Lusi Yao-Juntunen

A JOB FILLED WITH EMOTIONS:
A NARRATIVE STUDY ON THE EMOTIONAL DIMENSIONS AND RELATED EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN CLASS TEACHERS’ WORK

Master’s thesis
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
Intercultural Teacher Education
2018
A job filled with emotions: a narrative study on the emotional dimensions and related emotional intelligence in class teachers' work (Lusi Yao-Juntunen)

This master's thesis attempts to empirically examine the connection between emotional intelligence and the teaching profession. There has been a growing amount of quantitative or mixed methods research demonstrating the solid interrelation between teachers' emotional intelligence and teaching profession. However, the concern of teachers' emotional intelligence and its corresponding actions requires more empirical researches. Thus, the focus of this narrative research lies on finding out how three Finnish class teachers describe the role of emotions and the emotional experiences in their work. Teachers' stories are analyzed from the perspective of emotional intelligence. The theoretical framework of this thesis is based on Goleman’s theory of emotional intelligence, and the justification of applying Goleman’s theory is made along with other influential theory constructs. Furthermore, this thesis aims to explore how the emotional dimensions in teachers’ work can be seen in light of emotional intelligence particularly in terms of Goleman’s EI construct.

Methodologically, this master’s thesis applies the principles of narrative inquiry. The data has been collected by interviewing three class teachers with varied teaching experiences. The teachers also work in different classroom contexts – a regular Finnish mainstream classroom, an international school classroom and a preparatory classroom. This master’s thesis applies the holistic-content reading approach in data analysis process; each interview is analyzed individually. By using this method, the analysis results provide a two-dimensional finding for each interview. The first dimension offers an overview or general impression of each teacher’s emotional experience related to work. The second-dimension reveals more specific themes related to emotional dimensions in teachers’ work from the perspective of emotional intelligence.

The findings of the thesis suggest that the class teachers describe the emotional dimensions in their work in a similar way, although emphasizing different emotional aspects. These teachers display their acknowledgement of the critical role of emotions through their living experience and reflections. They recognize the urge for teachers to acquire the set of substantial skills which are embedded in Goleman’s emotional intelligence theory: self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation and social skills. Furthermore, the findings of this empirical thesis reveal that teachers’ working environment is an emotional place. The teaching job is argued to be an emotional labor which is far beyond simply delivering a lesson. Related to the importance of emotions in teachers’ work, teacher wellbeing as another major theme emerges from the findings. Therefore, this master’s thesis aims to raise awareness of the significance of emotions in teachers’ work and shred lights on both pre-service and in-service teachers’ need of developing emotional intelligence as teaching proficiency. Nevertheless, promoting teacher wellbeing in the profession should also be essential and prevalent.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, emotions, teacher wellbeing, self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, relationships
Contents

1 Introduction ........................................................................................................................................... 6

2 Theoretical Framework: Emotions in Teaching Profession .............................................................. 10

   2.1 Emotional intelligence .................................................................................................................. 10
       2.1.1 Emotional intelligence as a debatable term ................................................................. 10
       2.1.2 Emotional intelligence by various key thinkers ............................................................ 11
       2.1.3 Goleman’s five-dimension model of emotional intelligence ........................................ 13
       2.1.4 My justification on Goleman’s construct ........................................................................... 14

   2.2 Emotional intelligence in the teaching profession ..................................................................... 16
       2.2.1 Self-awareness ................................................................................................................... 16
       2.2.2 Self-regulation .................................................................................................................. 17
       2.2.3 Empathy ............................................................................................................................ 18
       2.2.4 Motivation ........................................................................................................................... 19
       2.2.5 Social skills .......................................................................................................................... 20

3 Methodology ....................................................................................................................................... 22

   3.1 Narrative inquiry .......................................................................................................................... 22
   3.2 Philosophical Assumptions of Narrative Inquiry ......................................................................... 23
   3.3 Data Collection ............................................................................................................................ 26
   3.4 Data Analysis ................................................................................................................................ 27

4 Findings .............................................................................................................................................. 30

   4.1 Peppi ............................................................................................................................................ 30
       4.1.1 A job that filled with emotions ......................................................................................... 30
       4.1.2 Major themes ..................................................................................................................... 31
   4.2 Reetta .......................................................................................................................................... 37
       4.2.1 Knowing herself and owning her emotions ................................................................. 37
       4.2.2 Major themes ..................................................................................................................... 38
   4.3 Saaga .......................................................................................................................................... 44
       4.3.1 Teaching is more than teaching .................................................................................... 44
       4.3.2 Major themes ..................................................................................................................... 45

5 Ethical issue and trustworthiness ..................................................................................................... 51

6 Discussion .......................................................................................................................................... 53

References .............................................................................................................................................. 57

Appendices
1 Introduction

The very intention of this master’s thesis derived from my initial interest and knowledge I had gained from my bachelor’s thesis. As I am becoming a class teacher, I am enthusiastic to discover the essence of developing to be an effective teacher. While researching and trying to focalize my research topic, something interesting and surprising caught my attention – teachers’ emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence may be a familiar term for many. It may be commonly assumed to be one kind of intelligence closely related to emotion, yet one is unlikely able to pinpoint its substances and circumscription. My bachelor’s thesis displays explicitly the connection between teachers’ emotional intelligence and teaching profession, precisely it is examined how significant it is for teachers to be emotionally competent in the context of educational professionalism. Meanwhile, it reveals emotional intelligence as a theoretical construct literally encompasses a wide range of competencies. Emotional wisdom is significant for teachers’ proficiency in practice. Hence, I hope to further this master’s thesis on teachers’ emotional intelligence by building upon my previous work, I wanted to hear teachers’ voices and to have their stories shared about emotional experiences in relation to their work. I am hoping to learn about the values and beliefs behind the stories that teachers will tell, to understand and interpret teachers’ meaning making of their stories and emotional world. Teacher participants for my research comprise both experienced and novice teachers from various classroom contexts, such as, a regular Finnish class, a multicultural class and a preparatory class. Teachers’ narratives become the research content or phenomenon under study, so the purpose of this thesis is to seek for the essence of story and through it to understand holistically teachers’ perception of emotions in their work. Additionally, how emotional intelligence can be implied in teachers’ emotional experiences.

There is a substantial amount of research done on teachers’ emotional intelligence that have attempted to manifest the significance and impact of emotional intelligence for teaching profession. In the following paragraphs, I am going to elaborate some previous studies on the topics related to teacher emotions before discussing Goleman’s construct of emotional intelligence in chapter two.

Teachers’ emotional intelligence has gained a considerable amount of attention in the research field of educational psychology, much attention is centralized on the aspect of teacher wellbeing by mirroring on the phenomena of teacher burnout (Anderman & Klassen, 2016). In addi-
tion, teachers’ emotion is strongly correlated with students’ own emotional status and development as well as their learning (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008). The recently growing researches have taken a strong stance on demonstrating the solid interrelation between teachers’ emotional intelligence and teaching profession. This highlights and introduces the significance of the topic that has been put forth in the research field. The focus of this master’s thesis lies on teachers’ perception of emotional dimensions in their teaching profession.

There is researches carried out looking into the link between teacher's emotional intelligence and their job satisfaction, professional teaching practice and teacher preparation program (Corcoron & Tormey, 2012). Research outcomes suggest that significance of emotional intelligence and its positive correlation with teaching practice and students' learning experiences. Emotionally intelligent teachers tend to possess good classroom management skills, strengthened teacher-student relationship, and create a positive and secure learning environment for teaching and learning in different dimensions. Corcoron and Tormey’s (2012) suggest that it is necessary to rethink the criteria for evaluating student candidates applying for teacher education, since evaluation is mostly based on their academic skills. They have also concluded there is an urge to focus on the development of emotional intelligence competence as a part of teacher training program because teacher's psychological preparation is apparently neglected in many places (Corcoron & Tormey, 2010). However, the concern of teachers’ emotional intelligence and its corresponding actions have not yet been seen or reflected in practice as it should.

According to the researches done in Canada (Tait, 2008) and in the United States (Justice & Espinoza, 2007), novice teachers were revealed to be overwhelmed by the job and they intended to leave the profession within their early years of teaching because of the stressful work and burnout. This worrying phenomenon is said to be caused by a lack of emotional skills. These researches also suggest to focus more on pre-service teachers or teacher candidates’ emotional intelligence instead of academic aspects, as a fact that many teachers may be well trained in academic profession without being mentally prepared when they start their career. The same study also emphasize that a personal or professional success does not mainly contribute to one’s intelligence but more significantly to one’s emotional intelligence. It indicates pre-service or novice teachers should be trained not only academically but also emotionally (Justice & Espinoza, 2007).
Moreover, Santavirta and her colleagues (Santavirt, Solovieva, & Theorell, 2007) concluded that the risk of teacher burnout is associated with the effect of job strain. Their research was conducted among primary school teachers in a Finnish context, research outcome indicates the two major factors for drawing stress and emotional exhaustion for teachers are excessive work demand and their ability to cope. Webb (2004, 2009) and other researchers collaborated to carry out several comparative researches in Finnish and English contexts regarding teachers' professionalism and well-being. Both researches reveal some of the competencies and skills a professional teacher should attain, which reveal to be closely associate with the construct of emotional intelligence.

Therefore, I have come to acknowledge the important role of emotions for teacher’s job through a great wealth of literature as supporting evidence in my bachelor’s thesis. I have also come to realize the large scale of researches done on teacher’s emotional intelligence or teacher emotions are quantitative or with mix methods (Chang, 2009; Buric, Sliskovic & Macuka, 2018; Rojas, 2012; Galler, 2015). In this master’s thesis, I intend to conduct a qualitative study in order to find out how teachers perceive their emotions in their work and how these perceptions can be seen in Goleman’s EI construct through teachers’ emotional experiences. Hence, I decided to conduct a narrative inquiry to explore how class teachers experience and perceive their emotions in their teaching profession. The following primary research questions have navigated me throughout my research process:

1. How do class teachers experience their emotions and describe the role of emotions in their work?
2. How do emotional dimensions in class teachers’ work pertain to Goleman’s construct of emotional intelligence?

The second chapter of this thesis consists of two parts. The first part will put forth the most influential thinkers’ perspectives and definitions of emotional intelligence by illustrating the most debated and interesting arguments. Emotional competence will be briefly addressed in respect of its distinction and possible common characteristics compared to emotional intelligence. Also, my justification of applying Goleman’s theoretical model of emotional intelligence in this thesis will be displayed. The latter part of the second chapter will elaborate on Goleman’s five-dimension model, as it is the fundamental framework for analyzing the substances of emotional intelligence. Each of these dimensions will be pondered regarding their implications and possible incorporated competencies. In other words, this discussion will take
place under the categories of teachers’ self-awareness, self-regulation, own motivation and to motivate others, teachers’ empathy and finally teachers’ social skills. The third chapter will deliberate to the research methodology used in the thesis, including introduction of narrative inquiry, data collection as well as analysis procedure. In the fourth and last chapters, thesis findings will be then presented followed by a final discussion.
2 Theoretical Framework: Emotions in Teaching Profession

2.1 Emotional intelligence

In this chapter I will present some of the most popular and influential approaches made by the key thinkers of emotional intelligence. In lights of these theories I will then justify and elaborate the focal theoretical model of this thesis.

2.1.1 Emotional intelligence as a debatable term

Emotional intelligence is a term that used to be neglected decades ago. Literature reviews and related research on emotional intelligence did not attract much of academic attention until 1990’s. The term of emotional intelligence was raised to public awareness by Salovey and Mayer (1990) in their seminal articles in 1995, followed by Goleman’s best-selling book of *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ* (Goleman, 1995). The term started to increase in popularity and value both in academic and social realm. Emotional intelligence comprises the complexity of an individual’s personality, characteristics, social skills and emotional capabilities. Researchers have put extensive efforts on exploring what emotional intelligence really is and have presented various theoretical models for the concept based on their different perspectives and interests. While some researchers argue that emotional intelligence belongs to a mixed/traits model, entailing both noncognitive abilities and character traits which can be somehow developed, others defend emotional intelligence as a series of innate mental abilities which are influenced significantly by emotion and cognition as a traditional standard intelligence. Abundant researches (Goleman, 1995; Salovey & Mayer, 1990, Bar-On, 1997) lit up discussions and discourses regarding what is the most appropriate definition of emotional intelligence. These debates have led to confusion and entanglement because of their competitive theoretical models, which vary considerably from one another (Allen, Mac-Cann, Matthews, & Roberts, 2014).

Different definitions of emotional intelligence carry their unique meanings and purposes. For the purpose of this thesis I have chosen Goleman’s theoretical model to study teachers’ emotional intelligence in the context of teaching professional. I find Goleman’s perspective to be comprehensive and realistic. Goldman’s key concept is involved with intelligence, which strives to indicate a sort of innate ability. However, this innate ability shall be valid and un-
nderstood only if it can be identified and reflected into concrete skills, traits or emotional con-
sequences. Before putting my stance further in respect of Goleman’s theory, I intend to dis-
cuss about various significant thinkers’ ideas about defining emotional intelligence in order to
demonstrate their different perspectives of this concept comparing to Goleman’s.

2.1.2 Emotional intelligence by various key thinkers

*Salovey and Mayer’s emotional intelligence*

Salovey and Mayer, (1997) who are considered to be the most important key thinkers regard-
ing the concept of emotional intelligence, they have made a revised definition of emotional
intelligence as below:

“Emotional intelligence involves the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emo-
tion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to
understand emotion and emotional knowledge; the ability to promote emotional and intellectual
growth” (p. 10).

Accompanied with their focused and unique definition, Salovey and Mayer (1997) established
a four-branch model which illustrates how people’s cognitive and emotional system operate
hand in hand. The first branch of emotional intelligence is emotional perception, which is the
fundamental branch within the whole model (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000). The function
of this branch is to perceive and express emotion in the first place before proceeding a mes-
sage into the cognitive system. The expression of emotion can be seen both in verbal and
nonverbal communication, such as type of words, tone of the voice, facial and body expres-
sion. When a certain type of emotion is sensed whether in oneself or in others, the person will
usually first try to identify what type of feeling that is. I consider this branch of emotional
intelligence as one part of emotional awareness. This is the ability to not only identify our
own emotions, but also the sensitivity to learn and recognize other’s emotion when there is a
social interaction going on. The second branch of the model is emotional integration, which
regards the facilitation of emotions (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000). Once an emotion is
shifted into the cognitive system, the emotion has the power and effect to alter a person’s
cognition status. According to Mayer and his colleagues (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000),
“The emotional facilitation of thought focuses on how emotion enters the cognitive system
and alters cognition to assist thought” (p.109). The third branch of the model involves emo-
tional understanding (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000). This is the process of a person trying
to understand the deeper meaning of this emotion, with the impacts of cognition. Goleman (1995) suggests that the emotion of anger is one of the most seductive negative emotions to emerge. A person may become outraged, because the feeling of anger is aroused without thinking deeper about the reason of his/her rage and what could be consequences of this emotion. The fourth branch of the system is emotional management. This concerns management of one’s own emotions and emotions of other people (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000). This branch involves the competency of regulating emotions in one’s own and in other capacities (Allen et al., 2014).

Mayer-Salovey’s hierarchical four-branch model demonstrates that emotional intelligence comprises ‘mental abilities, skills, or capacities’ (Mayer et al., 2000, p. 105), and it is viewed as ‘one kind of intelligence that operates across both cognitive and emotional systems’ (p. 107). The higher branches functions depend on the first two fundamental branches. It is deemed as an outcome of mental ability that has been processed through an individual’s cognitive and emotional system in order to achieve a defined task.

Mayer et al. (2000) persist on emphasizing emotional intelligence is a mental ability and that one’s emotional intelligence is to be measured just as another kind of intelligence. They have developed an emotional intelligence test called MSCEIT as a measuring tool in order to validate their definition. However, the test aims to underline the mental ability or emotional information processing, at the same time trying to eliminate the cultural, contextual or other noncognitive abilities.

**Bar-On’s five factors model of emotional intelligence**

Distinct from Mayer and Salovey’s four-branch model based on emotional and cognitive system, Bar-On defines emotional intelligence as “an array of noncognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one’s ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures” (Bar-On, 1997, p. 14). Accordingly, Bar-On (1997) developed a five-factor noncognitive model which covers a much wider scope than mental ability and it represents a set of personality and characteristics. This five-factor model includes intrapersonal skills and interpersonal skills, adaptability, stress management and general mood. There are a set of competencies embodied within each of this factor. Comparing Bar-On’s definition with Goleman’s, which is about to come after this section, these two theoretical models are indeed sharing a majority of overlapping and integrating competencies together under different domains.
Mayer et al. perceive Bar-On’s model as a mixed model and criticize it “seems to stretch beyond what is generally meant by emotion or intelligence” (2000, p. 102). However, Bar-On (Hedlund & Sternberg, 2000) has also exploited the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) based on his module by conducting a considerable amount of researches to validate this measurement of emotional intelligence. Allen and her colleagues (2014) suggest that this theoretical model contains mainly personality traits and it might not be able to offer more advanced or different information than what can be acquired from personality assessments, and what this model can provide is one way to highlight those personality aspects which are emotionally focused and relevant.

2.1.3 Goleman’s five-dimension model of emotional intelligence

Goleman’s book *Emotional intelligence* (1995) has gained an ample amount of recognition and popularity among the society and the academics world. The highlight of Goleman’s definition is that he considers emotional intelligence as almost everything but IQ (Goleman, 1995). He contemplates emotional intelligence as the panacea for success in one’s life. Almost everything he is referring to is personality and some other noncognitive skills that we possess. Goleman (1995) defines emotional intelligence as:

> “a set of characteristics: abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulse and delay gratification; to regulate one’s moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathize and to hope” (p.34).

Goleman (1998) has also developed his five dimensions of emotional intelligence into a range of twenty-five emotional competencies.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-awareness</th>
<th>emotional awareness, accurate self-assessment, self-confidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-regulation</td>
<td>self-control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability, innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>achievement drive, commitment, initiative, optimism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>understanding others, developing others, service orientation, leveraging diversity, political awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social skills</td>
<td>influence, communication, conflict management, leadership, change catalyst, building bonds, collaboration and cooperation, team capabilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2. Goleman's five-dimension model of emotional intelligence.**

This figure displays Goleman’s theory encompassing 25 competencies.

Some researchers argue that Goleman’s definition of emotional intelligence is beyond acceptable limits because it seems to take on all non-academic or noncognitive skills and personal traits; they also challenged what is the purpose to relabel our personality traits with a different name as “emotional intelligence”, because the set of personal traits or personality variables that already existed ever since (Davies, Stankov & Roberts, 1998; Gardner, 1999; Mayer et al., 2000). For such reason, I am going to justify my choice among these various influential thinker’s perspectives of emotional intelligence on why I am applying Goleman’s concept for this thesis in the next section.

2.1.4 My justification on Goleman's construct

Gardner (1983) conceptualized emotional intelligence encompassing interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences, which enhance the emergence of intelligence in emotion. Gardner (1993) also commented on with measurement of intelligence as following: “When it comes to the interpretation of intelligence testing, we are faced with an issue of taste or preference rather than one on which scientific closure is likely to be reached” (p. 17). Whether one name is considered better or more appropriate than other, the biggest and prolonged disputes appears to be among researchers’ interpretations of how narrow or broad the concept of emotional intelligence should embrace. It is also acknowledged that the competencies and skills from these researchers' models constitute numerous similarities at certain level, which indicates the major trend of prerequisites for being emotionally intelligent or emotionally competent.
According to different perspectives of emotional intelligence I have elaborated earlier on, Goleman's construct and Mayer-Salovey's four-branch model are literally sharing certain similarities, the function and disposition among these two theoretical models are partly related and interwoven. For example, the competencies within dimensions of self-awareness and self-regulation are associated in Mayer-Salovey's fourth and most sophisticated branch as emotional management. Additionally, the competencies within motivation are implied in Mayer-Salovey's second and forth branch as emotional facilitation and management. However, it is hard to pinpoint Goleman’s social skills in the four-branch model explicitly, since Mayer and Salovey’s focal point focuses on cognitive abilities of applying and navigating emotions sensibly to assist thinking for proceeding responsible actions. Their attempt to possibly exclude social interactions induced by emotional outcome may be the key to outlining a more restricted definition of emotional intelligence.

It can be argued that, one's individual actions and social interaction with other human beings should be embodied within emotional intelligence. Emotions take place in various social contexts and operate hand in hand with cognition, such as excitement aroused by reading a thriller book even by yourself or feeling upset when no consensus is to be made on a conflict situation. As Lantto indicated, “the combination of emotional, cognitive and social aspects are evidently blended together as an inseparable entity” (2002, p. 25). By looking at simply the term intelligence, it makes no doubt the term favors and turns towards one's individual cognitive ability and wisdom. When we talk about intelligence in terms of emotion – as emotional intelligence, I find it barely possible to isolate this set of blended cognitive psychological functions from any social settings.

Goleman's conceptual model presents an intelligible but comprehensive set of features for emotional intelligence to be employed in a more pragmatic and realistic context. Therefore, the next chapter will shed light on teachers' emotional intelligence specifically through Goleman's theoretical scope and discuss what could be the competencies that are prerequisite and significant in teaching profession. But first, it is essential to acknowledge why emotional intelligence is important for teaching profession.
2.2 Emotional intelligence in the teaching profession

2.2.1 Self-awareness

According to Goleman (1995), self-awareness is about knowing one's emotions and having the ability to recognize one's feelings in an ongoing situation. Self-awareness is the essence of Goleman's five-domain emotional intelligence model, because it is a fundamental and important feature of self-understanding. Self-awareness impacts greatly on the one's reaction to any emotional events. There are three emotional competencies under the domain of self-awareness: emotional awareness, accurate self-assessment, and self-confidence (Goleman, 1998).

Teachers’ working environment is an emotional place, teacher is constantly faced with emotions in all forms presented by the students and themselves (Schutz & Zembylas, 2009). Caruso and Salovey proposed (cited in Corcoran & Tormey, 2012) that “nonverbal information is often the basis for successful social interaction. This information consists of gestures, voice tone, and facial expressions”. Therefore, teachers need to be aware of not only their verbal language but also nonverbal languages when they are interacting with an emotional event. Student teachers participating in Corcoran and Tormey's research of teacher's emotional intelligence addressed that awareness of their own use of verbal and nonverbal languages are essential for conveying emotional messages and responses they intended to (2012). Teachers should be aware of their own feelings, moods, tone voice, facial expressions, emotional availability. They should be aware and conscious about the way how they respond to others in different emotional events.

Another competence relate to self-awareness is self-assessment (Goleman, 1995). Self-assessment or self-evaluation is an essential and critical process for teachers in term of lifelong professional development. Teachers are required to evaluate their own work continuously and reflect on what and how they have conducted in both actions and emotions in order to enhance for example better classroom climate, social-emotional relationship with their students, job satisfaction as well as educational attainment (Kinman et., 2011; Malm. B, 2009; Miyagamwala, G., 2015). It can be perceived that emotional awareness and self-reflection are the focal issue in respect of self-awareness under the umbrella concept of emotional self-awareness.
The last competence of self-awareness is self-confidence (Goldman, 1995). The teacher is playing a role of an adult and leader in the classroom, and the image of a teacher should be confident. The teacher's confidence helps students to build trust and reliability on the teacher and maintain a better classroom management. A perfect lesson plan presented by a low self-esteem teacher is probably not going to succeed because of teacher’s lack of confidence and classroom management skills. This can be correlated with my personal experience in middle school: A novice math teacher encountering with this weakness was teaching in a very low voice with little confidence, also her scant interaction with students might have been the main reason lead to poor classroom management and little respect from the students. Apparently, confidence and classroom management became the obstacles for her to deliver lessons effectively in her profession. Therefore, one can assume that emotionally intelligent teachers tend to be emotionally aware, confident, and reflective.

2.2.2 Self-regulation

Self-regulation is the second domain of Goleman's model of emotional intelligence (1998), and it refers to emotional management in terms of managing one's own emotional states and impulse. Similarly, Saarni (1997) proposed a specific stance regarding the term of self-regulation. She views self-regulation as “the ability to manage one's action, thoughts, and feelings in adaptive and flexible ways across a variety of contexts, whether social or physical” (Saarni, 1997, p. 40). Quebbeman and Rozell (2002) argue that perhaps self-regulation holds the most vigorous connection between a triggering event and emotional resolution in behavior. Gross and Thompson's (2007) family of regulatory process demonstrated emotional regulation process and its corresponsive strategies. Apparently, self-regulation has been considered by many researchers as a fundamental and influential contributor for self-efficacy, prevention of negative emotion, transformation from negative emotion to positive emotion, as well as higher emotional tolerance and management skills.

Teachers may encounter a variety of emotional situations in the classroom (Sutton, 2004; Chang, 2009; Hosotani & Imai-Matsumura, 2011; Galler, 2015), such as teacher's own frustration, disappointment, or student's disruptive behavior. Teachers need to have the competency of displaying their own inner feeling appropriately, because verbal language, facial expression or body language of the teachers tend to reveal their own opinions and feelings unconsciously (Corcoran & Tormey, 2012). For example, anger and frustration may be some of the
most commonly experienced negative feelings by teachers, and these feelings should be expressed by the teachers very carefully (Goleman, 1995; Wu & Chen, 2018).

As Goleman (1995) suggested, emotional intelligence under the domain of self-regulation also include competencies of self-control, adaptability, and innovation. Explicitly, these are skills that teachers ought to obtain in order to work effectively in the profession. A teacher with good self-control would consider carefully what verbal and body language to use as social expression. Shouting or raising voices at students, using over acting body language or gesture at students may be unprofessional and ineffective, as they could work conversely and induce opposite outcome. It may also reproduce negative emotional influence onto students and classroom atmosphere. In any unpleasant emotional circumstance, teachers are expected to be able to redirect their own emotional attention or focus towards a more positive one in order to function with the least negative emotional interferences as possible.

Classroom can be filled with emotions and unexpected circumstances due to sudden situational change or incident (Galler, 2015). The competencies of adaptability and innovation will strengthen teacher's flexibility and adjustability to immediate changes and students' needs. Teacher's innovation of new teaching techniques, problem-solving method, and their adaptability of fresh dynamic situation in the classroom are seen to be emotionally significant in order to work effectively.

Teacher's poor self-regulation competency may lead to negative emotional influence passed onto students, loss of confidence, poor classroom management and professional stress. Corcoran and Tormey (2012) report in their research that emotionally intelligent teachers are less likely to have burnout but more likely to have a higher job satisfaction. Sutton's (2004) research also implies that, teachers consider the competence of regulating unpleasant or negative emotions would enhance for effective teaching in the classroom.

2.2.3 Empathy

Goleman (1995) defines empathy as the ability to recognize and understand other’s feelings and perspectives. He views empathy consisting of the competencies of understanding others, developing others, service orientation, leveraging diversity, and political awareness. Quebbeman and Rozell (2002) note that empathy is an important contributor in emotional intelligence because this skill reinforces an individual's ability of interpreting others' action and behavior.
A behavioral definition for empathy in teachers is regarded as the demonstrated expressions of understanding what the students see and experience, as the teacher's ability to mirror the mind of a child (Swan & Riley, 2015). Researches also point out (Baron-Cohen, 2011; Galler, 2015) that teacher's empathy is activated and becomes functional when they adopt the double-minded focus attention, when teachers focus not only on their own interests but also those of other people.

Siegel (2012) emphasized that a wide range of empathic practices are embodied and conducted by teachers within the classroom. Teachers are supposed to regulate their lessons to meet the students' needs, interests and contexts. If empathy was not involved, teachers would be only teaching contents mechanically but not the students (Swan & Riley, 2015).

Noddings’ (1984, 1988) prolong educational focal point on ethics of caring articulate on empathy as a teacher competence helps to set a solid ground for strengthening other important teaching features and professional development, such as caring, positivity, commitment and so on. In line with Noddings’ stance, Nieto (2006) also considers empathy of a teacher as a decisive element for effective teacher making.

Goleman (1995) incorporates leveraging diversity as one of the competencies within the domain of empathy. Especially in today's multicultural classroom settings, the application of empathy practice becomes an influential factor impacting on teacher's effective teaching. Recently, plenty of educational attention shed lights on cultural diversity and student differentiation based on their own needs. McAllister and Irvine's (2002) research indicates a set of empathetic actions, namely understanding other's position, caring, patience, being open-minded, respect and tolerance shall be attained by teachers in order to promote their optimal teaching performances on behalf of students' best interests.

2.2.4 Motivation

Motivation involves emotional tendency and how it facilitates one's attitude and action to achieve goals. Goleman (1995) suggests that the dimension of motivation comprises four competencies: achievement drive, commitment, initiative and optimism. Goetz and Hall (2013) define motivation as “the process underlying the initiation, control, maintenance, and evaluation of goal-oriented behaviors” (p. 59). They suggest good motivation in teachers indicates an important prerequisite for good classroom instruction and enhance teachers to moti-
vate children to learn and develop. Schunk and colleagues’ research (Schunk et al., 2008) also highlights the significance of teacher motivation and indicates its positive influence on students.

Numerous researches have explored the relationship between teacher motivation and teacher's self-efficacy expectation, in regard to teacher's own perceived ability of mastering pedagogical challenges (Goetz & Hall, 2013). These researches suggest that teachers with higher motivation would have higher self-efficacy expectations among teachers. As a result, it will have impacts on creating optimal classroom climate in general. Furthermore, research findings indicate that the teacher motivation influences positively on students' autonomy, learning motivation and goal achievements (2013). Jacobs and Gross (2014) also point out that teachers needs to have the longing and ambitions to convey enthusiasm and interests to students in order to motivate them to learn. Therefore, effective teachers not only need to maintain their own motivation at work at a relatively high level but also need to be able to stimulate students’ learning motivation. Presumably, teachers with lower motivation at work indicate low level of commitment in the profession, where it directly impacts the quality of teaching and learning outcome of students.

2.2.5 Social skills

Social skills are the last component of Goleman's emotional intelligence model (1995). This component involves a wide range of social competencies, namely influence, communication, conflict management, leadership, change catalyst, building bonds, collaboration and cooperation, and team capabilities. According to Goleman, these competencies represent how effectively and successfully an individual is capable of interacting and collaborating with others, and hopes to make positive impacts on other individuals and their relationships. In terms of teachers, this group of social competencies can represent the fabrication of a favorable teacher–student relationship, as well as other social relationships a teacher may get involved with relating to teaching profession.

As Anderman and Klassen (2016) argue positive teacher-student relationship is important and multifaceted, which is beneficial for both the teacher and the students' emotional and educational outcomes. Firstly, they imply that the teacher-student relationship is the bridge to construct and maintain an interpersonal connection. Secondly, this relationship is encouraging and fostering a positive classroom atmosphere, while providing a safe and friendly learning
environment for students. Finally, the teacher-student relationship is an important medium in building and reinforcing societal norms, values, and teacher's expectations to students.
3 Methodology

As my intention and anticipation was to learn about teachers' stories in order to explore the deeper meanings underneath their experience, I found narrative inquiry as a methodology well suited for my research purpose. Narrative inquiry offered a pathway for these teachers to illustrate their ways of knowing by sharing their perceptions of emotional competencies relating to their professional life. Employing narrative inquiry in my research helped me to understand teacher participants' insights into their emotions and how their experiences had formed their perceptions of emotions/emotional competencies in teaching practice. Inasmuch, I consider it is necessary to discuss narrative inquiry as methodology to be used, so that my research will be presented and seen from a more explicit ontological and epistemological stance.

3.1 Narrative inquiry

When we talk about narrative, spontaneously ‘stories’ come to our mind – stories that we are told or stories that we may tell. Storytelling have been heritage of human history and culture. As an Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce's saying, ‘where there is no narrative, there is no history’ (Altman, 2008, p. 1). Stories must convey certain meanings, values or knowledge which are significant somehow for human life, for both the narrator and also for those to be told. We intend to pass on and transmit these meaningful stories and the knowledge embedded within from one generation to next, from one to another. Polkinghorne (1988) pointed out that psychologists tended to look into people's individual stories by the 1950's, in terms of individual's perception and memory, which is the cognitive aspect. And then psychologists have widened their research interest while acknowledging these stories are constructed literally on social contexts, as Bold (2012, p.17) inserts that gradually historians and theologians also started to employ narrative to describe, understand and explain human activity.

At the beginning of eighties, narrative inquiry as a research methodology has finally been recognized as a positive resource for inquiry by scholars within interdisciplinary particularly in the fields of human and natural sciences (Kim, 2016, p. 5), as well as in social sciences later (Clandinin, 2006). According to Connelly and Clandinin (2006, p. 45), Jerome Bruner refers narrative as a mode of knowing about the lived story or experience, whereas a narrator means the one who knows and tell about the knowing. They have also related the research methodological turn to narrative ways of thinking about experience, an articulation is made
upon that narrative may be seen as both phenomena and research method (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990). The central to narrative inquiry is to seek for the significance and beliefs for these participants' stories. Looking into the underlying meaning of the story shall offer us a better understanding to the experience. As Elbaz-Luwisch (2005) puts it, narrative inquiry is to discuss about the particular in ways that lead to enrich understanding of wider issues.

Narrative inquiry as a methodology has become prominent in the educational discipline during the last decade (Kim, 2016, p. 18). Teachers’ stories and their experiences have provided useful insights in understanding various educational issues. Connely and Clandinin (1990) indicate that narrative inquiry in educational field, precisely in classroom context is about studying the experiences and stories that are shared and socially constructed together by both teachers and learners. In other words, narrative inquiry is seen to be effective and affective to conduct in regard to study teachers' and students' lived experiences. By shedding lights on teachers' stories as to create more articulated educational discourses, it will hopefully empower teachers to reflect on their own experiences and develop ongoing professional growth.

3.2 Philosophical Assumptions of Narrative Inquiry

Freeman (2015) argues that narrative is a mode of understanding and one of the ideal ways to understand human life:

‘In exploring the realm of real-life human affairs, in academic psychology and well beyond, narrative is, arguably, the most natural and appropriate means available. This is most obviously so in the big story context, when we want to know about the movement of individuals' lives over some significant span of time. But the necessity of narrative is in no way limited to big stories. Its significance is not limited to matters of method, either. For narrative, it turns out, is of great and enduring theoretical significance as well.’

Through Freeman's lens of looking at narrative, I consider teachers’ stories become the research content under study, so as the purpose is to seek for the essence of story and through it to understand holistically participants’ experiences. Therefore, I acknowledged that narrative inquiry is one methodology that best fit this research. Barkhuizen (2013) defines narrative knowing as both cognitive and social activity, it comprises meaning making, learning or knowledge construction that occur during narrative research activities such as obtaining narratives, analyzing narratives data, reporting the findings and consuming the research. This set of research actions involves both researcher and participants’ sense making of the told stories as
well as reshaping and reflections upon. This series of actions is a cognitive process constructed on the foundation of social interactions employed by all research parties. Thus, narrative knowing is recognized for its nature of fluidity (Barkhuizen, 2013), the conception of constant, stable, permanent and unchallengeable shall be avoided when we encounter narrative knowledge.

As illustrated earlier, narrative inquiry literally emerges out of a close collaborative relationship between researcher and participants. Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 20) define narrative inquiry as ‘a way of understanding experience. It is collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus’ based on Dewey’s theory of experience. In order to make their statement explicit, a three-dimensional narrative inquiry space has been developed and derived from Dewey's theory of experience (Clandinin, 2006), which includes interaction (personal and social), continuity (past, present, future) and place (situation). Cresswell (2013, p. 36) concludes the epistemological belief within interpretivism framework as a ‘reality co-constructed between the researcher and the researched and shaped by individual experiences’. As Clandinin (2006, p. 47) asserts, ‘narrative inquirers cannot bracket themselves out of the inquiry but rather need to find ways to inquire into participants’ experiences, their own experiences as well as the co-constructed experiences developed through the relational inquiry process'. That is, as soon as a narrative inquiry starts, both researcher's and participants' stories from social, cultural and institutional contexts are collaborating and interweaving together to retell the stories. In other words, all parties engage within the research process may influence on the research outcome, meanwhile research readers may create various meaning making for the research. Do and Schellert (2004) describe emotions as ‘intense, short-lived active states’, this could explain why participants may reflect on their experiences on the interview differently than the time when the event happened. Furthermore, when researcher revisits and studies about narrative data, interpretation made for the research may be changed as well. Diverse values, backgrounds and life experiences of any party involved with the research can be contributed to these possible changes.

Canagarajah (2015) inserts that the subjectivity of the researcher plays an influential role during any research projects. Researcher's values, ideologies, life experience, personal stance and knowledge of the researched contents have great impact on how the research is conducted and how findings are interpreted. It is recommended to researchers that these issues of subjectivity – who I am, my stance on the research topic, brief information of the participants and their
justification shall be made explicit throughout the research body implied within theoretical framework, methodology as well as the findings. Participants render subjective meanings for their actions and their experiences. As Reissman (1993) points out it is essential to notice the multilayered meanings in the stories and the context where the stories are situated in. Besides, it is very important for researcher and readers to bear in mind that a personal story is not necessarily mirroring what exactly happened. Each person who physically experiences the same event will perceive and tell a slightly different version of the story depending on narrator's social cultural backgrounds, how they make sense of the event in consideration of their previous life experiences (Bold, 2012, p. 18). However, commonalities may be found within these stories. Thus, meanings for these actions are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views (Creswell, 2013, p. 24). In line with Corbetta’s view, Creswell also concludes ontological belief within social constructivism / interpretivism as such,

‘Multiple realities are constructed through our lived experiences and interactions with others’ (2013, p. 36). Participant's narrative is accountable for the primary and subjective information researcher would obtain as data. Narrative researcher shall also attempt to be positioned and empathized from participants’ perspectives as to better understand participants’ views of situation and stories appear. Instead of trying to be ‘objective’ and maintaining distant from participants in the field, researcher shall recognize both participants’ and researcher’s historical, cultural and social settings where the narrative (told stories and experiences) and narrative research process is situated. This is the main key for understanding and interpreting reliable insights for narrative inquiry (Creswell, 2013, p. 25).

My research interest was to hear in-service teachers’ voices, to find out how they personally experience and understand their emotions, as well as possible emotional impacts on their professional and personal life. I would like to discover these teachers’ meaning making of their experiences and the values that shape them (Warren & Karner, 2010). Elbaz’s (2005) book about teacher’s storytelling reveals that by conducting narrative research could attempt to draw our attention to wider concern of teacher’s profession. To achieve these aims, doing a narrative research by giving teachers the stage to tell their stories that are meaningful for them is considered to be appropriate to me. Bold (2012) suggests researchers tend to choose to interview people when they are interested to learn about participant’s life experience, emotions and thoughts, meanwhile conversational and dialogue narratives tend to offer participant opportunity to share their perceptions, ideas and values. Therefore, conducting theme interviews with open-ended questions seems to fit for my research purpose. As discussed in the previous
sections, I fully acknowledge the collaborative relationship between myself as a researcher and participants for co-creating this thesis. Noaks and Wincup (2004) also emphasize such relationship starts from the interview, it requires flexibility, rapport with participants and active listening.

3.3 Data Collection

This research was carried out in one of the cities in Northern Finland. I had a clear vision of looking for classroom teacher participants for this research, I also had a strong interest to include teachers from various classroom environments and teaching experiences. I was lucky enough to be able to reach out to three Finnish female classroom teachers who are currently positioned in different phases of their teaching career in different environments. One of these three participants was a novice teacher while the other two have been dedicated in teaching for over 15 years. Their working environments included a regular Finnish primary classroom, an international school primary classroom and an upper grade preparatory classroom. I thought the similarities and diversities in these teachers themselves and their classroom environments would make this research more revealing. I was curious to find out how similar and different emotional experiences and understanding these classroom teachers with varied teaching experience would share.

I conveyed face to face theme interviews with three teachers by asking ‘big’ open-ended questions, which induce teachers to tell about their stories or an interlude. Goleman’s five-dimensional construct of emotional intelligence is the back bone of this theoretical framework. I thought it would be appropriate and rather reasonable to design my leading open-ended questions for the interviews based on the various emotional dimensions from Goleman’s EI construct. I expected these questions enable to evoke teachers’ reflections on their emotional experiences in their work. I proposed big questions and encouraged teachers to tell their stories. I engaged myself into the conversation to the fullest by showing them my interest and attempting to understand from their point of views, listening carefully and asking them to clarify on issues. Teachers shall answer to these questions with their natural reflections and thoughts in relation to their emotional experiences. If teachers’ narratives do not happen spontaneously, I would had applied my supporting questions to serve as a guideline and ensured our interview moving forward.
All interviews took place in comfortable, secure and peaceful environments of teachers’ own choice. One of the interviews was conducted at a teacher’s home, the other two interviews were conducted at schools – one in a teacher’s own classroom, another in a reserved meeting room. We had very relaxing and trustworthy interviews with these teachers where they burst into laughers, expressing their back-then anger emotions or tearful scenario without any hesitation, even at the beginning of our conversations. A favorable environment ensures teachers feel easy and safe to share their personal experiences particularly in terms of emotional issues, a peaceful environment minimizes the chance of being disturbed or influence on the quality of audio recording of the conversation (Kim, 2016). The language of all interviews was English. Each interview was fully audio recorded and lasted for about an hour, there are about 8 to 10 pages of transcription in English for one interview. Face-to-face interviews allowed me to observe also teachers’ nonverbal expressions, it gave me and the teachers opportunities to ask if there was something unclear, it also encouraged me to raise in-depth questions if the situation was appropriate. I had the opportunity of showing my interest and respect as a good listener verbally and nonverbally in order to diminish the distance between me and the interviewed teachers. These are certainly the benefits of conducting face-to-face interview compared to e.g. a participant’s written essay.

3.4 Data Analysis

The Holistic – Content Reading approach

Unlike traditional content analysis which dissects original story according to defined themes from a categorical perspective, I chose to work from a more holistic perspective in a content focused manner with each interview transcript. According to Lieblich (1998, p. 13), the holistic-content model of reading aims to examine each participant’s data individually, and to treat whether smaller or bigger stories as a whole, keeping the focal point on imploding content and the meanings emerging from the texts. Lieblich (1998, p. 62) suggests a set of guidelines for analyzing the data in such manner and I found this reading strategy rather useful in guiding me through the process of data analysis.

With a piece of open mind, I started by reading each transcript several times until I started grasping a general impression of the narrative. It was very important to keep my research interest and questions in mind, this facilitated my ‘content detection’ clear and focused. I kept reading the materials repeatedly and started to proceed coding the texts which ‘spoke’ to me.
ran the coding process many times so that I would not miss any important spots. Miles et al. (2014, p. 74) demonstrates various types of coding approaches to be applied in their work, I have used for example In vivo coding, process coding, emotion coding and so on during my coding process. Of course, not all coding approaches have a clear-cut. That means some contents can literally qualify to one or several approaches. For example, from this narrative transcript ‘It is very important that I need to be real, like I need to show my real emotions but then at the same time I am the adult here and I am working here so I can’t dump my emotions on the children, that they need to be safe’, I have coded it with ‘Role of profession restricts how to express emotions’. Also, I have coded the following transcript ‘I felt like so sad that it is not possible to smile or being in front of the class to carry on the day. So, I just noticed that and said to the students that I am not feeling well and write instructions on the board and do the quiet working to give myself some time to deal with sadness’ with ‘being aware and regulating own emotions’.

After the data coding procedure, I started forming a general impression (as dimension 1) from each teacher’s interview. Moving from general impression of each narrative, I continued to analyze the narrative content in a deeper level by looking for thematic aspects. In order to investigate on these themes, I organized my previously quoted codes into one document and then put them into different categories. At this stage, there were approximately 15 to 20 categories emerging from the codes. Here is an example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional awareness and regulation</td>
<td>Be aware and regulates emotions at work x2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional role restricted how to express own emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Impulsive as a result of being offended surprisingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aware of own emotions and feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Need time to deal with sadness or hard feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify certain emotion and think about how to deal with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowing yourself is fundamental for regulating emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stays emotionally aware and keep good distance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very cautious about own feeling and ready to balance it out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive feeling</td>
<td>The joy of rewarding as the first emotional teaching experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interacting with students are joyful and happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching is enjoyable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching is meaningful and rewarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Love for teaching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next, I narrowed these categories down and merged them into larger themes which constituted major findings of the narrative (as dimension 2). This process has provided me with various thematic findings based on the content foci of each transcript. For example, I have concluded the categories of ‘Relationship with student’, ‘Coping with parents’ and ‘Colleague support’ into a theme finding of ‘Social relationships’. In this research, the two-dimensional examination of narrative not only offers us an opportunity to look at how each teacher generally perceives the role of emotion from a holistic perspective, but also provides us with zoom-in lenses to learn deeper about their emotional experiences and emotional impacts at work, sometimes these influences on their personal life as well.
4 Findings

4.1 Peppi

4.1.1 A job filled with emotions

Peppi is the youngest among the teachers I interviewed. She just graduated a while ago from university as both classroom teacher and music subject teacher. She had teaching experience of one semester in a combined class of 48 pupils, where she worked closely together with her co-teacher. She also had some previous teaching experiences in various places as a substitute teacher and other work experience in a totally different profession.

Peppi acknowledged that her expectation of difficult emotions related to teaching actually occurred to be different than she thought of. For example, while she was still a pre-service teacher, she was most anxious about encountering children with difficulties or dealing with parents. Once Peppi started working in the classroom, she quickly realized the difficult emotion that caught her out of guard turned out to be frustration – frustration that came along with shock and surprise, which she did not expect at all.

‘When I was actually in the classroom, then the feelings of frustrations they came as a shock first, why am I feeling this now? Like why this is happening to me and what I am going to do with this?’

‘When you know that some students are struggling and you don’t know how to help them, or you are trying but it doesn’t work’.

As Peppi recalled, frustration first came to her as a surprise indeed. They seemed to derive mainly from searching resolutions and resources for students with difficulties in learning or facing other challenges. Frustration was most described as a negative emotion in Peppi’s narrative, when she was depicting her own feeling in classroom as well as her helplessness towards the issue of limited resources to offer her students who were in need of extra support. To her another surprise, she came to realize the role of teacher was not simply about teaching school subjects as many student teachers would imagine, but it is more about being a third parent and upbringing students holistically. In line with her frustration, Peppi was showing her worry for big classes these days in various stage of her sharing. This also represented her
caring attitude and empathy for students, especially those who should receive sufficient amount of attention and help for their individual needs.

Although Peppi concedes that ‘usually the strong feelings are negative’, she also gained plenty of positive emotional experience in her work. Her happiness and joy took place when students were working well together, when they had achieved something individually or as an unity. Also, when some students were pleased and eager to share their personal life with her so that she would know she was being liked. Another big part of satisfaction from work for Peppi was her functional relationship with colleagues and the great support she received from them. Inevitably, such positive relationship and experience was extremely helpful and valuable for Peppi. Her narrative exemplifies how support means a great deal for a freshly graduated novice teacher, such healthy and close colleague relationship literally supported and balanced Peppi in her professional and personal life. Despite the positive influences of colleague support, I detected signs of anxiety of Peppi’s ‘being alone’ between the lines. This can be seen through her relief of having a co-teacher who she worked closely together and a supporting team behind. But her anxiety seemed to remain because her next teaching position will be working as a music subject teacher ‘alone’ in a new school. Furthermore, Peppi recognized the importance of constructing positive relationship with her students as a big part of the profession, which enhances teaching outcome in a wider sense. Her social relationships with colleagues, students and parents will be discussed further as one of the major theme findings in the next part of analysis.

Even though Peppi was a novice teacher with short teaching experience, her narrative mirrored her competencies in reflecting both emotionally and practically. She was able to look back and reflect in her actions in order to achieve better performance in the future. She acknowledged that regulating emotions and being aware of them was vital in teaching. Keeping herself motivated at work and ability of motivating her students are equally important. Moreover, Peppi had a clear understanding of teacher wellbeing that should be taken well care of in teaching profession.

4.1.2 Major themes

The following five themes were discovered from Peppi’s narrative. They can be seen in various stages throughout the whole interview.
1) Emotional self-awareness and self-regulation

Peppi’s narrative tended to imply she is aware of her emotions and recognized the needs of identifying and regulating emotions in professional manner accordingly:

‘If you get to know yourself better … maybe you cope with them easier. They don’t surprise you and you don’t act as rashly. Like I realized that I am feeling frustrated, so I need to take a deep breath or then I am going to explode.’

‘I think you feel a lot of emotions during the day. Like analyzing your feelings might help you working with kids better, especially feelings of frustration and even anger sometimes’.

She noted that knowing herself is fundamental – to be able to be aware and identify her own emotions, so as to deal with these emotions properly and professionally. Peppi went on to exemplify if she had a bad day, she would be usually more conscious about her own feelings so that she would not outburst easily and pour it onto students unprofessionally. Apparently, she knew herself well enough. There was strategy or small goals that she would apply to get through those more emotional days. For example, doing easier tasks with students, sharing with colleagues at coffee break or simply having some peaceful time on her own. Although Peppi was new teacher and held a slightly different perception of emotion earlier, her narrative indicated her understanding of the significance of emotion from her teaching experience so far.

2) Reflecting emotions

‘I think it is always good to reflect your things all the time so maybe the things that you wouldn’t have wanted, next time it will not happen in the similar situation’.

Peppi found teaching is a job filled with emotions. She learnt that emotions play a big part in her work soon after her teaching career had started. She realized that she needed to be competent in emotional management. Reflective thinking reminded her to reflect on her emotions and actions at work. She reflected on her emotional experience constantly and afterwards, in order to evaluate her own actions. For instance, identifying her own emotions, taking a deep breath instead of out bursting inappropriate words at a critical moment, creating strategy and goals to survive through an emotional day, these are literally the knowledge she learns from her emotional experience through reflective thinking. Peppi’s story suggests that being reflective on emotions and actions is an important skill for a teacher – not only reflecting on her
own emotions constantly but also reflecting on her teaching, reflection is a key to improve and enhance better performance later on.

3) **Motivation**

Motivation in Peppi’s narrative can be seen mainly in her engagement of motivating students.

‘Sometimes students can work on their own interest presentations which they like a lot. For example, these boys were working on the trampoline video to show the class. Usually these boys were athletes and like working off the desk, or having troubles focusing…but then now it is their time to shine.’

‘Instead of pointing out the bad in them, using positive reinforcement worked quite well actually. Each Friday students appear to have this skill will be announced and they were very happy.’

Peppi thought it was essential to know the students personally, particularly about their interests and strength in order to boost their motivation and energy level in concentration and learning in general. Positive experience that Peppi gained in relation to joy and rewarding feeling from students’ fruitful learning outcome turned into one of the greatest motivations for her to work. Especially when Peppi witnessed her students’ development in learning and personal growth, she knew then she had done something right to empower her students. When she was having a hard time at work, she would set a step-to-step small goal for motivating herself to overcome the day.

4) **Importance of social relationships**

Peppi’s view about social relationships appeared to be the largest part among the findings of major themes. Findings emerged from this theme were demonstrated in light of her relationships with colleagues, acquaintance with students and relationship with the parents. Furthermore, it revealed how Peppi perceived this set of relationships as a big part of her profession.

*Relationships with colleagues and the parents*

Peppi expected ‘more difficult situations’ in colleague relationships but it turned out to be ‘very good working environment, that surprised me positively because I thought it might be harder’. Even though she notices that teachers have different interests and perspectives towards teaching within the team, they do share the ‘same attitudes and values towards working’ which constitutes a ‘functioning group’ that fills with similarities and diversities. Peppi
explicitly shows how much she enjoys this functioning and harmony relationship with colleagues in different stages of her narrative:

‘I had a partner as two teachers in the classroom, we had 48 kids. So that helped a lot you know, because you two were carrying the burdens so that we could plan together and supported each other and like when there were problems we could discuss them, I think emotionally that was very valuable for me’.

‘Colleague support is important like exchanging ideas and projects, so that I wouldn’t feel alone being there, never. I always have somebody to talk with and I was new there, they were eager to help and let me in and be part of the group, it was very easy to go there’.

I sensed Peppi’s high appreciation of the supports she gained from her colleagues as a novice teacher. She felt warmly welcomed and well taken as a new community member. It was obvious that Peppi succeeded in finding her place and building a close and solid relationship with others. She noted between the lines this friendly working environment was a big part of her personal motivation to work, in terms of valuable emotional support. In particular, the emotions of anxiety and frustration emerged from work.

‘And you have parents that are concerned, well they are the easier parents because they are also concerned. But when you have the parents that they don’t see the problems, they don’t want to take responsibilities or they don’t care, that’s maybe even harder. But also with the parents that care, then you are all feeling this huge helplessness. And you were like what to do with this kid, but we have tried this this and this, what more can we do.’

‘…you do it as a person. Even though you have this role of teacher, at least I tried to be a person more than THE TEACHER for the pupils and parents. I would like to be nice and easy to talk to, less hard to dislike.’

Peppi also described parents were very different and they involved in various fashions. However, their involvement with her work was relevantly limited according to her experience. Parents’ involvement usually refers to cooperation and communication with the teacher in regard to student’s school issues. Peppi suggested that good communication with parents require empathy and respect, making yourself approachable for the parents may lead to effective problem solution for students.
Peppi managed to analyze there were several kinds of relationships she owned with her students on various levels.

‘With some (students) I have better they came to talk to me during breaks or after class or during class wanted to share their weekends.’

‘The ones that are really extrovert, they come to talk to you and they like you, that they want to share with you about their weekend their pets and puppies.’

‘……or we have this quite formal relationship that they didn’t want to share much but they didn’t see me as a thread or anything. They do their homework and they don’t have any problems, those are the one that we don’t know that much.’

‘Some are having more problems, they don’t see me as an enemy but someone maybe not try to not change them but who like......because they also like know that they are struggling, or they have different kinds of problems so they might have some small confrontational attitudes towards me.’

The first kind of relationship was a neutral but without much social interactions involved, these students were more introvert and doing alright with their studies. The second kind was a closer relationship with extrovert students who were eager to share their personal life. Peppi knew these students the best as they were easier to be acquaint and build social bonding with. The third kind were involved with a bit of confrontational attitude from the students. They were the students struggle with school issues and it was hard to build relationship with them on personal level. Peppi was able to reflect and recognize the significance of knowing her students are beneficial, as for reading students’ verbal and nonverbal behaviors.

‘It was usually quite easy to read them. If they are just talking to each other, like something totally they were not supposed to, then you know ok this doesn’t interest them. If they are focused on the tasks, also talking to each other but in a different way that talking about their tasks but not their horses (laughter). But you can see their interests, or they are into it or not.’

Being able to identify students’ verbal and nonverbal languages enhanced Peppi to evaluate the quality of the lesson – she received signals from her students’ spoken and body languages which indicating their level of engagement. This signals suggested her whether there was a need to change the lesson plan or if something did not work in the class. Sufficient acquaintance with her students helped her to tailor the lesson and teaching method based on students’
needs and interests, navigated her to apply suitable reinforcement in students’ learning and growth in their wellbeing.

Furthermore, she emphasized the importance and aim to be likable and approachable as a person for both pupils and parents:

‘You do it as a person. Even though you have this role of teacher, at least I tried to be a person more than THE TEACHER for the students and parents. I would like to be nice and easy to talk to, less hard to be dislike……you want to understand more why the students do something. If you have your emotions with you then you are like sensible to what’s going on in the class.’

Peppi’s narrative mirrored her analysis and deep thinking on the matter of teacher-student relationship, I also discovered her true understanding and strong will to be acquainting with her students in order to build a positive relationship with them.

5) Teacher wellbeing

Peppi found it difficult to separate or actually leave the emotions that took place at work behind from her personal life, as she

‘Feel a lot of emotions during the day, especially feelings of frustrations and even anger sometimes’.

‘Sometimes there were like this emotion of joy and like I succeeded in something. Well also this frustration that I mentioned already that maybe it's the hardest emotion there. Also the sadness when you know that some students were struggling and then you don’t know how to help them, or you are trying but it doesn’t work.’

‘I’d like to do everything concerns work at school…When I go home I get to spend time with my family. I think that’s important for the wellbeing of the teacher, that you know when to stop and don’t spend whole evenings planning and worrying about your pupils.’

In her narrative, she exemplified further some situations of work-related conversations with her colleagues stretched out to the evenings and sometimes even through the weekend at home. However, she gradually learnt about maintaining good balance between professional and personal life was the essential issue to be taken care of. She suggested by having her own hobbies, spending quality time with family and friends can be an effective method of balancing teacher’s work and their wellbeing for healthy life style. At least, this worked very well for her.
4.2 Reetta

4.2.1 Knowing herself and owning her emotions

Reetta was an experienced classroom teacher from an international school in Finland, who had teaching experience of fifteen years. Before she became a classroom teacher, she was teaching piano in the evenings from time to time. As she clearly recalled, the inspiration for her to become a formal teacher came from the rewarding feelings from piano teaching and the joy of seeing her students learnt. Her teaching career officially started at a Finnish school in one of the Baltic countries, after teaching there for four years she started teaching in the current international school till now.

During our interview, I got the impression of Reetta owning a deep understanding of her emotions. She saw the significance of emotions and wellbeing in terms of her. She remarked that as she was teaching with her whole authentic personality, her job has a deeply involved with emotions constantly. She came to understand that emotion was a weighty element in relation to teaching profession even though she held a different perception at the beginning of her career. She did not realize to pause a moment to think about her emotions as an issue, not emotions in relation to work at least. Reetta demonstrated through her narrative about her ability of regulating emotions and adapting herself in various environments. She emphasized that the foundation for her to manage emotions in an appropriate manner is to identify her own emotions first. Reetta was competent in easing her emotional status in a stressful situation – this was something that she had practiced, learnt and reflected from her emotional journey along her professional and personal life. She liked to be reflective and learn from her own experience in order to improve future performance.

'Students' learning takes place based on relationship......the more time you spend with your own class, the better it is, to really know them and you get to enjoy them more.'

Reetta considered relationships to be a big part of her profession. Her relationship with students is essential and vital as a majority part of her job. In her opinion, spending time with her students was the best investment for building up good teacher-student relationship in. She also revealed that relationships with the parents and her colleagues were in fact supporting the relationships created in the classroom – her relationship with each of the student. Intensive teacher-student relationship has turned Reetta’s teaching very emotional and personal, that
was why she considered having good breaks during an academic year was a must for teachers to maintain their wellbeing. Her relationship with the parents were indeed limited, especially when things were going well. Gaining trust from the parents would enhance good communication and problem solving. Reetta deeply enjoyed being in her wonderful working environment. She received emotional support and supports in work-related issues. Meanwhile, she was also able to offer her support for other colleagues when it was needed. Hence, collegial support is emotionally important for all teachers in Reetta’s perspective.

4.2.2 Major themes

1) Knowing yourself, emotional awareness and regulation

‘Identify the signs of yourself getting angry or frustrated so that you know that now you need to do something and give yourself a break’.

‘When I was unable to teach in front of the class because of the affection of some bad news, I would change her lesson plan and have the students do quiet working to give myself some time to deal with the sadness’.

Reetta found a big variety of emotions were engaged in teaching when she was doing her job ‘with her whole personality’. It was essential for her to be aware of her own professional role in the class in order to express her emotions professionally, ‘I am the adult here so I can’t dump all my emotions on the children, they need to feel safe’. She emphasized continuously that her emotions were needed to be regulated. Apparently, it is important for teachers to be able to identify their emotions and have a deep understanding of themselves.

Reetta was able to identify and regulate her own emotions in an emotional or stressful situation, in order to prevent strong and negative emotions from taking her over.

‘Sometimes I notice that I’ve things start building up that I start thinking about the student's case in bed or night time when I wake up, I might say to my husband that is there chance that we could go out of town for a weekend to cut it, somehow just need to go out of the cycle and even maybe one evening you do something totally different and it might help you to get out of the worrying cycle’.

In addition, Reetta exemplified how she regulated her emotional status from ‘home worry’ and ‘school worry’ by relocating herself physically and engaging herself with positive thinking. When the physical environment changed from school to home, she attempted to forget
the school worry and focus on home being. Once Reetta became aware of school worry starting to take over her mind, she immediately reacted to ease her stress. There were numerous evidences from the interview indicated that Reetta not only knew adequately about herself and her emotions, but also she had the profound recognition of teacher wellbeing.

2) Reflective on emotions

Although at the present time Reetta acknowledged the significant role of emotion in her work, she used to hold a rather different stance to look at emotion as an issue:

‘At the very beginning when I was a teacher, I didn’t even stop to think about it (emotions) much. I think the more experience I have the more I am aware of the emotions play a part and I would be more conscious to set goals for myself. Ok in this situation, I need to practice dealing with my emotions.’

Reetta’s constant reflections on emotions and teaching experiences helped her to develop as a teacher and entail better performance. The first episode she shared in our interview was a confrontational situation that happened in the class. Reetta was being called as a racist by a student whom she gave a consequence for not doing a task he was supposed to do. She was deeply offended by this student’s act and as a result, she resolved the whole situation in front of the class in other students’ presences. When the emotional situation was over, Reetta was reflecting on her feelings and the whole event. She made a conclusion about herself being too impulsive to handle the situation because of the ridiculous accusation she got:

‘I didn’t even think about (racism) so I got really personally offended…I really snapped and gave him a lesson in front of the whole class and later on I reflected on that, maybe it would have been better to calm down and do that talking outside the class but not in front of the class. We are not perfect, we make this kind of mistake, like that time I was not able to control my anger’.

Apparently, Reetta analyzed the event, her emotions and actions in a deeper way from different perspectives. From this confrontational event, she learnt that when countering with the emotion of anger, it would be better to take a moment and have a second thought of how to react instead of acting impulsively. Reetta’s actual experience facilitated her to learn more about herself and her emotions. Constant reflection on experiences guided her through the journey of gaining the competencies of emotional awareness and regulation.
3) **Motivation**

Reetta’s motivation for work came from her positive mind state and her own passion for teaching. She found practicing positive thinking very helpful as it encouraged her to focus on the bright side whenever the sign of worry came along:

‘The last few years I have been practicing a lot like being grateful and positive thinking that even though in the morning I would feel like I don’t want this and there is something worry me, I’ll try to focus on the positive’.

This mind-set promoted her to retain positive attitude and stay open-minded to various situations and emotional events. Also, Reetta experienced ‘lots of happiness and joy’ while having personal interactions with her students and the ‘joy of having them learn’ when seeing students making progress in learning:

‘I think it is a very rewarding job. Sometimes when you work with a student for one and half year who is struggling a lot, you are doing a lot of work for that and then you started to see it is paying off, that's really rewarding and you feel like this is worth doing it and you can make a difference.’

Thus, she saw teaching not merely being the joy of action but in fact it was meaningful for her and the students. She enjoyed the rewarding feeling of having students learnt, particularly in some challenging cases. These positive feelings she gained from work have influenced greatly on her motivation to work.

'In this job you can always develop yourself more......you can always do things better and differently and try out things, read new studies, so there is always a chance to develop, so that's important keep motivated.'

Reetta owned a vision for continuous self-development, she liked about the idea of teaching allowing her to conduct on-going professional development even inside her own classroom. Furthermore, the harmonious collegial relationships created a nice working atmosphere which had also become one of Reetta's biggest motivations to come and devote herself to work to the fullest.
4) Social relationships

Collegial relationships

Reetta's close relationship with her colleagues did not only serve as one of her motivations, it also served her as the resource of support in terms of work, ‘If you have a problem or you need someone to help, it is always easy to go and ask. There is also the basic respect as well’. When she had a bad day, she could go to the staff room and get some silly laughter with other teachers. This collegial relationship had been built on a solid and supportive base, as she was not ready to risk that for changing to another school because ‘the biggest thing has been the colleagues’. She also mentioned that sharing and listening shall be an optimal method to receive and offer support among colleagues.

‘With my closest, my buddy teacher we share a lot of things. But this year especially we've been working so many years together that is getting a little bit tiring so I clearly need a change. With her it is sometimes like a little bit too much of sharing, too much of her problem coming to me, so sometimes it can get a little bit too close and it starts burdening you.’

‘It is good and of course when we share the same working place we understand exactly what the other is exactly talking about. Of course, there is that danger that we get into too much each other’s world and take the other's emotions as well and get angry or frustrated on behalf of others.’

Apparently, Reetta shared a lot with her buddy teacher and her husband about work issues, however, too much of sharing and involvement with other's burdens can be sometimes problematic too. As she had noticed, emotions are easily contagious. Collegial support is essential and beneficial for teachers, but without an appropriate limit or boundary, it can turn into negative effect for you and for others. So, as she suggested, ‘that takes some practicing’ to find a good balance.

Relationship with students

‘I guess I could get pretty close with these students. One nice thing how I can see that they also want to have contact with me is that they often walk to my desk at the beginning of the school day or at the end of the lesson to tell their personal life like today I am going to do this or do you know yesterday I read this book or...they want to tell their things and that's really nice’.
Reetta acknowledged the essence of relationship with her students because ‘*all learning takes place in the classroom and it is based in their relationship*’. She recognized the importance of doing this job ‘*with whole authentic personality, to be who I need to be here*’. However, she emphasized several times in our interview that she was constantly aware of her professional role in the class and how to regulate and express her emotions appropriately in order to ensure her students feel safe in the environment. Thereby, she was happy to see the relationship they have successfully built up together as a foundation for good learning and teaching to take place.

Moreover, positive gestures from challenging students served as a great comfort and accomplishment for Reetta. She told in the interview that there was a boy who usually gave her lots of hard time in the class, but after a long summer holiday he literally ran through the whole football field to give her a big hug. Apparently, positive gesture as such kind confirmed that Reetta owned a positive and comfortable relationship with her students.

**Relationship with parents**

‘I notice that there are parents that approach me with small matters. I think that is very nice that we managed to build a relationship where they can actually contact me for small matters before they become too big’.

Relationship with parents does not play a major part in Reetta’s work, especially when things are going smoothly with students. She considered relationship with the parents as a supporting role for her relationship with the students and for their learning. Parents approaching Reetta even for ‘*small matters*’ appeared as the evidence of her success in gaining parents’ trust and their will to cooperate. Therefore, she was delighted to be able to maintain such reliable and functional relationship with the parent.

4) **Empathy**

The forth theme that emerged from Reetta’s interview was empathy, her ability of thinking and feeling from other’s perspective. In fact, Reetta’s empathy did not emerge distinctively as an individual theme from her interview. Instead, it was discovered from her frustration about overloaded school projects to students’ inappropriate behaviors.

‘frustration about not being able to give the most that I could for my students because of some not so necessary school projects and lack of resources, her worries of prominent concern nowa-
days about classes getting bigger and not able to provide sufficient personal attention for every student.’

Reetta empathized for her students. She was not satisfied about school taking part in too many unnecessary projects which took plenty of their time and energy. As a consequence, she could not have been able to use the best of her energy on what she found the most important for the students. Reetta was worried about classes growing bigger so that she cannot provide equal and sufficient amount of attention for each student, as she would really like to ‘keep track on how they all are doing’. She referred ‘teaching is a calling job’ for her which is ‘a big part of her life’. She threw her whole personality into her job – she was experiencing and handling her own emotions in the classroom and succeeded in staying in her professional role and ensuring her way of expressions and actions made her ‘students feel safe’. When Reetta sometimes was upset about certain inappropriate behavior that her students had conducted, she was feeling empathetic for them instead of angry at them. She would wonder what made them want to do behave in such way and how to resolve the problem. Reetta’s empathy turned into one of her strengths in managing social relationships and offered her multiple lenses to perceive things from different perspectives, particularly in understanding others.

5) Teacher wellbeing

Reetta was glad to receive emotional supports inside and outside of school, also from her family whenever it was needed. She was aware of teacher’s work can easily implicate with worrying too much about students on behalf of their parents, or colleague’s problem started to affect on her when there was too much sharing or discussing about work the whole evening with her husband. She knew the difficulty of separating work from personal life and managed to keep ‘good distance’ to maintain teacher wellbeing. Furthermore, Reetta pointed out that her relationship with each of her student was very intensive and personal as ‘they can really get under your skin and gets tiring’. For that, summer holiday and other breaks during the year is very vital for teachers to totally forget about work and throw everything behind. She clearly realized the danger of weighty emotional burden from work can easily lead to the risk of teacher burnout.
4.3 Saaga

4.3.1 Teaching is more than teaching

Saaga was another experienced teacher who had been teaching for about fifteen years. She used to work as a language teacher for students from various age groups. Now she was teaching in an upper grade preparatory class, where immigrant children were aged from 12–15. These students had arrived in Finland either alone or with their parents.

Saaga's job was involved with constant social relationships. She emphasized how important it was to maintain good relationships with her students. In particular, she regarded the need to know her students was essential because that enabled her to interpret students’ emotions and behaviors and the possible reason behind them. This advantage guided her to deliver and modify lessons with flexibility according to students’ physical and emotional needs. Knowing her students well was one thing, knowing about herself and reflected on her own emotions constantly was another. In order not to accidentally damage her students’ feelings, she attempted to be encouraging and express herself with awareness especially when coming across with some negative emotions. She did not seem to hesitate to exhibit her emotion of sadness in front of others by putting herself in other’s shoes, so her competence of empathizing was explored.

Saaga also considered herself as a guardian for her students rather than simply a teacher, because she saw her job was more than teaching the language or delivering lessons. Instead, her job was all about students’ upbringing. She naturally felt being responsible to look after her students because of some students’ backgrounds. She also hoped to bring in different elements of learning into her classroom, for example, encouraged students to work by applying different methods, advocated democracy by giving students choices, and developed their social skills and decent attitudes. Her interest in understanding students showed her urge to care. These aspects mirrored her view about the upbringing role that she possessed, she saw that teacher’s job is always more than teaching.

Saaga was keen on witnessing the outcome of her teaching work. However, she seemed to have a characteristic of being humble and did not always want to take credits from her student’s success. She chose to pursue another job as her ‘hobby’ which can offer a concrete outcome of her work – waitressing. She decided to gain her feeling of ‘successful achieve-
ment’ by doing these two jobs for balance. In addition to learning achievement, she found that a good solid relationship that had been successfully established between her and her students was very valuable and enjoyable.

4.3.2 Major themes

1) Teaching is emotional

As soon as our interview began, Saaga shared her thought about emotions in terms of teaching:

‘First of all, I would say that one of the reasons why teacher’s job is so tiring because they need to be socially aware all the time.....in my work, my emotions are there all the time. I would say it is even more than the regular class, of course there are also situations that you are dealing with quite big things there.’

Saaga revealed her view about the role of emotions in her work, by stating her work is intensively emotional constantly. Considering some of her students’ family backgrounds, she was dealing a lot with issues concerning students’ wellbeing and everyday life. She also enjoyed the feeling of rewarding – seeing some of the students’ achievement in learning, although she was being humble and modest about her personal contribution to teaching. Furthermore, she addressed that emotional and communicational competencies should be the core of teaching, by providing student teachers the possibilities to choose was missing from the current teacher education. In the interview she shared one recent example of an emotional situation with her students in the classroom about them crying over this students’ current problem and worries. She did not hesitate to show her emotions in tears in front of her students and at the same time, showing her emotions sensitively was her encouragement for her student to feel safe to express feelings and emotions if necessary.

‘I usually feel disappointed if we just talked about some issue a short while ago and then it happens repeatedly. And again, they are minor things. I am very blessed with bad memories. When I enter the classroom, I forgot what happened the previous day (laughter)’.

Since Saaga recognized the role of emotions in her job, she was aware of her emotions at times, including some negative emotions. Humor seemed to be one of the methods Saaga used
for regulating negative emotions. She implied that incorrect way of dealing with negative emotions is unhealthy and might also cause damage to students’ emotions without intention.

2) The role of teacher

‘Your job is really more like upbringing the children, way more than just teaching them’.

Saaga emphasized the word ‘upbringing’ to entitle her job. Meanwhile, she also addressed herself ‘as guidance’ since her job was ‘not just about teaching but everything else’. Students spent most of their time at school with Saaga during the day, and she felt that she was more responsible for many other things than simply teaching students the language. She saw her role for her students ‘crossing the line of just being a teacher and becoming something else, whether it is a mom, or a friend or co-walker’. One of her aims was to ‘prepare the students for the outside world’ by practicing and developing different skills and attitudes with respect, which was a prominent part of upbringing. To put it simple, she taught her students the language and subject studies, but she also took care of many study unrelated issues in her students’ everyday life. Therefore, Saaga and her students had successfully built a solid and valuable relationship by sharing their personal thoughts and emotions, by giving others comfort and support.

3) Motivation

So far Saaga had been contributing most of her career time to teaching. Her passion and faith in teaching profession derived from her motivation to work with her students as well as the impact of motivating her students.

‘There was this girl skiing with great fun and smiling. She was having fun. But her teacher was mocking on her skiing skill sarcastically’.

‘I think you should encourage the student. Teacher actually can really put you down with so tiny things unconsciously’.

She could still clearly remember this one scenario happened in a skiing lesson many years ago when she was doing her teaching practice, because of the unappropriated language used by the teacher. She fully disagreed with such act of putting down student and it could accidentally cause negative influence on students as consequence. In contrast, Saaga would have seen herself saying ‘Wow, look at her, she is trying’ in the exact same situation. In her opinion, teacher’s ability either to motivate or discourage surprisingly vigorous. She acknowledged the
power of motivating her own students by encouraging them with comforts and praises. She pointed out the need of maintaining students’ self-esteem and allowing them to work in their own pace, as well as facilitating them to work by applying various methods and finally inspiring them with different ideas.

Other than perceiving the implication and advantage of motivating students in terms of students learning and upbringing, Saaga also emphasized the importance of her own motivation to work in her narrative.

‘I think the best part about preparatory class or teaching special needs children, we always get to start from where they are......They get more out of it if we can differentiate. That is the most I love about being in the preparatory class’.

It was not difficult to see Saaga loving her job. It was her passion of teaching that kept her in this profession for such a long time. She expressed her joy in this job because her teaching can be personalized according to students’ own needs. The benefit of having a relatively small size preparatory class enabled her to make differentiation happen. Student’s own level and aims were the core for both teaching and learning, Saaga implied. She was happy to be able to tailor her teaching in her current job and looking forward to seeing the outcomes of the work both her and her students had contributed in. She found her job is valued and rewarding as she can help students on their personal level, and this was where Saaga’s major motivation was born for her teaching profession. She vividly saw the role of motivation she held for herself towards teaching as well as motivation she endowed for her students were both equally essential in teaching and learning.

4) Care and empathy

The most significant findings that appeared in Saaga’s narrative reflected explicitly on her kindness as a person: care and empathy. In preparatory class, some students’ backgrounds were quite different and sometimes even accompanied with traumatic experiences. I think this is one of the major differences in classroom context comparing with regular classrooms.

‘......Especially the ones that arrive (in Finland) on their own without their parents. Even though their personal instructor would be living there with them, they spend most of their time awake at school. Instructors there also have different shifts, they might not really get to see each other very often.’
‘Usually when we met with other preparatory class teachers, quite often we talk about the limits and boundaries - how far you can you. Now stop being a mom and go back to the teaching. Is it now the part belongs to the social workers?’

Saaga conceded to be the adult who literally her students spent most time of their day with. This heart-rending fact made her feel the urge and responsibility to care more for her students than just teaching the lesson. She was interested and asked students about their out-of-school life, for example their weekends and sleeps. She cared about their emotional wellbeing, whether they were feeling happy or blue. She also remanded them of different appointments such as going to the dentist.

Other than being a teacher for many, she was also a mother. Her motherhood instincts somehow advance her to care more. As a teacher and as a mother, she fully understood how much her action of caring could mean for her students. She offered to go with students to see school counselor and social worker because she knew her student would need her to be there and support her emotionally. She also made sure that students’ emotions and feelings would be exposed in safe places. Nevertheless, Saage tailored and conducted her lessons based on students’ emotional and mental states. She would not force anything to take place in her lesson just because it was a plan. She checked on students’ moods all the time in order to modify suitable activities in order to the get most out of the lesson. She attempted to look from students’ perspectives and understand them for the best interest of their learning and wellbeing.

5) Relationships with students and communication with colleagues

Relationship with students

As Saaga mentioned at the very beginning of the interview, social relationship particularly with her students was the essence of her work. Her teaching took place in space and time through the relationship that was built between Saaga and her students.

‘You not only need to see how every individual student’s mood is and (but also) how it affects as a group, how the group is doing. You need to be able to interpret different kinds of emotions and behaviors too. Also, you need to be curious and interested to know what is behind these actions and expressions verbally and nonverbally.’

‘Usually if I see the whole class is more or less tired and almost fall asleep, I would take a ball and pass it around, and name out things under certain topics. For example, sports or maths. So
that they get to activate their brain and body at the same time. Also, we can just stand up and so some physical movements.’

Saaga deeply recognized the importance of knowing her students well is beneficial, not only for lesson planning but also for modifying the lesson with flexibility at any time. Without knowing the students, teaching and learning can easily turn into a dull and aimless process. This showed further evidence of how strong and close relationship she had wanted to build up with her class. More importantly, how interested she was in understanding her students. Her stance towards teacher-student relationship implied that teacher’s will and interest to understand the students was the key to create a caring and adhesive relationship with them.

Furthermore, Saaga attended with her students to various meetings for providing them with trust and safety where students needed to discuss about challenges or sensitive issues with other people. She regarded these occasions were the crucial time when she could offer emotional support for her students. At the time being, these interactions had worked as a path of gaining trust and building relationship with them.

‘Some of them call me after a couple of years and telling about their life...it is so good to know that they always have someone to call back to’.

Saaga was always pleased to validate successful relationships with her students. She saw positive relationship with students did not always last for short period, it may have long lasting influence in students’ future life. Saaga expressed her joy and satisfaction as she shared such fruitful relationship with her students, which were substantially valuable and worthwhile.

**Relationship with colleagues**

However, Saaga saw her relationship with colleagues is rather distinctive comparing with what she had with her students.

‘I should be more active and it would be also nice to be asked from other teachers too. A two-way thing it is......I think we (with other class teachers) should take a minute together and discus about how things should be done.’

She described the nature of her job ‘**In this position I am like living on my own island**’. In my understanding Saaga’s job as a preparatory class teacher did not and had not so far involved much cooperation with other class teachers, she mostly did her planning and teaching on her own.
I could see Saaga’s will and wish to extend possible cooperation and communication with other colleagues. She yearned to develop further mutual understanding in respect of her students’ learning and integration into mainstream classrooms with other teachers. I could detect her frustration and struggle about getting colleagues onboard for achieving mutual understanding on providing what was needed for students who were attending integration lessons. Saaga’s collaborative relationship with her colleagues had not been one of the major elements for her work achievement, however, for me she was desperately hoping for some improvement someday.


5 Ethical issue and trustworthiness

Since researcher is positioned in the most decisive role in influencing the research process and outcome at all stages, ethical issues should be aware and taken into full consideration by the researcher throughout the whole research process. Ethical concern in research work is more than simply ticking a check list according to certain organization's ethical tenets, even though many of these ethical guidelines are useful, academic and critical (Bold, 2012, p. 52). Narrative research is conducted replying greatly on the relationship between the researcher and the researched, the research process is accomplished by the contribution and collaboration of both parties. Narrative research allows researcher to politely intrude into participant's private life and emotional world with permission and willingness. This indicates the negotiable relationship between the researcher and participant is built on trust, mutual respect, openness and empathy (Clandinin, 2007). Therefore, researcher has the responsibility to keep participant protected in terms of their privacy and also make sure that the findings do not have any harmful consequences for the participants. I have changed all the names of my participants into artificial names for the purpose of protecting teachers’ anonymity and confidentiality.

Issue of transparency is regarded as one of the most significant elements in validating the ethical degree in the narrative research. As Economic and Social Council (Bold, 2012) suggests participants shall be informed about the research purpose and use, research methods and possible implication or lasting effects draw by the interview process or research outcome in the future. Before conducting interviews, my participants had agreed and signed a consent form which states clearly about my research interest and purpose, the use of collected data including recorded tapes and its transcription, as well as participant's right to participate or withdraw from the research at any time. As an additional remark, it is also mentioned that participant's shared experience and emotions will not be evaluated or judged at any points. I regard this guarantee rather important for my participants, I attempted to ensure that my participants and I would have mutual understanding and respect for their personal sharing, I engaged to create this safe and opened atmosphere as I could for them to share with least worrying and reluctance. Having access to participants' life and emotional world in order to gain their meaningful stories and explore about the significance underneath is the essential and vital intention of my research.
Another aspect in terms of transparency is concerned about the role of the researcher. As a researcher, how do I influence the research process (Yow, 2006)? I have the responsibility to acknowledge and address on my subjective position and bias in this research. Connelly and Clandinin state (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 479) that in order to use narrative inquiry as methodology to study one’s experience or story, it is necessary for researcher to adopt a particular view of experience as phenomenon under study. Since narrative research is built on the contributions of researcher and participant, the stance of which researcher will take on determines considerably on how the stories are being pictured and interpreted. With this clarification on mind, it may help readers to examine and study the research with better understanding from researcher's view point. As a pre-service teacher and fresh researcher, I have articulated the significance of teacher's emotional intelligence based on Goleman's theoretical construct in teaching profession in my bachelor's thesis. From this previous research and learning process, I have come to the conclusion and subjective tendency stance that teacher's emotions and emotional competencies are playing a significant role in teaching profession. However, as I am not yet being an in-service teacher, this somehow holds me onto a more open-minded and objective position without judgmental intention to learn about teacher's own voices about their emotional experience.

As discussed earlier, narrative research is fluidity, it advocates pluralism, relativism, subjectivity through interpretation (Lieblich, 1998, p. 2). Opposite from positivistic paradigm, narrative research does not search for one absolute truth from human activity or experience. It allows interpretation to take place from various angles by various reader – the researcher or the research consumer. In line with Lieblich’s standpoint, Corbetta (2011) also asserts that there is no absolute single social reality, but there are multiple realities to be pursued depending on which perspective and context to take on. In the methodology chapter, I have explained why narrative approach would be the favorable choice to conduct this research. Moreover, elaboration on data analysis method and its process that I use is also clearly presented. All in all, trustworthiness of this narrative research is grounded on an abundant amount of justification and clarification throughout this study but primarily described in the methodology chapter.
6 Discussion

[Good teachers] are emotional, passionate beings who connect with their students and fill their work and their classes with pleasure, creativity, challenge and joy. (Hargreaves, 1994, p.835)

Apparently, classroom is an emotional place for teachers. Findings provide visible evidences to show teaching is more than delivering a lesson, teaching is an emotional labor involving intensive social interactions that take place between both teacher and the students. Teacher’s relationship with the parents and colleagues seem to function as a supporting role to enrich teacher-student relationship and promote teacher wellbeing.

Findings of this thesis indicate class teachers’ emotional experiences share a great deal in common in terms of their emotional perception. Solid evidence was discovered about teachers visualizing the critical role of emotions and the significance of obtaining a set of substantial emotional skills in teaching profession. I have looked deeper into these teachers’ emotional experiences and explored that their perception of emotions could be seen clearly in light of Goleman’s five-dimensional theoretical construct of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills. However, each teacher’s emotional experience and its perception have emphasized different weights among these dimensions. For example, Peppi was a relatively new teacher, she first seemed to be immersed by the sea of emotions, but she then quickly recognized the urge to pursuit skills in dealing with her emotions thanks to her competency in reflection. It seems to me that her emotional experience was exposed to Goleman’s theory of emotional intelligence with an even weight. Reetta’s long-term dedication in teaching unveils her strong ownership of self-understanding and self-regulation by continuous reflecting and practicing. As a result, she was able to describe her emotional experience and analyze the linkage among different emotional dimensions. In Saaga’s case, her emotional perception imploded greatly on her empathy and motivation towards student, as well as the trustworthy and intensive relationship that she had built up with her students.

These teachers had not taken their emotions into consideration as a prominent issue at the early stage of their teaching career. Soon after, they prompted to realize the need to attain and practice the must-have emotional competencies in order for them to perform better at work when encountering in an emotional event, to achieve double-minded perspective of empathy.
and caring for others, to use motivation to facilitate one’s attitude and action, and create positive relationship with others.

Teachers who tend to be emotionally self-aware, should have good self-understanding. They are able to acknowledge and identify their own emotional status, do not rashly get carried away by constantly changing feelings or impulse. They may be able to produce confident performance so as to ensure students with trust and security. They are also able to be reflective on what have been conducted and how to develop further.

Teachers who tend to be emotionally self-regulated should have good self-control skills, capable of thinking objectively before conducting action and do not allow emotional impulse to take over (Galler, 2015). They are ready to handle changing circumstances and apply innovative resolutions. Whenever encountering with a stressful occasion, they are more likely to be able to reappraise the situation, regain motivation and attention and then resume with corresponding effective actions.

Teachers who tend to be engaged with motivation, empathy and care, they should be open-minded and perform their work with high engagement and commitment. They are more emotionally understanding of others and capable of perceiving from others’ perspectives based on their individual need and concern, so that they can facilitate student’s attitude and actions. Teacher should also offer positive feedback for students. Teacher with high motivation to work may convey enthusiasm and interests onto students which may produce positive impact on the learning. High motivation in teachers can become prerequisite for good classroom atmosphere.

An iconic feature of teacher profession is the constant communication and interaction physically and emotionally with students (Galler, 2015). Teachers who tend to be socially competent may be influential, engaging to make positive impacts on students by showing as a role model both emotionally and behaviorally. They may be able to create a favorable relationship with students, also a safe and positive school environment for students to be. These are great advantages for students to achieve positive emotional and academic outcomes.

Furthermore, good cooperation and collaboration skills may support teachers to maintain good communicate with parents and colleagues. The capability of working well with others may be advanced for establishing a reciprocal relationship, in order to maximize not only the teachers' teaching quality but also the students’ academic and emotional learning out-comes.
It is beneficial for teachers to pursue and apply a range of social skills in this profession so as to work effectively in terms of ensuring the teacher’s optimal level of engagement and motivation.

One of the major themes emerged from the findings is teacher wellbeing. Even though it did not show up explicitly as one individual theme in Saaga’s data, her acknowledgement of teacher wellbeing can be interpreted between the lines under her perception of emotional awareness and regulation when talking about limit and boundaries of her work with other colleagues. Findings of other two interviews about teacher wellbeing have been visibly displayed, emotional support that can be received from social relationships turned out to be one of the valuable resources of maintaining teacher wellbeing. Furthermore, I think the competencies in dimensions of emotional awareness and regulation indicate a teacher’s acknowledgement and ability to maintain one’s wellbeing. Meanwhile, wellbeing serves as an essence for teacher’s physical, mental and professional quality. High quality in teacher wellbeing more likely indicates that a teacher is able to attain and apply emotional competencies effectively, and able to achieve optimal healthy work-life balance holistically. In contrast, if a teacher wellbeing is overlooked, the teacher might perform deficiently in previously discussed emotional aspects and possibly attend with low job satisfaction which may further lead to disappointing teaching and learning outcomes. Therefore, teacher wellbeing should no longer to be just a ‘nice-to-have’ quality in a teacher, it has become one of the major concerns in teaching profession (Bubb & Earley, 2004; Ferguson, 2008). Hence, teacher wellbeing is another major element finding strives to advocate its significance in teaching profession according to teacher’s narratives.

To answer my research questions in brief, the thesis findings suggest that these class teachers have full awareness of the powerful role of emotions in their teacher profession. Through the lenses of these teachers’ experiences, their emotional competencies influence greatly on the quality of teaching, students’ emotional and academic achievements. The findings of major themes emerged from each interview seem to be in line with Goleman’s theory construct of emotional intelligence. The empirical findings also revealed to be consistent with the theoretical findings emerged from my bachelor’s thesis as well as supporting the theoretical framework in this master’s thesis. In other words, these findings are also positively serving for my justification and literature reviews made in chapter two on various dimensions of emotional intelligence in the context of teaching profession.
Further direction

Starting from my bachelor’s thesis to my current master’s thesis, I have been putting an abundant amount of efforts on discovering the linkage between emotional intelligence and teacher emotions in the context of teaching profession. I am glad to be able to explore their connections not only theoretically, but also empirically through witnessing teachers’ emotional perceptions. I hope this thesis will serve as a reminder for in-service teachers and give heads-up to pre-service teachers about the significant role of emotions in teaching profession. Becoming competent in managing emotions of our own is not simple, it requires plenty of reflecting and practicing through our experience.

Teacher emotions have been studied and become one of the major concerns in the educational field over the recent years. Evitable, emotional issue plays a remarkable role in teaching and learning, as well as teacher wellbeing. However, teacher education programs seem to still overlook this invisible but vital element of educating future teachers. In the near future, hopefully there will be more narrative researches conducted on teacher emotions in order to raise more awareness of teacher emotions, to encourage teachers to acquire a set of substantial skills that encompassed within Goleman’s theory of emotional intelligence as teaching proficiency. These competencies shall be beneficial in supporting teachers emotionally as well as maintaining wellbeing inside and outside the classroom. And hopefully, emotional education for teachers will be included and become prominent in teacher education programs.
References


APPENDIX I

Consent Form

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study.

My research interest is about teachers' emotions. In the research I hope to find out about how teachers experience and perceive their emotions/emotional skills in their teaching profession. In the interviews, I would like to hear about your stories and experiences in regards to emotions, particularly from your own perspectives. And it is very important for you to know that your emotions and experiences that you are about to share will be not evaluated at any points.

Our discussion will be audio taped to help me accurately capture your insights in your own words. The tapes will only be heard by me for the purpose of this study and it will be deleted once transcription is made.

You also have the right to withdraw from the study at anytime. In the event you choose to withdraw from the study all information you provide (including tapes) will be destroyed and omitted from the final paper.

Insights gathered by you and other participants will be used in writing my qualitative research report, which may be read by my supervisor. Direct quotes from you may be used in my thesis, however, your name and other identifying information will be kept anonymous.

Signature of Interviewee -------------------------------

Signature of Interviewer -------------------------------

Date: 15-11- 2017
APPENDIX II

Supporting questions for the interview:

Can you tell about yourself briefly?

- How long have you been teaching?
- Have you been teaching as a classroom teacher or subject teacher?
- Have you been involved with other kinds of profession?

1. What comes to your mind when you hear about 'teacher emotions', 'emotional competencies', 'emotional intelligence'?
2. Did you earlier, and do you now see these terms relate to your work as teaching?
   - Yes - And in what ways do you see them being relation?
   - No – why not?
3. What kinds of emotions have you experienced in your teaching career?
4. How prepared were you to have these emotions when you started to work as a teacher?

5. **Self-awareness**
   - Can you recall a situation happened recently at work/ in classroom which involved with your emotions?
   - Can you think of a situation that happen in the classroom or at school which made you think or reflect on your own emotions afterwards? Eg. Teacher-students' interaction, teacher-colleagues' interaction. How often does this happen?
   - Can you also think of a situation that you actually realized that you need to change your way of expressions (verbal and nonverbal language, emotional expressions) while the situation was still on-going?
   - Let's say if you are having a bad day, in personal or professional wise, how do you know about that and how to get through the day?
6. **Self-regulation**
   - Have you ever felt upset or disappointed by what your students have done or behaved under your expectation?
     - How did you feel and react to that situation?
     - Can you share some examples on that?
   - What if your reaction or resolution to the situation does not work out, how do you feel then?
     - Do you and how do you try to improve the situation?

7. **Empathy** (ask to elaborate examples on each question)
   - How well would you say you know about your students?
   - Do you think you usually know what is going on in the class?
   - Do you think you are usually able to recognize your students' thoughts or emotions by their verbal and nonverbal language?
   - How do you know that your students are enthusiastic about the lesson or interested in what they are doing?
     - How do you maintain the good vibe or improve the situation if necessary?

8. **Social skills** (ask to elaborate examples on each question)
   - How would you describe your relationship with your students?
     - What do you mean by “......”? 
   - How would you describe your relationship with colleagues?
   - How would you describe your relationship with the parents?
   - Now we have discussed about your relationship with your students, colleagues and the parents, how would you describe or look at this set of relationships as part of your profession?

9. **Motivation**
   - Has teaching been always enjoyable so far? Why and why not - when?
   - What do you love most about teaching?
   - What keeps you going? -
For experienced teacher: What have kept you so long in this profession?

For novice teacher: What encourage you to maintain this profession in the future?