative and stressful emotions affects my teaching performance. These questions indeed are the very core of my research paper, and my activities will address some of them and try to answer them as thoroughly as possible.

#### 2.4.2 Reading activity n.1: “The Gingerbread Man”

The first activity I was asked to organize and deliver in a 3<sup>rd</sup> year grade in the primary school was a Christmas-themed short story to read to the children and I was also asked to create some reading activity aimed at enriching their vocabulary and pronunciation of English as a FL.

As regarding the planning phase of my activity, it involved a blending of anxiety and excitement summed up in the question ‘am I able to match my tutor’s expectations of my linguistic and organizational skills in order to put together a reading activity for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade children?’

So my first emotions sprang from feelings of anxiety and fear of disappointing my tutor’s expectations, and from ‘fear of negative evaluation’ (one of the links between ‘Foreign Language Anxiety’ and ‘Foreign language teaching anxiety’), blended with the excitement and intrinsic motivation of having the opportunity to be a support teacher and experiment some reading activities with children, putting finally into practice the theoretical knowledge I bore in mind about FL teaching and learning.

However, I managed to overcome my anxiety and fears; I found on the web an interesting short story entitled ‘The Gingerbread Man’, which showed in twelve illustrated slides accompanied by some simple sentences the story of a gingerbread man and that seemed just suited for 3<sup>rd</sup> graders in a primary school and there was a sentence that repeated itself often as a sort of chorus of the story, that ran like this: “Run, run as fast as you can. You can’t catch me, I’m the gingerbread man!” and that would have proved to be very useful to make children memorize easily some new vocabulary having fun, as a sort of song chorus, and as a frame for the story.

So I printed it and read it through and started thinking about the possible reading activities that could be created, since the English teacher did not give me any clue, she told me that I could create any exercise I thought fit for children of their age, given their competence and keeping in mind the kind

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<sup>18</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘oral communication anxiety’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

of activities they do during lessons. She did not give me any detailed instructions. She thought that now I was used to observing them enough working during English lessons to be able to create some reading activity on my own.

At a certain point I realized there was an interesting potential activity that could be done upon the text, with the images providing a visual support not to be underestimated: this idea was related to a reading activity originated from a book the children read the previous week that contained pairs of words with similar pronunciation but different meaning. The book was 'Hop on Pop' (Seuss 1963) and examples of pairs of words that can be found in the book are: 'cup / pup, see / bee, night / fight' (Seuss 1963). In that occasion I was asked to read the book to the children, and this activity is the third one that I will describe in this chapter of my paper.

The English teacher of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom told me that they used to read English books once a week in order to keep a regular program of pronunciation, training, refreshing and enriching of vocabulary, and the hour devoted to this reading was called 'Kids' Corner' and it consisted in a child's presentation to the class of a book he or she had read, by reading it out loud, summarizing the plot and clarifying any unknown words the rest of the classmates might have not understood during the reading. It is an interesting and motivating activity for learners, it helps the anxious ones get more self-confident and increase their self-esteem. The teacher would sit next to them and encourage them, it is a cooperative activity in which all learners can help each other and intervene, and the learners in this way have the chance to be at the centre of the learning situation, since the teacher would be just a helper or tutor, and interfere only to help and clarify the meaning of a word or to correct pronunciation, but as for the rest she allowed the pupils to interact with each other as if they are the tutors of their mates.

By thinking about 'Hop on Pop', I was able to see how to construct a vocabulary activity for the story of the 'Gingerbread Man' with a similar strategy involving pairs of words bearing a similar sound but a different meaning: I would create for each paragraph of the story a string of words, some of which would be terms taken from the story, but others would be intruder words that bore a similar sound but a different meaning from the correct ones.

Each table contained as many strings of words as there were sentences in one page of the short story, so the child was facilitated in the task by knowing that one line in the table represented one sentence in the text. The children will not be given any copy of the story, they would listen to it, but by listening they should be able to do this task of recognizing the correct word and crossing out the intruder words. I spent a lot of time at home rehearsing over and over again how I would read the story and I tried to anticipate some of the children's questions and possible difficult words in order to create a vocabulary

list with the translation of some difficult words for them, to be handed to the teacher to give it to them only after the activity was completed and attached to the rest of the story.

When the day came when I had to present the activity, I was very excited and I could not wait to present it. I was determined to do my best not to show my anxiety. Generally I am very anxious when I have to engage in oral tasks and perform orally, and anxiety usually prevails upon serenity and excitement, but this time I was less anxious than I expected to be, and I felt proud of myself and of how I was succeeding in regulating my emotions.

The teacher told the children that today I had some surprise for them, and I introduced to them the short story. The teacher told me to talk about the reading activity later, after they were familiar with the story, or it would have been too confusing for them. My first reading was done very slowly, stressing the pronunciation of the words, and showing to the children all the pictures of the book, page after page, and mimicking some verbs and actions to facilitate the comprehension.

After my first reading, the teacher asked them whether they had understood more or less what was happening in the story, most of them nodded and they were all very enthusiastic about it, but it was clear they needed at least another reading in order to get used to and get more confidence with the new vocabulary.

During my second reading I felt more confident and more at ease, since I had already broken the ice and realized I was doing well, reading at a good pace and having a positive feedback from both teacher and children. In this phase after I read each page I asked the learners whether there was something they did not understand, and then I translated the passage, so that everyone would understand the vocabulary. The children were enjoying the story even better now, and they still needed the visual support of the images of the story, which I showed them all the time. When they had questions about new words, I always tried to make them guess the meaning making them focus on the context, showing the related picture or linking the unknown vocabulary with things they knew already. I always used this strategy, encouraged and helped by their English teacher, before translating the word, which I kept as a last resource.

At the end of the lesson the children were glad and enthusiastic about the reading activity and were motivated and encouraged by the fact that they had completed almost all their work correctly.

The teacher gave them enthusiastic feedback, and told them she would keep a copy of the short story in their 'Books' Corner', on a desk at the back of the class, and they could take it home and re-read it anytime, and she attached to it my vocabulary list, with the translation of the most difficult words.

This reading activity exploited inferring and guessing strategies upon the unknown vocabulary to be done by pupils, so that they began getting used to guessing words not using immediately a dictionary or with teachers giving the translation of the terms without even trying to make pupils infer

it, which is counterproductive to the learning style of pupils. Moreover inferring work will be very valuable to them both in the educational context, when in higher grades they will be asked to exploit their inferring and guessing strategies to scan and skim texts ('scanning' and 'skimming'), and in real life, while reading a newspaper, watching television or reading an article, where scanning and skimming are omnipresent, even if subconscious, because they have become automatized activities and they are not induced as when practiced in school.

#### 2.4.3 Reading activity n.2: "My Monster Project"

The second activity I was asked to organize during my internship experience was a reading task made of two parts, related to the vocabulary of the body and the colors, and that had monsters as its main theme, and was thus called by the English teacher 'My Monster Project'.

The first task was to be a 'cloze' exercise consisting in the written description of the coloured picture of a monster, and children had to take this image as reference point while filling in the missing words. The English teacher told me to cut out one word out of seven more or less, and the words cut out had to be either colors or body parts, since that was the vocabulary of the English unit the children had just finished studying and revising with the teacher. She taught them this vocabulary through flash cards, songs, short stories and textbook activities, and the pupils were enthusiastic and excited thanks to her creativity and ability to render any activity interesting and linking them with their needs and with what they enjoy doing. So a song could be made into a mini role-play or acting with the children dancing and impersonating animals, and revising the vocabulary with the flashcards could become a quiz, a challenge among pupils about how many words each child would remember, and when one beat another the other learners would compete to be the next ones answering this time. They were not anxious about the quiz at all, on the contrary they were thrilled and pervaded by excitement, enthusiasm and a contagious motivation that encouraged them to challenge themselves and test their skills on a daily basis.

The second task of the reading activity consisted in the outlined torso of the body of a monster that children had to complete drawing by looking at a written description of the creature, with several words related to its body and color. So this time they would look to the text in order to draw the body of the monster, whereas on the previous activity they did the exact contrary.

This was an effective way to look at and involve different skills and abilities of the learners, some better at guessing missing words in 'cloze' exercises, others at gathering information from the text and reshaping them in a personalized drawing. This was an example of how the teacher tried to test the different learning styles of children and engage them in a revision of English vocabulary in an effective and motivating way.

Immediately after the teacher told me what to do and throughout the whole planning phase of my activity, I was torn between positive (excitement) and negative (anxiety) emotions about the task delivered to me, but my 'eustress' (Selye 1975 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p. 26), that is, my positive stress as opposed to distress, pushed me onwards and my optimism and enthusiasm did not falter, also because the positive and enthusiastic feedback given to me by the teacher and mirrored in the children's response to my previous reading activity provided me with self-confidence in my abilities and it was a good starting point to look back at with pride and a sense of achievement. On the other hand, I was afraid to do an activity either too simple or too difficult for the children and I wanted to give the teacher a good first impression of me and my work and diligence; I wanted to make a good impression as a reliable and professional tutor for children. With the structure of the activity in mind, I surfed the Web for a good monster image and then I built my text description following the colours and shape of the image I found. After the text was revised and checked, the most challenging part that made me nervous and doubtful was which words to cut out in order to create the blanks.

After I completed the two reading activities I brought the sheets to the teacher to have some feedback and clarify some doubts: she told me that the activity was well done. She changed some words in the first part of the activity which I decided to cut out and propose as blanks. She told me that at some points I took away too many body parts at once and that might confuse the children, so she suggested I put as blanks some colours and then some body parts. She was glad about the textual description of the monster in the second part, even if she told me that in some parts the text was too long and complicated for the children to understand and she gave me some tips to edit it in an effective way. She told me that as a whole I did a good job and she was glad of it and I felt reassured and motivated to do even better next time, and I went home to make all the necessary changes and to rehearse how I would present orally the activity to the children, aware of my 'oral communication anxiety' and 'Foreign Language Anxiety' (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, p.125). I also tried to anticipate what the learners' doubts and questions may be, reflecting upon how to help them overcome them and make them guess the meanings of unknown words without just translating them.

When the day came I had to present my reading activity to the children, I felt both excited, looking forward to it but also very anxious and nervous, because of my 'oral communication anxiety' and 'fear of negative evaluation'. I over-rehearsed my part and my oral presentation of the activity, tasks and text reading, but still I felt unsure and I hoped I would be clear and appear calm and relaxed while presenting my reading activity. However my first experience had a great success in the same 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class, so my past success gave me additional motivation and increased my sense of self-

worth and self-esteem, so my positive emotions overruled the negative ones. What I was feeling was mainly 'eustress' (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p. 26).

The teacher announced to the children I had a surprise for them that day and my heart began to beat very fast, it was my turn now. I presented the activity to the children, explaining in a clear way what they had to do, and that they were going to listen to the reading twice before starting doing their task, and I also told them to pay attention to the drawing, because they would need it during the reading task. So I started reading, slowly, stressing each word and making a pause at each blank space, but at the same time linking it with what came before and after by the intonation of my voice, paying a close attention to the punctuation, so that the learners would already try to make their very first guesses from how I was reading and from the intonation of my voice. As I started reading the activity, I almost forgot about the fear of speaking in public, I dived into the text easily along with the pupils, and soon I began to feel myself their contagious enthusiasm and thirst to learn.

After my two readings the children were given some time to try to fill the blanks focusing on the context and the image of the monster, and it was very interesting to walk among the desks and see how the children were responding to the task. Some of them were quick and completed the blanks in a few minutes whereas others were full of doubts and were very unsure about a lot of words.

As a tutor, I tried to help out the children who were unsure trying to make them guess how to fill the blanks.

The pupils' response to my or the teacher's help was differentiated according to their different emotions and personality traits: some of the learners were eager to have some clue as to what the answer was, and engaged themselves in trying to solve the issue by reasoning with the hint I gave them, whereas others seemed very shy and felt very nervous and anxious just because I was speaking to them and seemed to be as unsure as they were without my help, but most pupils benefited from it and reached the correct answers through a guided reasoning and some guided questions.

As regards the second part of the activity, the children were asked to draw a monster following the instructions given in the text description below the sketched shape of the torso of a monster. The teacher suggested me to have a pupil reading the text this time, and a boy immediately offered to read the text. He was enthusiastic while he was reading and made just a few minor mistakes of pronunciation (for example reading eyes with the 'h' inspiration as if there was written 'heyes'), but his mistakes did not make him falter and he proceeded until the end of the text. After his reading the English teacher asked the pupils whether they understood the general theme of the story, and she read it with them again, asking them also to translate together, with both my and her help.

She helped them guess the meaning of the words and one episode is worth mentioning. Some pupils were having problems understanding the following sentence: ‘He has got a big red mouth with pointy teeth to eat you!’

The teacher asked the pupils if anyone could help their mates guess the meaning of the words, but as she told me later, she did not expect anybody to actually translate it. A girl raised her hand and steadily translated the whole sentence without any apparent effort, as if she was just re-reading it, leaving both the teacher and me speechless and impressed, and we praised her quickness and perfect translation.

The majority of the learners found my activity challenging and engaging and were keen to repeat the experience with some other reading exercise, and this made me glad, gratified and stimulated me to do even better the following time, and motivated me deeply. To see them happy and motivated like that gave me the sense of gratification and satisfaction I was looking for when engaging first in this experience; their motivation was contagious and their enthusiasm helped me overcome and forget any ‘oral communication anxiety’ I could have felt in less motivating and serene situations.

This activity helped me understand better how to engage in the role of the teacher and how to help learners solve linguistic problems about unknown words in ‘cloze’ exercises and to associate unknown words to the sentence context, which is very important in reading activities such as ‘skimming’ and ‘scanning’ for example, and will help them in the future as well. The English teacher of the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders is aware of it and uses her ‘emotional intelligence<sup>19</sup>’, creativity, and emotional display daily to help her pupils while learning a foreign language.

#### 2.4.4 Reading activity n.3: “Hop on Pop”

The third and final activity I want to mention has been chronologically the very first one I did and the one that was placed midway between me observing the classroom and actually starting creating activities to children on my own. This reading activity mainly involved reading to children a book mimicking what was written in it and showing them the various illustrations, and no specific activity from me was required by the teacher, because I was still a bit unsure how to build a reading activity and tutor A thought it better to make me experience public speaking and deal with my ‘oral communication anxiety’ before giving me homework related to reading activities. In this way I could become acquainted with which emotions first affected me and realize how to react to regulate and manage them.

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<sup>19</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘emotional intelligence’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

I mention it in third place after two reading activities brought forward to classroom because I think it can function as a summing up of the two preceding activities to the extent in which it shows my first reactions to all the emotions aforementioned in the ‘Gingerbread Man’ activity and in ‘My Monster Project’, so it functions as an insight into my first emotional displays and both positive and negative feelings related to teaching and reading activities, and observations of pupils’ emotions, and it can work as a sort of reframing and as a more aware and focused comment on the emotions I experienced during my internship. I put it in third place also because what was required of me here did not involve the creation of reading tasks for children, and I wanted it to be a sort of summarization of my novice teacher emotions seen through the lens of the two preceding reading activities, in the extent in which here I can draw bridges through the reading activities and see how they influence one another.

Tutor A offered me the chance to do this reading activity after I observed the classroom for three weeks. She thought I was ready to engage in reading a book and answering the learners’ doubts about linguistic issues and she asked me to read them a book called ‘Hop on Pop’ based on oppositions between similar sounding words that have different meanings. All words are inserted in a sentence and each sentence is effectively illustrated in a colorful image that is very useful to help children understand the meaning of the sentence and the opposition between couples of words, since usually each page has got two sentences containing words that sound similarly but have different meanings and that if pronounced one after another create a sort of tongue-twister.

So I started by introducing to the children the title of the book and then I started reading slowly and carefully stressing the pronunciation of the words and by showing them at the same time the pictures that supported the text.

The first reading was done just by reading the book and showing to pupils the pictures, whereas in the second one after reading each page the teacher told me to ask pupils what the sentence meant, if they could guess it from the picture (in the case they did not know the meaning of the words) and to translate it to them only if they were in big difficulties and there were no other modes to help them guess the words on their own. The very first means used by tutor A to help learners guess a word, apart from showing them the images, was trying herself to mimic and interpret the word in the sentence, be it a noun or a verb. Most of the times her acting was successful and children could understand easily what she meant, and she was very good at mimicking and modelling expressions, such as anger, surprise, sadness and so on to reflect the meaning of a word.

When it was my turn to do the second reading the teacher encouraged me to follow her example and engage in mimicking while reading the sentences, and I was eager to do so but a part of me was very afraid to do it in a wrong way or not to be up to the teacher’s expectations while doing it. I felt she had had much more experience than me mimicking and that I could disappoint her or make pupils

laugh if I was not good enough. Moreover it was a kind of performance and acting on my part and I am very anxious at the idea of acting or performing, and I had a previous experience of a course in theatre acting where I had been belittled and judged negatively by the acting teacher, who thought I was unable to express expressions at all, and so I carried with me this previous negative experience. Also I felt anxiety regarding role-play and any kind of social activity, even if done with close friends, involving performance and acting, and being in front of a classroom supervised by a teacher, even if these were children, scared me a bit and made me anxious and very self-aware.

So at the beginning I felt very shy and anxious while mimicking nouns and verbs pupils did not understand, but most of the times my attempts proved to be successful and understood by learners, and this gave me a wave of motivation and encouragement so that my anxiety was better regulated and steadily decreased, and I started enjoying just reading the book and helping the children; the anxiety became a secondary issue, not a primarily one, after I saw I was doing a good job and was encouraged also by tutor A.

Something that is worth spending some words on as it was stressed various times also by the teacher was the quality and effectiveness of the pictures in conveying the meaning of the words and, as for example as concerned the idea of speed or movement of some actions, the images were very good in expressing that, and in cheering up the learners, whereas this was not true of all books, the teacher told me. She praised Dr. Seuss' books for being among the best ones to make children learn English vocabulary and pronunciation very quickly and effectively, also with support of images and with the game on similar sound but different meaning.

The images used in 'Hop on Pop' can be seen in 'Appendix C' (see p.137) and they are good in portraying the moods and the facial expressions of the funny characters drawn in the book, and they are positioned in the page in a way so that learners are facilitated in grasping the meaning of the sentence and the specific context. Without any images, indeed, reading the book would be dull and learners would have many difficulties identifying and understanding the meaning of most words, mostly because being deprived of any context and without illustrations the only alternative for teachers would be to just translate them or to draw themselves the pictures on the blackboard. All this is said to stress the central role and importance of illustrations in children book, especially to learn a language, but also for other didactic topics.

Illustrations in this book also proved to be the main means and fuel of motivation and interest in children, eager to see what the picture in the next page will be and what words are to be learnt.

So pictures and eagerness to learn merged as one thing. This happened also during other reading activities such as 'The Gingerbread Man' or 'My Monster Project': the power and importance of illustrations in reading activities must not underestimated, regarding young learners.

Moving now onto my emotions during the second reading, I was told by the teacher to read each page and then make the pupils guess the meaning of the sentence. This second part of the reading activity involved a factor that touched my anxiety related to the unpredictability of the improvisation stressor, and being my very first impact with it I was afraid I would have difficulties as to how to address in the best way possible the doubts and questions of the learners, but my good skills in English and my need to give a good impression of my abilities to the teacher counterbalanced my nervousness. So during my second reading I had 'oral communication anxiety', performance anxiety regarding mimicking and the stress derived from the unpredictability of the improvisation stressor, but I managed them well because the pupils' enthusiasm about me reading, their engagement, interest, motivation and their successful learning related to my efforts in performing and making them guess the words they did not know rewarded me emotionally very much, and made me feel what a good teacher must feel realizing her work has been successful, and this is the fuel of teacher motivation according to several studies (Schutz and Zembylas 2009; Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010).

For the third and final reading, tutor A decided to switch the roles of reader and listener. Now pupils had to read one page and translate the sentence, and the teacher became a tutor and a helper of learners, as regarded helping them guess meanings and correcting pronunciation mistakes always keeping in mind a positive mistake policy, focused not on mistakes but on the good done by pupils.

So I gave the book to a pupil and encouraged him to read one sentence and asked him whether he understood the meaning and, if he did not, I tried to help him guess it from images, from the context or my mimicking. Each learner read one sentence and then the teacher complemented pupils for their success and good work and thanked me for my help and she announced she was going to do something creative at the blackboard related to what has just been read.

Tutor A wanted to create a poster with all the couplets of words written on it, following the order of the pages of the book, since in opposite pages there were sentences using words with opposite meanings at times, or however with similar sounds but opposite meanings but related to either the same or opposite contexts, such as 'day/night' or 'up/down' (Seuss 1963). In her opinion it was a useful tool to create so children won't forget the words they learn, and she also exploited this time to revise and strengthen the children's memory about what has just been learnt, since she asked to the whole class to help her remember which were the words they just learnt, and I was the only one having the book so they could not look the words in 'Hop on Pop'. Pupils were eager to help their teacher and challenged each other at who remembered more words, so this proved to be another motivating activity for learners. On my part I was glad to watch and help the pupils remember words, trying to mimic some verb or show some picture, but hiding the sentences, otherwise the aim of the exercise was spoiled, that is, practicing their memory skills and information retrieval abilities.

After having completed writing the couples of words, tutor A hung the poster on the classroom wall and encouraged pupils to read it from time to time in the future to make sure that what they learnt today would not be forgotten over time.

Then after the lesson was over the teacher told me it would have been very useful and interesting to create a sort of little book for children with all the words they read and learnt that day that they could leaf through and read when they wanted, to be put in the 'Books' Corner', along with other books they could read during the break or take home with them.

I gladly accepted the task and the teacher told me the booklet was to be structured with two words in each page and next to each word a simple image effective to remind the children the meaning of that word. This would have been slightly different from the book since there would have been no sentences, just the words children needed to revise and study, arranged in a way that was creative for children, with colored writings and funny styles, but everything had to be easy to understand. It would have been a tool of reading and study for children to quickly access in the classroom.

### Chapter 3. Analysis of my internship reading activities

This section of my paper deals with the comment of the aforementioned reading activities I created for children regarding the effect of the novice teacher's emotional displays on pupils, the emotions fostered by these reading activities concerning the teaching situation itself, and finally with some reflection about how FLA is fostered by the teaching experience in a primary school and how novice teachers can cope with it through emotional display and fostering positive emotions and attitudes in the classroom.

#### 3.1 Key-topics of the reading activities

The key-topics related to the reading activities have been grouped in categories each belonging to a separate reading activity, since each one of them fostered specific pupil and novice teacher emotions and anxieties specific to the reading task performed.

The key-topics I addressed during the analysis of 'The Gingerbread Man' are:

- a) Pupils' emotions fostered by the novice teacher's emotional display;
- b) Novice teacher emotions;
- c) Sources of anxiety as a novice teacher and anxiety-coping strategies.

The activity 'My Monster Project' caused my attention to focus on the following key-topics:

- a) 'Emotional contagion<sup>20</sup>';
- b) 'Surface acting<sup>21</sup>' vs 'deep acting<sup>22</sup>' in teaching;
- c) Unpredictability of the improvisation stressor.

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<sup>20</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'emotional contagion' has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>21</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'surface acting' has been amply dealt with by Hochschild (1990); Groth et al. (2006) cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas (2009) and by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>22</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'deep acting' has been amply dealt with by Hochschild (1990); Groth et al. (2006) cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas (2009) and by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

Finally the reading activity ‘Hop on Pop’ was addressed regarding these key-topics:

- a) The relevance of caring;
- b) Satisfaction and uneasiness: mixed emotions as a novice teacher;
- c) ‘Fear of failure<sup>23</sup>’ and perfectionism while planning an extra activity.

### 3.1.1 Analysis of “The Gingerbread Man”

#### *a. Pupils’ emotions fostered by the novice teacher’s emotional display*

Moving now onto concrete examples found during the activity, let us see how the novice teacher’s emotional displays affected learners, how teacher emotions were affected by the tutor interventions or pupils’ response to the task, and how I dealt with them and managed them as a novice teacher.

The first example springs from a misunderstanding during the reading of the text. At some point of the narration of my short story a child’s misinterpretation of my reading had a powerful impact on my emotions and is worth mentioning. I had arrived at the last page of the story, where the gingerbread man is deceived and eaten up by a cunning fox, and the last line of the story runs as follows: ‘that was the end of the gingerbread man’.

A child thought I said ‘that was the hand of the gingerbread man’, asked me the sense of that sentence and laughed, amused by the sentence I read. I stopped for a second and I told him that he misunderstood what I said, I smiled and slowly re-read the sentence and stressed the pronunciation of the word ‘end’ and explained to the child the difference between the two words.

Then the teacher intervened and said I must speak more clearly and loudly, stressing each word and pausing after each word, so that the children won’t misunderstand what I say and be aware of the different pronunciations of words. I tend not to speak loudly due to my shyness and ‘oral communication anxiety<sup>24</sup>’ and the teacher’s intervention made me aware I had to speak louder.

The intervention of the teacher was useful in many ways, even if my first reaction was a bit of sense of guilt and nervousness, because I realized that during the end of my first reading I was going a little

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<sup>23</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘fear of failure’ has been amply dealt with by Gordon and Sarason (1955); Sarason (1980) cited in Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) and by Ipek (2007) cited in Merç (2011).

<sup>24</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘oral communication anxiety’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

bit too fast due to my ‘oral communication anxiety’, but while I was reading I did not realize it, and for the children it must have been difficult to keep the pace with me. I did not notice it because they seemed to enjoy the story, looking at the pictures and listening to me, but I felt guilty and responsible because I should have known better and realized I was hurrying a bit and that would be damaging for their learning experience. The intervention of the teacher made me aware of the children’s needs and of my mistakes and distractions while I was reading, and she also made me realize how I needed to be more careful about my tone of voice, intonation and pronunciation. During the following readings I felt more confident and I read better, and I was encouraged by the suggestions given to me by the teacher, whom I admired in her teaching method.

During this activity the more nervous and anxious children are guided by the teacher – thanks to specific inferring facilitating strategies such as mimicking the meaning of a word – toward the correct guessing of an unknown word and their self-esteem and confidence are enhanced by the encouragement and praise of the teacher at how they are reasoning well, how they are making good observations, etc. Any little encouragement for this kind of learners from the teacher proves to be of vital importance for their self-image and perception whenever it can be given, and teachers should always be aware of this, and avoid any kind of disruptive and negative behaviour in front of these pupils, whose emotional balance is very fragile and instable. Interestingly, during this reading activity it was observed how anxious pupils were helped and offered inferring strategies to guess unknown words also by their peers, who showed some experience and confidence in inferring strategies, that can be easily explained by the fact that their English teacher used to encourage these types of strategies in them also while teaching other subjects, such as Mathematics for example.

Another facilitating strategy for the understanding of the vocabulary I had to perform which was a source for my ‘Foreign Language Student Teacher Anxiety’ (Merç 2011, p.81)) was mimicking the vocabulary of the short story, especially the words I thought to be more obscure and difficult for the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders. My anxiety originated from the fact that I am anxious about doing any kind of activity which requires any kind of acting or performing on my part, even if it is just a gesture or expression for children, and mimicking is a kind of acting, one has to modify one’s facial expression and make some gestures such as to be hungry, tired, sad, happy, angry, etc. or else mimic some gestures related to actions such as to walk, to run, to jump, to snap, to clap, etc..

All this acting makes me very nervous and it was a challenge for me to put aside my anxiety and focus on the children and their need to learn, but I managed quite well and I did my very best to overcome my fears. I wanted to make a good impression both on learners and on my tutor, and I also wanted to prove to myself I was able to make that short story understandable to these learners doing my very best and also by letting myself perform and act in order to facilitate their learning.

‘Fear of negative evaluation<sup>25</sup>’ is one of the three performance anxieties – along with ‘test anxiety<sup>26</sup>’ and ‘communication apprehension<sup>27</sup>’ – that are related to ‘Foreign Language Anxiety<sup>28</sup>’, as Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope claim (1986). So there is a concrete emotional link between the kind of anxiety experienced by a teacher and that felt by a learner, who might feel the ‘fear of negative evaluation’ while performing orally in FL in front of their peers and the teacher or else during a test, afraid of making some big mistake and being ridiculed by their peers or by the teacher in a public context, where the self-image and self-esteem of the pupil are exposed and learners feel they do not have full control of the situation and of the improvisation stressor (in this case they cannot control when and what the teacher is going to ask them and are afraid of the reaction of their peers) associated with the teacher intervention (Young in Klee 1994).

Coming to some concrete example, while narrating the story I came across some verbs and nouns I needed to mimic in order to facilitate and guide the learners in the understanding of the meaning of the words, and some examples are:

- a) ‘Jump out’;
- b) ‘Hungry’;
- c) ‘Swim’;
- d) ‘Heavy’;
- e) ‘Eat’;
- f) ‘Snap’;
- g) ‘Laugh’.

In particular, the ones that gave me most problems were ‘snap’ and ‘laugh’.

I was encouraged by the English teacher not to translate words immediately, but to do all my best to guide the learners through a reasoning that would lead them to a self-discovery of the meaning of a

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<sup>25</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘fear of negative evaluation’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

<sup>26</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘test anxiety’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

<sup>27</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘communication apprehension’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

<sup>28</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘Foreign Language Anxiety’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

word, like she did, mimicking them, linking them with some word in English pupils knew already or with some Italian word they were familiar with. Their teacher had multiple ways to lead them through this difficult process of learning and guessing a new word, but I was new, inexperienced and was anxious thinking I was not up to the challenge, about looking silly mimicking that word or to confuse the children instead of facilitating their learning process. So my feelings and emotions while mimicking words were anxiety mixed with the excitement related to the feeling of trying to teach someone else something I had learned myself when I was a child, trying to imitate and make the best of both what I learned at University in my 'Language Didactics' Courses and thinking back at my positive experiences with FL teachers and in particular looking up to this tutor I had the luck to work with and that I personally admired. This attitude of mine mirrors well what Schutz and Zembylas (2009) said about student teachers' habit of mirroring in their teaching styles and practices the techniques and modes of teaching of effective teachers that helped them and were a model for them during their student career.

The words 'laugh' and 'snap' presented an interesting challenge. Not only were they new words for the pupils and required a particular attention, but they needed to be understood well because they figured in the grid of the reading activity that included both correct words and intruder words so I needed to make sure that pupils understood their meaning correctly and, as regards the spelling, very important as well of course, their teacher insisted that they should be left to think on their own focusing on listening to my pronunciation as to how they were written down. This could work for 'snap' with 3<sup>rd</sup> graders but it was far more difficult, if not impossible, that they link the sound 'f' with a 'gh' spelling. The English teacher realized this only after the children completed the exercise, and was curious whether someone guessed what the correct spelling of 'laugh' was in the string of words that included respectively: 'laughed' / 'river' / 'shiver'.

As can be seen, none of the words has a sound similar to 'laugh', because I thought the word was already difficult enough in its spelling and pronunciation by itself and it would have been too confusing for the children to distinguish it from another similar word, so the only other play on sounds is the one between 'river' and 'shiver', and it was easy for them to detect and circle 'river' and exclude 'shiver'.

Going back to 'laugh', there was a pupil who immediately identified what he heard with that word, and other classmates did the same. There were some children who had not any doubt about it and linked the 'f' sound with the 'gh' spelling, and their teacher was very impressed by them and praised them. She thought it very difficult that they could link the two things and was enthusiastic about their success. In particular in class 3A everyone had it correct, whereas in class 3B someone did not recognize it and did not circle it. Actually on average class 3A was more brilliant and pupils quicker

learners than class 3B, but both classes were very smart, they liked learning new things, had a particular love for English (and for their English teacher, who was tutor A) and were enthusiastic about learning new words and engaging in new activities, and they grew very attached to me, and me to them. They were the best classes I tutored and they showed the highest level of motivation, enthusiasm and love for learning and were the quickest learners.

The word 'snap' presented some difficulties as well; the teacher and me tried to mimic it as best as we could, first shutting our mouth all of a sudden to mimic a big bite, then with our arms mimicking a big mouth and then shutting it all of a sudden, and this helped children, but still they were not sure about the meaning, but it helped them looking at the illustration of the story where the fox has the gingerbread man in its mouth, and so they understood it was the verb meaning the mouth shut on the gingerbread man. In this case the spelling was simple, it mirrored what they heard and was easily detected in the string of words that included also the word 'clap'. The children knew the meaning of 'clap' due to a textbook song they used to sing with their teacher, so they easily circled the correct word.

I quoted the experience with this word because it fostered a great deal of anxiety in me, mimicking made me anxious, since I did not know which gesture to use exactly and seeing that the teacher was a bit confused herself as well really made me nervous and a bit unsure about what to do and how to proceed. I really wanted the learners to understand without translating the word, but in the end it was rewarding because they understood the general sense of the meaning of the word; after all they were still very young learners and we did not expect them to understand every word with its exact meaning.

As regards the pupils' emotions fostered and evoked by my teaching style and by my own emotional display, they showed mainly involvement, enthusiasm and motivation. It was evident they enjoyed storytelling above any activity from their excitement each time the teacher would announce at some point of the lesson "story-time!". This would evoke in them the idea that the teacher would either read them a book or make them listen a short story from their textbooks' CD.

They were not afraid at all of asking questions, which is a good sign of the thirst of knowledge and of love for learning in a child. During my second reading they showered me with questions about the vocabulary and also about the pictures of the short story.

Moving now onto children emotions fostered by teachers' attitudes and behaviour, it can be seen how this reading activity exploiting inferring and guessing strategies from pupils and engaging them in a funny story both motivated them and enhanced their commitment and interest in learning new words while enjoying themselves. The prevalent emotions were enthusiasm, happiness, and a strong will to do their very best to complete the reading activity, that they were a bit nervous about when they first saw the grids with the words in them to circle, but soon they were amused by the

game of me reading it and them choosing the correct word, and each pupil cried out he or she finished the grid, in a sort of competition on who was to finish it first, and, apart from learners whose personality was generally nervous or anxious, in general learners showed no signs of fear, anxiety or boredom while doing the activity. The teacher's role in all this is important because my excitement and their English teacher's enthusiasm, strong belief that her pupils can do everything in reach of their competence and continuous encouragement and support is mirrored by their emotions and interest in the subject matter, as it could be easily witnessed and inferred.

So teachers are emotionally contagious (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010) and can make the difference in a classroom, at least as regards its emotional climate.

Indeed my experience seems to confirm Powell and Kusuma-Powell's (2010) statement that "emotional contagion is the primary mechanism through which emotions are shared" (ibid., p. 139).

As regards my love and affection for the pupils, it must be said that they were quick learners and their child-like enthusiasm and excitement was very contagious, and more than once it helped me relate to them better and helped me foster positive emotions, if I was having a bad day, and enhanced my teaching performance. During my reading activities with children my positive emotions always found a way to overrule the negative ones, just the presence of those cheerful children made me forget about any trouble I had, either in my personal life or due to my anxieties.

After all, as Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) argue, "emotions are as contagious as viruses – both positive and negative emotions" (ibid., p.138). According to them, and my experience confirmed this theoretical approach to teacher emotions, 'teachers can be highly emotionally infectious' (ibid., p. 139) and depending upon whether their emotions are positive or negative they can foster or cause impediments to the learning process (ibid.). Moreover, there is a reciprocal exchange of emotions between teachers and pupils: teachers can catch pupils' emotions and be influenced by them, but also pupils can be influenced by teachers' emotional displays (ibid.). The important thing for a teacher is to be emotionally intelligent so as to realize that he or she is being influenced by external emotions and there is the need to act upon them, regulating them and cognitively reframing them and find a solution to enhance learning and act upon negative emotions, capable of impeding language learning and to negatively affect the self-esteem and self-confidence of pupils.

#### *b. Novice teacher emotions*

As regards positive novice teacher emotions related to this particular reading activity, my self-esteem and self-confidence suddenly increased when the English teacher at some point asked me the meaning of a word appearing in my short story, 'sly'. It was just a question, but for me it meant being

called into action by someone superior and more experienced than me. I thought she had all the answers and I was there just to help her maybe with some activity to do with children, but I did not think I could be called into action also as regarded the language itself by their very teacher, because she did not remember something.

This was an overreaction on my part of course, springing from my idea of the teacher, in particular of the language teacher, as a model and example of a caring woman, capable to reply to any answer raised by children, devoted primarily to the love and affection of pupils and engaging them in activities and games about the language and culture of the Country where the language is spoken.

This is because the best English teacher I ever had was my primary school teacher who loved engaging us in funny activities that were motivating and involved all our cognitive styles and different intelligences. Now I can doubly appreciate her for what she did and for how she devoted herself to us and to our effective learning of the language. Once we even cooked some English food at school to put into practice in a concrete way some aspect of the English culture, and at the end of the year we always had a play and a concert with English songs.

Going back to my classroom activity with 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, I was enthusiastic about being of some linguistic help to my tutor, and I immediately replied in Italian to the question of what was the meaning of 'sly' and also gave her an English synonym, 'cunning', to try to give her the best impression I could, in my struggle to avoid making mistakes in front of her and of the children.

Linking this internship experience to an occasion in my primary school that caused me to experience strong emotions, enhanced my self-confidence and helped me in my love for languages as a child, my primary school English teacher is inextricably linked in my memory also with a memory filled with positive emotions with me regarding one of these concerts.

At the end of my 5<sup>th</sup> grade we participated as a class in the traditional end-of-the-school year concert, made up of a play and of English songs we were taught by our English teacher.

Our teacher motivated us and her enthusiasm was very contagious and I was always very excited to take part in singing. At the end of the concert, after the headmaster congratulated us for our performance, the English teacher announced that she would call one of her most brilliant pupils to translate the song we had just sung 'We are the World' by Michael Jackson, to conclude the day with a surprise.

I knew I was good in English but I did not have the least intention of stepping out in front of hundreds of people to speak, not at all, and I wasn't even sure she meant me. So I did my best to lower my head, pretend I didn't hear anything and hide among the other classmates.

But of course my classmates were the first ones to point at me, call me out, grab me and drag me where the teacher was, saying I was the one that could do that translation.

I think I blushed terribly in matter of seconds, but once the teacher caught me there was little I could do to give up my translation. I was given a sheet of paper with the English text and did my best to translate it, I found it very easy to do, what blocked me at times was the awareness I was in front of a big audience and that the eyes of everyone, the headmaster included, were stuck on me as long I was translating. My English teacher at times helped me when I froze, but I had no problems translating the text, and after I finally returned among my mates she congratulated me and the headmaster expressed his gratitude and said he was impressed and did not expect a 5<sup>th</sup> grader to be able to translate an English song as easily as that.

I was still very anxious due to my ‘stage fright<sup>29</sup>’ and ‘oral communication anxiety’, but also glad and proud of having dealt well with it and managed to translate the song well. This helped my self-esteem and my self-confidence very much, and also increased my love for foreign languages, and I think I might say it was one of the sparks that transformed my love for learning languages into what was to become a love for lifelong learning.

The fact that my teacher exploited my talent, made me deal with my biggest fears (‘oral communication anxiety’ and ‘stage fright’) and made me realize I could overcome obstacles and share with others my talent, such as translating, helped me believe more in myself and engage in activities such as translating, writing stories in English and engage in lifelong learning.

As regards me and what the ‘Gingerbread Man’ reading activity helped me with, first of all it made me more acquainted and more aware of how a reading activity for 3<sup>rd</sup> graders is conducted and managed by a teacher, and I had an idea of how to solve problems related to this kind of activity, problems that have to be solved in a matter of seconds, such as the meaning of a word, correct pronunciation, but also how to correct children without damaging their self-esteem and self-image when they make mistakes or are convinced they are right but they are not.

It also helped me to be aware of my own mistakes and deficits as a support teacher, and reminded me how I must be more careful about my reading out loud, in particular as far as my tone of voice and pronunciation are concerned. I went from an initial shame and sense of guilt due to the speed I had in reading and to the fact I did a mistake in front of my tutor to a better understanding of how we all need mistakes in order to realize our lacks and be aware of the need to improve them.

I also felt a deep gratification and satisfaction for the pupils’ very good results in their activity and commitment to their work. They were proud of themselves and grateful to their support teacher at the end of the lesson, and were sorry to have to go home because they wished I could read to them the story again after their activity was over. I was deeply moved hearing this because their deep and

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<sup>29</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘communication apprehension’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

sincere affection made me aware of how they really loved doing that exercise that I created for them, and it warmed my heart and made me feel what I imagined had to be the deep motivating engine for teachers, when they succeed in constructing a successful and motivating activity for children.

Answering the focus question about which teacher emotions are fostered during a reading activity, with a peculiar attention to the novice teacher case, it can be seen how in my case there was an initial blending of anxiety and excitement, apart from an additional state anxiety that is a stable part of my personality. Then the positive emotions fostered by the enthusiasm and engagement of the children in my activity overruled the negative ones, present only in minority during the tutor's intervention, in the form of shame and sense of guilt for reading too fast, and I was able to readily reframe and recognize these emotions as positive spies to improve and enhance my novice teacher's experience learning from my mistakes and deficits.

Meyer (in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) argues that student teachers need to regulate their emotions so that they are able on the one hand to appease their mentors and on the other to find a place for themselves as 'teachers' (ibid., p. 83).

In a way the same could be said for me, as far as regards my conflicting emotions of anxiety due to my 'fear of negative evaluation' (feeling as a student being taught by my mentors) and my need for independence while I managed my emotions concerning how I was going to teach a specific reading activity to children.

*c. Sources of anxiety as a novice teacher and anxiety-coping strategies*

'Oral communication anxiety' is one of the emotions felt by me as a novice teacher during my internship activities, as has been mentioned already, and it happens mostly in situations where communication and interaction with teachers and pupils is needed, so even more so during reading activities.

This kind of anxiety presented itself especially in moments when the situation was not under my full control such as when pupils raised questions and doubts, or when they misunderstood what I read or explained, and at first it took me aback and I was not sure how to deal with it and overcome it, but time and practice in the classroom let me become aware of the situations in which anxiety presented itself, so that I was ready to anticipate it and manage it better over time with a few strategies learned from the literature on teacher emotions while teaching, such as 'deep acting' (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.81; Hochschild 1990; Groth et al. 2006 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.57) and reaching the 'balcony view' (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.30), that is, be able to reframe emotions in a way that allows oneself to reach the necessary emotional detachment from the potentially disruptive emotions experienced (ibid.).

Finally, as regards my ‘Foreign Language Anxiety’<sup>30</sup>, I felt it both as a learner and as a teacher with a blending of stressors coming from both ‘Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale’ (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, p.129) and ‘Foreign Language Student Teacher Anxiety’, and the traits in common between the two types of anxieties are:

- a) ‘fear of negative evaluation’;
- b) perfectionism as a personality trait;
- c) anxiety when answering unexpected questions (Kim and Kim 2004 cited in Merç 2011);
- d) communicative tasks (ibid.);
- e) low self-esteem (Merç 2011);
- f) ‘communication apprehension’<sup>31</sup>;
- g) fear of making mistakes (Ipek 2007 cited in Merç 2011);
- h) ‘fear of failure’<sup>32</sup>.

Turning to the strategies I used in order to overcome my anxieties, they are:

- a) ‘cognitive reframing’ (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.89);
- b) reach the ‘balcony view’;
- c) engage the practice of ‘deep acting’, that is summoning positive emotions and aligning my inner emotions with the ones I wanted to show to the people around me, as opposed to ‘surface acting’ (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.81; Hochschild 1990; Groth et al. 2006 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.57);

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<sup>30</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘Foreign Language Anxiety’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

<sup>31</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘communication apprehension’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

<sup>32</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘fear of failure’ has been amply dealt with by Gordon and Sarason (1955); Sarason (1980) cited in Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) and by Ipek (2007) cited in Merç (2011).

- d) Give to pupils as much positive feedback as I could, focusing not on the learners' mistakes but, as suggested by Young (in Klee 1994), on the good done by pupils;
- e) Have a mentality about mistakes seen as something that anyone can do and as good spies telling what pupils need to practice more and not as personal faults, as Young (in Klee 1994) says;
- f) Adopt an emotional display as relaxed and friendly as possible, as argued by Young (in Klee 1994) so as not to worry pupils or negatively affect learners with family problems or already anxious by nature;
- g) Create activities that fit the students' needs and interests (Young in Klee 1994).

I must say that the 'emotional contagion' of children has been also very precious and helpful to me as regarded lowering my anxiety levels and my fear of speaking in public.

Their positive attitude, enthusiasm and motivation helped me more than once to overcome my negative emotions when I was having bad days due to personal problems, and this is another confirmation of Powell and Kusuma-Powell's (2010) thesis that teachers can actually be influenced by pupils' emotions just as learners are affected by their teachers' ones, both positive or negative emotions.

### 3.1.2 Analysis of "My Monster Project"

#### a. *"Emotional Contagion"*

From planning and creating this reading exercise for children I learned how to deal better with my 'oral communication anxiety'<sup>33</sup>, how to approach children in a primary school classroom, how to address their problems, doubts and questions in an effective way, supported by their English teacher, and how to deal with my role as a tutor and to fulfil my tasks such as reading loudly and stressing the pronunciation of words, avoiding simply translating unknown words straightaway, but rather trying to link them with something from which the children can guess the meaning, when it is possible.

I also learned how to plan and build a reading activity and I became more aware of its structure and of how children respond to it. My need as a novice teacher from an emotional point of view, in my

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<sup>33</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'oral communication anxiety' has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

very first steps, is to be accepted and appreciated by learners, and to make a good impression on my tutors.

Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) argue that emotions are contagious and they stress how there is a link between how much an emotion can be contagious and how much a person is influential and powerful in a specific environment (ibid.).

These researchers also argue how teachers are the most powerful and influential individuals in a classroom and how the emotional flow starts from them and is directed toward students, who are infected by the teacher emotions and, in their turn, can affect teachers with their responses and emotional displays (ibid.).

So teachers' emotions can be infectious both in a positive or negative way, with serious implications for the educational context, and therefore learning can be a constructive or disruptive experience depending upon which emotions are fostered and brought into the classroom daily by teachers (ibid.).

Turning now our attention to tutor A's emotions, I want to briefly analyze her emotional display as a whole and in particular during my reading activity, and her attitude towards the children and me, to cast new light on the positive emotions that teachers should have while teaching and on their potentially positive effect on both novice teachers and pupils.

Tutor A offered to children an emotional display involving 'deep acting' that showed a deep faith and conviction in the abilities and learning skills of each of her pupils, from the most brilliant ones to the ones that needed most help and attention.

Her faith in their potential never faltered and she never imposed her role of evaluator or her superior and authoritative power over them; she tried to be at their level, in the sense to be one of them, a helper and tutor helping them learn English, but when she needed to keep a good classroom management she knew how to obtain order and silence. She was able to gain silence and order with just a glance or a few words, spoken at a normal voice tone; she did not need to scream or get angry to make pupils understand.

She established an agreement with them at the start of the year and the children who happened to disturb others or impair the learning situation for any reason needed but to be called to order and they hushed or stopped disturbing. The class seemed to be united and learners to relate well to each other. In the classrooms taught by tutor B, instead, the pupils seemed to be less attentive or caring about keeping silence, and the teacher needed to call them to order several times and even use a high tone of voice and they seemed to respect and accept her authority only when she stressed it to them or threatened them with disciplinary notes.

So tutor A puts into practice my personal belief of teaching as an act of love and care toward children, and embodies the model of the teacher as a helper and tutor, who puts learners at the centre of the

learning situation, does not impose her authority on them and does not consider them empty vessels to fill with the teacher's knowledge.

This is the general attitude of the English teacher, let us move now onto how she behaved during the delivery of my reading activity 'My Monster Project'.

Starting from when she counselled me about the planning of my activity when I brought her the sheets I printed out, she was very kind and nice to me, gentle and caring, and stressed the positive outcomes of my work, not the negative ones. She also considered my mistakes not as mistakes, but as positive things that needed a change to be enhanced, as opportunities to learn better and to learn from imperfections; she stressed several times how I did a very good job, and just told me how to improve my work, she did not focus or stress my errors.

She had a positive attitude, a contagious enthusiasm that I know I mirrored while I was around her and she had also a contagious smile, she smiled all the time, while in classroom and talking with colleagues. This is how I think an effective teacher should behave with her pupils and her colleagues, to foster a positive environment around her, both inside and outside the classroom walls.

This English teacher's aforementioned characteristics match the ones of Nieto's (2005 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010) research about the features of highly effective teachers.

To sum up, the list of features belonging to highly effective teachers can be divided into four categories according to Nieto: strong subject-matter knowledge, excellent communication skills, pedagogical effectiveness and emotional 'self-awareness'<sup>34</sup>, which is one of the topics of my research. The 3<sup>rd</sup> grade English teacher showed all these features, but the 'self-regulation'<sup>35</sup> of emotions and 'self-awareness' of the teacher were in my opinion the key-factors as regarded the emotional impact on learners and regarding what builds the emotional climate of the classroom.

Her positive attitude both during the planning and presentation of my activity doubled my feelings of motivation, self-efficacy, belief in myself and self-esteem, and consequently my performance was enhanced due to the lowering of my 'oral communication anxiety', 'stage fright' and 'Foreign Language Anxiety'. I was calmer and more relaxed and this resulted in a more serene approach to pupils, more time to think and reflect upon how to answer in an effective way and retrieve good inferring strategies, and a more positive sense of achievement and self-efficacy when I went back home.

So engaging in 'deep acting', showing and fostering positive emotions through positive, serene and encouraging emotional displays and having a good classroom management and 'self-regulation' of

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<sup>34</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'self-awareness' has been amply dealt with by Goleman (1995) cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>35</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'self-regulation' has been amply dealt with by Goleman (1995) cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

emotions seem to be the best way to promote and keep a serene learning environment and to foster the learners' commitment, motivation, sense of self-worth and self-esteem, and the best way to plant some seeds for a potential budding of love for lifelong learning, as happened to me when I was at primary school with the attitude of my English teacher.

*b. "Surface Acting" vs "Deep Acting" in teaching*

As regards me and the development and shifting of my own emotions, I am aware that I both influenced and was myself under the influence of the children's emotions; the English teacher and me were both the agents and the objects of the emotional climate of the classroom, and I knew that the learners were subject to the affective climate of the learning environment (Hargreaves 2001 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010).

I acted upon my own emotional display so as to appear as cheerful and enthusiastic as possible and it was not as difficult as I expected because I was continuously subject to the children's enthusiasm, optimism and eagerness to learn. It was as if their English teacher was planting in them, through her emotional display, positive attitudes and the very seeds of love for life-long learning, through activities appealing to their own interests and shaping them in the way they fitted for a specific unit of English devoted to Christmas vocabulary, for example, or to the parts of the body.

Whenever I felt nervous or anxious while speaking during my internship experience as a whole – due to my 'oral communication anxiety' – or while listening to the doubts and questions of the pupils – due to the improvisation stressor – I managed my emotions the very first times through 'surface acting', that is, not summoning positive emotions but simply continuing smiling and keeping a regulated outer attitude, but internally still feeling high levels of anxiety and nervousness, not acting or intervening upon them (Schutz and Zembylas 2009).

It was very stressful at the beginning, during the first lessons in which I engaged in conversations with pupils and helped the English teacher asking questions about the weather and about what the children did during the weekends, for example. Afterwards I felt very anxious and 'surface acting' did not help my self-confidence and self-esteem, even if it was rewarding to know I did a good job and to see the pupils' enthusiasm.

After a couple of weeks, I decided to try to put aside the negative emotions, and when needed, to summon positive emotions primarily because I needed and wanted to feel them and then because I believed, and wanted to know if my guess was correct, that through 'deep acting' on the one hand I would have felt more relaxed and on the other the people surrounding me would have had more positive reactions than when I did 'surface acting'.

I wanted to create an alignment between what I felt and my emotional display, my facial expression and gestures included. So I started to act upon my emotions by summoning the calm and serenity I needed to overcome my anxiety, and to exert control over my emotions so as to be able to lessen the ones that impacted me negatively and were debilitating and to keep the positive ones. In a few words, I started ‘deep acting’.

What were the effects of this emotional practice and did it have any positive outcome for the teaching and learning situation?

As regarding the impact of ‘deep acting’ upon my emotions, it certainly helped me feel calmer, less anxious and consequently more effective in my teaching. I noticed my enhanced efficacy due to increased levels of concentration, because anxiety, acting as an ‘affective filter’ (Krashen 1982 cited in Pennington 1996, p.337) when it was at high levels, impaired my focus and I felt a new wave of motivation, self-esteem and self-confidence thanks to a steady decrease of both ‘oral communication anxiety’ and ‘Foreign Language Anxiety’. I also acknowledged a renewed sense of self-efficacy when my emotional display was aligned to my deeply held beliefs and I did not feel that uneasiness of emotional conflict (anxious inside, cheerful outside) that I felt during ‘surface acting’. Feeling calmer and more relaxed enhanced both my own sense of self-worth and my ability to interact with and provide children with good inferring strategies while reading, detecting their emotions and behaving accordingly, as not to damage or impair the learning process.

Moreover the emotional display involving ‘deep acting’ adopted successfully by tutor A and leading to enhanced learners’ performance, self-confidence and commitment made me look up to her and encouraged me to try to see what my emotional reaction would be and the pupils’ one if I adopted it as well, and the result was highly successful and the learners were even more enthusiast and confident with me since I started ‘deep acting’.

I noticed how my socialization skills benefited from the summoning of positive emotions as well: I engaged more quickly and with more confidence with children now, and their enthusiasm and happiness seemed to effectively mirror my emotional display, now more genuine and authentic than when I used to modify only how I looked – that is, my outer looks and facial expressions – and not how I felt. While interacting with them, I also allowed myself more time to think and reflect, because anxiety tends to make me hurry and think very quickly at times, making me take decisions without sufficient time to reflect at all. So now I had more time to reflect and think before taking a decision, and it helped me view various situations where I had difficulties with pupils from a different perspective. I was starting to achieve the ‘balcony view’<sup>36</sup> that according to Powell and Kusuma-

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<sup>36</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘balcony view’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

Powell (2010) helps the teacher get the necessary emotional detachment from a potentially disruptive situation so that he or she can analyze and judge events from an objective point of view, putting aside his or her personal emotions, that might be an obstacle to the promotion of learning and of a serene learning environment.

My emotional balance was apparent also to the people surrounding me, as I noticed from the English teacher's response to it. Tutor A noticed I was calmer and more confident, and that I understood better while I was more relaxed regarding how to engage with children, giving them instructions and I was more serene while helping them and suggesting them strategies as well.

My mind had more time to process information and retrieve effective inferring strategies for reading activities and it was easier to establish bonds between the children's needs, interests and between unknown words and what they knew already.

I noticed a change in the children as well, as regards their emotions: ever since I was friendlier with them and more serene thanks to 'deep acting', they seemed to enjoy the reading activities I proposed better, they could understand and relate better to me presenting them this or that activity, also because my reading was more confident and I did not risk being too fast or unclear. They also tended to have more confidence asking things, as if there was a new wave of trust enveloping them.

Trust is central to the exchange of emotions and negotiations between teachers and students, as stated by Bryk and Schneider (2004 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010).

What is trust? According to Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010), trust is "about recognizing how we invariably depend upon other people and how we can enhance our relationships by decreasing our personal sense of vulnerability" (ibid., p. 136).

Bryk and Schneider (2004 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010) define the kind of trust present in healthy schools as 'relational trust' (ibid., p. 136), and state that this is the kind of trust embedded in the relationships between teachers, students and parents in an educational context, characterized by the individuals' acknowledgement of their role and responsibilities towards the others and their conviction that others will behave according to the expectations of those relationships (ibid.).

There are mainly two obstacles to the development of classroom trust according to Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010): the idea of trust as something unchangeable and static and the teacher's self-perception and role of evaluator in the classroom.

The reason why students feel uncomfortable with a teacher as an evaluator is given by Dickerson and Kemeny (cited in Goleman 2006 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010). They state that when someone evaluates us our social self feels threatened.

What is our social self? According to Dickerson and Kemeny (ibid.) it embodies how others see us and how we see ourselves through someone else's eyes. They also believe that the messages that we

receive from the people surrounding us regarding how they perceive us build our sense of self-image and self-worth. The direct consequence of our social self being judged negatively is that our sense of self-worth feels threatened, and we may feel negative emotions such as shame, guilt and a steady lowering of our self-esteem (ibid.).

Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) suggest two strategies that teachers can adopt to avoid their role of evaluators negatively impacting learners' emotions and their sense of self-worth and self-esteem:

- a) Emphasize that teachers are evaluating the students' tasks and achievement and not what they are as persons;
- b) Employ descriptive feedback instead of solely evaluative feedback, since the former is a fundamental factor of efficient student learning (it represents the material upon which both teachers and learners can scaffold new learning), whereas the latter is completely alien to learning.

*c. Unpredictability of the improvisation stressor*

During this reading activity I helped my tutor in offering to help to learners in difficulty.

One interesting episode linked to the unpredictability of the improvisation stressor but that also rewarded me as a novice teacher because of the smartness of a learner is worth mentioning.

I was walking around the desks offering my help to pupils in difficulty and one group of pupils had problems in filling the last blank of the following sentence:

I am wearing shoes, but they are of different colours: they are \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ and dark green.

Since the answer for the last blank was 'light green', I tried to give them the hint to think about the opposite of 'dark' in English, but it seemed they were not familiar with the word 'dark'.

I experienced a moment during which I had no clue as how to respond to the children's needs or how to employ an effective facilitating strategy to help them guess the missing colour, and it happened both because of my anxiety and because I assumed that they knew the word 'dark', so the surprise they did not know it made me falter. Reflecting later at home about this experience made me realize I should not take anything for granted in their knowledge, but I should try to deploy multiple facilitating strategies and, more importantly, I needed to realize how anxiety affected negatively and impaired my concentration, my effectiveness as a teacher and as a tutor helping children, since I could retrieve information more slowly and with less focus than when I was calm and relaxed.

Therefore mine was also a problem related to the unpredictability of the improvisation stressor: Merc (2011) suggests how one of the possible sources of anxiety for student teachers can sprout from the improvisation stressor related to the unpredictability of the students' answers and doubts during a lesson (*ibid.*), and I have to say that I can relate to this kind of anxiety, because I felt it first person as well while interacting with pupils.

In these situations I experience a feeling of nervousness related to the fact that the person feeling it has no power or control over the situation, and the unpredictability of the pupils' questions may affect the teacher's sense of his or her role and his or her emotions, because an unexpected question or the lack of an answer from the teacher can cause feelings of anxiety and uneasiness that can give way to several emotional reactions, if the teacher is not an expert of emotional 'self-management'<sup>37</sup>, and does not know how to dominate and engage in positive emotional displays.

In my case, I felt a pang of anxiety when the boy told me he did not know what 'dark' meant because they had never encountered that word, and I was at a loss as to which facilitating strategy to adopt next, and I froze for a moment. Then I tried to suggest they think of the opposite of 'dark' as the word meaning 'luce' in English, and a boy of this same group of learners, as soon as I finished talking, knew that his pencil crayons had the English name of the colour written on them, and he quickly opened his pencil-case and took in his hand the light green pencil crayon to look what was written on it and then triumphantly cried out loud "light green!" and he wrote it on his sheet of paper.

I complemented him and walked on to observe and help other pupils. The boy's idea of looking at his pencil crayon to solve the linguistic problem still lingered in my head for several days and I was impressed about the sort of association of ideas that occurred in him in order to understand where he would find the answer. I shared the episode with the English teacher and she agreed with me that it was curious how the pupil immediately thought about his pencil crayon and she was positively impressed.

The aforementioned episode is another piece of evidence of the fact that learners trained by the teacher to be autonomous and who are given the correct tips to develop an autonomous kind of thought and reasoning are able to succeed. To do so they have to exploit the bits of information offered to them by the teacher in the form of a question or suggestion to encourage them to exploit better the context of the text for example, or to read a certain sentence better, or listen to a recording once more, with the teacher linking continuously and in different manners the known information by the pupils with what they did not know yet.

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<sup>37</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'self-management' has been amply dealt with by Goleman (1995) cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

It was beautiful and gratifying to watch them respond so well to our hints, and helping each other guessing words and exploiting inferring strategies to answer correctly, as if they were a team, as the learning environment should always suggest. It was an exciting experience to witness the positive impact of my activities on the children, it was very motivating for both the teacher and me, and it was a source of motivation and encouragement for the learners as well to see our enthusiasm, satisfaction and positive attitude towards them.

As a side note to that, it was also very touching to see their sad expression when the lunch bell rang, their moan of regret and how they said they wished they could continue their English lesson. It was evident their teacher knew how to engage them in activities they did not find stressful at all but rather fun and challenging, which does not mean these exercises were below their cognitive level, but on the contrary, they engaged in challenging activities that helped them learn in a way that did not make them think they were at school, which is, I strongly believe, the ultimate aim of every language teacher, with students of all ages, but especially with elementary children, still young and vulnerable to negative emotions and to a lot of stress and anxiety, if they happen to engage with severe and stern teachers and classroom environments.

I strongly believe that the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders' smartness, speed in learning and confidence mirror their teacher's emotional displays and attitudes, aimed at raising the children's sense of self-worth, self-esteem and self-perception, and with their behaviour and commitment they reward the teacher's struggle to keep and promote a serene learning environment.

This context puts the teacher at the same level of pupils as a tutor and not as an authoritative commander, but still the teacher needs to be aware of his or her role as the leader of the classroom, and he or she can function as an emotional coach rather than a strict ruler, channeling and regulating emotions, both his or her own and the ones of the pupils, avoiding potentially disruptive situations and promoting the deep values he or she believes in, through learning activities aimed at enhancing the children's cognitive skills, intelligences and through negotiations of roles and tasks that shape from the beginning of the year the deep values and norms of classroom behaviour. In this way the teacher-student relationship is transparent from the start and each pupil is aware of what he or she is allowed or not allowed to do in the classroom, and which behavioural norms are permitted and which not. This is how the teacher gains respect and how his or her authority is recognized and the deviation from the norm acknowledged and reprimand understood in its context (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010).

The 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom I observed and worked with was among the best examples of such an educational context, even more so when compared to other classrooms, either belonging to a superior or inferior grade, where pupils were less engaged and motivated in learning English due to less

interesting lessons with textbook activities without much effort on the teacher part of personalizing them and rendering them more motivating and interesting for learners.

### 3.1.3 Analysis of “Hop on Pop”

#### *a. The relevance of caring*

Since this was chronologically the very first internship active experience for me, after having observed the classrooms, my emotional display was still one of ‘surface acting’, and I felt very high levels of anxiety related to speaking and to ‘Foreign Language Anxiety’<sup>38</sup>. I did not try still to align my outer emotions (facial expressions and external visible emotions) to my inner ones.

I looked up to tutor A, and tried to reflect in my performance as many positive elements regarding my emotional display as I could from her, smiling constantly, being calm and relaxed at least on the outside, and responding to the pupils’ needs with calm and serenity.

Emotional display is directly related to care, a very crucial aspect of teaching and directly linked to ‘emotional intelligence’<sup>39</sup> according to Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

Isenbarger and Zembylas (2006 cited in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) argue how teachers reach the peak of their positive (satisfaction) or negative (disappointment) emotions specifically through the outcomes of their relationships with whom they interact with and teach.

According to Noddings (1984 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) caring in the classroom is embodied by encouraging dialogue, showing interest and flexibility as regards what pupils need and are interested in (Rogers and Webb 1991 cited Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009), by creating a safe and serene environment for children and showing them love (Nias 1989 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) so they know teachers care for them and positive pupil emotions are fostered (Prosser 1999 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009).

I provided these literature theories about care towards pupils because I think it is a central concern in the teaching environment, where there are still teachers that believe belittling and screaming to children is effective in correcting them and they do not care if they foster negative emotions and encourage disruptive or anxious behaviours in pupils, very sensitive at a young age to emotions and in need of good examples of caring and loving teachers, whereas at times the opposite is the case.

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<sup>38</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘Foreign Language Anxiety’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

<sup>39</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘emotional intelligence’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

Moreover caring is seen as one aspect of the emotionally intelligent teacher (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010).

All these factors about caring have been reminded here to stress how tutor A possessed all of them and this was visible and easily detectable watching her lessons, and her enthusiasm and optimism were very contagious and spread easily among children, who were enthusiastic to learn.

These concepts and qualities shape the behaviour and attitude of tutor A, always interested in the pupils' needs and interests and showing for them constant care and proving to be emotionally intelligent in her emotional display, interactions, and multiple ways to solve problems and react to sudden difficulties in the classroom without affecting negatively the children's emotions, self-image or self-worth.

*b. Satisfaction and uneasiness: mixed emotions as a novice teacher*

The following paragraph will take into consideration the most notable novice teacher's emotional reactions to the doubts and questions raised by pupils during the reading activity.

The first episode that caught my attention and is worth mentioning is the perplexity of a pupil while I was reading the book for the second time when I arrived at the page containing the following sentence: "Three fish in a tree" (Seuss 1963). The boy wondered whether it was possible to say also 'fishes' in English to form the plural of 'fish'. This made the teacher and me wonder ourselves whether that was possible. My first reaction was to say "it is not possible", but I immediately stopped myself, because the boy's question made me realize that actually I was not very sure myself, so I turned to the teacher.

I thought her experience and talent made her a sort of model teacher and a vessel of knowledge, so I was pretty sure she would easily answer the boy's question.

She stared back at me in wonder, and was unsure whether 'fishes' was a possible plural form in the English language, and finally asked me what was my opinion about it.

I was in a bit of awed reverence toward tutor A, so I found it surprising she would ask me for help, but I was also proud that in a sense I was given importance and was asked to help her, and it improved my confidence and self-esteem, but I was not sure myself about the correct answer, and I felt a bit of shame not being able to respond to her call of help, but immediately offered to ask to my English professor at University about it, and to give her an answer the following week, and she was thankful to me about my offer and told the children she would tell them as soon as she was sure about it, and until that moment they would have followed the book example and say 'three fish' for the plural form of 'fish'.

This episode raised in me opposite feelings: anxiety due to the improvisation stressor created by the pupil's answer, then aggravated by the fact I did not have an answer I was sure about and that was trustworthy enough to provide him, and this made me feel I was not matching the standards expected from me by the teacher ('fear of negative evaluation'<sup>40</sup> and 'fear of failure') and there was some shame and lowering of my self-esteem going along with that feeling, but I felt also calm when I realized that tutor A herself had problems answering, and when she asked my help I felt I was given importance and considered a possible helper and assistant of tutor A, and I felt my sense of self-worth and of self-esteem increase because of this and I felt pride for being addressed by the teacher, and consequently the positive emotions outnumbered the negative ones.

However I could not answer and this made me feel uneasy, but the fact I provided a possible solution by offering to ask my University professor and the positive teacher's feedback about this idea made me feel I somehow solved the situation temporarily and I gained back a good emotional balance.

The second example I want to mention which fostered uneasiness in me regarding my oral performance and which is linked to my mimicking is another sentence from the book: "Mr. Brown upside down" (Seuss 1963).

This sentence was challenging in the sense that it created in me a feeling of uneasiness related to how to explain its meaning to pupils and how to render it with my mimicking in an understandable way without just translating it, and in this respect I have to say the illustration helped some.

In addition to the illustration I tried to twist my arms and swirl them in a way that I hoped resembled something that is turned upside down, but still children were confused and I did not know how to help them more, but suddenly I thought a visual effect with a concrete object could foster a faster understanding, so I took a pencil and turned it upside down repeating the English sentence, and this time the children understood and cheered in victory, and this fostered in me a beautiful feeling of satisfaction for realizing they understood and thinking I was part of what made them understand that difficult sentence, a feeling that Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) state in Yiddish is called 'naches' (ibid., p.87), that is, the pleasure experienced by a teacher watching and sharing the success of his or her learners.

The third sentence I will mention as generating novice teacher mixed emotions is "They yelp for help" (Seuss 1963) referred to a couple of dogs under pouring rain pictured in a page of the book. The problem here was how to render visually the verb "to yelp" and how to link it with the need for help of the dogs. The picture helped learners understand the general context and the vague meaning of the verb, they understood dogs needed help, but the teacher and me wanted pupils to go further

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<sup>40</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'fear of negative evaluation' has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

than that because we were aware of their potential and that we could make them understand it was actually an onomatopoeic sound of the dogs' bark while in pain or in need of help.

So we asked to pupils whether the word "yelp" reminded them anything about dogs and tutor A mimicked a sort of sad barking that helped children understand what we meant. It was a difficult word and also while rehearsing it and reading the sentence most learners had problems pronouncing it, and in general the purpose of the book was to create various little tongue-twister sentences to get pupils accustomed to different pronunciations of similar words bearing different meanings.

The last episode I am about to mention refers to the very last page of the book that contains the following text:

What does it say?

Seehemewe

Patpuppup

Hethreetreebee

Tophopstop.

Ask me tomorrow, but not today. (Seuss 1963)

This passage was challenging as regarded the nonsensical words, made up of existing words sewn together one after the other, so that the four lines resulted in a tongue-twister for children helping them pronounce the words learned throughout the book as a sort of mini-game.

I was at a loss after reading it the second time as how to render that, and I instinctively turned to the teacher to see what she would suggest me to do in this case. I felt a bit uneasy and at the same time eager to see how she would help me. Tutor A wanted the children to learn and understand the book at their best, but also realized that part was way too confusing for the children to understand and told me not to translate that part because it would have been too difficult and confusing for children, but to help them pronounce the words, to be spoken out loud slowly one after the other and not all together as they were written. So I started asking children to repeat the words after me, stressing carefully the pronunciation of words and correcting any mistakes, and my emotions benefited from the teacher's intervention.

*c. Fear of failure and perfectionism while planning an extra activity*

Moving now onto my emotions while planning and creating the mini-book commissioned to me by tutor A based on ‘Hop on Pop’, my main emotions were ‘fear of failure<sup>41</sup>’ related to whether I was up to the task, being my very first task during the internship, a fear related to my perfectionism and low self-esteem that often made me unsure about my own potentialities, and ‘fear of negative evaluation’. During the planning what made me most uneasy and nervous was how to organize the pages of the book exactly, since the teacher told me what they were to contain but not how to structure them in detail, and I wondered what could be the best design for pupils. At the end I decided for funny fonts, but clear and easy to understand, so as not to confuse or impair learning, and funny pictures to match words with.

At the end of my activity I was proud with myself and I could almost foretell the children’s reactions seeing my booklet. I was just a bit worried about the teacher’s reaction and hoped it would be a good one. I had consulted her during my activities bringing her some sheets I had printed and she seemed to be glad of my work, so I was as optimistic as possible with my perfectionist personality always stinging me with some fear I had not done a perfect job, but the children’s enthusiasm was all I needed to suppress most of my negative emotions.

The day came to deliver the booklet to the class and the teacher showed it proudly to the class and told them it would be available anytime for them to consult in the classroom during their revision time in the ‘Books’ Corner’ and the children gathered around the table where books were placed to look at it and they were very enthusiastic about it, and their emotions were contagious and made me experience the satisfaction a successful teacher must experience quite often in his or her classroom. As a side-note to this mini-book task I was given before all other reading activities, it can be noticed how the researcher decided not to regard it as an actual reading task on her part, since all it was required of her was to rewrite the vocabulary of the book in a creative way associating words with funny images, but still the ‘Gingerbread Man’ activity is regarded as the very first active experience as a novice teacher thinking and planning a reading task, with the vocabulary inserted in the grids with similar sounds and different meanings. This is why the mini-book based on ‘Hop on Pop’ is left a bit aside in the paper, as an additional reading activity not as emotionally significant as the ‘Gingerbread Man’ or ‘My Monster Project’ regarding the structure and construction of reading tasks for pupils.

As a final note to conclude about ‘emotional contagion’ and about the effect of a teacher’s attitude upon pupils’ behaviour and emotions, it was very sweet one day when a teacher of classroom

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<sup>41</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘fear of failure’ has been amply dealt with by Gordon and Sarason (1955); Sarason (1980) cited in Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) and by Ipek (2007) cited in Merç (2011).

3A was in a delay and I was asked to stay in the class until she arrived, how pupils cheered I was there and ran to pick the book 'Hop on Pop', placed it in my hands and begged me in unison to read it to them and also to make them read it because they enjoyed it so much.

I was glad and speechless, I could not express by words what I felt, but it was a wonderful feeling that they should ask me to do so by themselves and did not see it as a boring or dull scholastic activity.

Regarding novice teacher emotions, my initial anxiety related to 'fear of failure' and 'fear of negative evaluation' saw a dramatic improvement thanks to the support shown by tutor A and the positive reaction of children and their successful learning, and the underlying uneasiness due to the unpredictability of the improvisation stressor was counterbalanced by the constant help and optimistic attitude of the teacher and the increase of self-esteem related to being actively engaged and called for help by the teacher herself.

## Chapter 4. Results and discussion

In this final chapter of my study I summarize and discuss the main findings of my internship experience as a novice teacher (both as regards the observation and field notes taking period and when I participated actively as a novice teacher helping children with reading activities), relating it with the appropriate research fields cited in the first chapter of my dissertation.

This section will address the main focus questions raised by my paper, that are divided into teacher emotions and novice teacher anxiety, and each section contains the relative key-topics through which it was possible to establish a link between my experience in the primary school and the existing literature on teacher emotions and teacher anxiety, and these topics are discussed relating them both to the concrete experience of the internship and then it is suggested how research in teacher emotions and teacher anxiety can be deepened and which topics need more investigation.

### 4.1 Teacher emotions and implications for the teaching situation

In the following paragraphs I will address and discuss the following topics taken from the existing literature on teacher and novice teacher emotions (Schultz and Zembylas 2009; Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010) and ‘emotional intelligence’ (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010) that mirror my focus questions:

- a) How relevant are emotions and what is their role in teaching?
- b) What is the effect of ‘surface acting’<sup>42</sup> and ‘deep acting’<sup>43</sup> in teaching, that is, the effect of emotional displays upon both the novice teacher and the primary school pupils?
- c) Why are ‘emotional intelligence’ and ‘emotional contagion’<sup>44</sup> between teachers, novice teachers and learners important?
- d) What are the dominant emotions of a novice English teacher while organizing and performing reading activities for primary school learners?

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<sup>42</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘surface acting’ has been amply dealt with by Hochschild (1990); Groth et al. (2006) cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas (2009) and by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>43</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘deep acting’ has been amply dealt with by Hochschild (1990); Groth et al. (2006) cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas (2009) and by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>44</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘emotional contagion’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

#### 4.1.1 The relevance and role of emotions in teaching

My internship experience allowed me to come into contact with a concrete teaching environment and to learn why emotions are central and vital factors in teaching, and how they have the power to enhance (positive emotions) or worsen (negative emotions) both the people feeling these emotions (teachers) and the ones absorbing them (learners). So teachers can bring into the classroom emotional displays and foster ‘emotional contagion’ in either a positive or negative way that will affect the learning situation.

Research in teacher emotions also stresses the existence of a link between emotions and identity in teachers (Zembylas 2005 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009), and this is evident as regards tutor A; her vitality and enthusiasm were part of her personality and identity as a person and they were always the core of her lessons, because she always brought her positive emotions along with her in the classroom, and those emotions were part of her everyday attitude as a person and not solely a façade of required emotions for teaching.

As regards me during my internship, I was aware of my emotions while teaching and helping learners, and of how they were relevant in teaching because at times high levels of anxiety impaired my cognition for example (‘cognitive-affective filter<sup>45</sup>’) or because my ‘oral communication anxiety<sup>46</sup>’ made it difficult for me to retrieve the wanted information from my brain and I froze for a moment, and it was warming and really precious to feel the wave of positive emotions sprouting from the children’s enthusiasm and the tutor’s help that gave me the strength and self-esteem needed to regulate and lower my negative emotions, so I could focus on the positive ones, feel calmer and improve my teaching methodology.

It has been noted how teachers experiencing repeatedly negative emotions, related to disruptive behaviour on the pupils’ part or due to personal stress, risk of experiencing ‘emotional draining<sup>47</sup>’ and ‘burnout<sup>48</sup>’, as reminded by Schutz and Zembylas in the ‘Introduction to Advances in Teacher Emotion Research: the Impact on Teachers’ Lives’ (Schutz and Zembylas 2009), one of the main causes of teachers quitting their job (Jackson et al. 1986; Maslach 1982; Morris and Feldman 1996 Schaubroeck and Jones 2000 cited in Schutz and Zembylas 2009), whereas emotionally intelligent

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<sup>45</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘cognitive-affective filter’ has been amply dealt with by Pennington (1996).

<sup>46</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘oral communication anxiety’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and cope (1986).

<sup>47</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘emotional draining’ has been amply dealt with by Schutz and Zembylas (2009).

<sup>48</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘teacher burnout’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) and by Schutz and Zembylas (2009).

teachers, capable of regulating their emotions and having a mindsight of the emotions of others, are able to change and enhance the affective climate of the classroom, and they do not impair the sense of self-esteem and self-worth of learners, liable to be damaged by emotional displays involving anger, contempt or belittling behaviour on the teacher's part (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010).

This leads us to the importance for teachers not to deviate from a caring behaviour toward learners.

It depends on the teacher's beliefs and personality whether he or she is going to make a psychological investment and care about learners, and it is well known that caring has a cost (Schutz and Zembylas 2009), in the sense that a teacher that chooses to care does it because he or she believes that it is worth making an emotional investment in pupils, and is aware of the difficulties that will be encountered while caring, and a caring teacher has to be very well self-regulated and very patient with pupils, to prevent 'emotional draining' and 'burnout' when dealing with negative emotions and to safeguard the children's well-being. Therefore, as Hargreaves (1998 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) states, caring has a lot to do with the personality and the willingness of a person to establish relevant relationships in the classroom and to create a serene learning environment based on values the teacher is willing to invest in and that pupils are encouraged to respect. Caring depends also on contextual factors that may lead teachers to be either more willing or less willing or able to manage their emotions and, therefore, their commitment to care.

Goldstein and Lake (2003 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) argue how one of the problems with caring is that is not discussed enough, especially during teacher training programs, and this causes teachers not to be always aware of its relevance in the teaching profession, so that it is not taken into consideration or else it is underestimated during teaching practice and the result is a lack of what care ultimately is, that is, love toward learners, as stated by Nias (1989 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009).

Focusing now on my internship experience in an elementary school and on whose findings are relevant for the sphere of teacher care, the first link I want to establish with the literature on teacher caring is a statement about primary education:

[it is] a culture of care, love, concern, affection and other possible emotional displays towards children. (Hargreaves 2000; Nias 1989, 1999; Noddings 1984 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.63)

Tutor A and tutor B show different approaches to care, shaped by their different beliefs about children and about their personal role as teachers and what is expected from them on the one hand, and their personality and willingness to show a non-paid care behaviour on the other. However, it must be said that both teachers showed a satisfying attitude and readiness to show a caring behaviour, with some

minor edginess and proneness to get angry and be irritable on the part of tutor B, but this is just understandable, due to ‘teacher burnout’ and ‘emotional draining’ which is often caused by the children’s lively and at times stubborn behaviour.

The effects of the teacher’s willingness to care were also easily detectable: 3<sup>rd</sup> graders under tutor A felt they were cared for and considered special and important by their teacher, who believed in them and expected the best from each of them. Consequently they cared and respected their teacher as well, talked to her a lot also outside lesson time, they were eager to show her their homework and to engage in vocabulary-challenges using flashcards during lessons to rehearse English and see who remembered most words, and the like. This was the kind of behaviour fostered by an emotional display involving caring among other values that the teacher was more than ready to share with children.

Also the classes taught by tutor B were driven by a caring attitude on the teacher’s part, with some occasional but understandable frustration-driven outbursts on the teacher’s part for the jokes and chatting of children during lessons, even if it must be said that the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders taught by tutor A never showed the propensity to disturb the lesson, and usually were silent and paid attention to the lesson. However, it must be kept in mind how in times of excessive demands from teachers as in our age ‘burnout’ and ‘emotional draining’ are likely to affect teachers (Schutz and Zembylas 2009), and one of the causes of these emotional imbalances could be the friction between what a teacher feels to be his or her commitment to care and his or her expected professional role due to reforms or a specific educational context, for example.

Here what is relevant is the episode I described in the paragraph of this paper entitled *1.2.2 The self-regulated teacher* (see p.32), an event that contrasts very much with what has been just described about tutor A and B, as it is an evident deviation from a caring attitude, and all teachers should display care toward learners, even more so in elementary schools populated by children who are sensitive to emotions and might be particularly fragile and prone to anxiety due to several issues, such as the child involved in this story.

Summarizing what has been described already, this teacher, already called C in paragraph *1.2.2 The self-regulated teacher*, showed a serious deviation from any caring attitude that might be expected from a teacher in an educational environment, since she screamed at the top of her lungs to a child just because he did not color a picture the way she expected him to. I was appalled and could not believe my eyes seeing her screaming like that, and watching the child tremble and cry in front of her, and then she walked away quickly out of the class as if nothing unusual happened.

Such a distorted behaviour coming from a teacher I believe has no justification at all, because even if there are roots for it in beliefs about children and the teacher’s role in the classroom, one’s conscience

should know better than screaming like that to a child and then leaving the class. Moreover, the teacher screaming knew, as tutor B told me later, that that particular child had family problems and suffered from a proneness to anxiety and panic attacks. However, such behaviour on the teacher's part has to be strongly avoided with any child.

Having said this, this is just one example of how a teacher can decide to deliberately ignore and trample upon children's emotions and forfeit her role as a caring teacher and, first and foremost, as a caring adult and as a guide for children in the class, giving a good example children should benefit from and imitate and take as a role model later in their life, for example if they decide to engage in the teaching profession. Sadly, the kind of attitude shown by C is a piece of evidence going in the opposite direction to the desired one, leaving in a child's mind a negative memory of a teacher figure, associated with unpleasant emotions such as fear, anxiety and maybe anger and resentment, however all emotions to stay away from and hopefully forget, whereas an effective and emotionally intelligent teacher should foster only pleasant and endurable emotions, so that learning can be associated with positive memories and joyful emotions for the child.

Evidently, if we are not to justify but to try to gather some possible reasons as to how C behaved in that manner from the existing literature on teacher beliefs about their role and about children (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010), C believes that her role as a teacher was to threaten and discipline learners through fear and an excessively authoritative and controlling behaviour, believing that adopting such an attitude meant to have the classroom under control and to foster good chances of learning.

C's behaviour when shouting at the child at his total incompetence in colouring then assumes the traits of an emotional blending of anger and contempt towards the pupil and, apart from the obvious need to avoid anger while teaching, contempt is pointed out to be the most destructive emotion in teaching and the most disruptive one in the relationship between pupil and teacher by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010), who argue that contempt is capable of seriously impairing the sense of self-worth and self-efficacy of the victim. Contempt is a clear evidence of a total lack of caring and respect on the teacher's part and has serious implications for the learning situation (*ibid.*).

Linking this episode to the literature on 'emotional intelligence', it is relevant here to keep in mind how also in this case 'deep acting' can become useful and precious as a means to deal with and regulate anger, so that it does not have a disruptive effect on learners, as in the aforementioned situation, but a constructive one, fostering a caring attitude towards the child, aligning the teacher's emotions to the deeply held values, as suggested by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (*ibid.*).

#### 4.1.2 “Surface Acting” vs “Deep Acting” in teaching: the effect of emotional displays upon both the novice teacher and the primary school pupils

Starting from the relevance of the opposite practices of ‘surface acting’ and ‘deep acting’ in teaching as a job, we have seen in the paragraph entitled *1.1.2 Emotion management: “Emotional Labour” vs “Emotion Work”* (see p.15) how these opposite practices can be found in employees who decide to fake their emotions (‘surface acting’) or to align their inner emotions with the ones they intend and are paid to display to customers (‘deep acting’), as reminds us Oplatka quoting Hochschild and Groth et al. (Hochschild 1990; Groth et al. 2006 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009). These opposite concepts have been embodied during my internship experience by tutor A (‘deep acting’) and tutor B (‘surface acting’), and their effects on teaching and learning have been interesting and worth mentioning as factors confirming the findings of the existing research about their outcomes. The existing research on teacher emotions addresses repeated ‘surface acting’ which lacks an inner alignment of the emotions teachers express facially as one of the possible causes of ‘teacher burnout’ and quitting their job (Schutz and Zembylas 2009).

Let us focus now on my internship experience and how tutor A and B deal with emotion management<sup>49</sup> that, in some cases, if not taken care of, can lead to ‘teacher burnout’ and teachers quitting jobs (ibid.).

Tutor A, the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade English teacher, showed a very good competence in emotion management and she always seemed to be very happy, confident in herself and friendly and caring with children, and they seemed to reflect and give back to her the same positive emotions she delivered enriched by the innocence and enthusiasm typical of children. She did not bring her negative emotions or problems into the classroom, and even when there were problems with other teachers or with the administration of the school she kept her issues separate from her job, and did not allow her negative emotions to affect her classroom teaching and her care for pupils.

Therefore she showed ‘deep acting’ during her teaching. It was evident she powerfully felt all the emotions that she inspired to children and spread throughout her classroom, and how she believed and expected only the best from her pupils, and first and foremost she wanted them to know she cared for them and her behaviour showed her belief that the learning environment had to be built by positive emotions and by a constant encouragement on the teacher’s part.

Tutor B, the English teacher for all other grades except the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, on the other hand, practiced only ‘surface acting’, she was not an expert emotion manager and this was evident from most of her

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<sup>49</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘emotion management’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) and by Schutz and Zembylas (2009).

lessons, where she appeared bored and impatient during the whole lesson, frustrated by school administration and troubles with other colleagues, and she was not able to separate her anger and frustration from her teaching method and most of the times she could barely control her ‘surface acting’ and her façade of happiness changed quickly into indifference, boredom, frustration and irritation projected also outside toward pupils, and the effect was that children felt at times intimidated by the angry outbursts of the teacher, or else they reflected an indifferent and passive participation and engagement in the lesson, and did not show any sign of enthusiasm, motivation or eagerness in learning the subject. When compared to their 3<sup>rd</sup> grade peers, the learners of the other grades did not cheer up and jump while realizing it was ‘English time!’, whereas this was the cry of joy and eagerness shouted by 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, and this cry always managed to steal a big smile from tutor A.

As regards me and my own management of emotions while teaching reading activities to children, at the start I was very anxious, struggled just to keep a minimal ‘surface acting’ showing a friendly and gentle expression due to my high levels of ‘oral communication anxiety’, ‘stage fright’<sup>50</sup> and ‘Foreign Language Anxiety’<sup>51</sup> that seemed to overwhelm me and outnumber my positive emotions and to threaten my emotional balance, but with time I learnt how to overcome all this.

I learnt that overthinking what and how I was going to read was impairing my concentration and so I decided to try to align my inner emotions, the feelings I wanted to feel, with my facial expressions and emotions I delivered to the world outside, and I discovered it actually helped my well-being, and improved my skills as a novice teacher and as a helper of pupils.

Having more time to think and reflect when I was asked questions, I could deliver my answers with a calmer attitude, pupils were more able to understand me and learned better, and I on my part had lower anxiety levels and felt more confident and effective as a novice teacher. After a few lessons I was able to control my ‘deep acting’ quite well and I preferred it to ‘surface acting’ because the latter meant I just assumed facial expressions to comply with what I wanted to deliver to the people around me but without actually feeling them myself, whereas ‘deep acting’, aligning my inner emotions with my facial expressions, allowed me to feel the calm and enthusiasm I wanted to spread among the children. Moreover they seemed more eager and glad about my activities when I was engaged in ‘deep acting’, maybe because they felt I was calmer and less anxious.

All this leads to the conclusion that emotion management on the teachers’ part can affect negatively pupils and the learning process if not cared for, especially if it means having teachers bringing their negative emotions and problems in the classroom and not making an effort to leave

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<sup>50</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘stage fright’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

<sup>51</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘Foreign Language Anxiety’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

them aside while engaging with children; moreover this attitude affects negatively also pupils' emotions such as motivation, engagement in the lesson and enthusiasm, steered towards indifference, boredom, demotivation and a passive participation. The two English teachers are an example of how emotion management can affect children, either positively or negatively, and this is another example of how teacher emotions and emotional displays count and are important in the learning environment.

#### 4.1.3 “Emotional Intelligence” and “Emotional Contagion” between teachers, novice teachers and learners

The two previous paragraphs lead us to reaffirm what the qualities of an effective and emotionally intelligent teacher are, so that similar episodes as the one involving C can be avoided and prevented through an improved widespread awareness of what it means to be an emotionally intelligent teacher, with increased well-being directed both outwards and inwards, that is, both towards learners and towards the well-being of the teachers themselves.

Here are briefly listed Goleman's (1995 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010) five elements required to be emotionally intelligent teachers:

- a) ‘Self-awareness<sup>52</sup>’;
- b) ‘Self-regulation<sup>53</sup>’;
- c) Motivation;
- d) ‘Social awareness<sup>54</sup>’;
- e) ‘Relationship management<sup>55</sup>’.

What interests our discussion related at the moment to the loss of self-control on the teacher's part is ‘self-regulation<sup>56</sup>’, in as much as there has to be a widespread awareness both among mentors and

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<sup>52</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘self-awareness’ has been amply dealt with by Goleman (1995) cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>53</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘self-regulation’ has been amply dealt with by Goleman (1995) cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>54</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘social awareness’ has been amply dealt with by Goleman (1995) cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>55</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘relationship management’ has been amply dealt with by Goleman (1995) cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>56</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘self-regulation’ has been amply dealt with by Goleman (1995) cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

teachers that it is of primary importance to be aware and recognize one's own emotions and to create and to regulate emotions before responding to the stimulus they provoke (Covey 2004 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010), otherwise anger outbursts and the risk of damaging children's self-image and sense of self-worth dramatically increase, along with the teachers' sense of 'burnout' and 'emotional draining'.

Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) argue how 'self-regulation' is of vital importance also because it allows people to 'delay gratification' (ibid., p.76) and to anticipate and block emotional outbursts: self-regulated teachers also are effective ones in their teaching methodology and classroom management because they attribute their responsibility for success or failure to themselves, that is, they have an internal locus for responsibility and they are motivated by deeply held values.

Research in 'emotional intelligence' (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.16) also argues how emotionally intelligent teachers know how to deal with stress and negative emotions better than their non-emotionally intelligent colleagues, less capable in regulating and anticipating their own emotions and emotional responses, therefore emotionally intelligent teachers know better how to jostle and solve potentially complex situations.

A good example of emotionally intelligent teacher, as opposed to examples of teachers such as C, is tutor A. She possesses all the qualities required to be emotionally intelligent (Goleman 1995 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010): she is always willing to establish significant and long-lasting relationships with pupils, parents and colleagues and she is able to detect and have a mindsight of the emotions of others ('social awareness'); she is aware of her emotions and checks them before reacting in negative ways to children ('self-regulation' and 'self-management'<sup>57</sup>); she is herself her own fuel of motivation that then she spreads in the classroom and knows always how to motivate both learners and her own colleagues for festivities and concerts for example (motivation); she manages interactions well and knows how to consider mistakes in a way that is effective for the child to learn from them and not to see them as judgments of the child as an individual but as opportunities to learn and improve ('relationship management').

Moreover she has a good degree of 'self-knowledge'<sup>58</sup> as she recognizes her strengths and weaknesses.

I was able to detect and spot each one of the aforementioned skills during my observation hours and I was glad to join tutor A for reading activities when it was my turn to help her, because I admired her very much and she embodied my role model of effective teacher.

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<sup>57</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'self-management' has been amply dealt with by Goleman (1995) cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>58</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'self-knowledge' has been amply dealt with by Goleman (1995) cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

Tutor A had also another quality associated by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) to an evidence of ‘emotional intelligence’, and this is the use of humor during her lessons, that is thought to be effective in functioning as psychological protection against stress by Titze (cited in Ayan 2009 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010) and considered to be capable of fostering a serene learning environment that makes it easier for teachers to deal with the cognitive challenges.

Another factor that motivates me to be like tutor A in the future is how she succeeded in infecting children with her positive emotions, such as enthusiasm, optimism, love for learning and trying original ideas in the class, willingness to challenge oneself in a new quiz or new activity, and her pupils seem never to be bored or to find her lessons dull or boring, which is a very special goal nowadays, in a time when, as Schutz and Zembylas (2009) remind us, it is of primary relevance for teachers to find new ways to address the interests of learners, that due to the development of new technologies tend to see the learning situation as something slow-timed and outdated.

Research in empathy shows how there is a negative link between the ability to feel empathy towards others and occupying a position of leadership and authority, as suggested by Hatfield (1993 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010). Consequently teachers who feel their role as authoritative and establish relationships based on power and leadership are prone to feel less empathy than individuals who do not see power and control as major elements of the learning environment.

Research in teacher emotions (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010) shows how emotions can be as infectious as viruses and how positions of power can be relevant as regards ‘emotional contagion’: this is because “emotions flow from the dominant to the less influential [individual]” (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.139), that is, from teachers (who are more influential) to pupils, but also the reverse is possible, to the extent in which teachers can be affected also by learners’ emotions, but the scope of this depends from individual to individual. The veracity of this can be checked just by thinking how political leaders have an emotional influence over crowds, as Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) remind us.

The two researchers also stress how two individuals experience ‘emotional contagion’ every time they are relating well, and this happens automatically at a subconscious level, and this phenomenon is called by psychologists ‘synchrony’ (ibid., p.139), as if the emotions of the two speakers are synchronized, on the same wavelength (ibid.). Research (ibid.) has found also that especially people working in the ‘caring’ professions (such as medicine, social work and teaching) are more likely to be affected by both ‘emotional contagion’ and ‘synchrony’, since part of their job is to have a psychological investment in the well-being of their patients, be they sick people or students.

Finally, as Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) argue, research shows how every teacher can become emotionally intelligent taking a few steps in the right direction and becoming aware of their own

emotions, and how this can lead to an increased sense of personal well-being and an enhancement of the general welfare and positive emotions of the people around him or her (ibid.).

It has been noted how it is important for teachers to be aware of their own emotions, especially the negative ones, capable of impairing the learning situation, and to anticipate them so as to be able to check their reaction and be self-regulated individuals.

Research in teacher emotions (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010; Merç 2011) showed how some solutions adopted by novice and experienced teachers are either ‘suppression<sup>59</sup>’ (deny emotions) or ‘repression<sup>60</sup>’ (deliberately ignore emotions) of negative emotions, and it has been stressed how such attitudes are only detrimental for both the teachers’ well-being and the impact on learners.

A possible solution to this, cited already in the paragraph entitled *1.2.2 The self-regulated teacher* (see p.32), is ‘cognitive reframing<sup>61</sup>’, a practice that allows all individuals, not only teachers, to think back about a past episode during which they were overwhelmed by emotions to clearly judge the event at the time it happened, and this makes them analyze and focus on the reasons why they experienced those emotions and how they could have anticipated them and stopped themselves from reacting in a negative way for example, or becoming too upset when they could have been stronger. ‘Cognitive reframing’ is very beneficial since it fosters welfare to the extent to which it allows individuals to create a distance between themselves and the experienced episode and to reframe it in a positive light, and to learn from their mistakes or rushed emotions, and to anticipate better one’s own emotional reactions if a similar episode represents itself in the future.

This practice is shown to be effective by research in teacher emotions (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010) and a more widespread awareness of it is needed among teachers, especially novice teachers, more prone to feeling themselves overwhelmed by emotions, at least in the first period of their job (Merç 2011; Young in Klee 1994).

A concept similar to that of ‘cognitive reframing’ and with its same function is the ‘balcony view<sup>62</sup>’, another term used to define the emotional detachment experienced while meditating about a past episode that caused emotional issues to an individual, so that he or she can reach the ‘balcony view’, away from any disruptive emotion, in a position of emotional neutrality that fosters an

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<sup>59</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘suppression’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>60</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘repression’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>61</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘cognitive reframing’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>62</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘balcony view’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

objective judgment free from the influence of emotions and offers a new and different perspective on a situation that previously was seen only as negative and to be suppressed.

My personal experience during the internship taught me how ‘cognitive reframing’ can be a precious technique for me to gain back a positive emotional balance, after some episode that threatened to disrupt my well-being due to high levels of anxiety such as ‘oral communication anxiety’ and ‘stage fright’, for example, or due to the unexpected question or reaction of a pupil while I am explaining a reading activity. I discovered this cognitive practice from the literature on teacher emotions (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010) and since I suffer from several anxieties, especially while performing in front of people, I decided to try to adopt it as a means to lowering my anxiety levels and reframe past situations when I was anxious as positive situations and opportunities to learn from either my mistakes or from my emotional reactions, such as being overwhelmed by anxiety, and I learnt to be calmer, anticipate my anxiety and not let it override my positive emotions.

Once I started practicing ‘cognitive reframing’ it was easier for me to be aware of my own emotions and to establish a distance between the stimulus caused by anxiety and my response, so that I did not let anxiety impair my concentration or ability to respond to the pupils’ needs, but I was calmer, had lower anxiety levels and was more serene while reflecting, retrieving facilitating strategies for children’s learning or simply planning an activity for them.

Later during my internship, when I asked to tutor A whether there was something she was willing to share with me about teacher emotions after I informed her that would be the topic of my dissertation, she told me about how she used to practice ‘cognitive reframing’ as well in order to evaluate at home with more calmness and serenity episodes that were liable to impair her emotional balance, and how it was in this manner that she succeeded in the past years to learn several things about her own emotions and about the emotions of her pupils as well, and how she learnt to anticipate both her own emotional reactions that could have impaired the pupils’ learning and their emotions, and succeeded in being more caring and careful about how to engage each one of them, each with different emotions and personalities.

This sharing from tutor A was very enlightening and useful for me, because I felt it was very significant to know she adopted ‘cognitive reframing’ like me, and that it was a very successful technique just as research pointed out, and I eagerly noted it down on my notebook, and was eager to share it in my paper, as one of the techniques adopted by this teacher to reframe and learn from her emotions, both from positive and negative ones, because it has been seen that to deliberately ignore (‘repression’) or deny (‘suppression’) the presence of negative emotions does not lead anywhere, and for sure it is not a step in the direction towards ‘emotional intelligence’ and effectiveness as successful language teachers, willing to increase their own welfare and the one of the people around them.

#### 4.1.4 The dominant emotions of a novice English teacher while organizing and performing reading activities for primary school learners

During my internship I experienced both positive and negative emotions, in various degrees and with different intensity depending on the context in which they were experienced. In the first phase of my internship negative emotions associated with ‘oral communication anxiety’<sup>63</sup>, ‘stage fright’ and ‘Foreign Language Anxiety’ were dominant and outnumbered the positive ones, also because my low self-esteem made me feel even more nervous and insecure in my abilities as a teacher, being this my very first experience as assistant teacher. I experienced these emotions while performing reading activities, while dealing with the unpredictability of the improvisation stressor in my interactions with learners and while managing my ‘stage fright’ talking in front of the class.

In a second moment I learnt how to manage better my emotions, find and keep my emotional balance, that kept my anxiety levels at a low and reasonable level, and to check and anticipate my emotions so that I would be aware of my anxiety before it overwhelmed me and, for example, made my mind freeze when I could not find immediately the answer for the pupils. While being more self-regulated I was able to think calmly of an answer and to respond to the child in a calm and serene attitude, and this helped both the learners and me.

As regards planning reading activities, my anxiety sprang from my ‘fear of failure’<sup>64</sup> and ‘fear of negative evaluation’<sup>65</sup>, both dependent on my low self-esteem, but after my success on my very first reading activity the following ones were planned and constructed with a more serene emotional balance and less anxiety, because I was starting to build my past history of successful activities prepared for tutor A, and this reassured me about my abilities as a novice teacher and as a good learner in the tutor’s hands. Also the counselling of tutor A while planning my activities was very precious and her optimism gave me new confidence in myself and in my potentiality when I needed it most. The children’s positive emotions in the classroom and the cheerful attitude of tutor A were very contagious and helped me fight and defeat negative emotions when I was having a bad day or was unsure about myself, so also their help was very precious.

My internship experience as a novice teacher also gave me the opportunity to confirm how emotion and cognition are not separated elements in the teaching profession, but they continuously

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<sup>63</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘oral communication anxiety’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

<sup>64</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘fear of failure’ has been amply dealt with by Gordon and Sarason (1955); Sarason (1980) cited in Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) and by Ipek (2007) cited in Merç (2011).

<sup>65</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘fear of negative evaluation’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

influence and shape each other and are on the same level of teacher activity, as stated by Golombek and Doran (2014). I also experienced first-hand how some situations I found myself in during my activities were for me growth opportunities that with the help of the tutor I was able to learn from and widen my knowledge about my teaching methodology as a novice teacher, sharing with experienced teachers my doubts and curiosities about their profession, just as pointed out by Golombek and Doran (ibid.). I also noticed how some episodes from my internship, such as children responding well to an activity or showing enthusiasm and wanting me to read them again the same book, were for me episodes in which I was able to experience ‘cognitive congruence<sup>66</sup>’, a concept described by Golombek and Doran (ibid.) as a direct link between ideal and real, that is, between how a novice teacher figures and imagines her activity to be ideally, and how it is in reality, and when the two imagined episodes have a high percentage of matching, they foster in the teacher positive emotions, whereas when this does not happen, negative emotions are likely to arise (ibid.).

Moreover, similarly to what the novice teacher cited in Golombek and Doran’s study (2014) does, in the very first phase of my internship I showed as well due to my personality a tendency towards perfectionism, I set for myself very high and unrealistic self-standards to reach in a short time, and I needed the approval and I wanted to be liked by pupils due to my insecurities about my abilities and my low self-esteem, and these are factors that novice teachers are likely to have to deal with at the start of their teaching career, as argued by the two researchers (ibid.).

Finally Golombek and Doran (ibid.) state how novice teachers are liable to experience frictions between the ideal selves they imagine themselves to be and how their attitude is received by pupils, or between how they imagine their methodology to be and how their activities actually affect learners, and this is why novice teachers, due to their vulnerable position, need to engage in practices of ‘self-regulation’ of emotions and check their emotional responses in order not to be overwhelmed by emotions and to avoid ‘teacher burnout<sup>67</sup>’ and ‘emotional draining’.

#### 4.1.5 Suggestions for future research in teacher emotions

Gathering the suggestions for a future agenda in teacher emotion research based on my findings during my internship experience, the topics that need deeper investigation and about which the researcher herself had trouble in gathering enough data are:

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<sup>66</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘cognitive congruence’ has been amply dealt with by Peirce (1998) cited in Golombek and Doran (2014).

<sup>67</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘teacher burnout’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) and by Schutz and Zembylas (2009).

- a) The effect of emotional displays ('surface acting' vs 'deep acting') upon teachers themselves and upon pupils and which are pupils' emotional responses to teachers' emotional displays;
- b) Novice teacher emotions, with a focus on how being a novice teacher means being midway between being a learner and a teacher with the emotional tensions regarding both teachers and learners, and more investigation is needed about the link between 'Foreign Language Anxiety' and 'Foreign Language Student Teaching Anxiety'<sup>68</sup>;
- c) More research is needed in 'emotional intelligence', how it can be achieved and what characterizes it, and how both teachers and learners can benefit from it;
- d) Advantages of 'deep acting'<sup>69</sup> as opposed to 'surface acting'<sup>70</sup> in teaching.

Now I would like to summarize instead the topics about which more awareness must be spread among novice teachers, experienced teachers and mentors, and all the people involved in all levels of education and teacher education in schools:

- a) More awareness is needed on the central and vital role of emotions in teaching, and their potential to enhance or impair the learning situation and the pupils' emotions, and how there is the possibility that the attitude of teachers with the belief that learning involves threats, sternness and screaming on the teachers' part causes teachers to deviate from the path of caring;
- b) More awareness and maybe also more thorough research and investigation is needed upon 'emotional contagion'<sup>71</sup>, how it works and how it is effective in enhancing learning when it

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<sup>68</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'Foreign Language Student Teaching Anxiety' has been amply dealt with by Merç (2011).

<sup>69</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'deep acting' has been amply dealt with by Hochschild (1990); Groth et al. (2006) cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas (2009) and by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>70</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'surface acting' has been amply dealt with by Hochschild (1990); Groth et al. (2006) cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas (2009) and by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>71</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'emotional contagion' has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

fosters positive emotions and motivation in pupils, whereas it can damage and impair the pupils' sense of efficacy and self-confidence when it is ruled by negative emotions and by a teacher with the belief that teachers must be drill surgeons, so that fear and punishment are the main emotions quietly taking control of the learning environment;

- c) Teachers should have a good knowledge of how 'cognitive reframing' can help them cope with negative emotions and reframing episodes containing unpleasant emotions into opportunities to revise their behaviour and improve it by establishing a distance between the 'spark' (impulse to react driven by a certain emotion) and the 'flame' (their emotional response to it, that is, giving in to the impulse), as stated by Ekman (Dalai Lama and Ekman 2008 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010) and also by distancing themselves from the negative feelings experienced during the specific episode.

#### **4.2 How anxiety affects language teaching and implications for the teaching situation**

The internship was useful to me also to focus on how teacher anxiety affects teaching, and consequently the learning environment. In particular I focused on my personal emotions as a novice English teacher working as assistant teacher to two experienced English teachers in a primary school. The situation of the novice teacher is complex and twofold regarding the teacher's emotional landscape, because novice teachers are midway between the role of learner, still learning about teaching methodologies and approaches, and the role of independent teacher, that has to let go of the learner guided role to enter the teaching job and find his or her own space and autonomy, without any guidance or mentor, and this is what teacher training is supposed to prepare novice teachers to. However, as literature upon teacher training and education (Schutz and Zembylas 2009; Merç 2011) has found, there are several imperfections inside mentoring that risk impairing the novice teacher's self-esteem and sense of autonomy and his or her expectations regarding his or her future role in the classroom.

The following paragraphs will address the focus questions of my paper related with teacher and novice teacher anxiety and then a paragraph will be devoted to suggestions for future research in teacher and novice teacher anxiety and anxiety-reducing strategies.

The focus questions of my paper that the following paragraphs will deal with are:

- a) What are the sources of anxiety for novice teachers finding themselves midway between learning and teaching?

- b) What is the link between the ‘Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale<sup>72</sup>’ (FLCAS), the ‘Foreign Language Student Teaching Anxiety Scale<sup>73</sup>’ (FLSTAS) and the ‘Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Scale<sup>74</sup>’ (FLTAS)?
- c) What are some possible anxiety-reducing strategies in teaching for novice teachers?

#### 4.2.1 Novice teacher as midway between learning and teaching: sources of anxiety

Regarding novice teacher emotions Meyer (in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) argues that the future career of teachers is marked by the very first emotional experiences and memories that happen during teacher training and the researcher stresses the need for more research upon novice teacher emotions and experiences during teacher education, because of the central role of emotions for both teachers and learners (*ibid.*).

What novice teachers are expected to do during their education program is twofold and it has to do with theory on the one hand and practice on the other, and this is exactly what happens with emotional practices, as Denzin (1984 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) reminds us, arguing that emotional practices derive from interactions between people, formed by a blending of interpretation, thought (theory) and applications of those ideas formed in the mind (practice).

It has to be kept in mind that during teacher education also teacher identity is liable to be affected by the teacher’s decision to include or not her own emotions in her teaching practice, as pointed out by Swanson (1989 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009). In particular the researcher believes that interactions with students and mentors have an impact upon teachers because they represent the first emotional response to relationships that embody a blending of school culture and teaching experience.

Nowadays, however, the emotional aspects of teacher training are neglected and the methodological aspect of teaching is favoured, according to Meyer (in Schutz and Zembylas 2009), who stresses how this impairs the preparation of teachers because it causes an imbalance between the two spheres of teaching, emotion and cognition, and the lack of emotional expertise results in novice teachers with a limited awareness and competence in emotion management<sup>75</sup> and ‘emotional

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<sup>72</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale’ (FLCAS) has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

<sup>73</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘Foreign Language Student Teaching Anxiety Scale’ (FLSTAS) has been amply dealt with by El-Okda and Al-Humaidi (2003) cited in Merç (2011).

<sup>74</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Scale’ has been amply dealt with by Ipek (2007) cited in Merç (2011).

<sup>75</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘emotion management’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) and by Schutz and Zembylas (2009).

intelligence<sup>76</sup>. Therefore, Meyer (ibid.) argues how when trying to reformulate their identities in order to respond in the best way that fits their job, teachers are led by their training to focus more on the pedagogical and methodological aspects of teaching and less on the emotional practices.

This can result in attitudes and behaviours that can lead to practices that might impair the learning situation, learners' emotions and the teachers' emotional balance itself, leading to 'burnout' and 'emotional draining'.

An aspect of teacher education that is linked to FLCA (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986) and that embodies the condition of novice teachers as learners during this period is the scrutiny and examination they undergo while being observed and evaluated by mentors during their experience and teaching practice, and this can lead to anxiety and nervousness that are defined by Meyer (in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) as clashes of positive and negative emotions repeating themselves and revolving around the same situation that provokes mixed feelings in the novice teacher.

The relationships with mentors and students are the spark that fosters these three emotional tensions during teacher education found by Meyer (ibid.):

- a) The struggle to find autonomy in the relationship with mentors;
- b) The need on the one hand to distance themselves from the teaching method of the mentor to affirm their own idea of teaching methodology and achieve a personal sense of fulfilment, but on the other hand they want to reflect the competence and experience of their mentors;
- c) Establishing significant and long-lasting relationships with students fosters pairs of conflicting emotions (such as joy vs pain) that can impair the emotional balance of novice teachers.

Another emotional link between learners and novice teachers is Krashen's 'affective filter' (Krashen 1982 cited in Pennington 1996, p.337), one of his hypotheses about second language acquisition, stating how some affective factors might foster language acquisition and these are: self-confidence, motivation and anxiety. According to Krashen's theory (1982 cited in Pennington 1996) learners presenting high doses of self-confidence, motivation and low levels of anxiety are likely to be favoured in language acquisition if compared to their peers with high levels of debilitating anxiety, a low self-esteem and low motivation levels, all elements that foster the raising of an 'affective filter' that prevents the learner from experiencing acquisition. This happens because the 'affective filter'

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<sup>76</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'emotional intelligence' has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

creates a mental block that keeps out the comprehensible input needed to transform the input into acquisition, and so the learner cannot experience progress in learning.

Well aware that the term was created and designed for learners and language acquisition, I find it useful to quote it in my paper because it serves to explain a ‘cognitive-affective filter’<sup>77</sup> experienced by me as a novice teacher during my internship and fostered by the same affective variables described by Krashen (1982 cited in Pennington 1996) that are: self-confidence, anxiety and motivation.

In order to explain better what I mean by ‘cognitive-affective filter’ I will provide an example of what I experienced during my internship and how this filter impaired my cognition.

Why do I quote the term ‘cognitive-affective filter’ instead of reprising simply the concept of the ‘affective filter’, since I relate my experience to Krashen’s term?

I decided to use Pennington’s term (1996) partly to mirror her idea that ‘the emphasis on the filter has to be put not only on affect but also on cognition, since “in the brain, affect and cognition are distinguishable but inseparable”’ (Schumann 1994 cited in Pennington 1996, p.340) and partly because my very experience of this ‘affective filter’ impaired and affected my cognition in the extent in which, as I am going to explain in the following lines, the high levels of anxiety caused by the raise of the filter affected my memory and my ability of retrieving known information from my brain.

This happened because at times when a child asked something unexpected or I found out my teaching strategies were not being effective and I had to switch them in real time I found it difficult to keep in check my anxiety that caused me mental blocks and caused my mind to ‘freeze’ temporarily and I did not know what to say or do for some minutes, and here the help of the tutors was very precious.

I used to feel the increase of this ‘cognitive-affective filter’ when I experienced high levels of debilitating anxiety that caused a steady lowering of my self-image and self-esteem, already quite low as a general rule, and a decrease of my motivational levels. For example when I had to deal with unexpected questions or statements by the pupils, or to change my facilitating strategies because they did not prove to be effective with learners, at times I experienced a sort of mental block, that is, my mind froze and I did not know what to do or say even if I knew the information I needed was in my mind and I just had to look more carefully for what I needed. The help of the tutors to help me out of these situations was significant, especially the help of tutor A, who understood my difficulties during these times and offered new strategies or answered the pupils’ questions herself, and this relieved me from my block and after I went home I realized how I knew the answers I needed all along. I simply had to give myself more time to think about how to answer and find a way to lowering my debilitating anxiety levels, easy to manifest themselves while I talk and communicate, especially in front of a

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<sup>77</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘cognitive-affective filter’ has been amply dealt with by Pennington (1996).

classroom, because of my ‘stage fright’<sup>78</sup>, ‘social anxiety’<sup>79</sup> and ‘oral communication anxiety’ (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986, p.127), alongside with the fear of not living up to my tutors’ expectations.

So the kind of outcome of this ‘cognitive-affective filter’ in my specific case regards mostly output, not input; this filter blocks me from properly delivering the output that hopefully learners will transform into long-lasting acquisition. What I experience is a mental block preventing me from scanning my mind to search for useful information to share and deliver to pupils, and it is the same anxiety I experience during an oral test or examination, when I know the answer but I am too anxious to extract it from my memory because my mind goes blank and I cannot utter a single word all of a sudden, and this is a clear example of Krashen’s ‘affective filter’ (1982 cited in Pennington 1996); because then as soon as I leave the classroom I realize I knew the answer to the oral exam all the time, because it comes to my mind as soon as I relax and feel calmer.

Turning now to the ‘cognitive-affective filter’ in novice teachers, this can have serious implications for the teaching profession and consequently for the learning environment if not taken care of, and more research is needed to investigate its causes and to create some anxiety-coping strategies to lower the high anxiety levels experienced by those who suffer from it. Young’s (in Klee 1994) strategies are a good example of how to deal with anxiety, but more situated ones are needed through maybe the sharing of single case studies that might create a vaster scope of anxiety triggers that will in their turn stimulate the creation of specific anxiety-coping strategies to adapt for one’s own use according to what the specific teaching environment or individual requires.

#### 4.2.2 The link between the “Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale” (FLCAS), the “Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Scale” (FLTAS) and the “Foreign Language Student Teaching Anxiety Scale” (FLSTAS)

The internship experience gave also me the chance to explore my anxieties, especially the communicative ones, and work upon them during my 150-hour stay in the primary school and see whether my anxiety-coping strategies, extracted from the literature on teacher and student teacher anxiety (Young in Klee 1994; Merç 2011), were effective or not.

Also research on learner anxiety (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986; Young in Klee 1994) has been investigated, because some traits in common between teacher and student anxiety were established,

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<sup>78</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘stage fright’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

<sup>79</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘social anxiety’ has been amply dealt with by Young in Klee (1994).

because they were mirrored by the novice teacher's feelings and sensations during the reading activities created for children.

My personal anxieties during this internship were the following ones, retrieved from the literature on teacher and student teacher anxiety:

- a) 'Oral communication anxiety': difficulty in speaking in dyads and/or groups, and this is one possible manifestation of 'communication apprehension'<sup>80</sup>;
- b) Another branch of 'communication apprehension' that I experienced during my reading activities with children was 'stage fright', that is the fear of talking in public in front of an audience;
- c) Student teacher anxiety sources found in research on teaching anxiety I felt during my internship include:
  - Helplessness when answering unexpected questions (Merç 2011);
  - Performing communicative tasks, being observed by mentors (in my case tutors), 'fear of negative evaluation'<sup>81</sup> and lack of teaching experience (Kim and Kim cited by Merç 2011);
  - Unpredictability of the improvisation stressor (Merç 2011);
  - Fear of making mistakes, 'fear of failure' (Gordon and Sarason 1955; Sarason 1980 cited in Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986; Ipek 2007 cited in Merç 2011);
  - Perfectionism as a personality feature (Merç 2011);
  - Low self-esteem, self-perceived low ability levels and 'social anxiety';
  - Speaking in English while reading or explaining an activity, especially while stressing the pronunciation of words and adjusting my speed while reading (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986);

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<sup>80</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'communication apprehension' has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

<sup>81</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'fear of negative evaluation' has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

- Tendency when planning an activity to over rehearse orally the reading task to be sure to read it well during the lesson because of ‘stage fright’ and perfectionism that makes me believe anything less than a perfect performance is a failure (ibid.).

It can be noted how my anxiety sources can be divided in three main categories:

- a) Some are general fears or performance anxieties depending on the personality of a person (‘oral communication anxiety’, ‘stage fright’, ‘fear of negative evaluation’, fear of making mistakes and ‘fear of failure’);
- b) Others are more or less specific to the job of a novice teacher (helplessness when confronted with unexpected questions, unpredictability of the improvisation stressor and lack of teaching experience);
- c) Finally there are some anxiety sources that present themselves as a continuation of a status of learner experienced by the pre-service teacher as a number of lingering fears with points in common with FLCA (communicative tasks, being observed by mentors, low self-esteem and self-perceived low ability levels and over rehearsing).

Therefore it can be seen how there is a blending of anxieties experienced by the novice teacher both as a teacher and as a learner, finding one’s place as a teacher and starting to move away from the status of learner, dependent upon others for the confirmation of one’s own performance and outcomes.

An interesting tool developed to measure student teachers anxiety is the ‘Foreign Language Student Teaching Anxiety Scale’ created by El-Okda and Al-Humaidi (2003 cited in Merç 2011), based upon different interactions of teachers thought to be liable to trigger anxiety in novice teachers:

- a) Interactions with mentors (5 items);
- b) Interactions with other language teachers (5 items);
- c) Interactions with students (8 items);
- d) Classroom management (6 items);

- e) Correcting written homework and planning classroom activities for students (5 items).

Re-elaborated from El-Okda and Al-Humaidi (2003) cited in Merç (2011).

Personally I recognize myself as having anxiety while planning my activities and interacting with tutor A and B and with children during my internship, and the findings of the study confirm that there was a moderate anxiety level in the pre-service teachers involved in the study (ibid.).

The researchers therefore believe that something must be done to lessen this anxiety and Horwitz (1996 cited in Merç 2011) suggests that anxiety-reducing strategies need to be a responsibility of both the student teachers and their mentors.

A study aimed at finding links between FLCA and FLSTA was done by Yuksel (2008 cited in Merç 2011), as has been pointed out in the paragraph entitled *1.3.2 Sources of “Foreign Language Student Teacher Anxiety”* (see p.38), and the parallel between FLCA and FLSTA is done because it is stressed how the novice teacher undergoing close examinations and inspections during the teacher training phase is likely to experience the same tensions students feel while dealing with a test.

These anxieties can be related to the same ‘fear of failure’, ‘fear of negative evaluation’ and fear of losing their face in front of mentors shown by learners when having to perform and speak in a foreign language in front of peers in Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope’s study (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986), and this has been confirmed by my personal fears and anxieties as a novice teacher during my internship. Eventually Yuksel (2008 cited in Merç 2011) found that the elements of the teacher practicum (mentors, peers and students) were anxiety triggers for the Turkish pre-service language teachers involved in the study.

Another study that ended up with the creation of a tool to assess anxiety levels in teachers was done by Ipek (2007 cited in Merç 2011) to investigate the anxiety level of Turkish EFL teachers. The data collected through diaries and semi-structured interviews from participants were collected in six categories that triggered anxiety: teaching students at specific language levels, making mistakes, teaching a specific language topic, using the foreign language, ‘fear of failure’ and being compared to fellow teachers. The qualitative data were then developed into a scale to measure ‘Foreign language teaching anxiety<sup>82</sup>’, called ‘Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Scale’ (FLTAS).

Some anxiety sources reported by Merç (2011) are physical fatigue, sleepiness and a perfectionist personality, causing teachers to feel that only a perfect performance is acceptable. I share

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<sup>82</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘Foreign language teaching anxiety’ has been amply dealt with by Merç (2011).

this feeling of perfectionism because I am a perfectionist person and also because I suffer from ‘fear of failure’<sup>83</sup>, that makes me over study overnight until I am exhausted the days before an exam for example, because I have an irrational fear that this is the only way to try to get full marks, and I tend to believe that anything less than full marks is not an acceptable result. This evolved during the internship, as written in the list of my anxieties, in an over rehearsal of reading and performing orally the task at home before presenting it to the class, due to my ‘stage fright’ and ‘oral communication anxiety’.

Another source of anxiety for pre-service teachers identified by Merç (2011) is the feeling of helplessness experienced by student teachers when confronted with unexpected answers or questions by learners, and this is another anxiety I share with these novice teachers, and it was among the factors that made me most nervous, because of the unpredictability of the improvisation stressor (*ibid.*), and because I felt I had no power or control over the situation, in the sense that there was no way to predict the learners’ doubts or questions and so I could not plan in advance my response, and the idea of having to answer immediately and without any preparation made me easily anxious.

#### 4.2.3 Anxiety-reducing strategies in teaching for novice teachers

The anxiety-reducing strategies I adopted to lower my anxiety levels belong partly to the literature upon teacher anxiety and partly on personal strategies I found to be effective during the internship and in general from my own experience, since I am in general an anxious person:

##### a) Personal strategies:

- Rehearse the subject of an exam orally, especially if it is an oral one (as a learner), or a planned activity (as a novice teacher) before having to present orally the communicative task in front of an audience;
- My past history of school success as regards my learner anxiety helps me regulate and lower my anxiety when I am experiencing high anxiety levels before an exam, because I feel reassured by my past positive experiences and so I realize my perfectionism and ‘fear of failure’ are irrational fears. The same cannot be said for my status as a novice teacher, since I do not possess any previous teaching

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<sup>83</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘fear of failure’ has been amply dealt with by Gordon and Sarason (1955); Sarason (1980) cited in Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) and by Ipek (2007) cited in Merç (2011).

experience to know whether I will be successful at it or not, so these fears are stronger but still my good English skills and my University career that informed me about teacher emotions and how lessons are to be done help me feel calmer.

b) Anxiety-coping strategies derived from literature and from the internship:

- Develop ‘deep acting’<sup>84</sup> in order to align one’s emotions with one’s deeply held values, as opposed to ‘surface acting’<sup>85</sup> where there is no alignment, and the emotions visible outside are not the ones truly felt by the individual, and so there is no well-being fostered nor an enhancement of one’s own emotional balance, and novice teachers tend to be very sensitive to the emotional aspect of teaching (Schutz and Zembylas 2009);
- ‘Cognitive reframing’<sup>86</sup> and the ‘balcony view’<sup>87</sup> are useful and effective anxiety-coping strategies for teachers who want to reframe past unpleasant emotional experiences into opportunities to enhance their emotion management detaching themselves from the negative emotions experienced during the chosen episode, becoming self-regulated teachers and fostering a serene affective climate in the classroom;
- ‘Emotional contagion’<sup>88</sup> can also be used to help oneself feel better and overcome negative emotions; in my case the optimism, enthusiasm and positive emotional display of tutor A helped me overcome some of my fears and anxieties related to my public speaking and low self-esteem, it made me have more self-confidence and I ended up mirroring her attitude and improving my well-being;

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<sup>84</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘deep acting’ has been amply dealt with by Hochschild (1990); Groth et al. (2006) cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas (2009) and by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>85</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘surface acting’ has been amply dealt with by Hochschild (1990); Groth et al. (2006) cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas (2009) and by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>86</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘cognitive reframing’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>87</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘balcony view’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>88</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘emotional contagion’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

- The pupils' enthusiasm and love for learning in the classrooms 3A and 3B taught by tutor A also gave me a lot of motivation and helped me overcome my anxiety many times, also because my reading activities with them were my very first test as a novice teacher and my success mirrored by tutor A's enthusiasm was evidence that I was doing my job well, and these positive experiences were the very first significant blocks of my teaching experience, relevant to me when I would be under a lot of stress and anxiety because looking back and questioning whether I had a past history of success or not as a teacher it is relevant when it comes to lessen novice teacher anxiety related to over-studying and over-rehearsing;
- 'Unmasking Success' (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.68) is a useful technique suggested by Powell and Kusuma Powell (2010) for teachers that helps them reframe a difficult student they have in their classroom, focusing on his or her potentials and not on his or her faults; then teachers are encouraged to devise the activities that could be planned ad hoc for this specific student and to think about what could motivate or interest the learner;
- See mistakes as spies and opportunities to improve teaching and not as something irreparable and a source of shame that threatens to lower one's own self-esteem as my perfectionism tends to make me believe.

After my internship experience I also had the confirmation of what Young (in Klee 1994) stresses in her research about teacher anxiety regarding the attitude of effective teachers who want to lessen potential anxiety present in the classroom, because this was the behaviour of tutor A during lessons, an attitude I did my best to mirror while teaching myself. Young (ibid.) divides her anxiety-coping strategies in three categories and the ones I detected during my internship are the following ones:

- a) Role-related beliefs about language teaching:
  - be a tutor and not a drill surgeon.
- b) Teacher-student interaction:
  - offer students positive feedback and focus on their successes and not on mistakes;

- consider mistakes spies to enhance learning and not faults;
- adopt a relaxed, patient and friendly behaviour:
- use some humor during lessons.

c) Classroom procedures:

- encourage pair and work groups during lessons and create activities fitting the learners' needs and interests.

I had the chance to see and verify how all these behavioural elements help children remain motivated and how they foster their enthusiasm and love for learning.

This is the attitude of tutor A and her classes proved to have the most brilliant and motivated pupils of the whole school, if compared to the classes of tutor B where learners were less motivated and as a general rule they felt bored and indifferent during lessons.

#### 4.2.4 Suggestions for future research in novice language teacher anxiety

Future research on novice language teacher anxiety should focus mainly on the following areas of interest:

- a) FLCA (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986) as related to novice language teacher anxiety;
- b) FLSTAS (El-Okda and Al-Humaidi 2003 cited in Merç 2011) and FLTAS (Ipek 2007 cited in Merç 2011);
- c) Performance anxieties related to the teaching profession ('communication apprehension' and 'fear of negative evaluation');
- d) Reducing-anxiety strategies to help both teacher and learners.

Moreover, more research is needed regarding the struggle for autonomy experienced by novice language teachers when evaluated and performing in front of mentors (Schutz and Zembylas 2009). More investigation is required as regards the 'cognitive-affective filter'<sup>89</sup> experienced by novice teachers as a mental block affecting cognitive skills and stressing some of their emotional difficulties, and finally it is hoped that other tools other than FLSTAS (El-Okda and Al-Humaidi 2003 cited in

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<sup>89</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of 'cognitive-affective filter' has been amply dealt with by Pennington (1996).

Merç 2011) and FLTAS (Ipek 2007 cited in Merç 2011) are created in order to measure and assess the anxiety levels and sources of teachers, both novice and experienced language teachers, so that a less stressful and more serene learning environment is created, that promotes the well-being of both teachers and learners.

Moving now onto anxiety-coping strategies, areas of research that should be questioned deeper are:

- a) ‘Cognitive reframing’ as an anxiety-reducing strategy promoting well-being and stimulating a positive reframing of past unpleasant emotional experiences;
- b) Create and plan similar activities to ‘Unmasking Success’ to help teachers solve issues they are experiencing in their everyday job with difficult, disruptive or demotivated students that risk of causing them ‘emotional draining<sup>90</sup>’ and ‘teacher burnout<sup>91</sup>’, if not taken care of;
- c) Stress the importance and potentiality of ‘emotional contagion’ to relieve anxiety in positive learning environments ruled by enthusiasm, optimism and care as it was the case in tutor A’s classrooms.

On the other hand more awareness is needed among teachers and teacher educators about the power and relevance upon pupils’ emotions of teachers’ attitudes in class, in the aspects reminded to us by Young (in Klee 1994) in her research:

- a) Role-related language teacher beliefs (tutor and helper vs drill surgeon);
- b) Student-teacher interaction (beliefs about mistakes; feedback; humor; emotional display);
- c) Classroom procedures (work and pair groups; motivating activities).

Finally, additional but not less relevant topics related to teacher training and teacher anxiety to be kept in mind and that hopefully research will investigate deeper in the future are:

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<sup>90</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘emotional draining’ has been amply dealt with by Schutz and Zembylas (2009).

<sup>91</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘teacher burnout’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) and by Schutz and Zembylas (2009).

- a) Broaden the scope of anxiety research so that more investigations are done about novice teacher anxiety, and so that the focus does not remain fixed only on learner anxiety, as suggested by Young (in Klee 1994), who stresses how the existing research on language anxiety focuses on the learner, neglecting teacher anxiety;
- b) Foster and encourage a focus on the emotional aspect of teaching in teacher training programs, as argued by O' Conner (2008 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009), whereas usually only the pedagogical and methodological aspects are questioned and emotions are neglected and seen as secondary;
- c) Hargreaves (2000 cited in Schutz and Zembylas 2009) warns how the continually changing context of teaching in which teachers find themselves in nowadays, undergoing educational reforms and continual modifications, can cause teachers to mask or invent emotions in order to live up to the expectations of the new context teachers happen to work in.

## Conclusions

In this final section I draw the conclusions of the findings of my internship experience in a primary school, divided into three categories: the role of emotions in teaching, the emotionally intelligent teacher and then teacher anxiety and anxiety-reducing strategies.

As regards the role of emotions in the teaching environment, my findings address the following topics, regarding which it is hoped more investigation and research will be done:

- a) The central role of teacher emotions in the teaching environment, and how negative emotions can affect both teachers and learners, and therefore both the teaching and the learning process;
- b) The relevance of the opposition between ‘surface acting’ and ‘deep acting’ and how the latter can foster well-being and a more effective teaching and learning experience, causing the alignment of emotions with the deeply held values of the individual;
- c) Emotional displays and well-being have a central role in teaching; the emotional practices of emotion management<sup>92</sup> and ‘self-regulation’<sup>93</sup> are key-words to promote successful teaching and learning experiences and to avoid ‘teacher burnout’ or ‘emotional draining’, among the first causes of distressed teachers or of teachers quitting their job (Schutz and Zembylas 2009), and it must be kept in mind how ‘emotional contagion’ can be either positive or negative in the class, depending upon which emotions it is based upon.

Moving onto the related topics of ‘emotional intelligence’<sup>94</sup> and care, the concepts that interest my paper and need to be more widespread among teachers are:

- a) ‘Emotional intelligence’:
  - All the qualities required to be emotionally intelligent were present and detectable in tutor A, who became my model of ideal teacher, as she was aware of her own emotions, had a mindsight of other people’s emotions and possessed all the skills

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<sup>92</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘emotion management’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010) and by Schutz and Zembylas (2009).

<sup>93</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘self-regulation’ has been amply dealt with by Goleman (1995) cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

<sup>94</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘emotional intelligence’ has been amply dealt with by Powell and Kusuma-Powell (2010).

needed to check and regulate her own emotions, and to prevent other people's emotional outbursts or loss of their own emotional balance, be they students, parents or colleagues;

- Humor as an element used during lessons to lessen stress and anxiety in learners was very effective, as I could see during tutor A's lessons;
- Empathy is another feature of 'emotional intelligence' and tutor A showed it several times, and this stresses also how her role-related beliefs are disengaged from an authoritative position that imposes the teacher role upon learners using power and authority, since it has been found there is a negative link between powerful and authoritative positions and the ability to feel empathy (Hatfield 1993 cited in Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010);
- 'Cognitive reframing' as a practice relevant to reframe unpleasant emotions into episodes to learn from and upon which enhance one's emotional responses and behaviour in the classroom has to become more widespread and has to be suggested and its practice encouraged to prevent 'teacher burnout' or 'emotional draining'.

b) Care:

- The relevance of care towards pupils became even more evident after having witnessed the episode of C screaming at a helpless child, deviating from any form of care and respect, and from the very path of teaching that is "a culture of care [...] towards children" (Hargreaves 2000; Nias 1989, 1999; Noddings 1984 cited in Oplatka in Schutz and Zembylas 2009, p.63); it is evident that care depends on much part on the individual since teachers are not paid to show care, but it is up to their sensitivity to which degree to show it during their job, but both literature upon teacher emotions and my internship experience have lent much evidence to how showing care dramatically improves the learning process and has a positive impact upon pupils' emotions.

Finally, the following areas of teacher anxiety need more attention and investigation by researchers, teachers, teacher educators and all people involved in the teaching profession:

- a) The relevance of the ‘cognitive-affective filter’ for novice teachers, especially for those who might suffer from ‘oral communication anxiety<sup>95</sup>’ and who are affected by nervousness when confronted with the unpredictability of the improvisation stressor, also because the cognitive impairment caused by the ‘cognitive-affective filter’ can have serious implications for teaching and consequently for learning if not taken care of, and more research is needed, in particular in the form of case studies as the one I tried to frame regarding my internship experience, so that more strategies to cope with anxiety are mapped out and shared by teachers;
- b) More research is needed to investigate the link between FLCAS (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986), FLTAS (Ipek 2007 cited in Merç 2011) and FLSTAS (El-Okda and Al-Humaidi 2003 cited in Merç 2011), and to point out what the points in common between learner anxiety and novice teacher anxiety are, as the latter one is a status midway between teaching and learning, and it is hoped tools other than FLSTAS (ibid.) and FLTAS (Ipek 2007 cited in Merç 2011) will be developed to measure and assess the levels of anxiety in teachers;
- c) More case studies of novice teachers investigating their emotions and anxieties are needed to broaden the scope upon teacher emotions and anxiety and establish new strategies to enhance teachers’ well-being.

The anxiety-reducing strategies adopted to lessen stress and nervousness in my case belonged to three main categories:

a) Personal strategies:

- Rehearsing several times a planned reading activity before presenting it to the class to reduce my ‘oral communication anxiety’ and ‘stage fright<sup>96</sup>’;

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<sup>95</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘oral communication anxiety’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

<sup>96</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘stage fright’ has been amply dealt with by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986).

- My past history of success as an English student reassures me about my competence in English and I feel calmer as my ‘fear of failure<sup>97</sup>’, ‘fear of negative evaluation’ and FLCA levels lower.
- b) Anxiety-reducing strategies adopted during my internship:
- The ‘emotional contagion’ of positive feelings such as enthusiasm, love for learning, care and optimism during my reading activities in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classrooms helped me feel better as I felt I was being influenced by this positive affective climate, that helped me cope better with my anxiety and negative emotions;
  - Tutor A’s emotional display and enthusiastic nature fostered in me a greater level of self-esteem, sense of self-worth and self-image and her suggestions and positive feedback upon my activities helped me have more confidence in myself and increased my self-efficacy;
  - The success and happiness of pupils at the end of my lessons filled me with ‘naches’ (Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010, p.87), that is the satisfaction felt by a teacher realizing her teaching was successful and seeing others learn what she taught them, and many times just being among pupils made me forget my anxieties as I felt carried away by their positive feelings, curiosity and love for learning.
- c) Coping strategies derived from the literature on teacher and learner anxiety:
- ‘Deep acting’ as a way to align one’s emotions and reduce stress and anxiety as opposed to ‘surface acting’ in the literature about emotion management in teaching (Schutz and Zembylas 2009; Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2010);
  - Strategies related to the teachers’ behaviour during lessons that help to foster a serene learning environment and prevent a stressful affective climate (Young in Klee 1994; Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986); in particular more awareness is needed about the relevance of teachers’ behaviour at school, in particular focusing on interactions between teachers and students, classroom procedures and role-related beliefs about the language teacher’s role at school;

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<sup>97</sup> As already mentioned, we point out that the concept of ‘fear of failure’ has been amply dealt with by Gordon and Sarason (1955); Sarason (1980) cited in Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) and by Ipek (2007) cited in Merç (2011).

- Teacher training programs should focus more on the emotional aspects on teaching, instead of favouring only the methodological and pedagogical aspects of it, as suggested by O' Conner (2008 cited in Meyer in Schutz and Zembylas 2009).

The researcher hopes that this paper contributes in shedding some light upon the central role of emotions in teachers' lives and their impact upon teachers themselves, learners and the learning process itself, and how there is a strong need to investigate novice teacher emotions more, and to research strategies to cope with negative emotions to reframe them and enhance emotion management and regulation.

Novice teacher anxiety is another topic that needs more attention, and it would be interesting to understand better its link to learner anxiety and the implications for the learning and teaching situation.

Finally, 'emotional intelligence' is a very useful skill for language teachers and for teachers of every subject in order to learn how to manage, regulate and anticipate one's own emotions and have a mindsight of those of the people around them, fostering well-being and preventing emotional conflicts in an environment where such frictions with colleagues or students could leave scars that might be invisible to the eyes, but that could affect the sensitivity and the emotional well-being of the individuals.

## Appendix A

*The Gingerbread Man.*

### Part 1: Story



# THE GINGERBREAD MAN



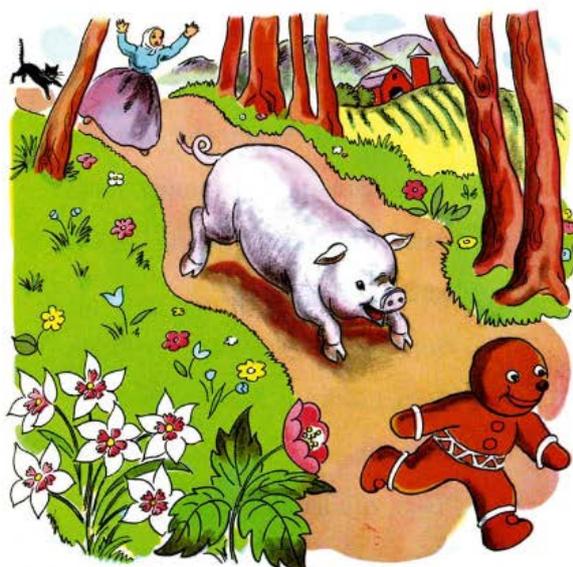
Once upon a time a little old woman and a little old man lived in a cottage. One day the little old woman made a gingerbread man. She gave him currants for eyes and cherries for buttons. She put him in the oven to bake.



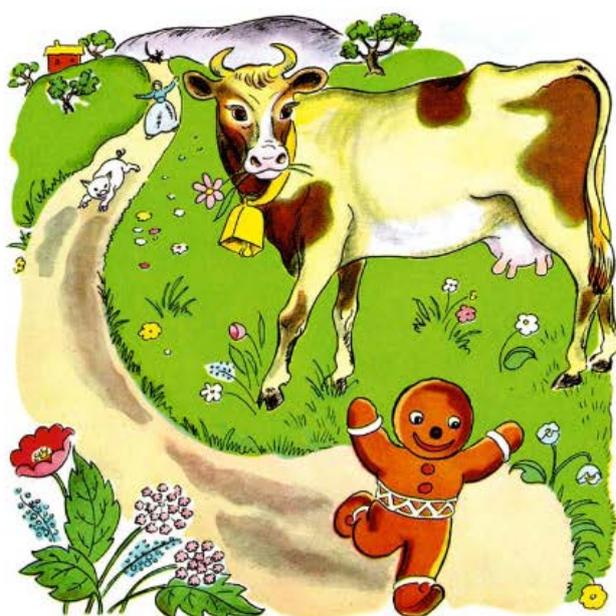
The little old woman and little old man were very hungry and wanted to eat the gingerbread man. As soon as he was cooked, the little old woman opened the oven door. The gingerbread man jumped out of the tin and ran out of the open window shouting, 'Don't eat me!'



The little old woman and little old man ran after the gingerbread man. 'Stop! Stop!' they yelled. The gingerbread man did not look back. He ran on saying, 'Run, run as fast as you can! You can't catch me, I'm the gingerbread man!'



Down the lane he sped when he came to a pig. 'Stop! Stop! I would like to eat you,' shouted the pig. The gingerbread man was too fast. He ran on saying, 'Run, run as fast as you can. You can't catch me, I'm the gingerbread man.'



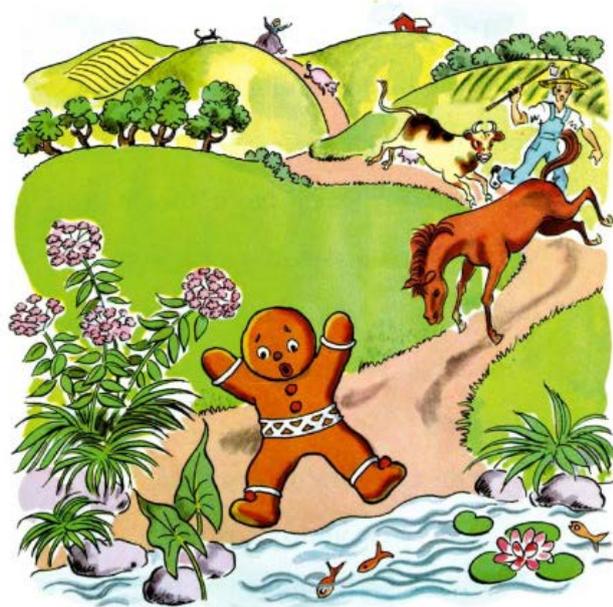
A little further on he met a cow. 'Stop! Stop! little man,' called the hungry cow. 'I want to eat you.' Again the gingerbread man was too fast. He sped on down the road saying, 'Run, run as fast as you can. You can't catch me, I'm the gingerbread man.'



The cow began to chase the gingerbread man along with the pig, and the little old woman. But the gingerbread man was too fast for them.



It was not long before the gingerbread man came to a horse. 'Stop! Stop!' shouted the horse. 'I want to eat you, little man.' But the gingerbread man did not stop. He said, 'Run, run as fast as you can. You can't catch me, I'm the gingerbread man.'



The horse joined in the chase. The gingerbread man laughed and laughed, until he came to a river. 'Oh no!' he cried, 'They will catch me. How can I cross the river?'



A sly fox came out from behind a tree. 'I can help you cross the river,' said the fox. 'Jump on to my tail and I will swim across.' 'You won't eat me, will you?' said the gingerbread man. 'Of course not,' said the fox. 'I just want to help.'



The gingerbread man climbed on the fox's tail. Soon the gingerbread man began to get wet. 'Climb onto my back,' said the fox. So the gingerbread man did. As he swam the fox said, 'You are too heavy. I am tired. Jump onto my nose.' So the gingerbread man did as he was told.



No sooner had they reached the other side, than the fox tossed the gingerbread man up in the air. He opened his mouth and SNAP! That was the end of the gingerbread man.

## Part 2: Reading Activity



## Activity

Circle the key words taken from the story of 'The Gingerbread Man'. Be careful, there are some extra words that are not part of the story.

<b>Cottage</b>	<b>home</b>	
<b>Gingerbread man</b>	<b>chocolate man</b>	
<b>currants</b>	<b>chestnuts</b>	
<b>Strawberries</b>	<b>cherries</b>	
<b>oven</b>	<b>bake</b>	<b>cake</b>
	<b>hungry</b>	<b>angry</b>

	<b>Ran after</b>	<b>yelled</b>
<b>ran on</b>	<b>go on</b>	<b>catch</b>
<b>Lane</b>	<b>rain</b>	<b>street</b>
<b>sped</b>	<b>sad</b>	<b>shouted</b>

cow          sped          road  
 fast          take          catch  
 chase      pig          big          woman  
             fast          past

Horse          stop          hop  
 want          run          fun  
             chase          cheese  
 laughed      river      shiver  
             cross          pass

Sly      fox      bee      tree      see  
             tail      swim  
             help      yelp  
             wet      pet      cat  
 back      heavy      tired  
             nose      close

tossed      mouth      shout  
             snap!      Clap!  
             End      hand

## Part 3: Vocabulary list



## Vocabulary



- **Cottage** = casetta
- **Gingerbread man** = omino di pan di zenzero
- **Currants** = frutti di bosco / ribes
- **Cherries** = ciliegie
- **Oven** = forno
- **Bake** = cuocere
- **Hungry** = affamato
- **Cooked** = cotto
- **Tin** = teglia
- **Run after** = correre dietro a... / inseguire
- **Yelled** = urlavano
- **Run on** = continuare a correre
- **As fast as you can** = più veloce che puoi
- **Lane** = stradina
- **Further on** = più avanti
- **Sped on** = correre più veloce
- **Chase** = dare la caccia a....
- **Joined** = unirsi a... (joined the chase = unirsi alla caccia)
- **River** = fiume
- **Cross** = attraversare
- **Sly** = furbo / astuto
- **Tail** = coda
- **Swim** = nuotare
- **Climb** = arrampicarsi
- **Back** = schiena
- **Heavy** = pesante

- **Tired** = stanco
- **Nose** = naso
- **Did as he was told** = fece come gli era stato detto
- **No sooner...** = non appena...
- **Tossed (in the air)** = lanciò (in aria)
- **Snap!** = Ammm! (bocca che si chiude di scatto)
- **End** = fine



## Appendix B

### *My Monster Project.*

### ‘MY MONSTER PROJECT’

1. Here there is the drawing of a monster. Look at it carefully. Then read the description and try to complete it. Use the drawing of the monster to help you.

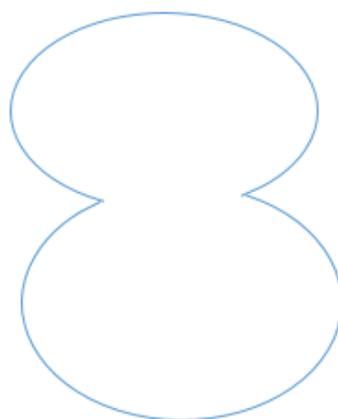


### ‘PAT THE MONSTER’

Hi, my name is Pat. I am a colourful monster. I have got three big blue (eyes), two orange (ears), a (nose) and a wide (mouth) to eat with. My (head) is orange and my (body) is yellow, the same colour as lemons. I have got six (arms) and six hands, and each hand has got four pointy fingers. I am wearing a red and white sleeveless t-shirt and a pair of (shorts) as a rainbow. I've got three (legs). I am wearing shoes, but they are of different colours: they are (blue), (light green) and dark green.

## DRAW YOUR MONSTER

2. Here there is a complete description of a monster and a part of the body of the monster. Read the description and then try to draw the missing parts of the body of the monster.



### Draw Your Monster

Bob is a scary monster.

He has got a big **blue round body!**

He has got a **big green round head** with **three big red eyes.**

He has got a **square black nose.**

He has got a **big red mouth** with **pointy teeth** to eat you!!!

He has got **four pointy pink ears.**

He has got **five red arms.**

Each arm has one hand, and **each hand has three fingers.**

Finally he has got **three big orange legs** to run after you, and **three black feet.**

Be careful and watch your back when you walk by night, or **SNAP!** Bob will eat you in one bite!

## *Vocabulary*

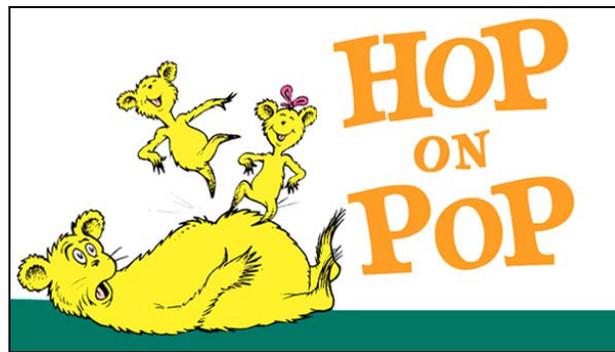
- **Colourful** = colorato
- **Sleeveless** = senza maniche
- **Scary** = spaventoso
- **Square** = quadrato
- **Pointy** = appuntito
- **Ear** = orecchio
- **Run after (someone)** = inseguire / correre dietro a (qualcuno)
- **Watch your back** = guardati le spalle
- **Bob will eat you in one bite!** = Bob ti mangerà in un sol boccone!

## Appendix C

*Hop on Pop* by Dr. Seuss.

Vocabulary list and sentences taken from the book and read in class during my internship.

## Hop On Pop



Pup is up.

UP / PUP

Pup in a cup.

CUP / PUP

PUP / CUP

Cup on pup.

IN / ON

Mouse on house.

MOUSE / HOUSE

HOUSE / MOUSE

House on mouse.

We all are tall.

ALL / TALL

Tall vs Small

ALL / SMALL

We all are small.

We all play ball.

Up on a wall.

ALL / BALL

BALL / WALL

ALL / FALL

Fall off the wall.

We play all day.

DAY / PLAY

NIGHT / FIGHT

We fight all night.

He is after me.

HE / ME

HIM / JIM

Jim is after him.

We see a bee.

SEE / BEE

SEE / BEE / THREE

Now we see three.

Three fish in a tree.

THREE / TREE

Fish in a tree? How can that be?

They call me Red.

RED / RED

RED / BED

I am in bed.

Red, Ned, Ted and Ed in bed.

They call him Pat.

PAT / PAT

PAT / SAT

Pat sat on hat.

Pat sat on cat.

PAT / CAT

PAT / BAT

Pat sat on bat.

NO PAT NO

Don't sit on that.

SAD DAD BAD HAD

Dad is sad.

Very, very sad.

He had a bad day.

What a day Dad had!

THING / THING

What is that thing?

THING / SING

That thing can sing!

SONG / LONG

A long, long song.

Good-bye, Thing.

You sing too long.

WALK / WALK

We like to walk.

WALK / TALK

We like to talk.

HOP / POP

We like to hop.

We like to hop on top of Pop.

STOP!

You must not hop on Pop.

Mr BROWN / Mrs BROWN

Mr Brown upside down.

UPSIDE DOWN

Pup up / Brown down

Pup is down.

Where is Brown?

WHERE IS BROWN?

THERE IS BROWN!

Mr. Brown is out of town.

BACK / BLACK

Brown came back.

Brown came back with Mr. Black.

SNACK / SNACK

Eat a snack.

Eat a snack with Brown and Black.

JUMP / BUMP

He jumped.

He bumped.

FAST / PAST

He went past fast.

WENT / TENT / SENT

He went into the tent.

I sent him out of the tent.

WET / GET

Two dogs get wet.

HELP / YELP

They yelp for help.

HILL / WILL

Will went up the hill.

WILL / HILL / STILL

Will is up the hill still.

FATHER / MOTHER

SISTER / BROTHER

That one is my other brother.

My brothers read a little bit.

Little words like IF and IT.

My father can read big words, too.

Like CONSTANTINOPLE and TIMBUKTU.

SAY / SAY

What does it say?

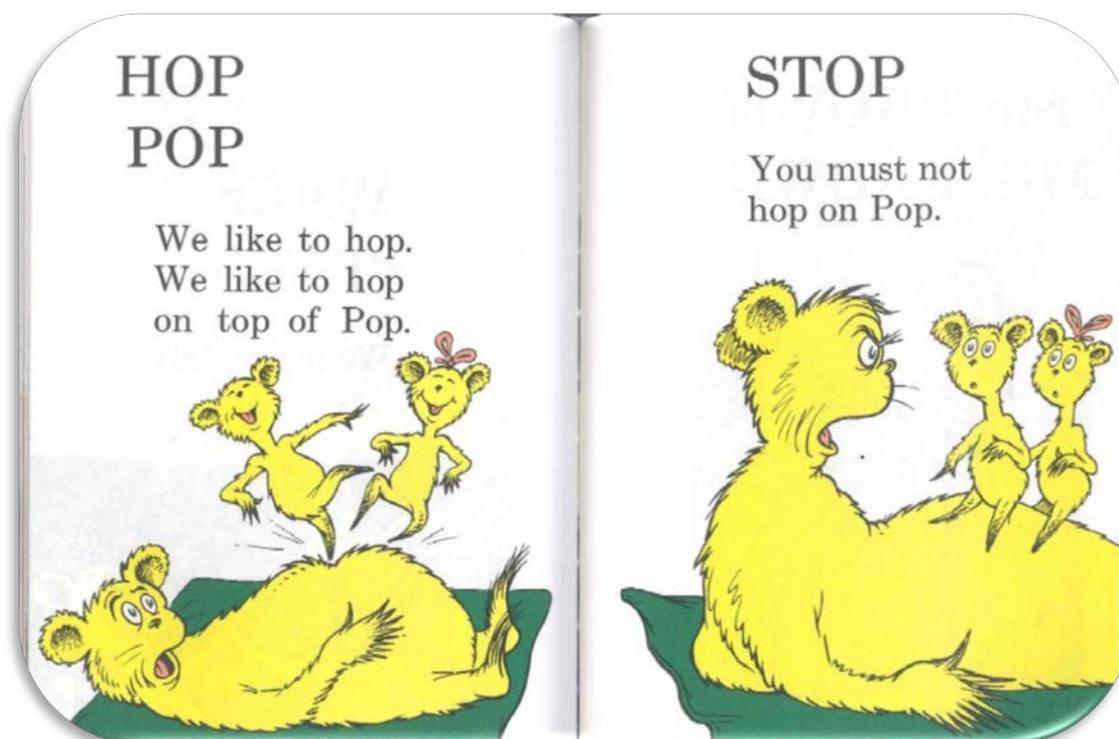
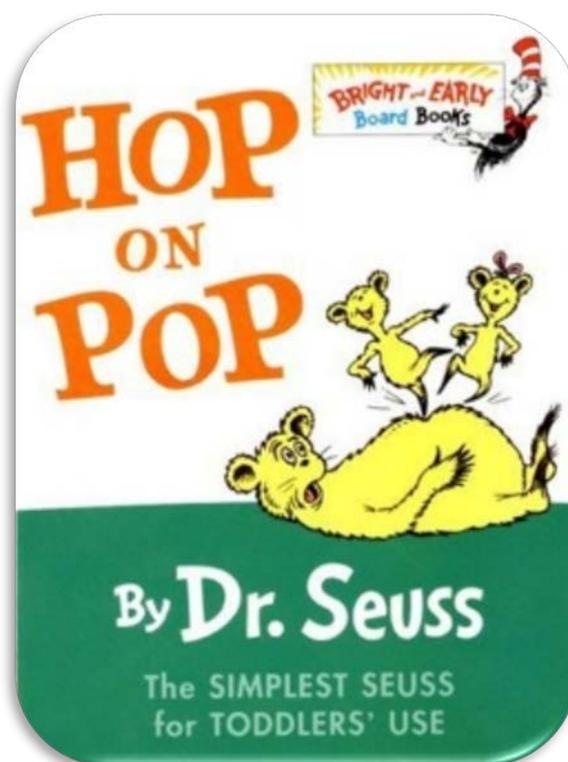
Sehemewe

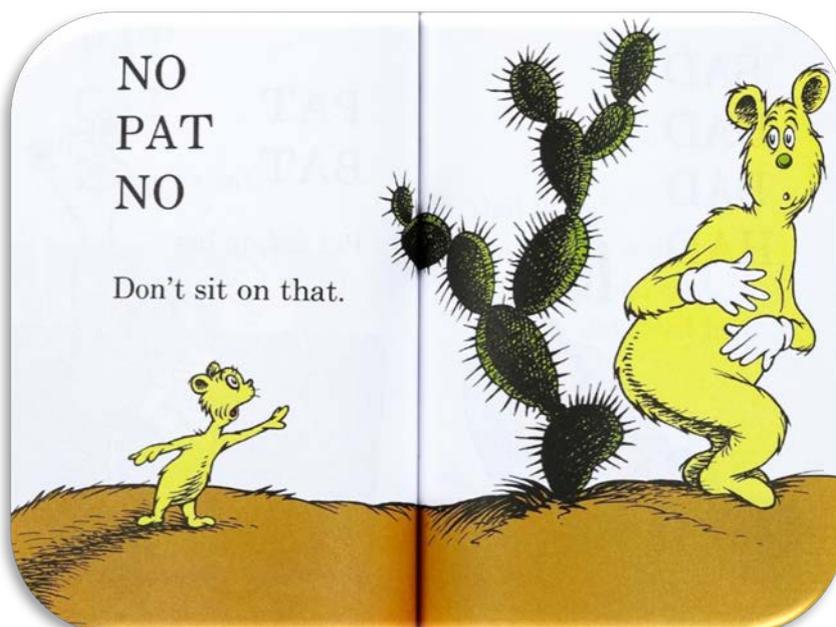
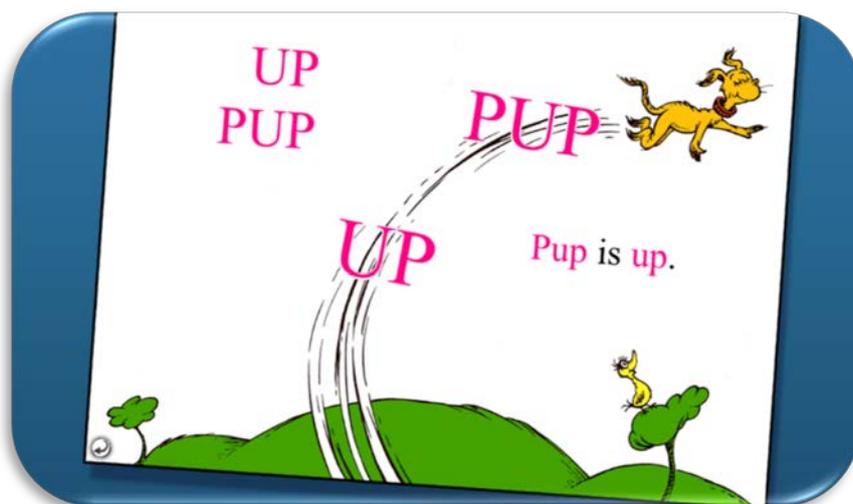
Patpuppup

Hethreetreebee

Tophopstop

Ask me tomorrow, but not today.





WALK  
WALK

We like to walk.



WALK  
TALK

We like to talk.



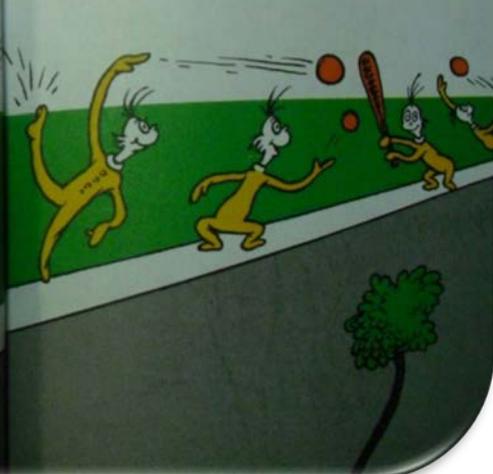
ALL  
BALL

We all play ball.



BALL  
WALL

Up on a wall.



HE  
ME

He is after me.

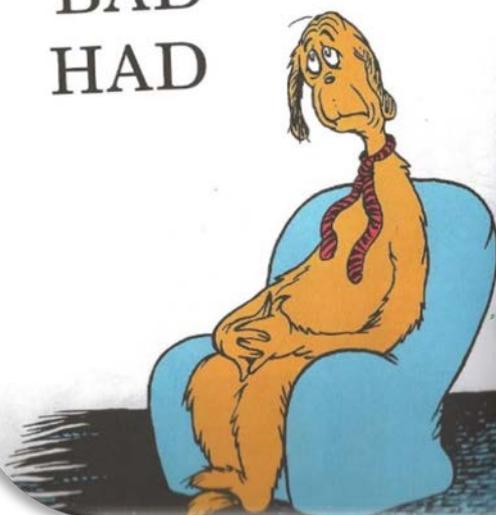
HIM  
JIM

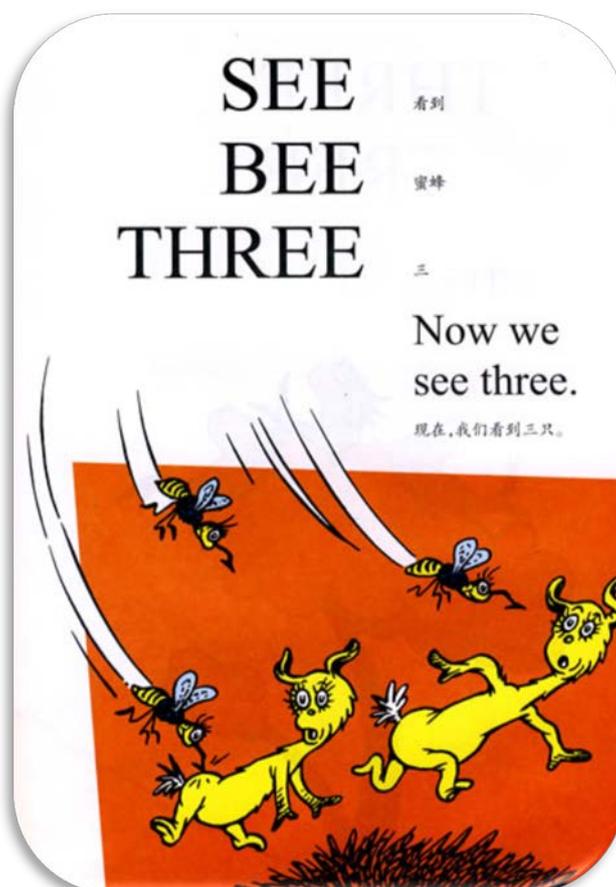
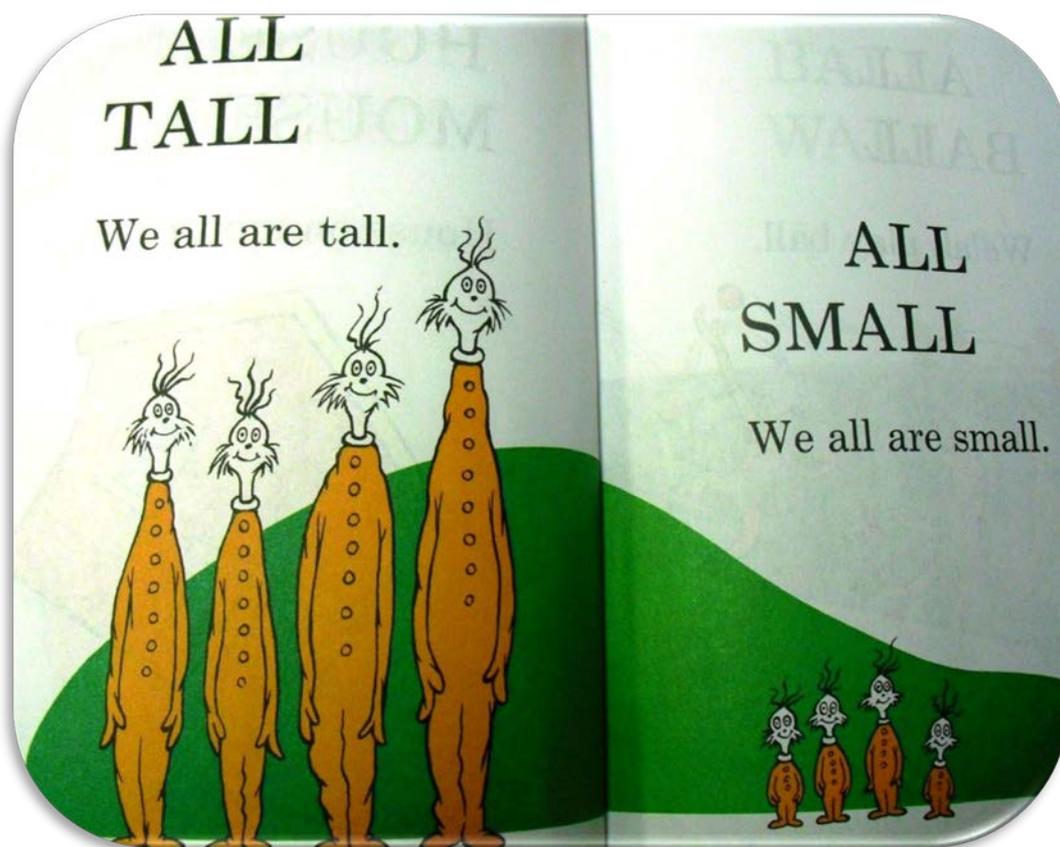
Jim is after him.

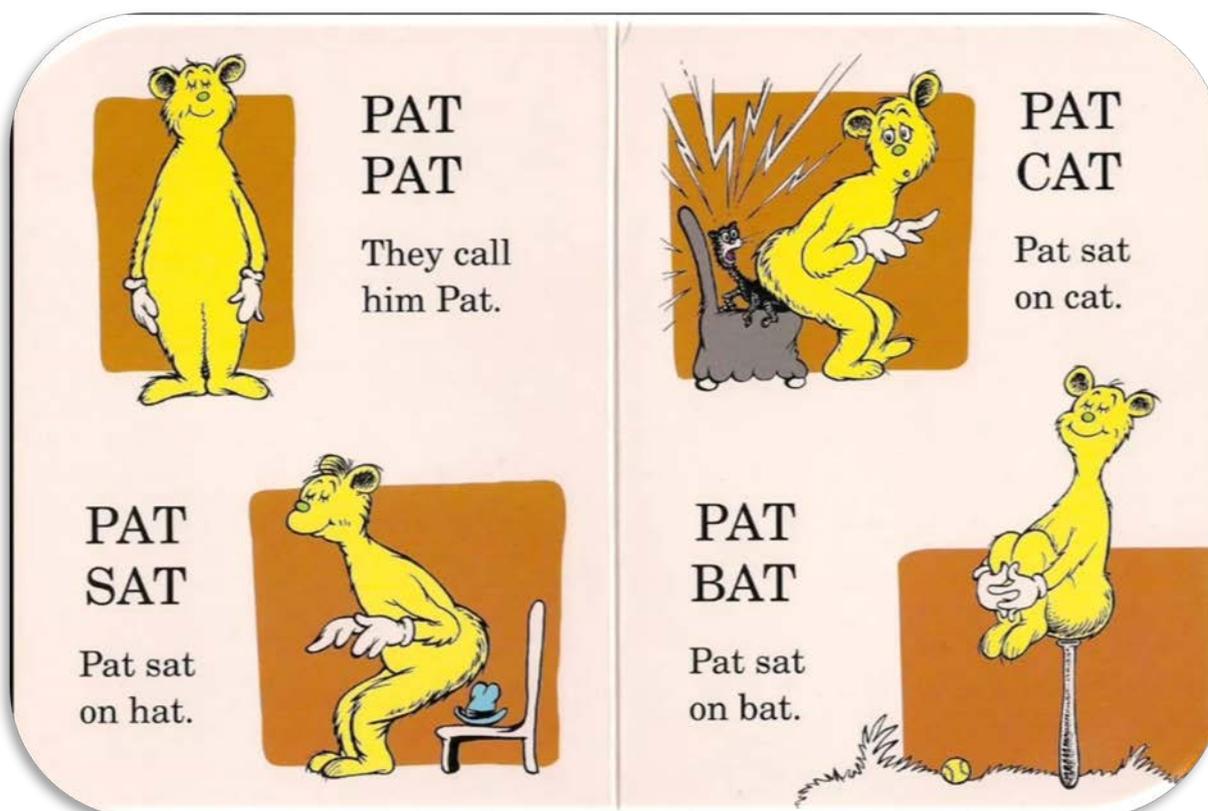
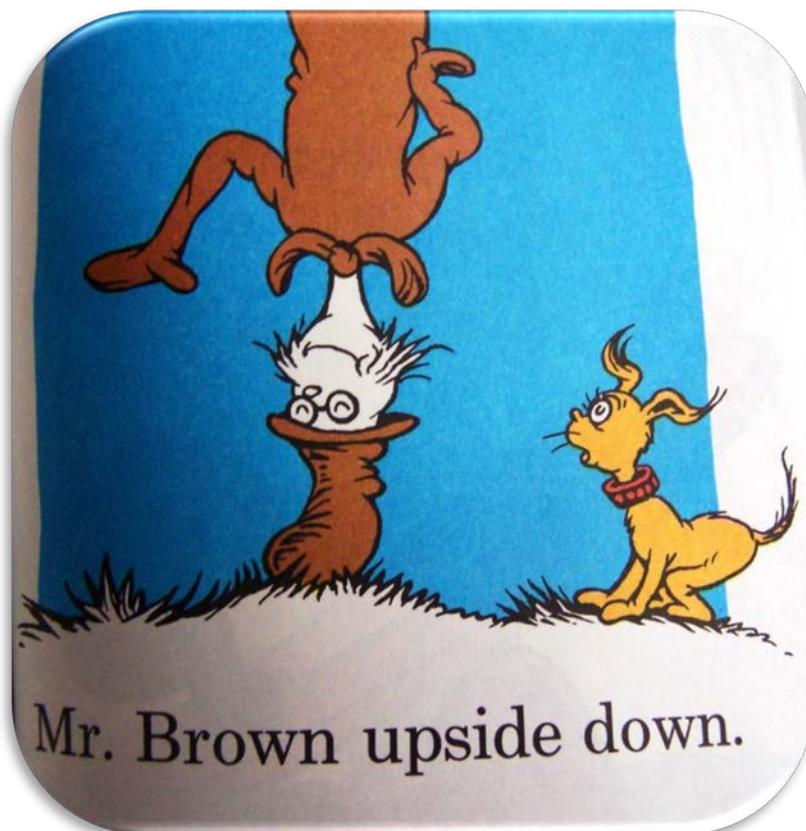


SAD  
DAD  
BAD  
HAD

Dad is sad.  
Very, very sad.  
He had a bad day.  
What a day Dad had!







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<http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED482487>

<Last consultation: 19/09/2014>

## Consulted Websites

### *APA PsycNET: American Psychological Association.*

Online database to research scholarly articles, publications, journals and books related to the field of psychology, useful to find information for this paper.

<<http://psycnet.apa.org/index.cfm?fa=search.defaultSearchForm>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

### *DeepDyve.*

Research database for millions of articles, online journals, books and full-text previews. Thousands of leading scholarly journals from *Springer*, *Elsevier* and other important online research databases.

<<http://www.deepdyve.com/>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

### *Eric (Education Resources Information Center): Institution of Education Sciences.*

A vast cost free research database where one can search articles, e-journals, dissertations and books of any subject, often with full-text available.

<<http://eric.ed.gov/>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

### *JSTOR.*

Research database where to look for books, articles, dissertations and more material about several subjects.

<<http://www.jstor.org/>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

***Mind Tools: Excellent Skills for an Excellent Career.***

Website devoted to point out leadership skills to make people excel in their career, found useful for my purposes because there are sections dealing with learning skills, stress management techniques, problem solving and communication skills that helped me deepen my knowledge about these topics.

<<http://www.mindtools.com/>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

***National Professional Resources, Inc.***

*National Professional Resources* (NPR, Inc.) is a website devoted to the field of education publishing. Founded and operated by educators with a deep commitment to the success of all learners, the aim of the website is to provide teachers, administrators, and other school staff with quality tools and resources that will better enable them to help every student achieve success. There are books, quick-reference guides and videos by experts in education that were useful for my paper.

<<http://www.nprinc.com/>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

***National School Climate Center: Educating Minds and Hearts...Because the Three Rs Are Not Enough.***

*NSCC* offers a variety of professional development programs to foster well-being and positive emotions in learners, especially in children. In particular the aim of the developers of the website is to promote the child's social, emotional and civic skills alongside intellectual skills and dispositions, and to foster collaboration inside school administration between teachers, parents and students to create a learning environment based on positive emotions.

<<http://www.schoolclimate.org/index.php>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

***Philosophical Investigations for Applied Linguistics.***

Blog about linguistics, teaching English and cognition lead by Dr. Yosuke Yanase, associate professor of applied linguistics in *Graduate School of Education*, Hiroshima University, Japan.

Useful for dissertations and published studies and discussions about teaching English and the importance of cognition.

<<http://yosukeyanase.blogspot.it/>>

<Last consultation: 27/09/2014

***Questia: Trusted Online Research.***

Online library and database to search articles, journals, dissertations, books and reference works.

<<http://www.questia.com/>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

***Sage Journals.***

Research tools, journal alerts and online journal access information for any subject are provided in this website useful for individual users, students and researchers.

<<http://online.sagepub.com/>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

***ScienceDirect.***

This website is a leading full-text scientific database offering journal articles and book chapters from thousands of journals and books on several subjects.

<<http://www.sciencedirect.com/>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

***Springer.***

Online publisher and database to research articles, journals, books and reference works, specialized in scientific, medical and technical fields. It is a precious tool to research articles in education, teaching and learning and to check the publications in the field.

<<http://www.springer.com/?SGWID=6-102-0-0-0>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

***Taylor & Francis Online.***

Online platform for the homonymous publisher of thousands of articles about multiple subjects.

<<http://www.tandfonline.com/>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

***Teachers College Record: the Voice of Scholarship in Education.***

The *Teachers College Record* is a journal of research, analysis and commentary in the field of education.

<<https://www.tcrecord.org/>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

***TeachingEducPsych.org: the Teaching of Educational Psychology.***

The aim of this website is to provide all those who are concerned with learning and teaching with a theoretical framework and a set of standards to develop education for teachers.

The questions the website aims to answer are the following ones:

- Who are the teachers?
- How should they be selected?
- What is the curriculum for teaching the teachers?
- Which methods should be used for teaching the teachers?

<<http://www.teachingeducpsych.org/>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

***TES connect: Think, Educate, Share.***

In this website thousands of free teaching resources can be found for teachers to use in their classroom and school.

*TES Teaching Resources* is where teachers share and download free lesson plans, classroom resources, revision guides and curriculum worksheets. Moreover there is a forum community where teachers and students from all around the world can share ideas, ask for problems and get suggestions from teachers, experts and scholars from all over the globe.

<<http://www.tes.co.uk/>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

### ***The City College of New York: School Education.***

Website of the *City College of New York* offering experiences, e-journals and other additional material about teaching and learning education with children.

<<http://www.cuny.edu/education/>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

### ***TK California. A Project of Early Edge California.***

The website of *TK California (Transitional Kindergarten California)* meets the needs of teachers and administrators who want to implement transitional kindergarten. The project has been led by a collaboration between *Early Edge California (formerly Preschool California)* and twenty experts whose expertise spans the areas of language and literacy development, early math, social emotional development and executive function, culturally responsive education and dual language acquisition. The *teaching tools* section of the website offers: classroom and instructional planning, social emotional development, English language arts, mathematics, English language development and family engagement. The *teaching tools* section has been investigated for knowledge about socio-emotional development in learners and teachers and has been useful for this paper.

<<http://www.tkcalifornia.org/teaching-tools/social-emotional/teaching-strategies/>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

***Topmarks. Helping teachers and parents save time finding excellent online educational resources.***

Online database to research educational resources for children, where one can browse by subject and child age. The short story of *The Gingerbread Man* used as a reading activity by the researcher during the internship in the primary school was discovered in this website.

<<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/stories/GingerbreadMan.aspx>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

***Università di Ca' Foscari. Catalogo Periodici Elettronici.***

Electronic Journals List from the Website of the Libraries of the *University of Ca' Foscari* in Venice.

<<http://aire.cab.unipd.it:9003/unive/a-z/unive>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

***Wiley Online Library.***

This website is a multidisciplinary collection of online resources covering life, health and physical sciences, social science and the humanities. It gives access to articles, journals, online books and reference works, laboratory protocols and databases.

<<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>

***WorldCat.***

*WorldCat* is the world's largest network of library content and services. It connects people to the collections and services of thousands of libraries worldwide, and it is extremely useful to get informed about the existing publications about a specific research topic or to find books, articles, journals or any other kind of paper or electronic publication existing worldwide.

The website can be used also to search many libraries at once for an item and then locate it in a library nearby. Useful to search reference works otherwise difficult to find by less accurate web browsers.

<<https://www.worldcat.org/>>

<Last consultation: 27/09/2014>

**WRAP: *Warwick Research Archive Portal*. University of Warwick Publication Service and WRAP.**

Online research platform to search articles, dissertations, books and other documents, very precious as regards the collection of open-access, viewable and downloadable dissertations on numerous subjects.

<<http://wrap-test.warwick.ac.uk/cgi/search/advanced>>

<Last consultation: 14/09/2014>