

**EMOTIONS
IN SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING
AS SEEN IN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NARRATIVES
WRITTEN BY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**
A discursive study

Master's thesis
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Tiivistelmä – Abstract <p>Tunteet ovat osa jokapäiväistä elämäämme, niin hyvässä, kuin pahassakin, ja ne voivat olla ihmisiä eteenpäin vievä tai toisaalta lamaannuttava voima. Tunteet rakentuvat sosiaalisessa kanssakäymisessä, mutta yksilökohtaiset kokemukset tunteiden merkityksestä ja voimakkuudesta ovat avain niiden ymmärtämiseen.</p> <p>Tieteellisessä tutkimuksessa tunteet on usein jätetty huomiotta, sillä niiden on perinteisesti koettu olevan joko liian haastavia tai liian merkityksettömiä tutkittavaksi. 1990-luvulta lähtien tunteiden merkitystä on kuitenkin alettu arvostaa enenevässä määrin ja yhä suurempi määrä tutkijoita on huomionnut tunteet tutkimuksissaan. Myös kielitieteissä tunteiden tärkeä rooli on alettu ymmärtää. Tunteita on kartoitettu perinteisissä kielen oppimiseen ja opettamiseen liittyvissä tutkimuksissa vielä melko vähän, mutta kiinnostus on jatkuvasti nousussa ja tunteiden merkitys myös kielen oppimisessa aletaan tunnustaa. Samoin yksilön merkitys on saanut ansaittua huomiota.</p> <p>Tämän tutkielman tarkoituksena oli tarkastella tunteita, joita yliopisto-opiskelijat liittivät erilaisiin toisen kielen oppimiseen liittyviin ihmisiin, paikkoihin ja tilanteisiin. Aineistona käytettiin 11 omaelämäkertaa, joita opiskelijat ovat kirjoittaneet kuvaillessaan omaa kielimatkaansa lapsuudesta aina yliopisto-opintoihin saakka. Tutkielman metodina on käytetty diskursiivista otetta, jolloin huomiota on kiinnitetty enemmänkin siihen <i>mitä</i> opiskelijat kirjoittavat, kuin miksi niin tapahtuu tai mitä siitä seuraa. Näin ollen aineistona olleita narratiiveja ja niissä esiintyviä kertomuksia ja tunteita ei ole arvioitu oikeiksi tai vääriksi, hyväksi tai huonoiksi, vaan johtotähtenä on toiminut ajatus siitä, että jokainen omaelämäkerta on arvokas sellaisenaan.</p> <p>Tunteiden kirjo omaelämäkerroissa oli laaja ja värikäs, ja voimakkaimmin tunteita herättivät opiskelijoiden opettajat. Myös perheenjäsenet ja luokkatoverit saivat osansa tunteiden ilotulituksessa, kuin myös koulu ja siellä erityisesti ylioppilaskirjoitukset. Asuminen ulkomailla oli myös paljon tunteita herättävä kokemus usealle opiskelijalle. Kaiken kaikkiaan tunteet ja toisen kielen oppiminen näyttivät olevan tiiviisti kietoutuneet yhteen, ja tunteiden värittämät muistot olivat kirkkaina opiskelijoiden mielissä vaikka tapahtumista olikin saattanut kulua jo useita vuosia tai jopa vuosikymmen.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

Emotions have always had a huge effect on my learning, sometimes even up to a degree that was counterproductive to my goals and progress. I have learned numerous pointless details about rock bands without even trying, simply because I have been so interested in the subject, but have struggled to understand the point of an uninteresting textbook that I have read for an exam, even if the textbook and the message in it would have been most valuable to my future profession as a teacher. Emotions have played an important role in my language learning in particular. Even after 35 years, or so, I still have vivid memories of some of the first encounters with English, the first foreign language I knew. I remember the joy of learning the names of the months in English as I was dancing and singing along with Boney M and their Calendar Song, and I remember how excited and proud I was when I had the chance to play the song for my classmates in the English class in the third grade. Another exciting and positive memory I have is to have been called Sarah in the English lessons, also in the third grade, giving a positive vibe to the language itself and learning of it. Positive emotions have carried me a long way, whether they were associated, for instance, with music or time spent abroad or my teachers.

I have also experienced some negative feelings of frustration, injustice and anger in regard to my language studies, and sadly, most of them have been due to my teachers. Such negative emotions have hindered and at times killed my interest, enthusiasm, and joy of learning the language in question altogether. On the other hand, a memory of an English teacher who apologized after being very irritated and snappy in class was a major epiphany to me; teachers can be wrong, they can admit being wrong, and they can even say they are sorry, it was such a revelation. The memory has carried me all the way to teacher training at the university and working as a substitute teacher in school, giving me a positive role model as a future teacher, knowing that there is always the change of starting anew if something is to go wrong. Leaving comprehensive school and high school behind has not been the end of emotions being part of my learning. Even now, at the university level, I have experienced the power of emotions to either facilitate or hinder my studies, and therefore I can easily state that emotions have been one of the important keys to my learning. My personal experiences were the initial motivator in seeking to study emotions and learning together, the starting point being that I cannot be the only one who has experienced emotions as such a powerful tool, in good and in bad, towards studying and learning languages in particular.

As I later learned, after familiarizing myself with some studies and articles by well-known scholars, emotions had not been studied very thoroughly in the field of language studies. The older studies concentrated almost solely on anxiety, but hardly any mentions of positive emotions were present. This, however, seems to have changed in the 21st century, and the groundbreaking work of some known scholars, such as Arnold, Ellis, and Pavlenko, has made studying emotions more of a current interest also in language studies, and many other researchers have later followed suit. At the turn of the century, Niemeier (1997: viii) even went as far as to say that emotions are “one of the fashionable topics” in several fields, language studies included, and that is again the case after a perhaps slight decline.

Early on, the work of Edwards (1997, 1999), and Potter and Edwards (2001), in the field of discursive psychology has been important in understanding the relationship between emotions and language learning. The main idea behind discursive psychology is to describe what is being said or written, instead of trying to find causes and consequences. Therefore, with the help of the guidelines of discursive psychology and some autobiographical narratives, the aim of the present study is to see how students write about their emotions in regard to their second language learning, and particularly in regard to English. Also, studying the students’ stories will hopefully help me realize some ways of becoming the teacher who can help her future pupils to thrive, instead of making them want to quit. This might, in fact, be the greatest motivator for me to investigate the subject further.

Why is it, then, important to study emotions in language learning? Schutz and Pekrun (2007b: 3) see that, for instance, classroom settings are emotional in nature, but apart from test anxiety, other students’ or teachers’ emotions in educational settings are quite unfamiliar to scholars. Schutz and Pekrun (2007b: 3) even state that we know “next to nothing” about either the unpleasant emotions, such as anger, hopelessness, shame, or boredom, or the pleasant emotions, such as enjoyment, hope, or pride, in educational settings. Their statement is still quite accurate, even if almost a decade has passed. It is, therefore, important to use every opportunity to increase the knowledge of emotions in education and other learning situations, which is precisely what this study intends to do. According to Schutz and Pekrun (2007b: 4), it is evident that more research on emotions in education is needed and there has, in fact, been a “discernable increase” in research concerning emotions in education. The importance of studying emotions also on a larger scale can be seen when thinking about the impact that emotions have, not only on learning, but on societies in general. Pekrun and Schutz (2007) have certainly noted such an impact, as they have been looking back on the previous findings

of “investigations into the nature of emotions experienced by students and teachers”, they state that

emotions profoundly affect students’ and teachers’ engagement, performance, and personality development, implying that they are of critical importance for the agency of educational institutions and of society at large. (Pekrun & Schutz 2007: 313-314)

As it is my stance that learning can take place outside of a classroom in social interactions, this study aims to broaden the scope somewhat from educational settings also into other environments, for instance, living abroad, which is a very important area particularly in language learning. As living in a foreign country is a situation very inclined to evoke a variety of emotions, and language learning happens in a social surrounding and in interaction with other people, it is also a valuable area for this study. The choice to include learning outside the school environment into the mix enables getting as much information from the data as possible, thus increasing the knowledge of different areas that are linked to language learning and the emotions connected to it.

The outline of the present study, then, is as follows. In the theoretical background, which consists of Chapters **2** and **3**, I will present some of the scientific fields that are relevant to this study. Under psychological approaches in Chapter **2**, I will explore the fields of psychology in Section **2.1**, social constructionism in Section **2.2**, and discursive psychology in Section **2.3**. Also, understanding language studies and second language learning are essential to this study, and they will be dealt with in a chapter of their own, Chapter **3**. Section **3.1** will be dedicated to clarifying to some of the key concepts in language studies, Section **3.2** will take a look at the traditional SLA research, and Section **3.3** will concentrate on the views that will take us closer to the learner, a vital part in language learning. Finally, Section **3.4** will introduce a few previous studies of emotions in educational context. All the sections will be handled through the emotional aspect of the subject in hand. The aforementioned theoretical framework guided me towards understanding how it is possible to study emotions in the first place and gave me the tools towards writing a solid analysis.

Furthermore, the methodology of the study will be handled in Chapter **4**, and finally in Chapter **5**, the analysis of the data is discussed. Section **5.1** concentrates on the family members that the students’ emotions are linked to, including the students themselves, and Section **5.2** investigates the link between the students’ emotions and people in school environment. Section **5.3**, then, views the emotions from different places’ point of view, that is, how the students link their emotions to places where they have been to or lived in. The

fourth part, section 5.4, concentrates on the matriculation examination and the emotions it is linked to. In order to link the theoretical framework and the analysis together, discussion of the different aspects is needed. Such discussion will take place in the final chapter of this study, the conclusion, in Chapter 6.

2 PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO EMOTION

It might seem rather odd for a thesis with the title *Emotions in second language learning* to have a chapter on psychological approaches, but there are solid reasons behind the choice. Firstly, emotions have been more fully studied within the psychological field than they have been in language studies, thus there is a longer history of studying emotions in psychology. Secondly, in order to understand the development towards sociocultural approaches in language studies, it is important to explore the similar development in psychological approaches, since, again, the history is on the psychology's side. The third, and also the most important, reason for using so much time and space for the psychological views on emotions is that there are already many aspects in common with language studies in the psychological approaches, not least in the facts that emotions may motivate or hinder learning, and that they are often manifested in linguistic forms. Section 2.1, then, handles emotions from a psychological viewpoint in general and the other two sections approach the subject from a more specific point of view. Thus, Section 2.2 explores emotions in social constructionism and Section 2.3 discusses emotions in discursive psychology.

2.1 Emotion in psychology

All human beings have emotions and people also experience emotions on a daily basis. No one certainly contests that emotions exist, but that might be the only thing that emotion researchers agree on. People have lay knowledge of what emotions are and could probably quite easily describe what most of them are like. Yet, scientifically it is quite difficult to define what, in fact, the word *emotion* means. Many researchers support the view that emotions are very difficult, if not impossible, to define (Izard 2007; Frijda 2008; Nummenmaa 2010; Matsumoto & Hwang 2012; Keltner, Oatley & Jenkins 2014). Some say that one scientific definition cannot be adequate (Scarantino 2012), whereas some almost demand that finding a universal definition is essential for emotion research to move forward

(Izard 2007). Nummenmaa (2010: 15) states that in psychology, among other fields, emotion research has been neglected for quite some time simply because emotions have been perceived as too subjective and personal, or just too difficult for scientific study. However, recent studies have proven that emotions do not differ from any other activity that our brain produces and, in fact, emotions are parallel and can be studied as precisely as, for instance, our hand movements, eating regulation, memory, or sight (Nummenmaa 2010: 15). Emotions can arise from such sources as words, music, literature, odors, or just from our brain (Lewis, Haviland-Jones & Barrett 2008). Still, some emphasize that emotions are more than just a “mere epiphenomena of neural and bodily processes” (Frijda 2008: 82) or activity in our brain. Therefore, the core of emotion research seems to stem from two different views. On the one hand, emotions are seen as biological in nature, thus the evolutionary approach is used, but on the other hand, emotions are said to be born within cultures, thus the cultural approach is followed (Keltner et al. 2014). Some researchers support the former and some the latter view, but it seems that most emotion researchers acknowledge that emotions possess both sides of the coin. Emotion research has, in fact, expanded substantially over the past few decades, but still it seems that every article on the subject accentuates the fact that emotions have not been widely recognized or studied in the scientific field. This is also what the writer of this thesis noticed while studying the subject, thus giving an instant validation to the study in hand.

Differences aside, perhaps the closest answer to a question *what is emotion?* can still be found in the field of psychology, where a number of researchers, perhaps even the largest number in all of the scientific fields, have studied the issue. Emotion research in psychology has taken many turns and sides towards the topic and a large number of theoretical models have been constructed over the years (Frijda 2008). The precise question “[w]hat is an emotion?” was asked in that particular form over a hundred years ago in 1884, when a philosopher and psychologist William James wrote an article with the question as the title (Solomon 2008: 3). As Foolen (1997: 18) points out, there is a long tradition of emotion studies in psychology. Bodor (1997: 195) even goes as far as to say that emotions have been perceived as “a privileged topic of psychology” for quite a long time, even if the first scientific efforts to understand what the term *emotion* might contain were seen in the field of philosophy, for instance by such familiar names as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and later Descartes (Stearns 2009; Izard 2007; Solomon 2008; Keltner et al. 2014), and are widely spreading among other disciplines, such as history, sociology, and neuroscience (Stearns 2008, 2009). Furthermore,

the role of emotions has gained more interest also in language studies, particularly in the past few decades, something that is very relevant to the present study. The views on emotions in language studies will be handled more closely in Chapter 3.

There are quite possibly as many definitions of the word *emotion* as there are researchers in the field of psychology, or any other field for that matter. Lewis and Michalson (1983a, as quoted by Lewis 1989: 56) suggest that the term *emotion* includes five different types of components, namely “emotional elicitors, receptors, states, expressions and experiences”. Later, Lewis (2008: 304) slightly changes his angle, stating that along with the term *cognition*, *emotion* “refers to a class of elicitors, behaviors, states, and experiences”. All these components describe the whole range of rather physiological aspects of emotion, starting with a stimulus that triggers change and goes through the receptors in the Central Nervous System and is then shown, for instance, in hormonal responses or in facial expressions (Lewis 1989: 56-60, Lewis 2008). Also Izard (2007: 263) sees that basic emotions, which will be dealt with in more detail later, have “evolutionarily based neurobiological roots and at least partially dedicated neural systems”. Lewis (1989: 66) continues that in order to have an emotional experience it requires a person’s interpretation and evaluation of all the elements mentioned above. Similarly, Valiente, Swanson, and Eisenberg (2012: 129) state that “emotions represent individuals’ reactions to stimuli, accompanied by their judgments on the circumstances surrounding the stimuli”. Moreover, Lewis (1989: 67) says that emotional experiences often take linguistic forms, such as “I am frightened” or “I am happy”, which makes the psychological approach to emotions instantly compatible with language studies. Also Nummenmaa (2010: 33) supports such a view, stating that people like to organize, classify, and name things, thus using the words to describe their mental states, emotions included. For instance, Finns have about 50 frequently used words in their language to describe emotions (Tuovila 2005, as quoted by Nummenmaa 2010: 36). Yet, despite such linguistic characteristics of emotional experiences, language has not been widely recognized as valuable in the field of psychology, quite the opposite. According to Roebuck (2000: 80), in the early theoretical paradigms, namely in behaviorist school and in cognitive science, “the role of language and language use in cognition is neglected”.

In regard to defining the word *emotion*, also Bennett (1982: 244) offers an interpretation, stating that emotion can be seen as a type of “subjective feeling”, including such very basic emotions as love, hate, anger, and pleasure. Nummenmaa (2010: 33) lists as basic emotions pleasure or joy, fear, hate, disgust, sadness, and surprise, which people tell they experience

more frequently than other emotions. According to Differential Emotions Theory (DET), Izard and Buechler (1980: 167-168) suggest that there are ten fundamental emotions, which are experienced as “interest, joy, surprise, sadness, anger, disgust, contempt, fear, shame/shyness, and guilt”. The list may be quite surprising, particularly in regard to including *interest* as one of the fundamental emotions, since it might also be considered as a mood, instead of an emotion. However, Izard and Buechler (1980: 168) include *interest* in their list, and furthermore state that of those ten emotions mentioned above, interest is the positive emotion people experience most frequently and it also motivates learning, which is a noteworthy aspect to this study.

In his later research, Izard (2007) takes a stance towards the concepts of basic emotions and emotion schemas. He separates basic emotions from emotion schemas, but states that the term *emotion* includes both sides (Izard 2007: 260). According to Izard (2007: 261), the basic emotions, which can also be categorized as natural kinds, are “interest, joy/happiness, sadness, anger, disgust, and fear”, thus cutting out some of the emotions from his earlier list and decreasing the number from ten to six. He gives multifaceted evidence to support his statement of, firstly, there being basic emotions, and secondly, basic emotions being natural kinds, and this view can be summarized as follows: “basic emotions are natural kinds on the basis of critical common properties, including their unique capacities to regulate and motivate cognition and action” (Izard 2007: 261). Emotion schemas, on the other hand, are “defined in terms of the dynamic interaction of emotion and cognition”, thus involving “higher order cognition” (Izard 2007:265). The difference between basic emotion and emotion schemas, therefore, lies in their properties. The emotion schemas are not natural kinds since their properties differ within different cultures and from one individual to another (Izard 2007: 261), properties very similar to also language, whereas “each basic emotion has distinct universal and unlearned regulatory and motivational characteristics” (Izard 2007: 264). Izard (2007: 265) criticizes somewhat his fellow researchers for labeling the emotions wrongly as basic emotions, when, in fact, they mean emotion schemas, which can be seen in the use of common or vernacular labels such as “joy or happiness, sadness, anger, and fear”. Still, Izard (2007: 265) acknowledges that most theorists are in agreement with the view that “basic emotions are few in number, relatively infrequent, and short in duration and that nonbasic emotions (emotion schemas) are virtually infinite in number and usually longer in duration”. Adding to Izard’s views, emotion schemas are also a link between psychology, discursive

psychology, and language studies, and this connection will be examined more closely in Section 2.3.

As seen above, Izard still includes *interest* in the new list of emotions, which is a very important aspect to this study, since interest seems to have a strong relation to learning. Izard sees interest, along with fear, which “inhibits approach and motivates escape or protective behavior” (Izard 2007: 264), as something unique compared to other basic emotions, namely that “interest focuses and sustains attention and motivates exploration and learning” (Izard 2007: 264). According to Izard (2007: 264), only interest and fear have such unique functions amongst the basic emotions. On the other hand, he divides the basic emotions into the positive and the negative, stating that the positive ones, which include interest and joy/contentment, “occur frequently to facilitate exploration and learning, as well as affiliative and attachment behavior”, and that the negative ones, including sadness, anger, disgust and fear, “have a low base rate and a short duration” (Izard 2007: 264). The statement about the positive basic emotions seems to imply that interest may not, in fact, be unique at all in facilitating learning, since the *joy/contentment* combination seems to have that same effect. However, Izard (2007) sees interest as the emotion that has the power to change or even create other emotions, thus making it a very powerful tool indeed.

Bennett (1982: 244) offers yet another way of looking at the issue, stating that the word *emotion* can be used to describe the way people act, or the “emotional expression”. Klinnert et al. (1983: 58) go even further and describe a series of different outcomes, which can occur when people are in an emotional state. These outcomes include physical sensations, facial and vocal expressions, and such “instrumental behaviors” as withdrawing, attacking, or cuddling (Klinnert et al. 1983: 58). Solomon (2008: 11) even states that “[v]irtually all emotions get expressed (however minimally) in behavior”. Furthermore, Klinnert et al. (1983: 58) suggest that social surroundings and people’s emotions have great consequences on other people’s behavior. Izard (2007: 263) sees that the consequences on other people can already be seen in infancy, stating that “basic-emotion expressions serve distinct social communicative functions via face, voice, and body signals that motivate others in distinct ways”. To put it simple, the way a person shows how he or she feels may very well influence the way other people behave, for instance, an aggressive person very often attracts aggression in other people. Similarly, it may be argued that in the school environment the way the teacher behaves will have an effect on how the pupils or students behave, and vice versa. Such an effect in

behavior alone is a very strong advocate for studying emotions more rigorously also in regard to language learning.

In addition, Izard (2007: 265) sees the other side of emotions affecting behavior, stating that if a child is anger-prone, this “may cause the child to perceive anger-evoking cues that others see as neutral”, and, thus, our interpretation of what other people mean affects our emotional experience (Nummenmaa 2010: 37). Similarly, meeting a person we dislike makes us interpret the social interaction situation as more aggressive and negative, even if the situation is, in fact, completely neutral (Nummenmaa 2010: 52). Nummenmaa (2010: 52) points out that since emotions, similarly to other functions such as seeing or hearing, are highly automatized, we get information about a change in our social environment through the subjective emotional experiences without even noticing the change itself, and this can trigger an emotional reaction in less than half a second. For instance, meeting a person we like will trigger a positive reaction, which in turn will guide our interpretation of the social interaction, which can also lead to misunderstandings and false interpretations of the situation, particularly if we are not aware of the reasons, such as dislike towards a person, behind the reactions (Nummenmaa 2010: 52-53). Thus, the individual experience becomes very important in social situations. However, Foolen (1997: 20) points out that there is a difference between talking about feelings and acting them out, which both adults and children are capable of doing. Foolen (1997: 20) says that “the verbal saying and the non-verbal showing are qualitatively different ways of communicating”. He continues that “[i]n the non-verbal way, the feeling is expressed directly, whereas in a verbal utterance the *conceptualization* of the feeling is communicated” (Foolen 1997: 20, original emphasis). More of this will be taken into account in Chapter 3, when taking a closer look at emotions in language studies.

Other people are basically the key to experiencing emotions. One could argue that the same is true of learning languages. Nummenmaa (2010: 17) states that in order to survive our daily lives and interaction with other people, emotions are essential. Emotions are social in nature, but they are not merely subjective or inner events, in fact, quite the contrary, since a special feature of emotions is that they are both visible and audible to the outside world, very unlike, for instance, thoughts or memories, which stay our inner and personal issues, if we choose not to share them with others (Nummenmaa 2010: 76-77). Personal emotions lead to strong experiences in us, but also in other people, emotions are, in fact, rather infectious, and this similarity in interpreting the world through emotions leads to a better understanding between people (Nummenmaa 2010: 144-145). Human relations and social environment are crucial if

a person is to grow up to have emotions in the first place. Still, there is an ongoing discussion about the role of nature versus nurture, that is, how much, for instance, learning and social aspects affect our emotional range. Frijda (2008: 79) sees that there is no denying the biological base of emotions. According to Bennett (1982: 244-245), the whole basis of an affectionate and feeling human being with normal social skills lies in the “contact comfort” (Bennett 1982: 244) between an infant and its caretaker. What it means in laymen terms is that even more than nourishment a human baby needs a warm lap to curl onto. However, to become an emotional adult that is not quite enough. Bennett (1982: 245) continues that in order to experience emotions in later life a child needs, along with the contact comfort, “peer contact” with other human beings as well. Bennett (1982: 268) emphasizes the importance of these two forms of contact by saying that the lack of them will lead to “a lasting negative influence on patterns of social behavior”. After such a statement it is easy to understand that social contacts are very important and should be treated as such. Nummenmaa (2010: 37) points out yet another factor about human emotions and other people, namely that there are emotions, such as shame, that can only exist through, for instance, observing our parents and peers, thus being culturally learned and social in nature. Taking into account that also language learning is culturally bound and social in nature, it is important to notice that all the findings in the psychological approaches presented here are, in fact, quite strongly interconnected with language learning and language studies as well.

One of the issues already addressed briefly in this section was that defining the term *emotion* is a difficult task. In the field of psychology, emotions have been approached from different angles. Inchaurrealde (1997: 136) states that in the field of psychology there are no clear definitions to emotions, as they can be perceived in very different perspectives. Similarly, also Izard (2007: 260) has come to the same conclusion, stating that “[r]esearch on emotion flourishes in many disciplines and specialties, yet experts cannot agree on its definition”. Therefore, considering all the views discussed in this section, it can clearly be seen that researchers have quite different views on what, in fact, emotion is. Izard (2006, as quoted by Izard 2007: 271) even went as far as to conduct a survey among “39 internationally known experts in emotion researcher”, of which 33 answered, in order to find how they thought about defining the word *emotion*. The result of the survey was, not surprisingly, that basically it is not possible to define emotion, but on the other hand, a follow-up survey suggested that “the lack of consensus on a unified definition did not prevent considerable agreement on the defining features or components and characteristics of emotions” (Izard 2007: 271) as many

researchers shared a common view on the components and characteristics of what an emotion contains. It is, therefore, quite possible that even if there can be no universal definition for what emotion is, we can all still share an understanding of what an emotion means. Frijda (2008: 84) suggests that all emotion researchers should, in fact, try to facilitate communication by talking and listening to other researchers, trying to learn something from other fields that study emotions, other than one's own special area, thus expanding their horizons and getting rid of their restrictions, which is what this study is very much trying to do on its own small scale.

Since finding a universal definition for the word *emotion* has proven to be very difficult, if not impossible, to emotion researchers, it is not reasonable to expect it here. In order to continue this journey, it is time to take a stance towards an approach that seems the most appropriate for the purposes of this study. The road to take is to follow the view that is supported by Wierzbicha (1993, 1995, as quoted by Niemeier 1997: viii), who has done plenty of research on the subject of emotions being culturally based, a theory, which according to Niemeier (1997: viii), has begun to gain more support among researchers. Currently, there seems to be a rather congruent understanding of the fact that environment, culture and social relationships affect emotions, and that is the point of view for this study. The social constructionist viewpoint certainly supports such a view on emotion. Harré (1986: 5) even went as far as to say that there is “the possibility that many emotions can exist only in the reciprocal exchanges of a social encounter”.

All in all, the psychological point of view on emotions might be regarded as rather physical or physiological, but there is a link to second language learning, or learning in general, as well. First of all, emotions often take linguistic forms, such as “I am happy” (Lewis 1989: 67), thus giving justification for choosing the discursive approach as the method to investigate the expressions of emotions in the data of the present study. Secondly, Izard and Buechler (1980: 168) state that interest is the emotion that motivates learning the most, and it is also the most frequently experienced positive emotion. Furthermore, second language learning often takes place among other people, mainly at school or in a foreign country, and according to Bennett (1982) and Klinnert et al. (1983), other people and social surroundings are the key to experiencing emotions in the first place. Valiente et al. (2012: 130) point out, that “advances in psychology and neurosciences demonstrate that emotions are crucial contributors to students' motivation, interpersonal resources, memory, and learning”. Particularly the connection between emotions and motivation and learning is very relevant to the present

study, which will become evident in the analysis of the data, presented in Chapter 5. The next chapter will, however, handle more of Harré's ideas and social constructionism in general.

2.2 Social constructionism

Emotions have been of interest to human beings throughout the history of man, but the tradition in which emotions have been perceived has varied a great deal. During the nineteenth century when the emotions started to interest the scientific field they were basically seen as non-cognitive and involuntary (Harré 1986: 2). Gradually the view has changed towards perceiving emotions as cultural and social phenomena and particularly the social constructionist viewpoint supports such a view.

Social constructionism leans heavily on the assumptions that cultural conventions affect emotions a great deal, that emotions are intentional, and that culturally and locally bound moral order highly influences the use of emotion words (Harré 1986: 8). According to Harré (1986: 8), the intentional aspect of emotion means that emotions are “about something”. Solomon (2008: 12) supports Harré's views, also stating that the “intentionality” of emotions means that they usually have an object to which they are directed. The intentionality or the “aboutness” of emotions means that, for instance, people get angry about something or at someone, are proud or jealous of something or someone and so on. This means that the presence of other people and the social environment can be detected every time people talk about their feelings and emotions, hence the social nature of emotions. According to social constructionism, emotions are, as the name suggests, socially constructed, or “socioculturally constituted” (Armon-Jones 1986: 68) and cannot therefore exist outside the social relations and surroundings. According to Stets and Turner (2008: 43), even the most hardcore social constructivist accepts that there are a few primary, but still socially constructed, emotions, which are “happiness, fear, anger, sadness, disgust, and surprise”. Beyond this particular classification of primary emotions, there seems to be no agreement on whether certain emotions are, in fact, hardwired in human beings or if they are “wholly cultural constructions” (Stets & Turner 2008: 43).

On the other hand, Solomon (2008: 13) notes that emotions can very well also be about something that is nonexistent or imaginary, for instance, jealousy can arise from the mere imagination of a person. Furthermore, emotions also contain beliefs, desires, needs, attitudes,

and values, which may explain some of the emotions people are experiencing, for instance, a person may be angry because he believes that another person has wronged him (Solomon 2008: 13). Harré (1986: 12) adds that it is important to realize that emotion words are always used in a situation of some sort and under various conditions, and these must be taken into account. Moreover, Bedford (1986: 20) states that the behavior varies from one person to another and from one occasion to another, and also that the same emotion can mean different things to a person depending on the occasion, leading to different types of behavior. According to Bedford (1986: 20), emotions, in fact, interpret behavior instead of describing it. Furthermore, Harré (1986: 9) emphasizes the effects that particularly the local language and moral order have on how people experience emotions. He also claims that, in fact, there are “culturally diverse emotions” (Harré 1986: 10). Not all cultures have the same understanding of, for instance, jealousy compared to how western societies understand it. Similarly, not all emotion words are directly translatable into other languages, because they are culturally bound. Wierzbicha (1991: 120-130, 1995, as quoted by Kryk-Kastovsky 1997: 155) supports such a view, stating that the words that people use are “language-specific and hard to compare cross-linguistically.” The same aspect can also be found in discursive psychology (Edwards 1997: 180) and will be dealt with more closely in Section 2.3.

What all of the factors mentioned above mean is that the culture, the people, and the language we are surrounded by while growing up have a long lasting influence on how we experience emotions in general, and how we talk about them. Armon-Jones (1986: 36-37) takes the notion even further, claiming that emotions are a constitution of “non-natural attitudes”, that is, attitudes that can be learned and are acquired particularly in sociocultural contexts. Armon-Jones (1986: 37) also sees that since the function of emotions is sociocultural, it serves “individuals only as members of their community”. Therefore, it is very important that the way people talk about their emotions and the emotion words they use should be interpreted only within the cultural context in which they are uttered. Edwards (1997: 173) even talks about “emotion discourse” when referring to the ways in which people talk about their emotions. He also sees that social constructionism is “broadly compatible” with discursive psychology, particularly when focusing on “language-oriented approaches to emotions” (Edwards 1997: 173). The way people talk about their emotions is one important aspect of the discursive psychology of emotion and therefore a noteworthy aspect to this study. Discursive psychology combines some of the issues presented earlier and this will be handled in the following section.

2.3 Discursive psychology

A very relevant aspect of this study will be recognizing the ways in which the students express their feelings through writing. A noteworthy way, then, is to turn to discursive psychology. Discursive psychology very much deals with emotion discourse, that is, how people talk, or write, about their emotions (Edwards 1997: 170). According to Edwards (1997: 179), it is the aim of discursive psychology to view how emotion words figure in various “discursive activities”, such as giving reasons, making excuses, and directing blame. Also Pishwa (2009: 9) sees that people use emotion expressions in justifying “behaviors, decisions and other affects”. Roebuck (2000: 80) argues that discursive psychology can be seen as the “[t]hird generation psychology”, as opposed to behaviorist or cognitive psychology. Moreover, Roebuck (2000: 80) states that discursive or, in other words, sociocultural psychology “treats psychological and linguistic processes as a unified phenomenon”, an aspect that was already pointed out in Section 2.1. Discursive psychology also “emphasizes utterance or discourse [...] taking into account the sociocultural context” (Roebuck 2000: 80). She also sees this third wave influenced by Vygotsky’s ideas in regard to the notion that “the properties of the mind can be discovered by observing mental, physical, and linguistic activity, because they are *intrinsically* related” (Roebuck 2000: 80-81, original emphasis), thus having, again, the social aspect. Further, Roebuck (2000: 81) summarizes the basic idea behind the Vygotskian thinking in stating that “discursive psychology emphasizes that consciousness is mental activity achieved through discourse, whether public or private, and not underlying or hidden abstract processes”. Moreover, Harré and Gillett (1994: 86, as quoted by Roebuck 2000: 82) continue that “[m]ind is, then, a symbolically organized social construction, determined by and, thus visible in, discourse”. In regard to being symbolically organized, it is also important to notice that emotion discourse includes, along with emotion words, also metaphors (Edwards 1997: 188). Similarly, Foolen (1997: 16) points out that “languages are full of conventionalized metaphors that are related to emotions”, giving examples such as “be *in* love” or “love can be *burning*” (Foolen 1997: 16, original emphases). Moreover, Larsen et al. (2008: 181) point out that “many of metaphors people use to express emotion involve bodily sensations”, for instance, anxiety can be described as having butterflies in the stomach, and anger can be seen as blood boiling in the veins.

Drawing from cognitive science, functional linguistics, and discursive psychology, Bednarek's (2009) views are the link that joins the psychological approaches to language studies in the present study. Bednarek's (2009) answer to Edwards' (1999) emotion discourse is to divide the language describing emotional expressions into *emotion talk* and *emotional talk*. According to Bednarek (2009: 396, original emphases), "*emotion talk* makes use of expressions that directly and explicitly name a particular emotional response". She continues that emotion talk is used to refer to "lexical items that denote emotional experience for example *love, hate, joy, envy, sad, mad, enjoy, dislike*", but also to fixed expressions such as "[h]e had a broken heart" (Bednarek 2009: 399, original emphases). Further, emotion talk can be used to refer to temporary emotional states that last only for a moment, but also to "more permanent emotional dispositions" (Bednarek 2009: 399). On the other hand, emotional talk is perceived more of an indirect emotional experience, which "need not be clearly identifiable" (Bednarek 2009: 396). For example, colorful accounts of events often show no signs of explicit emotion words, but emotional experiences can be detected in them, which is when emotional talk is being used (Bednarek 2009: 396). Such a characteristic is clearly seen in some of the examples chosen for the analysis of this study, presented in Chapter 5. Bednarek (2009: 397) continues that the emotional experiences expressed in emotional talk can be either verbal, including such examples as repetition, exclamation and affective connotations, or non-verbal such as facial expressions, vocal cues and gestures.

Moreover, Bednarek (2009: 369) points out that using either emotion or emotional talk needs to be considered a "discursive strategy" and not necessarily the actual representation of the speaker's "internal affective state". What this means is that by using either emotion or emotional talk the speakers may not be telling anything about their actual, current emotions, thus saying that *I'm happy* does not necessarily mean that the person is really happy (Bednarek 2009: 405). Emotions should, thus, be seen as both "cognitive and social phenomena" and language use, then, "both reflects and construes emotion schemata" (Bednarek 2009: 396). Bednarek (2009: 405-406) sees that both the cognitive and the discursive aspects are needed when examining language and emotion, as "[r]esearch on emotion schemata can provide underlying explanatory power and a grid for classifying affective language, whereas adopting the discursive perspective can show us important social functions of emotion talk". The emotion schemas, or schemata, will be addressed next.

The social aspect of emotion discourse can, then, be seen in the use of schemas, a subject that was already addressed briefly in Section 2.1. Pishwa (2009: 7) sees that social interaction is

enabled by “social knowledge clustered in schemas and categories”, of which schemas are seen as more abstract and larger, and can also be labeled as “scripts” or “frames”, both of them serving “as background information and as verbalized concepts” in social interaction. To Bednarek (2009: 396), emotion schemas are “belief/knowledge structures about emotional experience”. Furthermore, Bednarek (2009: 397, following Kövecses 2000, original emphases) argues that the “structured folk knowledge” that people possess is important when they are trying to interpret their emotional experiences and it also includes an awareness that there are various components in emotional experience. People’s emotion schemas comprise the same aspect as the folk knowledge, thus being “*both* motivated by human physiology *and* produced by the socio-cultural environment” (Kövecses 2000: 14, as quoted by Bednarek 2009: 397, original emphases). The emotional experiences can be manifested in the change in human physiology when, for instance, anger makes the body heat rise, but emotion schemas are also based on observation of other people’s emotional experiences and being exposed to emotion discourse or other “socializing processes” (Bednarek 2009: 397). In short, people can draw on schemas or, in other words, their knowledge of the typical features of the world, when interpreting the emotional behavior they witness in other people, for instance, making sense of when they observe rushed breathing, paleness and sweat as “components of a possible schema of fear” (Bednarek 2009: 399). Bednarek (2009: 398) also notes that emotion schemas are “at least partly influenced by culture”, thus being highly compatible with emotions themselves, and language as well.

One important aspect in regard to emotions is that they can vary from one person or situation to another, and that they can also change over time, even over minutes or hours (Johnstone, Schorr & Scherer 2001: 4-5). Johnstone et al. (2001: 4) point out that both academic studies and common observation indicate that the differences between individuals on how they react to any given event can be striking. They continue that, for instance, the way people respond to the ending of a romantic relationship can vary from sadness, to anger, to guilt, or even to relief or hope, or there can be a total absence of emotion (Johnstone et al. 2001: 4), all of which can be regarded as quite common and normal emotional responses. This proves that there are no “correct” responses to any emotions. Johnstone et al. (2001: 4) summarize the complexity of individuals’ emotional range by stating that “any emotion may be evoked by an infinite number of events, including events that have never been encountered previously”. Furthermore, even if an event has resulted in one particular emotion at one particular time, it may change. Johnstone et al. (2001: 5) state that even “responses to a recurrent situation over

longer time spans can change and be changed”. Such a feature can also lead to problems. Pishwa (2009: 7) suggests that our memory may play tricks on us, as it is not possible to store any events as is; instead, the representations of past events keep changing and they are also “retrieved in dependence on moods”, which can in turn lead to “biased memorizing”. As the data of the present study consists of autobiographical narratives of the past, it is important to keep in mind that the stories, and also the emotions presented in them, may indeed be different now as opposed to when the events actually took place. Kunda (1999: 182, as quoted by Pishwa 2009: 7) names such a phenomenon as “hindsight bias”, which sees the difficulty in reconstructing “the way we had understood events before we had known about their eventual outcomes”.

Edwards (1997: 189) gives another important aspect of viewing emotion discourse, namely that it is important to study what is being said in actual use for it to be natural. Roebuck (2000: 82) states that “mind is realized in the act of discourse”. Discursive psychology can be used to examine both spoken and written texts, but the texts should preferably be spontaneous, instead of being strictly structured (Edwards 1997: 189). One might argue that no such thing as spontaneous discourse exists if it is collected for scientific study purposes, since there is always the element of the presence of the researcher in one way or another present, but it is possible to reach at least semi-spontaneous situations where data can be collected and regarded as natural and authentic. Edwards (1997: 193) also sees that it is possible to some extent to “spell out a range of discursive resources concerning emotions”. He does not offer definitions of emotion words, but gives some tools for understanding what emotion discourse is able to do, for example in “everyday narrative” or “in discourses of events and accountability” (Edwards 1997: 193), in the form of emotion categories. These categories include such combinations as “[e]motion versus cognition”, “[s]pontaneous versus externally caused” and “[h]onest (spontaneous, reactive) versus faked, artful, not ‘true’” (Edwards 1997: 194, original emphases) and could be used in several combinations. However, the categories are not precise enough to conduct a deeper analysis for the purposes of this study and they will, therefore, not be taken into account here.

To sum up Section 2.3, Planalp (1999: 138, as quoted by Pishwa 2009: 9) argues that after taking everything into account, communication of emotions is a social act and “an effective way to establish social connections”. Pishwa (2009: 12) even states that “if social aspects are so basic for human interaction and even for their existence, we can take for granted that language offers a whole lot of insights into their nature”. She also sees that “understanding

language use requires an understanding of its social dimension”, continuing that the social aspects of language have not been properly appreciated in linguistics, and therefore, there is “a gap to be filled” (Pishwa 2009: 2). This notion will be looked more closely in the following chapter.

3 EMOTION IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

This chapter concentrates on emotions from a language learning point of view, which is a part of a larger ensemble called language studies. Section 3.1 deals with the different concepts of the current study, clarifying the many terms and definitions that will be used in this study. From this the journey continues on to a short review of the traditional SLA research, also from the emotional viewpoint. This will be handled in Section 3.2. The third section of this chapter, Section 3.3, focuses more on the current, and even upcoming, views on emotions in language learning, namely that the learner is on the focus along with the sociocultural approach to the subject. Finally, Section 3.4 takes a glance at the previous studies of emotions in educational context, thus introducing some relevant studies in regard to the present study in order to reflect this study on the findings of the previous studies.

3.1 Central concepts

It is important to get clarity in some of the terminology used in this study in regard to language learning and emotions. As was already discovered in the earlier sections, defining certain key concepts can be very challenging. This is also the case with some key terms in language learning and the emotional aspects of it. Firstly, the term *affect* has traditionally been more frequently used in language learning research than the term *emotion*, and also with a wider meaning. Arnold and Brown (1999: 1) use the term *affect* broadly, including the aspects of “emotion, feeling, mood or attitude which condition behaviour”. Also Stevick (1999: 44) uses the term in a very broad sense, stating that a person’s affect towards something, whether that something is a thing, an action, a situation, or an experience, is how that something “fits in with one’s needs or purposes, and its resulting effect on one’s emotions”. In saying so, Stevick (1999: 14) separates emotions from affect, but acknowledges the role of emotions by stating that “emotions are commonly responses to how one’s various needs and purposes are or are not being met”. This means that if a person’s need, for instance,

to feel competence in language learning is not met, it could result in emotions like anger or in physical symptoms like sweaty palms (Stevick 1999: 14). However, for the purposes of this study there is no need to separate the two terms *affect* and *emotion* and they are thus treated as equal. This means that when using the term emotion, the term of choice for this study, also the qualities of the term affect are included. This also seems to be the trend in current scholarly literature, since the term affect appears nowadays less often than the term emotion. Noteworthy to this study is the fact that in the Finnish language, the language of the autobiographical narratives used as the data in this study, the nouns *emotion*, *feeling* and *affect* could all be, and usually are, translated into a single word, which is “*tunne*”. This one word in Finnish is a tight package full of meaning, which consists of all the qualities of the many sides embedded in its English counterparts. Due to this feature in Finnish, and also for clarity, the words emotion, feeling and affect will be treated as equal in this study.

Secondly, it is important to make clear the distinctions between the terms *second language acquisition*, *second language learning*, and also their abbreviations *SLA* and *SLL*, respectively, and also the term *L2 learning*. *SLA* and *SLL* are used interchangeably in this study, which is also the choice made by Ellis (1985: 6), and Mitchell and Myles (2004: 6), thus the two phrases mean virtually the same. Still, as Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005: 3, original emphases) point out, the term *SLA* can be rather confusing as it is often used to refer to the learning of another language, that is, as the label for “the *object* of enquiry”, but also, the term *SLA* is used to represent the field of study, “the *study* of how people learn a second language”. The confusion is avoided in this study by following the principles of Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005), namely that the term *SLA* stands for the label for the field of study, and the label for the object of enquiry is *L2 learning*, which also includes any qualities embedded in the term *L2 acquisition*. This simplification of the terms is necessary, since for the purposes of this study it is quite impossible to engage in a battle whether language is, in fact, learned or acquired or perhaps something completely different. Furthermore, the abbreviation *L2* is used to present the longer term *second language*, for instance, in such phrases as *L2 learning* or *L2 learner*. Moreover, as the term *L2* also includes several angles and there is an ongoing battle over which languages can, in fact, be included under the term *second language*, for the purposes of this study the term is quite heavily simplified. Mitchell and Myles (2004) offer a solid solution for defining the concept. This means that *L2* is understood in the broadest sense possible, which is to say that all foreign languages, after properly learning the mother tongue, or tongues if the learner is bilingual, are included in the term, whether they were learned

before school, in a classroom, or abroad, or are, in fact, the third, the fourth, and so on, language for the student (Mitchell & Myles 2004: 5-6). Furthermore, the *L2 learners* may be children or adults, learning the second language “formally and systematically”, that is, in school, or through “informal social contact” in communication (Mitchell & Myles 2004: 23).

As discussed in the previous chapter, the word emotion is not easy to define even in the field of psychology where it has been studied more thoroughly, let alone in language studies, where the subject has been almost completely neglected until quite recently. Omondi (1997: 88) sees a clear correlation between the terms *emotion* and *language* in stating that the word emotion resembles the word language, since they both are familiar words to the extent of being taken for granted, yet are very difficult to define as scientific concepts. In language learning people often turn to dictionaries when they come across words they are not familiar with, and it, therefore, seems to be an appropriate point of investigation in order to gain understanding of the term *emotion* from a language learning point of view. The dictionary definitions can be said to have more of a semantic aspect to them than being true definitions of the phenomenon, but since also native speakers, for instance, of English, use dictionaries as reference books, they have valid information of the term for the purposes of this study. First, Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary (1987: 461, original emphases) defines the word *emotion* as:

1 An **emotion** is a feeling such as fear, love, hate, anger, or jealousy, which can be caused by the situation that you are in or the people you are with. **2** **Emotion** is the part of a person's character that consists of their feelings as opposed to their thoughts.

Second, The Penguin English Dictionary (1992: 302) has a slightly different and more concise approach to defining the word, stating that *emotion* is:

1 excitement **2** a mental and physical reaction (e.g. anger, fear, or joy) marked by strong feeling and often physiological changes that prepare the body for immediate vigorous action.

The third definition of *emotion noun* comes from the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (n.d.) and is as follows:

a strong feeling such as love, fear or anger; the part of a person's character that consists of feelings

Finally, another online dictionary, Vocabulary.com (n.d., original emphases) gives somewhat longer and more detailed description of the word, briefly acknowledging also the etymology of the word:

An **emotion** is a strong feeling, like the *emotion* you feel when you see your best friend at the movies with a group of people who cause trouble for you.

The word *emotion* comes from the Middle French word *émotion*, which means "a (social) moving, stirring, agitation." We feel many different emotions every day, like love, fear, joy and sadness - just to name a few. On its own, *emotion* means "the expression of feeling," like a musician who plays with great emotion, or an actor whose face conveys emotions, even when he or she is just standing quietly on the stage.

As seen even in the short dictionary examples above, the word *emotion* can be defined, and also understood, in several different ways, even though there are also many similarities. As was already seen in the previous chapter on psychological approaches, the researchers in psychology have not been able to find a universal definition for *emotion*. This is also true for the professionals who compile dictionaries, and it is not, therefore, the goal of this study to give one either. Perhaps the simplest way of handling the word *emotion* is to follow the principle found, for instance, in the psychological approaches viewed in this study, which is that emotions are about people, their surroundings and culture. Omondi (1997: 89, original emphasis) states that "*emotion* is an experience by the human being." This simple statement links the ideas found in all the fields explored for this study and is therefore a valid point. From that simple statement Omondi (1997: 89-90) continues to introduce a fundamental term for this study, namely *emotional language*, which strongly parallels with Edwards' (1997, 1999) term *emotion discourse*. According to Omondi (1997: 89), emotional language covers every piece of language that names, refers, or is related to emotions. For instance, merely naming emotions like love or hate automatically makes them a part of emotional language (Omondi 1997: 89). Furthermore, Omondi (1997: 90) states that "we are going to understand emotional language as that language which either by its meaning or its function in use expresses any of the emotions we shall identify", which is precisely the perspective the writer of this study will take on her analysis. Moreover, Frijda (2008:74) states that "emotions are usually referred to by nouns". Harris (2008: 320), then, brings forth the obvious, saying that "human beings, unlike other primates, can put their feelings into words". Nummenmaa (2010: 165) even suggests that emotions are, in fact, the first language and a sign system that human beings use as infants.

Still, words may never capture the essence of emotions, the way we actually feel. Panksepp (2008: 48, original emphasis) states that similarly to a blind person's inability to truly understand the meaning of the word *red*, "one cannot use words to *explain* primary-process raw emotions". He continues that words can be used to "discuss affective experiences, but

they do not adequately capture the fundamental causes of feelings” (Panksepp 2008: 48). Still, words are basically the only thing we have in order to make any sense of our emotions, and particularly in order to share them with others. Even Panksepp (2008: 47) says that “[w]ithout affect, we humans would have little to talk about and no special reason to reach out to others”, thus somewhat contradicting himself. Harris sees our ability to voice our emotions a multidimensional power, stating that

it allows human beings to communicate what they feel not just about ongoing situations, but also about past, future, recurrent, or hypothetical situations. These conversations - which begin in early childhood - provide our species with a unique opportunity to share, understand, and reconstitute emotional experience. (Harris 2008: 321)

Harris’ view supports the way in which the students write about their language journeys in their narratives and the vast information found in the data of this study. This will, naturally, become clearer in the analysis of the data, in Chapter 5.

Lastly, an important guideline for this study is to follow the ideas presented by Imai. He takes a very particular view on defining emotions, arguing that “[e]motions are not just an individual’s private inner workings in response to external stimuli but are socially constructed acts of communication that can mediate one’s thinking, behavior, and goals” (Imai 2010: 279), thus leaning heavily towards the social constructionist approach, which seems to be the way today’s SLA research is beginning to lean towards in a more substantial manner. At the end of the twentieth century there began to be a shift towards a change concerning emotions in language studies, Niemeier (1997: viii) even argued then that emotions are “one of the fashionable topics” in several fields, including language studies. Similarly, the focus of studies on emotions was changing and a sociocultural approach was beginning to gain interest among researchers. This shift will be examined more closely from the language learning viewpoint and will be handled later in Section 3.3. Before that, in the following section, it is time to take a quick glance at some of the more traditional aspects of the SLA research in the past.

3.2 A glance at the traditional SLA research

The field of SLA is still relatively new, since, even though interest in L2 learning has been present for quite some time, the early empirical studies date back to the 1960’s (Ellis & Shintani 2014: 5). Also, interest in “affective factors in education” has been around from the

early parts of the 20th century (Arnold & Brown 1999: 5). Still, even if the interest towards the affective aspects has existed in language studies, the major change towards actually treating emotions as valuable in language learning had to wait almost till the new millennium. In the past few decades, according to Arnold and Brown (1999: 5), “many of the major developments in language teaching [...] are in some way related to the need to acknowledge affect in language leaning”. The knowledge about language learning has expanded with every approach the field has seen. The methods for analyzing particularly the learner language included such widely used methods as Error Analysis (EA), Contrastive Analysis (CA), and functional analysis, which include both form-to-function and function-to-form analyses (Ellis & Barkhuizen 2005; Mitchell & Myles 2004), to name only a few. The methods that took affect into consideration included, for instance, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and the Natural Approach (Arnold & Brown 1999: 6). Each method built on the earlier method used and tried to solve the problems encountered in the previous models. All this work has added to the knowledge about language learning.

Emotions, then, have not been in the central focus in language studies in the past, but they have been increasingly gaining interest among researchers for a decade or two. Emotions and their relations to language have not, by any means, been entirely out of the picture in regard to SLA research in the past, but studying emotions has just been rather marginal (Foolen 1997: 15-16) and the focus has basically been the “causation between emotions and learning outcomes” (Imai 2010: 279). Kramersch (2009: 4) somewhat criticizes the idea behind such studies for missing the point, stating that “[s]uccess in language learning is an artifact of schooling [...], but the language-learning experience itself is neither successful nor unsuccessful”. Furthermore, the studies of emotions in SLA research have usually been quantitative in nature, pursuing to find causality between, for instance, language proficiency and affective variables (Imai 2010: 279). Such an approach is not the focus of this study, but rather the affective variables themselves.

As Frijda (2008: 80) points out, the negative aspects of emotions have been dominating “the earlier theorizing” in the field of both psychology and philosophy. Similarly, this is certainly the case in SLA research. In the past, the studies of emotions have concentrated almost solely on anxiety, which was seen as “the most influential emotional factor in language learning” (Oxford 1999, as quoted by Imai 2010: 279). Arnold and Brown (1999: 8) call anxiety “quite possibly the affective factor that most pervasively obstructs the learning process”, which is an important point also for this study, since its power can be seen in the data of this study, as it is

also associated with such negative emotions as “uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension, and tension”. Also Oxford (1999: 62-66) sees the many sides of language anxiety, naming such correlates for it as self-esteem, tolerance of ambiguity, risk-taking, competitiveness, social anxiety, test anxiety, identity and culture shock, beliefs, classroom activities and methods, and instructor-learner interactions. All these categories have strong emotional aspects in them and it is a great balancing act for the language learners to find the balance in order to have the emotions working for them and not increasing language anxiety. Such wide variety of categories in language anxiety may well explain why the subject has been on top of SLA research for so long. Valiente et al. (2012: 129) note the exclusiveness of anxiety in language research in the past, saying that “[t]he few studies of emotion and achievement have largely focused on anxiety, but there has been scant theoretical and empirical attention devoted to the treatment of other emotions”. Furthermore, according to Valiente et al. (2012: 130), “[d]espite the prominent role emotions play in educational settings, work on how negative or positive emotions (with the exception of anxiety) contribute to key academic outcomes has emerged slowly”. That is to say that even if there is an understanding that emotions, in fact, affect learning outcomes, there has still not been large interest in studying the subject. This could naturally originate from the difficulty of the task, as was quickly learned by the writer of this study when starting this project, and the idea of studying the effects of emotions in L2 learning was, therefore, discarded on her behalf. However, as the quick look on previous research shows, there is definitely a place for the study in hand, which concentrates, not on correlations or learning outcomes, but on emotions per se in the student discourse. Still, according to Mitchell and Myles (2004: 25-26, following Gardner & MacIntyre 1992, 1993), the social psychologists have in a consistent manner argued that individual differences are responsible for different outcomes in learning, one part being the cognitive factors, including language aptitude and language learning strategies, and the other being affective factors, including anxiety, language attitudes, and motivation.

One widely studied area of interest among scholars of SLA research has, in fact, been L2 motivation (Imai 2010: 279). Gardner and MacIntyre (1993: 2, as quoted by Mitchell & Myles 2004: 26) see motivation as a very complex construct, which can take rather emotional forms, particularly by its three main components, that is, “desire to achieve a goal, effort extended in this direction, and satisfaction with the task”. Arnold and Brown (1999: 13) see that SLA theory “leaves no doubt about the crucial importance” of motivation. Also Ellis (2012: 325) acknowledges that motivation has been studied largely on its role in language

learning, stating that despite the fact that the results of the studies have been rather mixed, there is, however, “overwhelming evidence that more motivated learners learn more”. Furthermore, according to Imai (2010: 279), the works of several researchers (Dörnyei 1998; Dörnyei & Ottó 1998; Gardner 2001; Gardner & MacIntyre 1991, 1993) give “considerable scholarly attention” to L2 motivation and its power to predict success in language learning. On the other hand, Ellis (2012: 327) lists some elements that have a tendency to behave as “main demotivating factors”. Such factors seem very relevant to this study, as many of them have a place in the narratives used as the data. Ellis (2012: 327) suggests that teacher and learner factors, as well as facilities and classroom activities constitute the factors in question. He continues that “poor relationship with students (e.g. through criticizing them)” is among the demotivating teacher factors, which can be seen in the narratives. Also, the learner factors such as “reduced self-confidence (lack of belief in one’s own capability)” or “experience of failure”, as well as “negative attitudes towards fellow students”, can all be found in the narratives. Further, Ellis (2012: 327) uses “frequent change of teachers” as an example of the demotivating facilities factor, an issue mentioned in the narratives. Similarly, some of the classroom activities functioning as demotivating factors, that is, “activities perceived by students as irrelevant” and “repetitiveness”, are well represented in the data.

Still, while Imai (2010: 280) gives credit to all the researchers that have advanced the field of SLA in the past, he acknowledges the limitations of their rather restricted approach to the subject. Imai (2010: 280) argues that the mainstream SLA research has dismissed several dimensions of emotions, for example emotions such as enjoyment, relief, gratitude, jealousy, and “the interpersonal and communicative dimension of one’s emotionality”. He continues that the whole mainstream SLA research has underrated the complexity and the nonlinear nature of “the interplay of emotion, cognition, and action” (Imai 2010: 288). Similarly, Frijda (2008: 81) argues that “[t]raditionally, emotion and cognition have been considered different faculties. They have been put in opposition; so have feeling and thinking”. This should not be the case, as Arnold and Brown (1999: 1) pointed out already nearly two decades ago, saying that “the affective side of learning is not in opposition to the cognitive side”. They continue that both sides should be used together and not be separated, which will in turn benefit, not only the learning, but also other aspects of students’ lives beyond the classroom (Arnold & Brown 1999: 1-2). Kramsch (2009: 4) states that “[w]e are fooling ourselves if we believe that students learn only what they are taught”, meaning that there are various ways of learning in and outside of the classroom, which also includes L2 learning.

Still, what has been in common with most approaches in SLA is the fact that they have “traditionally given more attention to the processes of acquisition than to the flesh-and-blood individuals who are doing the learning”, leading to separation of the language and the “learners’ minds, bodies and social behaviors into separate domains of inquiry” (Kramersch 2009: 2). Moreover, Kramersch (2009: 50) widens her critique towards the SLA research by stating that it “has not dealt with the full range of a learner’s symbolic activity. It has focused more on the communicative and informational value of utterances than on their symbolic aspects and their emotional effects”. The symbolic aspects of language will be handled more closely in the following section. The viewpoint of many SLA theories, then, has resulted in focusing on two kinds of knowledge in L2 learning, namely the “*knowing that*”, which means the facts about the language, and the “*knowing how to*”, referring to the language performance (Kramersch 2009: 74, original emphases). Kramersch (2009: 74) introduces two new possible views on the subject, which the “narratorial self brings into focus”. These other aspects Kramersch (2009: 74, original emphases) has labeled as “*remembering how*”, representing past experiences and emotions, and “*imagining what if*”, which reflects the “future scenarios for action”. According to Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005: 229), sociocultural theory, then, offers “a much more holistic perspective of language learning, where individual and social merge into one and where use and knowledge are indistinguishable”. Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005: 229) see the differences between more traditional methods of SLA and a sociocultural approach in the use of the metaphors “acquisition” and “participation”. The traditional viewpoint of language learning has been that learners are acquiring, that is, taking and possessing, language input for themselves, then storing the language knowledge in their minds, and finally using it for input when needed (Ellis & Barkhuizen 2005: 229). The sociocultural approach, however, sees learning as a “*socially situated activity*” (Ellis & Barkhuizen 2005: 229, original emphasis), thus having a strong parallel to social constructionism. The sociocultural aspect of language learning and the importance of language learner will be examined more closely in the following section.

3.3 Focus on the learner

The views of L2 learning have changed rather significantly throughout the years. As in psychology, also in SLA research the sociocultural or the “sociointeractional” approaches are gaining more momentum, which see L2 learning as a social phenomenon, although there is an

ongoing battle over whether it is, in fact, social in nature or merely a “cognitive enterprise” (Ellis & Shintani 2014: 13-14). Also, the learner is starting to get to the focal point of current SLA research. According to Pavlenko (2002: 292), the L2 learners have previously been perceived as “minimally social recipients of input and producers of output”, but the position has begun to change into seeing the learners more as “individual agents whose multiple identities are subject to change over time”. Naturally there have been theories in the early SLA research supporting the sociocultural view on L2 learning, for instance, Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory and Schumann’s Acculturation Theory in the 1970’s (Ellis & Shintani 2014: 14-15). Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005: 230), in fact, see that the work of Russian developmental psychologist Lev Vygotski, conducted between 1925 and 1934, has been the basis for sociocultural theory, particularly in relation to L2 learning. Still, it seems that only in the 21st century the sociocultural approach has been perceived as recognized and valued as the cognitive approach before. A noteworthy aspect for this study is, as Ellis and Shintani (2014: 15) point out, that SLA research that has its basis on the sociocultural approaches is usually qualitative in nature, whereas the so-called traditional, or mainstream, research tends to be quantitative. This is a valid point to this study, since it aims for an in-depth qualitative approach. The methodology of this study will be handled thoroughly later in Chapter 4.

As the learner and the multiple learning environments entwined with emotional aspects are gaining more interest in SLA research, it is time to see what emerges from the subject. Pavlenko (2002: 293) suggests that the “agencies” of L2 learners are constantly co-constructed and shaped both by sociocultural environments and the people around the L2 users. In fact, Pavlenko (2002: 286) states that “interaction is crucial for L2 learning”, which is also the stance the writer of this study has taken. For Kramersch (2009: 73), then, the “narratorial self” is important in language learning, since through the discourse of this self the author is in control over his/her sentences. Also, the readers get to know the author’s “multiple selves” and even have the chance to experience the same emotions as the writer did at the time of writing (Kramersch 2009: 73). According to Kramersch (2009: 75), it is the fulfilment of the self that drives people to learn a foreign language in the first place, that is, the drive to “physical, emotional, and social equilibrium”, as each new language adds something to the self. The self and the learner are important in such an equation, since language “cannot be spoken or written without engaging the body of the speaker/writer, its use leaves cognitive and affective traces in the user’s perceptual make-up and in his or her sense of self” (Kramersch 2009: 41). Arnold and Brown (1999: 18) describe language learning

and use as “transactional”. This means that the learner reaches out “beyond the self to others, and, as such, it is intimately connected with the learner’s emotional being” (Arnold & Brown 1999: 18). However, Kramersch (2009: 2) continues that even within the few SLA approaches where L2 learning has been perceived as “social scaffolding” or a “communication tool”, the language has still been studied separately from its learners. The point that Kramersch (2009: 1-4) is strongly presenting is that whether languages are learned abroad or in a classroom, the learners are always constructing new identities for themselves, finding other realities, and associating very personal memories and experiences with each language that they learn. She adds that many language learners describe the experience as “one that engages their emotions, their bodies, and the most intimate aspects of themselves” (Kramersch 2009: 2), which is a point that also this study is trying to make. Language learning is not static or rigid, and it does not always follow the exact same patterns and rules. It is, however, flexible and changes from one person to another, taking along all the personal quirks and sides of the learner. Arnold and Brown (1999: 18) point out that by bringing the “social focus” to language learning, it becomes clear that learners are not “anchored in a fixed state but rather are conditioned by forces in the social context affecting them”. Furthermore, the experience of learning languages is “likely to engage learners cognitively, emotionally, morally, and aesthetically” (Kramersch 2009: 43), thus making it a very versatile and vivid encounter for the learner.

One aspect of language learning being sociocultural is the fact that language itself is symbolic. We create meanings to objects with the use of symbols, namely letters, which constitute words. These symbols get their meaning within a culture, which makes them sociocultural in nature. As Kramersch (2009: 6) points out, “symbols are conventional in nature, they refer to and represent the social and psychological reality of a speech community. As signs shared by a social community, symbols derive their meaning from the force of social convention”. On the one hand, words communicate information, but on the other hand, they exceed their “informational value” by triggering emotions and shaping feelings (Kramersch 2009: 40). Thus, language as a symbolic system “creates and shapes who we are, as subjects” (Kramersch 2009: 17). This “subjectivity” (Kramersch 2009), the self and the symbolic nature of language are important aspects for this study. As Kramersch (2009: 18) explains, “[o]ur ability to recognize and accept ourselves as subjects, with emotions, feelings, memories, and desires, is the prerequisite to developing our sense of self. Subjectivity [...] is our conscious or unconscious sense of self as mediated through symbolic forms”. Moreover, language usage is symbolic for basically the same reasons, since it “mediates our existence through symbolic

forms that are conventional and represent objective realities, and [...] because symbolic forms construct subjective realities such as perception, emotions, attitudes, and values” (Kramersch 2009: 7). Kramersch condenses the social nature of language, and also its relation to emotions, perfectly in line for this study by stating that

internal sense of coherence and continuity over time is socially constructed via the symbolic system and the idealized cognitive models available in the community. It is the family, the school, the community that enable children to give meaning to their feelings, their experiences, their memories, in particular through language and through narratives of the self. (Kramersch 2009: 20)

All this has its consequences for language learning as well, since using the symbolic forms to give meaning to their environment, whether it is a classroom or something else, the language learners “rely not only on cool reason, but on the embodied aspects of a cognitive and socialized self: emotions, feelings, memories” (Kramersch 2009: 53). The way Kramersch (2009) describes the “subjectivity” and the relations between language, language learning, the learner, and emotions is a perfect match for what this study is trying to say, which is that language learning, the learner, and emotions are basically an inseparable entity, which should not be separated, quite the contrary. As the data of this study clearly shows, emotions have a huge role in the students’ language learning journeys. As Kramersch (2009: 34) says, “[t]he language learners portrayed in language memoirs draw heavily on analogy to make sense of the world around them and the reality they construct, based on their perceptions of the foreign symbolic forms, is both imagined and real”. This statement will be taken into account when handling the data, which will be done thoroughly in the analysis, in Chapter 5. Still, before getting to the analysis, there is one relevant area that needs to be addressed and that is taking a glance at some of the previous studies that have relevance to the present study.

3.4 Previous studies of emotions in educational context

Emotions and language learning have not been exhaustively studied together, even though there are a growing number of researchers taking an interest in combining the two areas. Schutz and Pekrun (2007a) have gathered a large ensemble of scholars in one book, presenting a wide variety of theoretical perspectives, studies and research programs on emotions in education, including both the students’ and the teachers’ emotions in educational contexts. In the concluding chapter, Pekrun and Schutz (2007: 311-331) give several suggestions on how to advance our theoretical thinking on emotions in education, but also

what to study and how to study them empirically. For instance, they see that many studies on emotions concentrate solely on one single emotion, such as test anxiety, at a time (Pekrun & Schutz 2007: 317). In their view, what is, then, needed is “debate and cross-fertilization among researchers pursuing truly divergent approaches, as well as new perspectives that enrich existing theories” (Pekrun & Schutz 2007: 315). This is what the present study is aiming to do in its small-scale endeavor, looking at emotions in language learning from a slightly different angle than before and including all the emotions found in the data in the analysis.

There have, then, been studies on emotions in educational contexts since the early 20th century. However, particularly discursive studies on the subject are quite rare, which gives justification to the present study, as it aims to find the emotion discourse used in the narratives and to see what types of emotional language is linked to the people and the surroundings in the students’ lives in regard to language learning. Another discursive study was conducted by Keski-Heiska (2009), who studied the memories of English teachers by university students. There are some similarities between Keski-Heiska’s (2009) study and the present study, as they are both discursive studies and the data consist of autobiographical narratives written by university students studying English. However, Keski-Heiska concentrates on the memories that the participants of her study have of their teachers, which is only one part of the present study, even though it is the largest of the groups that has evoked emotional expressions in the participants of the present study. In her study’s findings, Keski-Heiska (2009: 49-102) categorized the teachers portrayed in her data in different types of repertoires, for instance, in *the terror repertoire*, *the progress repertoire* or *the incompetence repertoire*, which could also have been used for this study, since in the passages of this study some clear examples of all the repertoires can be found. Keski-Heiska does not in any way accentuate emotions in her study, but the narratives and her findings about teachers are filled with them. This only proves that even if emotions are not the main focus of attention, they are still abundant and clearly seen in situations where people are accounting for their past, making them a very valuable subject to study in relation to, for example, learning.

Further, MacKenzie (2015) has studied the role of emotions in learning, together with support and reasons behind it, of adults learning Finnish as a foreign language by using a narrative inquiry research method. According to MacKenzie (2015: 27), “[a] narrative inquiry is a qualitative research approach to help gain personal opinions based on past and current experiences from the research participants”. She gathered her data by conducting interviews

with adult learners of Finnish. In her abstract, she states that “emotions were not directly connected with learning, although indirectly with the learner’s well-being or desire to study and learning the language” (MacKenzie 2015: 2), which is quite different from what the data in the present study discovered. Also, it is quite different from what she is suggesting in her concluding remarks, as she states, for instance, that “[t]he learners expressed many negative emotions when learning Finnish as a foreign language”. On the other hand, MacKenzie (2015) found that support from, for instance, family members and motivation were among the factors that had a very important role in the learning of the participants of her study, factors that have rather mixed reactions in this study. The present study concurs with her statement that “surveying and comprehending how emotions affect one’s learning is important” (MacKenzie 2015: 9). However, even if MacKenzie (2015: 9) suggests that emotions can be “a key factor” in foreign language learning for adult learners, there is only one short section dedicated to emotions in her study and another one for motivation. By placing “emotions” right on the title of her study, and discussing how important it is for adult learners, one would have expected to see a more detailed account of the role that emotions have in the participants’ learning. That is something that the present study is trying to accomplish, that is, digging as deep as possible in the analysis as the data allows. Further, the obvious difference between MacKenzie’s (2015) study and the present study are the participants, as she has looked into adult learners who have moved to Finland and want to learn Finnish as a foreign language, whereas this study is about Finnish university students studying English, accounting for their L2 journeys from a very young age, thus giving quite a different view on the subject.

The closest study in relation to the present study that could be found in regard to emotions in learning was the dissertation by Juutinen (2011), which handles the emotional obstacles that the e-learning users encounter when, for instance, taking e-learning courses. She is bringing forth “the need to pay attention to users’ experiences and the effect of the emotions in the e-learning process” (Juutinen 2011: 11). Similarly to the present study, Juutinen’s focus is on the individual learner. According to Juutinen (2011: 11), plenty of research has been done on the systems used in e-learning, but the emotions and the experiences of the e-learning users have been quite neglected. As e-learning is more demanding than the traditional way of learning in a classroom with a teacher, it also means that more people drop out from the e-courses (Juutinen 2011: 12), thus understanding the learners’ emotional factors might help the development of also the system and should be taken into account more thoroughly. Also,

Juutinen (2011: 13) states that “[i]f a large segment of people do not like e-learning, it easily slows down the development of the field and causes divisions between people who will and can benefit from e-learning courses, and people who cannot”, thus describing a vicious circle that can occur if the learners’ emotions and experiences are not taken seriously. Such is the message also in the present study, as the students’ experiences are a valuable lesson, for instance, to all the teachers who want to learn and perhaps adjust their teaching in order to help their students thrive.

Similarly to the present study, Juutinen (2011: 17) is acknowledging the difficulty of deciding which emotions constitute the so-called basic or primary emotions. Still, no matter what they are called, she sees emotions as having “a crucial function in defining our personal relations to the external world” (Juutinen 2011: 17). Furthermore, Juutinen (2011: 18) concludes that based on research emotions need to be noticed in regard to e-learning, as they are an important factor in learning, classroom behavior, and “user psychology”. She summarizes her position, which could easily be the position of the present study about any learning, by stating that

[i]f you are able to use the technology and the e-learning systems, you generate pride that motivates you to continue your studies and work, and if you’re not handling it, your whole attitude towards e-learning can easily become negative and make you feel lot less motivated to continue to study in e-learning courses (Juutinen 2011: 18).

Even though Juutinen’s (2011) work is about e-learning, it has quite strong parallels to the more traditional learning situations described in the narratives used in the present study. For instance, the concept of e-learning is currently embedded in the so-called traditional learning, as many teachers and students already use plenty of electronic devices and materials. According to Juutinen (2011: 15), “the term e-learning is referred to a kind of teaching that uses any technical devices to support teaching, usually that technical device being a computer”, thus making it quite an everyday matter. Further, Juutinen (2011: 16) states that “[p]eople evaluate the value of things for themselves on the ground of their emotions and this is why emotions have such an important position in explaining which products people use and which they put aside”. A similar statement could easily be made about the language learning situations described in this study, as it could very well be the text books that might evoke just as strong feelings as a computer or a program in a learner. However, as e-learning is still a rather lonely way of learning, and the present study is concentrating on the sociocultural aspect of it, where social interaction with other people is one of the keys in learning, it is clear

that Juutinen's study is looking at somewhat different area than this study. It is not merely the things and products that make people behave in a certain way guided by their emotions, it is also other people and different places that do the same, which can be seen in the analysis of this study, presented in Chapter 5. The following chapter will, however, concentrate on the methodology of the study, showing the journey towards the analysis.

4 METHODOLOGY OF THE PRESENT STUDY

Chapter 4 introduces the methodology of the present study, by starting with the introduction of the participants and the data of this study in Section 4.1. Section 4.2, then, presents the methodological framework of the study by, first, introducing the approach chosen for this study in Subsection 4.2.1, and second, by displaying the analytical tools and research questions of the present study in Subsection 4.2.2.

4.1 Participants and data

The data of this study consist of autobiographical narratives written by first-year English students of the University of Jyväskylä. The narratives were written as a part of a course called *Opi oppimaan vieraita kieliä* 'Learn to learn foreign languages', and according to its title, it was aimed to help the students to learn how to learn foreign languages. Also, the course was compulsory for the students for the first time. One of the participants was majoring in other subject than English, which can occasionally be detected in the participant's narrative, and had therefore attended university for at least one academic year before taking the course. Still, all the participants were first-year students of English, and the majority was, then, also majoring in English. The course took place over the period of the fall term of 2005 and the first instructions for the students to write their narratives were given at the turn of October - November, 2005. The course itself was also a part of a longitudinal research project called *Noviisista ekspertiksi* 'From novice to expert', run by Professor Paula Kalaja.

The instructions that were given to students consisted of some general guidelines and of more specific questions to help the students in their writing. No strict boundaries were given and the narratives can therefore be said to be at least semi-spontaneous, as they, according to Edwards (1997: 189), should be when applying discursive psychology on written texts. The

students were asked to think about their role as an English language learner and a language student, writing from their own experience and being the narrator of the story. What might come as a surprise is the fact that even though the instructions guided the students to tell about their journey as a learner of English, there were several passages concerning other foreign languages as well. Naturally English was the main focus in the narratives, since the participants were studying English, and therefore, also the passages in the analysis contain examples mostly in regard to the English language. However, the story itself and the journeys the students had made as language learners were the main issues in the narratives, therefore they were written in the students' native language, Finnish, and in their own voice, not paying too much attention to the "correctness" of the use of their language. For more details on the instructions in Finnish, see Appendix 1.

The deadline for handing in the papers was in mid-November, 2005. There were approximately 80 students altogether in the group and of those giving consent to use their text in research, 11 narratives were used in this study, six of which were written by female and five by male students. The narratives were sent to the instructor of the course via e-mail. 11 of them were, then, randomly selected and sent to the author of this study, also through e-mail. The students' names on the narratives were instantly changed to female1, female2, male1, male2 and so on, according to the writer's sex, in order to keep them anonymous. In future references they will be cited as f1, f2, m1, m2 and so forth, respectively. After receiving the narratives, they were carefully read and re-read over and over again by the writer of this study, in order to gain understanding of the narratives and to find the *emotion discourse* (Edwards 1997, 1999) in them, and also to see where the *emotional language* (Omondi 1997) seemed to be linked to. Next, the emotion words and expressions that were discovered were all underlined, and later color-coded to find different categories such as emotions linked to teachers and other people, to school, and so forth. In the end, there were 11 rainbow-colored narratives ready for picking the examples used in the analysis. Eventually, after comparing the color-coded passages to one another, a selection of passages representing the most comprehensive variety of events and emotions was chosen and then put to a closer inspection as the analysis was carried out. The examples that are used in this study are the representatives of types of patterns found in the narratives, or of a colorful use of emotion discourse.

The reason for choosing autobiographical narratives as the data in this study was the vast amount of information in them. A questionnaire could have been composed, or an interview

arranged, in order to get some idea of the students' feelings towards language learning, but both methods would have limited the students' freedom of what to write or say, due to the prearranged questions that the researcher had chosen. What was most intriguing about using the narratives was the fact that the students were in no way explicitly instructed to write about their emotions, and yet, the narratives were filled with them. The instructions listed some very detailed questions that the students were to think about, including, for instance, instructions to tell the reader how the student *experienced* certain events. Still, the nouns *tunne/tunteet* 'emotion/s' or 'feeling/s', or the verb *tuntea* 'to feel', were not present per se in the instructions. Therefore, for the purposes of this study the expressions of emotions were, in fact, spontaneous, which in discursive psychology is a preferred aspect in the data used (Edwards 1997: 189).

As Kalaja (2011: 119) points out, narratives enable the researcher to get inside the learners' inner world in a way that has been rather difficult to do with other methods. According to Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000: 156), it has been a rather common notion in the scientific field until quite recently that "first-person tellings are less reliable and less valid than third-person tellings". However, they suggest that the views towards the first-person narratives have started to change and have gained more weight from being merely something vaguely interesting and perhaps even erroneous, towards a method that can provide a rich source of data, including in the field of SLA, which is not possible to be captured "in the more traditional approach to research" (Pavlenko & Lantolf 2000: 159). The use of the students' native language as the language the narratives were written in is, in fact, one noteworthy aspect to this study. Similarly to the social constructionist point of view, which was handled in Section 2.2, also Edwards (1997: 180) sees that emotions and the words people use to describe them are linked to social surroundings, and the rights and responsibilities that go with them. Furthermore, he continues that the names people use to call various emotions change historically and are different from one culture to another (Edwards 1997: 180). According to Edwards (1997: 180), it is not merely that people may very well feel the same emotions all over the world, but they use different names for them. Since the names people give their emotions vary across cultures and different languages, it is important that the writers had the opportunity to use those names to which they feel the closest. Using their native language allowed them to find the most accurate names for each emotion word they used in the narratives.

4.2 Methodological framework

There were a few methodological choices that needed to be made in order to get to the analysis of the data. First choice was done between a quantitative and a qualitative approach, which proved to be easy, since it was rather self-evident that emotions would be quite challenging to study quantitatively. Also, as the aim of this study was to examine the data discursively, choosing a qualitative approach seemed natural, since discursive studies are qualitative in nature (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen 2009: 139). Qualitative studies are, as the name already suggests, about the quality of the phenomenon that has been chosen for doing research. The quantitative approaches concentrate usually, for instance, on quantities, frequency, or percentages linked to the phenomenon in question, whereas the qualitative approaches focus on, for instance, describing and explaining the phenomenon (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen 2009: 139), which is precisely the aim of this study, that is, to describe the type of emotion discourse that emerges from the narratives used as the data.

Moreover, the numbers or percentage of, for instance, the occurrence of negative emotions in the narratives, was of no interest to the writer of this study, since the numbers could never get to the most intriguing part of the data, which is the existence of emotions in language learning itself, that is, whether the preconception of language learning and emotions going hand in hand did, in fact, exist in the data or not. Therefore, what types of positive or so-called negative emotions occurred in the narratives and towards what or who they were linked to seemed most interesting. Thus, the qualitative approach was chosen for this study. Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009: 139-140), in fact, state that the results of qualitative studies, and also discursive studies, are not usually presented in numbers, instead, they use the “thick description” (Ponterotto 2006) in order to get to the meanings and interpretations that people construct in social interaction with other people.

The concept of thick description seems to include all the factors this study is aiming to do. According to Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009: 140), it means that the phenomenon and its quality that are under review need to be carefully described in detail along with all the contexts and meanings that go with the phenomenon. Further, once the description is in hand, it needs to be reflected on the chosen theoretical framework and research questions (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen 2009: 140). When performing the review with care and in great detail, the thick, qualitative research can be just as precise, reliable, and meaningful as quantitative research, producing new knowledge, but only with the difference of being

quality-led instead of describing the quantities of the phenomenon (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen 2009: 140). This seems to be the perfect basis for this study. In the following Subsection 4.2.1, however, the discursive approach is handled in more detail.

4.2.1 Approaches

There is a certain view of the world and a conception of the subject in hand in this study and it somewhat follows the guidelines introduced by social constructionism, which was handled more closely in Section 2.2. Social constructionism is compatible with discourse analysis and a broader field of discourse studies and research. The link between social constructionism and discourse studies lies in the understanding that reality is constructed in social interaction and, for instance, language is an important part of it (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen 2009: 12). Further, Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009: 12) state that the important role of language in constructing our reality makes it necessary to study it. Moreover, as language is seen, along with its linguistic properties, as a discursive and a social system in discursive studies, studying it not only increases our knowledge of the language itself, but also, for instance, of our society and the surrounding culture, that is, how real people actually use language in actual communities (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen 2009: 13-14). As it is the aim of this study to understand the meanings behind the words and utterances in the narratives, thus concentrating on *what* is being said instead of trying to answer the question *why*, the aspects of discourse studies seem very relevant. The *what* in its own right is considered important, not trying to impose the presence of causality to the equation. As Heller (2008: 258) points out, “much written material deserves analysis as a source of information”, which is what is intended with the analysis of the narratives in the present study. The personal experiences of the writer of this study make it interesting to see whether other people have similar experiences with emotions and language learning in their language journey, thus gaining information.

One vital aspect of this study is understanding where the writers of the narratives come from and the interpretation of their texts. One very important aspect in qualitative and discourse studies, and in this study as well, is interpretation, which is also linked to representation. According to Heller (2008, 2011), it is, in fact, the interpretation that can be seen as valuable. Heller (2008: 251) states that it is not the reader’s job to identify and describe some objective truth, which probably might not even exist, but instead an interpretation of the matter can be given. Moreover, as pointed out by Heller (2008: 251), there is no need to give the voice to

others, in this case the writers of the narratives, but it is important to use one's own voice in a responsible way and give one's own interpretation of the data (Heller 2011: 47). This is exactly what the analysis of the data is aiming to accomplish. It will most likely be impossible to get inside the writers' heads, but it is possible to do the very best to find the meanings behind their words.

As noted before, the basic notion behind both the discursive approaches and social constructivism is that reality is constructed in social interaction, which basically means that words and expressions, or language in short, have no locked meanings, but instead they live and change according to different situations, therefore the meanings are always negotiated within each situation (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen 2009: 11-12). This is something to take into account with the study in hand. The analysis of the data of this study leans on the discourse of the students' narratives, and the meanings of the words can change from one writer to another, thus making interpretation a very important factor of the analysis. Since it is impossible to get inside the students' heads and truly understand the precise meanings behind the choices of their utterances, interpretation is the only way to move forward. It may, then, be that the writers would not recognize their thoughts on the analysis, but on the other hand, the interpretation of the writer of this study is still a type of construct of their reality, which, along with the ideas of discursive approach, is quite acceptable.

In regard to finding meanings behind the words, naturally there are "difficult choices of translation and representation" with the data, as was also discovered by Heller (2011: 47). The data of this study is in Finnish, but the analysis is in English, which sometimes makes portraying what has been written quite challenging. As Heller (2008: 255-256) made the choice with one research project on francophone Canadian women to treat the data "as accounts, as discursive performances", or as a way of how the women portrayed their lives rather than how they may have lived them, so needs to be done with the data used in this study. The autobiographical narratives have been written by university students, but they are accounts of their language journeys from the time they were small children, thus the accounts may not have very much in common with the actual reality. The human memory may embellish and color our memories and then make those stories to be true, and sometimes what we remember might only be a figment of a powerful imagination. Heller (2011: 42) states that "reality is socially constructed", which makes her viewpoint compatible with social constructionism (see Section 2.2). It could be said that people keep on constructing their reality, even the past, as they grow older, which it is why it is vital to keep in mind that the

narratives, the data of this study, are just that, narratives and not necessarily the absolute truth. Therefore, it is the aim of this study to give “an adequate description of the phenomena of interest” (Heller 2011: 42), namely emotions in second language learning, which is an interesting but by no means an easy task to complete.

4.2.2 Analytical tools and research questions

The work of Locke (2003) gave the first push and understanding of how to pursue the data of this study. Her study among athletes and the ways they talk about their feelings prior to and after their performance carries similar aspects of analysis compared to the analysis that needed to be conducted on the autobiographies of this study. Locke (2003) draws on the principles of discursive psychology in her study and is reporting on what the athletes are saying concerning the emotions that are linked to their performances. Similarly, the analysis of this study intends to concentrate on the emotion discourse the students use when writing about their second language learning experiences.

Locke’s (2003) work leans on discursive psychology. The goal of discursive psychology is to treat emotions, among other psychological states, as “constructions of events”, meaning that “people actively construct versions of events in their discourse”, rather than trying to find an answer to a question “why people say the things they do” (Locke 2003: [10-11])¹. Locke (2003) uses a micro-level examination of the data in her study and similarly, this study aims to do that. The present study will follow the principles of discursive approaches by being participant led, focusing on emotion discourse that arises from the autobiographical narratives, thus concentrating on what the students “construct as important or relevant” to them and not trying to make assumptions on what might be relevant to the participants (Locke 2003: [48]). Other people and the surrounding culture are strongly present in the students’ experiences in learning a second language and therefore in the narratives as well. Locke (2003: [50]) suggests that a more qualitative and constructionist approach should be taken into consideration in sports psychology, and it could be argued that the same is true in language studies, as understanding what truly drives language learners is crucial in understanding how to help them on their journey to success. Furthermore, Locke (2003: [47]) finds it important to understand that emotional experiences are constructed and fitted “into

¹ Online article, cited as requested by the author.

cultural and normative frames of accountability”, making emotion discourse, therefore, compatible with social constructionism.

Edwards (1997, 1999) uses the term *accountability* a great deal when describing how people talk about their emotions. He states that

[w]hen people describe events, they *attend* to accountability. That is to say, they attend to events in terms of what is normal, expectable, and proper; they attend to their own responsibility in events and in reporting of events. (Edwards 1997: 7, original emphasis)

Locke (2003: [13]) continues that accountability is, in fact, the primary interest of discursive psychology and the analytical interest lies in the “use of emotion talk in ways that are constructive, performative and rhetorical, and oriented to in their [the athletes’] accountability for performance”. In other words, according to discursive psychology, every time people describe what has happened or what they have done, to name a few examples, it is an account of some type. Locke (2003: [46]) continues that emotion discourse “is part of a larger accounting structure and in addition, embedded within narrative structure”, a statement that is very important for the present study, as it involves narratives and accounts of the participants’ journeys as language learners. Following the discursive method used by Locke (2003) in her study of the athletes’ emotion discourse by trying to locate the students’ accounts of their emotions in the narratives, it is the aim of this study to find an answer to the following primary general research question:

How do students write about their emotions in regard to second language learning?

Furthermore, in order to find more detailed information, it is necessary to deepen the general question with three more specific questions, namely:

- a. What types of emotions emerge from the narratives in regard to people in the students’ lives?**
- b. What types of emotions emerge from the narratives in regard to different places in the students’ lives?**
- c. What types of emotions emerge from the narratives in regard to different events in the students’ lives?**

Each of the specific questions will be dealt within separate sections, examining what type of emotion discourse the students use when writing about their experiences as language learners.

Moreover, the research questions concerning the people and the places in the students' lives (see specific questions a. and b.) are handled in several sections, as they are divided into a few meaningful units. This study will, then, examine towards which people, places, or events the emotions that arise from the narratives are linked to in regard to learning foreign languages. The emphasis of the study is on emotion talk that arises from the texts, instead of trying to find causes for the terms used and the general research question will be the guiding light throughout the whole analysis.

One important analytical tool used in qualitative studies, and thus also in discourse studies, is writing (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen 2009: 165), which is, in fact, the most important tool used in the present study. Majority of such analytical work happens out of sight, namely, inside the writer's head. Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009: 141-143, 165) describe the work in discourse studies as spiral, involving various stages of thinking, writing and re-writing, thus gradually forwarding the analysis. The description of the process is precisely what the analysis of the present study was like and, as Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009: 165) note, what can be seen as the end result of the process are the crystallized, the most salient observations along with the rationale behind them, as well as the sample passages used in the analysis. The end result is, then, presented in the following chapter.

5 ANALYSIS

“But all I know is what I feel, and it can't be wrong”

Europe: Not supposed to sing the blues (2012)

In this chapter the autobiographical narratives will be studied through four different types of lenses. According to Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000: 171), “[p]ersonal narrative [...] is an important verbal artifact for bringing past events (i.e. occurrences involving other people) into the present and for projecting the present into the future. In so doing, people are able to make sense, that is, of what they do and of what others do with them.” Keeping this in mind while reading the narratives, it became quite clear that the students had, in fact, tried to make sense of their journey as language learners, and also as people, telling the reader where they have started, where they are at the moment, and where they are going. Following the principle that is presented with the help of the Swedish rock band Europe (2012) at the beginning of this

chapter, it is the aim of this analysis to take all the writers' passages and examples at face value. The aim is not to assess the passages, or to categorize the emotion discourse, as somehow right or wrong. All the narratives are treated as authentic utterances of the writers, acknowledging that their texts are valuable as they are, since the writers have chosen to write about their language journeys in such particular ways.

Choosing the examples presented in this chapter proved to be challenging, since the options were abundant. The full procedure of how the autobiographical narratives were treated in order to get to the emotion discourse can be found in Section 4.1. In this chapter, Section 5.1 concentrates on all the family members that the students' emotions are linked to, emerging from the narratives and Section 5.2 views the emotions from the point of view of people who the writers had encountered in the school environment. The third part, Section 5.3, is connected to different locations, that is, how the students link their emotions to places where they have been to or lived in. The final part, Section 5.4, concentrates on the matriculation examination and the emotions it is linked to. The passages from the students' narratives are direct quotes and are, therefore, in Finnish. However, all the passages used in the present study can be found in English in Appendix 2.

5.1 Family members the emotions are linked to

This section concentrates on the writers' family members who have had some type of connection between the students, their L2 learning, and their emotions. The term family is understood in the widest sense, thus also including more distant relatives than the immediate family. Furthermore, the writers themselves are seen as part of their families, which allows the analysis to take their self-reflection into account. Firstly, the examination of these significant people is done by putting the focus back on interest. Interest is, as noted by Izard and Buechler (1980: 168), the strongest single emotion that motivates learning. In the majority of the narratives, the interest towards languages was initially raised by family members and a few relatives.

5.1.1 Inspiring relatives

According to the autobiographical narratives, significant people in the students' lives in regard to getting them interested in foreign languages were their relatives, namely parents, siblings and uncles in the narratives in question. Many positive feelings towards these people could be seen in the narratives. Mostly they were perceived as the inspirers for getting the students interested in languages in general and in English in particular. In the following two examples, the students describe how the curiosity towards learning English was awakened by listening to their older brothers practicing numbers in English.

(1) Ensikokemukseni englannin kielen opiskelusta sain kun kuusi vuotta vanhempi isoveljeni aloitti kyseisen kielen opiskelun koulussa. Hän harjoitteli lausumaan numeroita englanniksi kotona ja minä ajattelin, että kuulostaapa hankalalta, en minä ikinä opi tuota. [...] Innostus kielen oppimiseen oli kuitenkin kova, kyselin usein veljeltäni että miten sanot sen ja sen englanniksi. (f3)

(2) Aivan ensimmäisenä opin lukusanat yhdestä kahteentoista. Äitini ja isoveljeni niitä eräänä päivänä toistelivat ja minä siinä vieressä ihmettelin, että mitäs he oikein puhuvat. He sanoivat että englantia ja opettivat minullekin. (m1)

In example 1, the initial reaction of the writer was that the language sounded difficult (*kuulostaapa hankalalta*) and it would be impossible to learn (*en minä ikinä opi tuota*), making the language learning somewhat challenging. Also, by putting the emphasis on herself (*en minä...opi*), she indicates that the language would be impossible only for her to learn, she is not capable of learning such a difficult task. On the other hand, she sees her brother more than capable of the same task, making herself inferior to him, her brother being the living proof that someone had, in fact, learned the language, since he was able to practice his skills, namely numbers in English (*Hän harjoitteli lausumaan numeroita englanniksi kotona*). Also, an underlying admiration towards her brother can be detected, and even if it is not shown in words, it is quite clearly seen in between the lines, her brother had mastered this skill that felt impossible to learn. However, in spite of the feelings of inferiority, enthusiasm, which the writer never explains where it originated from, kept her motivated towards learning the language (*Innostus kielen oppimiseen oli kuitenkin kova*). Enthusiasm is also seen in how the writer describes the way she kept asking her brother to teach her new things. By using the word *often* (*usein*) and the structure *how do you say this and this in English* (*miten sanot sen ja sen englanniksi*), the writer is signaling repetition and thus motivation and eagerness to

learn more and more as often as possible, thus eventually perceiving language learning as something very interesting and positive.

An almost identical story is told by another writer in example 2. As in example 1, interest in the form of wonder (*ihmettelin*), numbers (*lukusanat yhdestä kahteentoista*), and an older brother (*isoveljeni*) are present here. Also the writer's mother is a part of learning this mysterious language, as the writer states that both she and his brother taught him English. The details of what was taught is ambiguous in this example, but the writer portrays an arising curiosity (*mitäs*) and a positive learning environment in describing how he almost by accident stumbled in the middle of a learning experience (*minä siinä vieressä ihmettelin, että mitäs he oikein puhuvat*) and was taken along without a fuss or making him feel inferior for instance because of his age (*He sanoivat että englantia ja opettivat minullekin*). The way the writer seems just to slide very comfortably in the language learning situation gives out a very relaxed, and thus a positive, feeling.

The accounts of the students' first steps towards learning English are filled with interest, enthusiasm, and curiosity in the autobiographical narratives of this study. In examples 3 and 4, the writers also show great initiative in the pursuit of learning English.

(3) Dog oli ensimmäinen englanninkielinen sana, jonka opin. Toki olin kuulut [sic] joitain perusfraaseja, kuten thank you ja my name is, mutta kun käskin veljeäni opettamaan minulle englantia, hän jostain syystä opetti minulle sanan dog, vaikkei meillä ollut koiraakaan. Siitä se sitten lähti. (f4)

(4) Pyysin sitten siskoani kertomaan mitä englanninkielisessä piirretyssä puhuttiin (taisi olla He-man. Ei mitään monimutkaista proosaa myönnettäköön). Tästä tuli meille lähes joka viikonloppuinen rutiini. Eräässä vaiheessa siskoni kysyi taas haluaisinko tietää mitä ohjelmassa puhutaan. Olin vain todennut ettei tarvitse enää. Olin siis oppinut englannin kielen korvakuulolta noin puolessa vuodessa ja 3-4-vuotiaana. Hauskinta on se etten muistaakseni mitenkään erityisesti edes yrittänyt ymmärtää. Jonkinlainen yhtäaikainen tulkkausjärjestelmä vain naksattiin päälle sisällä käyntiin. (m2)

Firstly, both the writers see themselves as the originators of their own learning, a characteristic which will be seen and investigated even further in the following Subsection 5.1.2. In example 3, this characteristic is seen as the writer states that she was *telling* her brother to teach her English (*käskin veljeäni opettamaan minulle englantia*), thus being in charge of her own learning. Similarly, in example 4, the writer describes a nearly weekly routine with his older sister as they watched an English TV-show together. In the beginning, the writer *asked* his sister to tell him what was said in the show (*Pyysin sitten siskoani*

kertomaan mitä englanninkielisessä piirretyissä puhuttiin), but later on rejected her offer to do so as it was no longer needed (*siskoni kysyi taas haluaisinko tietää mitä ohjelmassa puhutaan. Olin vain todennut ettei tarvitse enää*).

Secondly, there is a strong hint of superiority in both examples 3 and 4. In example 3, the writer shows superiority over her brother, when she uses the phrase *for some reason* (*jostain syystä*) in describing which word her brother decided to teach her, namely dog (*opetti minulle sanan dog*), which they did not even have (*vaikkei meillä ollut koiraakaan*). It is quite possible to see the writer rolling her eyes in a slight disapproval of her brother's choice of the word. The writer's superiority is seen in her word choices by indicating that had it been a reciprocal situation, she would have taught her brother something more meaningful. Also, in example 4, a hint of superiority is seen as the writer's sister has a big role in inspiring the writer to learn English, but it is as clear that the part of an initiator is all the sister was able to offer to him. The feeling of superiority in the passage is manifested in several different ways. First, the writer indicates that he had learned the language by just listening to it (*olin siis oppinut englannin kielen korvakuulolta*). The superiority is emphasized by adding the timeframe it all happened in, which was only in six months (*puolessa vuodessa*), and at a very young age of three or four (*3-4-vuotiaana*). Second, superiority in the form of pride, which nearly borders arrogance, is seen as the writer states that he did not even particularly try to understand (*etten muistaakseni mitenkään erityisesti edes yrittänyt ymmärtää*), but learned the language anyway. Moreover, stating that he learned *the English language* (*englannin kielen*) is another example of a rather arrogant attitude, as such a level of proficiency seems impossible for a 4-year-old boy. In a way, the writer emphasizes his superiority even by saying that the fact that he did not even need to try *is the most fun* (*Hauskinta on*) as it all happened very easily and automatically by switching on a sort of a simultaneous translation system in his head (*Jonkinlainen yhtäaikainen tulkkausjärjestelmä vain nakshti pääni sisällä käyntiin*). As the translation system clicked on, his sister became useless, thus giving the writer the power in the situation, he had maximized the aid his sister could offer him and was continuing on his own.

In comparison, the writer in example 3 is almost completely dismissing the phrases *thank you* and *my name is*, which she had heard earlier, as proper English (*Toki olin kuulut [sic] joitain perusfraaseja, kuten thank you ja my name is*). This is done by using a combination of *sure I had heard* (*toki olin kuulut [sic]*) and by ordering her brother to teach her, indicating that the basic phrases were something she had only heard somewhere in passing, but not really

learned, and that the proper learning experience only happened later, after her brother taught her. Therefore, even if the writer's brother had not been a major influence on her language learning journey, he is given the credit for teaching the writer her first word in English (*Dog oli ensimmäinen englanninkielinen sana, jonka opin*). The initial push and the awakening of interest in English were due to her brother, no matter how small his part was (*Siitä se sitten lähti*).

Somewhat similar to the story described in example 4, is the passage in the following example. One relative, and also television shows that the writer links to this relative, is strongly present in example 5. The uncle in question is perceived, as other relatives were in previous examples from other writers, as an important inspirer in increasing interest towards learning English.

(5) Ensi kosketuksena kieleen toimivat enoni Jyväskylästä tuomat, kaapeli-tv:stä nauhoitetut piirretyt lastenohjelmat, joita katsoin niin innokkaasti, että kasetit kirjaimellisesti kuluivat puhki. [...] Olen myöhemmin katsonut yhtä säilyneistä kaseteista ja, kummallista kyllä, olin pienenä ymmärtänyt repliikit lähes virheettömästi oikein. (m5)

In the example above, the writer describes his first encounter with the language, which is not specified here, but in an earlier passage the writer talks about English and it is a given that he is talking about the same language here. The first encounter was taped children's programs his uncle brought him (*Ensi kosketuksena kieleen toimivat enoni... tuomat, kaapeli-tv:stä nauhoitetut piirretyt lastenohjelmat*) and it was a very enthusiastic meeting. The enthusiasm can be seen in how the writer uses, firstly, the word *enthusiastically* (*innokkaasti*) when describing the way he watched those programs, and secondly, by using a very exaggerating image of worn out tapes that have holes in them (*kasetit kuluivat... puhki*). Moreover, the writer has the need to emphasize that the tapes were worn out in reality and not just fictitiously by using the term *literally* (*kirjaimellisesti*), thus bringing the eagerness to learn English close to an obsession. Despite this eagerness the writer shows surprise in the outcome, that is, how well he had indeed understood what the tapes were all about. The surprise is illustrated in the use of the phrase *oddly enough* (*kummallista kyllä*) and the fact that he had understood the lines nearly flawlessly correctly (*olin pienenä ymmärtänyt repliikit lähes virheettömästi oikein*). However, the writer's perfect performance is somewhat reduced by using the adverb *nearly* (*lähes*), diminishing the huge success to some degree.

As already seen in the previous examples, learning English seems to have been very easy to the writers in this study. Many stories depict a great talent, and as such also superiority, among the writers in learning the language and at times the passages borderline stories of child prodigies. Example 6 is one such genius type of a story, and even clearer one as such than example 5 above from the same writer.

(6) Kun minua kolme vuotta vanhempi isoveljeni aloitti koulussa englannin opiskelun kolmannella luokalla, minä olin kuusivuotias. Mielestäni englannin kirjat olivat hänen kirjoistaan kaikista hienoimpia ja muistan tehneeni sieltä hänelle jo joitain yksinkertaisia tehtäviä. Muistan myös sen kuinka yhtenä iltana suomensin äidilleni yhden tekstikirjan loppupään vaikeammista teksteistä. Siinä oli vain yksi sana jota en tiennyt (reindeer – on kuulemma poro). Ja en siis ikinä ollut lukenut sanastoa tai opetellut sanoja!! (m5)

The whole passage indicates that when the writer's brother started studying English, he was as good as his brother was, and perhaps even better in spite of their age difference, the writer being 6 years old (*minä olin kuusivuotias*), not yet in school himself, and his brother three years older than him (*kolme vuotta vanhempi*). First off, the brother's English books were the most wonderful the writer had seen (*englannin kirjat olivat hänen kirjoistaan kaikista hienoimpia*), thus creating a positive feeling towards the subject itself and an air of wonder around the language. Secondly, the writer remembers doing some of the simpler exercises in those books (*muistan tehneeni sieltä... yksinkertaisia tehtäviä*), making himself very capable. The point where the writer indicates being superior to his brother is when he writes that he was doing the exercises *for his brother* (*muistan tehneeni... hänelle*), as if it was not just fun and games to the writer, but already serious business. The genius story is revealed in how the writer describes the translating of one of the texts into Finnish. The text was one of the hardest ones at the end (*yhden... loppupään vaikeimmista teksteistä*). Merely the phrase *one of the hardest* (*yhden... vaikeimmista*) could have been enough to convince the reader of the talent of the writer, but he also emphasizes that it was one of the texts *at the end* (*loppupään... teksteistä*), which to a Finnish reader is also a clear indicator of a great talent, since the textbooks used in Finnish schools are usually compiled in such a manner that the most difficult and usually the longest texts are situated at the end of the books. The books are usually used in the same order, starting from the beginning and progressing towards the end as the skills of the learners progress, thus the skills of the writer were already very advanced at an early age.

Furthermore, more evidence of the writer's skills can be seen as he describes in the passage that from that difficult text the writer missed only one word (*oli vain yksi sana jota en tiennyt*), namely reindeer (*reindeer - on kuulemma poro*). By using the adverb *reportedly* (*kuulemma*) in giving the translation to the word reindeer, the writer is somewhat dismissing other people's knowledge of the language and highlighting his own ability, he only missed one word someone else happened to know, no big deal. The highlight of the genius story is shown in the final sentence of the passage as the writer emphasizes that he *had never read the glossary or learned the words* (*en siis ikinä ollut lukenut sanastoa tai opetellut sanoja*). To accentuate the uniqueness of the situation, the writer uses two exclamation points at the end of the sentence, showing that this type of a thing does not happen very often. The emphasis is also shown in using the structure *I mean I had never* (*en siis ikinä ollut*), as if the writer is trying to convince the reader that what he is telling really happened, or perhaps he is trying to convince himself.

The examples in this section show that the family members and relatives of the writers have had an important role in triggering the interest towards learning English, but on the other hand, being the initial innovators is the only role they seem to have been given. The family members may have been able to produce feelings of interest, enthusiasm, or curiosity in the writers, but for the following work and progress they seem to get no praise or merit. In fact, feelings of superiority towards the family members are quite clearly present in many of the examples. Also, the role of television shows and books seems to be quite prominent, as if the input of the relatives alone was not enough for the writers. The writers in this study seem to be very good at languages, particularly in English, and their skills have enabled them to benefit from their relatives' initial push towards the language learning. However, even if admiration towards some of the relatives can be seen, the writers seem to give most credit to themselves and some of the writers seem to have an invincible picture of themselves in regard to their language journey, they have been the inspiration to themselves, no need for others. This will be more closely examined in the following subsection.

5.1.2 Confidence in oneself

Even though family members and relatives in many cases initiated the interest in foreign languages, there were already segments in the previous subsection showing that sometimes

the students in this study relied heavily on themselves. There were also a few cases where all the power and motivation towards learning seemed to originate from the students alone.

(7) Olen aina ollut utelias oppimaan kaikkea uutta: opin lukemaankin jo ennen kouluun menoa, ja ihan itse opettelin. Näin myös englannin kanssa. Kyselin vaan isommilta, että mikä se ja se sana on ja miten se kirjoitetaan. (f4)

In example 4, the writer suggests that her curiosity (*Olen aina ollut utelias*) and the work she herself did (*ihan itse opettelin*), were the tools for successful learning in general. According to the writer, this was also true in learning English (*Näin myös englannin kanssa*), other people were merely a means to an end on her road to successful learning and she was the primary force and motivator (*Kyselin vaan isommilta, että mikä se sana on ja miten se kirjoitetaan*). Furthermore, using the phrase *I was just asking* (*Kyselin vaan*), the writer indicates that learning was also easy, happening just like that without too much effort on her part.

On a few occasions, the relatives were not even given the role of being the instigators of an arising interest towards foreign languages. One writer describes her situation in example 8.

(8) En oikeastaan osaa selittää englannin helppoutta millään. Vanhempani eivät juuri osaa vieraita kieliä enkä pahemmin englantia ollut ajatellut ennen kouluun menoa. Uskon kuitenkin, että erityisesti televisiolla, elokuvilla ja musiikilla on ollut merkitystä kielitaitoni kehittymiselle. Vanhempieni kertoman mukaan toistelin televisio-ohjelmien repliikkejä ja opettelin lausumista. (f2)

At first, by using the structure *cannot really explain* (*En oikeastaan osaa selittää*) the writer seems to be taking it for granted how easy English was for her. This indicates almost a nonchalant approach to the subject, merely stating a fact that has always been true. The indifference is also portrayed when she states that she had not much thought about English before school (*enkä pahemmin englantia ollut ajatellut ennen kouluun menoa*), making her statement about English being easy somewhat arrogant. Moreover, she gives no credit to her parents, because of their lack of knowledge of foreign languages (*Vanhempani eivät juuri osaa vieraita kieliä*), thus making the writer superior to her parents. Still, the use of the phrase *had not much thought* (*enkä pahemmin... ollut ajatellut*) when talking about herself and the phrase *don't really know* (*eivät juuri osaa*) when talking about her parents, give a slight indication that perhaps in her mind they were all somehow a part of her learning anyway, the

parents do not really know foreign languages, but they do know some anyway, and she had not much thought of English before school, but had thought a little of it anyway. She does, however, have a strong belief in that, instead of the family members, TV, the movies, and music have all been significant in the development of her language proficiency (*Uskon kuitenkin, että erityisesti televisiolla, elokuvilla ja musiikilla on ollut merkitystä kielitaitoni kehittymiselle*). Still, the work was done by the writer alone; she kept repeating the lines from television shows and learning pronunciation (*toistelin televisio-ohjelmien repliikkejä ja opettelin lausumista*). The role for her parents was merely to report on the work she did (*Vanhempieni kertoman mukaan*) and it was her persistence and enthusiasm towards learning the language that made a difference.

Two other writers paint a very similar picture when describing their first steps as language learners.

(9) Ensi kontaktini englannin kieleen sain ollessani noin neljävuotias. Se oli siinä mielessä kummallista miten nopeaa omaksuin kielen, koska perheessäni ei todellakaan ollut kukaan muulla ns. kielipäätä. Eikä kukaan oikeastaan perheessäni edes osannut englantia! (m5)

(10) Onneksi olen aina ollut kielissä hyvä. Miksikö? No ainakaan en ole perinyt sitä taitoa. Kai sitten vaan olin siitä niin kiinnostunut ja innostunut. (f4)

In example 9, the writer explains that he had his first contact with English when he was about four years old (*Ensi kontaktini englannin kieleen sain ollessani noin neljävuotias*), but in no way does he tell the reader how this happened. However, there seems to have been something unusual about the first encounter, since he seems genuinely surprised by the fact that he learned *the language* (*kielen*) so quickly. One might only wonder what *the language* contains, since the writer does not indicate whether he learned a few words, some bigger entities or whether he was able to communicate in English. The situation is similar to another writer, shown in example 4, but arguably neither of them did master the whole English language, as it would have been quite a task for four-year-olds, let alone non-native speakers. Still, the family members in example 9 certainly get no credit for helping the writer in question. He explains how his parents had no real knowledge of English (*Eikä kukaan oikeastaan perheessäni edes osannut englantia!*). There are several elements of surprise in the passage. Firstly, learning the language is described to have been *odd* (*kummallista*), making it unexpected and thus a surprise. Secondly, what made the situation odd was the fact that there

were no other members of his family who had *a so-called good head for languages* (*ns. kielipäättä*). He even underlines his family's inability with languages by using the emphatic *certainly no one* (*ei todellakaan... kellään*). It is clear that the writer strongly believes that there is, in fact, such a thing as a good head for languages and it is very surprising to him that he could be the only one in his family to possess it. Another element of surprise is the use of an exclamation point after explaining how no one in his family actually knew English (*Eikä kukaan oikeastaan perheessäni edes osannut englantia!*). To the writer his ability should be explained by a similar level of knowledge of his family, but as the family fails to meet his level, the writer verbalizes an exclamation of surprise.

Similarly, in example 10, the writer states that she has always been good at languages (*olen aina ollut kielissä hyvä*), but also wondering why that is (*Miksikö?*). She very quickly makes it clear that the skill was in no way inherited (*No ainakaan en ole perinyt sitä taitoa*), thus not giving any credit to her family for it and making her superior to them. By using the adverb *at least* (*ainakaan*) she emphasizes the fact that inheriting such a skill from her parents is the furthest possible possibility. To answer her own question of *why* (*Miksikö?*), the writer quite nonchalantly and making no fuss about herself, which is manifested in the usage of the words *perhaps* (*Kai*) and *just* (*vaan*), states that it was her being *so interested in and enthusiastic about* (*niin kiinnostunut ja innostunut*) languages. The passage is a tight package of superiority and self-confidence lined with interest and enthusiasm, where other people had no place as they were of no help to her.

Yet another example of relying merely on oneself is portrayed in example 11. The writer explains in an earlier sentence how she had witnessed a little boy at a grocery store with his mother, mimicking English.

(11) Tapahtuma muistutti minua itsestäni kauan sitten kun en vielä ollut aloittanut taivaltani englannin kielen oppijana. Lukemaan ja kirjoittamaan opin suhteellisen aikaisin, jo viisivuotiaana, ja sen jälkeen tunsin palavaa halua näyttää muille että osaan myös ”ulkomaan kieltä”. [...] Hurjaa että vaikka aikaa on kulunut jo viisitoista vuotta, yhä muistan miten kiinnostukseni kielenoppimiseen alkoi. (f5)

The writer is telling how, after learning to read and write at the age of five, she *felt a burning desire* (*tunsin palavaa halua*) to show other people that she could also speak “a foreign language” (“*ulkomaan kieltä*”). The eagerness is quite tangible with such a vivid imagery describing the passionate approach the writer had towards proving her language skills.

Nothing in the passage explains how the writer managed to learn this foreign language, since the passage clearly shows that at the time she learned to read and write she had *not* started her journey as an English learner yet (*kun en vielä ollut aloittanut taivaltani englannin kielen oppijana*). Also, since the writer puts *foreign language* in quotation marks (“*ulkomaan kieltä*”) the language might not even be any real language at all. However, there is a strong feeling of positive nostalgia in the passage, since the little boy in the grocery store took the writer back in time, to this place of burning desire (*palavaa halua*). She then describes how *wild* (*Hurjaa*) it is to still to remember the time that initiated her interest in language learning (*yhä muistan miten kiinnostukseni kielenoppimiseen alkoi*), thus indicating amazement and even surprise that after fifteen years this event is still fresh in her memory (*vaikka aikaa on kulunut jo viisitoista vuotta, yhä muistan*).

As was seen in the previous examples, the family members are not in any way present in some of the passages. Some of the writers relied solely on themselves in language learning and the feelings of interest, enthusiasm, superiority, surprise, and even passion can be seen in the passages. Also, the elements of taking everything for granted in regard to language learning are visible. The family members in this section are treated close to being ignorant fools, or they are given absolutely no role in the students’ language journey at all. There is, however, one character that is mentioned in each narrative used in this study. This person triggered the most colorful descriptions and perhaps the strongest emotion discourse than any other person or event portrayed in this study. The person, who also seemed to have the most power to either enhance or reduce interest among the students in this study, was the teacher. The language journey seen through the personas and behaviors of the writers’ teachers will be handled in the following two Subsections **5.2.1** and **5.2.2**. Also, Section **5.2** will take a look at another cluster of people closely related to the school environment, namely the writers’ classmates.

5.2 People in school environment the emotions are linked to

All children and teenagers participate in compulsory education in Finland, and they also have compulsory language studies at school. It is, therefore, no surprise that people linked to school environment, namely the teachers and the classmates, received a vast amount of emotion discourse in the autobiographical narratives of this study. The following subsections concentrate on the passages that contain emotion discourse about the people linked to the

school environment, starting with the teachers in Subsections **5.2.1** and **5.2.2**, and followed by the classmates in Subsection **5.2.3**.

5.2.1 The positive outlook on the teachers

Teachers were perhaps the most significant group in the students' lives in regard to second language learning, which is quite natural since all pupils in Finland come across languages and language teachers at some point in their school journey due to the Finnish school curriculum. All the students whose narratives were chosen for this study had written something about their teachers, both positive and negative aspects. The more positive aspects are taken into account in this particular subsection, and on the other hand, Subsection **5.2.2** presents the more negative aspects of the narratives in regard to teachers.

In the present study, emotion words that were used to describe teachers and their actions were very rich both in number and in style, which is why the number of examples is far bigger than in other sections. Moreover, Uusikylä and Atjonen (2005: 9) state that atmosphere, emotions and the personality of the teacher leave deep marks on many people, and that is precisely the picture that arises from the narratives, most writers still remember events from more than a decade ago in regard to their teachers, as example 12 illustrates:

(12) Opettajat ovat vaikuttaneet oppimiseeni jonkin verran, innostavat ja asiantuntevat opettajat ovat ruokkineet kiinnostustani kieleen entisestään. (f1)

The writer's simple statement of the matter is that teachers have affected somewhat her learning (*opettajat ovat vaikuttaneet oppimiseeni jonkin verran*). The difference between this example and many others in this data is that in example 12 the effect is described to have been rather mild by using the word *somewhat* (*jonkin verran*), instead of a more emotionally charged words. Still, enthusiasm can be seen in what follows next in the sentence, namely that inspiring teachers and teachers with expertise have fed into the writer's interest even further (*innostavat ja asiantuntevat opettajat ovat ruokkineet kiinnostustani kieleen entisestään*), which is to say that the enthusiasm had already been there, since interest could be fed *even further* (*entisestään*). An underlying gratitude toward these highly professional teachers can also be detected.

Professionalism of the teachers was something that other students responded to as well, as portrayed in examples 13 and 14:

(13) Saksan kielen aloittaminen oli suht mielekästä, vaikka opetus olikin kuivaa. Opettaja oli silti asiantunteva ja ennen kaikkea osasi käyttää kieltä vakuuttavasti. Häneltä saattoi kysyä mitä vain (jos sen teki tosissaan) ja sai vastauksen. (m2)

(14) Erityisen hyvin mieleeni jäi ala-asteen englannin kielen opettajani. Hän oli erittäin taitava opettaja ja sai ainakin minut jo siinä iässä ajattelemaan, miten tärkeää englannin hallitseminen on. [...] Jotenkin hänen ammattitaitoisuus vetosi minuun ja loi hyvän motivaation kielen opiskelulle. (m4)

In example 13, the writer describes how the beginning of studying German was quite meaningful (*Saksan kielen aloittaminen oli suht mielekästä*), even though the teaching was dry (*kuivaa*). The writer expresses that being dry is regarded as something undesirable, which can be seen in his acknowledgement that the teacher was *nonetheless* (*silti*) very professional (*asiantunteva*) and could use the language convincingly (*osasi käyttää kieltä vakuuttavasti*), which are the qualities that should be pursued. By using the phrase *above all* (*ennen kaikkea*) before describing how convincing the teacher's language proficiency was, the writer indicates that it was, in fact, the most important factor in language teaching for him. There is a clear admiration towards the teacher, as the writer is looking up to him/her². A type of seriousness and professionalism towards learning German can also be detected in the final sentence of the passage, as the writer felt that he could ask the teacher anything (*Häneltä saattoi kysyä mitä vain*), but only as long as it was done in a serious manner (*jos sen teki tosissaan*). By putting the phrase *if it was done in a serious manner* (*jos sen teki tosissaan*) in parentheses, the writer seems to indicate that not everyone in his class did take learning German seriously, and perhaps the teacher treated them as air, ignoring them, as being serious was the key to get an answer from the teacher (*sai vastauksen*). Due to the teacher's rule, there is a feeling of somberness in the passage.

Similarly, in example 14 the writer is describing an English teacher from elementary school whom he remembers particularly well. According to the writer, the teacher was *very skillful* (*erittäin taitava*) and made him think about how important it was to know English (*sai*

² There is no clear indication in the text to conclude the gender of the teacher in question as in the Finnish language the pronoun '*hän*', meaning '*he*' or '*she*' in English, includes both the male and the female gender, therefore using only either '*him*' or '*her*' would be distorting the original text. Later, the same principle is used for the English forms '*his*' and '*her(s)*'. Also, personal pronouns '*he*' and '*she*' will be put together to form the term '*s/he*'.

ainakin *minut jo siinä iässä ajattelemaan, miten tärkeää englannin hallitseminen on*). The writer somewhat separates himself from his classmates in stating that at least he was made to think about the importance of English proficiency. The use of the adverb *at least (ainakin)* indicates that perhaps he regards himself cleverer than his classmates, and because he possessed such insight already at that young age (*jo siinä iässä*). The teacher's professionalism is given credit, although the writer cannot pinpoint what exactly in his/her professional manner appealed to the writer, which is seen in the use of the adverb *somehow (jotenkin)* in *somehow his/her professionalism appealed to me (Jotenkin hänen ammattitaitoisuus vetosi minuun)*. Still, the professionalism was something that created a good motivation towards learning the language (*loi hyvän motivaation kielen opiskelulle*), thus making it a very positive thing.

In the previous two examples an underlying gratitude towards the teachers and their teaching methods can be seen in between the lines. Similarly, in the following two examples the credit is given to one particular teacher and gratitude is very strongly present. In example 15, the gratitude is also very clearly voiced.

(15) Sain kuitenkin ala-asteelta hyvät eväät jatkaa kielten opiskelua, pääosin tuon mukavan opettajan ansiosta. Hän teki parhaansa pitääkseen englannin tunnit minullekin haastavina, josta olen kiitollinen. (m2)

(16) Ensimmäinen englanninopettajani oli oikein mukava ja äidillinen nainen. Hän oli todella reilu, mutta sai kuitenkin pidettyä homman hallussa. On varmasti pitkälti hänen ansiotaan, että kiinnostukseni kieleen säilyi senkin jälkeen, kun olin tunteihin totunut ja samoja asioita jankattiin toistuvasti. (m1)

In example 15, the writer uses the word *grateful (kiitollinen)*, which naturally makes the gratitude easy to pinpoint, and this was mostly owing to the nice teacher he had (*pääosin tuon mukavan opettajan ansiosta*). However, the use of the adverb *mostly (pääosin)* indicates that there were also other elements in the writer's life that had an effect on his language learning. Still, the whole passage contains embodied gratitude written in it. The writer describes how he was given good provisions to continue his language studies from elementary school (*sain... ala-asteelta hyvät eväät jatkaa kielten opiskelua*), and since the word *provisions (eväät)* has also the meaning of a bag lunch in it, it suggests that the teacher who gave him this provision of knowledge also gave him excellent provisions to go, as a mother would pack sandwiches to take with him on a long journey ahead. What makes this passage interesting is the use of the adverb *nevertheless (kuitenkin)* in the sentence *I nevertheless got good provisions to continue*

my language studies (sain kuitenkin... hyvät eväät jatkaa kielten opiskelua), as if something had previously happened, which almost had made his language studies impossible to continue. The teacher, however, did his/her best in order to keep English lessons challenging for the writer (*Hän teki parhaansa pitääkseen englannin tunnit minullekin haastavina*). Once again a whisk of superiority is embedded in the sentence describing how the teacher kept English lessons challenging enough even for the writer (*pitääkseen englannin tunnit minullekin haastavina*). Particularly the phrase *even for me (minullekin)* shows superiority, since it sounds like the teacher had more work on keeping the writer interested than his classmates. Even if the phrase *even for me* is understood as *also for me*, which is a quite plausible translation from the Finnish text, there is still a hint of superiority, only in the case of *also for me*, the writer would not be alone at the top. Still, the writer sounds somewhat lonely and not connected with his classmates.

Example 16 shows gratitude in a form of maintained interest. The writer writes about his first English teacher, describing her as *a very nice and a motherly woman (oikein mukava ja äidillinen nainen)*, thus making the learning environment very positive and cozy, homey even. The teacher is given even more praise by stating that she was *really fair (todella reilu)*, but could still keep everything in check (*sai kuitenkin pidettyä homman hallussa*). The writer clearly has confidence in the teacher, which creates a safe learning environment, since *keeping everything in check* indicates that there were also disturbances in the class. The gratitude is, yet again, shown in the phrase *it is certainly mainly thanks to her (On varmasti pitkälti hänen ansiotaan)*. A hint of uncertainty can still be detected in the passage, as the writer uses the adverb *mainly (pitkälti)* instead of *fully*, and simultaneously reassuring himself with the adverb *certainly (varmasti)*. Still, the teacher was responsible in a positive way to keep the writer interested in the language (*kiinnostukseni kieleen säilyi*). The interest was maintained in spite of some negative aspects of the English lessons, namely that the writer got used to them (*kun olin tunteihin totunut*) and that the same issues were harped on repeatedly (*samoja asioita jankattiin toistuvasti*). By using the imagery of harping on about the same issues, the writer is also demonstrating the feelings of frustration, annoyance and boredom towards the methods used.

Example 17, then, continues the same theme that was seen in examples 15 and 16, but from a slightly different angle.

(17) Koko yläasteen ajan minulla oli sama englannin opettaja. Hän oli mielestäni oikein hyvä opettaja, sillä hän otti kaikki huomioon ja jaksoi välittää oppilaiden edistymisestä. Yksi syy siihen, että englanti oli edelleen lempiaineeni oli siis hyvä opettaja. Kaikki eivät kuitenkaan opettajasta pitäneet, mutta niinhän se menee, ei kukaan voi miellyttää kaikkia. (f3)

The writer gives credit to her English teacher, whom she had throughout junior high school (*Koko yläasteen ajan minulla oli sama englannin opettaja*), by acknowledging him/her to be a good teacher (*oikein hyvä opettaja*), and also one of the reasons why English continued to be her favorite subject (*Yksi syy siihen, että englanti oli edelleen lempiaineeni oli siis hyvä opettaja*). For the writer, the teacher was *one of the reasons* (*yksi syy*) for liking English, but she never explains what the other reasons were. Since the teacher is the only one to be mentioned, the writer makes him/her more important than the other reasons were, thus looking up to him/her. Also, by using the adverb *still* (*edelleen*) the writer is indicating that English had been her favorite subject even before junior high, and also, that perhaps other favorite subjects from elementary school had ceased to be her favorites in junior high. By indicating that English was her favorite subject due to a good teacher, the writer is projecting an air of positive feelings towards both the language and the teacher. An interesting point in the passage is that the writer also describes what made the teacher *very good* (*oikein hyvä*), thus giving the reason why English remained her favorite subject. The reasons for being such a good teacher were that s/he *was paying attention to everyone* (*hän otti kaikki huomioon*) and that s/he *managed to care about the pupils' progress* (*jaksoi välittää oppilaiden edistymisestä*). The qualities of the teacher are clearly making the writer feel both gratitude and admiration towards him/her, even to a point where one gets the feeling that perhaps the writer's other teachers could not manage to do what this English teacher did. However, being as fond of the teacher as the writer is, the same does not go with all of her classmates. The relationships between the students in this study and their classmates will be examined more closely in Subsection 5.2.3. In the passage above, the writer states that not everyone liked the teacher in question (*Kaikki eivät kuitenkaan opettajasta pitäneet*), while at the same time separating herself from that crowd and in a way still highlighting the fact that she did like him/her. Also, in a very adult manner, which would be interesting to know whether she actually felt that way at that time, she acknowledges that *nobody can please everybody* (*ei kukaan voi miellyttää kaikkia*) and *that is just how it goes* (*niinhän se menee*). There is a hint of surrender in the passage, as if the writer had tried to make others to see how good the teacher was, but could not convince them, thus experiencing the feelings of defeat.

To sum up, the prevalent positive emotion in regard to the teachers that the participants of this study were describing was gratitude. Particularly the teachers that showed great professionalism received grateful comments on their work and effort. The teachers who were perceived as good and caring by the writers were also the ones who managed to keep the students interested in learning languages, which seemed to be quite an effort for the teachers due to the students' good language skills. Still, the passages describing the teachers on the positive end of the scale are rather matter-of-fact and not showing any passionate imagery or strong emotions, whereas the following subsection about the teachers on the more negative end of the scale is filled with colorful descriptions and verbal fireworks.

5.2.2 The negative attitudes towards the teachers

In this subsection, the participants of this study fully release their emotional expressions when describing the more negative attitudes towards their teachers. The division of the examples in regard to the teachers into the positive and the negative is not clear-cut, as some might see, for instance, superiority as an empowering, and thus, a positive feeling. Still, the distinction has been made due to the overall feeling the passages convey. The language of the passages in this subsection is the most colorful and varied of all the sections, and for teachers, future and present, it is somewhat an eye-opening journey. All the students in this study started their "official" language journey in elementary school and the first foreign language they started studying was English. Bearing in mind the previous sections, many of these students had had experiences with the language before going to school and many already had basic knowledge of the language. This resulted on occasion in feelings of superiority, yet again as was seen with the relatives, but this time aimed at the teacher, as is shown in example 18 below:

(18) Oma luokanopettajamme opetti meille myös englantia. Hän oli pätevä, mutta kammosin hänen tapaansa lausua englantia. Olin näin jälkeensä ajateltuna jo alasteella ehkä liiankin ylpeä kielitaidostani ja kiistelinpä joskus kymmenvuotiaana opettajani kanssa siitä, miten sanat tulee lausua. (f2)

In the example, the student is telling how, even though her class teacher was qualified (*oli pätevä*), the teacher could not pronounce English properly, in fact, the writer abhorred his/her way of pronouncing English (*kammosin hänen tapaansa lausua englantia*). Stating the fact that the teacher was qualified indicates clearly that the student was expecting him/her to be

able to also pronounce English properly. Using the verb *abhorred* (*kammosin*) the writer clearly shows strong feelings of dislike, or even disgust, and irritation towards the teacher's lack of ability to master such an important aspect of the language. There is of course no evidence to demonstrate the state of the teacher's pronunciation proficiency for real, but to this student in question the shortcoming of her teacher made her take action, stating that she even argued with her teacher about how the words were to be pronounced at around the age of ten (*kiistelinpä joskus kymmenvuotiaana opettajani kanssa siitä, miten sanat tulee lausua*). It is clear to see that the student felt very confident about her language proficiency and also felt superiority towards her teacher. Using the words *even argued* (*kiistelinpä*) shows almost triumphant superiority over the teacher, making it nearly compulsory for the student to teach the teacher. However, the mood of the text changes as the writer changes the viewpoint from the 10-year-old pupil to the present day university student. Writing that, in retrospect, she was perhaps a bit too proud of her language proficiency (*Olin näin jälkeinpäin ajateltuna... ehkä liiankin ylpeä kielitaidostani*) the writer shows that as she has grown, she has come to realize (*näin jälkeinpäin ajateltuna*) that perhaps her superiority may not have been quite as well-earned as she had felt at the age of ten. This doubt comes across in using the form *perhaps a bit too proud* (*ehkä liiankin ylpeä*), signaling that even if it is quite acceptable to be proud of what you know, it is somewhat unacceptable to make it go to your head so that you will become *too proud* (*liiankin ylpeä*) to the point of being irritatingly cocky. The writer understands that she was proud of her language proficiency, but for it to happen *already in elementary school* (*jo ala-asteella*) it was too much. Even such a small fragment of text is filled with emotion talk and this continues throughout the other example passages.

Example 19 contains, for instance, the feelings of superiority, frustration, irritation, outrage, and determination, as the writer very colorfully accounts for a type of a battle with his junior high English teacher:

(19) Opettajani ei pitänyt minua yläasteella kielitaitoisena vaan enemmänkin näsäviisaana. Vaikka olin jo puolessa välissä lukuvuotta tehnyt koko työkirjan kannesta kanteen ja lukenut kaksi englanninkielistä kirjaa tunnilla. Numeroni englannissa laski. Tämä oli mielestäni raivostuttavaa, mutta jälkeinpäin ajatellen, se on ollut yksi tärkeimpiä tapahtumia kielitaitoni kannalta. Sisuuntuneena aloin työskennellä yhä kovemmin: luin paljon englantia vapaa-aikana, katsoin ulkomaisia ohjelmia ja jopa opettelin kielioppia, vain näyttääkseni opettajalleni. (m5)

The writer paints a picture of a misunderstood genius, whom the teacher in junior high treated more as a precocious smart aleck (*piti minua... näsäviisaana*) than a proficient language learner (*ei pitänyt minua... kielitaitoisena*) as the writer perceived himself. The writer elaborates his brilliance with some facts, namely that he had finished all the exercises in his workbook halfway through the school year (*olin jo puolessa välissä lukuvuotta tehnyt koko työkirjan kannesta kanteen*) and that he had read two books in English in class (*lukenut kaksi englanninkielistä kirjaa tunnilla*). Still, all his hard work went unnoticed by the teacher, resulting in the feelings of frustration and irritation. The whole passage is practically oozing with negative emotions towards the teacher. As the writer's English grade dropped (*Numeroni englannissa laski*), the emotions flared as the writer describes him being outraged (*Tämä oli mielestäni raivostuttavaa*). In retrospect, the writer sees this event as being one of the fundamental ones in regard to his language proficiency (*jälkeenpäin ajatellen, se on ollut yksi tärkeimpiä tapahtumia kielitaitoni kannalta*). The injustice the writer felt towards his teacher made him work even harder (*aloin työskennellä yhä kovemmin*), as he somewhat flared up (*Sisuuntuneena*). The Finnish verb "sisuuntua", which the writer uses as an adverb to portray his flare-up, is rather a challenging verb to translate, but it "refers to getting angry, but with an element of determination and even being unforgiving" (Academic Dictionaries and Encyclopedias n.d.). There are certainly prominent signs of all the aspects of flaring up in the passage, that is, getting angry, being unforgiving and determinate.

In example 19, determination is seen as the writer explains how he began to read English in his free time (*luin paljon englantia vapaa-aikana*), although not specifying what was read. He was also watching foreign programs (*katsoin ulkomaisia ohjelmia*) and even learning grammar (*jopa opettelin kielioppia*). As the writer is using the adverb *even* (*jopa*) when describing how he went as far as to learn grammar, he is signaling that grammar was the ultimate top to reach, no one was learning grammar voluntarily but him, therefore his language proficiency, and also determination, was at the highest level. All the activities that the writer took upon himself were designed to prove a point, which seemed to be the sole purpose of the task, indicated by the use of a phrase *just to show my teacher* (*vain näyttääkseni opettajalleni*). The writer was not as much interested in improving his language skills as he was to prove his teacher wrong, thus being quite relentless. The writer does not explicitly say it, but it can be seen in between the lines that getting angry at his teacher and all of his determination resulted in greater language proficiency, the prize for his hard work

being a study place at a university. One can only hope that the writer can feel at least a little bit gratitude afterwards.

Another illustration of how teachers can raise an abundant amount of different emotions in their pupils is shown in example 20. It shows how detailed the memories can be and how the writer's subjective interpretations of the events can be very significant.

(20) Yleensä opettaja kuitenkin kysyi minulta koska tiesi että osaan, mutta se tuntui lähinnä kiusalliselta. Muistan kun kerran rohkaisin itseni ja päätin vastata opettajan keksimään kinkkiseen kysymykseen. Vastaus oli oikea, mutta lausuin sanan "vehicle" väärin. Opettaja tyytyi vain korjaamaan virheeni eikä palkinnut tietämystäni lainkaan. Pitkän aikaa tunsin oloni nolatuksi enkä uskaltanut viitata taas ollenkaan. (f5)

The passage contains several emotion words. In the beginning of the passage the writer shows her high level of proficiency in English stating that she was usually the one the teacher turned to for answers, since the teacher knew that she knew (*Yleensä opettaja kuitenkin kysyi minulta koska tiesi että osaan*). The difference between this student and, for instance, the student in example 19 above is that in this case there are no signs of superiority towards the teacher, quite the contrary. In fact, the student felt that the spotlight *felt mainly awkward* (*tuntui lähinnä kiusalliselta*). The writer does not indicate where such inferiority had originated, since clearly she had a good knowledge of the language and had shown it on several occasions, otherwise how the teacher could know that she was the one to ask. In this passage the writer, however, describes one such occasion (*kun kerran*) that contributed on her inferiority in the future classes.

A clear case of anxiety can be detected in this passage. The writer remembers how she encouraged herself (*muistan kun kerran rohkaisin itseni*), yet again showing fear and inferiority towards the classroom activities and her skills, and decided to answer a very tricky question by the teacher (*päätin vastata opettajan keksimään kinkkiseen kysymykseen*). Using the verbs *encourage* and *decide* (*rohkaisin, päätin*), it seems like the writer had to muster all the strength she had after having a great struggle inside herself just to answer this one question. The correct answer to this question was *vehicle*, which the writer got right (*Vastaus oli oikea*), even though the question had been a tricky one (*kinkkinen*), but the unfortunate thing about the answer was that she got the pronunciation of the word wrong (*lausuin sanan "vehicle" väärin*). To many people such an event might not make a difference one way or the other, but to the writer it seemed almost devastating. It is clear that it made a huge impact on

the writer that the teacher only settled for correcting her mistake and did not reward her knowledge at all (*Opettaja tyytyi vain korjaamaan virheeni eikä palkinnut tietämystäni lainkaan*). Using the words *at all* (*lainkaan*) in emphasizing the fact that the teacher did not reward her knowledge (*eikä palkinnut tietämystäni*), the writer indicates that she felt that she should have been rewarded at least in some way for knowing the correct answer to a question that was tricky, thus showing the feelings of disappointment and injustice and even hurt. Such injustice resulted in even more negative feelings in the writer, namely being humiliated (*tunsin oloni nolatuksi*) and not having the courage to raise her hand yet again in a very long time (*Pitkän aikaa tunsin oloni nolatuksi enkä uskaltanut viitata taas ollenkaan*). The writer's anxiety level is evidently very high. In fact, the use of the word *again* (*taas*) suggests that this incident was not the only similar event in the writer's life, quite the opposite. Furthermore, this suggests that events like this might have been the instigator of the feeling of inferiority and fear the writer so clearly demonstrates towards her English classes in the passage. Since the only result of the humiliation that the writer felt was that she did not want to raise her hand again for a very long time, instead of perhaps voicing her disappointment, makes one wonder whether the teacher had any idea how strong the impact of his/her behavior had made. One may feel that perhaps s/he had no clue, which is of course a valuable lesson for the future teachers to keep their eyes open for such events in their own classrooms.

Another example of the power of the student's inner voice can be seen in example 21. The difference between this example and the one above is that the example below ends on a positive note.

(21) Kuudennella luokalla suhtautumiseni opettajaamme kohtaan muuttui täysin, kun hän kerran tunnin jälkeen pyysi minua jäämään luokkaan. Olin ihan paniikissa, kun mietin, että mitähän olin nyt tehnyt väärin... Hän vain halusi tietää, suostuisinko tuuraamaan häntä seuraavana päivänä yhden tunnin ajan, kun hänellä oli joku meno. Tietysti minua hieman jännitti, mutta kaikki sujui kuitenkin hyvin. Tämän muistan tietenkin hyvin myönteisenä asiana. (f4)

The writer does not indicate how she related to her teacher before, but she explains that it all changed completely in the sixth grade of elementary school (*Kuudennella luokalla suhtautumiseni opettajaamme kohtaan muuttui täysin*). There is a feeling of suspense in the air as on one occasion, the teacher asked the writer to stay behind after class (*kun hän kerran tunnin jälkeen pyysi minua jäämään luokkaan*). The suspense was quickly turned into a state of panic as the writer kept trying to think what she had done wrong (*Olin ihan paniikissa, kun*

mietin, että mitähän olin nyt tehnyt väärin). The previous statement raises a question whether the only times this particular teacher asked the pupils to stay behind was that something bad had happened. Such an interpretation is highlighted with the use of the adverb *now* (*nyt*) linked to the occasion. On this occasion, though, the teacher wanted to ask the writer if she could act as his/her substitute for one lesson the next day (*Hän vain halusi tietää, suostuisinko tuuraamaan häntä seuraavana päivänä yhden tunnin ajan*), which seemed to be a great relief for the writer. At first, the suspense is heightened by the use of three dots and then broken when revealing the teacher's true agenda (... *Hän vain halusi tietää*). The temporary assignment made the writer somewhat nervous (*Tietysti minua hieman jännitti*), which seemed to be expected, since the writer uses the adverb *naturally* (*Tietysti*) at the beginning of the sentence. Nevertheless, everything went smoothly (*kaikki sujui kuitenkin hyvin*) and the whole occasion was printed into the writer's memory as something very positive (*Tämän muistan tietenkin hyvin myönteisenä asiana*). The adverb *naturally* (*tietenkin*) is used again when the writer is thinking about the event, as if in all her nervousness and panic she did have confidence in herself to handle the substitution job. It would be interesting to know whether the confidence she gained from the experience was strong enough to give her a push to become a teacher, thus being a groundbreaking event in her life, but such a fact remains unknown. Completely another matter is the fact that a sixth-grader was chosen to substitute a teacher, something that feels very irresponsible on the teacher's behalf, and, in fact, wrong, as it seems that there was no adult supervision present at all. One can only hope that this was not the whole picture.

As is already seen in the previous examples, not all the emotions that were experienced in class were positive. One emotion that is usually considered to be very negative, namely fear, was present in several passages regarding the students' relationships with their teachers. The fear in the passages used for this study was experienced solely in elementary school, as is seen in example 22:

(22) Ala-asteella minulla oli ainakin kaksi englannin opettajaa. Toinen oli aika vanha ja hieman pelottava ja toinen nuorehko ja mukava. (f3)

The writer remembers having at least two English teachers (*ainakin kaksi englannin opettajaa*), indicating with the use of the idiom *at least* (*ainakin*) that there quite possibly were more, but she, for some reason, had no recollection of them. Of the two teachers that the

writer does remember, she gives quite different descriptions. On the one hand, there was the teacher who was *quite old and a bit scary* (*aika vanha ja hieman pelottava*) and on the other hand, the *youngish and nice* (*nuorehko ja mukava*) teacher. The way that the writer pairs the adjectives she used, old - scary and youngish - nice, almost has a ring to it that these belong together, as if the old teacher had to have been the scary one and not the other way around, resembling the composition that is often found in fairytales, the witches always being old and scary and the good characters being young and nice. The writer does not clearly specify the emotions she experienced in regard to these two teachers, but it is quite evident, particularly with the older teacher that s/he raised fear and anxiety in the writer, whereas the younger one made her feel safe and joyous.

Another example of such a fairytale-like description can be found in the following example:

(23) Ensimmäinen englanninopettajani oli keski-ikäinen nainen, joka oli jollakin tapaa hieman pelottavan ja kummallisen oloinen. Olen varma että tämä johtuu hänen muistisäännöstään numerolle 13: ”thirteen on sama kuin tee-hirteen”. Ajatus jonkun hirttämisestä oli lapsenmiehelläni liikaa ja tunsin suurta kauhua aina kun opettaja toisti sääntöään tunnilla. (f5)

In example 23, the writer describes her first English teacher as *a middle-aged woman who was in some way a bit scary and somewhat odd* (*keski-ikäinen nainen, joka oli jollakin tapaa hieman pelottava ja kummallisen oloinen*). The writer uses the exact same expression *a bit scary* (*hieman pelottava*) about her teacher as did the writer in the previous example, but she also elaborates what made the teacher both scary and odd, namely her mnemonic for number thirteen, which was “*tee-hirteen*”. The writer signals a very strong feeling about the cause of her feelings towards her teacher, stating that she is sure (*olen varma*). The teacher’s mnemonic for number thirteen, “*tee-hirteen*”, is a Finnish wordplay meaning that the letter t is hanged, t-hanged, “*tee*” being the letter t and “*hirteen*” literally meaning that something is about to be hanged. The idea of someone being hanged was just too much for her (*Ajatus jonkun hirttämisestä oli lapsenmiehelläni liikaa*) and the writer describes how she was in horror (*tunsin suurta kauhua*) every time her teacher repeated the mnemonic. It is clear that this particular teacher roused extremely strong emotions in her pupil and by using such expressions as *too much for the mind of a child* (*lapsenmiehelläni liikaa*) and *I felt great horror* (*tunsin suurta kauhua*) the writer is expressing fear that feels like beyond anything normal, quite the opposite. The level of fear that the writer is portraying in her account

resembles the accounts that one can usually see in the accounts of survivals of war or great abuse, as if the writer had somehow been broken because of her teacher.

In the previous example the horror was clearly in the writer's mind, but may not have been visible to outsiders. In the following example the situation seems quite the opposite, since on the one hand, the account makes an outsider cringe and very nearly feel horror, and then, on the other hand, the writer has very positive feelings about the situation.

(24) Hän oli ainutlaatuinen persoona, jota hyvät oppilaat rakastivat ja huonot pelkäsivät. Hänellä oli mitä omintakeisimpia opetusmetodeja: hän tukisti huonoja oppilaita ja esim. otti minut syliinsä lukemaan koko kappaleen silitellen samalla päätäni ja kehuskellen muulle luokalle, että näin heidänkin pitäisi lausua. Hänen tunneillaan viihdyin paremmin kuin koskaan enää tulisin koulussa. Ja hän on luultavasti suurin syy miksi tällä hetkellä opiskelen englannin kieltä. (m5)

The writer describes the teacher in question as *a unique character (ainutlaatuinen persoona)* and moreover states that s/he had *the most eccentric teaching methods (mitä omintakeisempia opetusmetodeja)*, signaling with the word choices that he had identified both the character and the methods of this teacher as quite unorthodox. Furthermore, the writer states that the good pupils loved and the bad ones feared him/her (*jota hyvät oppilaat rakastivat ja huonot pelkäsivät*) and in giving an example of the teacher's eccentric teaching methods, the writer clearly categorizes himself as one of the good pupils, thus signaling that he loved his teacher. The horror in the reader's mind comes from the teaching methods, since in this day and age it seems more than inappropriate for teachers to have their pupils sit on their laps, caressing or pulling their hair depending whether they were good or bad, as the writer describes his teacher's methods (*hän tukisti huonoja oppilaita ja esim. otti minut syliinsä lukemaan koko kappaleen silitellen samalla päätäni*). Still, the horror is most clearly only in the mind of the reader. The writer displays the feelings of comfort and being fond of the teacher by writing that he enjoyed being in his/her classes more than he ever was to be in school again (*Hänen tunneillaan viihdyin paremmin kuin koskaan enää tulisin koulussa*), signaling joy that he had experienced such feelings in using the word *enjoyed (viihdyin)*, but also sorrow since the moment is in the past and the writer now knows that it was the only time in school that he had felt that way by saying *more than I ever was to be (paremmin kuin koskaan enää)*. It is clear that this particular teacher had had a very powerful impact on the writer and it manifests itself in the last sentence of the passage, this teacher quite possibly being the biggest reason why he ended up studying English (*luultavasti suurin syy miksi tällä hetkellä opiskelen englannin*

kieltä). Gratitude can be seen in the word choices. Using the adverb *probably* (*luultavasti*) the writer indicates that there may have been other reasons as well, but giving such credit for the teacher it is clear that s/he has been a huge factor in his life choice for applying to study English.

Sometimes fear can turn into a positive thing, as seen in example 25:

(25) Ala-asteella meillä oli hirmu tiukka englannin opettaja. Minä ja monet muut oppilaat pelättiin häntä todella paljon. Kaikesta huolimatta kuitenkin kun näin jälkeinpäin miettii, niin ei voi muuta kuin kiittää häntä, sillä niin hyvää pohjaa englannille tuskin kovinkaan moni on ala-asteella saanut. (f4)

The writer is describing her elementary school English teacher as very strict (*hirmu tiukka*), explaining that the strictness led to that both she and also many other pupils feared him/her very much (*minä ja monet muut oppilaat pelättiin häntä todella paljon*). The fear is very visible in the word choices the writer makes, the Finnish word “*hirmu*” in *hirmu tiukka* ‘very strict’, can also be translated as *terribly*, which can stem from the word *terror*. Also, the emphasis on how much the pupils feared the teacher is shown in the adverbs used, that is, *very much* (*todella paljon*). Moreover, the writer recognizes the fact that being such a strict teacher and inflicting fear is not the best way to get results. This can be seen in the word choices like *in spite of everything* (*kaikesta huolimatta*) and *all the same* (*kuitenkin*) when the writer looks back on her English classes in retrospect (*näin jälkeinpäin*) and discovers that she, in fact, feels gratitude towards the teacher for giving her such a good base in English. The gratitude is shown in the sentence *can’t help but to thank him/her* (*ei voi muuta kuin kiittää häntä*) and the surprise for feeling so grateful is in the word choice *can’t help* (*ei voi muuta*) as if the writer really has no choice but to be grateful even if the circumstances had not been prone to success. The surprise is also visible when the writer wonderingly states that the base in English that she got was so good that not too many pupils have had that in elementary school (*tuskin kovinkaan moni on ala-asteella saanut*). What comes to mind from this passage is that perhaps the fear was harnessed in working hard and doing one’s homework, thus being a driving force instead of being a crippling emotion.

One common feature that many of the writers had when writing about their teachers was to compare them to one another, which of course is only natural, since changing schools between elementary school and junior high school, and then perhaps again for high school,

meant that the relationships with a familiar and a safe teacher was swapped with a new relationship with a stranger, a situation liable to raise an emotional response. For some students a new school gave a welcoming change for the better, but for some the changes were more of a negative in nature. Mostly negative sides are visible in the following three examples:

(26) Yläasteella opettaja vaihtui, eikä opiskelu ollut enää niin miellyttävää ja leikinomaista kuin aiemmin. Opettaja oli myös luokanvalvojamme, eikä hän ollut yhtä inspiroiva ja innostunut työstään kuin ala-asteen opettaja. (f1)

(27) Ala-asteella kielteisintä oli ehdottomasti se, että pelkäsin opettajaa. Yläasteella taas opettajien vaihtuvuus ja opetuksen taso oli kielteisintä. (f4)

(28) Jotkut opettajat täyttivät, ja jotkut jopa ylittivät odotukseni. Toisiin olin taas todella pettynyt. Ei se anna itsellekään hirveästi motivaatiota, jos opettajasta näkee, että hän halusi olla ihan jossain muualla, kuin opettamassa.(f4)

All the passages above are quite short, but clear feelings of disappointment and negative mood can be detected in all of them. In examples 26 and 27, the change of schools was definitely not for the better, whereas in example 28, there are also some positive aspects in it. In example 26, the writer describes studying in elementary school as *pleasant (miellyttävää)* and *playful in nature (leikinomaista)*, which it was no longer in junior high (*eikä... ollut enää*). She also links together the events of teacher changing and studying becoming somewhat more depressing, seeing a clear causation between the two events by linking the phrases *teacher changed* and *no longer pleasant (opettaja vaihtui, eikä... enää miellyttävää)*. Furthermore, the new teacher had more unwanted qualities compared to the elementary school teacher, namely that the junior high teacher *was not as inspiring (eikä hän ollut yhtä innostava)* or as *enthusiastic (innostunut)* as the elementary school teacher had been. Similarly, in example 27, a link between new teachers in junior high and some negative aspects is visible, the worst being a high *turnover of teachers (opettajien vaihtuvuus)*, but also *the quality of teaching (opetuksen taso)*. There is no clear-cut parallel between the turnover of teachers and the quality of teaching, but the writer uses the word *and (ja)* to link the two phrases, which might indeed indicate that the writer sees a link between the two. Also, in example 27, there is nothing that could be perceived as positive, since in elementary school the writer was afraid of the teacher (*Ala-asteella kielteisintä oli ehdottomasti se, että pelkäsin opettajaa.*). This seems to have changed when she begun junior high, but as already seen, not really for the better, even though the fear towards her teachers seems to have vanished.

Still, example 28 from the same writer as example 27, does portray even some positive feelings towards her teachers, as the writer describes how some of the teachers in high school met her expectations and some even exceeded them (*Jotkut opettajat täyttivät, ja jotkut jopa ylittivät odotukseni*). There is an element of surprise in the sentence, as if the teachers were not supposed to be as good as they turned out to be, and it would have been interesting to know what her expectations, in fact, contained. However, some of the teachers proved to be something more unpleasant and the writer felt really disappointed with them (*Toisiin olin taas todella pettynyt*). Perhaps the disappointment was even harder to bear, since some of the teachers proved to be excellent. Still, the disappointment alone was enough to make the writer feel somewhat cheated and demoralized, as she describes how it was not very motivating to see that the teacher wanted to be somewhere completely different than in class teaching them (*Ei se anna itsellekään hirveästi motivaatiota, jos opettajasta näkee, että hän halusi olla ihan jossain muualla, kuin opettamassa*.)

As seen earlier, fear was sometimes present in the accounts of elementary school teachers. Also, the passages of the high school teachers in these students' lives paint a rather cruel picture. The writers were no longer afraid of their teachers, but there is a common feeling of injustice and overall negativity in the next 3 examples that depict the cruelties of the teachers perceived by the writers.

(29) Koko lukion ajan luokallani oli sama englannin opettaja, joka oli mielestäni huono. Kukaan luokkalaisista ei pitänyt hänestä ja mielestäni hän oli epäsopeva opettajan ammattiin. Hän hyvin harvoin antoi myönteistä palautetta ja vaikka jokin esitelmä tai esse oli kaikin puolin todella hyvä hän keksi siitä jotain negatiivista sanottavaa. [...] Luulen, että opettaja yritti arvostelullaan saada meidät yrittämään kovemmin, mutta se oli kuitenkin huono tekniikka. Monet lintsasivat tunneilta ja jättivät tehtäviä tekemättä, koska tiesivät etteivät kuitenkaan pystyisi miellyttämään opettajaa. Ilmapiiri luokassa oli usein todella huono, kukaan ei halunnut viitata opettajan arvostelun takia ja sehän sai tietysti hänet haukkumaan meitä lisää. (f3)

Example 29 is a perfect example of a passage that does not contain many emotion words per se, but is still filled with emotion. The writer is somewhat distancing herself from the events, merely just describing what had happened in the past, but she is still painting a very emotional picture. In the example, the words and phrases to describe the teacher include such characterizations as *bad (huono)* and *unfit to be a teacher (epäsopeva opettajan ammattiin)*. Furthermore, in the writer's opinion, no one liked the teacher either (*kukaan...ei pitänyt*

hänestä). This seems that the writer is, in fact, rather cruel, but the description that follows of what can be called a vicious cycle, makes the writer's state of mind quite easy to understand. According to the writer, her teacher rarely gave positive feedback (*Hän hyvin harvoin antoi myönteistä palautetta*) and even if the presentations the students gave or the essays they wrote were very good, the teacher always had something negative to say about them (*vaikka jokin esitelmä tai essee oli kaikin puolin todella hyvä hän keksi siitä jotain negatiivista sanottavaa*). Moreover, the writer is emphasizing the unprofessionalism of the teacher, as well as somewhat uplifting her own expertise, by saying that the presentations and the essays were *really good in every way* (*kaikin puolin todella hyvä*) and, yet, the teacher found *something negative to say* (*jotain negatiivista sanottavaa*), indicating that the teacher was, in fact, not up to the job. The writer is slightly softening her criticism by saying that the reasons behind the harshness of the teacher was to get them to work harder (*Luulen, että opettaja yritti arvostelullaan saada meidät yrittämään kovemmin*), but then taking her approval back by indicating that no matter what the teacher was trying to do, it was still a bad tactic (*se oli kuitenkin huono tekniikka*). This resulted in students beginning to skip classes and neglect their assignments (*Monet lintsasivat tunneilta ja jättivät tehtäviä tekemättä*), because they felt that it was of no use, they could not please the teacher no matter how hard they worked (*koska tiesivät etteivät kuitenkaan pystyisi miellyttämään opettajaa*). The writer does not explicitly include herself in the group of students that began to neglect their school work, but the outrage and the disappointment that can be seen in between the lines suggests that she was, in fact, a part of that group.

In addition, the vicious cycle was ready. The writer describes it by saying that the atmosphere was often very bad in class, which resulted in reluctance to raise their hands for the students and more criticism from the teacher (*Ilmapiiri luokassa oli usein todella huono, kukaan ei halunnut viitata opettajan arvostelun takia ja sehän sai tietysti hänet haukkumaan meitä lisää*). The bad atmosphere is almost tangible in the passage. One can feel the students' withdrawing, reluctant to participate. Also frustration can be detected, both in the students and the teacher, which is clearly not helping the already bad situation.

In examples 30 and 31, the attitudes towards the teachers provoke very colorful descriptions of the past events.

(30) Lukiossa oli muutamia tosi hyviä opettajia. Harmi vaan, että pääsin vain harvoin heidän pitämilleen kursseille. Ne opettajat, joita minulla oli, olivat selvästikin ottaneet

elämäntehtävikseen polkea oppilaiden mahdollisesti orastavat kiinnostuksenalut kiven alle. Osa katsoi meitä aina nenänvarrtta pitkin ja näyttivät jatkuvasti siltä kuin olisivat haistaneet jotain hapanta. Hyvää palautetta oli aivan turha heiltä odottaa. Toiset opettajat taas olivat ihmisinä oikein mukavia, mutta kun he alkoivat puhua tunneilla, alkoi kummasti nukkutamaan. Onneksi lukiossa pystyi tenttimään kursseja, joten huonoja opettajia ei tarvinnut kauaa sietää. (m1)

(31) Englannin opettajia oli melkoinen liuta ja opetuksen laatukin vaihteli melko paljon. Ensimmäisenä opettajana meillä oli pieni keski-ään ylittänyt naisihminen, jonka opetusmenetelmät olivat jokseenkin natsimaisia. Oppilaiden julkisesti nolaaminen ja suoranainen haukkuminen olivat suuri osa tämän opettajan tyyliä. (m2)

In example 30, some positive aspects about the writer's high school teachers can be seen, but still, the writer states that the good teachers did not really cross paths with him, which was rather disappointing to him (*Lukiossa oli muutamia tosi hyviä opettajia. Harmi vaan, että pääsin vain harvoin heidän pitämilleen kursseille*). Still, the disappointment does not seem very deep, since the writer almost casually states that *it's a pity* (*Harmi vaan*), but he does not accentuate his irritation any further at that point, whereas it is very noticeable later in the passage, as the writer describes his teachers in rather harsh words. According to the writer, the meanness of his teachers was shown in the way some of them had made it their life's mission to suppress their students' dawning interests (*olivat selvästikin ottaneet elämäntehtävikseen polkea oppilaiden mahdollisesti orastavat kiinnostuksenalut*). The writer uses humor and very colorful expressions when describing the teachers he considers mean, which indicates that he is distancing himself from the events, thus perhaps shielding himself from the feelings of hurt and anxiety. The humor is seen in the exaggerated imagery, almost like a cartoon, in phrases like *taken as their missions in life* (*ottaneet elämäntehtävikseen*) and *stamp on the students' ... budding interests under a rock* (*polkea oppilaiden... orastavat kiinnostuksenalut kiven alle*).

Similar imagery continues when the writer is describing the condescending teachers, as he is painting a picture of teachers always looking at their students down their noses as if they had smelled something sour (*katsoi meitä aina nenänvarrtta pitkin ja näyttivät jatkuvasti siltä kuin olisivat haistaneet jotain hapanta*). The picture the writer paints is very clear, but instead of feeling submissive or inferior, the writer rises above his teachers and laughs at them in a very triumphant manner. He managed to survive his teachers' negative demeanor and came out a winner, thus giving his passage an air of arrogance, too. The boredom that the writer experienced in some of the teachers' classes is expressed in the statement that they were very nice as persons, but when they opened their mouths it made the writer feel like falling asleep (*Toiset opettajat taas olivat ihmisinä oikein mukavia, mutta kun he alkoivat puhua tunneilla,*

alkoi kummasti nukuttamaan). The writer does not show very much appreciation of his teachers; on the contrary, he is thankful that he did not need to tolerate the bad teachers for long (*huonoja opettajia ei tarvinnut kauaa sietää*), thus showing feelings of great relief and joy, he was lucky enough to find an easy way out of an annoying situation by taking examinations to pass the courses (*Onneksi lukiossa pystyi tenttimään kursseja*). His triumph is emphasized in the use of the adverb *luckily* (*Onneksi*). Of course one can only wonder whether everything should be easy in life or could tolerating the teachers have turned into an asset to the writer later in life.

In example 30, the writer's emotions are very openly expressed, whereas in example 31, the emotions of the writer are quite hidden. First, the writer states that they had *quite a bunch* (*melkoinen liuta*) of English teachers in high school, literally meaning that there were many teachers, but quite possibly also indicating that there were all types of personalities and quirks in the group, a type of a crazy bunch of people. Moreover, the writer states that the quality of teaching varied a great deal (*opetuksen laatukin vaihteli melko paljon*). The writer does not explicitly express any emotions in the passage, but underneath the feelings of disdain and frustration are quite clear. The writer describes his first teacher as *a small, over middle-aged woman* (*pieni keski-ään ylittänyt naisihminen*), which already paints a picture of a woman whom the writer blatantly disliked and is trying to belittle. As the writer continues describing the teacher's teaching methods as *somewhat Nazi-like* (*opetusmenetelmät olivat jokseenkin natsimaisia*), it is obvious that his feelings towards the teacher were not on the positive side, quite the contrary, the dislike is tangible. The writer also elaborates why he calls the teaching methods as Nazi-like, namely that for the most part the teacher's style was to publicly humiliate the students and she downright maligned them (*Oppilaiden julkisesti nolaaminen ja suoranainen haukkuminen olivat suuri osa tämän opettajan tyyliä*). This passage is another perfect example of the writer not using any emotion talk per se, but it being full of hidden emotions such as frustration, anger, and disdain.

After examining examples 29 through 31, it is quite understandable why the students in question wrote such cruel descriptions of their teachers, since even for an outsider many negative feelings surface. One writer summarized the feelings of her fellow students in one single line shown in example 32:

(32) Lukioaikana [...] Kielteisintä oli ehkä mielestäni huonot opettajat. (f4)

The writer sums up her feelings towards her high school teachers as plainly stating that in her opinion, *the most negative thing was perhaps the bad teachers (Kielteisintä oli ehkä mielestäni huonot opettajat)*. Still, even in this short passage doubt can be detected, as the writer uses the adverb *perhaps (ehkä)* and the phrase *in my opinion (mielestäni)*, which indicate that there could have been something else behind the negative feelings - perhaps not the teachers at all - and maybe the teachers she thought were bad, were not bad at all, as she was alone in her opinion. In any case, the teachers had caused the writer to experience some negative feelings towards them, which in turn is reflected in the negative feelings towards the whole high school.

All in all, the passages related to the teachers in the data of this study revealed a great variety of both the positive and the negative emotions. The passages were full of colorful descriptions of events concerning the writers' teachers and emotions linked to them. On the one hand, particularly in elementary school, the teachers were the ones that the students really liked, or even adored. On the other hand, the longer the students had been in school, the more negative the passages about the teachers got. The students in this study found learning languages very easy and this might be the reason why there were more negative emotions linked to the teachers than there were positive feelings. Being good at languages resulted in such feelings towards the teachers as frustration, irritation, arrogance, superiority, and boredom in the students. Also, the behaviors and methods of the teachers raised feelings such as dislike, or even disgust, injustice, determination, anxiety, humiliation, fear, and anger, or outrage even. On the positive side, the teachers' personalities and methods invoked interest, enthusiasm, gratitude, trust, and admiration in the students' minds. The passages about the teachers were many in number and in style and it is, therefore, easy to state that teachers evoke emotion discourse in plenty.

There is still one more group of people left that arose from the data of this study, namely the classmates of the writers. The passages concerning the classmates surprised the writer of this study completely, since contrary to the other groups handled in this section, the classmates seemed to evoke only the more negative emotions in the writers. This will be examined more closely in the following subsection.

5.2.3 Frustrating friends and classmates

For the most part, it is clear that both positive and negative emotions have been present when the students have accounted for their language learning journeys. Particularly in the passages about the teachers a great variation of rather powerful emotions can be seen ranging from adoration and inspiration to fear and horror. Also family members and relatives rouse several emotions such as interest, enthusiasm, and curiosity. It is, then, quite surprising that the passages containing stories about the writers' classmates seem to have what can be considered negative emotions. Envy, guilt, disappointment, irritation, and frustration can all be detected in the accounts. Not a single passage containing explicitly positive emotion words about the writers' classmates were found in the data of this study. There were some mentions of the whole class in general terms, for instance, the whole class being fond of English or being quite skillful, or that the atmosphere in class was nice. Still, none of the participants of this study clearly described any classmates with positive terms such as, for instance, nice or friendly, thus portraying some positive feelings towards the individuals with whom the writers spent much time in school. Some of the students acknowledged their classmates being better than them in English, but somehow the passages still did not have a positive feeling to them, but rather indifferent or annoyed. Granted that the data is very limited in number, but still, the negativity is quite surprising, and the negative emotion words used leave no question marks hanging over the students' rather crude remarks on their classmates as the remarks were very explicit. Some of the passages contain such clear signs of arrogance and social superiority that one has to wonder whether the writers have been able to keep these thoughts to themselves, or whether they have voiced their frustration, thus being guilty of a type of bullying. As previously mentioned, one has to keep in mind that basically every student whose narrative is a part of the data of this study had had some experience with foreign languages before attending school and they all considered themselves to be rather good at languages. This often resulted in treating their classmates as inferior and particularly being frustrated seems to be a commonly experienced emotion amongst the students in this study, as is shown in the following four examples.

First, examples 33 and 34 are accounts from elementary school and the writers show noticeable signs of frustration and annoyance towards both their classmates and studying in general:

(33) Silti kaikki oppivat jotain, paitsi minä. Se oli äärimmäisen turhauttavaa aikaa englannin opiskelun kannalta. (m2)

(34) Olin aluksi hieman turhautunut muiden huonoon tasoon ja siihen että olin jo kertaalleen lukenut kaikki kirjan tekstit ja tehnyt kaikki tehtävät. (m5)

In example 33, the writer had shown great talent towards learning English in his earlier passages and perceived himself as highly skilled in English at a very young age. In terms of his past experiences it is quite understandable that the writer felt frustrated and annoyed due to the fact that everyone else in his class learned English but him (*Silti kaikki oppivat jotain, paitsi minä*). The frustration stemmed from his advanced knowledge of the language, not because he did not learn the language at all, but because he already knew everything they were being taught. He even voices the frustration and says that it was *extremely frustrating* (*äärimmäisen turhauttavaa*), also showing anxiety. The frustration is even emphasized by stating that these were, in fact, *extremely frustrating times* (*äärimmäisen turhauttavaa aikaa*), indicating that the frustration had continued already for quite some time. There is also an element of surprise evident in the passage, since the writer seems genuinely surprised that he was the only one who did not learn something. Also, irritation and superiority towards the classmates is easy to see, as if they were there just to annoy the writer and he was thinking that English is really easy, why is it that they cannot learn it faster.

The frustration in example 34 stems from quite a similar type of a situation as the previous example, namely that the writer was somewhat frustrated with the poor standard of the others at first (*aluksi hieman turhautunut muiden huonoon tasoon*) and that he had already read all the texts in the book and done all the exercises (*olin jo kertaalleen lukenut kaikki kirjan tekstit ja tehnyt kaikki tehtävät*). In judging his classmates' poor language skills, the writer shows superiority towards them, but indicates in the word choices like *at first* (*aluksi*) and *a bit* (*hieman*) that the frustration was not really hindering him and that something happened later on to change things so that he no longer felt frustrated. The account of having already done everything there was to do clearly shows the feelings of boredom, which manifested itself as frustration, the English lessons had nothing new to offer him and it was getting tiresome. The latter sentence also indicates that the teacher was perhaps not quite as sensitive for the need of more exercises that would have been required with this pupil, the idea of individualization was clearly not present in the classroom. There is a lesson to be learned for every teacher here, as they should try to pay attention to different types of learners by offering them versatile tasks.

The following two examples, then, showcase an ongoing frustration aimed clearly towards some of the writers' classmates:

(35) Tasoerot kielitaidossa olivat ala-astettakin selvempiä ja tämä turhautti minua suunnattomasti. En voinut sietää puuduttavia tuntitilanteita, joissa piti esim. jaksaa kuunnella useita minutteja kuinka joku taitamaton tyttö yritti tavuttaa yhtä yksinkertaista lausetta! (m5)

(36) Kuitenkin viimeistään viidennellä alkoi ärsyttämään, kun piti odottaa joitain heikompia oppilaita. (m1)

Example 35 is from junior high school. The writer describes that in junior high *the differences in language proficiency were even clearer than in elementary school* (*Tasoerot kielitaidossa olivat ala-astettakin selvempiä*). Example 34 from the same writer had already shown that he had been experiencing the feelings of frustration before, but in junior high the situation was even worse, which is signaled in the use of the comparative form *clearer* (*selvempiä*) together with the adverb *even* (*-kin*). Such clear differences in the language skills, and perhaps even the fact that such differences still occurred in junior high, frustrated the writer *immensely* (*suunnattomasti*). The following sentence in the passage showcases multiple rather negative emotions, for instance, frustration, anger, and arrogance. The writer describes at least in his mind a common situation in class, where his classmate is trying to complete a task, but failing miserably in the writer's eyes (*En voinut sietää puuduttavia tuntitilanteita, joissa piti esim. jaksaa kuunnella useita minutteja kuinka joku taitamaton tyttö yritti tavuttaa yhtä yksinkertaista lausetta!*). The anger and frustration are seen in the structure *could not stand* (*En voinut sietää*) and together with boredom in the phrase *mind-numbing class situations* (*puuduttavia tuntitilanteita*).

The writer gives an example of one of the boring class situations, indicating that it was by no means the only one, by describing one of his classmates as *some unskilled girl* (*joku taitamaton tyttö*) and stating that he had to listen to that girl for several minutes when she tried to hyphenate one simple sentence (*piti esim. jaksaa kuunnella useita minutteja kuinka joku taitamaton tyttö yritti tavuttaa yhtä yksinkertaista lausetta!*). The sentence is filled with annoyance, arrogance, and frustration towards his classmate. He *had to listen* (*piti... kuunnella*), and *for several minutes* (*useita minutteja*), indicating that it was quite appropriate to experience the feelings of frustration, since no one should have to listen to such failure for so long. Finally, all the negative feelings are bundled together with the use of the

exclamation point at the end of the sentence, thus highlighting the suffering he had to bear. It is quite possible to see the writer rolling his eyes and fidgeting in his seat, which indicates that the writer may have very clearly made it known that the girl in question was actually quite stupid in his mind. If that was the case, hopefully he managed not to voice his opinion out loud for the girl's sake. The same type of frustration, arrogance, and superiority is seen in example 36. The writer states that *by the fifth grade at the latest (viimeistään viidennellä)* he started to feel irritated when he had to wait for some of the weaker pupils (*alkoi ärsyttämään, kun piti odottaa joitain heikompia oppilaita*). With the use of the adverb *however (Kuitenkin)* together with the structure *at the latest (viimeistään)* the writer indicates that there had been feelings of irritation even before the fifth grade, but at that time the weaknesses of his classmates really started to annoy him on a larger scale. By calling some of his classmates weaker, the writer is lifting himself on a higher level, thus showing superiority and arrogance towards the classmates.

Example 37 introduces a new emotion in relation to the people connected to the language learning in the students' lives. This emotion is envy.

(37) Aivan alusta saakka tunsin olevani muita edellä englannin oppimisessa. Yläasteella sain kateutta osakseni kavereiltani, koska en koskaan lukenut kokeisiin ja silti sain parhaan arvosanan. (f5)

At first, the writer shows similar elements of superiority towards her classmates as has been seen earlier. She states that right from the beginning she felt like being well ahead of the rest of the class in learning English (*Aivan alusta saakka tunsin olevani muita edellä englannin oppimisessa*). The superiority is emphasized with the use of the structure *right from the beginning (Aivan alusta saakka)*, as if her classmates had no chances of competing with her, she was the best from the start and would stay that way till the end. The writer, then, reports that her classmates experienced envy towards her in junior high (*Yläasteella sain kateutta osakseni kavereiltani*). The reason for them being envious was the fact that she never studied for the examinations and was, yet, rewarded with the best grade (*en koskaan lukenut kokeisiin ja silti sain parhaan arvosanan*). The writer also highlights her language proficiency by saying that she *never studied for the tests (en koskaan lukenut kokeisiin)*, but *still got the best grade (silti sain parhaan arvosanan)*. By that statement the writer is clearly showing both superiority, but also arrogance, as to her English was so easy it did not require any effort

whatsoever, and yet her classmates could not reach the same results, thus being envious of her. The passage indicates that the envy that her classmates experienced did not affect the writer in any way, it was merely an everyday situation to her.

Sometimes, however, the feelings of the classmates had an effect on the students of this study, as the same writer of the previous example illustrates in example 38:

(38) Paras ystäväni sai minut toisinaan tuntemaan syyllisyyttä ja tavallaan jopa toivoin epäonnistuvani joskus, jottei hän tuntisi oloaan huonommaksi. Kielioppi oli minulle hyvin yksinkertaista eikä minun pahemmin tarvinnut edes miettiä vastauksia. (f5)

The writer already proved to be very skilled in English in the previous passage and in this passage she adds to it by saying that *grammar was very simple* to her (*Kielioppi oli minulle hyvin yksinkertaista*). Moreover, she *did not even need to think about the answers much* in regard to grammar (*eikä minun pahemmin tarvinnut edes miettiä vastauksia*). In the previous passage the writer was talking about the envy that her classmates felt towards her, but in this passage she is reminiscing about the feelings her *best friend* (*Paras ystäväni*) made her feel. The writer states that sometimes this best friend made her feel guilt (*sai minut toisinaan tuntemaan syyllisyyttä*). The writer does not explain what was it about her success that resulted in her friend making her feel that way, but she does elucidate that sometimes she wished she would fail so that her friend would not feel inferior to the writer (*toivoin epäonnistuvani joskus, jottei hän tuntisi oloaan huonommaksi*). By using the adverbs *in a way* (*tavallaan*) and *even* (*jopa*) in describing her wish to sometimes fail, the writer is still indicating that failure was not something she really wanted, she left it to chance, not actively trying to do worse. This seemingly genuine wish to fail is not strong enough a power to overcome the wish to succeed, thus the writer did apparently not do anything to actually make her friend feel better. The passage is actually somewhat ambiguous of the role the best friend had, since the Finnish word “*huonommaksi*” has a double meaning. On the one hand, it could mean that the writer did not want her friend to feel *inferior* to her, thus she wanted to fail in order for them to be more equal. On the other hand, the word choice might mean that her friend was already one of the weaker pupils, thus the writer did not want to make him/her feel *even worse* by being so good herself.

Example 39, then, illustrates powerful emotional reaction the writer’s classmates had towards the writer:

(39) Pidin suunaattomasti [sic] koulunkäynnistä, erityisesti kirjoittamisesta. Jostain syystä olin yksin ihastukseni kanssa, sillä aina kun ehdotin että kirjoittaisimme, sain niskaani ryöpyn solvauksia luokkatovereiltani. (m3)

Firstly, the writer is stating that he *liked attending school immensely* (*Pidin suunaattomasti [sic] koulunkäynnistä*) and *writing in particular* (*erityisesti kirjoittamisesta*). The writer also demonstrates admiration in a form of a crush (*ihastukseni*) on writing. However, this was not the case with his classmates, who were throwing insults at the writer every time he suggested they would write something (*aina kun ehdotin että kirjoittaisimme, sain niskaani ryöpyn solvauksia luokkatovereiltani*). For the writer it was clearly a genuine surprise that he was alone in his infatuation (*olin yksin ihastukseni kanssa*) by using the phrase *for some reason* (*Jostain syystä*). The phrase could also be an expression of irony and the writer quite clearly understands that he was different from his classmates. Still, according to the passage, it seems that the whole class was against the writer, thus making him rather lonely and not getting support for his enthusiasm.

Yet another example of a lacking support from the classmates can be seen in example 40:

(40) Suurin motivaationi tähän kouluun oli käytännön englantiini kohentamisen. Sain kuitenkin pettyä, kun käytännössä katsoen kukaan opiskelutovereistani ei ollut halukas yrittämään päivittäisen kanssakäymisen hoitamista englanniksi, vaikka linjamme oli ”englanninkielinen”. (f6)

The writer is describing the atmosphere in the English school of home economics. Her biggest motivation to attend the school was to improve her practical skills in English (*Suurin motivaationi tähän kouluun oli käytännön englantiini kohentamisen*), but she ended up being disappointed since none of her classmates joined her in her enthusiasm to speak English on an everyday basis (*Sain kuitenkin pettyä, kun käytännössä katsoen kukaan opiskelutovereistani ei ollut halukas yrittämään päivittäisen kanssakäymisen hoitamista englanniksi*). The writer uses the adverb *practically* (*käytännöllisesti katsoen*) when talking about how *none* of her classmates (*kukaan opiskelutovereistani*) was willing to try engaging in an English conversation on an everyday basis (*ei ollut halukas yrittämään päivittäisen kanssakäymisen hoitamista englanniksi*), thus indicating that even if some of her classmates occasionally interacted in English with her, the main purpose for being in the school was denied to her due

to her unenthusiastic classmates. The disappointment the writer is also voicing in the passage (*Sain kuitenkin pettyä*), is palpable. Moreover, the writer is showing regret and annoyance towards both her classmates and the school itself by using the quotation marks in the phrase “English” (“*englanninkielinen*”) when talking about the school. The quotation marks indicate that the school has promoted its English language status to a false degree, thus producing annoyance and even regret to attend such a false school in the writer. Also the classmates get a piece of the writer’s annoyance, as if she was thinking that they should never have attended the school, were they not prepared to take full advantage of the English language status it offered.

Example 40 concludes the section about people in the students’ lives in regard to their emotions and language learning. As seen in the analysis, the students’ language journey began with plenty of positive emotions in the form of interest and enthusiasm with the family members, but also with confidence in themselves at quite a young age. Later, the personalities and the methods of the teachers produced a great variety of emotions in the students, both positive and negative. The analysis ended with the classmates of the students with the result that the passages contained a collection of rather negative emotions towards them, largest group of feelings being frustration, arrogance, and superiority. It is time, then, to leave the significant people behind and move on to another important factor in the students’ lives. This factor is the places the students linked their emotions to in regard to their language journey and it will be handled in the following section.

5.3 Places the emotions are linked to

This section concentrates on all the places the students’ have linked their emotions to. Most passages handle the school environment, which is quite natural, since all students come across foreign languages while attending school in Finland. Still, the students of this study had many language learning experiences abroad, which is another bigger cluster of passages concerning emotions in language learning. Beginning with examples of the school environment, a few clarifications of the terms is in order. The school systems somewhat vary in Finland and in other countries. The English counterparts for the Finnish system in this study come from the United States of America, from where the closest equivalents have been chosen. When students write about “*ala-aste*” in Finnish, which means the grades one through six, from the age of 6 or 7 to the age of 11 or 12, and is nowadays called “*alakoulu*”, the term *elementary*

school is used in this study. “*Yläaste*” in Finnish, grades seven through nine and ages between 11 or 12 and 15 or 16, nowadays called “*yläkoulu*”, is replaced by *junior high school*, or *junior high* for short, in this study. Together these two constitute an entity called “*peruskoulu*”, the closest equivalent for it being *comprehensive school* in English. The secondary level education for the students of this study after comprehensive school was “*lukio*” in Finnish, traditionally a three-year education that gives qualifications for higher education, for instance, at the university. The Finnish term “*lukio*” is substituted with its English counterpart *senior high school*, or *high school* for short, in this study.

As the people in the students’ lives in regard to their second language learning were fully examined in the previous chapter, all the passages concerning people, for instance teachers, are mostly omitted from this chapter. There is, however, one exception to the rule. Since people were an inseparable part of the students’ experiences abroad, the people that the students met while staying abroad are also seen in the examples. Still, before analyzing the freedom experienced abroad in Subsection 5.3.5, the first look is taken towards the school environment, beginning from the elementary school in Subsection 5.3.1, and continuing through junior high school in Subsection 5.3.2, senior high school in Subsection 5.3.3 and all the way to university in Subsection 5.3.4.

5.3.1 Love for a language in elementary school

As was already seen when looking at the passages about teachers, the younger the students were, the more positive their emotions towards the teacher were. The same phenomenon can be seen with school. The passages concerning school are, however, much shorter and less vivid than the passages describing the teachers, but on the other hand, the emotions in them are very straightforward and clear. Elementary school was where the students’ official journey with languages begun and for the most part a clear infatuation can be seen, as in examples 41 and 42 from one writer:

(41) Olin ala-asteella innokas oppilas ja ihastuin englantiin. Se oli mielestäni helppoa [...] (f1)

(42) Oppiminen on ollut melko ongelmaton (varsinkin alussa) ja tavallaan sitä voisi ajatella myös rakastumisena. (f1)

In example 41, the writer describes how she was *an enthusiastic pupil (innokas oppilas)* and how she *fell for English (ihastuin englantiin)* in elementary school. She even gives a reason for her enthusiasm, namely that it was easy (*Se oli mielestäni helppoa*). The passage is a clear continuum of the fact that learning languages was very easy to both the writer in question and also to the whole group portrayed in this study even before entering school, which is also portrayed in example 42. In example 42, the writer states that learning has been rather problem-free (*Oppiminen on ollut melko ongelmatonta*), which in an earlier passage is defined to concern the learning of English. As the writer uses the phrase *particularly at the beginning (varsinkin alussa)*, she is suggesting that later on there were problems even with learning English. Also, by putting the phrase in parentheses, the writer is subtly offering the information, as if she was embarrassed by the fact that English was not always the easiest subject to learn, wanting to whisper it and perhaps hope it to go away. She does say that in a way learning English could be seen as falling in love (*tavallaan sitä voisi ajatella myös rakastumisena*), which is even a stronger emotion than a mere infatuation.

In example 43, the beginning of studying English raised many different types of feelings along with falling for the language.

(43) Oli tosi kivaa ja jännittävää aloittaa opiskelu. Englannista muodostui pian koko luokan lempiaine tai ainakin minun. Mielestäni kaikki luokkani oppilaat aloittivat kielen opiskelun myönteisellä mielellä, tosin asenne saattoi muuttua opiskelun edetessä. Opiskelun alussa tuntui hienolta jos osasi sanoa jotain englanniksi. (f3)

The writer explains that it was really fun and exciting to start studying English (*Oli tosi kivaa ja jännittävää aloittaa opiskelu*), and the tingling feelings of excitement and interest are almost tangible. At first, the writer states that English soon became the favorite subject of the whole class (*Englannista muodostui pian koko luokan lempiaine*), but she quickly changes her stance on the subject, saying that at least English became *her* favorite (*tai ainakin minun*). Similar change can be seen in the following sentence, as if the writer begins to describe something she wishes to be true, but then realizes that it is better to face the facts and tell what really happened in her view. Saying first that all the pupils in her class started learning English with a positive attitude (*Mielestäni kaikki luokkani oppilaat aloittivat kielen opiskelun myönteisellä mielellä*), but then changing her position and stating that perhaps the attitude changed as the studying proceeded (*tosin asenne saattoi muuttua opiskelun edetessä*), the writer is reflecting her own positive feelings on the classmates' changing attitudes, somewhat

feeling disappointed that her classmates did not share her love for the language. In any case, the writer experienced pride as she was able to say something in English (*Opiskelun alussa tuntui hienolta jos osasi sanoa jotain englanniksi*). As the writer uses the phrase *at the beginning* (*alussa*) when describing how proud she was of her initial progress, she is suggesting that pride was not as easy to obtain later on.

Still, similar pride in succeeding to produce something in English can be seen in example 44. Furthermore, also educational materials used in school are evaluated in the example.

(44) Oppimateriaalit, joita käytimme olivat varsin perinteisiä; tekstikirja, tehtäväkirjat ja ääninauhat. Jälkeen päin [sic] ajateltuna arvostan suuresti sitä, että kielen opiskelu oli suhteellisen monipuolista: luettiin ääneen, kirjoitettiin sekä kuunneltiin nauhoja. Joskus saimme jopa englantilaisia vieraita luokkaamme, ja saimme esittää heille kysymyksiä englanniksi. Vaikkei sen ikäisenä vielä kovin hienoja lauseita osannutkaan muodostaa, oli kuitenkin erittäin hieno tunne tulla ymmärretyksi heidän äidinkielellään. (m4)

Firstly, the writer explains that the educational materials that were used in his school were quite traditional, namely a textbook, exercise books, and audio tapes (*Oppimateriaalit, joita käytimme olivat varsin perinteisiä; tekstikirja, tehtäväkirjat ja ääninauhat*). Such a collection might entail also a very traditional, and somewhat boring, use of the materials, but the writer felt that the use was, in fact, quite versatile. Such versatility was greatly appreciated, at least in retrospect (*Jälkeen päin [sic] ajateltuna arvostan suuresti sitä, että kielen opiskelu oli suhteellisen monipuolista*), which indicates that the writer did not appreciate such an opportunity quite as much as it happened. Still, the fact that at times they had English visitors in class (*Joskus saimme jopa englantilaisia vieraita luokkaamme*), made an impact on the writer, which can be seen in the element of surprise in the use of the adverb *even* (*jopa*). Also, the feeling the writer experienced as he was able to make himself understood in a foreign language, the native tongue of the visitors, is described as being *extremely great* (*erittäin hieno*).

Positive attitude towards English is visible in the following example 45:

(45) Positiivisina muistan myös kaikki ne hetket, kun sai kokeita takaisin ja oli saanut kiitettäviä numeroita. Se oli sitä onnistumisen iloa. (f4)

The writer has many positive memories of English lessons, which were due to the moments when she got her tests back and was able to see that the grades were excellent (*Positiivisina muistan myös kaikki ne hetket, kun sai kokeita takaisin ja oli saanut kiitettäviä numeroita*). She describes those moments as *rejoicing over success (onnistumisen iloa)*, which makes the feelings of joy and pride clear to see. As the writer uses the adverb *also (myös)* when writing about getting back her tests, she is suggesting that there were also other moments when she felt joy, but chooses not to elaborate them further.

The infatuation, or love for the English language, can also be seen in the feelings of enthusiasm and interest in English.

(46) Mielestäni jo tällöin englanti oli kaikista mielenkiintoisinta mitä koulu tulisi tarjoamaan (siis tietysti liikunnan jälkeen!). Ja epäilenkin, että kohdallani on todellakin pygmalion - itseään toteuttava ennustus. Sain pienenä kuulla niin paljon kehuja kielitaidostani, että se innosti oppimaan lisää - olinhan jo NIIN hyvä! (m5)

(47) Mieleenpainuvin kokemus ensimmäisenä englannin opiskelupäivänä oli, kun saimme englantilaiset nimet, minä olin Nick. Jo ensimmäisestä päivästä alkaen olin hyvin kiinnostunut kielestä, vaikka siitä ei vielä paljon ymmärtänytään. (m4)

In example 46, the writer is describing how English was the most interesting thing school could ever offer him (*englanti oli kaikista mielenkiintoisinta mitä koulu tulisi tarjoamaan*). There is a certain wisdom of the future in the sentence in using the future tense *was to offer (tulisi tarjoamaan)*. As the writer is looking back, he has understood that at that point in his life English was the best thing the school was ever to offer him, containing an element of sadness and sorrow in the passage. Even though the writer is claiming that English was the most interesting thing in school, he contradicts his own statement by saying that English only came after physical education on the scale (*siis tietysti liikunnan jälkeen!*). Even though the writer puts the statement about physical education in parentheses, as an afterthought, he accentuates the subject's high position by using the adverb *naturally (tietysti)* and an exclamation point at the end, thus making English less interesting than physical education, but also suggesting that everyone should know that anyway, no need to say it out loud, hence the afterthought in parentheses. Still, using the phrase *even then (jo tällöin)* in describing the interest in English, the writer is suggesting that English has remained in the center of his interest to this day. The writer continues his story by describing how the success in English was, in fact, *a Pygmalion - a self-fulfilling prophecy (pygmalion - itseään toteuttava*

ennustus), since the more praise he got from his language skills, the more interested in learning he got (*Sain pienenä kuulla niin paljon kehuja kielitaidostani, että se innosti oppimaan lisää*). The pride, the enthusiasm and the joy of such a positive cycle are clearly visible in the writer's exclamation *as I was already SO good! (olinhan jo NIIN hyvä!)*.

If the writer in example 46 perceived himself as very good already when starting to study English, the writer in example 47 felt that he might not have understood much of the language (*siitä ei vielä paljon ymmärtänytkään*), but he was still very interested in it (*olin hyvin kiinnostunut kielestä*). The interest is highlighted by using the time frame it began: *already since the first day (Jo ensimmäisestä päivästä alkaen)* of studying English. That first day made a lasting impact on the writer, as he describes that *the most memorable experience (Mieleenpainuvin kokemus)* in the first English lesson was getting an English name, the writer's name being Nick (*minä olin Nick*). Such a small change in class generated feelings of pride and interest in the writer, which is an important message to all teachers, since sometimes it is the smallest actions that can stir the greatest emotions.

Enthusiasm is one of the most visible emotions present in many of the passages from elementary school, as seen in the following examples:

(48) Aloittaessani englannin kolmannella luokalla olin luokkani innokkaimpia oppilaita. Kielen opettelu perustui tuolloin paljon leikkeihin ja lauluihin, ja kaikki englannin tunnit olivat tuolloin hauskoja. (f6)

(49) Ala-asteen ajan intoni englannin kielessä säilyi kovana ja opiskelin kieltä innokkaasti myös vapaa-ajalla. (m5)

(50) Peruskoulun ensimmäisellä englannin tunnilla olin sitten käsi viittaamisesta puuduksissa, kun opettaja kyseli, että mitä kaikkea englanniksi osaammekaan. Silloin tuntui mukavalta. (f4)

In example 48, the writer is describing the beginning of studying English in the third grade, stating that she was one of the most enthusiastic pupils in her class (*olin luokkani innokkaimpia oppilaita*), thus acknowledging that there were others quite as enthusiastic, but on the other hand, she had realized that not all the pupils were as interested in the language as she was. The language learning was fun for her (*englannin tunnit olivat tuolloin hauskoja*) due to the methods used, namely that there were plenty of games and songs involved in learning (*Kielen opettelu perustui tuolloin paljon leikkeihin ja lauluihin*). As the writer uses the adverb *then (tuolloin)* both in describing how all the classes were fun, and how they were

based on playing and singing, thus creating a parallel between the two, she is indicating that they both also changed later on in her school journey, learning English was later not fun nor games. Similarly, in example 49, the writer states that his enthusiasm towards English remained high all through elementary school (*Ala-asteen ajan intoni englannin kielessä säilyi kovana*), thus slightly indicating that things changed after moving to junior high. However, during elementary school the writer's enthusiasm soared, as he describes studying English also in his free time (*opiskelin kieltä innokkaasti myös vapaa-ajalla*), a sign of a true enthusiast. Another manifestation of a great enthusiasm can be seen in example 50. The writer is describing her first English lesson in school as the teacher was asking the pupils what they already knew in English. In this case, the enthusiasm took a very physical form as the writer is telling how her arm was numb from raising her hand all the time to show how much she already knew (*olin sitten käsi viittaamisesta puuduksissa, kun opettaja kyseli, että mitä kaikkea englanniksi osaammekaan*). The enthusiasm and joy are palpable in the passage. Also, the writer has very fond memories of the situation, as she is stating that it felt nice back then (*silloin tuntui mukavalta*). Yet again, by using the phrase *back then* (*silloin*), the writer is suggesting that later there were also times, when things did not feel that nice during the English lessons.

The easiness that the students' had experienced in regard to learning English even before school was visible in several passages in the previous section about people in the students' lives in regard to language learning. The ease also followed many of the students to the school world, as is seen in the following two examples:

(51) Peruskoulussa englannin aloittaminen olikin sitten äärimmäisen helppoa. (m2)

(52) Tehtäväkirjat, etenkin ala-asteella, tuntuivat jopa naurettavan helpoilta ja turhilta. (f5)

The ease of learning English is portrayed in example 51 above, as the writer explains how the beginning of studying English was, not just easy, but *extremely easy* (*äärimmäisen helppoa*). As the writer uses the adverb *then* (*sitten*), he is acknowledging that English had been easy for him even before school and therefore, beginning of English in school is so easy that the writer is taking it somewhat granted. On the other hand, as already seen before in the previous chapter, sometimes the easiness of learning English resulted in frustration and other rather wearing emotions. In example 52, the frustration is aimed at the exercise books, as the writer

describes them as *ridiculously easy and pointless (naurettavan helpoilta ja turhilta)*. The passage is very short, but it is rich with emotions. As the writer is criticizing the exercise books, she is pouring all her frustration, boredom, superiority, and even contempt towards the educational materials and perhaps even school. One can only imagine how such a disdain resulted in studying, as it might not have been easy to motivate her.

In contrast, the following example shows how motivation can be something intrinsic:

(53) Ala-asteen kielen opiskelusta ei ole jäänyt minulle mitään negatiivista mieleen. Uskon, että olin hieman keskimääräistä parempi kielen oppija. Hyvä opiskelumotivaatio toi tuloksia ja loi puitteet siirryttäessä yläasteelle. (m4)

In example 53, the writer has only positive memories of elementary school, since nothing negative calls to his mind about studying languages (*Ala-asteen kielen opiskelusta ei ole jäänyt minulle mitään negatiivista mieleen*). The positivity is seen in the way the writer sees himself as a language learner, namely *better than average (keskimääräistä parempi)*, and due to the fact that he was very motivated and got good results (*Hyvä opiskelumotivaatio toi tuloksia*). The writer's self-confidence is clearly high, which is more than natural as his performance in elementary school was at a good level and it gave him a solid base for moving on to junior high (*loi puitteet siirryttäessä yläasteelle*). The difference between this particular example and most of the passages describing the writers' success is that in example 46, there really are no signs of superiority or arrogance towards other people. Perhaps that is a true manifestation of self-assurance as there is no need to lift oneself higher than others or push others down.

As seen in many examples already, self-confidence was high in narratives of this study for the most part, but there was one occasion in regard to elementary school, where a student felt hesitant of her self-assurance. The lack of self-confidence is visible in the following example:

(54) Ilmapiiri tunneilla oli mukava, kenellekään ei naurettu, jos vastasi väärin. Mutta kuitenkin tuntui siltä, ettei uskalla vastata väärin... (f4)

First, the writer describes the atmosphere of the English class as *nice (mukava)*, and also very relaxed and non-judgmental as she is saying that no one got laughed at if they happened to

give a wrong answer in class (*kenellekään ei naurettu, jos vastasi väärin*). Such an atmosphere sounds like an ideal learning environment, but the writer herself prejudices it by stating that somehow it felt like one just would not dare to give a wrong answer (*Mutta kuitenkin tuntui siltä, ettei uskalla vastata väärin*). She does not elaborate where such fear stems from and why she chooses to undermine her class. Still, the writer emphasizes her distrust by using the three dots at the end of the sentence, suggesting that there are things that should not be spoken of, but one should trust her, she knows what happened to those who answered wrong.

To sum up, learning English had been easy for the students in this study before school, and it continued to be that way also in elementary school. Feelings of interest, enthusiasm, joy, and even love were present in the narratives, but also some cases of frustration and superiority could be seen, as was also witnessed in the previous chapter. The elementary school level was still quite easy to the participants in this study as they were good at English, some even before school. The joy of learning, and being as interested in the language and enthusiastic about showing their skills surely have carried the students a long way in their language studies. Still, it might have been more beneficial for them that they had experienced at least slight struggles with the language at a young age, since when the struggling, then, began in junior high, some of the students were at a loss.

5.3.2 Mixed feelings in junior high school

As the students of this study experienced a major change when moving to junior high school, also their feelings towards school took a turn towards more mixed emotions. Mostly the students felt that they were still able to cope with higher demands due to their good command of English and their motivation, but there were also some signs of inferiority, as seen in the following examples:

(55) Yläasteelle siirryttäessä opiskelu muuttui vaativammaksi, mutta korkean motivaationi ansiosta pysyin hyvin kärryillä. (f2)

(56) Viihdyin englannintunneilla, sillä siellä en ollut epävarma osaamisestani. Esimerkiksi saksan ja ruotsin opiskelu oli hyvin erilaista ja motivaationi alhaisempi, koska koin yksinkertaisesti olevani huono niissä kielissä. (f2)

In example 55, the writer acknowledges that studying English changed to more challenging in junior high (*Yläasteelle siirryttäessä opiskelu muuttui vaativammaksi*), but, in fact, it made no big difference to her as she was able to use her high motivation to keep up well (*korkean motivaationi ansiosta pysyin hyvin kärryillä*). Still, as the writer uses the phrasal verb *keep up* (*pysyin... kärryillä*), which in Finnish paints a picture of a person hanging on a horse-drawn wagon for the dear life, she is indicating that keeping up took some effort and was not as easy as it had been before. In addition, the students' motivation was usually high in studying English, but it sometimes suffered with other languages the students had in their curriculum, as seen in example 56. In example 56, the writer states that she liked being in the English classes (*Viihdyin englannintunneilla*) and the reason for this was that she did not feel insecure of her competence there (*siellä en ollut epävarma osaamisestani*). She continues that studying German and Swedish was very different (*saksan ja ruotsin opiskelu oli hyvin erilaista*), emphasizing the difference by using the adverb *very* (*hyvin*). The difference between English and the other languages was that she felt that she was bad at German and Swedish (*koin... olevani huono niissä kielissä*), thus resulting in having a lower motivation towards the languages (*motivaationi alhaisempi*). Such inferiority and being bad at something was quite new to these students, as they had so far moved from one triumph to another along their language journey.

On many occasions the change from the safe bosom of elementary school to junior high was a shock to the students and also puberty challenged them.

(57) Siirtyminen ylä-asteelle aiheutti jonkinasteisen shokin. Toki murrosiällä oli luultavasti myös osuutta asiaan, mutta useissa aineissa koin totaalisen mielenkiinnon menetyksen. [...] Varsinkin englannin tunneilla tilanne kärjisty. (m5)

(58) Yläasteen englanninopetus oli suuri pettymys. [...] Teini-ikäkin alkoi pikkuhiljaa painaa päälle, joten ajatukset olivat muualla kuin kielenopiskelussa. Kirjoissa ei ollut otettu huomioon, että 13-15 -vuotiaita ei välttämättä enää kiinnosta samat asiat kuin ala-astelaisia. (m1)

(59) Yksi negatiivinen asia yläasteen oppimisympäristössä oli kuitenkin ala-asteeseen verrattuna: monet oppilaista passivoituvat yläasteen aikana huomattavasti [...] En kuitenkaan usko tämän johtuvan siitä, että oppilaat olisivat kokeneet englannin kielen erityisen vastenmieliseksi oppiaineeksi: yläaste vaan sattuu olemaan monelle murrosikäisellä hankalaa aikaa. (m4)

In example 57, the writer straightforwardly states that *moving on to junior high caused some sort of a shock* (*Siirtyminen ylä-asteelle aiheutti jonkinasteisen shokin*). There is a slight whiff

of surprise in the passage, as seems to be the case whenever the students of this study had encountered some challenges in their language studies, as they had always been able to trust their skills in the past. The writer admits that puberty had something to do with such a shock (*Toki murrosiällä oli... osuutta asiaan*), even though he clearly doubts its role too, as he uses the dismissive adverb *probably* (*luultavasti*) in the sentence. The writer gives the biggest role of experiencing some challenges in many school subjects to *a total loss of interest* (*koin totaalisen mielenkiinnon menetyksen*). As the writer uses the phrase *a total loss* (*totaalisen... menetyksen*), he is signaling that he absolutely gave up and withdrew from attending the class activities. Frustration is, yet again, present, as is disappointment. According to the writer, *the situation culminated in the English classes* (*englannin tunneilla tilanne kärjistyi*) and it did so *particularly* (*Varsinkin*) there. Outside the passage the writer is aiming his disappointment towards his teachers and classmates, which again portrays somewhat selfish behavior, as if the writer himself had no way of enhancing the situation, for instance, by trying to help his classmates.

Also, the loss of interest, disappointment and somewhat giving up are all present in the examples 58 and 59. Puberty is viewed to have a connection to these emotions. The criticism of the writer in example 58 is turned towards the books, which did not take into account the fact that teenagers are not necessarily interested in the same topics as children in elementary school (*Kirjoissa ei ollut otettu huomioon, että 13-15 –vuotiaita ei välttämättä enää kiinnosta samat asiat kuin ala-astelaisia*). In example 59, the writer is turning his criticism mostly on puberty, which resulted in the students to become passive (*monet oppilaista passivoituvat yläasteen aikana huomattavasti*). He accentuates the difference between elementary school and junior high by using the adverb *notably* (*huomattavasti*) when describing the degree of passivity, but is very quick to state that this was not because they felt that English was particularly repulsive, it just happened to be an expression of puberty at a very difficult age.

Moreover, other somewhat negative emotions raised their heads in junior high.

(60) Yläasteella oli kielioppitunnit erikseen. Kuolettavan tylsiä. (m1)

(61) Yläasteaika olikin sitten vallan erilaista. En ole koskaan ollut vankilassa, mutta voisin kuvitella sen olevan samanlaista paitsi jos vankilassa jotain pahoinpidellään henkisesti, eivät vartijat liity mukaan. Kieltenopetus oli aivan kamalaa. (m2)

In example 60, the passage is short, but the emotion is clear. The writer states that the grammar was taught in separate lessons and they were *deadly boring* (*Kuolettavan tylsiä*). Just two words, but the feelings of boredom and even anger are quite tangible. In contrast, example 61 shows a very vivid imagery as the writer is describing his experiences from junior high. He also contrasts it to elementary school, stating that it was *completely different* (*vallan erilaista*), thus suggesting that in elementary school studying had felt good as he describes his time in junior high as being in prison (*En ole koskaan ollut vankilassa, mutta voisin kuvitella sen olevan samanlaista*). The writer, in fact, sees junior high as even worse than being in prison, since his belief is that if someone gets mentally abused in prison, the guards will not join in, as seems to be the case in junior high to his mind (*jos vankilassa jotain pahoinpidellään henkisesti, eivät vartijat liity mukaan*). Furthermore, the writer accentuates that *language teaching was utterly terrible* (*Kieltenopetus oli aivan kamalaa*), although not bluntly connecting language teaching to being in prison.

Luckily there were students that were still interested, motivated and had positive emotions towards language learning in junior high, as seen in the following two examples.

(62) Yläasteella opetus muuttui jotenkin vapaammaksi. [...] Kirjat olivat edelleen ihan mukavia ja ilmapiiri oli tosi hyvä ja rento. (f4)

(63) Kaiken kaikkiaan yläasteen kielen opiskelusta jäi minulle positiivinen kuva ja mielenkiinto englannin kieleen säilyi. (m4)

The writer in example 62 felt that *in junior high, the teaching changed somehow into freer* (*Yläasteella opetus muuttui jotenkin vapaammaksi*). There seems to be a relief included in the change for the writer, as if she had felt pressured in elementary school. By using the adverb *somehow* (*jotenkin*), it is clear that the writer is not able to pinpoint exactly how the freer learning environment came to be, but she does offer some suggestions, namely that *the books were quite nice* (*Kirjat olivat... ihan mukavia*) and that *the atmosphere was really good and relaxed* (*ilmapiiri oli tosi hyvä ja rento*). As the writer uses the adverb *still* (*edelleen*) and the phrase *quite nice* (*ihan mukavia*) when writing about the books, she is indicating that the books had always been the same and they had not before nor now been a source to get excited about. On the other hand, there is clearly excitement in the air when she is describing the new and changed atmosphere. The writer is plainly looking forward to the good things her junior high school class was about to give her, as if they were yet to come. In example 63, the writer

is looking back and seeing that what he got out of language learning in junior high was *a positive image* (*yläasteen kielen opiskelusta jäi minulle positiivinen kuva*) and also that his *interest in the English language was maintained* (*mielenkiinto englannin kieleen säilyi*). The writer even emphasizes the positive vibes he had, saying that *all in all* (*Kaiken kaikkiaan*) it was positive, slightly suggesting that there were also things that were more on the challenging side, but still, the overall feeling was on the plus side.

In short, it seems that the time in junior high was the time of mixed feelings for the students in this study. Many still felt motivated and interested in English, and one student even felt some type of liberation from the pressure of elementary school. Some students still liked the English lessons, but quite a few had very strong feelings of boredom, frustration, and even confinement. Some of the students began to realize that they may have gaps in their language skills, which occasionally resulted in the loss of motivation and interest. The puberty seemed to hit rather hard on some of the students, which was not good for their language studies. The struggles continued in high school, although in a different manner. This will be looked at in the following section.

5.3.3 Reality check in high school

As the students in this study were good at languages, and particularly in English, from an early age, it came as a bit of shock to some that their natural aptitude was not enough in high school. The shock is illustrated in the following two examples:

(64) Englannin opiskelu alkoi aika kevyesti, se tuntui ehkä jopa liiankin helpolta. Oli nimittäin mukava tuudittautua siihen tunteeseen, että on niin hyvä. Todellisuus onneksi iski jo parin ensimmäisen kurssin jälkeen: enää ei pärjännyt, jos ei tehnyt töitä. (f4)

(65) Lukioon tullessa olin itsevarma kielitaidostani, sekä englannissa että ruotsissa. Sain kuitenkin pian huomata ettei enää ollakaan yläasteella vaan nyt täytyy ehkä vähän myös aukaista oppikirjaa. [...] Täytyy tunnustaa että tunsin hieman ärsyyntyneisyyttä siitä etten enää pärjännytkään pelkällä ”mutulla” eli ”musta tuntuu”-periaatteella. Elämäni ensimmäinen ’9’ tuli sitten lukiossa, mikä kirpasi kovasti itsetuntoani. (f5)

In example 64, the writer describes the circumstances when studying English in high school began. At first, it felt rather light (*aika kevyesti*), still indicating that perhaps her suspicions of the easiness began to crack even at that early stage, as she uses the adverb *rather* (*aika*). The

suspicion is also present in the following sentence, as the writer is using multiple quite doubtful adverbs, saying that the beginning *felt maybe even a bit too easy* (*tuntui ehkä jopa liiankin helpolta*), as if she knew that it was too good to be true and that reality would soon come and crush her. Her instincts also proved to be right and she realized that it was impossible to cope any more if one was not going to work for it (*enää ei pärjännyt, jos ei tehnyt töitä*). The writer sees such an awakening as something positive, being grateful that it happened already after a couple of courses (*Todellisuus onneksi iski jo parin ensimmäisen kurssin jälkeen*). Even though it was a rather rude awakening to reality (*Todellisuus iski*), she felt lucky, and perhaps even relieved, to have experienced it (*onneksi*).

The writer in example 65 entered high school with a high self-confidence, being sure of her language skills both in English and in Swedish (*Lukioon tullessa olin itsevarma kielitaidostani, sekä englannissa että ruotsissa*). Rather quickly also she experienced a reality check (*Sain kuitenkin pian huomata*), realizing that she, in fact, needed to open her books to do well (*nyt täytyy... myös aukaista oppikirjaa*). Such a realization seems to have been a humbling experience for the writer, even though she is trying to escape the reality, using the dismissive adverbs *maybe* (*ehkä*) and *a little* (*vähän*) to describe it. Also, the writer writes very dismissively about junior high school (*ettei enää ollakaan yläasteella*), thus being somewhat arrogant, not recognizing the work that was done there. Moreover, the writer is somewhat reluctant, but chooses still to admit (*Täytyy tunnustaa*) that needing to work in the language classes made her feel slightly irritated (*tunsin hieman ärsyyntyneisyyttä*). She is using a Finnish word “*mutu*” when describing how she had gone about her language studies in the past, which means that she played it by ear, not spending any time to actually plan her studies or work for her grades. “*Mutu*” can also be understood as *methinks*, I think, or as “poor reasoning or knowledge based on common beliefs as opposed to actual knowledge” (Wiktionary n.d.). The word suggests that the writer felt superiority and perhaps even arrogance towards the junior high school curriculum, and not needing to work for her grades made her self-confidence soar. The fact that the *methinks* principle was not enough anymore in high school and that she received her first ever 9 in her report card, was a very hard sting on her self-esteem (*etten enää pärjännytkään pelkällä ”mutulla” eli ”musta tuntuu”-periaatteella. Elämäni ensimmäinen ’9’ tuli sitten lukiossa, mikä kirpaisi kovasti itsetuntoani*). It is very significant that the writer uses the word *self-esteem* (*itsetuntoani*) instead of the word *self-confidence*, when describing her failure to achieve a perfect 10 in the report card, suggesting that the 9 she got was a blow to her self-worth as a person, as if she

did not know who she was any more. In fact, the same writer experienced another blow to her character, described in the following example.

(66) Aina täytyi jotenkin mukautua annettuun muottiin ja tuntui että olemassa on vain yksi oikea vastaus tai ylipäätään tapa tehdä asioita. (f5)

Example 66 shows the feelings of frustration and disdain, and also the rebellious nature of the writer. She is describing the general atmosphere in high school, stating that people always had to adapt to a set mold (*Aina täytyi jotenkin mukautua annettuun muottiin*). Moreover, she felt that there was *only one correct answer or one way to do things at all* (*tuntui että olemassa on vain yksi oikea vastaus tai ylipäätään tapa tehdä asioita*). Frustration and a general contempt towards the usual practices are quite palpable. Still, an air of rebellion is also visible and the reader is getting a feeling that perhaps the writer did not just easily swallow everything that was expected of her.

As harsh as the reality check was for some of the students, also positive and interesting things found their way to the students' school life.

(67) Suuri plussa lukion englannin opiskelussa oli englanninkielisen keskusteluryhmän perustaminen. (m2)

(68) Aluksi oli mielenkiintoista päästä kielistudioon katsomaan, että mitäs sieltä löytyykään. Karu totuus kuitenkin on, että pidemmän päälle kuullun ymmärtämiset tuntuivat kestävän ikuisuuksia ja tuli omituinen halu olla missä tahansa muualla. (m1)

(69) Ensimmäinen lukion englannin tunti studiossa yllätti. [...] Nyt piti kuunnella rivien välistä ja tunnistaa ironia ja sarkasmi. (m3)

In example 67, positive feelings emerged due to an English language discussion group that was founded. The writer simply states that it was *a big plus* (*Suuri plussa*) in the English studies. Another novelty for the students in high school was the language lab, and examples 68 and 69 portray the feelings raised by it. In fact, example 68 shows the ambivalent feelings the writer is experiencing towards the language lab. At first, the writer shows curiosity and intrigue towards the language lab, interested in seeing what it contained (*Aluksi oli mielenkiintoista päästä kielistudioon katsomaan, että mitäs sieltä löytyykään*). Later on, the writer experienced disappointment and boredom in regard to spending any time in the language lab. The disappointment hit the writer hard, as he is describing the revelation as *the*

harsh truth (karu totuus). The boredom and also frustration towards the methods used in the language lab can be seen in the statements that *the listening comprehension exercises seemed to last forever (kuullun ymmärtämiset tuntuivat kestävän ikuisuuksia)* and that the writer experienced *an odd desire to be anywhere else (tuli omituinen halu olla missä tahansa muualla)* but the language lab. The writer in example 69, then, portrays the language lab quite differently, as to him it was an intriguing acquaintance. He states that the first visit was surprising (*Ensimmäinen lukion englannin tunti studiossa yllätti*) and the reason for it was that the listening comprehensions were very different to the texts they had been listening to before. The fact that just listening to the text was not enough any more, but instead it was important to listen to what was said in between the lines in order to recognize such novelties as *irony and sarcasm (Nyt piti kuunnella rivien välistä ja tunnistaa ironia ja sarkasmi)* was clearly exhilarating to the writer. The excitement before something new and so interesting is quite clearly visible in the passage.

Despite the problems that were experienced in high school, to some of the students studying English was still as easy and interesting as it had been all along.

(70) Opiskelu englanniksi oli alusta asti sujuvaa ja suhteellisen helppoa. Jos vertaan englantia muihin opiskelemiini kieliin, ruotsiin ja ranskaan, on sen opiskelu paljon mielenkiintoisempaa ja helpompaa. (f3)

In example 70, the writer is describing studying in a Finnish “*IB high school*”, which means that the studying is done in English and is based on an education system called International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (Wikipedia n.d.). For the writer, studying in English was *smooth and relatively easy* right from the beginning (*Opiskelu englanniksi oli alusta asti sujuvaa ja suhteellisen helppoa*). Still, using the adverb *relatively (suhteellisen)*, she is indicating that there were also times when studying was somewhat challenging. However, according to the writer, compared to Swedish and French, studying English was *far more interesting and easier (Jos vertaan englantia muihin opiskelemiini kieliin, ruotsiin ja ranskaan, on sen opiskelu paljon mielenkiintoisempaa ja helpompaa)*, which seems to be a common story among the students in this study, English seems to “win” every comparison to other languages the students had studied. Naturally, this comes as no surprise, since they are studying English at the university, which is a clear indication that their language proficiency

in English is on a rather high level. The emotion discourse linked to university life will, then, be handled next.

5.3.4 Interesting university

At the time of writing the autobiographical narratives, the students were still first-year students of English at the university and most of them only had a few months' experience of university life. Still, they had discovered many things about their relationship with English and about themselves. Many of the students felt, that they were finally in the right place, which is seen in the following three examples:

(71) Yliopiston kielten opiskelu on toistaiseksi ollut melko mielenkiintoista eri vivahteineen. (m2)

(72) Nyt olen parin kuukauden ajan tutustunut yliopistoelämään ja olen sopeutunut mielestäni oikein hyvin. Kurssit ovat monipuolisia ja sopivan vaihtelevia. [...] Yliopistourakkani on vasta alkanut, motivaatiota riittää ja uutta tietoa tulee joka suunnasta. (m1)

(73) Englannin opiskelu on ollut ihanan virkistävää verrattuna ruotsiin ja ranskaan. Kurseilla ei pysähdytä ”pikkuasioihin”, vaan käsitellään suurempia linjoja ja syvennetään taitoja mm. kirjoittamiseen liittyen. On ihanaa keskustella kirjallisuudesta ja opetella kirjoittamaan akateemisesti, eikä vain puurtaa kieliopin poikkeusten parissa. (f1)

The writers in examples 71 through 73 have found that studying at the university suits them and it has been interesting. Example 71 is a very concise description as the writer is merely stating that *studying languages has been quite interesting with different nuances (kielten opiskelu on... ollut melko mielenkiintoista eri vivahteineen)*. The expectations of the writer for the future are not yet set in stone, as he states that the studying has been interesting *so far (toistaiseksi)*, thus not giving a free pass to the language studies quite just yet. The writer is still somewhat doubtful, waiting to see what the future brings and is ready to adjust his opinions if necessary. The writer in example 72 feels that he has adjusted himself very well to the university life (*olen sopeutunut mielestäni oikein hyvin*), making him very confident and self-assured. He is also pleased with courses, as they are *versatile and nicely variable (Kurssit ovat monipuolisia ja sopivan vaihtelevia)*, thus expelling any source of boredom. There is a tangible feeling of thriving in the passage and the writer sees it himself, stating that his motivation is at a high level (*motivaatiota riittää*) and as *new information is coming from all*

around (*uutta tietoa tulee joka suunnasta*), the writer is clearly ready to take it all in, confident, fearless and enthusiastic.

In example 73, the emotion discourse takes yet a higher level of praise, as the writer describes studying English as *fantastically invigorating* (*Englannin opiskelu on ollut ihanan virkistävää*), making it seem like she had just woken up and discovered something wonderful. Sadly, the refreshing nature of English was due to the less invigorating studies in Swedish and French for the writer (*verrattuna ruotsiin ja ranskaan*), but still, it does not diminish the joy that studying English clearly brings to her. The writer gives several aspects of the English studies that make studying almost a dreamlike fantasy where everything is wonderful, naming, for instance, discussions on literature and learning academic writing as the sources for the joy, and happiness even (*On ihanaa keskustella kirjallisuudesta ja opetella kirjoittamaan akateemisesti*). The writer also seems very content with the teaching methods used, for instance, when issues are handled in larger entities and when the students get to deepen their skills (*käsitellään suurempia linjoja ja syvennetään taitoja*). There are still some aspects of studying that the writer sees as tedious, thus creating an air of dissatisfaction. The writer does not explicitly express it, but it seems that the more negative aspects are somewhat connected with studying Swedish and French, which, then, has made her attitude towards the languages also more negative compared to English. The negative aspects to the writer are stopping at the “trifles” and toiling with the exceptions to grammar rules (*ei pysähdytä ”pikkuasioihin” [...] eikä vain puurtaa kieliopin poikkeusten parissa*), and the word choices, such as *trifles* (*pikkuasioihin*) and *toiling* (*puurtaa*), already show the negative attitudes towards such methods.

The following example illustrates somewhat a similar type of atmosphere as in example 73:

(74) Pidän kielestä, sen puhumisesta ja kirjoittamisesta. Kiinnostavaa on myös, miten erilaisilla tavoilla sitä maailmalla käytetään, niin äidinkielenä kuin vieraana kielenä. Sen vaikutus muihin kieliin on myös kiintoisaa. Kielioppi, kielen opettaminen ja se, miten kieltä opitaan, eivät niinkään. (m3)

In example 74, the writer is making a rather detailed list of the contents of the university courses, dividing the courses into the interesting ones and uninteresting, or even dull, ones. The breakdown of the interesting and dull contests in the passage is quite descriptive and very interesting. It seems that the parts that many of the students in this study had criticized in the

earlier examples are seen as uninteresting to the writer, and the ones that have been easy to the students are perceived as interesting in the passage. Thus, the interesting contents for the writer have been the language itself, the speaking and the writing of it, and also how it has been used in the world as both native and foreign language. Furthermore, the writer sees the influence of English to other languages as interesting (*Pidän kielestä, sen puhumisesta ja kirjoittamisesta. Kiinnostavaa on myös, miten erilaisilla tavoilla sitä maailmalla käytetään, niin äidinkielenä kuin vieraana kielenä. Sen vaikutus muihin kieliin on myös kiintoisaa*). Throughout the passages in this study the students have described how easy and interesting English has been for them, thus making it compatible with the writer's opinion. Similarly, the previous examples have been filled with criticism towards, for instance, the teachers, and in example 74, the writer is stating that the technical sides of learning English have been more on the uninteresting side, namely grammar, teaching the language, and how the language is learned (*Kielioppi, kielen opettaminen ja se, miten kieltä opitaan, eivät niinkään*), all of which might be useful for the writer in order to understand how the language is being built and how those people who struggle with learning languages could benefit from different teaching and learning methods. It is not clear whether the writer in question intended to be a teacher, but if he did, one can only hope that the issues that he felt were uninteresting opened up some new horizons for the writer in order for him to be a supportive teacher to his pupils or students.

Being good at English had raised many rather negative emotions in the students of this study, mostly linked to either boredom or frustration. At the university some students finally felt that they were in the right place, but still did not feel content, as seen in the following example 75:

(75) Yliopistossa opettavat englannin kurssit ovat kuitenkin jo riittävän haastavia minulle, vaikka jotkin kurssit saavat minut epäilemään olenko tosiaan yliopistossa. En ole koskaan oppinut piirtämällä ja leikkimällä mitään ja lastentarhassakaan en ole joutunut aikaani viettämään, joten välillä vapaat ”assosiaatio” hetket [sic] käyvät hermoille. (m2)

The writer acknowledges that the English courses at the university are at last *challenging enough* (*riittävän haastavia*) for him, which seems to make him feel relieved and thankful, since he has finally found his place. However, the gratitude does not last for long, as the writer has also found things that are getting on his nerves (*käyvät hermoille*). The irritation and disappointment can be seen in his rather arrogant remark about the used methods, namely

the free associations (*vapaat "assosiaatio" hetket* [sic]) that the writer sees as a waste of his time as he had *never learned anything by drawing and playing* (*En ole koskaan oppinut piirtämällä ja leikkimällä mitään*) or has *never had to spend any time in kindergarten either* (*lastentarhassakaan en ole joutunut aikaani viettämään*). The passage is filled with superiority, arrogance, and even contempt, particularly towards kindergarten, which to the writer is something that one is nearly forced to go to (*joutunut*) and is a waste of everybody's time with all the drawing and playing. Similarly, the same emotions are also visible in the writer's comment on how some of the university courses have made him question whether he is truly studying at the university (*jotkin kurssit saavat minut epäilemään olenko tosiaan yliopistossa*). Clearly the writer has no stomach for practices that are not his choices, as if he does not realize that other people may benefit from different types of methods, thus making him somewhat selfish. To an outside reader, the passage gives a sad feeling as if the writer has never been able or allowed to really be a child, thus getting joy from the activities the writer clearly sees as childish and unnecessary. The sadness is, however, not visible to the writer as he apparently is glad that he had missed, for instance, kindergarten.

Some of the students, on the other hand, have found that their superiority and being good at everything connected to studying English, has begun to crumble, as they have also experienced some obstacles in their studies.

(76) Nyt, muutaman yliopistossa opiskellun kuukauden jälkeen, minulla on hieman sekava olo. En ole oikein päässyt opiskelurytmiin ja tehtäviä on jäänyt hieman rästiin, tai ainakin viime tippaan. Lisäksi minulle tuli yllätyksenä, että lähes kaikilla kurseilla puhutaan englantia. Olen nimittäin todella epävarma englannin suullisesta taidostani. Ja muutenkin minulle on tullut aika epävarma olo. Tuntuu, että olen huonompi kuin muut. (f4)

(77) Sanoisin että yliopisto eroaa paljon lukiosta kielen opiskelussa koska työ on hyvin itsenäistä ja vastuullista. [...] Itse olen tuntenut pientä ahdistuneisuutta kaiken vastuun ottamisesta ja valintojen tekemisestä koska minulla ei ihan selkeää suunnitelmaa ole koskaan ollut. (f5)

In example 76, the writer confesses that she has some mixed feelings after a few months at the university (*Nyt, muutaman yliopistossa opiskellun kuukauden jälkeen, minulla on hieman sekava olo*). For the writer, the self-confidence has changed into insecurity in general (*Ja muutenkin minulle on tullut aika epävarma olo*) and uncertainty particularly for her oral language skills in English (*Olen nimittäin todella epävarma englannin suullisesta taidostani*), thus the slight uncertainty towards her language skills that began in high school and was seen

in the previous subsection, is fully embodied at the university. It is clear that such feelings of inferiority have made the writer unsure of even herself; who is she, if not a language prodigy, which she indicates in stating that she is actually worse than everyone else (*olen huonompi kuin muut*). The passage has a feel to it that the walls are coming down on the writer and she is drowning as she has not been able to find the rhythm for studying (*En ole oikein päässyt opiskelurytmiin*) or do her assignments on time, or they have been finished at the last minute (*tehtäviä on jäänyt hieman rästiin, tai ainakin viime tippaan*). Furthermore, as the writer is very insecure of her oral skills in English, it came as a surprise to her that on most of the courses the communication is done in English (*Lisäksi minulle tuli yllätyksenä, että lähes kaikilla kursseilla puhutaan englantia*), thus making her confidence level sink even further. One can only wish that the future years at the university gave the writer her self-assurance back and that she was able to rely on her strengths in English.

Moreover, the university studies have raised some anxiety (*Itse olen tuntenut pientä ahdistuneisuutta*), as seen in example 77. For this writer, as opposed to the writer in example 76, the source of anxiety is not the university courses or the lack of self-confidence, but instead the fact that nothing is ready to hand as *the work is very independent and responsible* (*työ on hyvin itsenäistä ja vastuullista*). The anxiety towards being responsible and making decisions draws from the fact that the writer has never had a sufficiently clear plan (*Itse olen tuntenut pientä ahdistuneisuutta kaiken vastuun ottamisesta ja valintojen tekemisestä koska minulla ei ihan selkeää suunnitelmaa ole koskaan ollut*). The passage is filled with uncertainty towards the future and the writer seems quite lost.

On the other hand, at least one of the students in this study found, in fact, his niche in the English studies at the university, which is illustrated in the following example:

(78) Yliopisto-opiskelu on tuntunut mielekkäältä ja varmuus siitä, että englannin kieli on minunalani, on vahvistunut. On mukava huomata, kuinka omat kielitaidot, joiden luulin olevan suhteellisen hyvät, ovatkin vielä suhteellisen suppeat. Myös kirjoittajantaitoni ovat vielä varsin riittämättömät akateemiselle tasolle. (m5)

The writer states that studying at the university has felt rewarding (*Yliopisto-opiskelu on tuntunut mielekkäältä*). As the writer is literally saying that the university studies have felt *meaningful* (*mielekkäältä*), there is a sense of being in the right place already visible. Moreover, the certainty of having to have made the right choice is portrayed in the following

sentence, namely that the English language is right up the writer's alley and the feel for it has grown stronger (*varmuus siitä, että englannin kieli on minun alani, on vahvistunut*). What makes the passage particularly interesting is the fact that despite the realization that the writer's language skills are still quite limited, opposite to his initial views of them being rather good (*omat kielitaidot, joiden luulin olevan suhteellisen hyvät, ovatkin vielä suhteellisen suppeat*), such limitations are viewed as something positive. Such juxtaposition is seen as the writer, on the one hand, states that *it is nice to notice* (*On mukava huomata*) and on the other hand, describes that the nice part is having *sparse* (*suppeat*) language skills. Such joy towards any shortcomings is very rare and it is even enhanced with a statement that also the writer's writing skills are quite inadequate for an academic level (*Myös kirjoittajantaitoni ovat vielä varsin riittämättömät akateemiselle tasolle*). As the writer uses the adverb *still* (*vielä*) in describing his language defects, he is aiming to the future, as to say that he might still be an apprentice, but in the future his language aptitude will be at a very high level, which gives him joy and clearly keeps him positive.

This concludes the part of the students' school life, which were filled with emotions from falling in love to feeling angry, frustrated, and disappointed, which are all emotions found also from the previous sections about people in the students' lives. The journey that the students made from elementary school to university was rather a winding and emotional one. As all the students started their school journey full of self-confidence and belief in their skills, it was a rude awakening for some to realize that their proficiency was not always up to par with the demands. As many of the students planned to become teachers, it might have been a positive thing to experience also obstacles in their path, since it may have been a humbling experience to feel the other end of the scale as well. Next, leaving the school environment behind, the following, and the final, subsection about the places the students linked language learning and emotions together handles the times the students spent abroad.

5.3.5 Freedom in living abroad

In addition to school, emotion discourse of the students was linked to places abroad, where many of the students had spent more or less time before coming to university. Experiences varied from short visits abroad and student exchanges in junior high school all the way to years of living abroad. Staying abroad, even for a short period of time, was considered important for learning languages among the students who had such experiences. Moreover,

even some of the students who had not had the opportunity to, for instance, study abroad, felt that it would be important for their language aptitude, and they hoped that one day they could spend some time abroad. For those who already had the experience, the most significant role was, yet again, given to the people they had met. Similar feelings were expressed by the students who had not had the opportunity to stay abroad, but who had met foreigners in other circumstances. Social contacts seemed to rise above any other aspects in language learning, creating the most emotions and therefore being the most significant aspect in either enhancing or hindering the learning, which was basically the concise message behind the theoretical background of this study, which is that the sociocultural aspects of L2 learning are very important and powerful.

One of the students in this study had a very different school route than the others did, namely that he spent years abroad and, in fact, began his school journey outside of Finland. The following three examples illustrate his feelings of the times living abroad.

(79) En voi lakata hämmästelemästä, kuinka kivuttomasti ja täydellisesti nuori lapsi oppii uutta. Nuoren ikäni vuoksi muistoni Samoalta ovat epämääräisiä ja katkonaisia hetkiä ilman kontekstia. Silti olen varma, että nämä kaksi vuotta antoivat elämälleni selkeän suunnan: englantia meni selkärankaani, samaten erilaisuuden hyväksyminen ja rakastaminen. (m3)

(80) Muutto oli luonnollisesti äärimmäisen jännittävää [sic] ja pelottavaa. Vanhassa päiväkirjassani olen urheasti kirjoittanut, kuinka hauskaa ja jännittävää [sic] on lentää lentokoneella ja nähdä uusi maa, mutta voimakkaimmin tunsin pelkoa. (m3)

(81) Oli miten oli, minulla ei ole ainuttakaan ikävää muistoa Guyanasta. [...] Vuodet Samoalla olivat luoneet hyvän pohjan kielitaidolleni, mutta vasta Guyanassa kieli todella upposi alitajuntaani. Olin jo kyllin vanha ymmärtämään, että näin sujuva englantia oli minulle eduksi. Olin kyllin nuori oppimaan uutta vaivatta, ja kyllin vanha ymmärtämään sitä, mikä oli Samoalla saattanut mennä yli hilseen. (m3)

The first example summarizes the writer's feelings of spending two years in the Samoan Islands in the South Pacific at the ages between three and five, first in kindergarten and later in school. The writer is, in retrospect, very surprised how *painlessly and perfectly* (*kivuttomasti ja täydellisesti*) he learned new things. The surprise also seems to be continuous, since the writer uses an expression that he *cannot cease to be amazed* (*En voi lakata hämmästelemästä*). Even if the memories are rather vague and intermittent due to his young age (*Nuoren ikäni vuoksi muistoni Samoalta ovat epämääräisiä ja katkonaisia*), the writer is *certain* (*olen varma*) that the two years gave him a clear direction in life (*nämä kaksi vuotta antoivat elämälleni selkeän suunnan*) as he experienced the acceptance and love for diversity

(*erilaisuuden hyväksyminen ja rakastaminen*), and furthermore, he sees that *English was instilled into the spine (englanti meni selkärankaan)*, which means that the language became a permanent part of him. It is clear that the writer experienced some fundamental and deep emotions while staying in Samoa, and they were in part shaping him into the tolerant citizen of the world he later became and a proficient language learner.

The writer got even a greater understanding of the importance of English and that people are basically all the same when he moved to Guyana with his family at the age of 8, staying there for approximately 18 months. The beginning, however, was filled with more of the mixed feelings of excitement, joy and fear (*hauskaa ja jännittävää [sic]... mutta voimakkaimmin tunsin pelkoa*), portrayed in example 80. Still, as the writer found himself in a more familiar territory, in school and learning English, he was at ease again. In retrospect, the writer does not have *a single unpleasant memory of Guyana (minulla ei ole ainuttakaan ikävää muistoa Guyanasta)*, thus making the stay uplifting. The writer also shows a great deal of maturity in stating that he realized the value of his fluent English (*Olin jo kyllin vanha ymmärtämään, että näin sujuva englanti oli minulle eduksi*) and the passage also has a feel of pride to it.

Other students had shorter experiences abroad than the student in the previous examples, but nonetheless, they were quite as important to the students in question. Most experiences were very positive, as already seen before, and witnessed in example 82:

(82) Seitsemän kuukautta työskentelin Salisburyssa, ja kokemus oli mahtava. Pärjäsin todella hyvin uudessa kulttuurissa uusien ihmisten ympäröimänä. Kielitaidon kanssa ei ollut mitään ongelmia, vaan pikemminkin nautin suuresti englannin kielen käyttämisestä ja uusien ilmauksien oppimisesta. Eri murteet tulivat myös tutuiksi ja niitäkin oli hauska oppia tunnistamaan. (f5)

The writer is telling how she spent seven months in Salisbury, England, working (*Seitsemän kuukautta työskentelin Salisburyssa*) and felt that *the experience was fantastic (kokemus oli mahtava)*. The statement alone is a sign of a very positive attitude and joy towards the things seen there, but the writer also elaborates what made the stay such a wonderful experience. Firstly, the writer states that she *managed really well in a new culture surrounded by new people (Pärjäsin todella hyvin uudessa kulttuurissa uusien ihmisten ympäröimänä)*, indicating that both the surroundings and the people were a separable part of the successful stay. Secondly, the language itself caused no problems to the writer (*Kielitaidon kanssa ei ollut mitään ongelmia*), quite the contrary. Sheer joy and enjoyment are visible in the passage as

the writer is describing how she *enjoyed using English and learning new expressions (nautin suuresti englannin kielen käyttämisestä ja uusien ilmauksien oppimisesta)*. Moreover, the writer is clearly thriving in the English surroundings as she was having fun familiarizing herself with different dialects (*Eri murteet tulivat myös tutuiksi ja niitäkin oli hauska oppia tunnistamaan*) along with everything else.

Living abroad was naturally not always mere sunshine and joy, and the following example illustrates the mixed feelings that went with staying in a foreign country.

(83) Sain nopeasti työpaikan kenkäkaupasta, ja varsinkin töissä törmäsin usein tilanteisiin, joissa kielitaito oli ongelma. Koin erityisen vaikeaksi olla vakuuttava hankalien ja valittavien asiakkaiden edessä. Sanat katosivat ja lauseet eivät tahtoneet muodostua kiperässä tilanteessa. [...] Sen sijaan uusien työkavereiden kanssa rennosti rupertellessa englannin puhuminen tuntui helpommalta kuin koskaan. En myöskään koskaan saanut ”korkeammalta taholta” töissä negatiivista palautetta kielestäni, mikä olisi saattanut lannistaa. Lisäksi samassa kaupassa oli muitakin ulkomaalaisia, joiden kielitaito oli heikompi kuin minun. (f2)

In example 83, the writer moved to Glasgow, Scotland, to spend a gap year after high school and got a job in a shoe store. On the one hand, the writer is describing the troubles she encountered at work in regard to her language skills (*varsinkin töissä törmäsin usein tilanteisiin, joissa kielitaito oli ongelma*). The situations that were particularly difficult and that clearly made her feel very anxious were the ones *in front of the challenging and complaining customers (Koin erityisen vaikeaksi olla vakuuttava hankalien ja valittavien asiakkaiden edessä)*. The anxiety also took a very physical form as she was lost for words in such tricky situations (*Sanat katosivat*). The anxiety must have been great for the writer as she is trying to outsource the cause for feeling so uneasy, namely that the words vanished and the sentences did not want to be formed (*Sanat katosivat ja lauseet eivät tahtoneet muodostua kiperässä tilanteessa*), as if she had no say in what the words and the sentences were getting up to, which in turn clearly made her frustrated.

On the other hand, then, the writer felt at ease with her co-workers, which made speaking English also *easier than ever (Sen sijaan uusien työkavereiden kanssa rennosti rupertellessa englannin puhuminen tuntui helpommalta kuin koskaan)*. Clearly the relaxed environment with local people made the English language feel like the writer had never had any problems with it, thus only enhancing the learning. She acknowledges that had she got any negative feedback on her language skills from her superiors at work, she might have been discouraged,

but luckily she got none and did not need to find out if she had, indeed, been disheartened (*En myöskään koskaan saanut "korkeammalta taholta" töissä negatiivista palautetta kielestäni, mikä olisi saattanut lannistaa*). An interesting point in the previous sentence is that the writer uses quotation marks when writing about her superiors at work, calling them as “higher authority” (“*korkeammalta taholta*”). The quotation marks suggest that the writer did not respect her supervisors or bosses, instead she almost disparages their authority, as if they and their supervising position were a joke. Moreover, the writer gives another reason for not getting discouraged for struggling with her English at work, the first being that she got no poor feedback, namely that there were other foreigners working at the store, and they were weaker in English than she was (*Lisäksi samassa kaupassa oli muitakin ulkomaalaisia, joiden kielitaito oli heikompi kuin minun*). Once again a clear sign of superiority is seen, as the writer seems very pleased that she was not the weakest, and thus at the bottom. It almost feels that the writer did not include her foreign co-workers in the group that made her feel relaxed and made English easier than even, even though she was one of the foreigners herself. The passage suggests that she felt superiority towards the foreigners or “them”, as opposed to the locals or “us”, with whom the writer feels equal and more comfortable.

There is, however, one emotion that is clearly positive for the same writer in question, linking it to living abroad, and that emotion is pride.

(84) Sain monilta paikallisilta positiivista palautetta englannintaidoistani, mikä tuntui hyvältä. Vaikka vaikeuksia oli silloin tällöin, pystyin aloittamaan elämän (hankkimaan asunnon, työn, pankkitilin yms.) englanninkielisessä maassa, mistä olen ylpeä. (f2)

In example 84, the writer is describing the positive sides about living abroad. Firstly, she got positive feedback on her English from the locals, which made her feel good (*Sain monilta paikallisilta positiivista palautetta englannintaidoistani, mikä tuntui hyvältä*). Once again the local people were the key to her positive feelings, as if the writer needed constant feedback on her performance in order for her to feel secure and not lose heart. Secondly, the writer is proud of herself as she was able to start a life in an English-speaking country, being able to get an apartment, a job, a bank account, and so forth (*pystyin aloittamaan elämän (hankkimaan asunnon, työn, pankkitilin yms.) englanninkielisessä maassa, mistä olen ylpeä*). Managing to put together a regular life in a foreign country is no easy task and the writer’s feeling of pride is very comprehensible, in particular since she admits that there were some

difficulties at times (*Vaikka vaikeuksia oli silloin tällöin*), making the success even a bigger deal for her.

Even if the positive emotions seemed to be in the majority for the students in this study in regard to living abroad, there was also one case where the main feeling was more on the negative side and this is illustrated in example 85:

(85) Kurssin alussa oli tasokoe, jonka perusteella meidät jaettiin ryhmiin, ja minä jouduin edistyneimpien ryhmään. Kirjoitan ”jouduin” siksi, koska meidän opiskelumme oli paljon vakavampaa kuin ”alempien tasojen” ryhmissä. Toiset pelasivat Aliasta ja muita pelejä, mutta me opiskelimme kielioppia ym. tosissaan. (f1)

The writer is telling about the time she attended a language course in England. There was a proficiency test at the beginning of the course, which was used to determinate whether a student was placed in a more advanced or lower level groups (*Kurssin alussa oli tasokoe, jonka perusteella meidät jaettiin ryhmiin*), and the writer ended up in the advanced group (*ja minä jouduin edistyneimpien ryhmään*). For the writer, the division and particularly being placed in the advanced group was difficult. She even uses the Finnish verb “*jouduin*” in a sense that borderlines the meaning of *being forced to*, thus making the situation very unpleasant and disappointing. It is evident that the writer had expected to have fun, perhaps even the time of her life, on the language course and it is as evident that her expectations were not met and she was very disappointed. The reason behind such a disappointment stems from the differences in the working methods between the groups, which was much more serious in her group than in the other groups (*meidän opiskelumme oli paljon vakavampaa*). The writer describes how the students *in the “lower level” groups (“alempien tasojen” ryhmissä)* were playing games, for instance a game called Alias, and they were studying, for instance, grammar in a very serious manner (*Toiset pelasivat Aliasta ja muita pelejä, mutta me opiskelimme kielioppia ym. tosissaan*). Even the use of the quotation marks in writing about the “lower level” groups emphasizes the disappointment, as if the writer was not able to see the differences between her own group and the others, thus not seeing the point in being forced to study the language at a rather professional level, while others were having fun with the language.

All in all, the time the students in this study spent abroad was mostly regarded as something very positive. The students experienced the feelings of exhilaration, pride, and joy. They also

enjoyed their stay fully and felt their self-confidence to rise to a new level, thus somewhat changing them as persons. On the other hand, some of the emotions were on the more negative side, namely frustration, disappointment, and anxiety. Still, both the students who had spent some time abroad and the students who were still only dreaming about it, felt that as a language learner one should have the opportunity to stay abroad at some point, which might be something to think about in schools, in particular at the university or the secondary school level in general. As the students clearly crave for a break abroad, maybe it should be embedded in their studies as a mandatory part. This, and other matters that rose from the data, will be discussed further in the final chapter, the conclusion, in Chapter 6. Still, the following section before the conclusion will handle the final part of this analysis, namely the one event that the students have linked their emotions to, and more precisely, the matriculation examination.

5.4 The almighty matriculation examination

There is still one big cluster of passages that handled an event that could not be categorized in any other section previously introduced. This event, which nearly all writers mentioned, is the Finnish “national examination taken after high school which serves as a necessary qualification for starting academic studies in a university” (Glosbe n.d.), that is, matriculation examination, a type of baccalaureate. A vast variety of emotion discourse was discovered in most of the narratives regarding the matriculation examination, thus making it an important factor for this study. The Finnish high school has often been criticized for making every piece of work done in high school about the matriculation examination, as if there was nothing else in the world why the students should study a large variety of subjects. This is summarized in example 86:

(86) Tuntui, ettei koko opiskelulla ollut muuta tavoitetta kuin selvitä kirjoituksista. (f1)

The writer very clearly states that the entire studying felt like it was only about *surviving the matriculation examination (selvitä kirjoituksista)*. The use of the verb *survive* and the overall feeling in the passage has an air of desperation in it, as if the writer was actually struggling for her life with the examination. Similar feelings of overwhelming pressure can be detected in other passages as well. Some of the students were very stressed by the matriculation

examination, but English still carried them and gave them positive feelings, as seen in the following three examples:

(87) Vaikkakin juuri kirjoitusten alla epävarmuus omasta osaamisesta vain kasvoi. Kaikki meni kuitenkin hyvin, vaikka laudaturia ei tullutkaan. (f4)

(88) Vaikkei englannin ylioppilaskirjoitukset menneet aivan odotusten mukaisesti, mielenkiinto englannin kieleen säilyi, ja päätin hakea yliopistoon. (m4)

(89) Abivuosi oli stressaavaa aikaa. Kirjoitukset olivat aivan nenän edessä, osa jo syksyllä. Niitä ei enää voinut olla ajattelematta. Itse stressi kohdistui kuitenkin kaikkiin muihin aineisiin paitsi englantiin, josta kirjoitin laudaturin juurikaan lukematta. (m1)

In example 87, the writer explains how just before the matriculation examination there was a growing uncertainty about her knowledge in English (*epävarmuus omasta osaamisesta vain kasvoi*). As she uses the adverb *only* (*vain*) in stating how the uncertainty *only grew* (*vain kasvoi*), she is acknowledging the fact that she had been uncertain already before the examination. There is an element of fear embedded in the sentence for the outcome, but it turned out to be positive as the writer states that *everything went well after all* (*kaikki meni kuitenkin hyvin*). A sense of relief, and the element of fear, can be seen in the phrase *after all* (*kuitenkin*), which indicates that the writer was perhaps expecting something less positive as an outcome. Similarly, in example 88, the writer clearly had high expectations to succeed in the matriculation examination. As he states that *even though* the examination did *not* (*vaikkei*) go quite as expected (*Vaikkei englannin ylioppilaskirjoitukset menneet aivan odotusten mukaisesti*), he is simultaneously indicating that he had had high hopes of succeeding, and that the results were somewhat disappointing. Also, by stressing that he managed to maintain his interest in English (*mielenkiinto englannin kieleen säilyi*) even though the examination did not reach his expectations is another indicator that he had high hopes and that the results disappointed him. Luckily, his interest in English got the writer to apply for the university (*päätin hakea yliopistoon*), where he got in and therefore the story has a happy ending.

Furthermore, in example 89, the writer describes that the last year in high school (*abivuosi*) was *a stressful time* (*stressaavaa aikaa*) for him. The stress manifested itself in constant thoughts about the matriculation examination in such a degree that there was no escaping from them (*Niitä ei enää voinut olla ajattelematta*), which is a clear indication of the pressure the writer experienced. However, he continues that the stress was directed to all the other subjects, but not English (*Itse stressi kohdistui kuitenkin kaikkiin muihin aineisiin paitsi*

englantiin). Such a statement along with the following sentence, namely that the writer got the highest grade in English without really studying for it (*kirjoitin laudaturin juurikaan lukematta*), is a logical continuum to the previously seen passages where the participants of this study are showing superiority and almost arrogance in their English competence.

As in example 89, a similar approach to the matriculation examination can be seen in the following example:

(90) En lukenut millään tavalla edes ylioppilaskirjoituksiin. Kirjoitin englannin ensin syksyllä. Se oli enemmänkin kokeilu, miltä kirjoitukset tuntuvat. Arvosanaksi tuli E. Keväällä kokeilin kirjoittaa englannin uudestaan. Silloin olin hieman rutinoituneempi ja ehkä kirjoituksetkin olivat hieman helpommat. Keväällä kirjoitin L:n. (m5)

In example 90, the writer has almost nonchalant approach to the matriculation examination. Firstly, he states that he did not study for the examination (*En lukenut... ylioppilaskirjoituksiin*). Moreover, he stresses the little effort that went into studying by adding that he studied for it *in no way* (*En... millään tavalla*). The writer also adds the adverb *not... even* (*edes*) to emphasize his superiority as he states that he did not study even for the matriculation examination (*En lukenut... edes ylioppilaskirjoituksiin*), indicating that he had had no need to study before the examination either. Already this one sentence illustrates the superiority, but also the type of condescending way of mastering English without even studying it that the passages of this study are filled with. In this case, the writer took the English examination twice, the first time being more of experimentation (*enemmänkin kokeilu*) and resulting in the second highest grade (*Arvosanaksi tuli E*). The second time he took the examination resulted in the highest grade (*Keväällä kirjoitin L:n*). What is rather surprising is the change in the writer's attitude between the two examinations. After receiving the highest score with the second attempt, his arrogance has somewhat disappeared as he gives no credit to his superior competence, but rather sees the grade as a result of knowing the routine (*olin hieman rutinoituneempi*) and perhaps the examination itself being somewhat easier (*ehkä kirjoituksetkin olivat hieman helpommat*). There seems to be a growth in character for this writer, which is also seen in other examples.

As in the example above, also one other writer expressed his personal growth when analyzing his performance in the matriculation examination.

(91) Ylioppilaskirjoitusten tulosten perusteella olen kuitenkin tyytyväinen, että teiniangsti ja koppavuus olivat jääneet yläasteelle ja hoidin kuullunymmärtämiset kunnialla kotiin. (m1)

In example 91, the writer acknowledges that in junior high he had been full of teenage angst and haughty, but at the same time he felt content that he had left the arrogance behind him and was able to handle the listening examinations properly (*olen kuitenkin tyytyväinen, että teiniangsti ja koppavuus olivat jääneet yläasteelle ja hoidin kuullunymmärtämiset kunnialla kotiin*). The writer does not mention the results he got from the matriculation examination, but as he describes bringing the listening tests to a successful conclusion, or literally “*home with honor*” (*kunnialla kotiin*), and that the arrogance had vanished *based on the results of the matriculation examination* (*Ylioppilaskirjoitusten tulosten perusteella*), it seems clear that the writer was successful in the examination.

As already seen in example 87, some of the writers were satisfied with lesser results than what they may have anticipated for. On the other hand, some of the writers felt very disappointed when they did not get the best grade, namely L or *laudatur*, in English for their effort.

(92) Hajautin ylioppilastutkintoni, ja kirjoitin englannin jo abivuoden syksyllä. Sain paria pistettä vaille Laudaturin, mikä ärsytti tietysti. Mietin jopa, että olisin mennyt uusimaan, mutta keväällä oli niin paljon muutakin, että tulokseni jäi siihen Eximiaan. Nyt jälkeinpäin ei enää harmita lähes ollenkaan. Enhän enää tee ylioppilastuloksilla mitään, kun olen jo päässyt yliopistoon. (f1)

(93) Englannin ylioppilaskirjoituksissa minulla oli suuret odotukset, ja pettymys oli kova kun laudatur jäi tasan yhden pisteen päähän. Näin jälkeinpäin katsottuna se tuntuu lähinnä huvittavalta (vaikka sama toistui uusiessani kokeen), mutta silloin harmitti valtavasti. (f2)

In example 92, the writer is describing a situation with the matriculation examination in English, saying that getting the second best grade, *eximia* that is, was irritating (*ärsytti*). By adding that it was *naturally* (*tietysti*) irritating, the writer is expressing that the expectations were higher. This particular writer was thinking about taking the English examination again, but due to an otherwise busy spring, she never did renew it and was left with the grade *eximia* (*Mietin jopa, että olisin mennyt uusimaan, mutta keväällä oli niin paljon muutakin, että tulokseni jäi siihen Eximiaan*). In retrospect, being a student at the university, the importance of the matriculation examination has passed (*enhän enää tee ylioppilastuloksilla mitään, kun*

olen jo päässyt yliopistoon) and the writer expresses that the grade does not annoy her nearly at all (*ei enää harmita lähes ollenkaan*). Still, just by using the adverb *nearly* (*lähes*) it is quite clear that there is a part of her that does feel annoyed by that grade and that she is almost trying to convince herself not to feel such a way: she is at the university (*olen päässyt yliopistoon*) and there is no use with the results of the matriculation examination any more (*Enhän enää tee ylioppilastuloksilla mitään*).

There is a similar feel to it in example 93, as the writer has basically the same experience as the writer in example 92. In example 93, the writer had had great expectations (*minulla oli suuret odotukset*) and was very disappointed when she missed the highest grade, *laudatur*, by just one point (*pettymys oli kova kun laudatur jäi tasan yhden pisteen päähän*). The disappointment is even highlighted by the fact that the *laudatur* was missed by *exactly one point* (*tasan yhden pisteen päähän*) and because the same thing happened when she took the examination again (*sama toistui uusiessani kokeen*). Still, what makes this writer's experience different compared to the writer in example 92, is that she genuinely seems to have been able to put the experience behind her. She acknowledges that at the time, the grade annoyed her immensely (*silloin harmitti valtavasti*), but in retrospect, the whole experience seems mostly laughable (*Näin jälkeensä katsottuna se tuntuu lähinnä huvittavalta*). The writer does not clarify the other feelings the situation also rouses, since using the adverb *mostly* (*lähinnä*) indicates that there are others as well, but it seems clear that whatever those feelings were, the situation is over and done with.

As seen in the previous examples, some of the writers ended up being quite disappointed at their matriculation examination. On the other hand, there were some writers who got to experience great joy with the matriculation examination.

(94) Lukioaikana myönteisimmät kokemukset englannin parissa olivat ehkä juuri ylioppilaskirjoitukset. Tai eihän se itse koetilanne ollut erityisen mukava, mutta kun sai tulokset käteen, niin kyllä siinä taisi muutama ilon kyynel vierähtää. (f4)

(95) Ylioppilaskirjoitukset menivät lähes täydellisesti. Erityisen ylpeä olin 99 pisteen aineestani. (m3)

Both writers in examples 94 and 95 received good grades in their English examinations. In example 94, the writer does not indicate which grade she actually got, but it was good enough for her to shed a few tears of joy (*kun sai tulokset käteen, niin kyllä siinä taisi muutama ilon*

kyynel vierähtää). In fact, the writer states at first that the matriculation examination was perhaps the most positive experience she had with English in high school (*Lukioaikana myönteisimmät kokemukset englannin parissa olivat ehkä juuri ylioppilaskirjoitukset*), but quickly changes her statement that the examination situation itself was not the one that was nice, but it was the results then that made her very happy (*Tai eihän se itse koetilanne ollut erityisen mukava, mutta kun sai tulokset käteen, niin kyllä siinä taisi muutama ilon kyynel vierähtää*). Similarly, in example 95, the writer clearly expresses that the English part of the matriculation examination went nearly perfectly (*Ylioppilaskirjoitukset menivät lähes täydellisesti*) and that he was particularly proud of his 99-point essay (*Erityisen ylpeä olin 99 pisteen aineestani*), which is the highest score one can get, and the joy is nearly tangible in the passage.

To sum up, there is a clear feeling of growing up and being more mature in the passages about the matriculation examination. The writers are, in fact, quite calmly analyzing how they felt about the great effort at the end of high school and the really flamboyant and colorful emotion discourse is absent in this subsection. Naturally there were clear expressions of disappointment and irritation when the results did not concur with the perceived excellence the students felt about their language proficiency. Still, most of the students were able to see that, in fact, the matriculation examination was really only one part of their long journey and the prize for the hard work was already in their hands, that is, a place at the university.

6 CONCLUSION

It is now time to take a look back and see what the journey with the students in this study has brought along. This chapter aims to weave together the complex threads presented in the present study by discussing the findings. Firstly, the focus of the chapter will be on the theory and justification of the present study, but also to establish the stance I had taken on language learning and emotions. Secondly, the findings of the analysis will be brought together from the viewpoint of the research questions. The third part will take a look on the previous studies on emotions in the educational context by reflecting this study on them. In the final part, I am looking in the future by giving some suggestions for what was left out in the present study and how others could continue.

Theory. The present study began by exploring some of the theoretical frameworks connected to emotions and the overall goal of the study, which was to find emotion discourse in regard to second language learning in autobiographical narratives written by university students. As emotions have been studied in psychology far more extensively than, for instance, in language studies, it was chosen as a starting point. Furthermore, it later became apparent that the psychological approaches used in this study were quite compatible with language studies, which made choosing them as a part of this study justifiable. The connection between psychology and language studies can be seen, for instance, in the way that emotional experiences often take linguistic forms, such as *I'm happy* (Lewis 1989: 67), or that people have a tendency to name objects and mental states, including emotions (Nummenmaa 2010: 33), or that emotions such as interest have a strong relation to learning (Izard 2007: 264). Still, as Nummenmaa (2010: 15) pointed out, emotion research has been rather neglected even in psychology, let alone other fields, due to the emotions' perceived nature of being too subjective, personal, and difficult to study. The fact that emotion research has only in the past few decades began to be more recognized in several fields, including language studies, but has still not been widely studied in any scientific field gives an instant justification for the present study, as it adds something new in emotion research by introducing a small-scale discursive study on emotions in second language learning.

Another viewpoint on the subject in hand was to determine whether emotions, and also language, are something biological and innate, or whether they are social in nature and born within cultures. Even if there is no denying the biological base of emotions (Frijda 2008: 79), I chose to follow the latter view on emotions, which in turn includes the notions that emotions are expressed in behavior (Solomon 2008: 11) and that culture, human relationships, and social environment have a strong effect on emotions. According to the views of social constructionism, the approach that was highly appreciated in this study, emotions are socially constructed and cannot really exist without other people or social surroundings (Armon-Jones 1986: 68), but on the other hand, emotions can rise from mere imagination (Solomon 2008: 13), thus giving the individual somewhat power over their emotions. The role of an individual person, or learner, which is a more accurate characterization of the individual represented in this study, came to be an important one in this study, which will be addressed more closely later in the chapter. The social constructionist viewpoint also sees that it is important to remember that emotions are somewhat culturally bound (Bedford 1986, Harré 1986), meaning that not all cultures share the same understanding of how people experience emotions. It is,

then, essential to understand that the way people also talk about their emotions is linked to the cultural context. Edwards (1997, 1999) uses the phrase *emotion discourse*, which is the term used in the present study to describe the wide range of emotional expressions the participants of this study used in their narratives. The views of Edwards (1997, 1999) and, moreover, of discursive psychology, were the basis of handling the data of this study, as discursive psychology is very much related to how people express their emotions both in speech and in writing, that is, emotion discourse (Edwards 1997: 170).

Another very relevant point to the present study is the fluctuating quality of emotions, namely that they can change over time and from one person or situation to another (Johnstone et al. 2001: 4-5). As the autobiographical narratives used in this study are mostly located in the students' past, it may be that time has altered the way the students remember what had happened and how they had felt. Still, as it was the aim of the present study to discover the links between emotions and second language learning, it would have been counterproductive to assess the narratives as misinterpretations of the students' past due to human recollection being biased and fluctuating according to mood. Therefore, the autobiographical narratives used as the data of this study were treated as authentic descriptions of the events, thus concentrating on the emotion discourse itself.

The present study was born from a general presumption that emotions are strongly connected with learning. The assumption about emotions having a major role in language learning in particular was mainly due to the personal experiences I have had, as emotions have had both facilitating and hindering role in language learning for me. Such a mindset was the initial motivator to look into the emotions in second language learning and it was a given that emotions must play a vital role also in other people's language learning. An assumption as bold deserved to have a closer look, particularly as it became clear that the combination of emotions and language learning had not been studied to a large degree. Traditionally, studies in the field of SLA have concentrated on anxiety, or motivation, for the most part, but the wheels have slowly turned in the past few decades towards a realization that all emotions have, in fact, a quite important role in language learning. After examining different scientific fields for the theoretical background of this study, I came to the conclusion that the approach of the present study was to see language learning as a social phenomenon, in which the individual learner was the key. Particularly the sociocultural views of Kramsch (2009) were the key to understanding that language, language learning, the learner, and emotions are a strong entity entwined together as the language learners are trying to make sense of the world.

It is evident that the narratives used in this study are presentations of individual experiences, similar to no other and as such powerful examples of the fact that every individual learner has his or her own important story to tell. The aim of the present study was, then, to examine the ways in which university students studying English were reflecting on their language learning journeys from early childhood all the way to being university students, and how their linked different emotions to their journeys.

Analysis. The aim of the study led to the primary general research question, which was:

How do students write about their emotions in regard to second language learning?

The general question was also divided into more specific questions trying to find answers to which people, places, and events the students linked their emotions. Going through the autobiographical narratives I was able to find answers to the questions. Naturally, due to the presumptions mentioned earlier, the fact that the narratives that were used as the data of this study were filled with a vast amount of emotion discourse in regard to language learning was no surprise. On the other hand, what did come as a surprise were the *types* of emotions that were present in the narratives. A broad spectrum of emotions linked to second language learning was discovered when reading and re-reading the narratives. An interesting detail in the instructions that were given to the students in order to help them write about their journeys as language learners was that the words *emotion* or *feel* were not explicitly used, even if the students were instructed to reflect, for instance, whether they were good at English, or how they experienced their teachers and classmates (see Appendix 1), but the narratives were absolutely filled with emotion discourse. The participants of this study twined a vast amount of emotion discourse particularly around the people who were a part of the students' language journeys. The most surprising were the emotions that could be considered as negative, for instance, arrogance and frustration, aimed at the people in the students' lives.

The people linked to second language learning were the largest group present in the most colorful emotion discourse of all the groups considered in this study. As this study leans on the theoretical framework of language learning being social in nature, it is rather apparent, then, that people play a major role in it. The students' family members were often the ones giving the first spark of interest to the students in regard to language learning, but that was quite frankly the only role they were given. In fact, the students' stories were more about their superiority over their relatives than anything else as they mostly gave credit to themselves

regarding their language journeys and particularly the positive feelings of, for instance, enthusiasm and passion, attached to the journey.

An eye-opening moment for me was to read about the many rather mean remarks the students made on their fellow classmates. They were frustrated and angry towards other pupils for being too slow, or not being able to learn the simplest things. Superiority was, yet again, very much on the top of the expressed emotions. Also, it was almost impossible for some students to feel empathy towards the less skilled classmates or to understand that if something did not work for them, it might still be of help to others. *Selfish* is the adjective that often came to mind when reading through the passages the participants of this study had written about their classmates. As a future teacher, I am hoping that I can somehow prevent such division between my students, but on the other hand, I am apprehensive, because it might be that the students in this study never expressed their frustration, anger, and disdain towards the others, thus making the teacher's job to keep everybody somewhat content and stop the students bullying one another an impossible mission. Still, just the mere knowledge of students having such a variety of emotions on basically everything and everybody that has to do with learning might be enough to help me as a teacher to create a positive learning environment and to keep a tight rein on, for example, how the students treat one another.

Further, as a future teacher, I also need to keep in mind that the teachers constituted the group receiving the most colorful emotion discourse in this study. The teachers were both loved and feared, admired and ignored, respected and loathed, and it seemed, in fact, that the whole spectrum of emotions was found in the passages describing the teachers. I take it as an earnest reminder of the power that teachers have over their students, as, together with my own memories of my teachers, teachers truly seem to evoke the strongest emotions in their pupils and students than anyone or anything else. The emotions in question can also have a lasting impact, which is evident from the examples in this study, as some descriptions of the events are still full of such raw emotions that they feel almost fresh and tangible in the passages. Some teachers may influence a student to seek a career after a great role model, some students may have permanent scars due to the teachers' actions, and some fall somewhere in the middle, but the fact remains that it seems that everyone has something to say about their teachers and it is almost always filled with emotion discourse.

Another rather expected result in the analysis was that school environment itself rose plenty of emotion discourse on the surface. As all children in Finland go to school from an early age

and spend quite long periods of time there, it is clear that they have plenty of experiences also in regard to language learning, as languages are a part of the school curriculum. It seems, however, that something happens to students in school, because the narratives were filled with positive imagery on language learning when the students started school, but the longer the journey progressed, the more negative the emotion discourse got. Such a statement is naturally overgeneralizing the situation, as there were also very positive feelings all the way to the university level, but the overall picture is that the morale seems to drop along the way. At first, the students seemed to be in love with the language, but slowly frustration, envy, anger, and even fear among other rather negative emotions began to creep into the love affair.

An interesting observation was, however, made in the passages the students wrote about their experiences living abroad. Even if they experienced some stressful, or otherwise negative, moments, they were still left with an overall positive feeling from the experience, which is an important aspect to remember. The smaller the world gets due to globalization, the more opportunities and also wishes people have for spending some time in another country and culture. According to the students in this study, living abroad is also a very fulfilling experience that can carry a person a long way. It can be a boost for the self-confidence for being able to handle the daily affairs in a foreign country, thus making a person more positive about him/herself.

Reflection. Looking back on this study and the previous studies on emotions in educational contexts, which were presented in Section 3.4, it is clear that the present study managed to fill a gap on the subject, as suggested by Pishwa (2009: 2), by bringing some new information on emotions, language learning, and their social aspects into the discussion. Also, as Pekrun and Schutz (2007: 317) stated, there is a need for using “divergent approaches” and enriching existing theories through studying more than a single emotion, such as test anxiety, at a time, which is something the present study has done. There are not many discursive studies on a wide variety of emotions linked to language learning, but this study certainly found an abundance of them in the narratives used as the data, thus allowing me to say with a confidence that emotions are indeed very powerful tools in learning.

Using the autobiographical narratives as the data proved to be a perfect choice to get to the emotion discourse the participants of this study expressed through their stories as language learners, as the narratives were filled with emotional accounts of the students’ language journeys and learning experiences. After carefully analyzing the data it became obvious that

the preconceptions I had about the powerful link between language learning and emotions was proven to be correct. I was not alone with learning experiences full of emotionally charged moments, which was something I had expected all along. Granted, the sample used in this study was not very large, merely 11 autobiographical narratives, but, for instance, Keski-Heiska (2009) used a far larger sample, 50 autobiographical narratives in total, and the results still stay the same as the passages she used are also filled with emotion discourse, even if studying emotions was not the aim of her study. The aim of Keski-Heiska's study was to find memories of English teachers and she found an abundance of them in autobiographical narratives full of emotions. Both Keski-Heiska's and the present study prove that when it is a question of learning, emotions are strongly present.

Keski-Heiska's (2009) study handled the memories of teachers, who were also the largest group in the present study and evoked the most colorful accounts of emotion discourse, but this study widened the scope to all the emotion-laden aspects that the narratives offered. Thus, this study handled all the people that the students mentioned as part of their language learning journeys, showing that other people in general have an important role in language learning, hence proving that sociocultural interaction is vital to learning languages. For instance, relatives often had a big role in the beginning of the language journeys for the students in this study, even if their role diminished later. Also, the places, for example schools and living abroad, and one event, namely the matriculation examination, had a big role in the students' lives in regard to language learning. Such a variety of aspects clearly indicates that language learning seldom happens in solitude or isolated, but instead, other people and surroundings often dictate the mood where learning takes place, thus evoking either facilitating or hindering emotions in regard to learning.

MacKenzie (2015) used "a narrative inquiry" when analyzing the interviews of the participants in her study. She discovered, for instance, that the reasons behind learning Finnish included such aspects as "guilt", "fear of isolation within Finnish society" and "interest in languages" (MacKenzie 2015: 35), thus some basic emotions that were also found in this study were found in MacKenzie's data, even if the object towards which the emotions were aimed at were somewhat different. This proves that no matter what the learner's ethnicity, native language, or the target language is, emotions are strongly present. MacKenzie's (2015: 35-48) data and findings are, again, filled with emotion discourse, which further emphasizes what the present study found, that is, emotions are very powerful tools in regard to any learning situation. It can, thus, be suggested that emotions should be given a

much larger role in planning how education can be furthered and improved. Also, there is no difference in whether the learning takes place in a classroom with fellow students or on one's own through e-learning, as proven by Juutinen's (2011) study, which will be looked into next.

Particularly the western societies are quickly becoming more and more digitalized, and the school environment is no different. Courses in schools and workplaces are increasingly becoming solo missions that are attended via computers and the internet, thus e-learning is currently becoming more and more common. Still, as Juutinen (2011) states, the emotional aspects of e-learning have not been studied before, which is also true to a large degree in regard to the more traditional ways of learning, which the present study discovered. Juutinen (2011: 12) sees the importance of studying and thus understanding the emotional factors in order to "avoid the drop out students to be left behind in their academic studies or in their work trainings", which is a message also this study would like to bring forth, as the emotional aspects truly had a great impact in the lives of the participants of this study in regard to learning. If the students' emotions, particularly the more negative ones, are not acknowledged and somehow dealt with, it may be that some students' full potential will never be realized, thus the individual loss might be devastating. Further, Juutinen (2011: 51) suggests that the students usually start following either the positive or the negative cycle of the "Pride-Frustration model" according to their "emotional e-learning experience", meaning that success usually results in pride and failure in frustration. Such cycles can also be seen in the data of the present study and they seem rather self-evident, but the interesting part of the cycle is that, according to Juutinen (2011: 51), the emotional factors can have an effect even before the actual studying or course starts. This is the reason why attitudes and feelings should be taken more into account when thinking about learning, as occasionally the game is over before it has even begun. People have expectations, assumptions, wishes, hopes, and dreams, and they are also aimed towards school environments and people in those environments, as shown in the data of this study. It is, therefore, important to take a short look in the future and discuss some of the aspects that can be done in order to gain more information on the role that emotions play in learning and in our lives.

Future. It was clear from the beginning that the students that constituted the participants of this study were a special group. As they were all studying English at the university, it is rather self-evident that they had been good at English and that they liked the language. Such a characteristic made the participants a rather homogenous group, and as the analysis of the narratives progressed, it became even clearer that the students in this study were, in fact, very

alike. Therefore, the outcomes of the analysis are not of general applicability, but instead a picture of a very specific type of a language student. Therefore, were the participants the students of other subjects at the university, the results could very well be quite different, particularly if the students were studying subjects other than languages. On the other hand, as English is the modern day *lingua franca*, even taking a look at other languages at the university could be fruitful and bring forth some unexpected results. English is all around us and we currently get plenty of input of English in Finland, which is not the case with other languages to such a high degree, thus the language journey of, for example, a student of German might be different from a student studying English at the university. Such an angle was very briefly addressed in this study, as some of the students also wrote about their language journeys in other languages than English, but it was by no means sufficient enough to draw any conclusions on its own. Still, the lack of input might force the student to work harder in order to obtain a university level proficiency, and the journey could be rather different, and thus interesting, than the one traveled by a student studying English.

Further, as the university students often share quite a few similarities, for instance, having graduated from high school and taken the matriculation examination, in comparison to people who have not attended university, the results could vary even more if the participants were studying at a vocational school or were already in working life. It was clear from the data that the matriculation examination had had a great impact on the students in this study, as it evoked a large variety of emotions from exhilaration to near depression, thus studying people who have not been learning languages with the almighty matriculation examination looming over them would be an interesting aspect. Also, the connection between working life and languages could be a worthwhile subject to study in its own right, for example, what the language requirements for a certain position or company are, or how companies support their employees' needs for learning and using languages. Such a study might even be lucrative to the companies, as it might reveal opportunities to enhance the personnel's skills and readiness to take the business further or even abroad.

Moreover, as the students of this study seemed quite detached and isolated from their peers, it would be most intriguing, and perhaps devastating too, to study the emotion discourse in pupils such as the girl described by her classmate as *unskilled* (example 35). Such passages might draw quite a different picture compared to the ones this study presented. Simply studying people who themselves feel that they are not very good at languages, whether that would be the actual case or not, would be an interesting twist to the subject, and also a very

important one, to future and present language teachers in particular, as they are usually very good at languages, thus the experiences of those who struggle with languages would be beneficial for them to learn. Furthermore, as the results in this study suggest that social relationships and surroundings, and also emotions have a vast role in second language learning, those aspects should, therefore, be taken into account when drawing up, for instance, syllabuses and teaching materials in the future. The role of emotions in second language learning should also be given the credit it deserves both in scientific studies on second language learning and teacher training, something that the scientific world has only begun to look into, and perhaps even a smaller consideration has been given to emotions in teacher training. Further, as stated before, the feature particularly capturing my interest in the analysis was that even if the students had not experienced a student exchange or lived abroad in other circumstances, they all felt that it would be very useful to live abroad. Perhaps it would, then, be a good idea to study the experiences of those who have lived abroad further, for instance, from the point of view of how such students experience the level of their language proficiency in comparison to those students who have never lived abroad. Furthermore, some sort of a student exchange in the language studies at the university is something I firmly support, as my own experiences abroad and the students' narratives clearly show that living abroad even for a short period of time is an enormous advantage for a language student.

To sum up, as the emotion research is gaining more supporters and it is being linked to yet new fields of study, it is essential to realize the potential and power that emotions have on different areas of life. It is, therefore, quite as vital to understand that emotions play a big part also in language learning, in schools, and other social surroundings, and it should be given the important role it deserves. My instincts on emotions being very powerful tools in learning has been proven in this very small-scale study, but I believe that this has only been the tip of the iceberg, and I am leaving the ball to other people to catch and take further.

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Appendix 1: Instructions for writing an autobiographical narrative.

TUTKIMUSPROJEKTI "Noviisista ekspertiksi"
Kielten laitos / englanti, SOLKI ja OKL 2005-6

Kerro tarinasi englannin kielen oppijana

Olet opiskellut englantia yliopistolla jo jonkin aikaa. Nyt on hyvä aika pysähtyä ja miettiä elämääsi, menneisyyttä, nykyisyyttä ja tulevia aikoja, kielen oppijan/opiskelijan roolissasi.

Kerro tarinasi englannin kielen oppijana: aloita ensikontaktistasi ja jatka kertomalla englannin kielen oppimiskokemuksistasi peruskoulusta yliopistoon - ja koulun ulkopuolella. Tarinan tulee perustua omiin kokemuksiisi ja näkemyksiisi, ja sinä olet tarinan päähenkilö. Tee tarinastasi kronologisesti etenevä, ajatuksellisesti yhtenäinen. (Lisää ohjeita seuraavalla sivulla.)

Kirjoita rehellisesti ja avoimesti. Anna asioista havainnollisia esimerkkejä. Kirjoita äidinkielelläsi, omalla tyyllilläsi ja äänelläsi. Lauseiden ei tarvitse olla täydellisiä eikä pilkutuksesta tarvitse olla huolissaan. Voit käyttää englanninkielisiä sanoja tai sanontoja, *no problem*. Kirjoitat elämäkerran osana englannin kielen kurssia; sitä ei sellaisenaan kuitenkaan arvostella.

Kirjoita noin **5-10 A4-sivua** (marginaalit n. 2,5 cm, fonttikoko 12, riviväli 2), käytä mieluiten Word-ohjelmaa (tai rtf).

Aineistoa käytetään opetus- ja tutkimustarkoituksiin ja sitä käsitellään nimettömästi ja luottamuksellisesti.

Aikataulu:

- Tarinan 1. versio: tulosta teksti Opi oppimaan vieraita kieliä -kurssin tunnille viikolla _____.
- Tarinan täydennetty ja viimeistelty versio: tallenna elämäkertasi muodossa etunimi.sukunimi ja lähetä se liitetiedostona sähköpostiosoitteeseen noviisistaekspertiksi@suomi24.fi viikolla _____. Laita viestisi aiheeksi vielä toistamiseen etu- ja sukunimesi.

Tarinassasi voit kertoa mm. seuraavista seikoista, sikäli kun katsot ne *englannin kielen oppimisesi* kannalta tärkeiksi (sinun ei siis tarvitse vastata kaikkiin kysymyksiin). Muista vielä *otsikoida* tarinasi ja antaa nimesi.

- Kerro englannin kielen oppimisestasi lapsena ja peruskouluikäisenä

Mitkä ovat ensikokemuksesi englannin kielestä (mahdollisesti jo ennen kouluajoja)? Millaista oli opiskella englantia peruskoulun ala- ja yläasteella? Miten sen koit? Mitä opit? Millaisena koit englannin kielen opettajasi, kurssikaverit, luokan/kurssien ilmapiirin? Millaisena koit kurssikirjat, työkirjat, kieliopin? Mitä odotit englannin opiskelulta peruskoulussa? Vastasiko opetus odotuksiasi? Kerro yksityiskohtaisesti joistain niin myönteisistä kuin kielteisistä oppimiskokemuksistasi peruskouluajalta. Mikä oli sinulle helppoa, mikä vaikeaa? Kenen oli vastuu oppimisestasi? Millainen oli englannin kielitaitosi peruskoulun päättyessä? Olitko peruskoulussa mielestäsi hyvä oppilas englannin kielessä, miksi?

- Kerro englannin kielen oppimisestasi lukioikäisenä

Millaista oli opiskella englantia lukiossa? Miten sen koit? Mitä opit? Millaisena koit englannin kielen opettajasi, kurssikaverit, kurssien ilmapiirin? Millaisena koit kurssikirjat, työkirjat, kieliopin? Mitä odotit englannin opiskelulta tässä vaiheessa? Vastasiko opetus odotuksiasi? Kerro yksityiskohtaisesti joistain niin myönteisistä kuin kielteisistä oppimiskokemuksistasi lukiossa. Mikä oli sinulle helppoa, mikä vaikeaa? Kenen oli vastuu oppimisestasi? Millainen oli englannin kielitaitosi ylioppilaaksi tullessasi? Olitko lukiossa mielestäsi hyvä oppilas englannin kielessä, miksi? Millaista oli englannin kielen opiskelu verrattuna muihin kieliin, entä muihin lukuaineisiin?

Oletko muutoin kouluajanasi harrastanut/käyttänyt kieltä? Mihin? Ollut vaihto-oppilaana, piikomassa, kielikurssilla, interreilannut, ...? Kerro näistä tarkemmin englannin kielen oppimisen kannalta.

- Kerro englannin kielen oppimisestasi lukion jälkeen - ja nyt yliopistolla

Miten/miksi päädyit opiskelemaan englantia yliopistolla? Millaista englannin opiskelu on yliopistolla ollut verrattuna peruskoulu- ja lukioaikoihin, ja miten olet kokenut sen? Mitä olet toistaiseksi oppinut? Miten? Millainen on englannin kielen taitosi nyt - verrattuna äidinkieleesi, muihin osaamiisi kieliin, syntyperäisiin kielen taitajiin? Mikä sinusta tulee isona: kieltenopettajako vai jotain muuta? Miten englannin kielen opiskelu liittyy ammattihaaveisiisi? Mitkä ovat nyt tavoitteesi englannin kielen opiskelun osalta? Mitä englannin kieli merkitsee sinulle itsellesi: onko se itseisarvo vai väline?

Aivan lopuksi: leikitellään ajatuksella, että kaikki toiveesi englannin kielen opinnoissasi toteutuisivat, mitä ne olisivat?

Elämäkertasi *loppuun* kirjoita vielä: Aineistoa saa käyttää nimettömänä tutkimustarkoituksiin *tai* Aineistoa ei saa käyttää tutkimustarkoituksiin.

Appendix 2: English translations of data extracts

(1) I got my first experience in studying the English language when my six years older big brother started studying the language in question in school. He was practicing pronouncing numbers in English at home and I thought that it sounded difficult, I will never learn that [...] The enthusiasm to learn the language was, however, high, I often asked my brother how do you say this and this in English.

(2) The very first thing I learned was the numbers from one to twelve. My mother and my big brother were repeating them one day and I kept wondering next to them what it was that they were really speaking. They said that it was English and they taught some to me as well.

(3) Dog was the first English word I learned. Sure I had heard some basic phrases, such as thank you and my name is, but when I told my brother to teach me English, he, for some reason, taught me the word dog, even though we didn't even have a dog. That's how it started, then.

(4) I, then, asked my sister to tell me what they were talking about in an English cartoon (I guess it was He-man. Not any complicated prose I have to admit). This became a routine for us for almost every weekend. At one point my sister asked me again if I wanted to know what was being said in the program. I had just stated that it wasn't necessary any more. So, I had learned English by ear in about six months and at the age of 3 or 4. The funniest part of it was that, as I recall, I didn't really even try to understand it. Some type of simultaneous translation system just clicked on inside my head.

(5) The first encounter with the language were the children's programs, animated cartoons taped from cable TV, which my uncle brought with him from Jyväskylä, and which I watched so enthusiastically that the tapes were literally worn holes. [...] I've later watched one of the remaining tapes and, oddly enough, I had understood the lines nearly flawlessly correctly as a child.

(6) When my big brother, who was three years older than me, started studying English in the third grade, I was six years old. In my opinion, of all the books he had, the English books were the most wonderful and I remember doing some of the simpler exercises for my brother in those books. I also remember how one evening I translated one of the hardest texts at the end of the book to my mother. There was only one word I didn't know (reindeer - it's reportedly "*poro*"). And I mean I had never read the glossary or learned the words!!

(7) I have always been curious to learn everything new: I even learned how to read before I went to school, and I did it all by myself. This was also the case with English. I was just asking my elders what this and this word is and how it's spelled.

(8) I really can't explain why English was so easy. My parents don't really know any foreign languages and I hadn't much thought about English before going to school. I still believe that particularly TV, the movies and music have had an effect on the development of my language skills. According to my parents, I kept repeating the lines from TV shows and was learning pronunciation.

(9) I got my first contact in the English language when I was about four years old. It was in a sense odd how quickly I embraced the language, since certainly no one in my family had a so-called good head for languages. And no one in my family really even knew English!

(10) Luckily I've always been good at languages. Why? Well, at least I didn't inherit the skill. I guess I was just so interested in and enthusiastic about it.

(11) The event reminded me about myself a long time ago when I hadn't yet started my journey as an English learner. I learned how to read and write quite early, already at 5 years old, and after that I felt a burning desire to show other people that I could also speak "a foreign language". [...] It's wild that even if 15 years have passed I still remember how my interest in language learning started.

(12) Teachers have somewhat affected my learning, the enthusiastic teachers with expertise have further added to my interest in the language.

(13) The beginning of studying German was quite meaningful, even though the teaching was dry. The teacher was, nonetheless, professional and above all, s/he could use the language convincingly. You could ask him/her anything (if it was done in a serious manner) and you got an answer.

(14) I remember my elementary school English teacher particularly well. S/he was a very skillful teacher and got at least me thinking already at that age how important mastering English is. [...] Somehow his/her professionalism appealed to me, creating a good motivation towards learning the language.

(15) I nevertheless got good provisions to continue my language studies from elementary school, mostly thanks to that nice teacher. S/he did his/her best to keep the English lessons challenging even for me, of which I'm grateful.

(16) My first English teacher was a very nice and a motherly woman. She was really fair, but was still able to keep everything in check. It's certainly mainly thanks to her that my interest in the language was maintained even after I had gotten used to the lessons and the same things were harped on repeatedly.

(17) I had the same English teacher throughout junior high. S/he was a very good teacher in my opinion, because s/he was paying attention to everyone and s/he managed to care about the pupils' progress. One of the reasons why English was still my favorite subject was, then, a good teacher. Not everybody liked the teacher, but that's just how it goes, nobody can please everybody.

(18) Our own class teacher taught us also English. She was qualified, but I abhorred her way of pronouncing English. In retrospect, I was perhaps a bit too proud of my language proficiency already in elementary school and I even argued with my teacher about how the words are to be pronounced at around the age of ten.

(19) My teacher in junior high didn't see me as proficient in languages, but instead more of a smart aleck. Even though I had finished all the exercises and read two books in English halfway through the school year. My grade in English dropped. This was infuriating in my mind, but in retrospect, it has been one of the most important events in regard to my language

proficiency. Flared up, I began to work even harder: I read English a lot in my free time, I watched foreign programs and I even learned grammar, just to show my teacher.

(20) Usually the teacher still asked me, because s/he knew that I can, but it felt mainly awkward. I remember when at one time I encouraged myself and decided to answer a very tricky question the teacher had come up with. The answer was correct, but I pronounced the word “vehicle” wrong. The teacher only corrected my mistake but didn’t reward my knowledge at all. For a long time, I felt humiliated and didn’t dare to raise my hand again at all.

(21) In the sixth grade, my attitude towards our teacher changed completely when s/he asked me to stay behind one time after class. I was panicking, thinking what I may have done wrong now... S/he only wanted to know if I’d be willing to be a substitute for him/her for one lesson the next day because s/he had to be somewhere. I was naturally a bit nervous, but everything went, nevertheless, smoothly. This I naturally remember as a very positive thing.

(22) In elementary school, I had at least two English teachers. The other was quite old and a bit scary and the other youngish and nice.

(23) My first English teacher was a middle-aged woman who was in some way a bit scary and somewhat odd. I’m sure that this is because of her mnemonic for number 13: “thirteen is the same as ‘tee-hirteen’”. The thought of someone being hanged was too much for the mind of a child and I felt great horror every time the teacher repeated her rule in class.

(24) S/he was a unique character who the good pupils loved and the bad ones feared. S/he had the most eccentric teaching methods: s/he pulled the hair of the bad pupils and, for example, took me in his/her lap to read for the whole class while caressing my hair and praising me to the whole class, saying that this was the way for them to pronounce English. I enjoyed being in his/her classes more than I ever was to be in school again. And s/he is probably the biggest reason why I’m studying the English language at the moment.

(25) We had a really strict teacher in elementary school. I and many other pupils feared him/her very much. In retrospect, in spite of everything I can’t help but to thank him/her all the same, since I don’t think that too many [pupils] have had such a good base in English in elementary school.

(26) In junior high, our teacher changed and studying wasn’t as pleasant and playful in nature any more as it had been before. The teacher was also our homeroom teacher and s/he wasn’t as inspiring and enthusiastic about his/her job as the elementary teacher [had been].

(27) In elementary school, the most negative thing was definitely that I was afraid of the teacher. In junior high, the turnover of teachers and the quality of teaching were the most negative.

(28) Some teachers met and some even exceeded my expectations. On the other hand, I was really disappointed with some other ones. It’s not really motivating to oneself if it’s obvious that the teacher would rather be totally somewhere else than teaching [us].

(29) All through high school my class had the same English teacher, who was bad in my opinion. None of my classmates liked him/her and I think that s/he was unfit to be a teacher.

S/he very rarely gave positive feedback and even if a presentation or an essay was really good in every way, s/he found something negative to say about it. [...] I think that the teacher tried to make us try harder with the criticism, but it was still a bad tactic. Many [students] skipped classes and neglected their assignments because they knew that they couldn't please the teacher. The atmosphere was often really bad in class, no one wanted to raise their hands because of the teacher's criticism and that, of course, only made him/her criticize us more.

(30) There were some really good teachers in high school. It's a pity, though, that I rarely got to take their courses. The teachers I had had clearly taken stamping on the students' possibly sprouting budding interests under a rock as their missions in life. Some [teachers] always looked at us down their noses and constantly looked like they had smelled something sour. It was completely futile to expect good feedback from them. Other teachers, then, were very nice as people, but when they started speaking in class it made you feel like falling asleep. Luckily, you could take an exam to pass courses in high school, so there was no need to tolerate the bad teachers for long.

(31) There was quite a bunch of English teachers and the quality of teaching also varied quite a lot. Our first teacher was a small, middle-aged woman whose teaching methods were somewhat Nazi-like. Humiliating students in public and downright maligning [them] were the major components of this teacher's style.

(32) In high school [...] In my opinion, the most negative thing was perhaps the bad teachers.

(33) Still everybody but me learned something. It was extremely frustrating times from the viewpoint of studying English.

(34) At first, I was a bit frustrated in the poor level of others and that I had already read all the texts in the book once and done all the exercises.

(35) The differences in language proficiency were even clearer than in elementary school and this frustrated me immensely. I couldn't stand the mind-numbing class situations when I had to, for instance, manage to listen to some unskilled girl who was trying to hyphenate one simple sentence for several minutes!

(36) However, by the fifth grade at the latest it started to irritate me when I had to wait for some of the weaker pupils.

(37) I felt that I was ahead of the others in learning English right from the beginning. In junior high my friends envied me, because I never studied for the tests and still got the best grade.

(38) My best friend sometimes made me feel guilt and in a way, I hoped to fail every now and again, so that s/he wouldn't feel inferior. Grammar was very simple to me and I didn't even need to think about the answers much.

(39) I liked attending school immensely, particularly writing. For some reason, I was alone in my infatuation, because every time I suggested that we'd write something, my classmates hurled insults at me.

(40) My biggest motivation to attend this school was to improve my practical skills in English. I was, however, disappointed when practically none of my classmates was willing to

give it a go in seeing to everyday interaction in English, even though our class was “English-speaking”.

(41) I was an enthusiastic pupil in elementary school and fell for English. I thought it was easy [...]

(42) Learning [English] has always been rather problem-free (particularly at the beginning) and in a way it could be thought of as falling in love.

(43) It was really nice and exciting to start studying [English]. English soon became the favorite subject of the whole class or at least mine. In my opinion, all the pupils in my class started studying the language with a positive attitude, but the attitude may have changed as the studying proceeded. At the beginning of studying, it felt great if you were able to say something in English.

(44) The educational materials that we used were quite traditional; a textbook, exercise books and audio tapes. In retrospect, I greatly appreciate that studying the language was rather versatile: reading out loud, writing and listening to tapes. Sometimes we even had English guests in class and we got to ask them questions in English. Even if we couldn't yet form very fancy sentences at that age, it was still an extremely great feeling to be understood in their native language.

(45) I also remember all the moments when you got the tests back and you'd had excellent grades as positive. That was [when I was] rejoicing over success.

(46) In my opinion, English was even then the most interesting thing school was to offer (that's naturally after physical education!). And I suspect that with me it was, in fact, a Pygmalion - a self-fulfilling prophecy. I was praised for my language skills so much when I was little that it inspired me to learn more - as I was already SO good!

(47) The most memorable experience I had on the first day of studying English was when we got English names, I was Nick. Already since the first day I was very interested in the language, even though [I] didn't understand much of it yet.

(48) When I started [studying] English in the third grade, I was one of the most enthusiastic pupils in my class. Learning the language was based on plenty of games and songs and all the English lessons were fun at that time.

(49) My enthusiasm towards the English language remained high all through elementary school and I studied the language enthusiastically also in my free time.

(50) In the first English lesson in comprehensive school, then, my arm was numb from raising my hand all the time when the teacher was asking what we already knew in English. That felt nice back then.

(51) In comprehensive school, beginning [to study] English was, then, extremely easy.

(52) The exercise books, particularly in elementary school, felt ridiculously easy and pointless, even.

(53) Nothing negative calls to my mind about studying the language in elementary school. I believe that I was slightly better than average as a language learner. Good motivation for studying brought [me] results and created grounds for moving on to junior high.

(54) The atmosphere in class was nice, no one was laughed at if you gave the wrong answer. But still, somehow it felt like you didn't dare to answer wrong...

(55) Studying changed into more demanding when moving on to junior high, but thanks to my high level of motivation, I was able to keep up well.

(56) I enjoyed being in the English classes, because I wasn't insecure about my competence there. For example, studying German and Swedish was very different and my motivation lower, because I simply felt that I was bad at those languages.

(57) Moving on to junior high caused [me] some sort of a shock. Puberty certainly had probably also something to do with it, but I experienced a total loss of interest in many subjects. [...] The situation culminated particularly in the English classes.

(58) The teaching of English in junior high was a huge disappointment. [...] Puberty was also gradually starting to weigh on me, so the thoughts were somewhere else than in studying the language. The books had not taken into account the fact that 13-15-year-olds aren't necessarily interested in the same things any more as the elementary school pupils are.

(59) There was, however, one negative thing about the learning environment in junior high compared to elementary school: many students became notably passive in junior high [...] Still, I don't believe that this was because the students felt that the English language was a particularly repulsive subject: junior high just happens to be a very awkward time for many adolescents.

(60) In junior high, the grammar lessons were separate. Deadly boring.

(61) Being in junior high was, then, completely different. I've never been in prison, but I could imagine that it's the same, except that if someone gets mentally abused in prison the guards won't join in. Language teaching was utterly terrible.

(62) In junior high, the teaching changed somehow into freer. [...] The books were still quite nice and the atmosphere was really good and relaxed.

(63) All in all, studying in junior high left a positive image on me and my interest in the English language was maintained.

(64) Studying English started rather lightly, it felt maybe even a bit too easy. That is, it was nice to lull myself into the feeling of being so good. Luckily, reality hit me already after a couple of first courses: you didn't cope any more if you didn't work [for it].

(65) I was really confident about my language skills, both in English and in Swedish, when entering high school. However, I quickly learned that we're not in junior high any more, but instead, now you also have to open the book maybe a little. [...] I have to admit that I felt a bit irritated for not being able to cope with the mere "methinks" or "I think" attitude any

more. The first '9', then, in my life I got in high school, which was a very hard sting on my self-esteem.

(66) [You] always had to somehow adapt to a set mold and it felt like there's only one correct answer or one way to do things in the first place.

(67) A big plus in studying English in high school was the founding of an English discussion group.

(68) At first, it was interesting to get to see what was to be found in the language lab. The harsh truth, however, is that in the long run, the listening comprehension exercises seemed to last forever and I felt an odd desire to be anywhere else.

(69) In high school, the first English lesson in the language lab surprised [me]. [...] Now you had to listen between the lines and recognize irony and sarcasm.

(70) Studying in English was smooth and relatively easy right from the beginning. If I compare English to other languages I was studying, Swedish and French, studying it is far more interesting and easier.

(71) Studying languages at the university has been quite interesting so far with different nuances.

(72) I have gotten to know university life for a couple of months now and I've adjusted myself very well in my opinion. The courses are versatile and nicely variable. [...] My work at the university has only just begun, I have enough motivation and new information is coming from all around.

(73) Studying English has been fantastically invigorating in comparison to Swedish and French. There's no stopping at the "trifles" in the courses, but instead, larger entities are handled and skills are being deepened in regard to, among others, writing. It's wonderful to discuss literature and learn to write in an academic way and not just toil with the exceptions to grammar rules.

(74) I like the language, speaking it, and writing. It's also interesting how it's been used in different ways around the world, both as a mother tongue and as a foreign language. Its effect on other languages is also interesting. Grammar, teaching the language and the way the language is learned, not so much.

(75) The English courses at the university are nevertheless already challenging enough for me, even though some of the courses make me wonder whether I'm really at the university. I have never learned anything by drawing and playing and I've never had to spend any time in kindergarten either, so sometimes the moments of free "associations" are getting on my nerves.

(76) Now, after studying at the university for a few months, I have some mixed feelings. I haven't really gotten into the rhythm for studying and I haven't been able to finish my assignments in time, or they have been finished at the last minute. Furthermore, it came to me as a surprise that English is being spoken in almost every course. That is, I'm really insecure

about my oral skills in English. And I've started to feel really insecure as it is. I feel like I'm worse than everyone else.

(77) I'd say that university differs a lot from high school in studying languages, because the work is very independent and responsible. [...] I've felt slight anxiety myself for taking responsibility for everything and making choices, because I've never had a sufficiently clear plan.

(78) Studying at the university has felt meaningful and the certainty of English being right up my alley has grown stronger. It's nice to notice how my own language skills, of which I thought to be pretty good, are rather sparse. Also, my writing skills are still quite inadequate for the academic level.

(79) I can't cease to be amazed how painlessly and perfectly a young child can learn new things. Due to my young age, my memories from the Samoan Islands are vague and intermittent moments without the context. I'm, nevertheless, certain that these two years gave my life a clear direction: English was instilled into my spine, as well as accepting and loving diversity.

(80) Moving was naturally extremely exciting and frightening. I've bravely written in my old diary how fun and exciting it is to fly on an airplane and see a new country, but the strongest feeling was fear.

(81) Be that as it may, I don't have a single unpleasant memory of Guyana. [...] The years in the Samoan Islands had created a good basis for my language proficiency, but the language didn't really sink into my subconscious until Guyana. I was already old enough to understand that such fluency in English was an advantage to me. I was young enough to learn new things with ease and old enough to understand what might have gone over my head in the Samoan Islands.

(82) I worked in Salisbury for seven months, and the experience was fantastic. I managed really well in a new culture surrounded by new people. There were no problems with my language proficiency, on the contrary, I rather enjoyed using the English language and learning new expressions. I also familiarized myself with different dialects and it was also fun to learn to identify them.

(83) I quickly got a job in a shoe store, and especially at work, I often encountered situations where my language proficiency was a problem. It was particularly difficult to be convincing in front of the challenging and complaining customers. I was lost for words and it was difficult to form sentences in a sticky situation. [...] On the other hand, chatting with my new workmates in a relaxed way, speaking English felt easier than ever. I never got any negative feedback for my language [skills] from the "higher authority" either, which might have been disheartening. Also, there were other foreigners working at the same store whose level of language proficiency was weaker than mine.

(84) I got positive feedback on my English skills from many locals, which felt good. Even though I had some problems every now and again, I could start a life (getting an apartment, a job, a bank account etc.) in an English-speaking country, of which I'm proud.

(85) There was a proficiency test at the beginning of the course, in accordance to which we were divided into groups, and I ended up in the more advanced group. I'm writing "ended up in", because our studies were a lot more serious than the "lower level" groups' studies. Others were playing Alias and other games, but we were studying grammar etc. in a serious manner.

(86) It felt as if there was no other goal for studying than surviving the matriculation examination.

(87) Even though the uncertainty about my knowledge only grew just before the matriculation examination. Everything went nevertheless well, even if I didn't get *laudatur*.

(88) Even though the matriculation examination didn't go quite as expected, the interest in the English language was maintained, and I decided to apply for the university.

(89) The last year in high school was a stressful time. The matriculation examination was just in front of my nose, some [exams] taking place already in the fall. You couldn't not to think about them. The stress itself was, however, directed to all the other subjects except for English, of which I got *laudatur* without really studying for it.

(90) I didn't study even for the matriculation examination in any way. I took the English exam first in the fall. It was more of experimentation on how the exams feel. The grade I got was *E*. In the spring, I tried taking the English exam again. It had become a bit more of a routine, then, and perhaps the exam was a bit easier as well. In the spring I got an *L*.

(91) Based on the results of the matriculation examination, I'm, however, content that the teenage angst and arrogance were left behind in junior high and I brought the listening comprehensions home with honor.

(92) I took the matriculation examination in more than one part and I took the English exam already in the fall of the last year in high school. I was left with a couple of points shy from *laudatur*, which naturally irritated me. I even thought that I would take the exam again, but there were so many other things to do in the spring that the grade remained as *eximia*. In retrospect, it doesn't annoy me nearly at all. I really have no use for the results of the matriculation examination any more when I've already gained access to the university.

(93) I had great expectations for the matriculation examination in English and it was a severe disappointment when I missed *laudatur* by exactly one point. In retrospect, it feels mostly laughable (even though the same thing happened when I took the exam again), but at the time it annoyed me immensely.

(94) The most positive experience with English in high school was perhaps the matriculation examination. Or the examination situation itself wasn't the thing that was particularly nice, but when I got the results in my hand, then I suppose that I shed a few tears of happiness.

(95) The matriculation examination went nearly perfectly. I was particularly proud of my 99-point essay.