

**LANGUAGE LEARNING, IDENTITIES AND EMOTIONS DURING
THE YEAR ABROAD: CASE STUDIES OF BRITISH ERASMUS
STUDENTS IN ITALY.**

by

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ABSTRACT

The study presented in this thesis was designed with a view to investigating the lived experiences of three young British women spending a Year Abroad (YA) in Italy as a part of their undergraduate degree course. The study was guided by four research questions (see § 1.3). The empirical work was ethnographically-informed and combined interviews, diary entries, photos and photo captions with audio and video recordings. My understanding of the participants' experiences was mostly built up through thematic and lexical analysis of the interview transcripts. I first focused on the themes which recurred most frequently in the participants' discourse. I then examined the affective lexis that the participants drew on in expressing emotions and, drawing on the insights occurred from this aspect of the data, I built an account of their perceptions of and reactions to cultural difference. In addition, I looked into the specific ways in which they negotiated and reconfigured their identities as second language learners during the experience abroad. This study offers a new lens on the YA experience and demonstrates the value of cross-disciplinary research, which takes account of emotions in the negotiation of second language learner identities and in the handling of intercultural encounters.

This thesis is dedicated to Ilaria and Matteo

Che l'esercizio del pensiero tramite lo studio e la lettura
possa aiutarvi a capire l'importanza di qualunque illuminazione.

*La complessità del mondo può essere spaventosa, ma
l'esercizio del pensiero permette di tessere sottilissime reti
d'oro da gettare sulla realtà per poterla abituare. Serve
lavorare tanto, ruminare molte letture, pensare tanti
pensieri. Nutrire la mente possibilmente con cibi di buona
qualità. Ci vuole allenamento, bisogna arare il terreno per
prepararlo a ricevere qualunque "illuminazione".*

BENEDETTA TOBAGI, Come mi batte forte il cuore.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Introduction**
- 1.2. Nature and significance of this study**
- 1.3. Research approach and research questions**
- 1.4. Overall organisation of the thesis**

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This first chapter of the thesis is divided into three sections. In the first section, I will describe the nature and the significance of this study (§ 1.2). In the second section, I will present research approach chosen for this project and the research questions which guided it (§ 1.3). Finally, in the last section, I will illustrate the overall organization of the thesis (§ 1.5).

1.2. Nature and significance of this study

This study stems primarily from my personal interest in social and psychological language learning processes in adults and particularly young adults. During my long term experience as a second language learner and as a teacher in higher education, I experienced a number of situations in which second/foreign language learning processes were inhibited by internal and external factors. Subsequently, I decided to investigate some of these aspects in my Master's dissertation, whose focus was on motivation in adult learners of Italian in the U.K. After completing my Master's degree, I embarked on my doctoral journey with the main aim of exploring the ways in which second language learners, like myself, experience their language learning in the country where the target language is spoken, and the ways in which they feel about and deal with new linguistic and cultural realities.

Hence, the main focus of my research, which is on the emotional and social experiences of three university students, learning Italian in two different urban settings

in Italy. The participants, Daphne, Lucy and Ilaria, were all English native speakers, spending a year abroad as ERASMUS students as a part of their undergraduate studies.

I have looked into their second language learning experiences, into the (re)construction of their identities as second language learners and into their emotions during the year abroad.

To the best of my knowledge, little work has been done on language learners' emotions and construction of identity in Italian surroundings during the year abroad. Although interesting longitudinal studies are now starting to flourish in relation to international students' mobility and their social, cultural and linguistic experiences as second language learners, no research has been undertaken so far, concerning English ERASMUS students, who have lived in Italy. So, I believe my research will offer a new lens on the year abroad experience.

The main aims of my research were those of gaining insight into the lived experiences of language learning during a period of study abroad, starting from the personal experience of the three English participants in my study. They lived in Italy over a period of nine months. During this period, I documented their reactions to being immersed in new social and cultural contexts and I tracked their gradual mastery of the language spoken in the host country. I also investigated their understanding of cultural difference and their abilities to regulate their emotions. Ethnography was the main methodology adopted in this study, since it was believed to be the most suitable approach for shedding light on these particular aspects of the experience abroad.

1.3. Research approach and research questions

My project has been designed as an ethnographically informed case study. It has considered participants' lived experiences in the new Italian contexts and their perspectives on these experiences. This has been the core of the study.

The research was mostly undertaken by means of semi-structured and in depth interviews. Some of these interviews were based on photographs, with accompanying captions (written by participants). The photographs were taken by participants and related to their learning environments in Italy. I also drew on diary entries written by them for at least two consecutive weeks during their Year Abroad (YA).

All interviews were audio recorded and particular communicative events were also filmed. The data collected consists of audio and video recordings.

The study was guided by four research questions. These were:

Q1: What range of learning environments and social networks, with opportunities to use Italian, did the participants encounter in their day to day lives?

Q2: In what ways did they negotiate their identities as second language learners over time in these environments and social networks?

Q3: How did the participants in this study express their emotions during the YA? In particular, how often and in what ways did they make use of affective lexicon in their emotive discourse?

Q4: To what extent were participants' emotions bound up with the ways in which they perceived, experienced and dealt with cultural difference in intercultural encounters?

The first two research questions (Q1 and Q2), and the findings related to them, are addressed in Chapter 6, which deals primarily with the learning environments and

the social networks across which Daphne, Ilaria and Lucy negotiated their identities as second language learners.

The last two research questions (Q3 and Q4), and the related findings, are addressed in Chapter 7, which focuses on the expression of emotions and the ways in which the participants in this study (Daphne, Ilaria and Lucy) articulated their views about cultural difference.

1.4. Overall organisation of the thesis

The thesis is divided into eight chapters, including this first chapter (Chapter 1) and the concluding chapter (Chapter 8).

The core of the thesis consists of six chapters, which can be divided in two main parts. The first one, provides the theoretical background of the research, namely the context of study and the literature review chapters (Chapters 2 and 3), the research design and methods (Chapter 4) and some preliminary information about participants and settings (Chapter 5). The second part includes the Data Analysis chapters (Chapters 6 and 7).

More specifically, Chapter 2 gives an overview of the Year Abroad research context. It highlights a number of studies carried out within and outside Europe and considers current issues in this field. Chapter 3 provides with the main conceptual frameworks underpinning this research, which are within the sociolinguistic and cultural psychology traditions. Chapter 4 introduces the flexible design planned for this study and the methods designed and applied throughout the project, which mostly took the form of interviews. Chapter 5 provides a short profile of participants and the settings of

the study, namely the two Italian cities (Cagliari and Ferrara) in which the participants lived for one academic year (2006-2007).

The Data Analysis chapters follow the themes arising from a close scrutiny of the data in relation to the research questions pinpointed above in section § 1.3. In Chapter 6 the findings concerning my first and second research question are discussed. In this chapter I focus on the learning environments, in which the participants found themselves, the social networks to which they had access in Cagliari and Ferrara, and the types of opportunities for using Italian that they took up during their YA. In addition, I examine the participants' own shaping of social identities through their everyday practices, and their negotiation and re-construction of their social identities during their sojourn abroad.

In Chapter 7, I turn to the ways in which the participants in this study expressed their emotions, and the extent to which emotions constituted a significant dimension of their lived experience of cultural difference. I analyse this aspect of the data in relation to my third and fourth research question.

In Chapter 8, the final chapter, I provide an evaluative and summative description of the study, considering the extent to which I was able to answer my research questions, the limitations of the case study, and the implications for pedagogy and for future research.

CHAPTER 2

CONTEXT OF STUDY: THE YEAR ABROAD

2.1. Introduction

2.2. ERASMUS exchange programme and student mobility

2.3. Foreign language study and the Year Abroad

2.3.1. Development of linguistic proficiency

2.3.2. Individual differences, dispositions and perceptions

2.3.3. The need to narrow the research lens

2.4. The sociocultural turn in studies of residence abroad

2.4.1. Communicative Competence

2.4.2. Intercultural Communicative Competence

2.4.3. Intercultural Awareness

2.4.4. Pedagogic initiatives

2.4.5. Intercultural learning: the role of experience, emotions and reflection

2.5. Summary

CHAPTER 2

CONTEXT OF STUDY: THE YEAR ABROAD

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I shall give an overview of the Year Abroad (YA) research context, highlighting a number of studies carried out within and outside Europe and considering current issues in this field.

Pioneering research was undertaken in the late 1960s, and carried out until the late 1980s almost entirely in the form of quantitative work. The majority of preliminary British and North American studies on Studying Abroad (SA) had the following characteristics: (1.) they were quantitative in nature; (2.) they depended on test scores that measured linguistic progress only; (3.) they were short term.

In the 1990s qualitative studies on SA also started to flourish, and paved the way for more in-depth discussion of the experience abroad. These studies were undertaken through research over an extended period of time and with the use of specific ethnographic methods aiming to disclose sociocultural aspects emerging during the period abroad.

Many acronyms are used to designate this emerging field of research, among which are: SA (Studying Abroad), RA (Residence Abroad), YA (Year Abroad), and finally PA (Period Abroad). Following the British research tradition, I will adopt the abbreviation YA when referring to my study and to the lived experiences of my research participants, and the other acronyms (RA, SA, PA) when discussing wider implications of the transnational mobility phenomenon.

The chapter is divided into three main sections. I will start with an overview of the recent phenomenon of student mobility across and outside Europe, and the EU student mobility scheme in which my participants took part for one academic year, that is the ERASMUS exchange programme (2.2.); then I will review British and American research on YA, pointing to existing gaps in the literature (2.3.). After this, I will talk about the cultural turn in studies of residence abroad. This has enabled the theorisation of intercultural communicative competence and intercultural awareness (2.4.).

Finally, I will describe some recent British projects dealing with the YA, such as LARA project developed by Oxford Brooks University, and I will discuss the issues related to the development of intercultural awareness and competence (or the lack of it) in educational practice, highlighting the need for further research in the YA field (2.5).

2.2. ERASMUS exchange programme and student mobility

The ERASMUS programme is one of the large-scale European Union student mobility schemes and visits to the foreign countries can last from three to twelve months. It was initiated in June 1987 by the European Commission in collaboration with the academic community, with the primary aim of promoting cooperation between universities and supporting the expansion of the European labour market (Papatsiba, 2006: 109). As reported in the official website:

Erasmus ("*European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students*") is the European Commission's educational programme for Higher Education students, teachers and institutions. It was introduced [...] within the European Community, subsequently the European Economic Area countries, and the Candidate Country of Turkey.

(<http://www.erasmus.ac.uk/>)

In 1995 ERASMUS was then incorporated into the SOCRATES programme that included universities as well as schools and adult education. SOCRATES and two other two programmes (*Leonardo da Vinci* and *eLearning*) ended in 2006, and were replaced by the Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013. Today the ERASMUS programme is one of the nine sectoral programmes which make up the Lifelong Learning Programme (http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/index_en.htm).

The name ERASMUS was taken from the great humanist Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466-1566), because, during his life, he incessantly travelled across Europe, changing places of residence very often. In his work, he referred to students and scholars all over Europe, underlining the importance of communicating with them in the language of the host country. Interacting in the target language, would be, in his opinion, a civilised act. Europe and the history of European culture were of great interest to him, and indeed, his works are considered very important for the history of philosophy, literature and culture (Asso, no date: 129)

In 1987, when the ERASMUS programme was introduced, over 3,000 learners took part in it. Since then, student mobility has increased in large number. Today, it is estimated that an average of 150,000 individuals joins the programme each year. At present, individuals taking part in the ERASMUS programme, and in the other eight schemes included in the Lifelong Learning Programme, can spend the period abroad embarking either on a study experience, on a work placement or on an assistantship. Indeed, first studies in this field focussed on the period abroad as an opportunity to work (for full references see Coleman, 1995, p. 18, who cites among others: Kloss & Zemke, 1987; Wilson & Everett, 1989; Meara, 1986; Thomas, 1993).

Thus, transnational educational mobility provides opportunities for both studying and working abroad, and it is becoming a growing phenomenon also outside EU borders. As noted by Roberts et al. (2001) “This is not only evident in Europe, with European Union student mobility schemes, but in many other parts of the world including the USA, Japan, Latin America and Australia” (Roberts et al., 2001: 4).

However, despite the increasing numbers of people involved in exchange programmes, there is still a lack of research on European mobility schemes. Papatsiba (2006) ascribes this gap to the less pronounced cultural diversity across Europe, which means that individuals are less prone to experiencing ‘culture shock’ or problems of individual adjustment in intercultural contexts. Nevertheless, she also asserts that:

The EU Erasmus/Socrates student exchange programme, has not distinctly aimed at the acquisition of intercultural competence, even though enabling young Europeans to internalise a ‘European consciousness’ has been a hoped-for outcome. [...] From a political and institutional point of view, the priority has been given to academic aspects and future professional benefits of Erasmus mobility.

(Papatsiba, 2006: 109)

2.3. Foreign language study and the Year Abroad

Spending a Year Abroad is becoming a trend among students of foreign languages in many western countries. It is also an increasing trend among students of other disciplines. They are also now encouraged or obliged to live and study for a period abroad.

In the U.K. university students of foreign languages are required to spend a period abroad, usually their third academic year, from a minimum of one month to the entire academic year. This does not seem to be the case for many other European

countries, among which Italy, where the year abroad is recommended but not compulsory.

Most students of foreign languages in British higher education system are required to spend *one year*, namely a quarter of their course of study, in the countries where the languages they are studying are spoken natively. Indeed, Byram and Alred (2002) use the term YA rather than more generic ones, such as ‘residence abroad’ or ‘study abroad, since, as they assert, “the Year Abroad (YA) is a peculiarly British phenomenon” (Byram & Alred, 2002: 339).

Nevertheless, not all British universities have this requirement. The overall proportion is only 84% according to the NRAD (National Residence Abroad Database) survey carried out in 1998. Moreover, the usefulness of such experience in terms of personal and interpersonal learning is not always clear and we still have rather few research insights into this dimension of foreign language study. As Coleman (1995) has remarked:

Nearly all British universities think a period of extended residence abroad is an essential part of a modern language degree, and every year some 12,000 students embark on a costly adventure in a new country. Scientific evidence of the benefits of residence abroad, however, is patchy and does not always support a wholly optimistic view.

(Coleman, 1995: 17)

2.3.1. Development of linguistic proficiency

Early studies focused on the year abroad (YA) experience. The main concern was to show how and whether learners can achieve linguistic proficiency during the period abroad (perhaps because of concerns about funding for such schemes). Indeed, a

good deal of quantitative research on residence abroad, which aimed primarily to assess linguistic proficiency, was undertaken over three decades, between the sixties and the nineties, and it was based almost exclusively on test scores.

Carroll (1967) started the North American research tradition and demonstrated through empirical research that studying abroad (SA) can bring enhanced language proficiency. Many other studies flourished in the USA after this ground-breaking project. The main aim of later research was that of measuring mostly oral proficiency during and after that period of study abroad (See Veguez, 1984; Magnan, 1986; and Milleret: 1990).

In the U.K. studies on YA started to appear a decade after Carroll's pioneering study, and were again conceived with the main aim of assessing British students' fluency (Willis et al., 1977) and aural/oral skills (Dyson, 1988) during a period of residence abroad (RA) in France, Germany or Spain. These studies were also based on test-scores and showed that students during RA improved their lexicon as well as their speaking and listening proficiency but no significant progress seemed to emerge in L2 grammar acquisition (DeKeiser, 1991).

However, in contrast, a number of North American studies carried out in the 1990s showed that there were differences in grammatical acquisition between students studying abroad (SA) and their colleagues at home. These studies showed that SA-learners acquire the L2 grammar in a different order and with more fluency, and that this was probably due to the differing amount of exposure to the target language during the period abroad (see among others, Brecht et al., 1993; Ginsberg, 1992).

While such studies were able to capture large scale trends, from a qualitative point of view, they were not appropriate to disclose sociocultural aspects of the experience abroad. Insights into the lived experiences of students can only be gleaned through research over an extended period of time and with the use of specific qualitative and ethnographic methods. As Freed (2008) has pointed out in her assessment of these studies:

These studies were unable to reveal qualitative changes in students' language proficiency nor were they able to capture distinctions in actual L2 usage among SA students. Nonetheless this work stimulated interest in the topic and laid the groundwork for research which followed.

(Freed, 2008: 115)

2.3.2. Individual differences, dispositions and perceptions

By the mid 1990s, scholars had started to raise questions about factors other than linguistic proficiency in research on the period abroad. They included questions about phenomena such as participants' perceptions and individual differences. Coleman (1995) emphasised the fact that studies on the YA had revealed a pattern of high individual variation and wondered about students' identity while abroad, asking: "is there a risk that students abroad acquire the camouflage of the native speaker rather than the identity?" (Coleman, 1995: 32). His use of the term 'camouflage' is intriguing here. However, he does not elaborate on it or questions the notion of 'native speaker'. He did however emphasise the need to throw more light on the significant pattern of individual variation emerging from the early quantitative research. As he stated "what characterises virtually all studies of residence abroad is the high individual variation" (Ibid.: 33).

In 1998 Coleman conducted an extensive review of the emerging research on studying abroad (SA) within Europe. His review also took account of qualitative studies, which were emerging across Europe, and he highlighted the importance of such studies for the broadening of our understanding of cultural aspects of YA. Other scholars have also drawn attention to the value of research in the European context focusing on the links between language learning and culture. As Freed has recently noted:

European research has also placed a greater emphasis on assessing changes in intercultural competence as well as “attitudes, strategies and behaviours” which emanate from time spent living another culture.

(Freed, 2008: 116)

The crucial role that individual differences play during the YA emerged very clearly in a recent quantitative study conducted by Rees and Klapper (2005) at the University of Birmingham. This was a longitudinal study and it opened up a new dimension of British quantitative research on YA. Again, as with the earlier work, it had the main aim of measuring the main gains in linguistic proficiency among British ERASMUS students in Germany. Nevertheless, the most significant outcomes of this study concerned the high individual variation in performance progress during YA. It became clear that, while linguistic gains need to be taken into careful consideration, participants’ lived experiences of cultural difference and their dispositions to other cultural practices and beliefs also needed to be taken into account. Rees and Klapper (2005) enquire whether residence abroad, in its present form, is beneficial to all students, and whether a specific preparation before YA would help them to benefit from the experience abroad (Rees and Klapper, 2005: 93). They also point out that “the investigation of individual performance must form the cornerstone of research design in

this area in the future, combining both quantitative and qualitative research methods” (Rees and Klapper, 2005: 93).

In this section of my literature review, it is also important to mention the empirical work of Wilkinson (1998) and that of Pellegrino (1998), which brought a valuable new qualitative insight into the students’ lived experiences of Studying Abroad (SA), since they both focussed on participants’ perceptions of their experiences in the new foreign language settings. The adoption of such qualitative methodologies drew attention to the different kind of naturalistic environments participants found themselves in, and of the specific social circles and networks they were able to establish.

In the 1990s North American mixed-method studies on SA, with an important qualitative dimension, also started to appear. Brecht et al. (1993) conducted the first longitudinal study. This involved assessment of students’ linguistic progress during SA in Russia and their perceptions of this experience. This latter aspect, in particular, was evaluated depending on innovative qualitative methods, such participants’ diaries and journals, which opened a window on participants’ views on their concrete experience *in situ*.

The North American contributions to the field are well documented, they show the linguistic benefits of residence abroad and they also provide sociocultural insights into the lived experiences of participants in a number of different settings. In addition, they explore interaction and socialisation, and address the ways in which participants deal with cultural difference during the YA. This research is enriching our understanding of the significance of the experience of being immersed in a context where the target language is spoken.

Nevertheless, many topics are still neglected, such as: whether and how phonological accuracy is improved as a result of residence abroad; whether and how literacy skills are developed and whether and how sociocultural awareness is heightened and whether this enables individuals to handle better the cultural dimensions of language learning (Freed, 2008: 119-20).

2.3.3. The need to narrow the research lens

Anecdotal evidence suggests that students embarking on a YA experience rarely have adequate knowledge about the host societies and the strategic abilities that could help them to cope with cultural differences. This lack of awareness often means that the period abroad has a negative impact on YA-students. Coleman makes the following perceptive remark about this:

The *Independent's* Education Correspondent receives more angry letters about the experiences of modern languages students during compulsory residence abroad than any other topic: an indication perhaps, of its importance to individuals, and of the fact that it does not always go smoothly.

(Coleman, 1995: 17)

Moreover, little attention has been paid to the emergence of individual differences during YA, such as, among others, students' attitudes, motivation, perceptions and their ability to negotiate cultural difference. These issues need to be further investigated, since, to put it into Alred and Byram's words: "the value placed on the experience by students themselves is an indication that dimensions other than linguistic are involved" (Alred & Byram 2006: 210).

A more in-depth exploration of dimensions of the YA experience other than linguistic proficiency, would help us to gain further insight into what really means to be prepared for the YA, and to consider the ways in which we can help students to benefit rather than suffer from the experience abroad. More specifically, we would need to investigate further the sociocultural aspects of the YA, namely the ways in which students interact and socialise during the YA, and their capacity to operate within “a sphere of interculturality” (Kramsch, 1993: 205) (or to avoid doing so). Last but not least, specific social psychological dimensions would need to be explored in depth, such as motivation, perceptions and emotions of people involved in the exchange programmes.

2.4. The sociocultural turn in studies of residence abroad

In the last three decades, sociocultural studies on Residence Abroad have been proliferating and a great deal of attention has been put on the role that cultural difference plays during the experience abroad. Three concepts in particular have emerged in strand of research as central to own understanding of the growing phenomenon of transnational educational mobility, these are: 1) *Communicative Competence*; 2) *Intercultural Communicative Competence*; and 3) *Intercultural Awareness*. These will be discussed in turn in the following paragraphs.

2.4.1. *Communicative competence*

The notion of communicative competence (CC) first appeared in 1972 as a critique made by Hymes (a linguistic anthropologist) of Chomsky’s Universal Grammar approach. Hymes (1972) claimed that in order to understand language use we should

take into consideration not only grammatical but also sociolinguistic and cultural competence or the ability to use language appropriately in particular social and cultural contexts.

However, Hymes was not specifically concerned with language learning and cross-cultural communication studies, with a particular relevance for foreign language teaching and learning, started to appear only a decade later. In the 1980s, North American and European research started to move towards this direction with the work of Canale and Swain (1980) and van Ek (1980). In 1986, building on the foundations laid by Hymes, van Ek proposed a model of six “communicative abilities” or competences, among which were the ability to situate a language in a specific sociocultural context or *socio-cultural competence*, and that of meaningfully interacting with others or *social competence* (van Ek, 1986: 39-65). In the late 1990s, these concepts related to communicative competence were revisited and labelled as “savoirs” by Byram (1997) with the main aim of assessing the intercultural dimension of CC.

These concepts have been investigated in Residence Abroad through studies which focuses on classroom-based activities organised for students who were leaving for the YA and through *in-situ* ethnographic projects (see, among others, Killick & Parry: 1997, 1998, 1999; Roberts: 2001; and LARA project at <http://www.llas.ac.uk>).

2.4.2. Intercultural Communicative Competence

Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) has also become a key concept for the YA context of study. It is believed that through the development of specific intercultural communicative strategies, individuals can be helped to deal with cultural

difference during the YA. The enhancement of ICC before the YA is seen as a means of preventing possible language learning deterrents that students may face when immersed in a new society.

The concept of ICC has even more remote origins than CC, as stated by Wiseman (2001):

[it] was probably introduced by researchers interested in overseas technical assistants and Peace corps volunteers (Gardner, 1962; Hoselitz, 1954) Since then, ICC has been investigated in studies with such diverse conceptual foci as sojourner adjustment, immigrant acculturation, intergroup contact, culture shock, cross-cultural training, social change, international management, and foreign student advising.

(Wiseman, 2001: 1).

Since the 1960s, there has been a lot of research on intercultural communicative competence (ICC) (for full references see Deardorff, 2006: 233). It has been described in various ways, but as Deardorff asserts: “there has not been agreement on how intercultural competence should be defined” (Ibid.). Byram and Feng (2006) offer a definition that draws together Hymes’ original concept of communicative competence with notions such as affect, cognition and identity. In their views ICC is:

[T]he ability to behave appropriately in intercultural situations, the affective and cognitive capacity to establish and maintain intercultural relationships and the ability to stabilise one’s self identity while mediating between cultures.

(Byram & Feng, 2006: 211)

Byram and Feng (2006) also hint at the processes involved in achieving intercultural competence through the use of the very form “mediating”. They assert that even if students on Year Abroad (YA) live somehow on the margins of the foreign society, their experience can in any case be “a process of temporary re-socialisation into a foreign culture and its practices and beliefs” (Byram & Feng, 2006: 212). I agree with

this view; indeed, experiencing a YA can (and should) lead to greater awareness of sociocultural diversity and to the development of specific intercultural strategies.

Developing intercultural communicative competence before the YA is very important for those involved in the exchange programme. More research is needed in this area; and particularly, we need studies that focus on the possible ways in which intercultural communication can be enhanced in preparation for YA. The work of Byram and Coleman (2003, 2006), Roberts et al. (2001), Coleman (1998) is certainly going in this direction. Roberts et al. (2001) recommend that students should be prepared to undertake ethnographic research during their YA, developing an “ethnographic imagination” (Roberts et al., 2001:43).

2.4.3. *Intercultural Awareness*

The concept of intercultural awareness has its origins in the notion of *cross-cultural awareness* first introduced by the educationalist Robert Hanvey (1976) in his analysis of education for a global perspective. His main aim was that of enhancing individuals’ abilities in order to understand their condition in the community and to become aware of “the relationships between an individual’s enlightened self-interest and the concerns of people elsewhere in the world” (Hanvey, 1976: 1). This concept has been explored over the past three decades and labelled in various ways, such as cross-cultural capability, cross-cultural skills and cross-cultural competence.

Over the last decade, the concept of Intercultural Awareness (IA) has become the basis for practice-oriented models of intercultural communication (e.g. the work by Hall & Toll, 1999), whose main aims are to guide students toward successful

communication during the experience abroad. In attempting to conceptualise the ways in which individuals adjust to moving into a new cultural context, Hall and Toll (1999) draw on earlier psychological models including 'U-curve' and 'W-curve' representations of individuals' adjustment. These early models were proposed by Lysgaard (1955) and Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963). Lysgaard (1955) proposed a three stage U-curve of adjustment: initial adjustment or honey moon stage, crisis or stressful stage and regained adjustment or settling in the host country. This model was then enlarged by Gullahorn and Gullhorn (1963), with the W-curve adjustment model, which included three further stages of sojourners' re-adjustment when they come back from their experience abroad.¹

The conceptualising of individuals' adjustments into curve models aimed to represent, in Hall and Toll's words, "plots of emotional reactions to intercultural experience" (Hall & Toll, 1999: 4). This concern with emotional reactions to new cultural contexts provides fertile grounds for further exploration in this field, and for further theorisation of intercultural interaction, intercultural communicative competence and awareness.

In the late 1990s, Snow and Byram added a further practice-oriented dimension to the conceptualisation of intercultural communication. They proposed a new model for developing intercultural awareness and competence. They called for the fostering of specific 'savoirs' or strategic abilities that individuals can develop before departure (Snow and Byram, 1997: 9). They suggest that teachers should aim to make students aware of these strategic abilities, and to apply specific activities to develop them. The main aims of these activities would be raising intercultural awareness (IAR) and highlighting the complexity and relativity of culture. The main difference between this

model and that of Hall and Toll (1999) is that snow and Byram were drawing on a different view of culture, one informed by anthropology not psychology.

In later work, Alred and Byram (2002) proposed five distinctive strategic abilities or *savoirs* for the development of Intercultural Awareness (IA) and Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC), and declared that a person with these ‘savoirs’ could become a successful ‘intercultural speaker’ (Alred and Byram, 2002: 341).

One of these five ‘savoirs’, the ability of ‘savoir s’engager’, has been defined as *critical cultural awareness* (Alred & Byram, 2002: 341), or the disposition and orientation to act in intercultural contexts (Byram, 1997b: 89). This notion gives more agency to the individual social actor. O’Dowd (2005) sees intercultural interaction as related to the ways in which individuals perceive the practices of people of other cultures, and to the awareness that “one’s own way of seeing the world is not *natural* or *normal*, but culturally determined” (O’Dowd, 2005: 86).

The work by Byram et al. (2001); Hall and Toll (1999), and Roberts et al. (2001), provides a valuable steer towards the ways in which intercultural communication can be developed among students before, during and after a period of residence abroad. Each of these researchers takes a different angle on intercultural awareness. While Hall and Toll (1999) address the cognitive-affective-behavioural aspects of intercultural interaction and take a strategic perspective, Byram, Nichols and Stevens (2001) and Roberts et al. (2001) address the sociolinguistic and cultural aspects, drawing primarily on anthropology and sociology, and proposing that students should

be oriented to ethnographic research as part of their preparation for a sojourn abroad.

Roberts (2003) argues for this approach as follows:

[students] do benefit from both intellectual and practical preparation before they go abroad so that their encounters with ‘others’ and with ‘otherness’ can contribute to their understanding conceptually, analytically and emotionally. Learning to be ethnographic about these encounters offers students some ways of structuring their experiences while still encouraging their sense of themselves as active agents in managing the period abroad.

(Roberts, 2003: 114)

2.4.4. Pedagogic initiatives

Recently there have been a number of practice-oriented projects in Great Britain dealing with the YA, which have considerable importance for the development of this field.

Three projects in particular, funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and joined together under the banner ‘Residence Abroad Matters’ (RAM), are significant for the current state of research and practice. Those are: (1.) the *Learning And Residence Abroad* (LARA) project at Oxford Brooks (and a consortium of other UK universities); (2.) the *Residence Abroad* Project at Portsmouth University; (3) the *Interculture* Project based at the University of Lancaster.

These projects were conceived with the main aim of encouraging and disseminating the development of good practice across the HE sector. The LARA project in particular, which lasted from 1997 to 2001, was conceived of as “a programme of developmental work designed to encourage the spread of best practice across the HE sector” (<http://www.llas.ac.uk/lara/>), and played an important role in setting up the National Residence Abroad Database (NRAD)². The database gathered

useful information on current practice of UKHE in preparing students for the period abroad. A questionnaire with specific questions on whether and what kind of IAR activities were offered by the institutions was sent to all UKHE institutions. And from the questionnaire responses it emerged that Intercultural awareness Raising (IAR) is interpreted differently depending on the institutions. As stated by Hall and Toll (1999):

Whilst the great majority of respondents appear to have interpreted *intercultural awareness* as cognitive knowledge of the language, sociolinguistics, literature and arts of C2, only a minority addressed the issue from a cognitive + affective + behavioural + strategic perspective. Interestingly, even from universities who are known to be working seriously in the area of IAR, no materials were provided.

(Hall & Toll, 1997:12)

Hall & Toll (1999) have argued that this database and the few materials provided, despite being a good opportunity to acknowledge the disparity in practice in IAR and its importance, provides “only a very approximate picture of current practice in the field of Intercultural Awareness Raising (IAR) in UKHE institutions” (Ibid.).

The Language and Residence Abroad (LARA) project’s main aim was that of preparing students for academic, linguistic, cultural and educational integration during YA. Students involved in the project were offered the opportunity to undertake apposite training before departure, and they were asked to undertake various activities while abroad (for further details see <http://www.llas.ac.uk>). As stated in the LARA website,

In making [...] recommendations for integrating the period abroad into the degree-course of which it is a part, in creating teaching materials which will make it easier to achieve integration, in offering models of assessment and accreditation, the LARA project hopes to make a useful contribution to the process of review and improvement which has been under way for many years and which can lead to a more academically and educationally effective experience for the students.

[<http://www.llas.ac.uk/lara/larainprac.html>]

At present there are a number of HE institutions offering modules on IAR as part of modern language degrees, such as Leicester University, Southampton University and Thames Valley University in London. The latter group in particular promoted the *Ealing Ethnography Research Project* (now moved to King's College in London) and was used by Roberts et al. (2001) "as a case study to illuminate the notion of learner as ethnographer" (Roberts et al., 2001: 4). There are also many workshops accessible online (i.e. <http://ram.fdtl.ac.uk>) and a series of assessed materials on IAR.³

The Year Abroad (YA) is becoming a rapidly growing field of research, which surely needs to be further explored. There are still uncertainties about the specific meaning of intercultural preparation and the ways in which these concepts can be developed among students as well as teachers and educators in preparation for the YA (Hess: 1997).

IAR training (or the lack of it) can be decisive for the ways in which individuals perceive their experience abroad. For instance, as shown in Jordan & Barro's (1995) study, a lack of training can lead to a closure towards otherness and a reinforcement of stereotypes, which often stem from the negative attitudes of host people.

This issue also emerged from the reports on the Leeds Conferences in 1996, 1997 and 1998, which addressed the necessity to foster intercultural or cross-cultural competence among university teachers as well (Hall & Toll, 1999: 14). A review of IAR practice in the UK is presented in Killick and Parry (1997, 1998 and 1999).

From the current state of knowledge, these major issues emerge: (1.) the paucity of research-based practice in the field of IAR in the UKHE institutions (the notable exception being the work by Byram, Nichols & Stevens (2001) and Roberts et al.

(2001); (2.) the paucity of research that addresses ‘interculturality’ from a cognitive-affective-behavioural and strategic perspective (Hall & Toll, 1999: 12); (3.) the lack of a cross-disciplinary framework that links psychological and anthropological perspectives on research-based practice. In the section that follows, I outline a cross-disciplinary conceptual framework which attempts to link these two perspectives.

2.4.5. Intercultural learning: the role of experience, emotions and reflection

In this section, I outline the conceptual framework that I am adopting in this thesis. My aim is to link an approach which focuses on language learning as a social and cultural practice (an approach that takes account of the sociocultural turn in this field of study) with a focus on emotions and affective responses to the experience of border crossing and sojourns in different cultural contexts. This is a cross-disciplinary framework which builds on previous research-based practice and on sociolinguistics, anthropology and social and cultural psychology. My starting point is with the notion of Intercultural Learning, introduced by Roberts et al. (2001).

Taking a broadly anthropological approach to language, these authors represent language learning as part and parcel of the wider process of cultural learning. As indicated above (in section § 2.4.3), they call for the development of an ethnographic approach to language education which focuses on the everyday practices of social life in different settings and on “learning about and living/doing culture” (Roberts et al., 2001: 30). Their proposal for a new anthropologically-inspired curriculum in language education, at HE level, draws on two intersecting traditions within anthropology: first, a constructivist approach, widely adopted across the social sciences, which represents ‘culture’ as social action, as “‘doing’ rather than ‘being’” (2001:55). Since languages

are part of culture, they are seen in the same way as resources for social and cultural practice. And, second, a critical poststructuralist approach to culture and language. In this approach, 'cultures' are not seen as fixed and bounded but as dynamic, fluid and ever-changing and as being continually produced, reproduced and recast. The critical element of this approach foregrounds the notion of power. For example, the ways in which cultural and linguistic practices work to construct and reconstruct social difference and social hierarchies (see Chapter 3 for further discussion of poststructuralist approaches within sociolinguistics). This concern also extends to the way in which the practices of ethnographers can construct asymmetries between them and the participants in their research.

Roberts et al. (2001) acknowledge that their ethnographic approach makes more demands on language learners than earlier approaches, such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), with its rather narrow and prescriptive definition of Communicative Competence. In the CLT approach and in some Cultural Studies courses, cultural practices are represented as fixed conventions and ways of speaking as appropriate or inappropriate; whereas, in the ethnographic approach advocated by Roberts et al. (2001), instead of being presented with a ready-made toolkit for 'understanding' the culture of 'the other', students are introduced to ways of carrying out their own ethnographic observations and interpreting situated cultural practices, starting out from the assumption that culture is always 'on the move' in different settings. In this approach, students are seen as not only acquiring intellectual, text-based knowledge about other cultural and linguistic practices but also experiencing and engaging with those practices, like an ethnographer 'in the field'. They are not presented with generalised statements about the cultural practices of speakers of other

languages, as if they were a homogeneous group but, as Roberts et al. (2001: 32) put it: “‘culture’, difference and otherness is studied in all its local particularity”.

In the terms used by Buttjes and Byram (1991), students would be going back and forth between their own cultural perspectives, values and practices and those of others: they would be ‘mediating between cultures’. Moreover, they would not be aspiring to the near-impossible goal of becoming a ‘native speaker’ but working in what Kramsch (1993:205) called a “sphere of interculturality”. However, intercultural learning of this kind involves following a more demanding path, one that is not easy. It is bound to involve disappointment, misunderstanding and frustration as well as excitement and satisfaction – a whole gamut of negative emotion – as, indeed, is the case with ethnography. In traditional ethnography, where the task of cultural description was seen as detached and primarily ‘scientific’ and objective, lone researchers kept personal diaries as a form of ‘safety valve’ where they could offload their frustrations (Jones, Martin-Jones and Bhatt, 2001: 324). However, today the researcher diary is seen as an integral part of ‘writing in the field’. It has become a means of achieving some reflexivity and of reflecting on the way in the biography of the researcher and the interactions between researcher and researched contribute to the shaping of the ethnographic account (Ibid.)

In the same way, intercultural learning (e.g. during a sojourn abroad) needs to include opportunities for experience (including emotional experience), and then reflection and the gradual development of intercultural awareness. As Roberts et al. (2001:38) rightly point out, HE language teaching/learning has tended to focus on intellectual development, mastery of linguistic forms and text-based knowledge, while

“the notion of an intercultural speaker implies a mix of the affective, the reflective and the intellectual”.

So the conceptual framework that I am adopting in this study incorporates all three of these dimensions of intercultural learning and the development of intercultural awareness. It also sees the affective dimension and emotions, as being a crucial dimension of the experiential phase of learning and of the personal development that takes place in and through border crossing. In Chapter 3, section § 3.8, I detail the specific ways in which I am conceptualising emotions as a lens on the learning of language and culture and on forms of investment in the language learning process. In particular, following Arndt and Janney (1991) and Pavlenko (2005), I emphasise the distinction between spontaneous emotional communication and emotive communication. The latter foregrounds the cognitive, retrospective aspects of communication about emotion and can therefore be considered as part of reflection and can foster awareness-raising.

2.5. Summary

In this chapter, I have presented a brief literature review of the research and practice-based writing on the YA, including an overview of the growing phenomenon of transnational student mobility and the European scheme in which my participants took part for one academic year, that is the ERASMUS exchange programme.

I have noted the contributions made by the early British and North American studies, which were primarily quantitative in nature. I have also shown that this research was followed by qualitative work. In addition, I have drawn attention to the existing gap

in the literature on longitudinal ethnographic studies focusing on sociocultural and social psychological factors.

I have also highlighted the importance given in recent practice-oriented projects to understanding and developing intercultural communication with the view to fostering Intercultural Awareness (IA) and Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) among language learners and teachers. I have also cited examples of pedagogic initiatives in this area, i.e. the Language Learners as Ethnographers approach.

The current state of research shows that the YA is a flourishing area of interest; nevertheless, further research and practice are needed in this field, since, as Alred et al. (2003) affirm, “studies of individuals’ responses to experience of other cultures can all help to redefine the nature of language and intercultural teaching and learning and its educational and social purposes” (Alred et al., 2003: x).

Indeed, it is through a deeper understanding of cultural difference and of the ways in which individuals can deal with it that we, as researchers and educational practitioners, could guide students towards a positive YA experience, both academically and on a personal level.

CHAPTER 2 – ENDNOTES

¹ For a discussion in depth of culture shock and cross cultural communication see also Furham & Bochner (1990) and Ting-Tomey (1999).

² See <http://www.llas.ac.uk/lara> for further details.

³ For a more in-depth discussion of IAR examples of good practice see Hall & Toll, 1999: 18-19.

CHAPTER 3

LANGUAGE, EMOTIONS, CULTURE AND IDENTITIES

- 3.1. Introduction**
- 3.2. Early theorisation of emotion**
- 3.3. Emotions in intercultural communication**
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- 3.6. Perspectives on emotions from Pragmatics**
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 - 3.8.1. Poststructuralist discourse on identity
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CHAPTER 3

LANGUAGE, EMOTIONS, CULTURE AND IDENTITIES

3.1. Introduction

The main objective of this chapter is that of providing the reader with the main conceptual frameworks underpinning my research project, the focal point of which was on the ways in which students experienced and dealt with cultural difference during the Year Abroad (YA).

Sociolinguistics and cultural psychology provided the basis for a conceptual framework for my analysis. More specifically, I have considered the strands of cross-disciplinary research which focus on language and emotions in intercultural encounters (e.g. the work by Pavlenko, 2005, forthcoming and Wierzbicka, 2004), and the strands which deal with poststructuralist conception of social identities (e.g. Norton Pierce 1995 and Norton, 2000). I therefore review this literature here.

The chapter is divided into three main sections: the first one focuses on the theorisation of emotions in their universal and socio-cultural dimensions. It deals with early universalistic theories relating to emotions (§3.2) and provides an overview of recent interdisciplinary studies of emotions in Intercultural Communication (§3.3), including some perspectives from cross-cultural psychology (e.g. Markus & Kitayama, 1991 and Matsumoto et al., 2001) (§3.4).

In the second section, I consider recent approaches to the study of the vocal expression of emotions (§ 3.5). Prosodic and paralinguistic features (§ 3.5.1) are viewed in this context as possible channels for the vocal expression of emotions, with a clear

distinction being made between emotive and emotional communication (§ 3.5.2). These are viewed through an interactional sociolinguistic lens (Couper-Kuhlen, 1986; Gumperz, 1982 and Tannen, 1993) which focuses on the pragmatic dimensions of emotions and discourse (Arndt & Janney, 1991; Bloch, 1996; Caffi & Janney, 1994 and Selting, 1994).

Finally, the third section focuses on the construction of social identities and emotions (§ 3.6). I will start with a review of the feminist poststructuralist positions, which see identity as dynamic, multiple and changeable “sites of struggle” (§ 3.6.1); subsequently, I will describe the notion of language investment (§ 3.6.2), and that of language desire (§ 3.6.3), which have been crucial in my study for the understanding of participants’ language learning and emotional experience during their YA.

The chapter concludes with some reflections (§ 3.6.4) on the gaps of the literature on identities and emotions in the Year Abroad research context. Recent work on the YA shows a growing interest in identity and second language learning (e.g. Block, 2007 and Jackson, 2008), but the emotional and emotive dimensions of such experience is still under researched territory, hence my focus on it in this doctoral research.

3.2. Early theorisation of emotions

The word “emotion” derives from the Latin term *e + movere* (to move) and it initially referred to both psychological and bodily states. As Averill (1980) asserts:

It originally meant to migrate or transfer from one place to another. It also was used to refer to states of agitation or perturbation, both physical (e.g. the weather) and psychological. It is this latter, somewhat metaphorical usage that gave the term emotion its modern meaning.

(Averill, 1980:37)

Today there is general agreement among most scholars about causes and consequences of emotions. They are defined as phenomena “provoked by immediate perception of external events or by ideational recall of previously perceived provoking circumstances” (McKeller, 1952: 80).

Early commentary on emotions was made more than a century ago by James (1892), who proposed a rather simplistic and evaluative classification between *coarser* and *subtler* emotions. In the first group he included: anger, fear, love, hate, joy, grief, shame and pride; in the second one, those related to religious, aesthetic and intellectual experiences.

From a more introspective perspective, a significant advance in emotions research was made by Sigmund Freud, father of psychoanalysis, who investigated the manifestation of unconscious emotions, rather than those that one explicitly expresses (Freud: 1914). He stated that subjects could be reluctant to show their affective states, despite the fact that they can possibly express them involuntarily through verbal communication or signs. Freud suggested that all emotions can be ‘adjustive’¹ to a stimulus. Stimuli leading to the recall of negative experiences are expressed through visible negative signs, stimuli evoking positive happenings provoke positive perceptible responses.

Freud’s conception of ‘cathexis’ (1927) around positive and negative emotional expression can be compared to Jung’s theories about ‘libido’ and to the two attitude types of introversion and extroversion (Jung, 1940). Jung identified in between these two extremes a special place for all sorts of subtler emotional stimulus-responses, which could be repressed or extraverted by the individual. Jung (1940) and Allport’s (1937) early theories on personality provided the basis for modern theorisation of and empirical

approaches to personality traits (see, among others: Allport, 1966; Eysenck & Eysenck: 1985; Eysenck, 1970, 1982, 1991; McCrae & John, 1992; Costa & McCrae, 1987, 1992; Goldberg, 1990, 1992, 1993).

In the 1960s and 1970s, a shift took place in the disciplines of psychology, anthropology, linguistics, and this led to the consideration of emotions in close relation to sociocultural and linguistic components (cfr. Davitz, 1964, 1969; Levy, 1973; Riesman, 1977; Schieffelin, 1976). Averill (1980) was probably one of the first theorists to consider emotions in their social dimension. Asserting that emotions are social constructions or “responses that have been institutionalised by society as a means of resolving conflicts which exist within the social system” (Averill, 1980: 37), he highlighted the fact that emotions and culture are in close relation, since they can be the result of ‘rules of culture’.

Building on this premise, Averill then developed a cognitive view of emotions which posited states of high motivation as turning points between passion and action. Initially, he seemed to be primarily concerned with the relationship between emotional systems and psychological and biological factors, but he later rejected the conventional separation between emotion and cognition, since he took the view that emotions are products of both multifaceted cognitive processes and cultural products such as religion, art and science. Therefore, as he stated, “investigation into the sociocultural determinants of thought (e.g. the sociology of knowledge) is relevant to emotional processes also” (Averill, 1980: 67).

Averill’s work paved the way for later research on the social construction of emotions (cf. Harré, 1986; Kemper, 1987; Fisher & Chon, 1989; Ratner, 1989; Greenwood, 1992 and Oatley, 1993). This work is based on the conviction that [adult]

emotions come from social and cultural practices, and therefore, they are relative and can change over time. In this view, they are shaped by language, and to a certain extent they can be socially constructed (Strongman, 1996: 220)².

Averill's work is undoubtedly a very useful tool for the analysis of individuals' social construction of emotions. However, I have not taken up his work in my analysis, since I needed an analytical approach which could embrace all my data. I retained lexical analysis since I felt it was particularly applicable to my data. Indeed, in line with Pavlenko's studies on emotions and multilingualism (2005) I was looking for a way of capturing the relationship between semantic (verbal, linguistic) and conceptual (individual, psychological) aspects of emotions, and I found that the propositional analysis, devised by Clore et al. (1987) was a reasonably productive direction for me, since it allowed me to identify the terms that participants' used to express their emotions in the qualitative data that I gathered. In fact, as stated by Pavlenko (2005: 211), "conceptual categories are best elucidated through naturalistic methods such as diaries, interviews, questionnaires, and ethnographies".

3.3. Emotions in Intercultural Communication

Over the last two decades, studies on emotions in Intercultural Communication (IC) have also started to appear. A host of researchers across different research traditions have started to become interested in the expression and description of emotions in different cultural contexts. As stated by Pavlenko and Dewaele (2002):

In the last two decades particular attention has been paid to ways emotions are expressed in different languages and cultures. Several linguists, psychologists, and anthropologists have demonstrated that emotion talk, concepts, and scripts may differ across cultures and that, as a result, some emotion words may have no translation equivalents (Altarriba, 2003; Athanasiadou & Tabakowska, 1998;

Heelas, 1986; Lakoff, 1987; Levy, 1984; Lutz, 1988; Rosaldo, 1980; Wierzbicka, 1999).

(Pavlenko & Dewaele, 2002: 264)

Most of research on emotions in Intercultural Communication has been conducted with a special focus on non-verbal behaviour and on a semantic and conceptual level (e.g. the work by Ekman, 1980, 1982, 1993, 2003; Dewaele & Pavlenko, 2002; Panayotou, 2004a, 2004b and Wierzbicka 1992a, 1992b, 1999, 2004).³

Emotional talk and its variation from one cultural context to another, as well as intercultural miscommunication, have been also taken into consideration especially through research employing an interactional sociolinguistic lens (e.g. Gumperz, 1982a, 1982b and Holden & Hogan, 1993). Indeed, emotional talk is a rich area of enquiry and further investigation in this direction can be useful to those developing foreign language curricula and to foreign and second language learners, who may experience vulnerability in this area (Scollon & Scollon, 2001: 149).

Emotions are an interdisciplinary phenomenon and as such, their interpretation in Intercultural Communication is still the centre of numerous debates (cf. Bamberg, 1997 and Wierzbicka, 1997). Theorists seem to be divided on the role of emotions in the construction of identities and on the ways in which they can be reliably described in multilingual contexts, i.e. through a semantic and conceptual approach or through an appraisal process (Ellsworth & Scherer, 2003).

As suggested by Pavlenko (2005), it would be interesting to conduct additional diachronic studies which take account of spontaneous talk in naturalistic settings (such as those conducted by Edward, 1997 and by White, 1990) and which also incorporate aspects unique to multilingual contexts, e.g. language choice or code-switching

(Pavlenko, 2005: 150). Moreover, non-verbal behaviour across cultures still remains an underexplored field of research, as does the influence of personality traits in intercultural encounters. However, these areas have not been explored in my research study because of time and space constraints, but they are surely worthy of being taken into account in further investigations.

3.4. Cross-cultural perspectives

The early use of the term ‘emotion’, which referred to both psychological and physical dimensions, reminds us of the inevitable and intimate link between individuals’ inner states and external contexts, a view that is shared, amongst others, by contemporary cross-cultural psychological researchers (e.g. Markus et al., 1995; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Markus & Nurius, 1991, Matsumoto, 2000 and Matsumoto et al. 2008).

While most cross-cultural psychologists still focus on the universal and biological innateness of basic emotions, recent studies also show the need to consider (basic and subtler) emotions as subjective experiences which are socially constructed and culturally shaped. As stated by Matsumoto and Luang (2008):

[T]he existence of universals and innate biological substrate of emotion does not preclude the possibility that cultures can also construct much of their experience. It seems, therefore, that cultural construction of emotional experience can occur above and beyond the baseline that is provided by basic emotion with universal expressions.

(Matsumoto & Luang, 2008: 222)

Indeed, one of the most pressing needs for cross-cultural research on emotions is the necessity to conduct more studies in real contexts, rather than in artificial ones,

where judgements on emotions are based on stimuli often without context information or manipulation (Matsumoto et al., 2001: 186).

Markus and Kitayama (1991) have classified emotions into two particular kinds: “socially disengaged” and “socially engaged” emotions. Emotions that are associated with independence, or *social disengagement*, such as pride and feeling of superiority, according to Markus et al. (1995), “most typically result from the satisfaction or confirmation of internal attributes, such as goals, desires or rights” (Markus et al., 1995: 445); whereas emotions that are associated with interdependence, or *social engagement*, such as anger and frustration “result from the blocking of those goals, desires or rights” (Ibid.).

Hence, according to contemporary cross-cultural psychological perspectives, emotions are an integral part of individuals’ personality and the representation of their ‘self’, which is in close and mutual relationship with their sociocultural contexts (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). Indeed, the psychological concepts of ‘possible and ideal selves’ were developed by cross-cultural psychological researchers over two decades ago (Higgins, 1987; Markus, 1977 and Markus & Nurius, 1986) to describe the representation of individuals’ personality in future states (cf. Dörnyei, 2005).

Matsumoto et al. (2001) added a further dimension to the study of emotions, culture and personality, by suggesting a focus on psychological adjustment to cultural difference, as a result of attempts at adaptation, which is “the process of altering one’s behaviour to fit in with a changed environment or circumstances, or as a response to social pressure” (Matsumoto et al., 2007: 4).⁴

Matsumoto et al. (2001) proposed the Intercultural Adjustment Potential Scale (ICAPS), that is a model of personal growth which considers, to put it into Matsumoto

et al.'s (2001) words, the “psychological mechanisms by which intercultural success or stagnation, personal growth or vindication, will occur” (Matsumoto et al., 2007: 9). These mechanisms are based on emotions internal to individuals and they are: Critical Thinking (CT), Openness (OP), Flexibility (FL) and Emotion Regulation (ER). The latter is considered as the gatekeeper of this model since, according to Matsumoto et al. (2007), emotions are central to these psychological processes.

Indeed, finding a constructive way to deal with one's own emotions, especially when living in new contexts, seems to be crucial in the successful handling of intercultural encounters. The participants in my study expressed their emotions with striking saliency in their accounts and therefore I decided to pursue this aspect of their accounts of the YA as shown in one of my data analysis chapters (chapter 7). I briefly considered Matsumoto et al.'s (2001) ICAPS model as a means of analysing of their psychological adjustment to cultural difference but eventually I decided not to use it since research findings based on this model were generated inside a laboratory and the model was not appropriate for study of real life adjustments during a period of study abroad. My data were mostly gathered through interviews and observations in naturalistic environments, therefore, I could have not used them for the purposes listed by Matsumoto et al. (2001).

Nonetheless, this model does appear to offer new perspectives on the study of individuals' reactions to cultural difference. In particular, it sheds light on the inevitability of conflicts and misunderstandings in Intercultural Communication, which often stem from ethnocentric and stereotypic points of view, and on the necessity to regulate or rein in negative emotional reactions in intercultural encounters. This particular way of conceptualising the relationship between emotions and intercultural

awareness proved to be relevant to my analysis of my participants' accounts of their lived experiences and, although I have not applied the model to my study, I found the general orientation provided by the model useful when considering the extent to which my participants engaged in successful intercultural communication, and when assessing their ability to control their negative emotional reactions and to reflect on their experiences (see § 7.4). Indeed, as noted by Matsumoto & Juang (2008),

[t]hose who can control their emotions will be able to engage in a more constructive intercultural process, opening the door to more successful intercultural interactions. Those who cannot will have that door closed to them. Emotions, therefore, hold the key to successful intercultural experiences.

(Matsumoto & Juang, 2008: 247)

At the present time, there is an increasing body of cross-disciplinary and comparative research on the complex, situated and wide ranging relationship between emotions, culture and language. This research clearly reveals the need to take account of emotions in our analysis of naturally occurring conversational interaction in intercultural encounters – bilingual, monolingual and multilingual (e.g. the work by Pavlenko, 2005, 2006; Pavlenko & Dewaele, 2002; Dewaele, 2004 and Wierzbicka, 1999, 2004).

3.5. Verbal expression of emotions

As I have implied earlier, studies of the interpretation of language and emotions in verbal communication are traditionally carried out in the framework of interactional sociolinguistics (IS). The pioneer of the IS tradition was Gumperz (1982a), who conducted a series of studies on discourse in interaction investigating social, sociocognitive and linguistic constructs, and adding new perspectives to sociolinguistic

theory with the development of significant analytic methods and ways of analysing situated talk (Gumperz, 1982b: 2).

Gumperz (1982a) viewed prosody as a reliable element of verbal interaction, since it is through prosody that speakers are able to exchange information and sustain conversation. He considered conversational interaction in its three basic phonological dimensions, those are *frequency*, *amplitude* and *duration*. He also contributed to advances in the study of intonation, loudness, stress, phrasing, shift in registers, code switching and variations in vowel length (Gumperz, 1982a: 100). His main interest in prosody lays in its role in conversational inference, that is to put it into Tannen's (1993) words, "a process requisite for conversational involvement, [which] is made possible by contextualisation cues that signal the speech activity in which participants perceive themselves to be engaged" (Tannen, 1993: 4).

These views on discourse and prosody belong to what Couper-Kuhlen (2001) calls the *contextualisation-cue paradigm*. This approach considers discourse as firmly grounded in verbal interaction, as contributing in the embedding of meanings in context and even as defining or redefining the context. Other approaches to discourse derive from distinct research traditions, which see intonation (an integral part of prosody) either as part of the grammar, or purely as a means of signalling shifts in topics and in information processing (Couper-Kuhlen, 2001: 14-17).

The term 'contextualisation cue' refers to any sign in a speech exchange, involving two or more individuals, which serves as a means of embedding meanings in context. As stated by Gumperz (2001) the term refers to any verbal or non-verbal sign (e.g. code switching, prosody and rhythm) that when used together with grammatical

and lexical items, helps to “construct the contextual ground for situated interpretation and thereby affects how constituent messages are understood” Gumperz (2001: 221)⁵.

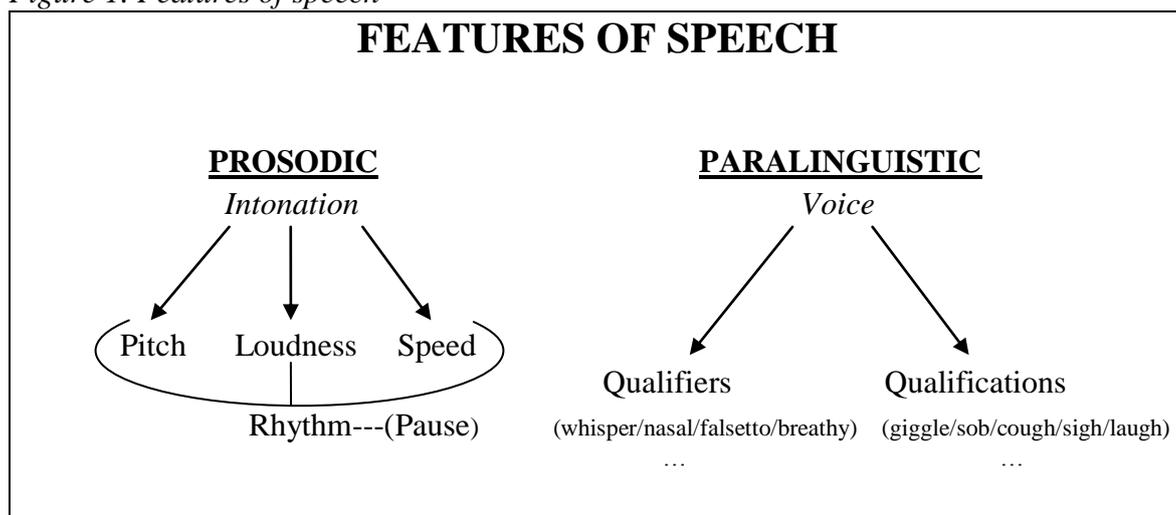
Gumperz’s early theories about verbal interaction, about the investigation of the ways in which speakers endeavour to reach their communicative goals, and about *conversational inference* and different kinds of *speech activities* (Gumperz, 1982a) had a major impact on the interactional approach to language, and they still provide the main conceptual basis for studies within the IS research tradition (Couper-Kuhlen, 1986; Gumperz & Hymes, 1986 and Tannen, 1989, 1993).

The role of vocal cues in the expression of affect and emotions is usually considered in terms of *prosodic* and *paralinguistic* features (Pavlenko, 2005: 49). The main vocal cues in the expression of affect are *prosodic* features. These occur more frequently in discourse than the paralinguistic features, and are the melodic characteristics of speech (Wells, 2006). As stated by Couper-Kuhlen (1986:5), prosody can be viewed from three different speech perspectives, which are dependent one on another, those are: *articulatory* (from the perspective of the speaker), *auditory* (from the perspective of the hearer) and *acoustic* (signals from speaker to hearer). Wells (2006) provides a useful definition of prosodic features, dividing them into three dimensions: (1) *pitch*; (2) *loudness*; and (3) *speed* or tempo or speech rate (whose inverse is the duration of the constituent segment). These three dimensions form together the *rhythm* of the speech, which combined with pause, namely stretches of silence, break up the flow of the speech (Wells, 2006: 3).

The other main vocal cues in the expression of affect are *paralinguistic* features. Most discourse and conversational analysts agree on the fact that the main paralinguistic feature is *voice*, namely voice modification that sporadically occurs in discourse.

Couper-Kuhlen (1986) distinguishes between voice *qualifiers*, e.g. whisper, falsetto, nasal or breathy voice; and voice *qualifications*, e.g. giggle or sob (cf. Scherer, 1986, Scherer et al. 2001 and Frick 1985) (see *Figure 1*). However, Couper-Kuhlen also admits that paralinguistic features “are often not given their due: either they are subsumed under the intonation or prosody or they ignored altogether” (Couper-Kuhlen, 1986: 184).

Figure 1. Features of speech



(Adapted from Couper-Kuhlen, 1986; Gumperz, 1982a & Wells, 2006)

In my study, I initially considered a prosodic focus based on Interactional Sociolinguistics. However, interaction analysis and conversational analysis are most applicable to the analysis of spontaneous conversational interaction. Had I been able to audio-record my participants actually talking in Italian to someone this would have been a productive line of investigation, but I did not have very much data of this kind. The methods I used in my study were those which were best suited to addressing my research questions and to analysing the kind of data that I had. Indeed, my central body of data consisted of semi-structured interviews and, therefore, in order to address my research questions, I carried out thematic and lexical analysis of the interviews instead of conversational analysis.

3.6. Perspectives on emotions from Pragmatics

My research brings together perspectives on emotions from the fields of social psychology, pragmatics and sociolinguistics. The fields of pragmatics and sociolinguistics, in particular, have experienced a shift within the last decade towards the use of new, unified conceptual frameworks in research on emotions. As Pavlenko (2005) has pointed out:

For many years, emotions in language have been examined only through the lens of vocal communication, concepts, or metaphors. It is only in the past decades that we have begun seeing theoretical proposals for a unified **pragmatics of emotive communication**.

(Pavlenko, 2005: 113)

Within these pragmatic discursive frameworks, emotions are considered as part of socially-constructed, dynamic and fundamentally interactive processes expressed through specific emotive linguistic devices, such as prosodic or lexical cues (Arndt & Janney, 1991).

According to Arndt and Janney (1991), “emotional communication” needs to be clearly distinguished from “emotive communication”. They define *emotional communication* as spontaneous and often unintentional responses to internal states, whereas *emotive communication* is described as the conscious, strategic modification of socially learned, cognitively mediated and intentionally performed affective signals (Arndt & Janney, 1991: 529).

Research on prosody in emotive communication has started to appear only in the last two decades (Arndt & Janney, 1991, Caffi & Janney, 1994; Holden & Hogan, 1993 and Selting, 1994). This research mainly focuses on a variety of prosodic cues in stretches of emotion discourse, particularly on emotive contrasts signalled in speech

through cues such as pitch placement, prominence and direction (Arndt & Janney, 1991: 535), and on the use of contrastive devices (e.g. positive/negative, confident/doubtful, clear/vague, more/less) as indicated by Caffi & Janney (1994).

As far as research into emotional communication is concerned, its conceptual frameworks can be found in the hitherto embryonic, interdisciplinary research tradition that combines linguistics, sociology and psychology (cf. Bloch, 1996; Retzinger, 1991; Scheff, 1990; Scheff and Retzinger, 1991 and Pittman, 1994).

Bloch (1996) conducted an excellent conversational analysis of emotional communication. She analysed a series of self-reported participants' *flow experiences*, namely ongoing activities or situations, containing perceptions, thoughts and feelings, in which participants were an integral part (Bloch, 1996: 324) (cf. Chafe, 2001). Bloch's main aim was that of identifying possible links between linguistic features and the expression of positive self-feelings (such as excitement, delight, self-respect, pride) and negative self-feelings (such as anger, uncertainty, shame) in everyday life. Her empirical results showed that specific paralinguistic markers, such as stuttering, stammering, repetition, filler words, pauses, mumbling, incoherent speech, low, feeble voice quality, usually signalled negative self-feelings; whereas other paralinguistic markers, such as midstream inhalation, laughing, smiling, and moved or touched voice quality, and other [commonly known as prosodic]⁶ markers e.g. rapid flowing, melodious and direct speech, indicated positive self-feelings. However, she also revealed that certain paralinguistic signs, such as laughed words, extension, condensed speech, inhalation, exhalation, soft voice and emphasis, are ambiguous, given that in her studies they signalled negative self-feelings in a number of contexts and positive self-feelings in others (Bloch, 1996: 330).

As mentioned above, due to the constraints on data gathering in my study, I was not able to explore the potential of a conversational analysis approach. Neither was I able to explore the prosodic and paralinguistic aspects of my data, since I had not recorded spontaneous talk between my participants and their regular interlocutors. I therefore focussed on emotive communication (namely retrospective talk about emotions) and, to begin with, I adopted a propositional and semantic analysis. I chose the term emotive communication to indicate my participants' expression of emotions in their accounts of intercultural encounters, where they use the terms to describe their emotions in a conscious, intentional and cognitive way. More specifically, I considered the emotion lexicon that participants used to describe and represent their experience of emotion.

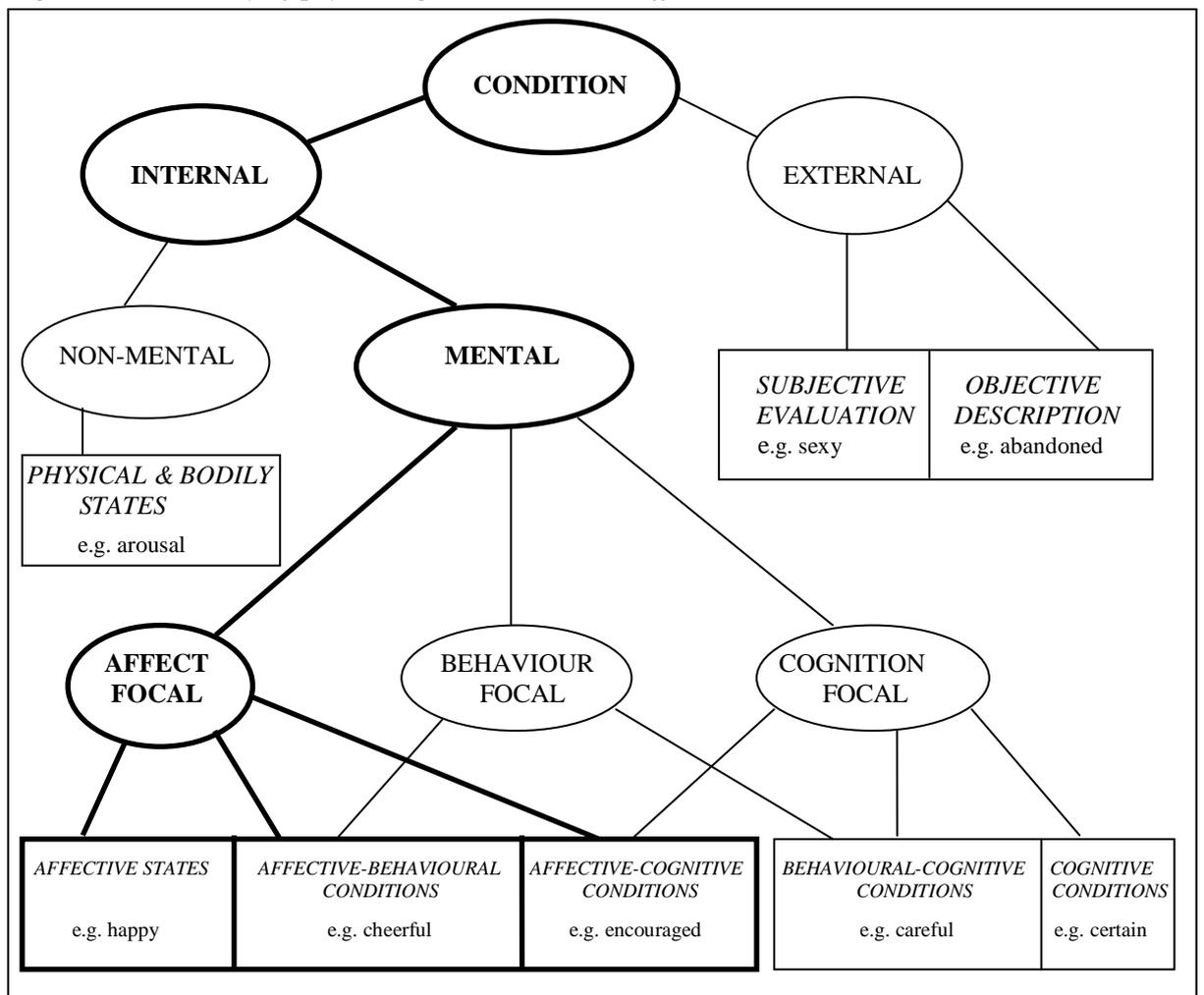
3.7. Researching an affective lexicon

As is shown in one of my data analysis chapters (Chapter 7), I approached the propositional and semantic analysis of emotions from a social psychological perspective, namely through the identification of affective lexicon based on *Clore et al.*'s (1987) taxonomy of psychological conditions, specifically on the emotion terms that referred to the internal-mental-affect focal condition. The lexical analysis I conducted was quantitative in nature, and was therefore decontextualised. Nevertheless, it provided a starting point for my study. I used it as a trigger to develop a more interpretative ethnographic analysis of the data collected (cf. Chapters 6 and 7).

Clore et al. (1987) proposed eight different categories, joined together into four broad classes. The categories were: 1) Subjective Evaluations and Objective Descriptions (which together constitute the External Conditions class); 2) Cognitive Conditions and Cognitive-Behavioural Conditions (constituting the Cognitive

Conditions class); 3) Physical and Bodily States (which is a class of its own, and constitutes Non-Mental conditions); 4) and the categories of Affective States, Affective-Cognitive Conditions, and Affective-Behavioural Conditions (which constitute the Affective Conditions class). Mental Conditions give rise to five categories, depending on which of the three major meaning components, behaviour, affect or cognition, they mainly focussed on (see *Figure 2*).

Figure 2. Taxonomy of psychological conditions: Affective lexicon



(Derived from Clore et al., 1987: 753)

Clore et al. (1987) hypothesized that the best examples of emotion words would be those that refer to internal (as opposed to external) conditions, those that refer to

mental (as opposed to non mental) conditions, and those that have a significant focus on affect.

This taxonomy emerged from an analysis of a sample of almost 600 English words in which Clore et al. (1987) considered what kind of condition each term referred to. More than four hundred undergraduate psychology students participated in the study. They were divided into groups of 20 to 30, with each person rating a sample of affective terms. The study was designed so that the average rating for each item would be based on approximately 20 observations. Their empirical results confirmed that the lexical items related to *Affect-focal Mental Conditions* that had shown little difference between feeling/being could be confidently rated as emotions (e.g. *feeling/being* happy).

These advances offer a valid contribution to the study of emotions, nevertheless, as Clore et al. (1987) clearly stated, their study is not a theory of emotions, rather it is one possible heuristic approach to the identification of the psychological states that need to be considered in theories of emotions (Clore et al., 1987: 754).

Conceptual frameworks are still being refined in current research on emotions and verbal communication. There is scope for examining different kinds of data. As stated by Bloch (1996):

So far the emotional dimensions of social life, both on level of everyday and the level of social institutions, have not been given much theoretical attention. An enlargement of the interpretative possibilities of the conversational interview may have crucial and far-reaching importance as it would enable us to reveal the powerful forces of emotions operating in social life.

(Bloch, 1996: 337)

We need more fine-grained advances of emotive and emotional communication in different social contexts, so that we can begin to extend theory-building. We need to ask not only *how* members of the society express their emotions verbally, but also *why* they do (or do not) express them in particular ways in particular contexts. I believe that further investigation along these lines of a discourse analytic nature, which incorporates perspectives from the strands of intercultural communication and of cross-cultural psychology that I have discussed above (see Chapter 2 and § 3.2.1), would allow us to understand emotions in a wider intercultural spectrum (cf. Ellworth & Scherer, 2003; Markus et al., 1995 and Matsumoto, 2000, 2008).

3.8. Identities and emotions from a poststructuralist perspective

As my study unfolded, I began to look into the poststructuralist literature on identity and language learning as a social practice, that is the literature which focuses on the construction and negotiation of second language identities (e.g. the work by Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). I paid particular attention to the notions of emotional investment (Norton Pierce, 1995 and Norton 2000) and language desire (Piller & Takahashi, 2006; Takahashi, 2009 and forthcoming), and, finding them particularly useful, I applied them to my analysis of participants' accounts of their language learning and emotional experiences during their Year Abroad.

These notions have helped me to understand how, why and to what extent my participants gained (or were denied) access to Italian communities of practice, and to explain their romantic and often idealised, but not necessarily gendered, discursive construction of new linguistic identities during their stay in Italy. I, therefore, review this literature here (§3.6.1, § 3.6.2 and § 3.6.3).

3.8.1. Poststructuralist discourse on identity

A poststructuralist approach sees social identities as non-unitary, mutually constitutive and changing over time and as sites of struggle. According to this theoretical standpoint, individuals' identities are seen as multiple and contradictory (Weedon, 1987, 1997). Within a critical poststructuralist perspective, it is argued that there are dominant discourses of identity (e.g. about femininity or about successful language learning) that circulate in society (in powerful institutions like the media, the academy and so on) and individuals have to navigate these discourses, accepting, recasting or contesting them.

This notion of social identities, as in Norton's study (1995: 20), has helped me to understand my participants' stories and to explain the circumstances in which my participants spoke Italian or, conversely, remained silent. As stated by Norton (2000: 14), "poststructuralists take the position that the signifying practices of societies are sites of struggle, and that linguistic communities are heterogeneous arenas characterized by conflicting claims to truth and power" (cf. also Bourdieu, 1977, 1991 and Heller, 1982).

Relations of power are at the heart of poststructuralist thought about discourse. They are considered as key elements for the understanding of the shaping of individuals' identities. As I indicated above, in this view, discourses about are continually being imposed, negotiated or contested. The idea of identity as a site of struggle has its origins in Hegel's concept of relationships of domination. He highlighted the importance of social recognition as one of the most influential elements in an individual's construction of identity. As Alcoff and Mediatea have stated:

Hegel's argument suggests that, rather than being extraneous to the self, socially recognized identity is a necessity of the self, in order to be able to operate as a capable moral agent, for example, or as a valid participant in civil society.

(Alcoff & Mendieta, 2000: 4)

Weedon (1987, 1997) links this concept of power, to a theory of *subjectivity*, that is the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of individuals, their sense of themselves and their ways of understanding their relations to the world (Weedon, 1997: 32). According to her, it is within this sphere of subjectivity that identity emerges and manifests itself, changing over time and acquiring multi-nature connotations.

Norton (2000) espouses these poststructuralist theories about identity as a site of struggle. She uses the term "to reference how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (2000: 5).

Norton (2000) was one of the first to draw attention to the fact that language is central to language learners' construction of identity. She also argued that the study of relations of *power* (often unequal) and interactions between language learners and target language speakers are very important in order to understand identity. She defined the term 'power' as "the socially constructed relations among individuals, institutions and communities through which material [e.g. money, real estates and capital goods] and symbolic [e.g. language, religion, education and friendship] resources in a society are produced, distributed and validated" (Norton, 2000: 7).

Norton (2000) carried out a longitudinal study among five immigrant women, who were learning English in Canada. She constantly emphasised the struggle her participants had to undergo in order to construct and negotiate their identities. This was

due in part to the relations of power her participants encountered, and also, to other factors, such as motivation, ethnicity, gender and class.

In opposition to current humanist conceptions of the individual, she firmly asserts that:

Poststructuralism depicts the individual as diverse, contradictory, and dynamic; multiple rather than unitary, decentred rather than centred [...] the conception of identity as a struggle is an extension of the position that social identity is multiple and contradictory. Subjectivity is produced in a variety of sites, all of which are structured by relations of power in which the person takes up different subject positions – teacher, mother, manager, critic – some positions of which may be in conflict with others. In addition the subject is not conceived of as passive; he/she [...] has human agency.

(Norton Pierce, 1995: 15)

Human agency is, indeed, a major feature of poststructuralist views of identity. Individuals have the ability to resist others' positioning within a particular social discourse, hence the notion of struggle. They can say 'no' to unequal relations of power and to the imposition of particular identities, and they might even "set up a counter-discourse, which positions the person in a powerful rather than marginalised subject position" (Norton 2000: 127)⁷.

Building on poststructuralist thought, Norton also demonstrates in her study that the concept of identity is not fixed, and can dramatically change over time. The same standpoint is taken by Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000) who analysed the concept of identity through the first-person narratives of their participants. Their study provides revealing insights into the life stories of people, who have struggled through cultural border crossing before (re)constructing their identities. Here the function of narratives becomes crucial, as it is used to tell stories and to construct individuals' own reality. Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000), imply that we would all construct our own narrative so as to give a cohesive sense to our lives; and when unexpected events happen, we need to

adjust the narrative, since failure to adjust to or to accept new events could lead to cognitive and emotional instability. As they state:

Narrative takes on an especially clear function when people are confronted with disturbing and anomalous circumstances, such as a natural disaster, an assassination of a community leader, etc. In such cases people generally [should] become talkative.

(Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000: 160)

Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) also emphasised the importance of narratives in individuals' lives and in their negotiation of identities (cf. Pavlenko, 2007). It is, indeed, through narratives that we can resolve tension and impose coherence between past, present and future (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004: 18). In this view, identities are seen as dynamic and individuals as continuously involved in the production of selves, in the positioning of others, in the revision and creation of identity narratives, which give value to new modes of being and belonging (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004: 19).

Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000) identified three main phases in the process of identity (re)construction in second language learning: a phase of loss, a phase of recovery and, finally, a phase of (re)construction, becoming a second language speaker. Nevertheless, they also emphasised that:

It is ultimately through their own intentions and agency that people decide to undergo or not the frequently agonizing process of linguistic, cultural, and personal transformation [...]. This decision may be influenced by various factors, including one's positioning in the native discourse and the power relations between the discourses involved.

(Pavlenko and Lantolf, 2000: 171)

What Pavlenko and Lantolf described as an 'agonizing process' can be related to what Norton called 'site of struggle', as they are both trying to portray the experiential side of negotiating identities. According to these poststructuralist views, the

(re)construction of identity turns out to be a tough and painful process along the way, inevitably linked to a range of emotions (cf. Pavlenko, 2005 and 2006).

Hence, as shown in this section, the key concepts for the analysis of my participants' negotiation of identities in the new Italian contexts, were drawn from a poststructuralist approach which gives primacy to individuals' *sphere of subjectivity* (cf. Weedon, 1987) and *relations of power* in interactions (cf. Norton, 2000). More specifically, in one of my data analysis chapters (Chapter 6), I have adopted the notion of *emotional investment* developed by Pavlenko (forthcoming) building on the poststructuralist notion of investment proposed by Norton Pierce (1995).

3.8.2. *Emotional investment*

The process of (re)constructing and negotiating identities in new contexts, particularly through a second or additional language, can, as mentioned above, be agonizing and emotionally draining. In particular it requires individuals to put a great deal of effort in order to deal with their emotions⁸.

Poststructuralist views of identities as socially and discursively constructed runs parallel to the 'theory of positioning' developed by the discursive psychologists Davies & Harré in the late 1990s (see Davies & Harré, 1990, 2001 and Harré et al., 2009). The theory presupposes a flexible and ephemeral view of individuals' roles in society, and it highlights the role of language (or discourse) in the ways in which people assume subject positions or are positioned by others.

A discursive approach to identity is also adopted by social constructionists, who, as pointed out by Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004), consider "identity options as constructed, validated, and offered through discourse available to individuals at a

particular point in time and place” (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004: 14). The general trend in current sociolinguistic work on identity is to link these insights of social constructionism with critical Poststructuralism. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) were the first to do this explicitly.

In my study, drawing on Pavlenko’s views (forthcoming) about emotions in multilingual contexts, I have adopted a stance on identities as *emotional, discursive sites of struggle*, in which L2 speakers are seen as inclined to feel and talk about their language learning experience and the struggles they go through “to establish their legitimacy in the face of indifference, disinterest, and sometimes linguistic, ethnic, racial or gender discrimination” (Pavlenko, forthcoming: 3). Central to this view is the concept of emotional investment in new or desired identities.

The notion of emotional investment builds on the notion of language investment introduced by Norton Pierce (1995), as a way of reconceptualising the literature on motivation for language learning from a poststructuralist point of view. In more traditional motivation studies the focus is more on individual differences than on the impact that the social context can have on learners’ second language acquisition (Cf. Dörnyei, 2005; Gardner, 1985 and Ushioda, 1996)⁹. The classic concepts of instrumental and integrative motivation, proposed by Gardner and Lambert in the early 70s (Gardner & Lambert, 1972) had been considered as a possible line of enquiry in this research. However, when I looked closely at my participants’ accounts of their lived experiences in Italy, I realised that I needed a more comprehensive analytical tool which could embrace the multifaceted relationships between the participants in my study and their second language, and a conceptual framework which was based on a view of language learning as a situated social and cultural practice. I, therefore, found the notion

of language investment particularly appropriate for my analysis, one that was grounded in critical poststructuralist theory.

Norton Pierce (1995) proposed the notion of *investment* to capture the complex socially and historically constructed relationship of language learners to the target language and their sometimes ambivalent desire to learn and to speak it (Norton Pierce, 1995: 9). According to her, language learners' investment in a second language acts as a mediator between their desire to speak the language and their motivation to go through the long drawn out process of learning new language forms and conventions of use.

The concept of investment builds on the notion of *cultural capital* developed by Bourdieu and Passeron in the late 1970s (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977, 1990), a metaphor borrowed from the language of economics, and adapted for the analysis of other fields of action or social contexts (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991). In this sense, 'fields of action' are intended as the places where different kinds of resources or capitals are distributed. According to Bourdieu (1991), there are different forms of capital, besides 'economic capital' in the strict sense (i.e. money, stocks and shares, property, etc.), there are also other kinds of capital, such as 'cultural capital' (i.e. skills, knowledge and other cultural acquisitions), 'symbolic capital' (i.e. honour or accumulated prestige), and so on. In his view, one form of capital can be converted into another, for example educational qualifications can be converted into profitable jobs, and the maintenance or alteration of the distribution of such capital requires continuous 'struggles' by individuals in order to pursue their aims, namely to generate 'returns' on their *investments* in these fields of action (Bourdieu, 1991: 14).

Norton Pierce (1995) adapted this concept to second language learners, taking the position that if learners *invest* in another language, they will acquire a greater range

of symbolic and material resources, which will consecutively enlarge their cultural capital. The amount of profitable return obtained from learners' investment (i.e. accessibility to previously remote resources of target language speakers) will depend on the amount of effort they make to learn the second language (Norton, 1995: 17).

Moreover, when learners invest in another language they are also investing in the construction of a new identity. Indeed, the notion of investment, as stated by Norton (2000),

presupposes that when language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with target language speakers, but they are constantly organizing and reorganizing *a sense of who they are* and how they relate to the social world. Thus an investment in the target language is also an investment in a learner's own identity.

(Norton, 2000: 10-11)

Learners' investment in a new language involves a constant struggle for access to social networks within target language communities and a struggle to avoid marginalization and alienation from them. As indicated earlier, the idea of individuals' struggle in building up new identities as competent speakers of the shared communities is central to the poststructuralist conception of identity as a subjective way of understanding the world (Weedon, 1997). Also central to these views is the desire to be part of real or imagined target language communities of practice. Indeed, a great deal of emotion can accompany the dynamic and transformative real-time process involved in individuals' (re)construction of their identities: language learners' can feel proud and content about reaching their linguistic goals, or, on the contrary, they may experience shame and loss in confidence for not doing so.

These emotions are bound up with learners' *investments* in desired identities. When language learners become aware of the kinds of emotions that are triggered by

different language learning experiences, it can be of great help to them, since they can evaluate the outcomes of plans, make changes in goals, persist, abandon, or modify their plans and goals and take action (Pavlenko, forthcoming: 9).

For instance, Alice, the participant in Kinginger's ethnographic longitudinal study of French language learning (2004), felt frustrated and sad, sometimes even angry, bored and depressed, about being deliberately marginalised by her second language (French) being withheld by people in positions of relative power, such as her teacher (Kinginger, 2004: 230). Nevertheless, her desire to move beyond her past and to accomplish her professional aspirations (therefore her *investments* in the target language) paid off in her struggles to achieve L2 competence. She eventually managed to gain access to informal interaction with French language speakers (Kinginger, 2004: 241).

Sometimes the communities of which learners wish to be part, are only 'imagined communities' (cf. Lave & Wenger, 1991 and Wenger, 1998) sustained by a romantic image of the target language (country, people, culture etc.) together with the desire to make this image real (Kinginger, 2004: 227). As pointed out by Norton (2001), learners' imagined communities lead to imagined identities, and, therefore, learners' investments must be considered within this context. Norton (2001) argues that, since different learners have different imagined communities these "are best understood in the context of a learner's unique *investment* in the target language and the conditions under which he or she speaks and practices it" (Norton, 2001: 165-166)¹⁰.

To sum up, Bourdieu and Passeron's (1977) notion of *cultural capital* underpins the poststructuralist notion of emotional investment. According to them social contexts are fields of action where different resources (symbolic and material) are distributed in

various forms of convertible capital. The distribution of such capital requires continuous ‘struggles’ by individuals in order to pursue their aims, namely their *investments* in these fields of action.

If learners *invest* in another language, they will expand their range of resources and will then enlarge their cultural capital. Obviously, the amount of *return* obtained from learners’ investments will depend on the amount of *effort* they make and on the *challenges* for acceptance they tackle when learning the second language. These aspects are shown quite clearly in my participants’ accounts, where they describe the extent to which they were willing to make efforts and to accept struggles and challenges while Italian learning in Italy (see Chapter 6).

As I have shown, investing in another language also means investing in a new identity. In other words, when L2 learners try to reach language-specific goals and build up convertible cultural capital, they are also investing in new identities, since there are constantly re-evaluating their sphere of subjectivity, namely a sense of who they are in relation to their surroundings. This process involves emotions as well as thoughts hence the notion of *emotional investment* in new and desired identities. This notion includes a commitment to dealing with one’s own emotional struggles, and to plan L2 goals with a vision of the future which can help to evaluate changes in goals and to take action. Indeed, as shown in Chapter 6, my participants’ ability (or the lack of it) to sustain emotional investments as they attempted to enlarge their cultural capital determined the extent to which they were successful in their interactions with Italian native speakers and the extent to which they were able to plan, sustain and/or *convert* their L2 investments into new forms of capital.

3.8.3. *Language desire*

As mentioned in the section above, the romantic image of target language communities can be fuelled by an inner desire to become part of those real or imagined communities of practice. This idea has been recently conceptualised under the notion of ‘language desire’; a concept in the field of language and gender developed nearly a decade ago to explain L2 learners’ romantic preference for new linguistic identities (see Piller, 2002; Piller & Pavlenko, 2007; Piller & Takahashi, 2006; Takahashi, 2009 and forthcoming).

Piller (2002) introduced this concept in her work on bilingual talk among couples, in which she described the romantic (intermarriage) relationships between native and non-native speakers, and explained their language choice and use, their emotional connection, and the discursive construction of their identities (Piller, 2002: 6).

She defined ‘language desire’ as something similar to a strong emotional attachment that individuals have for their second language. This feeling guided the participants in her study to pursue their L2 as a main university subject and produced a motivational discourse of predilection and yearning for their second language even before they started a romantic involvement with target language native speakers (Piller, 2002: 100-102).

More recently, this concept has been extended to the assumption that language desire ought to be also examined together with the notion of power (Piller & Takahashi, 2006; Takahashi, 2009 and forthcoming) since, according to Piller and Takahashi (2006: 59), desire is “dialectically constituted in the relationship between the macro-

domains of public discourses [where power can often be contested] and the micro-domains of individual experience.”

Piller and Takahashi showed in their ethnographic study (2006) that the discursive construction of individuals’ desire to learn another language, through specific romantic and sexual choices, can have a significant impact on their opportunities to learn and use the new language. The participants of their study were five young Japanese women living in Sydney, Australia, in search of a romantic relationship with English native speakers, whom they had often idolized from following Hollywood stars. During their stay in Sydney, they had often taken advantage of the romantically charged social contexts in which they found themselves and sometimes they had even taken a dominant discourse role in the gendered L2 interaction, where they could decide who could talk to them, about what and how long (Takahashi, 2009: 3).

Interestingly, Piller and Takahashi’s study (2006) shows how the essentialist assumption that non-native speakers of English are lacking confidence, powerless, and therefore disadvantaged can be challenged, since in the romantic search for an English partner, with whom their participants could improve their L2 interactional skills, the Japanese women in their study showed a great deal of agency.

Individuals’ desire for and investments in new linguistic identities can be very powerful, since, depending on the social conditions in which they find themselves, they may lead them to become active agents in the construction of their own lives and guide them to reach their personal objectives. In my first Data Analysis chapter (Chapter 6), I will show how I took this view on board as I have tried to understand my participants’ lived experiences during their YA, and to describe the extent to which their efforts to construct new ‘Italian’ identities helped them to reach their linguistic goals.

To sum up, central to current thinking in sociolinguistics about emotions and identity is the notion of language desire, in other words a romantic preference for new language identities sustained by a strong emotional attachment to and by a romantic image of the target language (e.g. country, people or culture). Relations of power are also influential in language desire, since they constitute dialectical spaces where new identities can be imputed and accepted and/or contested. This discursive construction of L2 desire can have a significant impact on individuals' opportunities to learn and use the new language. Indeed, as shown in Chapter 6, my participants' desire for a new linguistic identity in Italian helped them to become relatively active agents in the construction of their own lives in Italy (albeit to different degrees and in different ways) and their ability to combine this desire with reflection and self awareness determined the extent to which they were able to match their desired L2 identities to real ones during their YA.

3.8.4. Identity and language learning: emotions as an under-researched area

Research on the Year Abroad has been proliferating over the last three decades, with a growing focus on the sociocultural and pedagogic dimensions of the experience abroad (for a comprehensive set of references see Chapter 2). A number of recent studies have also investigated the development of the new linguistic identities of YA students (e.g. the work by Block, 2007; Crawshaw et al, 2001; Jackson, 2008 and Kinginger, 2009). However, the expression of emotions during the period of study abroad is still an under examined field of research and, as I show in this thesis, would require greater attention (Cf. also Pavlenko, 2005, 2006). As stated by Jackson "the findings of sociolinguists and social psychologists raise our awareness of the need to

pay attention to the language attitudes, motives, *emotions*, and self-construals of L2 speakers on stays abroad” (Jackson, 2008: 38).

As researchers and as language teachers we need to consider YA students as individuals embarking on a journey of personal growth, who constantly negotiate and reconstruct their cultural identities as an ongoing process of becoming (cf. Byram, 1997b and Meinhof & Galasiński, 2005). We also need to put more emphasis on the emotional processes involved in the experience abroad, in order to raise awareness of the ways in which emotions are bound up with the year abroad experience of language learning and build an understanding of the ways in which students have access to social networks in the target language communities. In addition, we need to foreground some of the ways in which images of the cultural context of the target language clash with those they desired and yearned for before the period of study abroad (cf. Kinginger, 2004).

3.9. Summary

In this thesis, I am adopting a cross-disciplinary approach, based on sociolinguistics, pragmatics, social and cultural psychology. The choice of the literature presented in this chapter has been guided by my research goals and by my epistemological stance on language learning. These, in turn, have shaped my research questions which were:

Q1: What range of learning environments and social networks, with opportunities to use Italian, did the participants encounter in their day to day lives?

Q2: In what ways did they negotiate their identities as second language learners over time in these environments and social networks?

Q3: How did the participants in this study express their emotions during the YA? In particular, how often and in what ways did they make use of affective lexicon in their emotive discourse?

Q4: To what extent were participants' emotions bound up with the ways in which they perceived, experienced and dealt with cultural difference in intercultural encounters?

In order to answer the first and second research questions (Q1 & Q2), I have adopted a poststructuralist approach, using the notions of *language investment* (Norton Pierce, 1995 and Norton, 2000), the concept of *emotional investment* (Pavlenko, forthcoming) and that of *language desire* (Piller, 2002 and Takahashi, forthcoming). These concepts are at the heart of discourses on social and affective dimensions of second language learning and identity construction (§ 3.6).

For the third and fourth research questions (Q3 & Q4), I have looked at the literature that pertains to the study of individuals' emotive discourse, that is the expression of emotions as dynamic processes shaped by the contexts, and I have considered how this might be viewed through a cross-cultural lens (§ 3.5). In particular, I have used Clore et al.'s (1987) taxonomy of psychological conditions. This has allowed me to characterise the participants' *affective lexicon*.

I turn now to my account of the design of my study and the research methods employed (Chapter 4).

CHAPTER 3 – ENDNOTES

¹ See Darwin (1904: 205) for the notion of emotions as biological adjustments to destabilising processes, which occur unexpectedly for subjects; cf. also Cannon (1929) and Leeper (1948: 17).

² For a sociocultural overview on the link between cognitive processes and language cfr. also Vygotsky, L.S. (1962). See also Parrott & Harré (1996), who focussed on two apparently subtler emotions: embarrassment and modesty. In their view, embarrassment can be referred to as an emotion of social control and it can be useful in order to understand social happenings in which emotions emerge. It is also interesting to note their description of ‘modesty’ as a meeting point of social anxiety, self-esteem and role-performance (Parrott & Harré, 1996: 53-55).

³ For a full set of references see Pavlenko (2005), chapter 4.

⁴ Cf. the work by Berry (1997) on acculturation and adaptation.

⁵ Cf. Couper-Kuhlen, 2001 and Scollon & Scollon, 2001.

⁶ Bloch (1996) defines *rapid flowing, melodious* or *direct speech* as paralinguistic markers, however if we have a closer look these refer to intonation speed, namely to prosodic rather than paralinguistic features.

⁷ Cf. the theory of “language desire” (summarised in § 3.5.3.) developed by Piller (2002), where target language speakers become the *desired* object of confident and powerful L2 learners, in search of gendered and romantically constructed new linguistic identities.

⁸ Cf. Gross (1998, 1999 and 2002) and Gross & John (2003), for current perspectives on the emerging field of *emotion regulation*.

⁹ On early social psychological theorisation on motivation see also: Gardner et al. (1977), Gardner & Lambert (1972), Gardner & Smythe (1975), Lukmani (1972), Mc Donough (1981), Dörnyei (2001, 2003) and Skehan (1989).

¹⁰ Cf. the concept of ‘imagery’ in conversational analysis in Tannen (2007), 133-160.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

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CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces my research design and the methods used throughout my study. I have divided the chapter into four main sections. The first one presents my research design and the initial development of the conceptual framework for my study. Particular attention is paid to the approach I adopted to the research design that highlights the ways in which I built a sample and the kind of research I decided to conduct, that is a multiple case study informed by ethnography (§ 4.2).

The second section deals with the conventional methods used in case study research, and the data collection methods I adopted (§ 4.3). Emphasis was put on *interviews*, as a specific interactive strategy (§ 4.3.2), which I found particularly useful during data collection. Some of the interviews were based on diaries written by participants about their practices, and on photographs taken by them during their period in Italy, as outlined in § 4.3.3 and 4.3.4. I have also described the language used by the participants of this study in each interview we undertook before, during and /or after the YA (§ 4.3.5). My account of these research methods and research processes is followed by some reflections on their utility and effectiveness for my research (§ 4.4).

The third section is on the specific ethical concerns, which arose during the planning of my research project and the gathering of data. These relate in particular to issues linked to transparency of procedures and to my epistemological position as a long distance observer and case study researcher (§ 4.5).

The last section introduces the methods I decided to employ for the analysis of the data collected (§ 4.6). More precisely, I illustrate in this section the first stages of data analysis, which included the transcription of data undertaken by me (§ 4.6.1); the approach to data analysis (§ 4.6.2), including my use of the research software NVivo (§ 4.6.3), and the evaluation of disparities between research design and practice (§ 4.6.4). The data analysis was primarily thematic in nature. I also employed different analytic approaches (qualitative and quantitative) in investigating the participants' use of affective lexis. The second data analysis chapter (Chapter 7) presents this lexically-oriented analysis.

4.2. My approach to research design

In this section, I provide a brief overview of my research project and its key components, including the main aims, participants and settings, research questions and type of study.

I approached my research from a poststructuralist point of view, so ethnography was best suited to my purposes. I used mixed methodologies (qualitative and quantitative) with various flexible data collection procedures. Theory was important, but not central, for these procedures. My study was framed by orienting theories, such as those outlined in my Literature Review chapter (Chapter 3), and which evolved according to what emerged from the data and from participants' narratives, which were an integral part of my data analysis.

Hence, I opted for a 'flexible design', as shown below (in *Table 1*), according to Robson's (2002) and Cresswell (1998) definitions. Since I was carrying out qualitative

and quantitative research, this seemed, in my opinion, to be the most appropriate and sensible choice.

The methods and data highlighted in bold were planned in the initial development of my research design, but then omitted in later stages, as they turned out to be neither necessary nor fruitful.

Table 1. Flexible Project Design

MAIN AREAS OF INTEREST		
<i>Language learning, identities and emotions during the Year Abroad</i>		
RESEARCH QUESTIONS		
<p><i>Q1: What range of learning environments and social networks, with opportunities to use Italian, did the participants encounter in their day to day lives?</i></p> <p><i>Q2: In what ways did they negotiate their identities as second language learners over time in these environments and social networks?</i></p> <p><i>Q3: How did the participants in this study express their emotions during the YA? In particular, how often and in what ways did they make use of affective lexicon in their emotive discourse?</i></p> <p><i>Q4: To what extent were participants' emotions bound up with the ways in which they perceived, experienced and dealt with cultural difference in intercultural encounters?</i></p>		
METHODS	DATA	DATA ANALYSIS
<p>Audio recording of interviews with participants (at least 3 for each student), one every 2 months. Size 3 in 2 different locations.</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews</p> <p>Photo- based interviews</p> <p>Written diary-based interviews</p> <p>Video recording / observation of selected events</p> <p>Email based discussion of the interviews transcripts</p> <p>Questionnaire to be administered when participants come back</p>	<p>Audio recordings of <u>all</u> interviews</p> <p>Transcripts of <u>all</u> audio recordings</p> <p>Transcripts of <u>selected</u> video recordings</p> <p>Photos / photo captions / video recording</p> <p>Diary entries / video recordings</p> <p>Video diaries / video recordings</p> <p>Email correspondence</p> <p>Questionnaire responses</p>	<p><i>Q1 & Q2:</i> Qualitative analysis: Thematic analysis (of interview transcripts, photo captions and diary entries) with identification of recurring and salient themes.</p> <p><i>Q3 & Q4:</i> Qualitative analysis: Thematic and lexical analysis (of interview transcripts, photo captions and diary entries) with identification of recurring and salient themes.</p> <p>Quantitative analysis: lexical analysis (of interview transcripts, photo captions and diary entries) with identification of terms for emotion and cultural difference.</p>

The choice and use of specific research methods, when designing a research project, is a very delicate process, which can vary over time. Ethnographic researchers, in particular, generally leave an open margin of flexibility to their pre-set strategies and

tend to adjust them eventually, in later stages of their research, depending on specific priorities of participants or emerging ethical concerns.

It is important to maintain transparent and constructive communication with participants throughout the entire research process. I concur with Cameron et al. (1994) when they underline the importance of interacting *with* the researched as a necessary condition that enables research to be empowering. To put into their own words:

We have characterised ‘ethical research’ as *research on* and ‘advocacy’ research as *research on and for*. One of the things we take that additional ‘with’ to imply is the use of interactive or dialogic research methods, as opposed to the distancing or objectifying strategies positivists are constrained to use. It is the centrality of interaction ‘with’ the researched that enables research to be empowering in our sense; though we understand this as necessary rather than a sufficient condition.

(Cameron et al., 1994: 22)

Indeed, dialogue was constantly used with participants, to reduce the power relations between me (the researcher) and them (the researched) even though, of course, this could not be done completely. Indeed, in my view, dialogic research methods should be used cautiously and as Cameron and her fellows (1994: 23) admit “we do not think of empowerment as an absolute requirement on all research projects”. But rather, I would add, we should see a dialogic approach as a methodological strategy, which can be used, providing it does not entirely dismiss the relations of power between researchers and researched.

As regards my epistemological position, this has been a cause of concern. I have been reflecting on my approach as a researcher and as a non-participant long distance observer, questioning whether a more consistent personal presence in participants’ environments would have been fruitful for the research. Moreover, I have been

wondering whether I could really consider myself to be an ‘ethnographer’ since, as Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) state,

The ethnographer participates, overtly or covertly, in people’s daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions; in fact collecting whatever data are available to throw on the issues with which he or she is concerned.

(Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995: 2)

Drawing on the principles of ethnography, my study considers participants’ accounts and their views of the world as an integral part of the research. The research has elements of a specific branch of ethnography, that is ‘critical ethnography research’, as its primary concerns are (1.) to describe, understand and critically evaluate the relations between participants and their surroundings; (2.) to mediate through language the relations of power between researcher and researched; and (3.) to try to change the surroundings through this process of critical enquiry (Thomas, 1993).

Indeed, during the data collection for my research, I endeavoured to mediate through Italian or/and English the power asymmetries between me and the three participants in my study. Interviews were the main source of data, and particularly during such interviews, I let my participants choose the language they preferred the interviews to be conducted (see § 4.3.5). Two participants (Daphne and Ilaria) chose mainly their second language and sometimes their first language depending on the circumstances, the other participant (Lucy) chose her first language only in each interview.

Moreover, during the process of data gathering and also in my analysis, I described consistently the relationships between my participants and the new Italian surroundings, in which they lived for one academic year (e.g. see § 6.3). I constantly

viewed my participants' experiences through an ethnographic lens, in other words, I took into consideration their perspectives on their experiences during the YA. Moreover, I used multiple methods of data gathering and designed the interviews in as dialogic manner as possible in order to understand their reasons why they managed to get access to local communities, like in the case of Daphne and Ilaria, or conversely, they reasons why they were denied access or not willing to be entirely part of them (like in the case of Lucy) (e.g. see § 6.4 and § 6.5).

In am aware of the fact that critical ethnography and in general critical qualitative research can be a minefield as there are many contrasting and emerging views among constructivist, postmodern, post-positivist and critical researchers. To put it into Carspecken's words (1996),

These days, trying to learn about social research is rather like walking into a room of noisy people. The room is full of cliques, each displaying a distinctive jargon and cultural style. [...] Most of these people are talking about qualitative research, but they disagree with each other on such basic issues as the nature of reality, the nature of knowledge, and the concept of truth. You cannot get more basic than that!

(Carspecken, 1996: 1)

Nevertheless, my research does incorporate some elements of critical ethnography, particularly with regard to my commitment to democratisation and reflexivity in building the researcher-researched relationship.

In this context, I will present the methods planned and used in my study, which are primarily interactive, thus implying advocacy and empowering research. More specifically, in section § 4.2.1., I will comment on the ways in which I built a sample and below, in section § 4.2.2, I shall discuss the definition of my project as a case study and I will reflect upon the significance of this term for my research.

4.2.1. Building a sample

One of the main issues that has emerged during the first stages of the research has been that of establishing a sample of participants. I started my study with eight participants and I initially set up strategies and methods according to this sample. However, during data collection five of them showed very little commitment to the project and were removed. Consequently, I had to re-arrange my research project design, including a variation of settings, methods and data analysis.

I met the first two participants in the U.K. before they left for Italy. I managed to do the first interview with both of them in May 2006, but only one then showed interest in the project during her stay in Italy and after coming back to the U.K. The other one, after going to Italy, showed no interest in carrying on with the research, thus, she was withdrawn.

The remaining six participants were contacted by e-mail as they were already in Italy. In order to get in touch with them I contacted the ERASMUS office in Sardinia. The reason why I got in touch with the ERASMUS office in Sardinia was mostly for practical reasons. This is where I grew up and where many of my relatives live, thus a very familiar place for me, where I could go more frequently during data collection. Furthermore, having taken my first degree over there and knowing the university system very well, I felt I could have been a reassuring figure for participants, and that they could have relied on me, for university-related problems. Throughout the study, though, it became very evident to me that participants were all able to deal with the different university systems, without any external help, and that their main initial difficulty was rather that of dealing with the outside world, namely the new cultural and linguistic contexts in which they found themselves.

After acknowledging my research focus and main aims, the ERASMUS office in Sardinia contacted the students currently doing their year abroad in Cagliari, urging them to contact me if they were interested in the project. Six students got in touch with me and we arranged to meet after a few weeks, in October 2006. They all signed the consent form and undertook their first interview in Cagliari. However, four of them showed very little commitment and having realized after a short time that they were not willing to take part to the project anymore, I had to withdraw them as well.

The study became then a multiple case study, with three participants only: Daphne in Ferrara, Ilaria and Lucy in Cagliari.

4.2.2. A multiple case study informed by ethnography

My project involved ethnographically informed case study research that took into account participants' lives in the new Italian contexts, in which they found themselves. It is best defined as a 'multiple-case study': more than one participant took part in the project, and since I worked closely *with* each one, in the ways described above, relationships became more than just researcher and researched subject. As Mertens (1998) emphasises when talking about *single-case* research:

This type of research used to be called single-subject research, but the terminology has been changed to single-case research because of what Levin (1992) calls a humanitarian spirit that discourages using the term *subjects* for human beings who participate in research studies.

(Mertens, 1998: 145)

Gillham (2000:1) defines case study research as a means of investigating "a unit of human activity embedded in the real world; which can only be studied or understood in context." He underlines the fact that a single case can be an individual, a group, an

institution, a community; but that there may also be multiple cases, it depends on what we want to find out and what that leads us on to (Ibid.).

The traditional research methods regularly used in case studies are of three types: observation, interviews and the gathering of documents.

Since interviews were all audio-recorded, I have also been able to combine a traditional audio/video approach to data analysis, with closer, more detailed thematic and thematic analysis.

My data analysis was interdisciplinary in nature. It could be argued that it falls within the emerging tradition of linguistic ethnography in that it combines lexical analysis with ethnographic insights gleaned from consecutive interviews and observation. As Rampton (2007) states, researchers in the new field of linguistic ethnography “share a commitment to putting linguistics and ethnography together to try to understand the social processes that we are involved in” Rampton (2007: 607).

Rampton admits that there are crucial differences between linguistics and ethnography, which generate a great deal of tension as far as methodologies are concerned, these are: (1) their object of study; (2) their procedures; (3) and their main aims. Generally speaking, the former focuses on ‘language’, uses more empirical standardised procedures and takes a broad view on language form and use; on the other hand, the latter puts emphasis on ‘culture’ and processes involved, it adopts more face-to-face procedures such as participant-observation, and aims to provide information about participants’ lived experiences. Despite these divergences, however, the two fields are strictly and significantly bound up together, as Rampton affirms:

- *Ethnography opens linguistics up*, inviting reflexive sensitivity to the processes involved in the production of linguistic claims and to the potential importance of what gets left out.
- *Linguistics (and linguistically sensitive discourse analysis) ties ethnography down*, pushing cultural description towards the analysis of clearly delimitable processes.

(Ibid.: 597)

In linguistic ethnographic case-studies participants observations and interviews are central, but there are also other techniques of data collection that can be applied. Yin (2003: 86) offers an overview of case study methods of data collection, and divides them into six sources of evidence, which are:

- 1 Documentation
- 2 Archival Records
- 3 Interviews
- 4 Direct Observations
- 5 Participant Observation

He highlights the strengths and weaknesses of these methods, but he also underlines the fact that we “should be aware that a complete list of sources can be quite extensive – including films, photographs, and videotapes” (Yin, 2003: 85). A list of *supplemental data collection techniques* is very usefully provided by Marshall and Rossman (1995), and it embraces, among other things, narratives (or participants’ written accounts, i.e. diaries), life histories and kinesics or the study of body motion.

In the course of my investigation I adopted some of these supplemental strategies, such as photographs, videotapes and diaries. However, the main and most important technique constantly used throughout the entire study was a traditional one, which I believe to be still a key feature in case study research, that is interview.

4.2.3. My role as a researcher and as an ethnographic interviewer

Conducting the interviews with the three participants was one of the biggest challenges during the data collection process. I was aware of the fact that when interviewing my research goals and my social identity (as researcher and interviewer) could shape the ways in which the interviews unfolded, therefore I decided to avoid the imposition of my agenda and, as far as possible, to reduce the power imbalance between me and my interviewees. In order to do this, I used open-ended or semi-structured interviews to gather information in a less formal way, so they could see there was not a strict agenda (cf. Arskey & Knight, 1999) and they could also experience an active agenda-setting role in the interview process, especially in the diary- and photo-based interviews (see § 4.3.3 for further discussion of the diary based interviews).

As an Italian native speaker I was familiar with the socio-cultural contexts in which the participants were living, and this helped me to understand better the meaning of the interview content which often referred to their social situations.

As Briggs (1982) notes, our ontology may affect the methodological process, therefore, it is important to be reflexive in our research and to be aware that our perspectives and our actions (including the asking of questions) may influence the direction of topic development and/or the stance taken by participants on their topics (Briggs, 1980: 118). I was also aware of the interview as interaction and as a discursive space for constructing meaning (Freebody, 2003; Blommaert & Dong, 2010), therefore, during the interview process, I tried to engage in using as much reflexivity as possible, looking for instance at my discourse role in the interview transcripts and at that of participants, at the messages they intended to convey and at the social situations in which the interviews were carried out (Briggs, 1982: 100-101).

Since my aim as an ethnographic interviewer was that of understanding my participants' lives from their emic points of view, I decided to explore their perspectives on their experience abroad through their accounts of their intercultural encounters. In order to achieve the most comprehensive perspective on those experiences, I let them choose the language in which they wanted to undertake the interview (see § 4.3.5).

Finally, although I did not have a fixed interview format, I made sure that I included in each interview the basic elements cited by Spradley (1979: 58-61), those are: explicit purpose, ethnographic explanations and ethnographic questions. Often the explanations of points that puzzled or intrigued me were given by participants after the interviews, when I engaged with them in casual conversations, with no audio-recording. This allowed us to balance the power asymmetries between me (the researcher) and them (the researched) and to also foster a climate of mutual trust.

4.3. Data collection methods

In this section, I shall briefly present all the methods I designed for my research and those actually used during the data collection process. These will be described in chronological order, namely according to their planning and concrete use with participants. They were mixed both qualitative and quantitative in nature.

I will stress the importance of *interviews* as a specific dialogic method in ethnographic research, which I constantly adopted throughout my study and that turned out to be the main tool of data collection. Two types of interviews in particular will be presented and examined in this context: interviews based on participants' written accounts (diaries) and on image (photos).

Ultimately, in the light of analytical reflections upon the chosen methods, I will enquire whether my strategies were appropriate to answer my research questions.

4.3.1 Methods designed and applied

In the preliminary phases of my study, I had designed specific methods according to their suitability to answer my four research questions. The primary method considered appropriate to answer my questions was *interviews*.

Interviews have been constantly used throughout my research. I had planned to undertake one initial semi-structured interview with four open questions, to be carried out with each participant before they left for Italy. Despite my plans, I managed to do this initial interview in the U.K. with two participants only, and one of them decided to drop out. The remaining six were already in Italy. Indeed, when I met them for the first time in Sardinia, I carried out the interview straight away. Six of them gave their consent, but only two were available for the project until the end. Thus, due to this unexpected change in the sampling size I had to modify the type of design.

I had also planned to maintain *e-mail correspondence* to discuss the interview transcripts or other issues participants wanted discuss further. The e-mail correspondence from participants was very infrequent and with little or no relevant evidence for the research, thus, this procedure was omitted from the final design.

I had also planned to administer a questionnaire when participants would have been back in the U.K., but this was replaced by a further interview, which was carried out with two of the three remaining participants only, again reinforcing the nature of the research. This dialogic procedure proved to be more appropriate, as participants could

put into their own words their experience abroad and were given the chance to reflect on it retrospectively.

Interviews were designed and used in accordance with all research questions. In response to my research questions, I had planned 'open-ended' interviews, according to Gillham's (2000: 60) definition of *verbal data dimension*, but I eventually opted for semi-structured interviews, thus, with open questions about their experience in general and closed ones based on the photographs taken by participants and on their diary entries. These interviews took place in Italy every three months, as planned, even though they varied in their specific nature.

The main reason why I chose this kind of interviews was because I wanted to encourage participants to talk openly about their experience and at the same time to glean insights into their perceptions of events in the new contexts. Thus, their written accounts and photos were used as spring board for further and deeper discussion.

As in Barton and Hamilton's (1998) study on literacy practices, in my project, ethnographic interviews became less structured over time, in this way participants,

Simply began to open out about areas of their lives they hadn't talked of before; they lost some of their inhibition about being tape-recorded; they began to get a sense of the range of [the research interests], and to feel free to initiate topics.

(Barton & Hamilton, 1998: 65)

Barton and Hamilton (1998) however, clarify that interviews alone are not enough as research tools, as they need to be triangulated with other types of data, such as participant observation data (e.g. field notes) (Ibid.).

Indeed, in addition to interviews, my research questions were investigated through observation of selected events at regular intervals. These events were to be

video filmed in part by me and in part by participants. In the end, the video-filming was mostly done by me, except for a short video-diary filmed by one participant in June 2007. The participants seemed reluctant to arrange for video filming themselves in the new environment and presumably they would have had to rely on someone else to do this with them.

So, as I have shown above, there were a few changes in the methods originally designed and those eventually adopted were somewhat different, due mainly to unexpected circumstances, such as the inappropriateness of some methods (i.e. email correspondence and questionnaire) in relation to participants' priorities. Nevertheless, I am glad to affirm that, despite these difficulties, the main purposes of my study have been met in full and no significant issue has arisen in relation to data collection procedures.

4.3.2 *A specific interactive method: interviews*

As mentioned above, interviews have been a constant tool for my data collection. In particular, semi-structured and in-depth interviews were used, namely interviews with open and closed questions, following specific aims, and using flexibility and naturalness of procedures while guiding participants to disclose intimate answers.

Interviewing was chosen and used as a main research method, and, in particular, semi-structured interviews, because I believed this dialogic procedure to be the most appropriate for the type of study I had set up. Gillham (2000: 65) notes that semi-structured interview is "the most important form of interviewing in a case study. Well done, it can be the richest single source of data." Indeed, it became evident, from the very early stages of my study, that it was a key source of data.

Interaction was encouraged throughout interviews and in order to improve my skills as an interviewer, following Gillham's advice (Ibid.: 70), I video filmed myself while depth interviewing one participant. I found this procedure very useful especially when watching my facial expressions, gestures and body postures, which were inhibiting and hesitant at times. However, my reticence appeared to encourage the particular participant in question to express herself more comfortably.

In the following paragraphs, I will talk about two specific semi-structured interviews I did with participants to explore my research questions, those are diary- and photo-based interviews, which were audio and video recorded.

4.3.3 *Diary-based interviews*

The use of diaries is very important for naturalistic and ethnographic research, since they can provide insights onto the significance of particular situations as well as into the inner perceptions of participants. As Alaszewsky affirms:

Diaries can be used not only to identify patterns of behaviour but also to provide greater insight into how individuals interpret situations and ascribe meanings to actions and events and therefore how actions that may appear irrational to outsiders are rational to the diarist.

(Alaszewsky, 2006: 37)

Diary accounts may appear repetitive or not very significant if they are examined only superficially. However, if they are scrutinized in detail, they can be a rich source of data, since a great deal of information can be gleaned through the special lens of the researched. I concur with Alaszewsky when he states that:

Diaries can be used to access those facets of social life which members of social groups take for granted and are therefore not easily articulated or accessed through research methods such as *interviews*.

(Ibid.: 42)

In the course of my research I used diary-based interviews to gather data of this kind. Specifically, I set up one semi-structured interview with each of the participants based upon their written accounts, which lasted maximum one hour and twenty minutes. I asked them to keep a written diary in an open format, for at least two consecutive weeks, including Saturday and Sunday. One participant (Ilaria) sent me an electronic and very concise version of daily activities. Another participant (Daphne), on the other hand, kept very detailed accounts of day-by-day activities, together with personal comments and impressions. Lucy provided no written diary entries. Subsequently, I carried out semi-structured and in-depth diary-based interviews only with the two participants who had written their diaries.

Corti (1993: 1) argues that the “diary interview method where the diary keeping period is followed by an interview asking detailed questions about the diary entries is considered to be one of the most reliable methods of obtaining information”. However, after experiencing the length of interviews, I realised it might have been better to have opted for an alternative diary format, perhaps ‘structured diaries’ with a pre-set design. As Corti states:

Diaries are especially prone to errors arising from respondents conditioning, incomplete recording of information and under-reporting, inadequate recall, insufficient cooperation and sample selection bias.

(Ibid: 3)

A diary-based interview method has also been developed by sociolinguists conducting research in bilingual literacy practices (e.g. Jones, Martin-Jones and Bhatt: 2000). In an ethnographic account of the use of diary-based interviews with bilingual adults in two different workplace settings, Jones, Martin-Jones and Bhatt show that this research method is particularly well suited in sociolinguistic research that is critical and dialogic in nature, and they list some of the advantages that occur from the adoption of

this method. These are: (1) the situating in space and time of particular literacy activities and language choices; and (2) a shifting of the positions of researcher and researched, allows for move the development of more natural interactions. Jones, Martin-Jones and Bhatt (2000) argued that:

participant diaries can be used interactively with research participants and can thus provide a means of developing a critical and dialogic research approach which engages with the perceptions and values of the research participants. Drawing upon the knowledge and experience of research participants is particularly relevant for research on multilingual literacy where different cultural values and world views are associated with different language and literacy practices.

(Jones et al., 2000:319)

Two participants in this study (Daphne and Ilaria) wrote their diaries for at least two consecutive weeks, as I asked them to do it. Ilaria wrote her diary in an electronic format, hence, the decoding of her diary entries was quite straight forward (see Appendix 4, § 1). Daphne's diary was handwritten by her, and although her writing was quite clear, during our diary-based interviews I had to ask her for the explanation of some particular words or sentences, which were not entirely clear to me (see appendix 4, § 2, and cf. also Appendix 3, Daphne- second interview)

As mentioned above, decoding the hand written diary entries was difficult at times, as well as conducting and transcribing the interviews. However, despite these initial difficulties, the main aim of this method was achieved. I gained insights into the social conditions for language learning opened up in the two urban settings in Italy, in which two of the three the participants found themselves; and, additionally, I gathered information related to the perception of themselves and others' during their experience abroad. On the whole, the diary interview method provided a penetrating inner view of

participants' lives otherwise inaccessible and has, thus, proved to be appropriate and productive for my research.

4.3.4 *Photo-based interviews*

In addition to the diary-based interview, I had also set up another ethnographically informed method, that is image-based interviews. Here my starting point was with the photo-based interview method devised in a recent research project (Martin-Jones et al., 2009). The focus of the project was on bilingual literacy practices. Since my focus was on foreign language learning, this method needed to be adapted to my aims.

I asked participants to take ten photographs, five related to the university environment and five concerning their life outside university. My main aim was that of identifying the range of learning environments and interactional contexts, in university classes and outside, encountered by participants in the two Italian urban settings. The idea was that these photos would then provide the main focus for discussion at our next meeting.

The image-based method turned out to be more challenging than expected. Other researchers have reported similar difficulties. In Knight's words (2002):

Images are information-rich and difficult to analyse in any systematic way. It takes a great deal of thought, discussion and persistence to find a way of sustaining a systematic gaze upon large sets of images, and that leaves aside questions about how the set is selected in the first place. This research is so new in social science that there is little to guide the researcher, which compounds the difficulties.

(Knight, 2002: 102)

The first obstacle I met was the small number of photographs taken by participants. Daphne and Ilaria took approximately six photos each, and Lucy did not take any. Moreover, no photos were taken inside the university environment. Thus, the discussion was mainly based on their free time activities and the interactional contexts they encountered outside university classes.

A second obstacle was the lack of personal expertise in this kind of research method. I felt that the discussions were too vague and unfocussed. Hence, it was difficult for me to lead the conversation toward precise aims.

Nonetheless, in spite of these quite predictable obstacles, the participants' degree of involvement and the amusement they shared when commenting on their pictures allowed me to have crucial new insights into their life in the new contexts, and their perceptions of them. Moreover, it was through this specific method that I realised the extent to which the environment was playing an important role in shaping the participants' learning process. Indeed, I agree with Nikula and Huhta (2008) when they affirm that:

Using photographs to trigger personal narratives is a valuable way of gaining insights into learners' subjective experiences with languages, and of revealing aspects of informal learning.

(Nikula & Huhta, 2008: 2)

Photographs were particularly useful to witness with visual impact the extent to which participants were involved in the outside world. To put it into Hamilton's words it is only through still photographs that we can observe certain elements of practice otherwise inscrutable, since they are able to capture "frozen moments of a dynamic process" (Hamilton, 2000: 18). However, I would say, participants' account of those

captured moments can add a further insight into this kind of data, and its interpretation could, in turn, assume a more holistic dimension.

In my study, I gained important insights into participants' learning environments and interactional contexts, but outside university classes only. Thus, this method only proved to be partially appropriate to answer my first research question, which was: *What range of learning environments and social networks, with opportunities to use Italian, did the participants encounter in their day to day lives?* However, as I have already mentioned, the discussions on selected photos did allow me to see the participants' learning experience in Italy through their special lens, and to better understand their behaviours in the new environment.

4.3.5. The language of the interviews

As mentioned earlier, I undertook a series of consecutive interviews with the three participants in this study before, during and after their period of study in Italy.

More precisely, I conducted six interviews with Ilaria and Daphne, and five interviews with Lucy, giving them the choice as to which language they wanted to use in each interview. Interestingly, Ilaria and Daphne used both English and Italian in the interviews, while Lucy used only English.

Daphne used English in the first interview we undertook in May 2006, in the U.K., before leaving for the YA. She was not confident enough in using the target language, indeed, when I asked her in the same interview, what she expected for the experience in Italy, this was her reply:

Excerpt 1 – *Daphne's expectation for her Year Abroad in Italy*

D: ... well ... I think ... firstly it will be really helpful for my Italian, I think I'll IMPROVE because at the moment, I think, my weakest point is my SPEAKING, I think, the grammar and the writing I can do, but speaking I get a bit nervous and I don't know { } to say straight away, so I think that will improve A LOT.

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\1D) 24.5.6>]

She also chose English in the second interview we undertook in November 2006, when she was already in Ferrara, Italy. This was a diary-based interview and although I quote many of her diary entries which she wrote in Italian, she commented on them rigorously in English, making use of only one Italian word in the whole interview (see Appendix 4). This was the Italian term '*dimmi*'. She used it when she was trying to explain the different ways in which people address each other in Italy and in England. This is shown in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 2 – *Daphne's initial use of Italian words in the interviews*

D: [...] I think here people quite often interrupt each other, and they say things like "dimmi", which I first I thought "it's so rude!", because in England I never say "Tell me! Speak to me!" Because it's a bit rude, but actually it's nice just the way... it is.

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D) 18.11.6>]

In the third, fourth and sixth interviews, conducted in April (interview 3 and 4) and in November 2007 (interview 6), Daphne chose Italian only. Interestingly, she chose English in our fifth interview, namely the last interview carried out in Italy, in June 2007, but she chose Italian in our sixth interview, which was conducted in the U.K..

Daphne's made use of her first or second language with no code-switching between the two languages, apart from one occasion reported in the example above (in **excerpt 2**). In other words, she showed a clear distinction between the two languages

and a distinctive linguistic command which became gradually stronger over time (cf. Chapter 6, **excerpt 18**).

As far as Ilaria's choice of language is concerned, in the six interviews we undertook, she did not mind using either Italian or English since she was comfortable in speaking both languages. In fact, in our first interview when I greeted her and asked for her name she promptly replied in Italian "*Eh .. mi chiamo Ilaria.*" [*Eh .. my name is Ilaria.*] [[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\1IL 16.10.6>](#)]. She chose English in the first and second interviews, undertaken in October and December 2006 respectively.

The first interview was a group interview, which included contributions from other interviewees, including Lucy. When I asked which language they preferred to use in the interview, the majority of them opted for their first language, namely English, so also Ilaria had to use her first language. The second interview took place in a public space (on the beach in Cagliari) with her ERASMUS colleagues present nearby. They were aware that she was being interviewed and, because she chose English again on the occasion, there might have been an over hearer effect. Her second language confidence and competence was clear from the interview content: she mentioned several times, that she had been speaking Italian only, and that she had only Italian friends with whom she spoke the target language all the time (see Chapter 6, § 6.4.3). In the following four interviews, Ilaria used Italian only, with no code-switching at all.

Lucy decided to use only her first language in all the interviews. Although using Italian was one of her main desires (see Chapter 6, **excerpts 30, 31 and 37**), unfortunately she did not manage to make the most of her time abroad to practise the language, and she tried even less during our interviews. Nevertheless, on a few occasions she used Italian words, code-switching to describe a particular event she

experienced. For example she used the words “*giro*” (tour) and “*scuderie*” (horse stables) and in our third interview, conducted in February 2007, in Oristano, Sardinia, where we went to see a special event for Carnival, called “Sa Sartiglia”. Indeed, when I asked her whether she enjoyed the event, this was her reply:

Excerpt 2 – *Daphne’s initial use of Italian words in the interviews*

S: For .. a special event, for the Carnival, er.. did you enjoy it?

L: **V**ery much. I’m **r e a l l y g l a d** I came.

S: Oh .. that’s good. What did you like the most?

L: Mm... (...) erm ... I enjoyed watching thi[:] “S’Istella”, a lot. Erm[:] (...) and .. also .. (...) also thi[:] ... when we did a “*giro*”, to see all the town, to see other people, dressed up, having fun. Erm... and..

S: “*Le scuderie*”?

L: [oh no] yeah, my favourite place was “*le scuderie*”, yes, yes, very much [*smiley voice*].

S: Eh.

L: I found them really... **traditional** and...just **GENUINE Sardinian** countryside, food, and everyone was so friendly, eh eh.

[<[Internals\LUCY\transcripts\3LU 18.2.6 video](#)>]

4.4 Reflections on chosen methods

During my data collection, I adopted various ethnographically informed methods, which generated different kinds of qualitative and quantitative data.

I used interviews as the main research method. Depth and semi-structured interviewing was constantly employed as a precious source to access participants’ written and visual accounts, respectively their diaries and photographs (Cf. Prosser, 1998). I also used video filming as qualitative method with the main intention of

exploring further my research questions. Some selected events were also filmed, primarily those in which participants were dealing with services encounters.

All the methods I have used have proved to be very useful and appropriate for my research. The semi-structured interviews based on written diaries were particularly important. They allowed me to access participants' inner perspectives and turned out to be a very rich source of data. It is through the reading (often between the lines) of intimate accounts that the (re)construction of participants' identity seems to finally come out into the open. Indeed, as Alaszewski (2000: 36) admits "[w]hile diaries may be seen as a means to an end, they can also be seen as texts in their own right used by the diarist to construct his or her own identity to support an account of social reality".

Nevertheless, this procedure may appear deceptive, as it often highlights the researcher predominant position of power in respect of researched. As mentioned in Jones, Martin-Jones and Bhatt (2000):

These types of interviews tend to impose the researcher's agenda, even though researchers are supposed to make a conscious effort to encourage interviewees to develop topics that are particularly meaningful to them. Interviews also tend to construct unequal relationships because the interviewer asks the questions and the interviewee [...] is positioned more passively in this knowledge-building process, although this can be mitigated by the type of questions asked.

(Jones, Martin-Jones & Bhatt, 2000: 322)

Interviews based on photographs provided a way for me to listen to participants' comments on the events or relationships depicted in the photos, and to acknowledge the meaning that they had attached to them. This procedure certainly added further insight into the participants' learning experience in Italy. Prosser and Schwarz (1998) suggest that:

Researchers using photographs in their work [should create] alternative overarching designs that provide models of good or innovative practice and a rich ‘menu’ of alternatives. Other more established approaches, for example designs for audio/biographical studies, historical research, or *case study*, are sufficiently well rehearsed to indicate potential variations of strategies and probable data collection methods. Image-based researchers have not routinely explicated their research designs and few models of good practice exist outside of anthropology and *ethnography*.

(Prosser & Schwarz, 1998: 117)

However, this is not true of literary research, since photo-based research is a well developed technique.

On the whole, I can firmly assert that all the methods used in my study were effective tools of investigation and generated a rich body of data for analysis. Nevertheless, should I use photographs as a research method in the future I would certainly vary my strategies.

4.5 Ethics

In educational research there are many key ethical issues that one should take into careful consideration if undertaking research in this field. Ethical concerns such as, among others, transparency, confidentiality and anonymity, arise when carrying out qualitative research in particular, because of the closeness that develops between researchers and researched. Indeed, as Borg and Gall (1984) state,

[i]n conducting an educational research project, one must never lose sight of the special requirements and problems involved in working with people [...] Thus the procedures section of the research plan should describe how the researcher intends to gain [participants] cooperation, how [s/he] will deal with potential human relations problems that may arise, and what he will take to ensure that the plan meets the *ethical standards* and legal requirements established for behavioral science research.

(Borg & Gall, 1984: 107)

For *ethical standards* Borg and Gall referred particularly to those principles that investigators should always respect and which are often cause of concern because their violation go against human rights. Among those that are most likely to be violated, they mentioned: a clear and fair agreement, including obligations and responsibilities, with research participants before their participation; sharing the collected data with participants in order to remove possible misconceptions; confidentiality of information given by participants and transparency about methodological requirements that may involve concealment or deception. These principles fall within the research ethics category, in line with the research guidelines for good practice promoted by the association *BERA (British Educational Research Association) Codes of Practice*.

These issues are not absent in quantitative research, but, as Finch (1985) asserts:

greater distancing of the researcher from the research subjects may make them less personally agonizing. Further, in ethnographic work of depth interviewing, the researcher is very much in a position of trust in being accorded privileged access to information, which is usually private or invisible. Working out how to ensure that such trust is not betrayed is no simple matter.

(Finch, 1985: 117)

In this next section I will turn my attention to some of the practical and ethical issues that arose throughout my study, questioning the validity and reliability of my data, and reflecting on my epistemological position as a researcher and as a non-participant long distance observer.

4.5.1 Transparency

Transparency of procedures is one of the most important issues related to ethics in educational research. Therefore, it is very import to take account of this issue when

planning, implementing and disseminating ethnographic research, and it is important also to draw attention to some possible risks deriving from the intentional lack of transparency when undertaking covert research. In my study I have addressed this specific ethical concern with reference to my research aims and with a view to exploring the extent to which pursuing complete transparency during the setting up and the implementation of the research was necessary and the kinds of constraints I could encounter.

The importance of *transparency of methodologies* is one the main current issues in educational research. This issue has arisen in recent controversies about the necessity of ‘evidence-informed practice’ and current debates about ethics and epistemology that have led to calls for “increased rigour in educational research as well as the use of systematic reviews” (Avis, 2003: 369). Mortimore in the recent article cited above (Mortimore, 2000) defined *transparency* as one of the major tasks of educational research and described it as an essential requirement of research, be it empirical or philosophical, be it fieldwork or texts alone. Since research “is a public process and replication is encouraged” (Ibid: 12). Thus, transparency includes the sharing of good practice and of knowledge both with colleagues and research participants. In an earlier article, Mortimore, in collaboration with other scholars, emphasized also the importance of sharing vision and goals as “crucial for all types of successful organizations, not only schools” (Mortimore et al., 1995: 11).

Transparency of methodologies and procedures is particularly important when researching on, for and with individuals. Researchers should ponder cautiously their moral choices and try to use a transparent approach with research participants as far as is possible. However, complete transparency sometimes is not possible due to the nature

and aims of particular studies. This is the case, for instance, of teachers undertaking *covert research*. They may need to carry out covert research in the classroom to observe students behaving more spontaneously.

However, whilst it may be true that the students do not know they are being researched, the teacher is now adopting the role of teacher *and* researcher. As a consequence, the teacher's relationship with the students is likely to change. The teacher may be more attentive, they may allow situations to develop for the sake of the research, etc. Therefore the classroom situation may no longer be natural.

(Greenbank, 2003: 797)

The issue of covert research has also come up in debates about sociolinguistics research methods. In most sociolinguistic research involving audio-recording, the aim is to capture speech that is spontaneously produced. However, when someone is conscious about being observed and audio-recorded, this may lead to the production of more guarded speech. This issue is known among linguists as "the observer paradox" and has been widely debated. Different researchers devise different strategies for dealing with it. This phenomenon is acknowledged by Cameron et al. (1994), although they recommend transparency and the avoidance of any covert-research.

It is likely that the more you tell people about your observation, the more their behavior will be affected. Some researchers compromise: they tell people they are being observed, but are rather vague about the object of observation. They may say more about this after the event. You may feel that you can afford to be more open; or if you are observing as a colleague or teacher [...] that it is important to retain an atmosphere of trust between yourself and those you work with.

(Cameron et al., 1994: 28)

BERA and *BAAL* advise researchers to avoid deception or subterfuge unless research designs specifically require it to guarantee that the appropriate data is gathered or that the welfare of the researchers is not put in danger. Both associations also recommend

asking for permission to the local authorities before this course of action is taken. The advice given by BAAL is as follows:

Deception and covert research. This is an area of particular concern in applied linguistics. Covert research and deliberate deception are unacceptable to the extent that they violate the principle of informed consent and the right to privacy. However, in some research - concerned for example with phonological variation and pragmatic variation in naturally occurring speech - there are compelling methodological reasons for informants not being fully informed about the precise objectives of the research.

[\[http://www.baal.org.uk/about_goodpractice_full.pdf\]](http://www.baal.org.uk/about_goodpractice_full.pdf)

4.5.2 Transparency as an ethical concern for my research design

During the design of my research project I took into careful consideration ethical concerns and decided to adopt a completely *transparent* approach with participants. This approach proved to be positive in terms of trust, but it had some limits, which I had not predicted.

First of all, I publicized my project in the higher institution, where I taught in from 2005 to 2007, when I intended to start my research. I distributed an information sheet and two students replied to me by e-mail showing interest in taking part the project. After obtaining their formal consent¹, I met them personally in the U.K. before they left for Italy. They already knew about my research aims, but I wanted to be even more transparent and tell them about the research design in detail. So I showed them the research questions and activities we would be doing together, and how I would collect and analyze the data. This approach, if it seemed very 'ethical' at first, proved to be risky, as I had not taken into consideration the fact that the two participants I had met might be put off by so much transparency. Fortunately, this was not the case as they

both seemed enthusiastic about the given details and agreed to be involved in the project. However, only one of them carried on with the project until the end.

With the group in Cagliari, I was more careful and when I met them I only talked briefly about the main aims and procedures of the research and asked them to sign the consent form if they were interested. All of them signed. Nevertheless, only two of them remained involved to the project until the end.

In the consent form I addressed issues such as anonymity and confidentiality, and also the right to withdraw. A copy of this form is included in the Appendices (Appendix 1). I also asked participants to choose nicknames to protect their privacy and they really liked this freedom of choice and the sharing of practices.

Moreover, I wanted to share with participants the data gathered, and as my main research strategy was based on interviews, I decided to keep up the e-mail correspondence in order to share opinions about the interview transcripts and their experience abroad. I informed them and they agreed, reassuring me that they would check their emails regularly.

Transparency of procedures has been essential for me in this context, in order to maintain an open relationship of trust with participants, and to proceed with the project respecting the rights, sensitivities, and privacy of the participants.

However, I have often wondered whether complete transparency was really necessary when approaching possible participants in a study. I was aware of the fact that a lack of transparency could have caused inconvenience and discomfort to participants, and that they could have felt that their own privacy had been violated, but like Cameron

et al. (1994: 28), I also questioned whether we should really tell people that they are being observed.

These ethical implications, when conducting research, are intrinsically linked to the issue of transparency and whether or not, researchers should be more open about their research, trying to avoid deception and concealment as much as possible.

During my study I have realized that the most important thing is to treat participants with respect and sincerity as “persons are not objects and should not be treated as objects” (Cameron et al.: 23). Nevertheless, in my short experience as a researcher, I have also experienced that complete transparency of methodologies may, in some circumstances, be counter-productive, particularly at the point of approaching possible research participants.

4.5.3 Other ethical concerns arising from my research methods

The nature and aims of my research inevitably gave rise to some ethical matters, such as, among others, consent, deception, anonymity and confidentiality.

A primary concern while designing my research project was the linking of my research aims to appropriate research questions and methods. I opted for a *flexible design* in which my skills as a social science practitioner have been playing an important role, as well as my participants’ views of the world. To put it into Robson words:

Doing flexible design research calls for flexible researchers. [...] Ideally, this kind of research calls for a well-trained and experienced investigators, but others aspects are also important. Personal qualities such as having an *open and enquiring mind*, being a ‘*good listener*’, general *sensitivity* and *responsiveness to contradictory evidence* are needed. These are commonly

regarded as skills central to the professional working with people in any capacity.

(Robson, 2002: 167-8)

Ethical concerns have been also taken into account all phases of my research, and have been carefully considered throughout the entire study. I have dealt with ethical issues, such as participants' formal consent, anonymity, right to withdrawal and transparency.

4.6. Preparing the data for analysis

In this section I will briefly discuss the crucial phases that followed the data collection process, those were data transcription and initial approaches to data analysis. The main issues related to these procedures will be highlighted, as well as the reflective approach that I adopted and the pragmatic practices that accompanied these stages of the research.

4.6.1. Transcribing the data

All the audio recorded interviews were transcribed by me (the researcher) for both ethical and practical reasons. The transcription conventions are shown in the Appendix 2. I decided to transcribe all the interviews, five for Lucy and six for Ilaria and Daphne, for two main reasons: (1) because all interviews count as a crucial part of collected data, thus, all passages were considered worth transcribing; (2) because having them in a written format would be very useful in later stages of the research when doing computer assisted data analysis (i.e. using NVivo 8).

As far as the video diary recording is concerned, this was done with the main aim of selecting events which would represent the ways in which participants' were experiencing and dealing with intercultural encounters in Italy. This process was facilitated by the research software NVivo 8, where I stored the interview transcripts and I coded them into "free and tree nodes" according to the salient themes. I also created three major categories (documents, emerging themes and method) and I included annotations and memos, which I linked to specific turns at talk taken by participants in the interviews. I also used the software to conduct quantitative analysis of data in relation to my third and fourth research question (as shown in Chapter 7). This was done through the use of charts (see *Figure 3* and *4*).

Transcribing all audio recorded interviews and most passages of the video recordings took a considerable amount of time. However, it was through this meticulous procedure that I gleaned initial insights into salient themes and recurring patterns in participants' accounts. This method paved the way for the first steps into what, then, became clear the thematic and lexically-oriented data analysis.

4.6.2. First steps into data analysis

My first steps into analysis had some of the common features listed by Miles and Huberman (1994: 9), specifically: (1) noting reflections; (2) identifying and isolating patterns and processes; (3) elaborating a small set of generalizations and linking them with current theories.

Mixed procedures both qualitative and quantitative were adopted for the data analysis. I considered various kinds of procedures, selecting those that seemed to me the most appropriate to respond to each of my research questions.

First of all, thematic analysis was used for the audio- and video-recorded interview transcripts and for the written text, i.e. the participants' diary entries, with the main intention of identifying recurring and salient themes and patterns in the participants' accounts and of capturing resonances and contrasts across accounts.

Finally, quantitative analysis was adopted as one of the means of answering the third and fourth research questions, with the main aim of identifying specific terms used by participants to express their emotions and to articulate their perceptions of cultural difference and with the further aim of tracking their frequency of use in different parts of their accounts.

Conversational analysis was also considered at first, but having no interview data with natural speech, i.e. interviews of participants talking with other people other than me (the interviewer) I decided not to pursue this line of analysis.

4.6.3. My use of the NVivo software

My analysis of the themes and issues emerging from the data was done with support from the NVivo8 software.

My first approach to the data analysis was through data coding, taking stock of all interview transcripts. As I indicated above, these were all audio-recorded and some of them (third interviews) were also video recorded. Unfortunately, the programme I used to audio record was not compatible with NVivo, or the videos. So, the software was used to analyse the written documents, but the analysis of audio and video data was done manually.

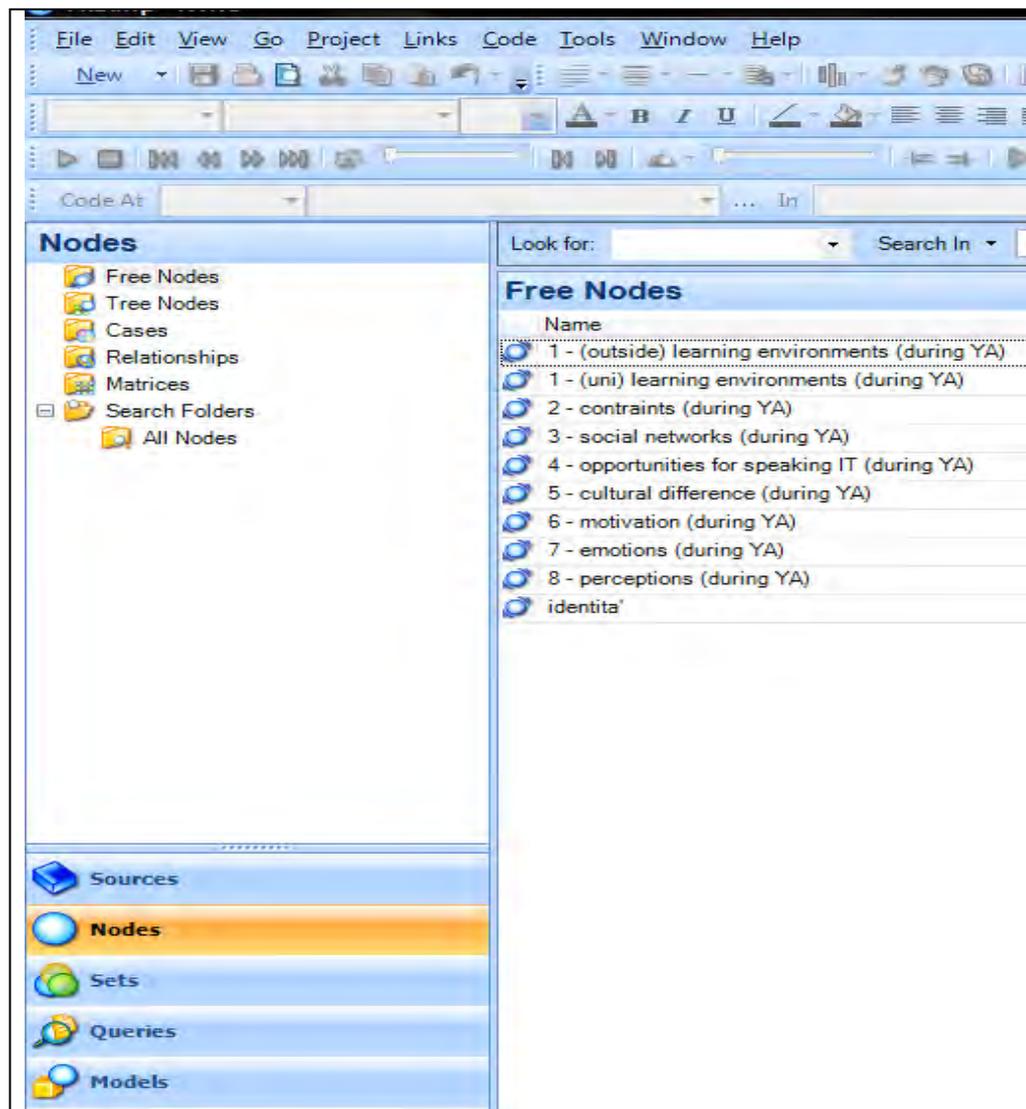
The interview transcripts were divided into three groups, according to the three participants. There are seven documents for Ilaria, six for Daphne, and five for Lucy. These documents include the transcriptions of the third interview for Ilaria and Lucy, which was filmed. For each participant there was also a video of some events lived in Italy: Carnival in Oristano (Sardinia) for Ilaria and Lucy; a tour in Ferrara for Daphne.

Some service encounters were also filmed, but not transcribed: Daphne ordering some food and drinks in a bar in Ferrara and buying a ticket at the train station; Ilaria ordering some drinks in a bar on the beach in Cagliari and buying a telephone card in a bar in Cagliari. There was also a short snapshot of Lucy buying a ticket at the newsagents in Cagliari (cf. Chapter 5). As pointed out above, these visual accounts were scrutinized manually, as no software providing technical support for this kind of data was found.

I started the analysis by coding the data in relation to my research questions (see *Figure 1*) and to my research interests. As shown in the figure below (*Figure 3*), I employed nine primary codes in all, so these were my ‘free nodes’:

- 1 - Learning environments (inside University)
- 2 – Learning environments (outside University)
- 3 – Social constraints
- 4 – Social networks
- 5 – Opportunities for using Italian
- 5 – Cultural difference
- 6 – Motivation
- 7 – Emotions
- 8 – Perceptions
- 9 – *Identità* (identity)

Figure 3. NVivo coding by Free Nodes



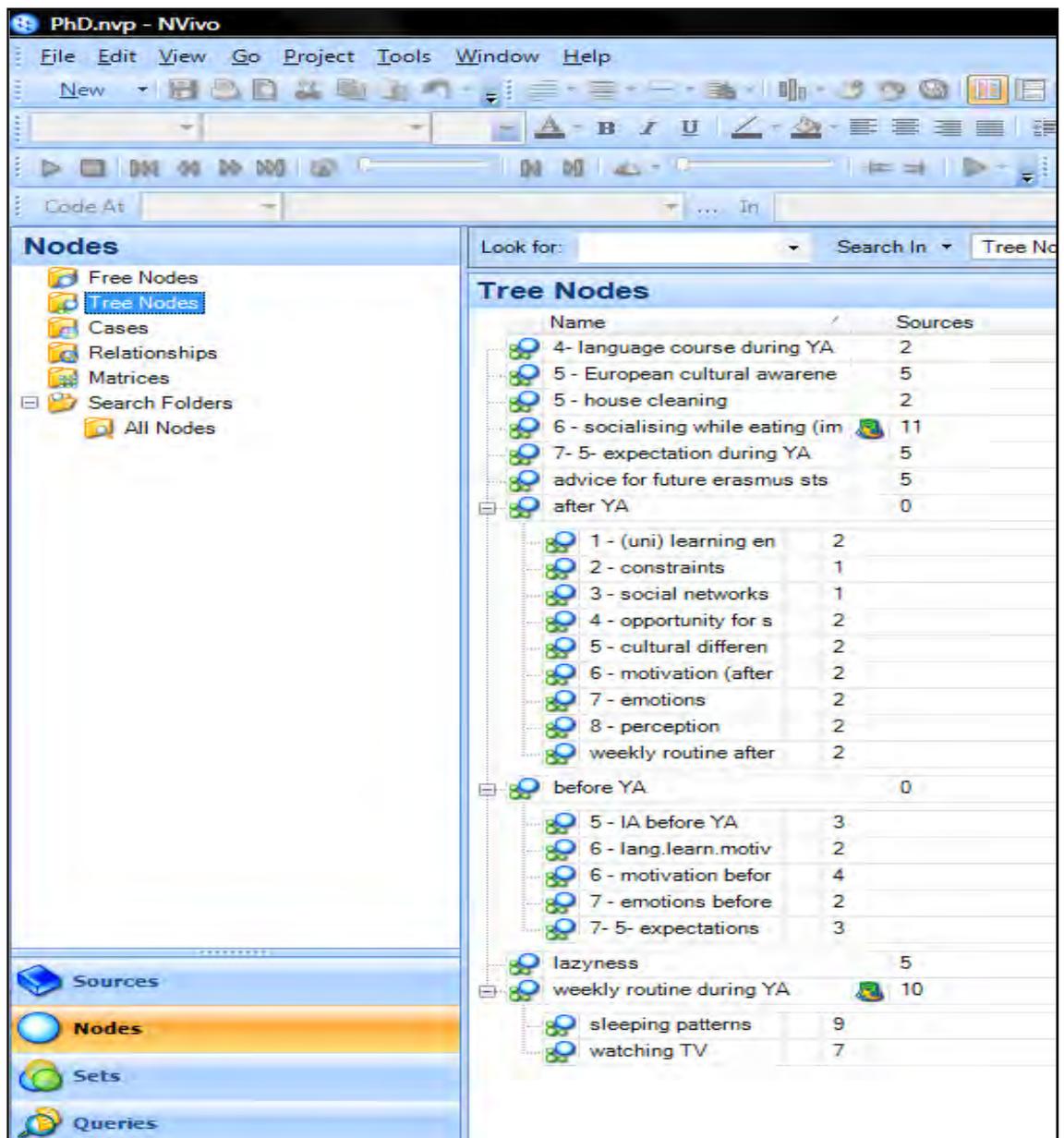
Adapted from my NVivo project

This initial coding is what Richards (2005: 92) calls “topic coding” which is relatively easy, but it can be misleading (see also Bazeley, 2007). Indeed, coding the transcripts according to the keywords (motivation, emotions etc.) was a very quick and easy process, although certain topics, such as: cultural difference or social constraints needed a different approach from the very beginning. This was an analytical coding, since research by themes (and not keywords) was needed to identify the precise turns at talk where these themes emerged, and they needed to be read carefully as they were often implicit references ‘between the lines’.

More precisely, I examined the transcripts imported in NVivo and I coded the turns at talk in which salient themes appeared to recur frequently. I made also use of other functions available in NVivo, such as memos, annotations and external links to my original files (see *Figure 5*). To encode the themes that occurred most frequently I also used graphs and summary reports of coded data. This allowed me to glean further insights into the data and to divide them into ten further categories, which were coded as ‘tree nodes’ and had various subcategories, as shown in the figure below (*Figure 4*). The ‘tree nodes’ were:

- 1- Language course during the Year Abroad
- 2- European cultural awareness (intercultural awareness)
- 3- House cleaning
- 4- Socialising while eating
- 5- Expectations during the Year abroad
- 6- Advice for future ERASMUS students
- 7- After Year Abroad
- 8- Before Year Abroad
- 9- Laziness
- 10- Weekly routine during the Year Abroad

Figure 4. NVivo coding by Tree Nodes

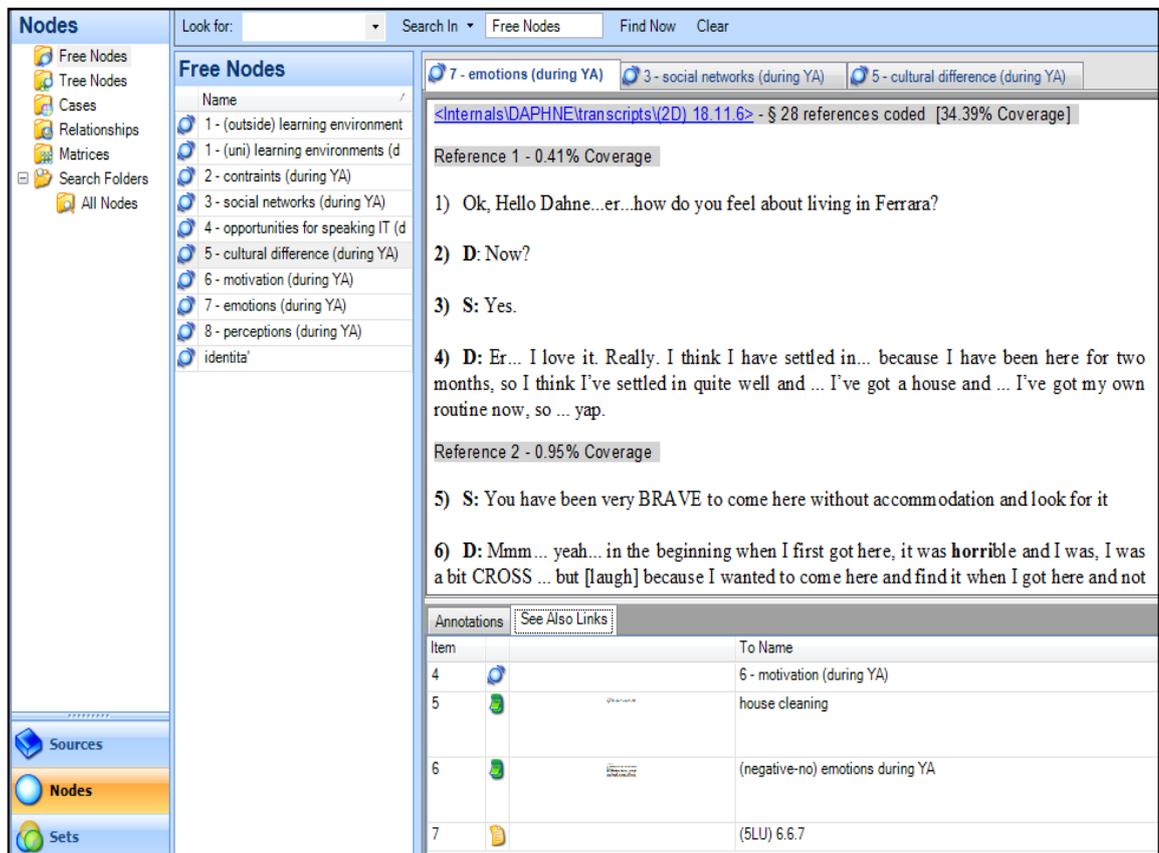


Adapted from my NVivo project

The figure below provides a snapshot of the type of systematic analysis I have conducted through NVivo, using various functions available in the software. The example reported below, shows, in particular, the lexical and thematic analysis I conducted for one of the participants in this study (Daphne) in relation to the expression of her emotions. This particular excerpt also shows the lexical analysis conducted in the second interview we undertook in Italy, in November 2006, and the thematic analysis of

other themes emerged in the same interview. As we can see from the figure, various types of electronic tools have been used to investigate these aspects, including, as mentioned above, annotations, memos and links to other transcripts and external files.

Figure 5. NVivo: Analytical tools



Adapted from my NVivo project

The following figure (Figure 6) shows an extract from the NVivo project summary. It is the first of twenty-nine pages. This summary, together with another summary in which only the free nodes were coded, helped me to identify the themes that occurred most frequently in my study. As shown below, the summary report was based on an overall count of the coded data into free and tree nodes, the references (i.e. the imported transcripts) and the overall coverage data of the coded themes specified in terms of percentages.

Figure 6. Example of NVivo Coding Summary Report by Free & Tree Nodes

Coding Summary Report		
Project:	PhD	
Generated:	08/02/2009 16:09	
Coding by Free & Tree Nodes		
Name	Initials	
Sonia Gallucci	SG	
Total Users	1	
Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\ (1D) 24.5.6		
Node Coding	References	Coverage
Free Nodes\4 - opportunities for speaking IT (during YA)	2	12.00%
Node Coding	References	Coverage
Results\EMOTION	36	47.89%
Node Coding	References	Coverage
Tree Nodes\6 - socialising while eating (importance of food)	1	7.43%
Node Coding	References	Coverage
Tree Nodes\before YA\5 - IA before YA	3	14.43%
Node Coding	References	Coverage
Tree Nodes\before YA\6 - motivation before YA	2	11.90%
Node Coding	References	Coverage
Tree Nodes\before YA\7 - emotions before YA	3	19.12%
Node Coding	References	Coverage
Tree Nodes\before YA\7 - 5- expectations before YA	3	7.94%
Total References	50	
Coverage	17.25%	
Total Users	1	
Coding Summary Report		

4.6.4. Some discrepancies between design and practice

As my data analysis chapters (Chapters 6 and 7) show, clear discrepancies emerged between what I planned in my research design and what I found in research practice. I started the project by asking whether and in what ways students on the particular YA exchange programme in which I was interested could really benefit from the experience of living in the host country. My questions were formulated in terms of ‘acculturation’.

My research questions were also broadly designed so as to anticipate all possible factors that might have a significant impact on participants’ everyday life in Italy. Hence, they included numerous factors such as: learning environments, social constraints and networks, opportunities for speaking the TL, cultural difference, motivation, emotions and perceptions.

From my reading of the coded data, I was struck by the saliency of participants’ expression of emotions and by explicit references to their perceptions of themselves and others. I therefore decided to focus on these salient features of the data in building my account of the ways in which they were negotiating their identities as second language learners, and the ways in which they were experiencing and dealing with cultural difference during their YA.

Thus, it became evident that the focus of my thesis did take a slightly different direction from the one planned, given that certain themes seem to have been salient for the participants’ in their lives abroad.

4.7. Summary

In this chapter I have introduced my research design and methods, paying particular attention to the overall conceptual framework and to the research strategies adopted throughout my research project. My research design included mixed methodologies and methods (qualitative and quantitative) (see *Figure 1*), but as pointed out in this chapter (in § 4.2), some of the methods, namely a post departure questionnaire and an email-based discussion of the interviews transcripts, were omitted in later stages of my research, as they turned out to be unnecessary.

Drawing on the principles of ethnography, which inform this case study, I considered participants' accounts as an integral part of the research, including their oral and written narratives. These accounts included: the consecutive interviews we undertook before, during and after their stay in Italy, their diary entries and the photo captions they wrote. Indeed, the data collected combined interview transcripts, diaries, photographs (and accompanying captions), with audio and video recordings, since all interviews were audio recorded, as initially planned, and some of them were also filmed.

The research methods have been presented in relation to my research questions, and their effectiveness to answer those questions. Considerable space has been given to the discussion of *interviews*, since this specific interactive method generated the main body of data for my research. This method proved to be the main tool of investigation: it allowed participants to talk about their experience in their own terms, and it allowed me to grasp the specific ways in which they negotiated their identities as second language learners in and through learning environments, social networks and opportunities for

speaking Italian, and the ways in which they expressed their emotions and they articulated their views about cultural difference during their YA in Italy.

Diary- and photo-based interview methods were also planned and applied in my study, even though only two participants (Ilaria and Daphne) wrote their diaries and took some photos. These methods proved to be appropriate and productive for my research, since they provided a penetrating inner view of participants' lives which would otherwise have been inaccessible. They also allowed me to see the participants' learning experience in Italy through their special lens, and to better understand their behaviours in the new environment.

As for the language used in the interviews, Ilaria and Daphne used Italian consistently in four out of six interviews, while Lucy used English in all the five interviews we undertook, apart from some occasional code-switching into Italian.

Some ethical and practical concerns have been raised in this chapter in relation to my research design and my epistemological position. I followed the *BAAL* and *BERA* codes of practice, and I adopted transparency of procedures throughout the entire study, in order to maintain a trustworthy relationship with participants, and to proceed with the project respecting their rights and their privacy. However, I found that complete transparency of methodologies may, occasionally, be counter-productive, especially when approaching possible research participants.

My first steps into data analysis procedures have also been introduced in this chapter. Particular focus has been put on the use I made of the research software NVivo, which allowed me to conduct a systematic analysis of data. I used the software to import all the interviews I transcribed, even though no analytical tool was available in NVivo for the audio and the video recordings; hence, I had to do the analysis of these

data manually. I also adopted the software to code the data in relation to my research questions and the themes emerging for the analysis. This coded data was linked to annotations, memos and external files, and, as shown in § 4.6.3, the data was further examined with the aid of graphs and summary reports.

The main aim of this last section was that of opening the way to further and deeper engagement with the data. The findings will be the focus of the Data Analysis chapters (Chapters 6 and 7).

CHAPTER 4 - ENDNOTES

¹ See Appendix 1: Consent Form.

CHAPTER 5

PARTICIPANTS AND SETTINGS

5.1. Introduction

5.2. The participants of this study

5.2.1. Daphne

5.2.2. Lucy

5.2.3. Ilaria

5.3. The urban settings

5.3.1. Cagliari

5.3.2. Ferrara

5.4. Snapshots of neighbourhoods and service encounters

5.4.1. Neighbourhoods

5.4.2. Service encounters

5.5. Summary

CHAPTER 5

PARTICIPANTS AND SETTINGS

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I will introduce the participants and the settings of this study. The chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section I will provide a short profile of my participants, including linguistic and academic background, and their reasons for taking part in this project (§ 5.2.).

In the second sections, I will describe the two Italian urban settings in which the participants lived for one academic year (2006-2007), these were Cagliari in Sardinia, and Ferrara in Emilia Romagna (§ 5.3.), and I will show some snapshots of their neighbourhoods and of service encounters they experienced in these neighbourhoods (§ 5.4).

5.2. The participants of this study

As previously said in the Research Methods chapter (chapter 4), building a sample for my study was one of the main issues of the first stages of my research (see § 4.2.1.). After several attempts at recruiting suitable participants for the project, both in the U.K. and in Italy, I found three young women in their early twenties, who showed commitment and enthusiasm from the very beginning of the project.

They were all of British origin and their first language was English. They shared with me their lived experiences in Italy as ERASMUS students for the entire academic year (2006-2007) and their account of their experiences provide the main foundation for

this study. The fictitious names that they chose for themselves were *Daphne, Ilaria and Lucy*.

5.2.1. *Daphne*

During the year in which I did the data collection for this project, Daphne was spending her third academic year as an ERASMUS student in Ferrara. She was doing a degree in Italian Studies with French at the University of Birmingham, which she completed successfully with a first class honours in 2008.

I met her for the first time in May 2006, before she left for the Year Abroad. After having contacted all the students who were studying Italian at the University of Birmingham at that time and who were due to go to Italy the following academic year, two students turned up for the pre-departure interview, but Daphne was the only one who actually carried on with the project till the end.

She came into the University room, in which our first meeting took place, with a big smile and clear signals of embarrassment (such as blushing and head down when entering the room). I feared that the shyness I perceived from her non-verbal behaviour would inhibit our interview. However, I was glad to be wrong, since she showed complete openness and flexibility talking about herself, her opinions and her emotions throughout the whole project.

Her hometown was a very small village near London, where she lived with her twin brothers and her father. She had a good knowledge of French and she had chosen to study at the University of Birmingham because she knew there were good language courses there. Indeed, when I asked her to what extent the Year Abroad was a

factor that had contributed to her choice to study Italian at the University of Birmingham this is was her reply:

Excerpt 1 – *Daphne's decision about the University of Birmingham*

D: OK. Bu' ... erm... most of the universities do the year abroad, so ... I didn't choose Birmingham just because of that ... but it was probably ... the thing that I was most excited about doing a language course, so that was yeah ... one of the things I was looking for when I chose to do languages.

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\1D) 24.5.6>]

Daphne had already been to Italy before, twice in Rome for four and then seven days during the summer of 2005. The main reason why she had decided to go to Ferrara was because she wanted to have her YA experience in a small town. To say it in her own words:

Excerpt 2 – *Daphne's decision about Ferrara as her YA destination*

S: Ferrara. And why have you chosen this city?

D: Erm ... because .. although I loved Rome SO MUCH, I wanted somewhere a bit a bit SMALLER to live, to live for a nearly A YEAR. I though it would be good if I would go somewhere where I could .. really GET TO KNOW people, and it seems that in somewhere a bit smaller it's easier to get to know a lot of people and, I though it would have been a bit more COSY really .. and .. comfortable ..

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\1D) 24.5.6>]



Photo n. 1 – *Daphne*¹

[Source: photo-based interview
13 April 2007]

5.2.2. *Ilaria*

I met Ilaria in Italy, more precisely in Cagliari, where she had just started her experience abroad as an ERASMUS student. I had previously contacted all British ERASMUS students in Sardinia², and Ilaria together with five other students, including Lucy, had kindly accepted to meet me after an introductory meeting for all exchange students with the local authorities at the University of Cagliari.

We conducted our first interview as an informal group interview in a bar near the university, and the whole atmosphere was quite relaxed and enjoyable. It was October 2006 and all six of the students who took part in the interview had arrived in Cagliari the week before.

Ilaria was willing to speak Italian, but we conducted the interview in English, since the rest of the group had opted for their first language when asked. Thus, from the very beginning Ilaria showed a high degree of confidence with the target language and strong willingness to pursue academic achievement (as shown in the Data Analysis chapters).

She was in her third year of study, and she was studying languages (Italian and German) at the University of Cambridge. She had chosen that particular university for its high reputation and for its academic environment.

Her knowledge of Italian was very advanced as well as her German. She also had a good knowledge of French although it was not part of her degree. Ilaria, like Daphne, successfully completed her studies the following year with a first class honours degree.

London was her hometown, where she lived with her parents as an only child. She had been to Italy already several times. She had been to Milan for a “shopping weekend” with her mother in 2002; she had been to Florence in 2004 a couple of times, then to Venice and Siena.

Her curiosity to discover another part of Italy led her to choose Cagliari as a YA destination. As she stated in our first interview, “*I have come to Cagliari because I want to sort of discover a bit of Sardinia and not just the mainland of Italy*”. [[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\ \(1IL\) 16.10.6>](#)].

She spent the whole summer in Cagliari, as she wanted to enjoy the sunny weather and the seaside as much as possible. After all, as she asserted during the same interview, she had always seen the YA experience in Italy as, “*Cool, a year of holiday, that’s good*” [[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\ \(1IL\) 16.10.6>](#)].



Photo n. 2 – Ilaria

[Source: Ilaria’s photo-based interview 18 February 2007]

5.2.3. *Lucy*

Lucy, like Ilaria, had already been in Italy for a week when I met her in early October 2006, and it was the first time that she had met the other British ERASMUS students living in the same city. She spent her YA in Cagliari, where she stayed until May 2007. She took part in the group interview we conducted in a bar, together with the five other students, including Ilaria.

Lucy was studying languages (Italian and Spanish) at the University of Warwick, not far from her native town where she lived with her parents and her sister, but unlike Daphne and Ilaria, she was only in her second year of study. I presume she completed her studies after two years of her YA experience (in 2009), but as soon as she went back to England we lost contact, therefore, these are only conjectures.

When Lucy arrived in Italy, her level of Italian was very low and she felt that this was a great obstacle during the entire academic year. She had an advanced knowledge of Spanish, which did not help, since as she said, “*I kinda of had to try to forget my Spanish in order to learn Italian because they are too similar to me!*” [[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\1LU 16.10.6>](#)].

The main reason why she chose to study languages at the University of Warwick was indeed for the Year Abroad experience. Indeed, this is how she replied to my question about the Year Abroad:

Excerpt 3 – *Lucy’s decision about the University of Warwick*

L: Erm, yeah I REALLY REALLY wanted to come originally, erm, it’s why I chose to erm ... take the course in... at Warwick. Erm, it was like choosing my course for university at the end of A-levels, that was the main point: I HAD TO GO ABROAD for a year. I REALLY REALLY wanted to. I started to feel

differently over the year, the last year studying, but ... it was like the main reason why I have chosen to do a language course.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\1LU 16.10.6>]

She had been to Italy once before, to Formo, a small town in the region of Marche, for ten days when she was sixteen, as an exchange student. She recalled the experience with amusement and admitted that it was during this experience that she “started to engage in learning Italian and the Italian way of life” [<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\1LU 16.10.6>].

The simple reason why she chose Cagliari as a YA destination was because she thought it was a small city compared to other big ones and that life there would have been better. This was a choice that at times she had regretted, but with which she was happy overall. This is evident in the excerpts below, taken from an interview we had in April, after she had just come back from Rome.

Excerpt 4 – Lucy’s decision about Cagliari as her YA destination

S: Ok, ok, that’s good. And then erm ...you went to Rome .. and .. when you came back from Rome, you told me, you had quite a good feeling about Cagliari, what happened?

L: [erm] **Y E S** , well .. I didn’t enjoy Rome very much, so I was looking forward to getting **away** anyway (...) erm ... part of me was thinking [*acting out*] “oh no I’m going back to Cagliari I just want to go **HOME**.” We got back to the airport, got back home and I sat down in my front room and turned on the television ... and I recognised all the adverts, and it made me feel so **homey**. It was like if I had come **back** to England and recognised this soap powder advert, for example. It made me feel like I do actually **belong** here, because there is a place for me in Cagliari where I fit, eh eh. This is satisfying. It’s quite a little thing but it has a big meaning, eh eh. [...]

L: Because even during the winter, when is boring, I always wandered [*acting out*] “oh maybe I should have gone to Rome, Rome is so **glamorous** and **exciting**” but last week showed me that the reality would have been a lot more stressful. And ... it reaffirmed ... erm ... it reaffirmed that ... I’m happy with Cagliari.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\4LU 7.4.7>]



Photo n. 3 – *Lucy*

[Source: Lucy's video diary May 2007]

5.3. The urban settings

In the following sections, I will briefly describe the two urban settings, Ferrara and Cagliari, where the participants of this study spent their YA. I will include their geographical position, their demography, their major economic sectors, the host university and other salient features.

5.3.1. Ferrara

Ferrara is a Renaissance city situated in the region of Emilia Romagna in the North eastern part of Italy, one of the richest regions of Europe. Its economy is predominantly based on the tertiary and the industrial sectors (including the food industry).

It has approximately one hundred and thirty thousand inhabitants, who are largely Italian with small minorities of migrants of east European, North African and East Asia origin (circa 4%).



Photos n. 4 & 5 – Views of Ferrara: The castle



Photos n. 6 & 7 – Views of Ferrara: The city centre



Photos 8 & 9: *Views of Ferrara: Piazza del Municipio*

The University of Ferrara is one of the oldest universities of Europe. It was founded in 1391 and today it is made up of eighty degree courses and eight faculties. The faculty of “*Lettere e Filosofia*” was the one in which Daphne attended the courses during her YA. The University also offers numerous postgraduate courses, such as PhD, Masters and specialisation courses. The main University buildings are situated in ancient renaissance palaces, in the heart of the city.



Photo n.10 & 11 – *University of Ferrara: Faculty of Literature and Philosophy*



Photo n. 12 – *Faculty office*



Photo n. 13 – *Faculty courtyard*



Photo n. 14 – *Main lecture theatre*



Photo n. 15 – *Computer room*

One of the most salient features of this city, apart from the many renaissance monuments and beautiful gardens to visit, is that almost everybody rides a bike, thus the streets of the city are characterised by a continuous and calm flow of colourful bicycles.



Photo n. 16 – *Bikes in Ferrara*

[Source (photos 4 to 15): Daphne's video diary June 2007]

Daphne had a second hand bike, which she, likely most local people, used to ride to go around Ferrara. Before leaving the city she gave it to the waitress of her local bar, who eventually became a good friend of hers.

5.3.2. Cagliari

Cagliari is the capital city of the region of Sardinia. It is situated in the southern part of the island by the seaside. There are numerous beaches nearby, including the “*Poetto*”, a popular destination for local people, which offers a variety of attractions, such as bars, restaurants and clubs.



Photo n. 17 – The “*Poetto*” beach



Photo n. 18 – Ilaria in a bar at the “*Poetto*”

[Source: Ilaria’s video diary July 2007]

The city has approximately one hundred and sixty thousand inhabitants, of which circa 17 % are migrants from Africa, East Asia and East Europe. The economy of the region is mainly based on the tertiary and on the secondary sectors (including the tourism sector).



Photo n.19 – *Panorama of Cagliari*

[Source: Ilaria's photo-based interview 18 February 2007]



Photos n.20 & 21 – *Views of Cagliari: The harbour*



Photos n. 22 & 23 – *Views of Cagliari: City centre - Piazza Yenne*

The University of Cagliari was founded in 1620 and is today made up of eleven faculties. Lucy and Ilaria attended their courses in the faculty of “*Lettere e filosofia*” and “*Lingue e letterature straniere*” during their YA. These faculties are situated in the centre of Cagliari, although there are some modern buildings on the outskirts of the city.



Photos n.24 & 25: *Going to University from Piazza D'Armi*



Photos n. 26 & 27: *University of Cagliari: Faculties of Languages and Literatures*



Photo n. 28: *Professor's office*

[Source (photos 20 to 28): Lucy's video diary June 2007]

One of the most salient cultural features of Cagliari, and of the whole region of Sardinia, is that three Romance languages are spoken: Italian, *Sardo* (a minority language) and Catalan (spoken in Alghero, a city in the north eastern part of the island). Although the majority of people use Italian today, there are still communities, especially inland and in small villages, that speak the minority language on a daily basis.

The presence of two languages was a surprise for Lucy, who was unaware of this linguistic richness, and it proved to be destabilising for her since she had flatmates who used to speak *Sardo* to each other and with her. In an interview carried out after we had been together for the Carnival in Oristano, during which Lucy had to speak Italian with local people, I asked her the reason why she could not speak Italian with her flatmates, and this was her answer:

Excerpt 5 – *Lucy’s bilingual environment in her Italian home*

S: That’s why, do they speak Sardinian?

L: Yes! I asked them when I arrived if they speak Sardinian and they said “well we mix half and half, but we’ll try and speak Sardinian with you [*Lucy*], because we know you’ve studied Spanish, and it’s quite similar”.

S: Oh my God.

L: And I was like “No please I have been studying Italian for the last year, that’s why I’m here.” Yeah, but I think they mix it a lot, well .. I’m just glad to find out that I can speak Italian better than I thought I could. I think I might mention this to them and say “please can you try and speak more Italian to me?”

[<[Internals\LUCY\transcripts\3LU 18.2.6 video](#)>]

5.4. Snapshots of neighbourhoods and service encounters

In this section I have inserted some photos taken from participants’ video-diaries, which show the neighbourhoods where they lived and some service encounters which they experienced.

The main aim of these snapshots is to provide an introductory visual description of participants' closest surroundings for their learning of Italian as a social practice (see Norton-Peirce, 1995). As I will show in my Data Analysis chapter (Chapters 6), the ways in which they participated in particular *speech events* (see Hymes, 1972), such as the service encounters in bars (for Ilaria and Daphne), at a train station (for Daphne) and at a newsagent (for Lucy), revealed rather clearly their commitment to making opportunities to use Italian.

5.4.1. Neighbourhoods

The photos below show Daphne and Lucy's neighbourhoods. Unfortunately I have no snapshots of Ilaria's surroundings, since she was quite reluctant to film near her house.



Photo n. 29: *Outside Daphne's Italian home (via Contrari)*



Photo n.30: *View from her room*



Photos 31 & 32: Views from Daphne's local bar, round the corner

[Source (photos 29 to 32): Daphne's video diary June 2007]



Photo 33 & 34: Views from Lucy's Italian home (Piazza Alghero)



Photos 35 & 36: Outside Lucy's home

[Source (photos 33 to 36): Lucy's video diary May 2007]

5.4.2. *Service encounters*

The service encounters below include: 1) Daphne ordering foods and drinks in her local bar (photos 37, 38, 39 and 40) and buying a ticket to Bologna at Ferrara train station (photos 41, 42, 43, 44 and 45); 2) Ilaria ordering foods and drinks in a bar at the *Poetto* beach (photos 46, 47, 48 and 49), and buying a phone card in a bar in the city centre of Cagliari (photos 50 and 51); 3) Lucy buying a bus ticket at a newsagent near the University in Cagliari (photos 52 and 53).



Photos 37 & 38: *Daphne ordering foods and drinks in her local bar*



Photos 39 & 40: *Daphne paying the bill*



Photos 41: *Departures screen at the train station* **Photo 42:** *Daphne queuing*



Photos 43 & 44: *Daphne asking for a train ticket*



Photos 45: *Daphne paying for and getting the train tickets*

[Source (photos 37 – 46): Daphne's video-diary June 2007]



Photos 46 & 47: *Ilaria ordering foods and drinks in a bar at the “Poetto” beach*



Photos 48 & 49: *Ilaria paying the bill*



Photos 50 & 51: *Ilaria buying a phone card in a bar in Cagliari city centre*

[Source (photos 46 to 51): Ilaria’s video-diary July 2007]



Photos 52& 53: *Lucy buying a bus ticket at a newsagent in Cagliari*

[Source (photos 52 and 53): Lucy's video-diary May 2007]

5.5. Summary

In this chapter I have provided a brief profile of my participants and summarised key features of the Italian cities in which they lived, including a short account of the universities in which they attended their lectures in the academic year 2006-2007.

I have decided to include these short descriptions, including the 53 photos, to introduce my participants – Daphne, Ilaria and Lucy – as real people with real lives, to show what the cities of Cagliari and Ferrara looked like, and to provide my readers with a wider context for their the reading of the Data Analysis chapters (Chapters 6 and 7).

CHAPTER 5 – ENDNOTES

¹ See Appendix 1 for participants' formal consent to use their photos and videos.

² See chapter 4 for more details about the local authorities that helped me to contact the ERASMUS students.

CHAPTER 6

NEGOTIATING IDENTITIES AND ENGAGING IN ACTIVITIES ACROSS LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

6.1. Introduction

6.2. Types of learning environments

6.3. Learning environments during the YA

6.3.1. Naturalistic environments

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6.6. Summary and discussion

CHAPTER 6

NEGOTIATING IDENTITIES AND ENGAGING ACTIVITIES ACROSS LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

6.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the findings related to my first and second research questions, which are:

- *What range of learning environments and social networks, with opportunities to use Italian, did the participants encounter in their day to day lives?*
- *In what ways did they negotiate their identities as second language learners over time in these environments and social networks identities?*¹

The chapter is divided into three main sections, each of which follows the themes arising from a close scrutiny of the data in relation to the research questions mentioned above. The first section deals with the learning environments, including the different kind of interactional contexts, in university classes and outside university, in which the participants found themselves (§ 6.2 & § 6.3).

The second section describes the social networks to which the participants of this study had access in the two urban settings where they lived for one academic year and the types of opportunities for using Italian that they took up during their YA in Italy (§ 6.4). In this section, I will evaluate the extent to which Daphne, Lucy and Ilaria's L2 desire for and investments in Italian were influential in their language learning.

In the third section, I will consider the participants' shaping of social identities during their experience abroad. Their negotiation and (re)construction of their social identities will be examined from a poststructuralist perspective, which sees individuals' identities as dynamic and changeable sites of struggles (§ 6.5). I intentionally use the

verb “(re)construct”, according to Pavlenko & Lantolf (2000), to indicate the further development of participants’ L2 identities during their period of study in Italy.

As my analysis will show, Ilaria, Lucy and Daphne responded in different ways to the opportunities to use Italian and make new friends in Italy and so, overtime, they (re)constructed their identities as second language learners. Their relationships with their flatmates, their language learning confidence and awareness, as well as their desire and willingness to achieve their linguistic and personal goals, all contributed to the level of language proficiency they achieved and the extent to which they adapted to the new society.

6.2. Types of learning environments

In this context I will use the terms *naturalistic* and *instructed* or *informal* and *formal*, to refer to the types of language learning environments my participants were exposed to.

The distinction between naturalistic and instructed types of language learning environments started to appear in the late 1980s among Second Language Acquisition theorists in the discussion of their research methodology (e.g. Cook, 1987; Ellis 1985, 1989, 1990, Long, 1988 and Larsen-Freeman and Long 1991). There was general agreement on describing ‘naturalistic’ the natural or informal study of a language outside the classroom, and ‘instructed’ the formal acquisition of a second language in a classroom.

Pica (1983) was probably the first theorist who made use of the term naturalistic, as opposed to instructed when referring to the acquisition contexts to which the

participants in her study were exposed. According to her, learning environments can be of three types: naturalistic, instructed and mixed. The terms ‘naturalistic’ refers to natural exposure in the target language environment; ‘instructed’ refers to classroom instruction, and ‘mixed’ is combinations of the two.

Further distinction was provided in the late 1980s by Spolsky (1989), who defined natural or informal environments as sites where fluent, free and meaningful language communication with the target language community can take place; whereas formal environments (namely classrooms) are defined as sites where second language learning is facilitated by a teacher in cautiously guided and simplified ways, and where attention is often paid to the practising of language forms (Spolsky, 1989: 171).

However, as Norton (2000) noted, this [and the other emergent SLA] distinction(s) appear to be simplistic, since natural environments do not always allow easy and exciting communication with members of the target language community, who are not necessarily supportive with second language learners or willing to help them to integrate in the new surroundings².

In this context, I will make use of the terms *naturalistic* and *instructed* learning environments drawing on SLA definitions. At the same time, I will adopt the poststructuralist perspective proposed by Norton (2000) who emphasised the social dimension of second language learning which, as she puts it, is “frequently marked by inequitable relations of power in which language learners struggle for access to social networks” (Norton, 2000: 113). Thus, my use of the terms naturalistic (natural or informal), as opposed to instructed (formal or classroom-based) learning environments,

refers to the *world outside the classroom*, which can often be hostile and uninviting (Norton, 2000: 113).

6.3. Learning environments

In the two sections below I will describe the language learning experiences of Ilaria, Lucy and Daphne drawing on their written and oral accounts. Their language learning in the Italian contexts and their gradual orientation to Italian culture took place mostly in naturalistic environments. They all attended university classes, more or less regularly, however, it clearly emerged from the data that, for the three participants, naturalistic/non-instructed environments were far more significant than university classes in terms of language learning and cultural orientation.

6.3.1. Naturalistic environments

Daphne learned a good deal just by staying at home. She studied at home for a large part of the day. Daphne used to read a lot at home and very often talked to her Italian flatmate Sara. Reading at home was an important and enjoyable learning activity for her. This is shown in the two excerpts below taken from a diary-based interview with Daphne conducted in November 2006:

Excerpt 1 – Daphne reading at home

S: Yeah, but you also say “*sono molto fiera di me*” [*I am very proud of myself*], so you are proud of yourself, why? What happened on [:]. that day? You said ...

D: [mmm]

S: “*Questo pomeriggio*” [*this afternoon*] Ah yes “*ho finito tutte le 806 pagine di Harry Potter*” [*I finished reading all 806 pages of Harry Potter*].

[...]

D: That was in a week, I think, I read it quite quickly.

S: Wow, in Italian?

D: Yeah, I really enjoyed it!

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D) 18.11.6>]

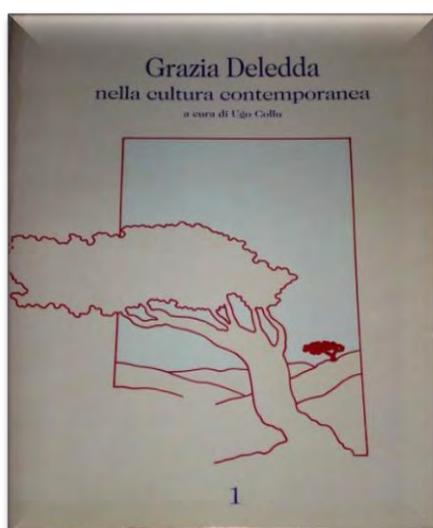
Excerpt 2 – Daphne reading at home

S: [...] Poi dici che hai letto più di cento pagine di storia italiana, un libro di storia italiana, eh eh, difficili? [*Then you say that you had read more than one hundred pages on Italian history, eh eh, difficult?*]

D: [eh eh, sì..] erm .. un po' pesante anche, perché in Inghilterra, all'università, non leggo i libri per il corso, forse alla fine, quando devi scrivere il saggio, ma durante il corso no, perché è.. un po' noioso. Ma .. questa volta ho comprato tutti i libri e ho letto, sì, più di cento pagine e che in Inghilterra **non faccio**, quindi ... sì.. [*eh eh, yes...*] erm .. *a bit heavy also because in England, at the university, I don't read books for the course, maybe at the end, when you have to write the essay, but during the course not, because it's ... a bit boring. But .. this time I bought all the books and I read, yes, more than one hundred pages, something that in England I don't do, so ... yes.*]

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\4D) 13.4.7>]

In contrast, Ilaria rarely used home as a learning space. When the university classes were over, a space she often worked in was the university library. This is shown in the caption below written by Ilaria in February 2006:



Non avendo lezioni qui a Cagliari in questo periodo (cioè tra il primo e il secondo semestre – non devo sostenere gli esami) sto preparando in questi giorni una traduzione per la mia laurea. Vado quasi tutti giorni nella biblioteca universitaria di Cagliari per fare la ricerca.

[*Having no lessons here in Cagliari in this period (namely between the first and the second semester – I am not obliged to take exams). These days I'm preparing a translation for my degree. I go to the university library of Cagliari almost every day to do the research.*]

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\3IL) 18.2.7 photos>]

Photo 54 – Ilaria's assignment for the University of Cambridge

[Source: Ilaria's photo-based interview 18 February 2007]

Both Ilaria and Daphne learnt a lot from watching Italian television. They used to watch it every day, especially during lunch and/or dinnertime. This is particularly evident in the picture below and the accompanying caption written by Ilaria, which shows her watching television.



Photo 55 – *Ilaria watching television*

[Source: Ilaria's photo-based interview 18 February 2007]

Siccome non seguo tante lezioni, guardo spesso la tv italiana – soprattutto all'ora di pranzo, quando mangio sempre con le mie coinquiline.

[*Given that I don't attend many lectures, I often watch Italian TV – especially during lunch time when I always eat with my flatmates.*]

[<[Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\3IL\) 18.2.7 photos](#)>]

In the photo-based interview conducted in February 2008, I asked her to comment on the pictures she took which were representative of her university life. This is what she said:

Excerpt 3 – *Ilaria and the role of the television in her daily routine*

I: Yes, there is [:] and this is about university life, watching TV.

S: Ah ...

I: Because every day, I come .. always come back for lunch and we always watch TV.

S: [yes?]

I: In our flat the TV is on almost always.

S: Really?

I: Yes. But it's ok, because I learn new things from TV.

S: And do you also like watching TV? Or do you see it more as [:] a commitment to learn Italian?

I: Er[:] I wouldn't say that it's a commitment, because yes[:] it is always on, it's not normal. Now I don't have to make too much effort in order to understand, what they are saying on TV, because it comes more like a ... rather passive thing, it's not an ... active thing anymore.

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\3IL) 18.2.7 video>]

Like Ilaria, Daphne watched television very often, and this played a crucial role in her daily life, as she pointed out in an interview carried out in April 2007:

Excerpt 4 – *Daphne and the role of television in her daily routine*

S: Do you watch the news on TV every day?

D: Yes, I like it, yes, yes I try to watch it... often, yes.

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\4D) 13.4.7>]

In contrast, Lucy watched television very rarely during her stay in Italy, although she would have liked to have done so. There was no television in the house where she lived. When we met for our second interview in December 2006, Lucy indicated that watching television would have helped to improve her understanding of the target language. This is shown in the excerpt below, taken from an interview conducted in December 2006:

Excerpt 5 – *Lucy and the desire to watch television*

S: [...] Do you watch television?

L: We don't have a television in the house.

S: [ah I see]

L: I wish we did erm ... I used to go to my friend's house, and watch television at hers, erm... it's **so useful** because you can see people's **expressions** and **gestures**, and that helps you understand. It's got the edge on radio, eh eh.

S: Could you get a television? Could you?

L: I don't know. I might be able to, my roommates think they'd like to buy one. Maybe something to discuss with them, over dinner maybe, eh eh.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\2LU 3.12.6>]

Just before the summer started, Lucy finally managed to get a television in her house, and watching it became an important daily activity especially during her meals.

The predominance of the television in the last few weeks of her experience abroad is clearly shown in her video diary, which she filmed in May. The video diary lasted approximately 13 minutes and the presence of the television is dominant for nearly ten minutes.



Photo 56 – *Lucy watching television*



Photo 57 – *The television in Lucy's house*

[Source: Lucy's video diary May 2007]

The participants in the study also mentioned other naturalistic environments where they had opportunities to hear and use Italian. For Daphne these opportunities came when she went out with her flatmate in Ferrara. When I asked her, in an interview conducted in November 2006, if she would have liked to have visited some other cities, this was her response:

Excerpt 6 – *Daphne spending time with her flatmate*

D: Mm, yeah, that's what I want to do, and when my flatmate is not .. working, we have been to the cinema[:] or [the other day]³ went to theatre[:] ... sometimes we just go out for lunch or for dinner together , which I really like so ..

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D) 18.11.6>]

6.3.2. *Instructed environments*

As far as the instructed learning environments (i.e. university classes) were concerned, both Ilaria and Daphne regularly went to the university lectures which they were interested in. Daphne, in particular, considered going to the lessons not only as an academic duty, but also as a way to socialise and to occupy her time, especially in the first semester of study. In fact, when the university was closed (during weekends and Christmas holidays in particular) she got so bored that she found it difficult to find outdoor activities outside home in which to engage.

For Ilaria going to the university represented a way of reproducing the university life she had had in the U.K. However, not surprisingly, the experience was totally different, since Cagliari did not have the same “university community” and “community feeling” (as she defined it) as Cambridge, and this disappointed her considerably, especially in the first semester. This point comes over clearly in the excerpt below, taken from an interview conducted in December 2006:

Excerpt 7 – Ilaria and the ‘university community feeling’

S: There is not a university life here ... I mean you go to the lectures, but outside the lectures ...

I: Yeah, that's it. You find a lecture and the right seat. That's a bit weird.

S: And do you like this?

I: Not really.

S: You'd rather have ...

I: [a **university community**] it would be quite nice. Maybe like, I don't know, maybe if we all lived in university accommodation, like *casa dello studente* [*students house*], it may be different. But I think because we all live separately, we don't really get the **community feeling**.

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\2IL) 3.12.6>]

The university system and the fact that the lessons were not compulsory seemed to have also affected Ilaria's language learning motivation. She found it difficult to "self-motivate". She stated the following in the same interview:

Excerpt 8 – *Ilaria's loss of language learning motivation*

S: Would you like to live in a bigger city? Or[:] DO you regret your choice of .. Cagliari?

I: Em[:] I don't regret my choice, because Cagliari is probably the same size as Cambridge. But it's just when I'm in Cambridge I always have work to do for Uni, so it keeps me occupied, but here because like, we have lectures, but we don't have to do any work for them, and it's like **more** self-motivating, and it's quite difficult to make myself to do extra work.

S: Ah[:], so do you think that your ... motivation would be higher if you had more ... work to do, more lectures ...?

I: Definitely! And also because the lectures aren't compulsory, and it's really easy to think "I'm a bit tired today, I'm not, I'm just not gonna go". Whereas if I were in Cambridge, the lecturers would notice if I wasn't there, and you get told off if you don't go there, whereas **here** no one really cares, that's make it a bit hard.

S: So do you think your motivation is decreasing over time? Or is it the same maybe?

I: Erm ... it's probably decreasing, like sometimes, a lot of time I get up quite late, in the morning, because I know there isn't anything to do here. And I think "If I get up earlier I just could feel more **bored**."

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\2IL) 3.12.6>]

For Daphne this aspect was frustrating at times, but only because of the kind of assignment she was required to do at University of Birmingham during the YA. She

found this to be completely unrelated to the lectures she was attending in Italy. She was not trying to reproduce in Italy the British University system nor was she comparing it with Italy. In contrast to Ilaria, she had adapted to the new academic environment so well, that she found it meaningless to do unrelated work for the University of Birmingham. As shown in the excerpt below, taken from an interview carried out in April 2007, this aspect of the university life disappointed her considerably:

Excerpt 9 – *Daphne's disappointment over the assignment for the University of Birmingham*

S: Molto bene, poi il giorno dopo, il sabato, ti senti molto stressata, ti senti stressata perché .. hai studiato molto e poi sembra che il lavoro che devi fare per Birmingham .. ti stressi. Perché così tanto? [*Very well, then the day after, Saturday, you feel very stressed, you feel stressed because .. you have studied a lot and then it seems that the work that you have to do for Birmingham ... makes you stressed. Why so much?*]

D: Erm.. mm.. perché mm.. non c'entra niente con il lavoro che faccio a Ferrara per l'università, quin' e non {...} mm[:] (...) è una cosa t u t t a diversa, ma è.. s e m b r a un po' qualc' è **qualcosa che devo** fare e non, **perché non ho** lezioni che vanno insieme con il saggio, mm... non sono immersa mm[:] nel tema, non ho imparà' anche se leggo i libri non mm[:] (...) mm ... è tutto staccato dalla mia **VITA** un po', perché è per Birmingham e **non sono** a Birmingham. [*Erm.. mm.. because mm.. this work I have to do for the university has nothing to do with Ferrara, so ... it's completely different (...) but it seems that it is something I have to do, and since I haven't got any lessons related to this essay, mm.. I'm not immersed in the topic, even if I read (...) but it's all disconnected from my LIFE, because it is for Birmingham and I'm not in Birmingham.*]

[\[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\4D\) 13.4.7>\]](#)

Indeed, it was by attending the Italian lectures that she improved her oral skills, since she was required to do oral presentations, standing in front of the class; furthermore, she decided to sit the final exams (although she was not required to) just to prove to herself she could do it. And she passed it with 30/30, i.e. the highest mark.

In the first semester Lucy, like Daphne, went to the language courses offered to all ERASMUS students, and she also tried to attend some lectures (literature and

history), although she did not go regularly, because she found them really difficult, since they were only in Italian. She recounts this in the excerpt below, taken from an interview conducted in December 2006:

Excerpt 10 – *Lucy and the university lectures*

D: Wednesday is the day when we have the most lessons; I think six hours all together. It's very hard. A lot of the times I may miss the last one, because I'm just tired. And I find the lessons SO frustrating!

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\2LU) 3.12.6>]

In April Lucy's attendance at lectures improved considerably, so did her note taking skills. She still found note-taking difficult, but she showed more commitment than before. As she reported in an interview conducted in the same month:

Excerpt 11 – *Lucy and the university lectures*

L: I have been trying to go to my lessons more, I have been to more lesson this semester than last semester. Which is good.

S: Are you happy with the university environment now? Because you told me you weren't really really satisfied with it. Or is it the same?

L: [it's] pretty much the same, but (...) for example this term I'm taking *letteratura inglese* instead of *letteratura italiana*, and so (...) I know the book that is being talked about, and it makes it so much easier to understand what's been said about the book. There's still a .. problem since ... I can't take notes very easily ... my listening skills aren't good enough yet. (...) erm .. but I'm getting more **out** of the lectures than I did before, and it doesn't feel like as much of a waste of time, he he.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\4LU) 7.4.7>]

6.4. Emotional investments and language desire across social networks and opportunities for using Italian

All three participants in this study had quite a lively social life during their YA, since they all stated they made many friends and went out frequently, either with other ERASMUS students (as in the case of Lucy), or with their flatmates and flatmates'

friends (as in the case of Ilaria) or with other ERASMUS students and their flatmates (as in the case of Daphne).

They also had a different range of opportunities for speaking Italian. From their written and oral accounts it emerged that both Daphne and Ilaria made good friends with their flatmates and their friendship with them opened up many opportunities to practise the language with Italian native speakers, whereas for Lucy these opportunities were constrained by the fact that her flatmates spoke a mixture of Italian, Spanish and Sardinian with her.

The kinds of opportunities that Daphne, Lucy and Ilaria had to socialize in the Italian contexts and the particular circles of friends (Italian native or non-native speakers) in which they participated had a strong impact on their chances of improving their second language.

In the following sections, I will describe the ways in which they managed to expand their circle of friends during their YA and the reasons why they did (or did not) do so. I will also describe the opportunities to use Italian taken and/or missed by Daphne (§ 6.4.1), Lucy (§ 6.4.2) and Ilaria (§ 6.4.3) respectively.

6.4.1. *Daphne*

At the beginning of Daphne's experience abroad, she enjoyed socialising indoors and outdoors with her only flatmate Sara, who then became her best friend in Italy. However, as time passed by, she expanded considerably her circle of friends. Indeed, despite the fact that all participants had many opportunities to expand their social circles, only Daphne was able to make a broad range of friends, including other ERASMUS

students like her or local people: the staff in the supermarket or in the local bar, her flatmate, Italian or international students at the university etc. In the excerpt below taken from an interview conducted in April 2007, we can see how she described her circles of friends in Italy.

Excerpt 12 – Daphne’s circles of friends

D: [mm..] sì ho... più amici studenti ERASMUS, che parlano inglese, ma ho anche .. nelle mie lezioni ho conosciuto (...) più de’ degli studenti italiani, er.. non erm.. non usciamo molto spesso insieme, qualche volta, per uno *spritz* , ma non’ non siamo molto vicini [*stretti*] ma[:] (...) erm[:] mm[:] parliamo durante la lezione, e sono.. carini, quindi.. sì ho più amici ingles’ o ERASMUS, anche italiani. [*yes I have more ERASMUS student friends, who speak English, but I also have ... in my lessons I meet more Italian students and sometimes we go out for a drink (called spritz – this is a typical drink of Ferrara) and we speak during the lesson, they are very friendly and nice, yes I have more ERASMUS student friends and Italian friends*]

S: Quindi hai socializzato anche con gli studenti italiani? [*so you have socialised also with Italian students?*]

D: Sì, sì con una ragazza a .. er[:] i s u o i amici che perché lei erm .. vuole fare ERASMUS l’anno prossimo in Inghilterra, quindi erm.. ci siamo conosciute, abbiamo parlato un po’ dell’Inghilterra e Italia e[:] erm .. d e l l e [*d e i*] vantaggi di fare.. un anno ERASMUS e .. e .. sì siamo uscite insieme due o tre volte, quindi [:] sì. [*Yeah, yeah, with one girl and her friends because she wants to do her ERASMUS in England next year, so ... we met and we talked a bit about the advantages and disadvantages of doing an Erasmus year and yes, we went out 2 or 3 times...*].

[<[Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\4D 13.4.7](#)>]

The pictures below, taken from a video filmed by me in June 2007, show Daphne interacting with the waitress in her local bar, who also became her friend.



Photo 58 & Photo 59 *Daphne with the waitress at the local bar*
[Source: Daphne’s video diary 8 June 2007]

The photo below, taken from Daphne in April 2007, shows her with other ERASMUS students, during a dinner in a restaurant. They went out for “women’s day”, a special event, which takes place in March in Italy.



Photo 60 – *Daphne with ERASMUS friends*

[<[Daphne’s Photo-based interview 13 April 2007](#)>]

Surprisingly, from the participants’ accounts it emerged that Lucy and Ilaria went out more often than Daphne, although their chances to go out seemed to be more restricted than those for Daphne, since they asserted several times that Cagliari offered few opportunities to go out. They resented the fact that sometimes they had to stay at home, as they found it repetitive going out to the same bars and with the same group of people every week.

Interestingly, both Ferrara and Cagliari are medium-size cities, and probably, Cagliari, being by the seaside, offers more in terms of outdoor activities. However, what was different about Daphne, who lived in Ferrara, was that she did not complain about this aspect of her life in Italy.

Indeed, it seems that it was not the quantity of opportunities to socialise outside their Italian homes that determined the degree to which they enjoyed living in the new society, but the quality of the relationships they had, and the efforts they made to bond with a few local people that they felt close to.

Daphne's willingness to meet and become acquainted with local people can be understood through her *emotional investments* in Italian (cf. Norton Pierce 1995 and Pavlenko, forthcoming). As she stated in our first interview, undertaken before leaving for the YA, her main aims were to get to know the new culture, to meet a lot of new people and to be able to be understood in the different Italian contexts. As shown in the excerpt below, taken from an interview conducted in May 2006, she appeared very determined to invest her time and energy to obtain the desired outcomes, and this prospect made her feel very excited.

Excerpt 13 – *Daphne's initial investments in Italian*

D: [...] the CULTURE is so different and it would be, everything I'll do will be NEW and it will be really fun, and I will meet lots of people, who are completely different .. to the English people, because I don't really know anybody who is not English [*laugh*]...

[...]

S: So how, how do you feel actually, going and living there for ONE year? What are your feelings?

D: Erm .. I think ... I guess at the beginning it will be a bit difficult because I just won't know anyone and ... and sometimes it's HARD to explain, like if { } to say ... if I don't know the words, then I'll just not be able to say anything. So I THINK at the beginning it will be difficult, but really.. I think I'll go over that quickly, and then it will just be ... the excitement of meeting new people and .. I think, yeah, I'm REALLY looking forward to it.

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\ (1D) 24.5.6>]

Over time, the positive outcomes of Daphne's plans increased her language learning motivation and helped her to adjust her goals and to consider new ones, e.g.

undertaking more complicated conversations, e.g. talking about complex issues or comforting her flatmate (see **excerpts 14** and **16** taken from her diary entries and from an interview conducted in November 2006) or overcoming the fear of speaking in public in service encounters or in academic environments during lectures and exams (see **excerpts 15, 17** and **18**, taken respectively from interview conducted in April 2007, November 2006 and June 2007).

Excerpts 14 – *Daphne's investment in Italian: talking about difficult things*

D: “[...] adesso cerco di parlare degli argomenti più complessi e per questo motivo trovo una nuova difficoltà.” [*now I try to talk about more complex topics and that's why I have a new difficulty*].

[[Source: diary entry November 2006](#)]

Excerpt 15 – *Daphne's investments in Italian: speaking in service encounters*

D: [...] adesso che conosco.. più persone e italiane, voglio essere capace di.. er.. uscire con un gruppo di tutti italiani e.. di parlare ... er[:] con il ragazzo del supermercato, con la cameriera al bar di parlare.. [con] più scorrevolezze[a]. Quindi .. sì forse perché ho cominciato a fare più amicizia, adesso vorrei migliorare ancora di più per.. essere più amici, con queste persone. [*now that I know.. more Italian people, I want to be able to.. er.. to go out with a group of all Italians and.. to speak ... er.. with the guy of the supermarket, with the waitress at the bar... more fluently. So.. yes maybe because I've started to make more friends, now I would like to improve even more to.. become closer to these people.*]

[[<Internals\DAAPHNE\transcripts\4D 13.4.7>](#)]

Daphne's investments in her second language were constantly accompanied by a great deal of language-related emotions, often worrying ones, such as anxiety, fear, nervousness and frustration. These emotions, as shown in the excerpts below, did not hold her back from her linguistic goals; on the contrary, they triggered her willingness to achieve them and to invest more and in new ways in Italian.

Excerpt 16 – *Daphne's emotional investment: frustration from not being able to comfort her flatmate*

S: You must be 'proud of yourself, of course. Oh that's nice. Ok, on Saturday the 21st again you start .. your diary by saying “*é troppo frustrante*” [*it is too frustrating*] and then something happened, you went out with Sara, you went to a restaurant and then she told you something about her life, yeah?

D: Oh yeah.

S: And you wanted to give her some advice?

D: Yeah she was having like a .. a problem with a colleague or a boyfriend or something like that , and I think she was quite .. not upset, but she was quite .. it was like a proper problem, and I was really pleased that we could talk about something like quite .. personal, like a proper friend, and I wanted to help her , like saying “maybe you could do this or do that, maybe it's because of this or something”

S: Yeah.

D: And I couldn't (...) it was like vocabulary I didn't know and I couldn't , I couldn't find a way to say it, and I wanted to help her and it was quite annoying because I wanted, I wanted to help, but I couldn't even think what or say so .. mm.. it was quite hard because I felt like I wasn't being helpful, but it wasn't because I didn't want or be helpful, but it was because I couldn't work out how to say what I wanted to say..

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D 18.11.6>]

Excerpt 17 – *Daphne's emotional investment in Italian: nervousness about speaking in university lectures*

S: I see, I see, ok, then you had a terrible experience [both laugh], because you said “Il prof. mi ha chiesto di alzarmi e di parlare della storia inglese, davanti a tutta la classe d'italiano! Era terribile.” [*The Professor asked me to stand and talk about English history in front of the Italian class! It was terrible*] [...] I can read here, that you had this experience on Tuesday, and then on Wednesday again you said “Ho dovuto ‘parlare’ ancora una volta, davanti a tutti gli studenti” [*I had to talk again in front of the whole class*], so you had to talk.

D: Yeah, I knew he was going to ask me.

S: Ah, so you were prepared?

D: Yeah, I wasn't quite as nervous, because I was expecting it.

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D 18.11.6>]

Excerpt 18 – *Daphne's emotional investment in Italian: overcoming nervousness about taking oral exams*

S: And what about the[:] your opinion about the university, the Italian university system? And.. have you taken any exam? Or .. did you like them or not?

D: Erm .. yeah.. I did an exam, last week, which was an oral exam, because almost all the exams are oral, which erm ... was quite a change because in England all the exams are written. I was quite' no, I was **very nervous** in the beginning, I was shaking and I was so nervous [...]

S: [how] did it go, your exam?

D: It was all right, eh eh, even the teacher was **so nice**, I think he liked the foreign students, because he gave me and my friend the top marks. Even though, eh eh, .. yeah

S: [sei contenta?] [*are you happy?*]

D: Yeah, I think, even though, we did, or I certainly answered something wrong, I think he was like “wow, you did well”. And with the exam all in Italian, so (...) it was kind of hard, in two weeks we had to know the ... the materials for the course that we had to do the exam in another language, so.. that was nice of him, eh eh.

[\[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\5D\) 8.6.7>\]](#)

Daphne also had a strong *desire* to be part of an Italian community, no matter what the size of the city was or the opportunities for going out were. Her desire to join the local social networks is to be understood not in the sense of a romantic attraction to its target language members (cf. Piller, 2002), but as a desire to match her idealistic image of the Italian language (including people and culture) to a real one she could experience in Italy (Cf. Kinginger, 2004).

In this romantic search for boundaries between ways of reconciling her imagined micro-domains and the reality of the Italian macro-domains, Daphne showed a great deal of agency. Like the participants in Piller and Takahashi's study (2006), she was able to contest institutional discourses of power, which positioned her as disadvantaged

or “foreign” (Cf. Davies & Harré, 2001) (see **excerpts 19** and **20**), and reverse them in her favour, by taking control of interaction in Italian and among Italian native speakers (see **excerpt 21**).

The excerpt below shows quite clearly Daphne experiencing negatively a power asymmetry in L2 interactions, when being positioned in a marginal role by Italian native speakers, since she was not able to understand their linguistic jokes.

Excerpt 19 – *Daphne being positioned as “foreign”*

S: Ok, ok on Friday the 27th you went to a party, again, and you said “it was very nice”... but “I felt a bit er ... excluded” “*qualche volta mi sento un po’ esclusa perché sono straniera*” [*sometimes I feel a bit excluded because I’m a foreigner*]... so what do you mean by that? You felt a bit ... isolated.

D: Mmm. I think it was because I was in another party for graduation, and it was quite, there’s a lot of traditions[:] a n d ...I just don’t know, and ‘cause (...) well it’s hard to explain, but I didn’t know the traditions, so[:] I didn’t know what was going on some of the time, so I felt really awful, I don’t know ... and a lot of times, not a lot of time, **WHEN I feel** excluded, it’s quite often because there’s a ... it with jokes a lot of times. And I think because erm....they’re quite subtle sometimes, I think it’s a quite hard thing, they usually play on words or ...like swear words or ... they’re quite particular and also if somebody else is talking, you don’t understand, it’s a kind of ‘**annoying** but it’s all right, it’s kind of **wait** until they change their subject to something I understand. If everyone starts **LAUGHING** and I don’t get it, it’s a, I don’t know it’s a ... quite, maybe it’s just a more obvious s i g n than a conversation, I don’t know if it does make sense.

[<[Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D 18.11.6](#)>]

In the following excerpt, taken from Daphne’s diary-based interview conducted in April 2007, we can also notice power asymmetries between native and non-native Italian speakers. However, unlike in the previous excerpt, in this one it is Daphne that positions herself as a “foreign” and as a capable language learner. She shows in this way noticeable agency in positioning herself in the new Italian contexts and a great deal of awareness of the linguistic asymmetries between L1 and L2 speakers.

Excerpt 20 – *Daphne's positioning herself as a "foreign"*

S: [...] scrivi una frase interessante, dove dici “bisogna avere un po' di pazienza con una **straniera**”; perché parlavi con una ragazza e questa ragazza non ti non ti è sembrata molto simpatica? [you write an interesting sentence where you say “it is necessary to have a little bit of patience with a **stranger**”; is it because you were talking with a girl and this girl didn't seem to you very nice?]

D: No perché lei ha una voce abbastanza bassa, è difficile capire .. erm.. quindi non ho capito tutto e le ho detto, e secondo me forse lei è solo un po' timida, ma non ha ripetuto la frase, quindi non sapevo c o s a dire e.. [No, because she has quite a low voice, it is difficult to understand.. erm..so I didn't understand everything and I said it to her, and in my opinion maybe she is just a bit shy, but she didn't repeat the sentence, therefore I didn't know w h a t to do and ...]

S: È stato imbarazzante? [was it embarrassing?]

D: un po' sì, e pensavo[:] (...) “ma se tu la ripeti, forse poi **capirò**, quindi basta solo provare un po' più e..ma.. sì... forse qualche volta bisogna avere pazienza con qualcuno che non capisce, ma se.. questa persona **ha un po'** di pazienza, poi dopo è più facile parlare insieme e... [a bit, and I was thinking (...)]”but if you repeat it, maybe I will **understand**, so it is enough to try a bit more and... but ... yeah...maybe sometimes it's necessary to be patient with somebody who doesn't understand, but if.. this person **has a bit** more patience, then it's easier to talk together and...]

S: Ma tu.. quando dici “bisogna avere un po' di pazienza con una **straniera**” tu ti senti una straniera? [But you.. when you say “it's necessary to have a bit of patience with a **stranger**”, do you feel a stranger?]

D: Erm .. quando qualcosa così succede sì, un po' perché.. sì perché erm.. non ho capito e... mi sentivo un po' esclusa, e non è successo per molto tempo, forse perché questa volta er.. mi sono resa conto [di] più... [Erm.. when something like this happens I do, a bit because..yes..because erm..I didn't understand and...I felt a bit excluded, and this hadn't happened for a long time, maybe because this time er.. I was more aware...]

[<Internals\DAAPHNE\transcripts\4D 13.4.7>]

In the excerpt below, taken from the same interview conducted in April, we can see Daphne taking control of L2 interaction when ordering foods in an Italian restaurant, since her Italian friends were too drunk to speak. In this particular situation, she refused an interactional marginal role and became the primary interlocutor in L2 conversations.

Her ability to deal successfully with this situation shows visibly that public discourses, which position L2 users as disadvantaged, can be challenged and that power asymmetries can be reversed.

Excerpt 21 – *Daphne reversing positions of power*

S: Poi hai avuto una serata molto divertente, con delle amiche, un'amica non era molto su, era un po' giù, perché gli è successo qualcosa, però poi tu dici "che strano è stata io la più capace di parlare italiano". Perché? [*Then you had a very amusing evening, with your friends, a friend wasn't very happy, she was a bit down, because something had happened to her, however, you say, that "it is strange because it was me who was the most able to speak Italian". Why?*]

D: [si] perché le altre due.. sono state un po' ubriache, eh, quindi non hanno parlato molto, perché di solito in un ristorante io[:] non ordino, perché per un italiano è più facile, ma questa volta le altre due no sono state in grado di parlare e così l'ho fatto io.. [*yes*] *because the other two.. were a bit drunk (eh), so they hadn't spoken a lot, because usually in a restaurant I[:] don't order, because for an Italian it's easier, but this time the other two were not able to speak, so I did it]*

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\4D 13.4.7>]

Daphne's desire for and investments in Italian led her to seek as many opportunities as she could to speak her second language. In the first few months she spoke Italian mainly with her flatmate Sara, and during the language course, which she attended at the university. The course was for ERASMUS students only. When I asked her about this in November 2006, her response was as follows:

Excerpt 22 – *Daphne's early opportunities to speak Italian*

S: And do you have many opportunities to speak Italian during the day?

D: Mmm ... mainly with my flatmate during breakfast time or dinner or .. but in the day (...) mmm... if I'm in lessons I don't really, I don't have to speak, and if I DO speak in the lesson it's usually in the Italian lesson when I'm with English students, so I do speak Italian during the day but mainly with my flatmate or to the teachers I speak in Italian.

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D 18.11.6>]

From the very beginning Daphne seemed to be eager to invest in speaking the language, she noticed that after having spoken Italian during the day, it was easier to speak it with her flatmate every evening during supper.

Speaking Italian was an activity that Daphne enjoyed very much, despite the efforts and the frustration of the first few months, since her level of the language was not very high when she arrived in Italy. She got frustrated sometimes because she would have liked to say more complex things, as mentioned above (in **excerpt 14**) and as shown in the excerpts below taken from the diary-based interview in November 2006.

Excerpt 23 – *Daphne's frustration over her Italian*

S: Do you enjoy speaking Italian?

D: Yeah, I do when I can express myself, but I do, I do get quite frustrated sometimes, if I can't, because it's just ... it's quite hard if there's something I really want to say and I can't say it. [...] I think, because I'm getting better, I'm more confident about speaking, so I speak more, which means I find more ... thingsss I can't say, because I'm trying more [laugh] so I think I'm getting maybe a bit more frustrated but I don't think it's because I'm getting 'worse, I think it's because probably I'm getting better, I don't know, maybe not.

S: Yeah, maybe you want to say more complex things.

D: [yeah that's why I think], yeah maybe I can actually say more and I'm finding the things ... like really complicated thoughts I have and I can't say them ...

[\[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D 18.11.6>\]](#)

Daphne also engaged in tandem learning for some time with an Italian girl, who intended to spend her YA in the U.K. during the following academic year. Namely, they decided to do a one hour language exchange on a weekly basis, where they could practise their second language, either by using each language (English or Italian) for 30 minutes or by using their second language only for one hour, in other words, Daphne would

speak Italian and the other girl would speak English. Daphne found this experience very useful, as shown in the excerpt below, taken from an interview conducted in November.

Excerpt 24 – *Daphne’s tandem learning*

S: Ok, that’s good, ok, on Thursday the 26th you met a friend but you said “*well not really a friend, I don’t really know her very well, but she’s very friendly*”, and you had a kind of exchange, like 30 minutes speaking Italian and 30 minutes, er, speaking in **English**, was it a good experience for you?

D: [yeah] yes[:]

S: or .. are you still doing it?

D: Yes, I had it a couple of days ago, because, just, I think, she doesn’t study English, she wants to practise speaking in English, so sometimes, the first time we did like 30 minutes in each language, when we met the other day, erm, I would always speak in Italian, and she’d always answer me in English, so we did it differently, which I preferred..

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D) 18.11.6>]

Speaking with Sara (Daphne’s flatmate) was definitively a good opportunity to practise the target language. However, Sara was ten years older than Daphne and spoke a very refined Italian, so Daphne re-evaluated her early investments in speaking mainly with her flatmate, and also looked for opportunities to speak with people of her same age and to learn more colloquial expressions, along with slang or swear words. When I asked her, why she wanted to speak “slang”, this was her answer:

Excerpt 25 – *Daphne’s new investment: speaking more colloquial Italian*

D: Yeah I’d like to, I’d like to learn something like the swear words and stuff, just because that’s the way people actually speak, and Sara doesn’t use those expressions, I hadn’t really heard them. But I think students just use them a lot more, because Sara is quite a bit, well, like, is 10 years older than me, whereas students they’d just say anything, and it’s nice to (...) to ... because you can’t find those expressions in the dictionary and teachers in England they are never gonna say these things, so.. a good chance to.. hear how people actually speak, not out of the textbooks or something.

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D) 18.11.6>]

Being able to understand Italian colloquialisms and slang as well as Italian humour proved to be quite difficult for Daphne, who found herself in embarrassing and unpleasant situations, such as the one described in **excerpt 20**. However, these kinds of language-related emotions led her to modify her goals and, as mentioned above, turned into constructive tools which helped her to achieve her new investments.

As time passed by, the linguistic situation improved considerably for Daphne. From our last three interviews, which were conducted in April, May and June 2007 respectively, it progressively emerged that her linguistic proficiency in speaking Italian was improving, so was her language confidence and her understanding of local people's attitudes.

She was now able to have short conversations in Italian with local people, without being worried about making mistakes. She was carrying on having long conversations with her flatmate, who did not speak English; and, as indicated above, she had started to interact with local people in the supermarket or at the local bar (see e.g. **excerpt 12** and **15**, and **photos 58** and **59**).

To sum up, Daphne invested considerably in Italian during her YA. The positive outcomes of her initial investments (e.g. becoming acquainted with local people, understanding and being understood by Italian native speakers) helped her to develop an awareness of the ways in which she could understand her relationships with the new Italian contexts. This awareness raising process was also accompanied by a great deal of emotion (cf. e.g. **excerpts 16, 17, 23**) which helped to evaluate her investment as convertible capital and, therefore, to modify her strategies (e.g. speaking to people of the same age and undertaking more complicated conversations) or to consider new ones

(e.g. understanding Italian humour and being less shy when speaking in public) in order to obtain a *good return* on her investment (e.g. becoming fluent and being accepted in the new social contexts, with a view to looking for jobs in Italy after graduating in the U.K.).

Her emotional investments acted as mediators between her strong desire to match her idealistic image of the Italian language, culture and people to the real one she experienced in Italy, and her second language motivation. In pursuing this goal she showed a great deal of awareness of the linguistic and power asymmetries between L1 and L2 speakers. at the same time she demonstrated agency by challenging such asymmetries and becoming a competent and confident L2 user.

6.4.2. *Lucy*

Lucy had quite a lively social life in the first few months of her experience abroad. She preferred to go out with other ERASMUS students, as is shown in the excerpt below, taken from an interview conducted in December 2006:

Excerpt 26 – *Lucy's circles of friends*

S: Do you have many friends?

L: I have a lot of acquaintances {...}. I find it quite hard to make friends.

S: Where are they from?

L: Erm[:] {...} erm ...I'm very friendly with Jojo, she is from erm...London; and her housemate Bojar, he is from Spain. Erm ... we spend some time, erm ... with most of the people from my language class, so there is Paul who is German, Arthur who is French, so a **mix** of people from across Europe. Mostly we speak English. I find it so much easier to make **meaningful friendship** if I can speak English.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\2LU) 3.12.6>]

Interestingly, from her interview transcripts it emerged that initially Lucy was the one who went out the most in Cagliari, especially with other ERASMUS students, but at the same time she was the one who felt loneliest and who went back to the U.K. more often and for longer periods. These two aspects of her lived experience in Italy are evident in the excerpts below (**excerpts 27, 28 and 29**), taken from three interviews conducted in February, April and June respectively.

The first excerpt shows how happy Lucy was when her boyfriend went over from England to Cagliari for her birthday, and at the same time it tells us how well she knew the venues for socialising in town and how close she was to the other ERASMUS students.

Excerpt 27 – *Lucy going out in Cagliari*

L: Erm ... Tom came on the 15th and { } and my birthday celebration was **so much fun**, so much fun, and ... unfortunately not many ERASMUS students could come because they were all already on their way home for Christmas, but erm... but a few of us erm... had some drinks at my apartment and we went to my favourite little bar[:] round the corner from my house, which **I think is the best bar** in Cagliari, but it's not very popular because it's quite far from the centre.

[<[Internals\LUCY\transcripts\3LU 18.2.7 video](#)>]

The second excerpt highlights the development of Lucy's social life and her efforts to make more friends.

Excerpt 28 – *Lucy expanding her social life*

L: And ... I have been spending a lot more time with the ... **new** English girl ... Sarah ... erm ... she lives with two Italian girls, really friendly. We've been going out with them a lot more .. and .. I have more of a social life .. now, which I'm happy about, and ... erm... my two Italian roommates seem really happy to help me practise in Italian, so ... everything is looking good, eh eh.

[<[Internals\LUCY\transcripts\4LU 7.4.7](#)>]



Photo 61 – *Lucy with one of Sarah’s friend*

Photo 62 – *Sarah*

[Source: Lucy’s video diary May 2007]

And finally, the third excerpt, taken from our last interview, shows a sort of regression to the initial stage of her YA experience. After several attempts to adapt to the new linguistic and cultural environment, she just simply gave up trying to adapt to the Italian surroundings, knowing that she would soon be back in her own country.

Excerpt 29 – *The regression in Lucy’s social life*

L: I think my routine is more or less the same (...). I probably go out even less {...} erm ... {...} because {...} my social life ... it’s still with English people, mostly. And erm ... two of them have gone home now, so, eh eh, I have even less of a social life I suppose. And this is, this is making me wanting to go home as well ...

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\5LU) 6.6.7>]

Over time, Lucy showed a decreased interest in expanding her circles of friends, be they Italian native or non-native speakers. Despite the resolutions she made in every single interview we undertook (see e.g. **excerpts 30, 31** and **32**, taken from interviews conducted in December 2006, June and April 2006 respectively), except in the last one, she did not manage to fully achieve her linguistic goals, as she sadly admitted in the last interview (**excerpt 33**).

Excerpt 30 – *Lucy's desire to speak more in Italian*

S: Yeah. Are you trying to speak Italian as much as possible?

L: **No**, to be honest ... **no**, eh eh.

S: Will you?

L: {...} I think I will try. I think when I get home ... erm to England ... I'll be able to let ... **full of my mind system worrying** ... like you said ... this part is **concentrating** on something, this other part is concentrating on ... When I ...when I get back to England maybe I'll just **settle** ... and I can now get ... a **real** idea of how much I've progressed ... and I think seeing that I haven't progressed as much as I'd like is gonna really motivate me when I come back.

[\[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\2LU 3.12.6>\]](#)

Excerpt 31 – *Lucy's desire to make Italian friends*

S: [...] ok we[:] last met in[:] November, I think, and.. I would like to ask **you** erm... what has been your experience since **then**, because we met erm.. before Christmas, then you spent some time in Cagliari, then you went back **to** [:] England, and so on, so what have you been doing so far?

L: **W e l l** ... after we last saw each other, I decided that I wanted to put some distance between me and the other girls, I was spending the time with, and I was always ... speaking English erm[:] we had a lot of differences and (...) I just decided I wanted to move forward and make some new friends. But erm... being, not being a proactive person I found it quite easy to decide what I was **NOT** going to do, rather than what I wanted to do and do instead. So ... I spent a lot of time in my room, I told myself I was trying to **study**, work on **that** aspect of the ERASMUS experience, but I didn't, because studying is boring. Erm... I watched a lot of films and (...) erm... (...) erm ... I have mostly dedicated my time waiting for my boyfriend would visit for my birthday, erm.. which is shame.

[...]

L: So that's good. Basically, if when I go back to Warwick, at the end of the year, and I can speak Italian, not fluently, I don't mind if I can't speak it fluently, but enough to .. to hold a conversation, with Italians, and get by, and if I have got a few Italian friends, and.. proper contacts, whom I can visit, they can visit me if they want, then I'd be **r e a l l y** pleased for what I have achieved.

S: Oh, this is your main goal now?

L: Yap.

[\[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\3LU 18.2.7 video>\]](#)

Excerpt 32 – *Lucy's investment: having a more proactive daily routine*

S: Are you enjoying this experience in Cagliari?

L: (...) **y e s** , yes I am. The last time we spoke erm... two months ago? And since then .. erm ... I think I'm having a more positive experience.

S: Erm ... for example what happened? What have you changed about your daily practices or everything?

L: Erm ... I **h a v e n ' t p a r t i c u l a r l y c h a n g e d** things in a great sense erm ... but I have been making efforts to change them. It's more of a work in progress. I have been trying to change my sleeping patterns and to wake up early. So ... erm.. manage to get myself up at 10 in the morning, eh eh, which is good [*amused tone of voice*]. Erm ... and I **eat breakfast** every day now, so I don't feel tired, or grumpy during the day as **much**. And er... I've been trying to make more than an effort to talk to my roommates, which is working (...) slowly, but it's working, eh eh.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\4LU 7.4.7>]

Excerpt 33 – *Lucy's awareness of lack of investment in Italian*

S: So you managed to stay, nine months? How long have you been here?

L: Nine months, yes.

S: Nine months. And do you have a general positive feeling about this experience or a negative one or so so? What is your general impression of it?

L: Mmm[:] it's quite **mixed**. I feel negative ... because ... I think I could have got more out of this experience if I'd arrived in Italy with a more ... positive attitude, because I was erm... in a bit of a dark route, eh eh, when I arrived. And I think it affected how I picked up the language and ... **definitively** my motivation.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\5LU 6.6.7>]

Lucy's difficulties to match her desire for and investment in Italian, was most probably due to the lack of constant efforts and commitment to second language learning. Moreover, the lack of access to the cultural capital (cf. Bourdieu, 1991) that Italian native speakers had made it more difficult for Lucy because of the fact that her flatmates spoke a mixture of Sardinian and Italian with her (as shown below in **excerpts**

30, 31 and 32), and this impeded closer socialisation with them and, unlike Daphne and Ilaria, it held her back from a regular use of the target language inside her Italian home.

Lucy's motivation to learn Italian in Italy was very clear from the very beginning, as she stated in our first interview. When I asked her "to what extent was the 'year abroad' a factor that contributed to your choice to study Italian at the University of Warwick?", this was her reply: "*I REALLY REALLY wanted to come originally, ehm, it's why I chose to ehm...take the course in... at Warwick. Ehm, it was like choosing my course for university at the end of A-levels, that was the main point: I HAD TO GO ABROAD for a year. I REALLY REALLY wanted to.*"

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\1LU 16.10.6>]

Unfortunately the lack of realistic goals and consequently the failure to achieve them by the planned time, namely before our meetings, which took place approximately every two months, made her feel less motivated and not confident in using Italian.

Unlike Daphne, Lucy's *emotional investments* in Italian did not act as mediators between her L2 motivation and the desire to speak it. On the contrary, Lucy's anxiety to speak with members of Italian society (cf. Norton, 2001) represented a huge linguistic deterrent which eventually led her to avoid struggles for future investments and to confine herself to her L1 comfort zone (cf. **excerpts 35** and **37**). This is clearly shown in the excerpt below, taken from our last interview.

Excerpt 34 – *Lucy's piece of advice for future ERASMUS students*

S: In what did you succeed? And what do you want to pass on this ... you know ... from experience, telling [future ERASMUS students] "do this, don't do that ..."

L: [mmm] I think my advice would be to ... **ignore any fear** you have about making mistakes, and push yourself to practise. Because I didn't practise my

Italian to start with, and ... almost after all, because I was scared of making mistakes. And ... now I'm trying to practise more, even though I'm so painfully embarrassed 'cause I'm aware of the mistakes I make, but (...) I feel satisfied that at least I'm trying. I think that's important. That would be my piece of advice I think {...} {...}.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\5LU 6.6.7>]

Lucy seemed to resist the struggle to claim rights to new Italian identities (e.g. by becoming more proactive) and she also seemed to resist other identities that were imposed on her (Cf. Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). As shown in the excerpt below, she was aware of this 'resistance' to trying and conforming to Italian lifestyle. The excerpt below, taken from an interview carried out in February 2007, describes this aspect very clearly.

Excerpt 35 – Lucy's desire for and resistance to conforming to L2 identities

S: [...] And er.. you said you've changed, why? [...]

L: Yes. I think erm... since returning to Cagliari erm.. I've realised that part of me, all of me really, has been **resisting** ... Italian lifestyle.

S: In what ways?

L: Mm .. I noticed my roommates whether they have **lessons**, or they have to do some work or anything, **it doesn't matter THEY WILL NOT sleep beyond 10 in the morning!**

S: Eh eh.

L: **They don't do it.** I think {...} I wouldn't like to call myself l a z y but in comparison (...). YES, I'm a lot **lazier** than them. And .. I don't have any classes at the moment, or a job, there's no **need** for me to wake up early. So if I feel like staying in bed, I just stay in bed. And (...) at the time erm... I do this because I just think it would make me happy but (...) in general it doesn't, it doesn't build a **positive** mental attitude {...} always giving in to the[:] **easier** option, if you like, I don't want to go and talk to my roommates, it's too difficult, I don't understand! I'll just sit there and be ... silent, I don't want to! So I don't understand my roommates, I read my English books, or[:] go online and email my boyfriend or .. for example I don't want to get up, there's nothing to do, I just stay in bed and get some more sleep. Things like that {...} but (...) over the last

few days I've decided to **push myself**, t r y i n g and **change** this routine. {...}
Almost trying **copying** what my roommates are doing, if you like, and ...

[\[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\3LU 18.2.7 video>\]](#)

As far as Lucy's opportunities to speak Italian were concerned, her case was different from the cases of Ilaria and Daphne. As already mentioned, she lived in a bilingual environment in her flat in Cagliari and her flatmates spoke both Italian and Sardinian. This bilingualism was a big obstacle for Lucy at the beginning of her sojourn in Italy, and inhibited her language learning confidence considerably.

Lucy's flatmates knew that she had studied Spanish before, and given that in Sardinian there are numerous Spanish words, they thought that speaking Sardinian in addition to Italian would improve verbal communication between them. Unfortunately, this was not the case, on the contrary, as Lucy asserted in an interview conducted in December 2006:

Excerpt 36 – *Lucy's flatmates speaking Sardinian and Spanish with her*

L: Because I told them I could speak Spanish, because I studied it for six years, and I got confused with Italian and Spanish, so they were like “*ok, we'll speak in Sardinian to her, so she will understand*”

[...]

L: And I was like ... **so confused** and it was like “I don't understand anything my roommates are saying! I can understand a bit of what my lecturers say, what's going on?”

S: Oh[:] ...

L: And then after a while they told me ... and I was like “No, no, I've been studying Italian, I want to practise that.” Eh eh.

[\[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\2LU 3.12.6>\]](#)

Thus, Lucy had fewer opportunities than Ilaria and Daphne to speak Italian at home. Moreover, most of her friends outside her home were ERASMUS students with whom she spoke English most of the time, as she felt more comfortable doing so. When I asked her in December 2006 whether she spoke English or Italian with them, this was her response:

Excerpt 37 – *Lucy's efforts to speak Italian*

L: Erm .. a **mix**, erm ... but for, for example if we go out for an evening, the first part of the evening I try to speak Italian to erm .. especially the Spanish Erasmus students because they don't speak English.

S: Ah ah.

L: So I'll try and talk in Italian, but as the day, like the evening goes on, you get more worn out, you just want to relax, so I spend more time talking to people in English.

[<[Internals\LUCY\transcripts\2LU 3.12.6](#)>]

Lucy had many friends or acquaintances, as she pointed out to me (see **excerpt 26**), from many European countries, and, as already mentioned above, most of these people were from her language class. As time passed by, Lucy had some more opportunities to speak Italian, such as when we went together to the Carnival in Oristano (in February 2007), and she was relieved to find out that she could indeed speak Italian. In February, she appeared more eager to speak the language but the fact that her flatmates were still speaking a mix of Italian and Sardinian was certainly not helping her. As she stated:

Excerpt 38 – *Lucy's flatmates speaking a mixture of Italian and Sardinian with her*

L: And I was like “No please I have been studying Italian for the last year, that's why I'm here.” Yeah, but I think they mix it a lot, well.. I'm just glad to find out that I can speak Italian better than I thought I could. I think I might mention this to them and say “please can you try and speak more Italian to me?”

[<[Internals\LUCY\transcripts\3LU 18.2.7 video](#)>]

From Lucy's oral accounts it emerged that, in Spring, she was making more efforts to speak Italian. These efforts were few but meaningful, as she was trying to overcome her fears and embarrassment about making mistakes, Thus she was trying to actively invest in the language. The two excerpts below, taken from an interview in December 2006 and one in April 2007 respectively, show this shift.

Excerpt 39 – *Lucy still scared of making mistakes*

S: Ok, and do you speak Italian every day?

L: **Yes!** I'll try and practise a little bit every day. Even if it's the space of sentences ...

S: How **much**, let's say every day? One hour, two hours or ...

L: One hour! At the most. It's not very much!

S: Would you like to speak it more?

L: Mm[:] {...} mm[:] y e s ... I think so... [*hesitant voice*]. I get very shy... very shy speaking Italian, and I'm scared of making mistakes. I **know** people say that by time you'll improve, but {...} yeah I get very shy.

[<[Internals\LUCY\transcripts\2LU\) 3.12.6](#)>]

Excerpt 40 – *Lucy's attempts to overcome her fears of making mistakes*

L: And er... I've been trying to make more of an effort to talk to my roommates, which is working (...) slowly, but it's working, eh eh.

[...]

L: And ... I have been spending a lot more time with the ... new English girl ... Sarah ... erm ... she lives with two Italian girls, really friendly. We've been going out with them a lot more .. and .. I have more of a social life .. now, which I'm happy about, and ... erm... my two Italian roommates seem really happy to help me practise in Italian, so ... everything is looking good, eh eh.

[<[Internals\LUCY\transcripts\4LU\) 7.4.7](#)>]

However, after a few months, Lucy's language investments seemed again to be less focussed and alternated between commitment and a loss of motivation. Indeed, in

the last interview we carried out in June 2007, she admitted she was less inclined to speak Italian than in the previous months. She was speaking English with her boyfriend in the U.K. every day via the internet (through Skype) and she was still and probably effortlessly trying to speak only Italian with her flatmates, since, as shown in the excerpt below, they were still speaking a mixture of Sardinian and Italian with her.

Excerpt 41 – *Lucy's flatmates still speaking a mixture of Sardinian and Italian with her*

S: Your routine is the same?

L: Yeah, pretty much the same: I wake up very late, I go to bed very late. I call Tom every day, I try to speak to my roommates as much as possible...

S: Do they speak Italian or Sardinian?

L: Erm ... a mixture, eh eh.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\5LU) 6.6.7>]

To sum up, Lucy's initial investments in Italian (e.g. to improve and speak the language) were characterized by a lack of constant efforts and real commitment and inhibited by a sense of anxiety when speaking the target language. Moreover, the lack of access to symbolic resources at home (i.e. friendship and interactions in Italian with her flatmates) impeded her investment in the building up of cultural capital (e.g. by widening her L2 knowledge and skills) which could have been converted into a profitable return (e.g. by passing her university exams). In Lucy's case, her emotional investments did not mediate between her language learning motivation and her desire to speak Italian, nor did they help her to match the idealistic image she had of her second language before the YA to the real one she experienced in Italy. On the contrary, her refusal to invest more in Italian and to seek alternatives in which she could have enlarged her cultural capital, seemed to open up a more reassuring L1 comfort zone in which she could resist the struggles to claim rights to new identities (e.g. by becoming

more proactive) and those imposed on her by Italian native speakers. Her emotional struggles seemed to act as motivational inhibitors instead, and this led her to abandon her initial investments and not to persist or consider new ones.

6.4.3. *Ilaria*

Ilaria lived in the same city as Lucy, but she experienced completely different situations from those that Lucy did. Ilaria became close to her flatmates and made a lot of Italian friends, as she stated in the interview below carried out in December 2006:

Excerpt 42 – *Ilaria's circle of friends*

S: Mm, ok, very nice. So do you have many friends, here, in Cagliari?

I: I think I have. Most of my friends are Italian, and... I haven't got any friends I've made without the help of my flatmates, or their friends who have become my friends... 'cause I think in lectures it's quite hard to make friends with Italians, they don't really want to make friends with English people. And also because when we go to lectures, me and Keith and Tara and Gemma, we always stick together, so it's like all the international people at the back, so the Italians, I think, they don't want to mix with us for that.

[<[Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\2IL\) 3.12.6](#)>]

She preferred not to go out with the other ERASMUS students, mostly because she wanted to speak Italian only during her YA. Ilaria's choice not to go out with other ERASMUS students, thus, was primarily based on her investment in achieving fluency in Italian. In the excerpt below, taken from an interview conducted in December 2006, this linguistic preference is shown in her reply to my question about whether she ever met the other ERASMUS students:

Excerpt 43 – *Ilaria and ERASMUS students*

S: do you meet them?

I: Not really. Erm...I went on a trip with them, they organised a trip to Sorgono and I went there, that was quite nice. But it was also hard for me, because I don't go to all the Erasmus parties, because I don't really like having to speak English all the time, I much prefer to speak in Italian. [...] Because I've noticed that I don't really hang around the Erasmus people much, because they all speak English, and the idea FOR ME for this year, is to improve my Italian. And I think when they are together, they just, they just all speak English, and I just can't see the point for me to spend time with them. I much prefer spending my time with Italians.

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\2IL) 3.12.6>]

Hence, in order to achieve her goals Ilaria decided to go out only with local people, but this choice seemed to be for her not only an academically oriented choice, but also a good opportunity to have fun, as she commented in the caption below, taken from a photo-based interview in February 2007:



Da noi c'è quasi sempre un'ospite a pranzo o cena, oppure qualche festa. Ci divertiamo un sacco insieme. Questa foto era fatta due settimane fa quando abbiamo organizzato una festa sorpresa per il ventesimo compleanno di un'amica – era veramente divertente!

[*At our place there are almost always guests for lunch or dinner, or some parties. We have a lot of fun together. This picture was taken two weeks ago when we organised a surprise party for the twentieth birthday of a friend – it was really amusing.*]

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\3IL) 18.2.7 photos>]

Photo 63 – *Ilaria having a party at home with her flatmates*

[Source: Photo-based interview 18 February 2007]

Ilaria maintained the same Italian friends throughout the whole academic year, indeed Lucy was the only British friend she had. As she said in the passage below, taken from an interview in June 2007:

Excerpt 44 – *Ilaria and her Italian friends*

S: Per quanto riguarda invece la cerchia di amicizie? Hai sempre tanti amici italiani, oppure è cambiata? [*What about your circles of friends? Do you still have Italian friends or has this changed?*]

I: No, ancora, cioè, tanti amici italiani, quelli che sono dei miei co' coinquilini, sì, e sì, ho ancora una vita sociale abbastanza vivace. Facciamo le cose insieme, andiamo al cinema insieme, faccio le cose così.. [*No, still, actually, a lot of Italian friends, my flatmates, yeah, yeah, I still have a very lively social life. We all do things together, we go to the cinema, this is what I do..*]

S: E hai anche amici della tua stessa nazionalità, oppure no? [*And do you have friends from other nationalities, or not?*]

I: Eh ... solo Lucy. [*only Lucy*]

[<[Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\5IL 6.6.7](#)>]

Ilaria seemed very focussed and determined to achieve her primary *investments* in Italian, which were, as mentioned above, first of all to improve the language, but also to understand more about the Italian culture. This determination in pursuing her plans emerged from the very beginning of her YA, as it is shown in the excerpt below, taken from our first interview in October 2006.

Excerpt 45 – *Ilaria main investments in Italian: reaching fluency and understanding the culture*

S: Thank you very much. And another question: what do you expect from this experience in Italy?

I: Erm...I expect to ... improve my Italian, erm... because that's the aim of .. my year abroad, my university course, and I hope I'll be fluent by the time I leave. And I also expect to understand a bit more about Italian culture and the Italian way of life. And so hopefully, within a year time *there will be no mysteries* and I hope I'll be able to understand like ... why the Italians don't queue and why they like beeping their horns on their cars and stuff like that.

[<[Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\1IL 16.10.6](#)>]

Not surprisingly, Ilaria's willingness to succeed helped her to reach her goals in the planned time and the evaluation of their positive outcomes led her to consider new investments, such as succeeding academically for the university of Cambridge, i.e. by completing her translation project by the time it was due (see the caption for **photo 54** and **excerpt 46**) and to extend early ones such as acquiring complete L2 fluency by reaching native speaker pronunciation (see **excerpt 47**). The two excerpts below, taken from an interview carried out in February 2007, show Ilaria's commitment to investment in L2 academic and personal achievements.

Excerpt 46 – *Ilaria's investment: succeeding academically for Cambridge University*

S: Erm... adesso da qui[:] a ... diciamo a giugno, hai degli obiettivi particolari? [*Erm, ... now from now[:] till ... let's say in June, do you have specific objective?*]

I: {...} erm ...

S: Oppure sei contenta delle cose che stai facendo, giorno dopo giorno ... [*Or are you happy about the things you are doing, day by day?*]

I: La prima cosa è di finire questo progetto, per Cambridge, lo devo finire entro la fine di giugno. [*The first thing is to finish this project for Cambridge, I must finish it by the end of June.*]

[<[Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\3IL\) 18.2.7 video](#)>]

Excerpt 47 – *Ilaria's investment: reaching Italian native speaker pronunciation*

I: E poi voglio (...) ovviamente voglio ... migliorare, l'italiano. [*And then (...) obviously I want to ... improve my Italian*]

S: Ancora? Eh eh [*more? eh eh*]

I: E perché le persone mi dicono che[:] quando parlo è ancora ovvio che io sia inglese. [*Yeah because people tell me that[:] when I speak it is still obvious that I am English*].

[<[Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\3IL\) 18.2.7 video](#)>]

The (partial or complete) achievements of Ilaria's investments were accompanied by mixed emotions, which Ilaria seldom expressed in our interviews.

Overall she felt happy and satisfied about her progress in Italian, and as shown in the excerpts below, taken from our second interview (conducted in December 2006) and from our penultimate one (conducted in June 2007).

Excerpt 48 – *Ilaria's emotional investment: feeling happy about her L2 progress*

S: And now you're happy about that.

I: Yeah. Definitely. But I think I have improved so much, [*I am better*] than when I came ... I mean I could speak really well, but ... I made a lot of mistakes, but now I correct my mistakes when I speak. And I stopped making the same mistakes, so... and I can speak a lot faster now, and I can understand pretty much everything that people are saying.

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\ (2IL) 3.12.6>]

Excerpt 49 – *Ilaria's emotional investment: feeling satisfied about her L2 writing skills*

S: [eh eh] eh.. poi stavi facendo una traduzione di un libro di Grazia Deledda, giusto? Come va con la traduzione? [...] ti senti soddisfatta di questo lavoro che hai fatto? [*eh eh*] eh ... *and then you were doing a translation of a book by Grazia Deledda, right? How is the translation going? [...]* are you satisfied about this work that you have done?]

I: Eh.. mi sento soddisfatta nel senso che l'ho fatto, però non so se e' di un livello molto alto, cioè, ci sono ancora dei cambiamenti, miglioramenti da rifare. [...] allora (...) sì mi sento soddisfatta, forse però quando l'avrò migliorato, un po', mi sentirò ... ancora più soddisfatta. [*Eh.. I feel satisfied in the sense that I've done it, but I don't know if it's of a very high level, namely, there are still some changes to do[...]* so (...) *I feel satisfied, but maybe I'll feel even more satisfied when I'll have improve it a bit.*]

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\ (5IL) 6.6.7>]

Nevertheless, she also felt sad and offended when after several months in Italy people could still notice her English accent, as shown in the excerpts below, taken from our second and third interviews conducted in December 2006 and in February 2007 respectively.

Excerpt 50 – *Ilaria's emotional investment: feeling offended about being identified as "English" by her accent*

S: You think other people understand you?

I: Yap.

S: [that's good]

I: Although sometimes they say to me that I've still got an English accent, and it's been really hard for me to lose it. My flatmate said "you speak really good Italian" but they can still tell I'm English, because I haven't got the intonation.

S: When they said that, did you get offended?

I: Erm ... when they FIRST said it, I was a bit offended, then they said "EVEN for someone who has been living here for five years, six years, they could still tell, an Italian can still tell if someone is English or foreign. I think I'd need to live here for a long time, before being able to pick up the intonation. Or maybe just like listen to tapes or while someone is speaking in Italian.

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\2IL) 3.12.6>]

Excerpt 51 – *Ilaria's emotional investment: feeling sad about her L1 accent when speaking L2*

S: Ma io sai che sento l'accento sardo? Eh eh [*But you know that I can hear the Sardinian accent? Eh eh*]

I: Sì anche[:] Gianpiero mi ha detto ... [*Yes also[:] Giampiero told me ...*]

S: E infatti ... secondo me parlare un'altra lingua con l'**accento del posto**, vuol dire che la parli veramente molto bene. [*And indeed ... in my opinion speaking another language with the **local accent**, means that you really speak it very well*]

I: Però, cioè mi, mi rende un po' triste quando le persone mi dicono "Nooo sei, hai ancora la voce un po' inglese". [*But, actually, it makes me feel a bit sad when people tell me "Nooo you are, you have a bit of an English voice*]

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\3IL) 18.2.7 video>]

Ilaria's language-related emotions helped her to become aware of which investment was feasible and which one was not in terms of the symbolic and material resources accessible in the Italian social networks in which she was moving (Cf. Norton Pierce, 1995). In other words, her *emotional investments* led her to re-evaluate her investments in more realistic terms, and in turn to take action. Indeed, Ilaria's early

investment in achieving complete fluency in the target language was reconsidered by her after a few months, when she realised that a Year Abroad was not enough to fully reach that goal, therefore, she contented herself with reaching very high (though not complete) fluency in Italian.

The excerpt below shows Ilaria's awareness of the importance of making realistic investments in Italian and her persistence in achieving them (at least partially) through the modifications of her initial goals.

Excerpt 52 – *Ilaria's realistic investment: achieving partial fluency in L2 pronunciation*

S: So you would like to have the Italian accent?

I: I want someone to think I am Italian, because they always know I am foreign.

S: Why do you want someone to think that you are Italian?

I: Because then I think it would be my ultimate goal. I will have achieved such a level of Italian, that people think I am Italian. That would be really nice. But I don't think it could happen this year, I think I would need to live here for a bit longer for that to happen.

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\2IL) 3.12.6>]

The excerpt below shows some of the ways in which ways Ilaria obtained positive outcomes from her L2 investments. It is taken from our penultimate interview carried out in June 2007 in Italy, and when I asked her how she had managed to improve her Italian so much, and whether it was a natural language learning process for her, this was her response:

Excerpt 53 – *Ilaria's L2 learning process*

I: Boh .. non lo so, non è che io ogni sera mi siedo, col vocabolario e cerco di preparare[:] cioè un nuovo lessico. (...) Però forse una cosa **utile** è stato che la mia coinquilina mi[:] corregge.. quando sbaglio. E questo è stato molto utile, perché io[:] ho imparato ~~dei~~ [dagli] sbagli, e adesso non sbaglio più[:] le cose semplici, diciamo. [I don't know ...I don't sit every evening with the dictionary and I don't try to prepare [:] a new lexicon. But maybe a **useful** thing has been

that my flatmate corrects me ... when I make mistakes. And this has been very useful, because I[:] learnt some mistakes that now I don't make anymore[:] simple things, let's say].

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\5IL) 6.6.7>]

Ilaria put a great deal of effort into reaching her goals: she went out as often as she could with local people, she tried to adapt her routine to that of her flatmates, e.g. by waking up earlier, having regular meals, watching television during lunch time etc. (see **photo's 55** caption and **excerpt 3**), she studied more frequently in the library and she 'always' spoke Italian.

However, in spite of being quite talented for languages and having achieved a very high level of Italian, her efforts in speaking a second language proved to be intellectually (and physically) demanding for Ilaria since she often felt tired and did not have the energy to wake up early in the morning. As she stated in April 2007:

Excerpt 54 – *Ilaria's intellectual fatigue when speaking L2*

I: Sono sempre un po' stanca ... forse perché mi stanco molto facilmente perché sto sempre parlando italiano ... mi sforzo col cervello, almeno questa è la mia scusa. Eh eh. [*I'm often a little tired... maybe because I easily get tired because I'm always speaking Italian ... I'm making efforts with my brain, at least this is my excuse. Eh eh*].

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\4IL) 7.4.7>]

She invested in building up her cultural capital and eventually she obtained a 'good return' from this hard work (cf. Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). She was able to master the linguistic and cultural resources used by her Italian friends and she did manage to enlarge her repertoire by interacting successfully within and outside her circles of friends.

Indeed, as shown in the photos below (**photos 64** and **65**), towards the end of her YA she was able to deal confidently with any service encounters and to interact fluently with local people. Moreover, she was also able to understand more about the Italian culture (cf. **excerpt 55**, and also see **excerpt 45** and **photo's 66** caption) and therefore she managed to enrich her way of understanding the particular Italian worlds, as she stated in our last interview carried out in December 2007 when she was back in the U.K.

Excerpt 55 – *Ilaria's achievement of her investment: understanding more about the Italian culture*

[S]ono diventata più aperta alle altre nazionalità [...] ho imparato a.. **tollerare** le altre culture [...] perché prima per me l'italiano era una cosa.. abbastanza astratta. Però dopo un anno in Italia, è diventato molto più concreto. Perché ho, cioè, ho visto le cose di cui parliamo, in classe, cioè ... boh è una cosa.. della **cultura** italiana, che per me, adesso, è molto più vivace, di prima. È una cosa **viva**, mentre prima era una cosa in un libro. [*I've become more open about other nationalities [...] I've learned to tolerate other cultures [...] because before for me Italian was a quite.. abstract thing. But after a year in Italy, it's become much more concrete. Because I have, actually ... I've seen the things we talk about, in class, actually ... I don't know... it's a thing... of the Italian **culture**, which is for me, now, much more lively, than before. It's **living** thing, while before it was a thing in a book.*]

[<[Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\6IL 9.12.7](#)>]



Photos 64 & 65: *Ilaria dealing successfully during service encounters*

[Source: Ilaria's video-diary July 2007]

Speaking Italian was also an opportunity for Ilaria to get to know the local Sardinian culture better, food traditions included, as shown in the caption to the picture below written by Ilaria in February 2007.



Ci piace cenare fuori e cerchiamo di cenare fuori almeno una volta al mese, è sempre bello conoscere i piatti tipici sardi. E ancora più bello quando non si deve fare i piatti dopo aver mangiato! In questa foto sono io con le mie coinquiline, Simona e Tiziana.

[We like having dinner outside and we try to have dinner outside at least once a month, it's always beautiful to know typical Sardinian dishes. It is even more beautiful when we don't have to do the washing up after having eaten! In this picture it is me with my flatmates, Simona and Tiziana.]

Photo 66 – *Ilaria with her flatmates in a local restaurant*

[Source: Photo-based interview 18 February 2007]

Ilaria's investments in Italian can be also understood in terms of her strong *desire* to be part of the local social networks. This desire led her to temporarily put aside her negative emotions when being positioned as 'a foreigner' (cf. **excerpts 50** and **51**) and to persevere in seeking opportunities to speak Italian with local people.

Ilaria's desire to improve her Italian as manifested through her discourse practices, had a significant impact on her opportunities to use the target language, since it motivated her to pursue her idea of making real the image she had of her being considered as 'Italian' in the target language community (see **excerpt 52**). For Ilaria, like for Daphne, her language desire acted as a mediator between her motivation and investments in Italian. However, unlike Daphne and Lucy, Ilaria did not have a romantic image of Italian life before her YA, on the contrary her views about Italian people, the

country etc. were quite realistic (cf. **excerpt 45**), and therefore she did not have unrealistic expectations which let her down, as in the case of Lucy.

Not surprisingly, Ilaria, like Daphne, showed a great deal of agency in trying to achieve her objectives, and the fact that she spoke Italian all the time helped her to integrate faster in the new social contexts and to feel an integral part of her Italian group of friends, who could not speak English. In an interview carried out in February 2007 Ilaria talked about this social aspect of her life in Cagliari, and when I highlighted the fact that she had really integrated well in the city, she added that, this was also probably due to the fact that she was English, thus, a novelty for the group. To put it into her own words:

Excerpt 56 – *Ilaria being positioned as a ‘foreign’*

I: Sì. Forse perché sono inglese e[:] loro vogliono sempre parlarmi, che sono una cosa[:] sono una novità, si può dire. Sono una[:] una persona nuova nel gruppo, nel gruppo. [*Yes. Maybe because I’m English and[:] they always want to speak to me, because I am a thing[:] a novelty, we can say. I am a[:] new person in the group, in the group.*]

S: Ma parlate italiano? [*But do you speak Italian?*]

I: Sì. Loro non parlano inglese. [*Yes. They don’t speak English.*]

[<[Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\3IL\18.2.7 video](#)>]

For Ilaria, differently from Daphne, being positioned as ‘English’ (thus foreign), seemed not to be a strong emotional deterrent, as long she could practise her second language. Moreover, her desire to reach L2 fluency and to accomplish her academic aspirations prompted her to challenge initial power asymmetries and to reposition herself as equal to others. Indeed, for instance, she gained access to interaction with her flatmates’ friends (Italian native speakers) by regularly going out with them even

without her flatmates and by going to local clubs, which were very popular amongst youngsters of the target language community in which she lived during her YA. In the caption below, taken from an interview in February 2007, this aspect is clearly illustrated.



Spesso esco il Martedì con i miei amici Gigi e Marcello per bere qualcosa al Soul, un locale nel Corso Vittorio Emanuele. Il Martedì ci vanno tutti i giovani e ci divertiamo sempre.

[On Tuesday I often go out with my friends Gigi and Marcello for a drink at the 'Soul', a club in 'corso Vittorio Emanuele'. On Tuesday all youngsters go there and we always have fun.]

Photo 67 – *Ilaria with her friends Gigi and Marcello*

[Source: Photo-based interview 18 February 2007]

In sum, Ilaria, like Daphne, was able to evaluate her initial language investments (e.g. achieve complete fluency in Italian) and to modify them (e.g. achieve only partial fluency) according to the material and symbolic resources she could access in the Italian surroundings. This ability to evaluate critically her language goals can be understood in her strong desire for academic success at the University of Cambridge. She showed a striking ability to control her emotions and this helped her to develop an awareness of which investments she could realistically reach during her YA and which ones she could not. Hence, she invested considerably in building up her cultural capital (i.e. gaining more knowledge of and skills in Italian) with a clear vision of future possibilities in which she would convert her various forms of capital in order to obtain profitable returns. For instance, she obtained prestige among her new circle of friends by investing

in her symbolic and cultural capital and she envisaged more prestige and a lucrative job after successfully finishing her studies, i.e. by converting these forms of capital into economic capital. Ilaria's emotional investments acted as mediators between her strong desire to be considered Italian (while in Italy), and her L2 learning motivation. Moreover, her desire to accomplish her academic aspirations prompted her to contest power asymmetries and to reposition herself as equal to others where and when she saw this to be necessary, i.e. in informal environments during her sojourn abroad.

6.5. Participants' negotiation of identities

Not surprisingly, during their period of study in Italy, all participants stated that they had experienced some changes in their lives mostly concerning their personality, attitudes and habits. In the subparagraphs below, I will show the extent to which they negotiated and (re)constructed their identities as second language learners in the Italian environment, and the ways in which their struggles helped them to 'fit in' into the new contexts.

6.5.1. Lucy: resisting the (re)construction of her L2 identity

Amongst the three participants of this study, Lucy was most probably the one who struggled the most for acceptance in society and for access to the symbolic resources (through interactions and friendship with local people) which were produced and validated in the Italian contexts. She made a number of attempts to access such resources, but being inconsistent and inconclusive they did not lead to the hoped for outcomes. Subsequently, Lucy, instead of struggling more to gain access to those

resources, gave up progressively the negotiation of her identity as a second language learner opting for reaffirming her identity as a powerful English native speaker instead.

In our last interview, conducted in June 2007, I asked her whether she felt she had changed during the experience abroad and this was her answer:

Excerpt 57 – *Lucy's awareness of her identity changing*

L: Erm ... I think I'm more prepared to ... deal with ... difficult situations (...) I think I'm a stronger person. {...} and ... I feel more European, and ... those two things ... I think, it's **strange** because it's almost things like .. the year abroad has reinforced my English feelings as well. {...} {...} and ... I feel ... I never before had any kind of **yearning** or passion towards **England**, but being away for a while ... erm ... I really have ... a sort of love for my home country. At the same time there's a soft spot for Italy as well, eh eh.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\5LU) 6.6.7>]

Hence, after eight months in Italy Lucy felt stronger and more European, but at the same time she also felt more attached to her home country. This 'yearning' towards England, especially towards the end of her sojourn, can be understood in her inability and lack of real interest in adapting to the new cultural contexts. As I have indicated above, during her YA she made a few attempts to speak Italian with local people, especially with her flatmates; but the fact that they spoke a mixture of Sardinian, Italian and Spanish with her (see **excerpts 36** and **41**), diminished her language learning motivation significantly and caused a loss of confidence in (re)constructing a new linguistic identity.

Her way to contest the unequal relations of power she experienced with her Italian flatmates, who positioned her as an 'incapable L2 listener and speaker', was to engage in counter discourses, in which she could challenge the existing power asymmetries and position herself in a powerful rather than a marginalised position (cf.

Norton, 2000). Indeed, she managed to re-establish her linguistic identity as an English native speaker, capable of interacting fluently and efficiently in her first language with other native (and non-native) English speakers.

This aspect is clearly illustrated in the excerpt below, taken from an interview we conducted in December 2006, which shows Lucy's determination to maintain her L1 identity as the only one feasible. The excerpt also pinpoints her reluctance to negotiate her identity as a second language learner in the new contexts. During the interview, we talked about her circles of friends in Italy (see **excerpt 26**) and she admitted having a lot of acquaintances (most of them international students) with whom she mostly spoke English because she found it much easier to make meaningful friendships if she could speak her L1. When I asked her why, this was her answer:

Excerpt 58 – *Lucy reaffirming her identity as an English native speaker*

L: I think more because of the language. And {...} I feel more confident that they understand **who I am**. And I understand **who they are**. It makes for more a **fulfilling** friendship.

S: Why, do you think that if you speak Italian with somebody else, it is not you, it is another person?

L: a **little bit**, because I have to form sentences in ways that ... I wouldn't normally {...} yeah, it does feel like I'm being a little artificial, **still** ... because Italian isn't ... it doesn't come so naturally ... speak ... **yet** ... **I'd like it was it**, eh eh.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\2LU 3.12.6>]

Unfortunately, Lucy's resistance to the (re)construction of her second language identity and her inability to recover from the phase of loss she experienced in the first few months (cf. Pavlenko and Lantolf, 2000) and, consequently, prevented her from being a fully confident second language speaker (as in the case of Ilaria and Daphne).

Over time, Lucy's sphere of subjectivity, namely her thoughts and emotions, led her to seek a comforting linguistic zone within her L1 identity, where she could "feel herself" and where she could take command of her own life by refusing to compromise with others' positioning. Hence, instead of persisting and seeking opportunities to speak Italian with her flatmates and/or with other Italian native speakers, Lucy preferred to turn onto a safer path where her identity as an English native speaker could make her feel in a firmer position of power. Indeed, in the last month, the only thing she was looking forward to was going back to the U.K., in order to see her English boyfriend, her family and to live in the British environment again.

Interestingly, Lucy was aware of the fact that more efforts to gain access to interaction with Italian language speakers would have helped her towards the (re)construction of her L2 identity. Nevertheless, her agency in second language learning seemed to be inhibited by her 'mental attitude', as she described it in the excerpt below, of choosing the easier option and not pushing herself enough towards the achievement of her linguistic goals (see **excerpt 35**).

Lucy's self-reflection on her experience abroad seemed not to lead her to the elaboration or the negotiation of a new sense of self. In fact, instead of trying harder in seeking more opportunities to interact in Italian, most of the time she decided to remain *silent*. Lucy knew that struggles were necessary for the negotiation of her L2 identity, but she was unfortunately not able, unlike Daphne, to envisage them as painful but rewarding process, which was essential in order to re-construct a powerful new self.

Lucy's apparent inability to act with agency in the new sociocultural contexts could be understood in terms of her difficulty and reluctance to shift away from the roles

she had created and decided to occupy in her home country. To put it in Archer's words (2000):

Actors [...] acquire their social identities from the way in which they personify the roles they choose to occupy. However, what array of roles is open to them at any given time, strongly conditions who may become Actor at that time and thus who may acquire social identity. Unlike Agency, which is universal to members of society, not everyone can succeed in becoming an Actor – that is in finding a role(s) in which they feel they can invest themselves, such that the accompanying social identity is expressive of who they are as persons in society.

(Archer, 2000: 261)

Indeed, for Lucy being accepted for what she was before her YA (as she pointed out in **excerpt 58**) seemed to be her main concern. In other words, she found herself confined in the roles she occupied before leaving for Italy, and this seemed to prevent her from envisaging and pursuing possible ways in which she could make investments during the experience abroad.

These difficulties emerge quite clearly in the excerpt below, where Lucy defines her effort to move on from the roles she occupied back in Britain as 'a cruel twist of fate'. Ultimately, despite the few attempts she made to access Italian society, she preferred to live in the imagined world she had left behind in Britain.

Excerpt 59 – *Lucy's 'cruel twist of faith'*

L: definitely! I think {...} making myself doing things I find **scary** or intimidating, is a **HORRIBLE** prospect at the time, but when I actually do it, and even if I've only **half achieved it**, it gives me so **much confidence**. I'm really trying to learn that: perhaps doing the opposite of what I think it would make me happy, **really does make me happy**.

S: [really?]

L: YES! it seems like a **c r u e l twist of fate**, but I'm glad I'm learning it now, eh eh.

[<[Internals\LUCY\transcripts\3LU 18.2.6 video](#)>]

The pictures and captions below, taken from Lucy's video-diary filmed by her in May 2007, show quite clearly her disinterest in negotiating and (re)constructing her identity as a learner of the Italian language. The first two photos show Lucy going to the University in Cagliari and the accompanying caption captures her feeling of not being concerned about what local people think of or say about her (**photos 68** and **69**). The third photo (**photo 70**) shows Lucy booking her return ticket to the U.K., which together with the accompanying caption, describes her increasing 'yearning' toward her home country.

"People look at me all the time anyway – it doesn't make that much of a difference"



Photos 68 & 69– *Lucy going to the University in Cagliari*

[Source: Video diary May 2007]

"Now I have something to look forward to"

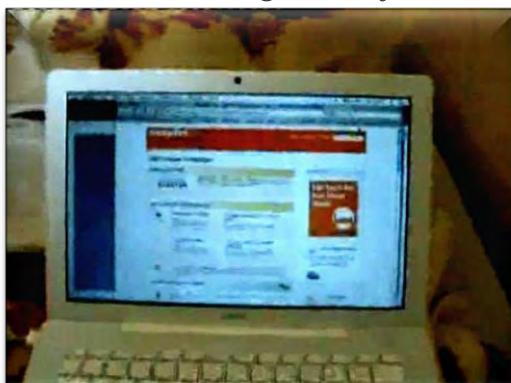


Photo 70 – *Lucy booking her return ticket for the U.K.*

[Source: Video diary May 2007]

Lucy's desire to be part again of the communities of practice she knew from her country of origin and to reunite with her loved ones, who lived there, is also shown in the excerpt below, taken from our penultimate interview conducted in April 2007.

Excerpt 60 – *Lucy's yearning towards her home country*

S: Ok, and then you told me that you want to leave in July?

L: Yes, I want to be back in England for a music festival in the end of July. **Perhaps I'll go back sooner**, I'm not sure (...). I f e e l like I still miss my family and my boyfriend m o r e than ever.

S: Ah[:].

L: And I expected to start to miss them less as the year went on, but ... I've been missing them more and more and more. So ... perhaps when the lessons have finished I might go back sooner. Although it does feel it would be a shame to waste ... **almost a free** holiday in Sardinia. Eh eh, so I'm not sure. At the moment my plan is ... mid July to go home.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\4LU 7.4.7>]

Indeed, her refusal to negotiate further her L2 identity and her positioning as fluent English native speaker triggered her decision to go back sooner, precisely one month before she had previously planned, as is shown in the excerpt below, taken from our last interview.

Excerpt 61 – *Lucy's refusal to negotiate further her L2 identity*

S: Thank you. And we met ... last time we met it was in April, has anything changed since then? Or ... is it more or less the same? I don't know, your routine or your friends, anything ...

L: I think my routine is more or less the same (...). I probably go out even less {...} erm ... {...} because {...} my social life ... it's still with English people, mostly. And erm ... two of them have gone home now, so (eh eh) I have even less of a social life I suppose. And this is, this is making me want to go home as well ...

S: When are you going?

L: Erm .. in two weeks now.

S: Oh[:]

L: Not long, eh eh, I think I'll just enjoy the sunshineand then go home.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\5LU 6.6.7>]

6.5.2. *Ilaria: consciously performing a new identity*

Ilaria, as mentioned above in § 6.4.3, throughout her sojourn abroad was driven by strong academically-oriented emotional investments and consequently, by a desire to become an integral member of the new Italian social networks. She, thus, invested considerably in her new linguistic identity by trying to understand her relationship to the new Italian networks and contexts and how she could construct this over time and space.

Unlike Lucy, she did envisage possibilities for the future in the struggles for the negotiation of her L2 identity, even though such struggles were attenuated considerably by the fact that she lived in a very friendly environment in her Italian home. There she had two Italian flatmates who were keen to speak to her in their first language and to become her friends. Therefore, although Ilaria lived in the same city as Lucy, in contrast with Lucy, she had easier access to the symbolic resources and forms of cultural capital she was endeavouring to develop, and this surely helped her to (re)construct her identity as second language learner more easily and less painfully than the other two participants of this study.

The (re)construction of Ilaria's L2 identity throughout her YA was generally characterized by *equal* relations of power and interactions between her, her flatmate and her flatmates' friends. However, in the academic environments she also experienced power asymmetries, especially in interactions with Italian professors, as is shown in the excerpt below, taken from an interview conducted in December 2006.

Excerpt 62 – *Ilaria and power asymmetries within the Italian academic environment*

S: And what about the relationship between students and professors, or among students? [...]

I: Our history professor he approached us saying “*Oh you are Erasmus, oh ...*” but he hasn’t really explained that thing to us, even if he knew we are Erasmus, but when we watched a film he said “Oh you are Erasmus, we have the English subtitles.” Even after that, he hasn’t really spoken to us. I think he left all to us to go and see him in his hours, you know, when students can go and speak to him.

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\2IL 3.12.6>]

Ilaria contested such unequal relations of power by avoiding altogether interaction with Italian professors, who, according to Ilaria, appeared to be positioning them as marginalised language learners. Indeed, Ilaria decided not to go and speak with them during their office hours, unlike Lucy, who tried a few times, even though she could not find them. When I asked her in December, whether she had managed to speak to one of her Italian professors, this was her reply:

Excerpt 63 – *Ilaria contesting power asymmetries by avoiding speaking with Italian professors*

S: Did you speak to him?

I: No I haven’t. I haven’t got any problem I don’t need to speak to him. (...) But I don’t know about the others, because I think the others often find it really hard to understand what’s going on in the lectures. And sometimes I would make my notes in English so they can copy them, otherwise they don’t really understand what’s going on.

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\2IL 3.12.6>]

Her answer to my question shows quite clearly that Ilaria was positioning herself as a ‘competent language learner’ who did not need and did not want to access interactions in the Italian academic environment. Her language confidence, reinforced by the easy access to L2 interactions outside the academic environments, led her to take a superior linguistic stance not only towards Italian professors, but also towards the other foreign students in the class, who, unlike her, experienced difficulties in

understanding what was being said during the lectures. Indeed, as she stated, she would even sometimes make her notes in English so they could copy them.

Ilaria's way to contest the power asymmetries experienced within the Italian university and her positioning as 'superior' towards other native or non-native speakers of English can also be seen in her choice not to go out with other ERASMUS students (see **excerpt 43**) and in her decision not to take the oral exams at the end of the academic year, as shown in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 64 – *Ilaria contesting power asymmetries by avoiding taking Italian exams*

S: Senti e per quanto riguarda, appunto l'università e gli esami, cos'hai deciso di fare con l'università di Cagliari? Devi dare degli esami o no? [*So as far as the university, indeed, is concerned, and the exams, what have you decided to do with the University of Cagliari? Do you have to take the exams or not?*]

I: Allora io non devo dare esami, però[:] ... cioè li potevo dare se io volevo, ma ho deciso di non darli, perché non voglio sforzarmi per una cosa che non è necessaria. Perché sono pigra. [*Well I don't have to take exams, but[:] ... I could actually have taken them if I had wanted to, but I have decided not to take them, because I don't want to put efforts into something which is not necessary. Because I'm lazy.*]

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\5IL) 6.6.7>]

Hence, both Lucy and Ilaria chose avoidance when they experienced unequal relations of power in the Italian naturalistic and/or instructed learning environments. They preferred to remain *silent* instead of struggling to gain access to informal (as in the case of Lucy) or formal (as in the case of Ilaria) interaction with Italian native speakers. Nevertheless, this passive form of protest against power asymmetries did not impede Ilaria's construction of a new discursive identity, whereas for Lucy it brought along further linguistic marginalisation within both public and private L2 discourses.

Ilaria's avoidance of interactional struggles with professors and international students within academic environments can be understood in terms of her disinterest in

seeking opportunities to use the target language other than those which occurred in her Italian home and when were validated within her new circles of friends. She saw this as a wide and rich enough environment for the achievement of her language investments.

As far as her awareness of her identity changing, Ilaria acknowledged having noticed some changes in herself over time, but she seemed not to consider them important or necessary for the (re)construction of her linguistic identity. Indeed, as shown in the excerpt below, when I asked her in our last interview (conducted in December 2007 in Birmingham, U.K.) whether she thought the experience abroad had changed her, she replied that now she was more open to other nationalities, but she also claimed that although she had changed some of her habits and attitudes (e.g. by being more relaxed about her studies or having a late dinner) on the whole, she felt the same person and that her way of thinking had not changed at all.

Excerpt 65 – *Ilaria's awareness of her identity changing*

I: Mm.. {...} sì direi che sono diventata più aperta alle altre nazionalità, però in me stessa magari sono uguale. Cioè non sono cambiata, troppo, anche perché mi sono reinserita nella vita a Cambridge molto facilmente, adesso sembra che io non sia mai stata fuori, cioè ... cioè [mm.. {...} *yes, I would say that I've become more open to other nationalities, but inside myself I'm the same. Actually, I haven't changed, too much, also because I have reintegrated into the life in Cambridge very easily, it now seems to me that I had never been abroad, actually... actually ...*]

S: Veramente? [*really?*]

I: Sì .. mh .. magari la mia passione per l'Italia è aumentata, cioè ora sono molto più.. rilassata, [nelle]⁴ cose che studiamo, perché.. boh' magari perché sono integrata così tanto con la società sarda. [*Yes .. mh ... maybe my passion for Italy has increased, actually now I'm more relaxed, about what we study, because..I don't know maybe because I integrated myself so well with into the Sardinian society.*]

S: Quindi per esempio non ti sembra, ti sembra di aver preso delle abitudini .. un po' italiane ..? Non so nel modo di parlare, di comportarti, nel modo di pensare, ti sembra di essere uguale a prima? [*So for instance it doesn't seem to you that you have taken on some habits .. a bit Italian..? I don't know in the way of*

speaking, of behaving, in your way of thinking, do you think you are the same as before?]

I: {...} {...} mm.. il mio modo di pensare è uguale ... [*mm.. my way of thinking is the same...*]

S: [è uguale] [*it's the same*]

I: ... mm.. però magari le abitudini mm.. tipo l'ora di cena, quella è diventata più tardi. Poi.. l'abitudine di prendere il caffè, cioè le cose superficiali diciamo. [... *mm.. but maybe the habits mm.. like dinner time, which has become later. Then.. the habit of having a coffee, actually the superficial things let's say.*]

[<[Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\6IL 9.12.7](#)>]

Hence, back in the U.K. after 12 months, Ilaria felt overall the same person she was before leaving for the Year Abroad. Her 'way of thinking' was the same, and only 'superficial things' had changed, such as some Italian habits she had taken on board or her passion for Italy which had increased.

Ilaria's striking ability to adapt to local communities of practice (in Cambridge, in Cagliari and then in Cambridge again) can be understood with reference to her sense of possibilities for the future, namely in her ability to foresee positive future outcomes from her struggles. Her ability to accept or dismiss others' positioning within certain public discourses (e.g. in her Italian home or within the academic environment) may well be seen in her willingness to become an active agent in the construction of her own life by constructing her sense of belonging around her investments.

Hence, Ilaria, unlike Lucy, showed active agency and her ability to become a social actor in the new Italian surroundings. She managed to adjust her existing social roles, even though for a limited period of time, and she was therefore successful in investing in the new sociocultural contexts. Her self-awareness and her capability for

reflection seemed to have helped her to develop a new sense of self in accordance with the roles she needed to perform in order to achieve her L2 investments.

Indeed, Ilaria's ability to clearly envisage her linguistic goals during her stay in Italy, allowed her to become a fluent Italian speaker and to integrate well into Sardinian society, without experiencing "the frequently agonizing process of linguistic, cultural, and personal transformation" (Pavlenko and Lantolf, 2000: 171) and the consequent phases of loss and recovery.

When I asked Ilaria in our interview, conducted in December 2007, what kind of advice she could give to future ERASMUS students, this was her reply:

Excerpt 66 – *Ilaria's piece of advice for future ERASMUS students*

I: Magari mm .. cioè **integrarsi**, con la gente del posto è molto importante. Vivere, se possibile, con gli stranieri, cioè con la gente del posto. E poi.. prendere ogni opportunità, perché è molto importante. [*Maybe mm.. actually to **integrate**, with local people is very important, to live if possible, with the foreign people, actually with local people. And then.. to take every single opportunity, because it's very important*].

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\6IL) 9.12.7>]

Ilaria emphasised the fact that living with local people was important in order to integrate into the new society, although in her opinion was that local people were still 'foreign' people to her, and this demonstrates the extent to which she did and wanted to negotiate her identity as an English native speaker.

Her experience abroad also demonstrates, in keeping with the poststructuralist perspectives I introduced in Chapter 3, that identities are not fixed and that they change across time and space. Hence, in order to fully understand positioning of L2 learners like Ilaria, in their chosen society and their spheres of subjectivity, identities ought to be considered as multifaceted and dynamic in nature. Their reactions to their positioning

help us to characterize the extent to which they are able and/or willing to negotiate a new sense of themselves.

6.5.3. *Daphne: commitment to the development of her L2 identity*

Unlike Lucy and Ilaria, Daphne was aware of the major struggles she had to undergo in order to negotiate and (re)construct her identity as a second language learner. Indeed, on numerous occasions, she admitted having faced difficult circumstances in which she had to struggle to negotiate her L2 identity, for instance when looking for accommodation in Ferrara (**excerpt 67**), when trying to socialise with other Italian students (**excerpt 12**), or when struggling for acceptance among circles of people who positioned her as ‘foreign’ (**excerpt 68**).

However, Daphne did not give up in face of the struggles she encountered especially in the first few months of her experience abroad, on the contrary, she faced them with courage and determination, and with an awareness of the need to overcome them in order to accomplish her L2 investments, which were primarily to access local communities of practice and to match her desired images of the host country with the real ones available in the new contexts in Ferrara.

The three excerpts below, taken from a diary-based interview conducted in November 2006, show Daphne’s struggles in different Italian environments and the constructive ways she dealt with them. The first one describes her difficulties when looking for accommodation in Ferrara and her choice to act immediately, e.g. by reading adverts in a local newspaper, by making phone calls and viewing until she found a place to live where she envisaged she would have had a ‘good return’ in terms of material and symbolic resources.

Excerpt 67 – *Daphne's struggles when looking for an accommodation in Ferrara*

S: OK, how did you find this house? Erm ... did you have an accommodation when you were in the U.K. or did you find it here ...

D: No, I came here with ... nowhere to live and I stayed, I MET a girl, who I didn't know before, and I stayed with her for one night, and then I went to a hostel and I stayed there, but every day I was on the phone, you know, in the phoning booth, ringing up people to ask "can I come and see y o u r spare room?" ... and ... I rang up the girl who lives here and I came to see it and I just really loved it.

[...]

S: Mm .. so nobody told you that it was going to be so difficult to find a house [in Ferrara].

D: Yeah, I just didn't realise that it would have been so difficult not having anywhere to go, because I spent all day looking for somewhere to live. And then I couldn't just go ... HOME or just go back to the hostel and ... but it wasn't really {...} I didn't have anywhere to go ... nowhere to relax, or just forget about looking for a house, so ... quite stressful

S: So it was really good [you could find it].

D: [oh yeah I'm glad] I did do it in this way, because actually, I did have a chance to see the houses, and I'm glad I didn't take the first one I saw, because I think ... a lot of people took the first room they saw, because there were SO KEEN to have somewhere to live, but I'm glad I have waited until I have found one ... more suitable for me.

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D) 18.11.6>]

The second excerpt shows Daphne's disappointment when being positioned as 'foreign' by Italian native speakers, and her struggles to be accepted as an equal member of the group. When I asked her to explain why she wrote in her diary on 27 October 2006 "qualche volta sembra di essere speciale [*sometimes it seems to me to be special*] for Italians, because they like talking with me, but some other times it's like more I am ... different", this was her reply:

Excerpt 68 – *Daphne's desire to feel part of the group*

D: Yeah, it's a kind of , it's quite a change, because I didn't feel part of the group, when I was ... being the English one that they wanted to speak English to them, and I didn't feel part of the group when I didn't understand, and it was, well, I didn't know whether I was special or whether I was just different, I didn't

feel part of it, because when people pay attention because they want you to speak English, it's not, it's not like being part of the group, it's still being a foreign person, even if it's in a good way ... it's still being a foreigner, I'd rather be ... just ...

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D 18.11.6>]

The third excerpt describes Daphne's experiences of power asymmetries within the academic environments. Unlike Ilaria and Lucy, she decided not to remain silent in the face of such inequalities, but her way to challenge them, was indeed to speak out loud in front of Italian native speakers (students and professors) and make them hear her voice as a potentially knowledgeable and confident L2 learner (cf. **excerpts 17** and **18**).

Excerpt 69 – *Daphne's experiencing power asymmetries in the Italian university*

D: [mh mh, yeah] and I think it's probably because it's just make ... mmm... he [the Professor]⁵ always **points** out that I'm a foreign student' although there are others, there are quite a few Americans in the class, and we're always... we all sit together and if somebody doesn't understand the question, we can help each other to work out how to say it. But [pause] yeah it just **makes...** points out the difference between me and the Italian students, I think.

[...]

S: And you stand up in front of the class now?

D: No, I don't stand up, but I do speak if he asks, sometimes.

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D 18.11.6>]

Daphne's choice to speak when facing power asymmetries in the academic environment and thus, her refusal to be silenced by others' positioning, is also shown by her decision to take the end of the course oral exams (see **excerpt 18**). As mentioned above, in § 6.4.1, she constantly challenged being marginalised by Italian native speakers in relative positions of power (such as the waitress in the local bar, the shop assistants in the local supermarket, her flatmates' friends etc.).

Admirably, Daphne's proactive attitude and her perseverance in trying to achieve her goals helped her to re-establish more balanced relations of power, and her struggles for acceptance in society were finally compensated when she managed to gain access to *formal* and *informal* interaction with native speakers of the target language communities. (cf. **excerpt 21**).

Hence, Daphne, like Ilaria, gained access to informal interaction with Italian native speakers, but unlike Ilaria, she also gained access successfully to formal interactions within the academic environment, with both students and professors. When confronted with power asymmetries, Ilaria and Lucy chose silence, be it caused by a lack (for Lucy) or an excess (for Ilaria) of language confidence, whereas Daphne refused to be silenced by other's positioning and decided to speak instead. She managed to reverse unequal relations of power by making others hear her voice as worth listening to.

Obviously, these efforts required a great deal of physical and mental energy from Daphne, in fact in her diary entry on 20 October 2006, she wrote “ho bisogno di concentrarmi moltissimo per capire e ci vuole molta forza, quindi divento stanca facilmente” [*I need to focus a lot in order to understand, and it takes a lot of strength, therefore I get tired very easily*] [[source: diary October 2006](#)] (cf. Ilaria's intellectual fatigue in **excerpt 54**).

Daphne was aware of the struggles that individuals may experience when learning another language, therefore, she seemed neither surprised nor discouraged by her first few unsuccessful attempts. The excerpt below shows her awareness of such struggles in language learning, when commenting on an Italian native speaker struggling to speak English with her, and on the reasons why she did not want to laugh at him.

Excerpt 70 – *Daphne's awareness of linguistic struggles in L2 learning*

S: I'm sure you will, ok, erm... then you went to this party and you found it really really funny, because there was somebody trying to speak English

[*both laugh*]

D: Yeah.

S: What happened? [*laugh*]

D: erm, quite often the Italian people like to kind of try out their English because even .. there was this girl's dad, and I think he hadn't actually spoken English for like twenty **years[:]** or something..

S: [*laugh*] [oh]

D: He was really nice, and it was really strange because all of a sudden he thought of an English word and he kind of shouted across the room to me, just like, I don't know like interrupting, trying to speak English, and usually I could see ... like if I'd heard the conversation so I knew when he said something, but this one time he started shouting 'ankle' at me, ankle I don't understand what's going on, I thought "I missed something", and then I realised he was having a conversation about his family and was trying to say 'uncle', so, so I didn't want to laugh at him because I thought "I know how it is like when you say something to somebody.." But it was so[:] funny.

[<Internals\DAPHNE\transcripts\2D) 18.11.6>]

Daphne was also aware of her identity changing over time in the new Italian contexts, as shown in the excerpt below, she felt progressively more confident and, like Ilaria, more relaxed about deadlines and being prompt for meetings. She also started to use Italian forms of verbal communication, such as using her hand, raising her voice and engaged in cultural practices such as not queuing or arriving late. Unlike Ilaria, however, these changes made Daphne feel very different as a person. She felt changed in her personality, emotions and thoughts. Thus, her sphere of subjectivity, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relations with the world made her feel a different person.

Excerpt 71 – *Daphne's awareness of her identity changing*

S: Ok. Ok I think we have finished. Er..just a very last thing, I would like to ask you, do you feel that after two months, your identity is changing? And if so, how?

D: I think it probably is, I think I probably don't notice all the way, I think I'm more confident, than I was, even just er.. I haven't got my ticket to go home, or just things like that, I'm not like I was.. like rigid "I have to do this now; I have to be at the lesson at ten o'clock exactly" Now I'm just going like ten past ten and it doesn't matter.

S: This is an Italian attitude, not English eh eh

D: yeah, and I think, I've noticed when I speak I use my hands, all the time, which I never used to do, but now I'm ... so which is really not an English thing to do, I think, soooo

S: When you come back in England, do you think you will be like you are now? Like a different person? Or would you go back to the old Daphne?

D: Er.. I think I will be a bit different, I think so, yeahh.

S: Are you glad about it?

D: Yeah, I think so.

[<Internals\DAPHNE\transcripts\2D) 18.11.6>]

Daphne's negotiation and (re)construction of her second language identity during her YA confirms the poststructuralist perspectives I introduced earlier in this thesis. In her case too we see that second language identities are dynamic, multiple and sites of struggles. Indeed, through her struggles, she managed not only to recover from an initial phase of loss and to become a competent L2 speaker, but also to grow as a person and to achieve all her emotional investments. These were not driven by an exclusive academic choice, as for Ilaria, but rather by a personal desire to change some aspects of her personality. This aspect is shown in the last excerpt presented in this chapter, taken from our last interview conducted in November 2007, in Birmingham, where she decided to speak in Italian. The excerpt reveals Daphne's awareness of the ways in which her

identity had changed during the YA, and how these changes made her feel the person she wanted to be.

Excerpt 72 – *Daphne's awareness of her identity changing*

S: E tu ti senti cambiata? [*Do you feel changed?*]

D: Sì molto, non sono così timida come prima e[:] (...) adesso non m'importa quel che pensano gli altri, invece prima, forse perché in Inghilterra {...} erm .. l'atmosfera è diversa e.. in Italia è più libera. Quindi adesso sono più.. me stessa. [*yes a lot, I'm not as shy as before and[:] (...) [yes a lot, I'm not as shy as before and.. (...) now I'm don't mind what other people think, whereas before, maybe because in England (...) erm .. the environment is different and.. in Italy is freer. So now I'm more.. myself.]*]

[...]

S: E ti senti più europea ora? [*do you feel more European now?*]

D: Sì, perché er.. erm.. ci sono gli stereotipi degli altri paesi, ma quando uno vive in un altro paese si capisce perché gli italiani sono così.. e non è... si capisce, perché capisci un'altra cultura e.. [*Yes, because er..erm.. there are stereotypes about other countries, but when one lives in another country s/he understands why Italians are like that.. and it's not..it's understandable, because you understand another culture and..]*]

S: Quindi pensi di aver capito la cultura italiana, o perlomeno adesso di poterla accettarla meglio? [*So do think you have understood Italian culture, or at least now can you accept it better?*]

D: Sì, spero di sì. [*Yes, I hope so.*]

S: Ti senti un po' italiana ora? [*Do you feel a bit Italian now?*]

D: Un po' sì, eh eh. [*A little bit yes, eh eh*]

S: Per esempio cosa fai di italiano? Che non è tipicamente inglese ... [*For example what do you do which is Italian? which is not typically English?*]

D: Erm[:] sono più rumorosa di prima e.. non voglio aspettare [*laugh*] [*Erm[:] I'm noisier than before and..I don't want to wait*]

S: Fai la fila? [*Do you queue ?*]

D: Mm[:] non voglio [*laugh*] [*mm..I don't want to [laugh]*]

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\6D) 21.11.7>]

Daphne, like Ilaria, seemed to have reached through a process of continuous self-reflection, a compromise between her personal and social identity, namely a balance between her internal thoughts and emotions and the happenings around her. Through reflexivity Daphne managed to give voice to her ‘emotional commentaries’, as defined by Archer (2000: 195) gaining access to interaction not only with the social world but also with to her inner self. Emotions helped her to become more aware of the situations and to select a set of new social roles during her YA. Unlike Ilaria, however, Daphne seemed to have used reflexivity and introspection more intensely and for a more extended period of time. This is shown for instance in the diaries entries, which she continued to provide also after the diary-based interview had been carried out (cf. Appendix 3.2) and in our last interview (cf. excerpt above), which shows the continuous and dynamic negotiation of her social identity, together with her commitment to adjust pre-existing social roles according to the surroundings and to the creative ways in which she was willing to invest and re-invest herself⁶.

6.6. Summary and discussion

In sum, the amount of time spent at the university was clearly important for Daphne and Ilaria. Ilaria was committed to the lessons to widen her knowledge and to improve her language skills (especially listening comprehension and note taking). Likewise, for Daphne, the university environment contributed to the development of her linguistic abilities, but unlike Ilaria, going to the university represented for Daphne an alternative way of socialising and being part of the new society.

In contrast, Lucy seldom went to the university lectures and her lack of academic commitment seemed to have considerably affected her language learning progress and

confidence. Moreover, the bilingual environment (Italian and Sardinian) in which Lucy found herself at home seemed to have impeded the building of a close relationship with her flatmates, who spoke a mixture of Sardinian and Italian to her. This bilingualism made Lucy feel very confused and restricted her opportunities to speak Italian outside the university environment and to widen her social circles among local speakers of Italian.

Socialising with flatmates emerged as an important factor, which contributed to the expansion of Ilaria and Daphne's social circles. This was a particularly important factor for Ilaria, who indicated that all the friends she had in Cagliari were young people she had met with the help of her flatmates. In other words, her flatmates' friends became Ilaria' friends. This means of access to local social networks and 'symbolic resources' was important for Daphne as well, since her flatmate then became her best friend in Italy.

All participants had many opportunities to socialise, even though their approach to entering the new social circles in Italy and their group preferences were relatively different. Ilaria seemed to be the most committed to building social networks within the new cultural settings. She made only Italian friends and did not put efforts into trying to socialise with other ERASMUS students. The fact that Ilaria had exclusively Italian friends expanded her opportunities for speaking Italian considerably, and at the end of her YA her language capability was so high that in my view, as an Italian native speaker, she sounded like a near-native speaker. In contrast, Lucy made few Italian friends or acquaintances. She preferred to socialise with other ERASMUS students, with whom she could speak her first language, and indeed, most of them were native speakers of English. For Daphne the most important thing seemed to be the quality time spent

with people with whom she could feel comfortable, no matter what their linguistic and cultural background was. Hence, she spent a lot of time with her flatmate, who then became her “best friend”. She also used to have long conversations with the waitress in the bar where she used to go every day, and the shop assistants in the local supermarket. But she also made friends with other ERASMUS students she met at the university.

The extent to which the participants of this study managed to gain access to formal and informal interactions with local people can be understood in their emotional investments and in their desire to match the images they had of the target language (people, culture etc.) before leaving for the YA with the real ones they experienced during their stay in Italy.

All participants were confronted with unequal relations of power, especially in the Italian academic environments, but while Lucy and Ilaria decided to remain silent and to avoid interaction with Italian students or professors altogether, Daphne decided to speak up instead, by making them hear her voice as worth listening to.

As far as opportunities for using Italian outside the instructed environments are concerned, Ilaria and Daphne had plenty of opportunities to use it, due to the social contacts they made through their flatmates and due to their strong desire to participate in Italian society. They practised the language in service encounters with local people (e.g. as in the case for Daphne the waitress in the local bar and the cashiers at the supermarket). Hence, they experienced a relatively easy access to symbolic resources which were produced, validated and offered in and through their Italian homes.

In contrast, Lucy had far fewer linguistic opportunities at home and did not make any particular efforts to try and practise the language outside the flat. Instead she sought

comfortable situations in which she could speak her first language, i.e. with other ERASMUS students, and most of the time she preferred to stay within the borders of her linguistic comfort zone. In the last months of her YA she seemed to put more effort into language learning and language use, and she tried to overcome her fears of making mistakes when speaking Italian, but unfortunately for her, it was too late, as the experience abroad was already coming to an end.

The extent to which the participants in this study negotiated their L2 identities, in and through different learning environments and social networks and the way they took up opportunities to use the target language during their YA, seemed to be greatly influenced by the ways in which they envisaged future possibilities deriving from the achievement of their emotional investments.

For Ilaria these were strongly academic oriented, thus, the (re)construction of her L2 identity represented for her a temporary adjustment confined within the YA timelines. This adjustment was necessary in order to reach her linguistic goals. In fact, when back in the U.K. she said she had not felt she has changed her sense of self. Lucy's lack of second language confidence and of a clear vision of future investments, led her to opt for resistance to the re-construction of her L2 identity, and to reaffirm her L1 identity instead.

In contrast, Daphne welcomed all the struggles faced in her second language learning, with a clear vision of the necessity to overcome them in order not only to accomplish her emotional investments, but also to grow as a person and to gain a new view of the world, which could helped her to deal with cultural difference.

The lived experiences of Daphne, Ilaria and Lucy, show quite clearly that identities are in dynamic evolution and that they do and ought to change more rapidly in new sociocultural contexts. The examples reported in this chapter also show that the extent to which individuals are prepared to negotiate and (re)construct second language identities, or conversely to resist and/or consciously perform them, is directly influenced by the ways in which they perceive their relationships to the new contexts, the ways in which such relationships are constructed over time and across space, and the ways in which individuals envisage opportunities for the future.

CHAPTER 6 – ENDNOTES

¹ See Chapter 4 (§ 4.2) for my research project design

² Cf. early theories on language learning and social practice: e.g. the notion of ‘legitimate speaker’ proposed by Bourdieu (1977), the ‘affective filter’ and the ‘monitor model’ by Krashen (1981) and the ‘acculturation model’ by Schumman (1978).

³ My insertion.

⁴ My insertion.

⁵ My insertion.

⁶ For a more detailed discussion of personal and social identity according to an anthropological view see Archer (2000).

CHAPTER 7

EXPRESSING EMOTIONS AND ARTICULATING VIEWS ABOUT CULTURAL DIFFERENCE

7.1. Introduction

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CHAPTER 7

EXPRESSING EMOTIONS AND ARTICULATING VIEWS ABOUT CULTURAL DIFFERENCE

7.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I will describe some of the ways in which the participants in this study expressed their emotions, and the extent to which emotions constituted a significant dimension of their lived experience of cultural difference. I will discuss these aspects of my data in relation to my third and fourth research question, which are:

- *How did the participants in this study express their emotions during the YA? In particular, how often and in what ways did they make use of affective lexicon in their emotive discourse?*
- *To what extent were participants' emotions bound up with the ways in which they perceived, experienced and dealt with cultural difference in intercultural encounters?*

My account draws on an analysis of narratives in which Ilaria, Daphne and Lucy shared with me the emotions they had felt in particular intercultural encounters. I have evaluated the emotive dimension of their speech, namely the terms for emotion which were used consciously and strategically by participants in their narratives. The analysis has been conducted in the light of the frameworks discussed in Chapter 3 (Arndt & Janney, 1991, Caffi & Janney, 1994; Clore et al., 1987; Holden & Hogan, 1993; Pavlenko, 2005; Panayiotou, 2004b; Planap et al., 1996 and Selting, 1994 and Wierzbicka, A. 1992a, 1992b, 1997, 1999a, 1999b and 2004) which consider the expression of emotions as dynamic processes inextricably linked to and shaped by social contexts.

In order to understand the expression of participants' emotions in their accounts of intercultural encounters, I have conducted lexical analysis of their discourse using

Clore et al.'s (1987) taxonomy of psychological conditions. This has allowed me to characterise the participants' affective lexicon.

As mentioned earlier in this thesis (Chapter 4), the quantitative and qualitative analysis of data, presented in the data analysis chapters (Chapters 6 and 7), have been facilitated through the use of the research software NVivo 8.

The chapter is divided into three main sections. In the first section, I will present the quantitative findings of a systematic analysis of the data (§7.2, § 7.2.1). I will then go on to consider culturally 'untranslatable' terms for emotion (§ 7.2.2). In the second section, I will consider in turn Daphne, Lucy and Ilaria's use of affective lexicon drawing on their accounts of the YA (§ 7.3.1, § 7.3.2 and § 7.3.3), focussing on emotive discourse in which frequent use of the same term for emotion was made. The third section deals with participants' emotive accounts of encounters with cultural difference (§ 7.4). More precisely, I will discuss the ways in which the participants in this study described their perceptions and expressed their opinions when confronted with cultural difference (§ 7.4.1, §7.4.2 and § 7.4.3).

7.2. Affective lexicon in emotive discourse in direct accounts

As outlined above, I have been viewing participants' emotive communication through a pragmatic lens, in other words I have been approaching emotions as part of a process of interaction rather than as a product. I have based my analysis on the identification of terms for emotion as indicated by Clore et al. (1987) in their taxonomy of affective lexicon, focussing exclusively on participants' direct-verbal cues in naturally occurring situations. This taxonomy is described by Planap et al. (1996).

In the following sections, I will first present the quantitative findings of a systematic analysis of the data relating to participants' affective lexicon (§ 7.2). I will then approach data using a qualitative ethnographic lens for each participant in this study (§ 7.3).

7.2.1. Quantitative findings

In my analysis, I first identified the statements made either orally (in audio- and video-recorded interviews) or in writing (in diary entries and photo-descriptions) by the participants. These included lexical items with a significant focus on affect, and, in line with Clore et al.'s theoretical approach (1987), I have rated them as 'emotions' in all instances where there was little difference in meaning between the terms for emotion preceded by the verbs *to feel* and *to be* (e.g. *I feel/am happy*) (see § 3.5.2).

As indicated in Chapter 3, Clore et al. (1987) provided a summative list of terms for emotion (261 in total), including adjectives, nouns and causative verbs, which directly referred to affective conditions; in addition, they also considered 21 non-causative verbs as terms indexing emotions, which they treated separately. Hence, their overall data analysis enabled them to identify a total of 282 affective terms (see *Table 2*). According to them, noncausative verbs can be rated as emotions only if considered in their active present participle form (e.g. *loving* someone and not being loved), and causative verbs can be rated as emotions only if considered only in their passive past participle form (e.g. *being frightened* and not frighten someone). The 31 underlined terms in bold presented in the list below refer to the lexical items (from Clore et al.'s list) which were used in verb or adjective form by my participants either in English or in Italian¹. Obviously these terms can be associated with other verbal and non-verbal

forms of communication of emotions. In this context, however, I will only look at the verbal statements made by participants.

Table 2. *Affective lexicon: nouns, adjective and verbs*

1. Accepting	59. Delight	115. Fond	172. Joy	227. Relief
2. Admiration	60. Delighted	116. Fondness	173. Joyful	228. Relieved
3. Admiring	61. Dependent (ps.)	117. Friendliness	174. Joyous	229. Remorse
4. Adoring	62. Depressed	118. Fright	175. Jubilant	230. Resenting
5. Affection	63. Depression	119. Forgiving	176. Kind	231. Resentful
6. Affectionate	64. Desiring	120. Frightened	177. Light hearted	232. Resentment
7. Afraid	65. Desire	121. Frustrated	178. Liking	233. Respecting
8. Aggravated	66. Despair	122. Frustration	179. Lively	234. Sad (Engl./It.)
9. Aggrieved	67. Desperate	123. Fulfilled	180. Livid	235. Sadness
10. Agitated	68. Despising	124. Furious	181. Loathing	236. Satisfied (Engl/It)
11. Agitation	69. Despondent	125. Fury	182. Loneliness	237. Scared
12. Agony	70. Determination	126. Gaiety	183. Lonely	238. Scorn
13. Alarm	71. Detesting	127. Gateful	184. Lonesome	239. Self conscious
14. Alarmed	72. Disappointed	128. Gloomy	185. Longing	240. Self-pity
15. Amazed	73. Disappointment	129. Gloom	186. Lovable	241. Self-satisfaction
16. Amused (It.) ²	74. Disapproving-of	130. Grateful	187. Love	242. Self-satisfied
17. Anger	75. Discontented	131. Gratified	188. Loving	243. Sensitive (hurt)
18. Angry	(It.)	132. Grief-stricken	189. Lovesick	244. Sensitive
19. Anguish	76. Discouraged	133. Grief	190. Loving	(considerate)
20. Anguished	77. Disenchanted	134. Grieving	191. Low	245. Sentimental
21. Annoyed	78. Disgust	135. Grouchy	192. Lust	246. Shame
22. Anxiety	79. Disgusted	136. Guilt	193. Mad	247. Shock
23. Anxious	80. Disgraced	137. Happiness	194. Malice	248. Shocked
24. Apathy	81. Disheartened	138. Happy	195. Melancholy	249. Sick-at-heart
25. Appreciating	82. Disillusioned	(Engl./It.)	196. Merry	250. Slighted
26. Appreciation	83. Disliking	139. Hating	197. Miserable	251. Solemnity
27. Approving-of	84. Dismay	140. Hate	198. Misery	252. Sorry
28. Argumentative	85. Dismayed	141. Hateful	199. Mixed-up	253. Sorrow
29. Arousal	86. Displeased	142. Heart-stricken	200. Mortified	254. Spiteful
30. Aroused	87. Dissatisfied	143. Heartbroken	201. Mournful	255. Suffering
31. Ashamed (It.)	88. Distress	144. Heartened	202. Moved (It.)	256. Surprise
32. Astonished	89. Distressed	145. Heartsick	203. Nervous	257. Surprised (It.)
33. At-peace	90. Disturbed	146. Homesick	(Engl./It.)	258. Suspicious
34. Attracted	91. Downhearted	147. Hope	204. Nervousness	259. Suspense
35. Awe	92. Dread	148. Hopelessness	205. Optimism	260. Sympathetic
36. Awestruck	93. Ecstasy	149. Hopeless	206. Optimistic	261. Sympathy
37. Bewildered	94. Ecstatic	150. Hopeful	207. Outrage	262. Tender
38. Bitchy	95. Elated	151. Horrified	208. Outraged	263. Terrified
39. Bitter	96. Elation	152. Horror	209. Overjoyed	264. Terror
40. Blue	97. Embarrassed ⁵	153. Hostile	210. Overwhelmed	265. Threatened
41. Bored (Engl./It.) ³	98. Embarrassment	154. Hostility	211. Panic	266. Thrilled
42. Broken hearted	99. Emotional (It.)	155. Humiliation	212. Passion	267. Tormented
43. Cheered	100. Enjoying	156. Hurt	213. Passionate	268. Troubled
44. Cheerful	101. Empathy	157. Ill-at-ease	214. Peeved	269. Trusting
45. Cheerfulness	102. Enjoyment	158. Impatient	215. Petrified	270. Uncomfortable
46. Comfortable (ps.) ⁴	103. Enthusiasm	159. In-love	216. Pining	(psychologically)
47. Compassion	104. Envious	160. Incensed	217. Pissed-off	271. Uneasy
48. Compassionate	105. Envy	161. Infatuated	218. Pity	272. Unhappy
49. Concern	106. Euphoria	162. Infatuation	219. Placid	273. Upset
50. Concerned	107. Euphoric	163. Intimate	220. Pleased	274. Uptight
51. Consoled	108. Exasperated	164. Intimidated	(Engl./It.)	275. Vengeful
52. Contempt	109. Exasperation	165. Irate	221. Pleasure (It.)	276. Violent
53. Contemptuous	110. Excited	166. Irked	222. Pride	277. Wanting
54. Contented (It.)	(Engl./It.)	167. Irritated (It.)	223. Proud (Engl./It.)	278. Warm hearted
55. Contentment	111. Excitement	168. Irritation	224. Rage	279. Woe-stricken
56. Courage	112. Fear	169. Isolated (It.)	225. Regret	280. Worried
57. Crushed	113. Fed-up (It.)	170. Jealous	226. Relaxed	281. Worry
58. Dejection	114. Flabbergasted	171. Jealousy	(ps.)(It.)	282. Yearning

Adapted from Clore at al (1986: 763-6)

As mentioned earlier, in this research study, I focussed only on the direct verbal dimension; therefore, I have selected from Clore et al.'s list only those items that were used orally or in writing by my participants to describe their own emotions. As shown in the tables below (*Tables 3 and 4*), my list counts a total of 59 lexical items indexing emotions (34 expressed in English and 25 in Italian), among which 13 terms have been added by me from the participants' accounts, after being identified as new terms for emotion. These are the terms underlined in bold in Table 3.

This first quantitative analysis has shown that all three participants used lexical items signalling emotions with high frequency. The lists below show the specific affective lexicon they used, which includes adjectives, nouns and verbs.

Naturally, the terms listed below may have the opposite connotation if preceded by the negative form (e.g. I am/do **not** feel amused – nervous), therefore, in the box below, I have only considered the lexical items which were not preceded by the negative form, so that the original meaning of the term was maintained. I have also included the terms reported in Italian accompanied by a translation into English made by me which is shown in brackets. The terms in bold marked with an asterisk in *Table 4*, “*emozionata*” and “*mi ha emozionato*”, refer to Italian words, for which no suitable linguistic and cultural English equivalent could be found, hence, I defined these terms as ‘untranslatable’ (cf. Panayiotou, 2004b), and I have decided to treat them separately in the last section of § 7.2 (namely § 7.2.2).

Table 3. Participants' affective lexicon (expressed in English)

1. angry	12. enjoying	24. pleased
2. annoyed	13. excited	25. positive
3. ashamed	14. frustrated	26. proud
4. awkward	15. getting/going red	27. ready
5. bored	16. grumpy	28. relieved
6. comfortable (psychologically)	17. happy	29. sad
7. cosy	18. homesick	30. (self)satisfaction
8. cross	19. homev	31. satisfied
9. depression	20. keen	32. scared
10. different	21. motivated	33. special
11. embarrassed	22. negative	34. upset
	23. nervous	

Table 4. Participants' affective lexicon (expressed in Italian)

1. annoiarmi (to feel/be/get bored)	7. felice (happy)	16. mi infastidisce (I feel/am/get annoyed, irritated)
2. ci sono rimasta male (I felt/was discontented, irritated, disappointed, uneasy)	8. fiera (proud)	17. mi sorprende (It surprises me or I feel/am surprised)
3. contenta / contentissima (contented, happy / very contented, very happy)	9. imbarazzata (embarrassed)	18. mi stufo (I feel/am/get bored, fed up)
4. emozinata* (loosely translated as: emotional, excited, moved, touched)	10. mancanza degli amici (missing friends)	19. motivata (motivated)
5. esclusa (excluded, isolated)	11. mancanza della casa (missing home)	20. nervosa (nervous)
6. fa troppo ridere (it really amuses me or I feel/am amused)	12. mancanza della famiglia (missing family)	21. non ne avevo voglia (I didn't feel like it or I felt/was relaxed psychologically, bored)
	13. mi annoio (I feel/am/get bored)	22. piacere (pleasure)
	14. mi fa piacere (I feel/am pleased)	23. soddisfatta (satisfied)
	15. mi ha emozionato* (loosely translated as: It made me feel emotional, excited, moved, touched)	24. speciale (special)
		25. triste (sad)

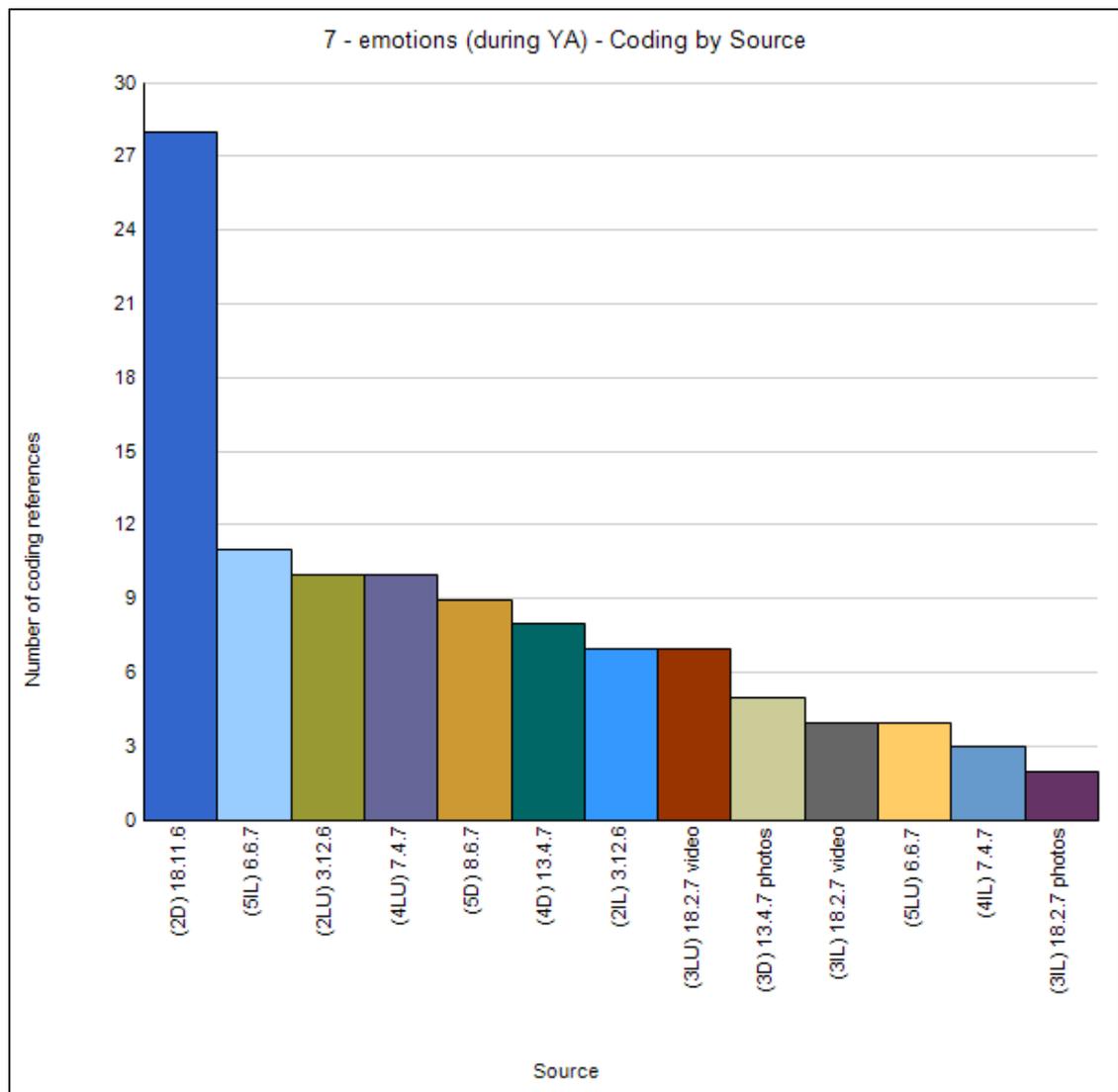
Through the analysis, I also found that evidence suggests that the verbal expression of emotions varied notably from one participant to another and that it was also influenced by the particular interactional contexts in which each participant in this study found herself. Indeed, whereas Daphne expressed her emotions very frequently, interestingly, Ilaria and Lucy made far less frequent use of terms for emotion than

Daphne did. Moreover, whereas Ilaria and Daphne used a large number of Italian words to signal their emotions, Lucy used none.

The graph below (*Figure 7*) shows the participants' use of affective lexicon, in each interview we undertook during their YA. I have coded the terms for emotion, with reference to the particular discourse contexts in which participants used them. Hence, each reference in the following graph indicates the use of terms for emotion within those discourse contexts. I have not considered the emotive discourse used in the first interview with Daphne, which was conducted in May 2006, namely before her YA, since I have no records of pre-departure interviews with Ilaria and Lucy; and I have not considered the last interviews with Daphne and Ilaria, which were carried out in November and December 2007 respectively, namely after their return to the U.K., since I have no record of interviews undertaken with Lucy after her YA. Thus, I have decided to consider participants' emotive discourse contexts during their YA only, to be consistent in my analysis.

The abbreviations in brackets indicate the name of the participant and the source, accompanied by the dates on which the interview was conducted, e.g. < (5IL) 6.6.7 > refers to the fifth interview undertaken with Ilaria on the 6th of June 2007. The discourse contexts indicated with "photos" and "video" refer to the photo- and video diary-based interviews. The numbers of coding references refer to the amount of emotive discourse contexts identified in each interview. These were coded by themes, i.e. in this case by the expression of participants' emotions during the YA and, as the acronyms in brackets indicate, they are not in chronological order; rather they are represented according to their frequency of use by each participant in each interview.

Figure 7. Participants' emotive discourse contexts coded by source



Source: NVivo 8

From the quantitative data presented in the graph above, it is very clear that Daphne used more terms for emotions than Ilaria and Lucy did. Interestingly, she was the one participant who made major use of emotive discourse in a single interview. This was our second interview (conducted on 18 November 2006), which lasted one hour and twenty minutes, where I identified twenty-eight emotive discourse contexts, which varied from two to approximately twenty turns at talk, in which she made use of direct verbal lexical items to express her emotions during the YA.

As we can see from the graph, Ilaria and Lucy used a large amount of emotive discourse, even though the amount of lexical items expressing emotions was far fewer than those of Daphne. These points will be treated in more detail in section § 7.3.

7.2.2. *Untranslatable terms for emotion*

As I will show in the following section (§ 7.3), two participants in this study (Ilaria and Daphne) gave their accounts of their experience abroad, switching from English to Italian and vice versa, whereas Lucy decided to use only English in her accounts.

During my scrutiny of the Italian lexicon used by one participant (Daphne) to signal her emotions, I encountered one particular term for which I could find no suitable English equivalent. Indeed, as Panayiotou (2004b:3) pointed out, there are terms for emotion which can be linguistically translatable, but culturally untranslatable, since they have specific cultural significance and meanings.

One Italian term for emotion in Daphne's accounts, which I consider to be untranslatable, is the adjective "*emozionat-a*" (in its feminine form, "*emozionat-o*" in its masculine form), whose verb form is "*emozionarsi*". This term encompasses a range of emotions, including: "touched, moved, excited, emotional".

Paradoxically, this term is at the heart of my discussion in this thesis, since its etymological origin is the noun "emotion", from classic Latin (XVII century) *emovère*: carry outside, move, shake (*trasportar fuori, smuovere, scuotere*). In Italian this word implies a light agitation, enthusiasm, lightening of spirit and commotion (*agitazione, sollevamento di spirito, entusiasmo, commozione*) [<http://www.etimo.it/>].

The Italian Dictionary of Sabatini and Coletti (DISC) (2003) distinguishes between the term ‘emozione’, in the language of psychology, and the use of ‘emozionato/a’ in everyday Italian language. Both definitions imply a sense of agitation, depending on inner states and/or external situations, and also associate the term with excitement (exciting experiences) and emotional states (impression, commotion, perturbation).

The online version of Collins dictionary [<http://dictionary.reverso.net/italian-english/emozionato>] also translates the word “emozionato” with the words: “overwhelmed” and “nervous” e.g. 1) “Sorry, I feel I bit overwhelmed” and 2) “I was very nervous during the exam”. These are surely interesting examples, although as an Italian native speaker my translations of these statements would be: 1) “Scusa, mi sento sopraffatto dalle emozioni” and 2) “Ero molto nervosa durante l’esame”; and not as Collins suggests: 1) “Scusami mi sento un po’ emozionato”; 2) “Ero molto emozionato all’esame.”

My reticence about these translations stems from the fact that firstly, the word “emozionato/a” implies a subtly positive significance, which the adjective “nervous” surely does not; and secondly, it implies an ensemble of positive feelings which can be still constrained, whereas the word “overwhelming” does indeed indicate the (verbal or non-verbal) expression of an overpowering inner state.

The Oxford language online dictionary translates “emozionato”, with the terms “thrilled” and “worked up” [<http://www.oxfordlanguagedictionaries.com>]. Again, the word “thrilled” implies a euphoric inner state, which the word “emozionato” does not, and the word “worked up” is better translated with the word “agitato”, which can assume slightly negative connotations, rather than the word “emozionato”, which as pointed out earlier, certainly does not.

Moreover, in Italian there is a clear difference between the word “emozionata” and the word “emotiva”, which is different from the meaning it would assume in English. In fact, the sentence “È una persona emotiva” can be translated in English with: “She is an emotional person”; whereas the sentence “È emozionata”, can be translated with: “She is touched, moved etc.” Hence, the difference between *emotiva/emozionata* is not the same as in the English words *emotive/emotional* (cf. § 3.5.2 in Chapter 3).

As shown in the excerpts below, taken from a photo-based interview conducted in April 2007, Daphne felt “emozionata” (excited) when she visited the cities of Florence and Venice (**excerpts 1 and 2**), which she loved.

Excerpt 1 – *Daphne feeling/being ‘emozionata’ when she visited Florence*

“Sometimes it really is hard to believe I live here”



Photo 71 – *Daphne in Florence*

“Numero 4. Ah.. questa è [*laugh*] a Firenze, er.. la settimana scorsa con la mia amica, e non è una vista molto bella di Firenze, ma l’ho scelta perché c’è [*ci sono*] anche io nella foto. Erm .. perché qualche volta, quando faccio .. erm .. o quando vado in un’altra città, o quando faccio un giro di [*a*] Ferrara, e.. all’improvviso penso “Oh ma io vivo in Italia!” E.. questo è molto erm... per me è stato molto e .. erm .. buo’ no, sono stata [*ero*] molto emozionata quando sono andata a Firenze, anche a Roma e Venezia, le città più famose, quindi l’ho scelto[*a*] perché [*ci sono*] io a Firenze.”

[*Ah.. this is [laugh] in Florence, er..last week with my friend, and this is not a very beautiful view of Florence, but I’ve chosen it because there is also me in the photo. Erm..because sometimes, when I do.. erm.. or when I go to another city,*

or when I go around Ferrara, and.. suddenly I think “Oh but I live in Italy!” And.. this is very erm... for me it’s been very and.. erm.. good , I was very excited when I went to Florence, also to Rome and Venice, the most famous cities, so I have chosen it because there is me in Florence].⁶

[<Daphne’s Photo-based interview 13 April 2007>]

Excerpt 2 – Daphne feeling/being ‘emozionata’ when she visited Venice

“Venice really is as beautiful as it looks”



Photo 72 – Panoramic view of Venice photographed by Daphne

“Sì sono andata a Venezia tre o quattro volte, ma la prima volta che sono andata .. er.., sono stata [*ero*] molto emozionata, ma .. ho er .. avevo molte a s p e t t a t i v e di Venezia, ma non sapevo che forse non sarebbe [*fosse*] così bella, come sembra nelle foto, ma invece secondo me er... È così bella, [*come*].. sembra nelle foto e nei libri e [*in*] TV in Inghilterra. Ho fatto questa foto da erm ... dal campani’ dal campanile nella piazza, erm .. perché sembra molto bella e dimostra che erm ... non è, anche a Roma, non è.. perché molte città (...) [*nella*] vita reale sono un po’ sporche, mm .. così belle ma secondo me Venezia .. non mi ha .. de l u s a. Mh mh sì.”

[Yes, I’ve been to Venice three or four times, but the first time I went ..er.., I was very excited, but .. I have er.. I had a lot of e x p e c t a t i o n s about Venice, but I didn’t know that maybe it was as beautiful, as it looks in the photos, but for me er.. It is indeed as beautiful, as it looks in the photos and in the books and on TV in England. I have taken this photo from erm... from the bell... bell tower of the square, erm.. because it seems very beautiful and shows that erm...it’s not, also in Rome, it’s not.. because a lot of cities (...) in real life are a bit dirty, mm.. so beautiful but for me Venice.. didn’t d i s a p p o i n t me. Mh mh yes.]

[<Daphne’s Photo-based interview 13 April 2007>]

Daphne also felt ‘emozionata’ (touched/moved) when she watched the Italian film “Saturno contro”. As shown in the excerpt below, taken from a diary-based

interview conducted in April 2007, she really liked the movie and she was happy about the fact that she could understand the Italian language. She got so ‘emozionata’ (emotional) that she even cried and felt sad.

Excerpt 3 – *Daphne feeling/being ‘emozionata’ when she watched an Italian movie*

S: Dunque sei andata a vedere un altro film, e ti è piaciuto moltissimo, il film era “Saturno contro”, un film che ti ha emozionato, e tu dici che è fantastico, e poi la cosa importante è che tu dici che hai capito quasi tutto. [*So you went to see another film, and you liked it a lot, the film was “Saturno contro”, a film that touched/moved you, and you say that it’s fantastic, and the most important thing is that you say that you understood almost everything.*]

D: Sì, mi ha emozionato, è un film italiano, con.. attori italiani famosi, e.. er.. non è.. un film.. con molta azione, è più di un gruppo di amici che parlano molto, sì ho capito quasi tutto, è abbastanza triste e ho pianto...e sì voglio comprarlo quando è in DVD, perché è fantastico, sì. [*Yes, [the film] made me feel emotional, it’s an Italian film, with.. famous Italian actors, and.. er.. it’s not a film... with much action. it’s more about a group of friends who talk a lot, yes I understood almost everything, it’s quite sad and I cried... and yes I want to buy it when it’s on DVD, because it’s fantastic.*]

[<Internals\DAPHNE\transcripts\4D 13.4.7>]

As shown in the excerpts above (**excerpts 1, 2 and 3**), the terms Daphne used to signal her particular inner state were never associated with states of nervousness and agitation, as the dictionary translations ‘nervous’ and ‘worked up’ would suggest, nor did they indicate too much intensity of feelings, as the word ‘overwhelming’ would suggest. On the contrary, they were often accompanied by positive terms, such as the verb “piacere” (to like) or the adjectives “bella” and “fantastico” (beautiful and fantastic).

To sum up, I would confirm Panayiotou’s (2004b) stance on the difficulty to translate specific terms for emotion and on the possibility to learn emotions in a new language and culture. Wierzbicka’s (1992a, 1992b, 1997, 1999a, 1999b and 2004) extensive studies on emotions across cultures have also shown that emotions can indeed

be culture specific, such as for instance the Greek word ‘*stenahoria*’ (loosely translated by Panayiotou as a mixture of sadness, discomfort and suffocation), the Japanese word ‘*amae*’ (loosely translated by Wierzbicka as helplessness, desire to be loved and dependency needs) or the Italian word ‘*emozionata*’ (loosely translated by me as touched, moved, excited, light spirited, slightly emotional, slightly agitated and enthusiastic).

The examples reported above, from Daphne’s accounts of emotive discourse show quite clearly that emotions can be learnt in a new language and culture. Indeed, Daphne used the term ‘*emozionata*’, in its adjective and verb form, to describe the range of emotions that this term encompasses in Italian, and, therefore, she appeared to have grasped the more Italian connotations of the word and to have made a successful linguistic and cultural approximation of the Italian meaning.

7.3. Participants’ affective lexicon

In the following sections (§ 7.3.1, § 7.3.2 and § 7.3.3), I will extend the lexical analysis presented above, taking account of the particular interactional contexts in which affective lexicon was used by Daphne, Lucy and Ilaria. In particular, my analytical question in these sections will be: *how often and in what ways did each participant in this study make use of affective lexicon to negotiate and construct her emotive discourse?*

7.3.1. Daphne

From a detailed analysis of Daphne’s use of affective lexis in her accounts of her experiences abroad, it emerged that she expressed her emotions in a variety of interactional contexts. As shown in the box below (*Table 5*), she made use of 75 direct

verbal lexical items to index her particular inner states. Twenty-two of these were expressed in Italian.

Table 5. Daphne's affective lexicon

angry (not)	happy	nervous (not quite)
annoyed	homesick (2x)	nervous (wasn't)
awkward	imbarazzata (<i>embarrassed</i>)	nervous (really)
awkward (not)	keen (2x)	nervous (even more)
bored	mancanza degli amici	piacere (<i>pleasure</i>)
comfortable	(<i>missing friends</i>)	pleased (3x)
(psychologically)	mancanza della casa	sad (2x)
contenta (<i>contented</i>) (2x)	(<i>missing home</i>)	sad (not)
contentissima (<i>very</i>	mancanza della famiglia	sad (very)
<i>contented</i>)	(<i>missing family</i>)	sad (not)
cosy	mi ha emozionato* (<i>loosely</i>	sad (quite)
cross (3x)	<i>translated as: It made me</i>	special (2x)
different (4x)	<i>feel emozional, excited,</i>	speciale (<i>special</i>) (2x)
emozionata* (<i>loosely</i>	<i>touched</i>)	stressata (<i>stressed</i>
<i>translated as: emozional,</i>	mi sorprende (<i>surprised</i>)	<i>psychologically</i>) (2x)
<i>excited, touched</i>) (2x)	nervosa (sarei) (<i>would be</i>	upset (2x)
esclusa (<i>excluded, isolated</i>)	<i>nervous</i>)	upset (not)
fiera (<i>proud</i>) (2x)	nervosa (meno) (2x) (<i>less</i>	
frustrated (3x)	<i>nervous</i>)	
getting/going red (ashamed,	nervous (10x)	
embarrassed)	nervous (didn't look)	

It is interesting to note Daphne's repeated use of the adjective "nervous", twenty-seven times in all, and also her tendency to draw repeatedly on other terms for emotion, such as "different/special" (eight times), and "sad" (six times). Also significant is her use of specific Italian terms in the form of adjectives or verbs, such as "emozionata" and "mi ha emozionato", for which no suitable English equivalents were found (see § 7.2.3)

I will now turn my attention to the two terms for emotion which had the highest frequency in Daphne's accounts of her YA, these are "nervous" and "different", I will treat the latter together with the word "special". My main aim in the following sections is to describe the ways in which Daphne made use of these (and other related) terms for emotion in her narratives and to ponder on the reasons why.

1. *Nervous*

Daphne used the adjective “nervous” several times in her narratives, alternatively in English and in Italian. The first time she expressed this emotion during the YA was in her diary on 25 October 2006, where she used the Italian term “*nervosa*” to indicate her particular state with regard to the Italian oral exams. She wrote “Sono contentissima che in Inghilterra tutti gli esami siano scritti, sarei troppo nervosa di parlare.” [*I am very happy that in England all exams are written, I would be too nervous to speak*] [[Source: diary entry October 2006](#)]. She was happy (and presumably relieved) that she did not have to take many oral exams in the U.K., as she stated in our second interview taken in November 2006,

Excerpt 4 – *Daphne being/feeling nervous about thinking of oral exams*

D: Because when I do, like, the oral exam, in England, for the languages, I get sooo nervous before, I can feel my hands are shaking: ... I think if I don't know what to say... you can't leave a big silence or something .. whereas in the written exam if I don't understand the question, I can go to the next question and come baaack, but with speaking you have to say something [*laugh*].

[<[Internals\DAAPHNE\transcripts\2D\) 18.11.6](#)>]

Her main linguistic concern at the beginning of her experience was to speak the target language in instructed environments. However, despite this nervousness, as I have already mentioned in Chapter 6, she decided to overcome this emotion by taking part in formal conversations during the lectures and by sitting the oral exams at the end of the academic year in Italy (see **excerpts 18** and **17** in Chapter 6).

Daphne admitted feeling very nervous when she had to speak in front of others even in her first language, because she defined herself as being a shy person and therefore, she said that she would get embarrassed and would feel awkward if she had to

speak. Indeed, when I asked her why she felt nervous about speaking in front of other people in the class, this was her reply:

Excerpt 5 – *Daphne being/feeling nervous to speak in front of others in her L1 and L2*

D: {...} I don't.. I don't like speaking in front of a group, even in English, because I just know I get red and that makes me even more nervous, but I didn't actually know the answer to the question he asked, which was a bit ..erm.. awkward, and also..I got so nervous I couldn't think in Italian, I couldn't think at all, and I couldn't think enough to say "I don't know the answer, or just to say "oh I can't speak" but the fact that I could feel myself going red and it was horrible, I think ..I don't know I just felt a bit silly in front of the other students, because I want to be **p**art of the class, and I don't want or be THE foreign student. When I have to speak in front of them , when I can't say anything, this makes it **ob**vious that I am **E**nglish and .. I feel .. I don't feel as much of the class if I l o o k like I can't speak Italian.

[<[Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D 18.11.6](#)>]

Interestingly, this aspect of her personality changed significantly after her experience abroad, as shown in our last interview undertaken in the U.K. in November 2007, where she stated that she did not feel as shy as before the YA, and she did not care about what other people may think of her (see **excerpt 72** in Chapter 6).

The emotion of being/feeling "nervous", also emerged in relation to informal conversations in Italian, such as the one she undertook with her flatmate when trying to comfort her (see **excerpts 16** in Chapter 6) or when trying to deal with day-to-day things in informal encounters. As outlined above, this aspect emerged very clearly in a diary-based interview undertaken in November 2006, where she used the term "nervous" for as many as eleven times. It made her feel really nervous, as well as annoyed, angry and psychologically stressed, when she couldn't express herself as she wanted to, for instance when talking about complex things (see **excerpt 23** in Chapter 6) or when being intellectually tired after speaking her second language, as shown in the two excerpt below.

Excerpt 6 – *Daphne feeling/being angry and annoyed due to her intellectual fatigue in L2 speaking*

S: So also, when are you angry? When ...

D: When I'm tired and I try to speak Italian, probably, eh eh.

S: Ok, so they're related then.

D: Yeah, I don't usually, I don't usually get angry, because probably this when I'm tired and I want to do something I can't, this makes me a bit annoyed and ...

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D) 18.11.6>]

Overall, Daphne felt nervous when she had to cope with things in Italian. This included a sense of frustration about not being able to either understand or reply to Italian native speakers. However, at the same time, it also made her feel very proud and pleased when she was eventually able to understand what was being said in the target language and when she was able to take part in conversations. The following excerpt illustrates these contrasting emotions quite clearly.

Excerpt 7 – *Daphne being/feeling nervous to speak Italian in informal encounters*

S: Ok, and are you proud about your progress in Italian?

D: I think so, because in the beginning I was quite nervous, and I did find it really hard when I first came here, just err... just to cope with everything. But I **think** I'm quite, I'm especially pleased to understand[:] not everything, but I do understand almost everything that people say to me, and I think although my speaking got better, I really, it really frustrates me when I can't reply, because I understand what somebody says and I know what I want to say, but if I can't say it, I think they think I haven't understood ... but I think I'm quite pleased.

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D) 18.11.6>]

Others' expectations made also her feel quite nervous, such as when she wanted to cook for her flatmate and she did not know whether she would appreciate her cuisine. This aspect is shown in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 8 – *Daphne being/feeling nervous about cooking for her flatmate*

S: Ah, ok. And then on the same day you had to cook for your flatmate, and you were a bit nervous, why? [*laugh*]

D: I think all the English students are nervous of cooking for Italian people, because the Italian people cook really ... really well, and in England like the students just make toasts or soup, a soup out of a can, not a homemade soup, but here all the foods are like ‘homemade and [short pause] not, I don’t know I think the students in England just make really quick food ready to eat, and ... go to bed or watch TV, but here the meals are much more of an event, which I really like..

S: [I see]

D: ... but I was a bit nervous. [*laugh*]

S: And what did you cook at the end?

D: I think, I cooked roast potatoes.

S: Oh that’s nice ...

D: Because I thought it’s quite an English thing, and (...) and yeah, I think it’s quite like that.

S: Did she like it?

D: Yeah she did. [*laugh*]

[<Internals\DAAPHNE\transcripts\2D) 18.11.6>]

As time passed by, Daphne felt generally less nervous, and this is shown by the fact that, in later interviews, she made lesser use of this and other associated terms, such as frustrated or embarrassed, to signal her emotions. Indeed, as shown in the excerpt below, taken from an interview conducted in April 2007, Daphne stated being less nervous now about making mistakes when speaking Italian.

Excerpt 9 – *Daphne feeling/being “meno nervosa” about speaking Italian*

S: E poi ti senti.. cambiata? Nel senso che ti vedi la stessa Daphne prima di Natale? O ti senti diversa? [*And then do you feel.. changed? I mean, do you see yourself as being the same Daphne as before Christmas? Or do you feel different?*]

D: Sono **m o l t o** diversa, e sì sono meno timida e.. sì se faccio errori (...) non è importante, sì sono meno nervosa di parlare italiano, se faccio errori, perché

succede.. non, non vuole dire che **non posso** parlare italiano, è solo che.. sono un'inglese che parla, non sono italiana. Quindi.. sì.. sono molto cambiata (eh eh). [*I am v e r y different, and yes I'm less shy and.. yes if I make mistakes (short pause) it's not important, yes I am less nervous about speaking Italian, if I make mistakes, because it happens.. it doesn't mean that I can't speak Italian, it's only because... I'm an **English** [person]⁷ who speaks, I'm not Italian.*]

[<Internals\DAAPHNE\transcripts\4D) 13.4.7>]

Daphne was conscious about her nervousness when she arrived in Italy and about the ways in which she changed over time. In an interview carried out in June 2007, she used this term for emotion as many as five times, but only to recall some episodes related to her past fear of making mistakes and to take oral exams, which she was able to successfully overcome. This is shown in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 10 – *Daphne recalling her nervousness about making mistakes and taking oral exams in Italian*

[...] I was really nervous when I arrived and I found it hard to speak to people, and I found it quite hard .. to get to know at beginning, 'cause I was nervous of making **mistakes**, as soon I spoke Italian and.. but now er.. (...) I don't mind if I make mistakes because .. people still understand what I'm trying to say, and everyone is really friendly and (...) [*sigh*] I think I'm a lot more **confident**, about speaking Italian, and I just get out and meet people in general.. yeah ...

[...]

S: And what about the.. your opinion about the university, the Italian university system? And .. have you taken any exam? Or .. did you like them or not?

D: erm.. yeah.. I did an exam, last week, which was an oral exam, because almost all the exams are oral, which erm... was quite a change because in England all the exams are written. I was quite no, I was very nervous in the beginning, I was shaking and I was so nervous (...) erm.. another time I did not, I didn't like it at all, because (...) because there were like four exams going on in the same room, and there were other students who were **waiting** for the exam in the same room, so.. one of the teachers kept saying "be quiet, I know it's a public exam, but you have to be quiet" but it seems to be stupid to do four exams in one room .. and have all students there, but say "you can't t a l k and (...) I don't know, it was a bit, a bit odd. Erm..

S: [how] did it go, your exam?

D: It was all right, eh eh, even the teacher was **so nice**, I think he liked the foreign students, because he gave me and my friend the top marks. Even though, eh eh, .. yeah

[<Internals\DAAPHNE\transcripts\5D) 8.6.7>]

2. *Different and special*

Other two salient lexical items which were unique to Daphne were the words “different” and “special”. These two terms have been added by me to Clore et al.’s (1987) list to the original, because they follow their classifications of affective words.

More specifically, both terms have a significant focus on the affective dimension, and show little difference in significance when preceded by the verbs feeling/being. Indeed, Daphne used them indistinctively in her accounts, and these were often accompanied by other common affective lexical items, such as “upset” and “isolated”. I have also identified the use of “different” and “special” in association with other words which I have defined as affective lexical items, for the reasons explained above, such as “cross” and “awkward”, and with other evaluative and descriptive terms, such as “strange” and “weird”.

Daphne made use of these terms especially when she wanted to describe her particular emotions in relation to her ideas and experiences of cultural difference. She felt “different”, “special” and at the same time “isolated” or “excluded”, when Italian native speakers wanted to talk to her only because they knew she was an English native speaker.

In her diary on Friday 27 October 2006, she wrote “Qualche volta mi sento un po’ esclusa perché sono straniera [...] e qualche volta mi sembra di essere speciale” [Sometimes I feel a bit *excluded* because I’m English [...] and sometimes I feel like I’m *special*] [[Source: diary entry October 2006](#)]. A month after she wrote the quotation above, I asked her, in a diary-based interview, to explain these particular diary entries, and this was her reply:

Excerpt 11 – *Daphne feeling/being different, special and excluded in local communities*

D: Yeah, mm..., I think it was sometimes because, like at the party, I just kind of ‘people would pay a lot of attention ... and to me because they wanted me to speak to in English or they wanted me to do a toast in English to this girl, er..., which was all right, I don’t mind, erm[:] ..., so I felt a kind of... the centre of attention for a while, and then, but then suddenly the conversation change and they would be laughing at something and I’d be just sitting there, and no one, and they are like not ignoring but (...) I don’t know ...

S: Just like this, without any ...

D: Yeah, it’s a kind of ... it’s quite a change, because I didn’t feel part of the group, when I was ... being the English one that they wanted to speak English to them, and I didn’t feel part of the group when I didn’t understand, and it was, well, I didn’t know whether I was special or whether I was just different. I didn’t feel part of it, because when people pay attention because they want you to speak English, it’s not, it’s not like being part of the group, it’s still being a foreign person, even if it’s in a good way ... it’s still being a foreigner, I’d rather be ... just ...

S: Yeah[:], so you would like people to pay attention, not because you are English and they want to speak English, but because it’s you?

D: YEAH[:].

S: No matter what your first language is?

D: [yeah I don’t] really want to be the centre of attention, I just want to ... like ...just speak to them, like they were speaking to each other or ...

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D) 18.11.6>]

Not being able to join in informal conversations in Italian with Italian native speakers, and being considered as a foreigner, made Daphne feel “different” or “special”, in quite a negative connotation of the term. Indeed she implied several times that feeling “different” meant for her also feeling or being “excluded”, and that she did not like it, since she did not want to be considered and treated as an outsider. Unfortunately, this was the case in the first few months of her YA, and, not surprisingly, this made her feel “upset” as well.

Her initial distress was mostly connected with day-to-day cultural misunderstandings or misinterpretation. Like the one, for instance, she experienced in a supermarket, when she took a carrier bag without paying, since she thought bags were for free (like in England) and she felt upset about not knowing that particular ‘silly’ (as she defined it) Italian custom which caused an unpleasant situation. Indeed, on 17 November 2006 she wrote in her diary: “Mi sono accorta che è molto più che è molto più sconvolgente quando non hai capito qualcosa della cultura italiana che quando non capisco la lingua.” [*I have realized that it is much more shocking when you haven’t understood something about the culture than when I don’t understand the language*] [[Source: diary entry November 2006](#)]. When I asked her to explain me why and what made her feel in this way, this was her reply:

Excerpt 12 – *Daphne feeling/being upset for not being able to deal appropriately with cultural difference*

D: I’m not sure, I only noticed it the other day, like two or three days ago, and it was something really silly, I was in a **supermarket** and I hadn’t paid for a carrier bag, or something, so it was like, it a really silly thing ... em.. but I just felt really, really not upset, but ... I was just... really ... just felt really different, I don’t know...

S: But why? What happened with the carrier bag? Did she shout at you? (laugh)

D: No I was just er... I think it was just something different, and ... it’s hard to ask people about (...) I think maybe because this culture and things like Italian people just **know**, where they learn this stuff, they just know it, and stuff that ... it’s hard to learn and nobody teaches you, things to **do** every day, whereas with languages, if people don’t, people expect me to know, people expect that I don’t understand every word, and so... they know that looking at a dictionary or using books is a different world. But when it’s something like a **custom** that people do, I don’t know, maybe I feel a bit a bit rude for not doing it or I won’t just say anything ‘cause I feel a bit .. strange or ... I don’t I was definitively, I was quite upset because, not crying, but I was quite (...) yeah.

[...]

D: And I ... I didn’t realise that you have to pay for something like that, I don’t know, it’s just er..., and she had to explain it to me, and it wasn’t a serious thing, no one was cross or anything, but I felt, I was just er.. oh...

S: You felt like “Oh I should know this”?

D: Yeah, like I should have known.

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D) 18.11.6>]

Interestingly, she made no use of the term “different” in the last three interviews, conducted after April 2007.

7.3.2. *Lucy*

The overall impression from Lucy’s accounts is that she felt quite mixed-up and confused during the YA. This is reflected by her alternating use of lexical items to signal her contrasting emotions, such “positive” and “negative”, “happy” and “sad” or “proud” and “scared”.

Lucy decided to undertake all her interviews in her first language; hence, she only made use of English terms to express her emotions. She made lesser use of affective lexical items than Daphne did, but her interviews were also much shorter than those with Daphne. Lucy used 33 words to index her emotions, as indicated in the box below (*Table 6*), and her interviews during the YA lasted about 50 minutes on average, whereas Daphne’s interviews lasted almost two hours. Hence, considering the relative length of their interviews, Lucy’s use of terms for emotions was proportionately higher.

Table 6. Lucy’s affective lexicon

bored	happy (really) (2x)	proud (2x)
depression	happy (weren’t)	ready
different	homey	relieved
embarrassed	motivated	sad
enjoying	motivated (less and less)	satisfied
excited	negative (2x)	(self)satisfaction
grumpy	pleased	scared (2x)
happy (4x)	positive (4x)	

As pointed out earlier, Lucy made use of contrasting affective terms to express her emotions. In fact, she used the word “happy” seven times, and the word “positive” twice, but at the same time she also used words like “negative” and “scared”. Most of the latter terms were used when she was articulating her perceptions of cultural difference. In the following sections, I will consider these terms more closely and I will identify why and how she made use of them within particular stretches of discourse, where she expressed her emotions about the new social contexts she found herself in.

1. *Happy and scared*

Initially, Lucy expressed happiness about her decision to live in a small city like Cagliari. Indeed, when I asked her, in an interview conducted in December 2007, whether she would prefer living in a bigger city, she replied: “*Erm.. I’m quite happy about here. I think if I went to Milan or Rome there would be a lot of tourists. I really value the fact that Cagliari feels quite Italian*” [[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\2LU>3.12.6>](#)].

A few months later, in April 2007, she reconfirmed to me in an interview that she was happy about her choice of Cagliari. Interestingly, a few weeks before our interview, Lucy had the opportunity to visit Rome, but she did not really like it, so she was quite happy when she went back to Cagliari. When I asked her to tell me about her experience in Rome, this was her reply:

Excerpt 13 – *Lucy feeling/being happy about her choice of Cagliari*

L: [erm] **Y E S** , well .. I didn’t enjoy Rome very much, so I was looking forward to getting **away** anyway (...) erm ... part of me was thinking [*acting out*] “oh no I’m going back to Cagliari I just want to go **HOME**.” We got back to the airport, got back home and I sat down in my front room and turned on the television ... and I recognised all the adverts, and it made me feel so homey. It was like if I had come **back** to England and recognised this soap powder advert,

for example. It made me feel like I do actually belong here, because there is a place for me in Cagliari where I fit, eh eh. This is really satisfying. It's quite a little thing but it has a big meaning, eh eh.

S: Yeah. Erm... what about the streets in Rome and in Cagliari? Did you notice the difference?

L: [yes] there's a **H U G E** difference. The street in Rome was **so c r o w d e d** And I was always pushed out of the way by people, and .. erm ... even in the **back** streets, full of people. I suppose one in five was Italian, **s o** many tourists, it ... it didn't really feel very much like Italy, eh eh. And then I went back to Cagliari, and walked half an hour to meet you ... the streets were so quiet and tranquil, and it was a nice, it was a **relaxing** walk from one place to another, rather than a **STRESSFUL** "got to get **through this**" sort of experience. And (...) it made me feel that I'm really glad that I chose Cagliari.

S: Oh[:] ...

L: Because even during the winter, when it's boring, I always wondered [*acting out*] "oh maybe I should have gone to Rome, Rome is so **glamorous** and **exciting**" but last week showed me that the reality would have been a lot more stressful. And ... it reaffirmed ... erm ... it reaffirmed that ... I'm happy with Cagliari.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\4LU 7.4.7>]

Hence, recognising small things like the adverts on the Italian television, or the tranquil streets in Cagliari, made her feel a new-found sense of 'belonging', together with happiness and satisfaction with regard to her choice of Cagliari as a destination for her YA.

Lucy also felt very happy in the company of her English boyfriend (Tom), both when they spent time together in England, during the Christmas holidays, and in Italy, when Tom went to Cagliari for a week to visit her. However, at the same time, Lucy also felt a little worried about her attachment to her boyfriend, which she defined it as being "not healthy". She realized that she had been neglecting other things in her life and that she needed to make more efforts in order to achieve her goals rather than just doing things that would make her feel psychologically "comfortable". This aspect is shown quite clearly in the excerpt below, taken from an interview conducted in

February 2007, where she recalled the visit of her boyfriend and also her short stay with him in England.

Excerpt 14 – *Lucy feeling/being happy when spending time with her boyfriend*

L: [...] I spent a.. **lovely week** just with Tom, and then we went back to **England** and .. I .. spent all my time with him! A L L my time and ... it made me **really happy**, but I don't think it was healthy. I neglected pretty much e v e r y other aspect of my life, a part of my relationship, with him.. erm... and by the time it came round to[:] the day I'd booked my flight for coming back to Cagliari, I wasn't ready to leave, **at all!**

S: [ah]

L: And (...) I was actually really happy when I couldn't find my passport, **anywhere**. My parents weren't happy. But I felt relieved and that when I told myself I was ... going to make .. more than an effort to take control of things myself, make myself .. I don't know {...} decide what I wanted to achieve, and make myself try to achieve it, rather than just doing things to **make each day** rather feel comfortable. If you see what I mean..?

S: Yeah

L: So .. when I visited friends in England, and tried to do all my English business, so when I came to the time to come back to Cagliari I felt ready. And I DID. It was quite good, I felt VERY DEPRESSED in the first few days, when I got here, I spent **so long** with Tom, and I was sitting in my room in Cagliari and I wanted to be and say "Oh Tom ..." and of course he wasn't t h e r e, it was **very strange** not to have **his presence** next to me. But ... as the days went on I feel like erm...[I was] GROWING INTO MY OWN SKIN, more, and er[:] **not** going out with the other girls, who I know... they like to spend their social lives out in bars, and things, it has been **r e a l l y** good for me, because I don't wake up with a hang over.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\3LU\18.2.6 video>]

Lucy's happiness though, as shown in the excerpt above, was mixed with relief, a sense of comfort, but also depression and homesickness. Indeed, in the same interview, her use of the term "happy" (and glad) was associated with other contrasting terms such as "scary" or "intimidating", as shown in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 15 – *Lucy feeling/being happy but also scared and intimidated about her way of dealing with new things*

L: [...] I think {...} making myself do things I find scary or intimidating, it's a **HORRIBLE** prospect at the time, but when I actually do it, and even if I've only **half achieved it**, it gives me so **much confidence**. I'm really trying to

learn that: perhaps doing the opposite of what I think it would make me happy, **really does make me happy**.

S: [really?]

L: YES! It seems like a **c r u e l twist of fate**, but I'm glad I'm learning it now, eh eh.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\3LU) 18.2.6 video>]

What Lucy found intimidating was, indeed, doing things which she did not feel (psychologically) comfortable doing, such as speaking Italian, with the prospect of making mistakes, or changing her daily routine. In fact when I asked her in an interview carried out in December 2006, whether she would like to speak more of the target language, she replied: “*mm... {...} mm... y e s ... I think so... [hesitant voice]. I get very shy... very shy speaking Italian, and I'm scared of making mistakes. I **know** people say that in time you'll improve, but {...} yeah I get very shy.*”

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\2LU) 3.12.6>].

This emotion unfortunately accompanied her for the whole YA, as she stated in our last interview taken in June 2007 (see **excerpt 34** in Chapter 6). In fact it emerged that she did not overcome the fear and embarrassment of making mistakes, and consequently she could not improve her second language as she wanted to. She felt “painfully embarrassed” and scared of making mistakes and her only piece of advice to future YA students was indeed, to “ignore any fear about making mistakes” (quotations from **excerpts 39** and **40** in *Ibid.*). Not being able to “grow (enough) into her own skin” by overcoming this fear, seemed to be, therefore, her real “cruel twist of fate” (quotations from **excerpts 14** and **15**).

2. *Positive and negative*

Lucy's contrasting emotions were also revealed in her use of the terms "positive" and "negative", often in the same stretch of emotive discourse. In an interview conducted with me in February 2007, she said she felt positive, as well as stronger and more confident than before, for having 'survived' the first three months of her YA, far away from her boyfriend. In her own words, "*erm ... getting through three months without seeing each other [me and Tom]⁸ as well as we did, then we feel really strong and positive about the next few months. {...} and I know that we don't have to go that long again without seeing each other, which is nice. Mmm...*" [[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\3LU\) 18.2.6 video>](#)].

However, at the same time, she did not feel positive about the fact that she had not been able, unlike Ilaria, to change her daily routine and imitate that of her flatmates. She was aware of the fact that becoming a more proactive person and trying to imitate her flatmates (see **excerpt 35** in Chapter 6) could have helped her to build a more positive attitude and for a little while she tried, even though only temporarily, as shown in the excerpt below, taken from an interview conducted in April 2007.

Excerpt 16 – *Lucy feeling/being positive about her life in Cagliari*

S: Are you enjoying this experience in Cagliari?

L: (...) **y e s** , yes I am. The last time we spoke erm... two months ago? And since then .. erm... I think I'm having a more positive experience.

S: Erm... for example what happened? What have you changed about your daily practices or everything?

L: Erm... I haven't particularly changed the daily routines in a great sense erm ... but I have been making efforts to change them. It's more of a work in progress. I have been trying to change my sleeping patterns and to wake up early. So ... erm.. I manage to get myself up at 10 in the morning, eh eh, which is good [*amused tone of voice*]. Erm ... and I **eat breakfast** every day now, so I don't feel tired, or grumpy during the day as much. And er... I've

been trying to make more of an effort to talk to my roommates, which is working ... slowly, but it's working, eh eh.

[...]

S: And what about your motivation Lucy? Do you feel as motivated as before or maybe your motivation is increasing? What can you tell me about your motivation being here and studying Italian?

L: It changes from day to day. I still have days when I feel like, I just want to stay in bed all day (...) but ... I think ... I think the sunshine is helping, it helps me feel more motivated, and it's **definitively** making me feel more positive about the next, the last two months, eh eh.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\4LU 7.4.7>]

She felt generally quite positive about her new attitudes towards her daily routines, even though, as she stated, this feeling varied day by day and, as she put it, they were days when she “felt like staying in bed all day”. Good weather did help her to keep her motivation high, as she said “the sunshine is helping”, and subsequent bad weather made her feel down again. In fact, when I asked her about her expectations after coming back to Cagliari from her Christmas holidays, this was her reply:

Excerpt 17 – Lucy feeling/being sad because of the bad weather

L: Erm... I came back after Christmas, after quite a long **rest** in **England** (...) and I was here for two weeks, before going back to England **again**. And (...) when I came back, again, I was expecting Cagliari to be very different, and most people were saying [*acting out/ imitating voices of others*] “when it will be **summer** there will be **so much more** to do. It will be **so** lively. I was really excited. Erm... so when I came back I was with my **friend**, we had a week together, and it **rained! It rained all week**. And she said “Oh Lucy you poor thing, you live in this **boring** city, the best thing is the good weather hasn't arrived yet”. I was like [*acting out / imitating the voice of her friends*] “I know I feel sad”.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\4LU 7.4.7>]

Two months afterwards, in June 2007, Lucy seemed again to feel mixed and contrasting emotions. Indeed, she stated that she was feeling both “positive” and “negative” about her experience abroad. In the excerpt below, she explained why.

Excerpt 18 – *Lucy feeling/being “mixed-up” about her YA experience*

S: Nine months. And do you have a general positive feeling about this experience or negative or so-so? What is your general impression of it?

L: Mmm[:] it's quite mixed. I feel negative ... because ... I think I could have got out more from this experience if I'd arrived in Italy with a more ... positive attitude, because I was erm... in a bit of a dark rut, eh eh, when I arrived. And I think it affected how I picked up the language and ... **definitively** my motivation.

S: Oh[:].

L: And ... (...) but ... I feel very positive because I still managed to gain **so much** from this experience. My language skills have improved, greatly, and {...} I've got a lot more confidence, in general, I feel like a more an outgoing person.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\5LU 6.6.7>]

When I asked her, in the same interview, how she felt about the University system in Cagliari and whether she was happy about the lectures and so on, she stated that she was feeling very negative about it. Actually, as shown in the excerpt below, this was the aspect of her life during the YA, about which she felt most negative.

Excerpt 19 – *Lucy feeling/being negative about the Italian university environment*

L: I think the university system is the **part** of the ERASMUS experience I feel most negative about, or the least positive, eh eh, because (...) I don't think I gained anything from the lessons, really! I **NEVER** came to a point where I sort of thought “Ok yes, I can understand this lesson , I feel confident with things. Erm .. (...) I never found easy to take notes, or ... to **learn** anything (...) and {...} in general I didn't go to very many lessons, because of this {...} so ... I'm not sure what I would do to change it if I came again, probably (...) try and motivate myself a lot more and keep on persevering. {...} but (...) no ... I just feel negative about the university environment, I feel I have gained more living with my roommates and ... spending time with ... other ERASMUS students.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\5LU 6.6.7>]

Thus, at the end of her experience abroad, Lucy still felt mixed emotions about her experience in Italy. From her accounts it clearly emerged that her positive feeling, her sense of satisfaction and pride derived from having achieved some goals (even though only partially), as she stated in the last interview in June 2007, “*erm ... I feel a*

big sense of (self-) satisfaction, because it was difficult at times, and now it's over and I feel I made it, I got through, so I'm proud of myself" [[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\5LU\) 6.6.7>](#)]. However, statements like these were also constantly accompanied by contrastive emotions such as feeling negative, embarrassed and scared (cf. **excerpts 18** and **19**), as she stated in the same interview, "*I was scared of making mistakes. And ... now I'm trying to practise more, even though I'm so painfully embarrassed 'cause I'm aware of the mistakes I make, but ... I feel satisfied that at least I'm trying*" [Ibid.]. And these aspects, I believe, mirror quite interestingly Lucy's perceptions of cultural difference, which she found difficult to understand, to adapt to and on the whole to cope with.

7.3.3. *Ilaria*

Ilaria used a total number of 29 terms to verbally express her emotions during her YA. At first glance, it would seem that Ilaria's use of affective lexicon was approximately the same as Lucy's, who used 33 terms for emotion in her oral accounts. Nevertheless, considering that Ilaria's interviews were slightly longer than Lucy's (they lasted about an hour on average); and considering also the fact that Lucy did not provide any written accounts of her experience abroad, Ilaria used a significantly smaller amount of affective lexical items than Lucy did. The box below shows the specific terms and expressions which Ilaria used to signal her emotions. The Italian words are marked in bold, and their English equivalent words, are in brackets.

Figure 7. *Ilaria's affective lexicon*

annoiarmi (to get bored) annoyed bored bored (not gonna be)	fa troppo ridere (it makes me laugh so much or I feel/am so amused) felice (2x) frustrated happy	mi infastidisce (non) (it does not make me feel/I do not get annoyed, irritated) mi stufo (get bored, fed up) motivata (motivated) non ne avevo voglia (i did not feel like it or I felt/was relaxed psychologically, bored) scared
ci sono rimasta male (I felt/was discontented, irritated, disappointed, uneasy) contenta (contented/happy) (2x) contenta (molto) (very contented/happy) (2x)	mi annoio (I get bored) mi fa piacere (pleased) mi infastidisce (It makes me feel/I get annoyed, irritated)	soddisfatta (4x) triste (3x)

Interestingly, more than half of the terms for emotion used by Ilaria were in Italian. Namely, she made use of 15 Italian words (adjectives, nouns, verbs or idiomatic expressions) some of which are used more than once.

In the following sections I will consider the Italian and/or English terms for emotions that Ilaria used most in her accounts of her YA: these were “happy”, (*contenta*, *contentissima*, *felice*), and “satisfied” (*soddisfatta*) which she used seven and four times respectively; and “bored” (*annoiarmi*, *mi annoio*), which she used five times.

1. *Happy*

Ilaria seemed generally happy about her life during her YA, indeed the terms which occurred most in her narratives were: “*happy*”, “*content*” and other idiomatic expressions such as “*mi fa piacere*” (I am pleased) or “*fa troppo ridere*” (it makes me laugh so much, I feel so amused or it really amuses me). Initially she stated that she was happy about her life in Cagliari, although she found it a little boring compared to the life she had had in Cambridge. As shown in the following quotation taken from an interview we conducted in December 2006, “*I think I’m happy here, although sometimes life can*

be a bit boring, because there is not really so much to do HERE”
[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\2IL) 3.12.6>].

She felt particularly contented when going out with her circle of Italian friends, including her flatmates. At weekends Ilaria and her flatmates used to go out and visit some other friends, to go the seaside, even in winter, or to have dinner at local typical Sardinian restaurants. Thus, Ilaria went out frequently and she had a lot of fun during her YA. She commented as follows in the caption below, taken from a photo-based interview conducted in February 2007.



Spesso ~~la~~ [il]¹⁰ sabato sera andiamo ~~alle~~ [a] casa degli amici per mangiare una pizza e giocare a Tombola o ~~le~~ [a] carte. Dopo andiamo spesso al Poetto per giocare sui tappeti elastici, che fa sempre troppo ridere, soprattutto quando si è ubriachi.

[On Saturday evening we often go to some friends' house for a pizza or to play Bingo or cards. Then we often go to the Poetto [beach] to play on the trampolines, which is always so funny, especially when we are drunk.]

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\3IL) 18.2.7 photos>]

Photo 73 – *Ilaria at the “Poetto” beach by night*

Ilaria also used other terms to indicate her happiness during her YA. For instance she used the following Italian words “*contenta*” (contented), preceded by an adverb of quantity “*molto contenta*” (very/a lot) or followed by the superlative form “*content-issima*” (most content/contented) to emphasis the extreme happiness she felt; and as indicated above she also used idiomatic expressions such as “*mi fa piacere*” (I am pleased, it gives me pleasure) or “*fa troppo ridere*” (it makes me laugh so much, I feel so amused or it really amuses me).

Ilaria reported that she was “*molto contenta*” and “*felice*” with her experience, as shown in the excerpt below, taken from an interview we conducted in April 2007.

Excerpt 20 – *Ilaria feeling/being very content and happy about her YA experience and choice of Cagliari*

S: [...] C’è qualcos’altro che vuoi aggiungere, che mi vuoi dire a proposito di questa tua esperienza? [*Is there anything else you want to add, that you want to say about this experience of yours?*]

I: Mm[:] (...). No, non lo so, cioè, è un’esperienza che mi piace molto, e... sono molto contenta che sono qua in Sardegna, e ... anche se qualche volta io penso che.. e va bene io preferirei essere in una grande città, per esempio Firenze, Milano, però poi .. penso.. e no va bene mi piace qua perché ... cioè è meno trafficato, è più tranquilla la vita. Allora sono felice della mia scelta. [*Mm[:]...(...). No, I don’t know, actually, it’s an experience that I like very much, and...I’m very contented that I’m here in Sardinia, and...even if some times I think that.. and all right I’d prefer being in a big city, for example Florence, Milan, but then .. I think ..it’s not all right, I like it here because... actually there is less traffic, life is more tranquil. So I’m happy about my choice*].

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\4IL 7.4.7>]

She was also pleased about the fact that her Italian home was a clean place. Indeed, she regularly cleaned her apartment in Cagliari. When I asked her whether this was a new Italian habit, this was her reply:

Excerpt 21 – *Ilaria feeling/being pleased about the cleanliness of her Italian home*

I: (...) eh[:] ... forse è una nuova abitudine, perché non so, mi sembra che la casa diventi sporca facilmente, perché abbiamo sempre gli ospiti che stanno entrando con i piedi **sporchi**, con le scarpe **sporche**, e poi siccome le mie coinquiline sono un po’ più **occupate** in questi giorni con gli esami, la tesi, forse loro non hanno il tempo [*di*] pulire, e allora tocca a me, a pulire. Però mi fa piacere, perché non voglio vivere in un appartamento sporco. [... *ehh...maybe it’s a new habit, because I don’t know, it seems to me that the house becomes easily dirty, because we always have guests who come in with **dirty feet**, **dirty shoes** (singsong tone), and then since these days my flatmates are a bit more busy with the exams, the thesis, maybe they don’t have the time to clean, so it’s my turn to clean. But I am pleased, because I don’t want to live in a dirty flat*].

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\4IL 7.4.7>]

In our last interview undertaken during the YA, in June 2007, Ilaria reaffirmed her positive emotions towards her experience abroad. She was very contented about her experience in general and she had no regrets. Indeed, as shown in following quotation, when I asked her whether the YA had been a neutral experience, she replied “No, molto positiva, sono molto contenta con quello che ho fatto, e.. lo rifarei se avessi l’opportunità.” [*No, very positive, I’m very contented with what I have done, and.. I would do it again if I had the opportunity.*] [[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\5IL 6.6.7>](#)]

Nevertheless, in the same interview, she also admitted that she would have liked to have gone out more with other ERASMUS students (cf. **excerpt 43** in Chapter 6), but, at the same time, as shown in the excerpt below, she was happy about her choice of not to going out with them, because otherwise she would not have improved her Italian the way she had done by going out only with native speakers.

Excerpt 22 – *Ilaria feeling/being very contented about her choice of not going out with other ERASMUS students*

S: E[:] ti sarebbe piaciuto frequentare altri ragazzi ERASMUS o sei contenta della scelta che hai fatto? [*And[:] would you have liked to go out with other ERASMUS guys or are happy about the choice you made?*]

I: Cioè ... a essere sincera sì sono molto contenta con quello che ho fatto, però sarebbe stato bello conoscere i ragazzi di altri Paesi, però se io avessi passato più tempo con loro avrei parlato sempre inglese. E poi ho l’impressione che **loro..** fanno tutto insieme. E non è che io potevo venire qualche volta, qualche volta no, era oppure tutto o niente! E allora... eh [*Actually... to be honest yes I am very content with what I have done, but it would have been nice to get to know guys from other countries, but if I had spent more time with them I would have always spoken English. And then I have the impression that **they..** do everything together. And I couldn’t join them only sometimes, not sometimes, it was everything or nothing! And so... eh*]

[[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\5IL 6.6.7>](#)]

Ilaria’s happiness was also, predictably, associated with satisfaction, especially having achieved her main goals, which were academically-oriented for the most part,

such as (as shown in **excerpt 49** in Chapter 6) finishing the translation of an Italian book she was doing for the University of Cambridge, as part of her YA assignment.

Towards the end of her experience abroad, Ilaria also felt satisfied about having understood more about some Italian cultural practices, such as why Italian people beep the horn on their cars (cf. **excerpt 45** in Chapter 6). Indeed, when I asked her, in the same interview conducted in June 2007, whether she thought she had achieved her objectives, this was her reply:

Excerpt 23 – *Ilaria feeling/being satisfied about having understood some Italian cultural practices*

I: {...} eh .. forse {...} mm .. non lo so .. forse solo la mia[:] la mia voglia, forse io sono stata un po' pigra, nel senso che ... avrei potuto studiare più grammatica, mentre sono stata qua. (...) però sono soddisfatta del progresso che ho fatto. {...}. So che è uno degli obiettivi che avevo era di sapere perché gli italiani suonano così tanto il clacson (eh eh). [{...} eh .. maybe mm .. I don't know.. maybe only my[:] desire, maybe I have been a bit lazy, in the sense that ... I could have studied more grammar, while I was here. (...)but I'm satisfied about the progress I have made. (pause) I know that one of the objectives I had was to know why Italians beep the horns so much (eh eh).]

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\5IL 6.6.7>]

2. **Bored**

From Ilaria's narratives it also often emerged that she was afraid of getting bored. She used specific lexical items to signal her feeling of boredom, such as "bored", or the Italian verb "*annoiarsi*" (to get bored) and also other semantically related terms, such as the verb "*stufarsi*" (to get fed-up) or the past participle of the causative verb "annoyed".

As shown in the excerpt below, the first time she used the term "bored" was in an interview carried out in December 2006, in which she explained that the reason why she got up late was indeed so as not to feel even more bored than she was.

Excerpt 24 – *Ilaria feeling/being bored about her daily routine*

S: So do you think your motivation is decreasing over the time? Or it's the same maybe?

I: Erm ... it's probably decreasing, like sometimes, a lot of the time I get up quite late, in the morning, because I know there isn't anything to do here. And I think if I get up earlier I just could feel more bored.

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\2IL 3.12.6>]

Hence, in order to avoid the same boredom in the future, she planned to change her daily routine, and she tried to do interesting activities, such as joining dance classes or attending more lectures. This strategy is shown in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 25 – *Ilaria making plans to avoid feeling/being bored*

S: [...] Will you change your daily routine or weekly routine?

I: I think so. I really want to. After Christmas I really want to start doing something else. I'd quite like starting dancing salsa, em ... and I'm also gonna try NEXT term I want to do more courses, so I'm not gonna be SO bored. Because that's the thing, because I don't have many lectures so I don't know what to do in the week. So I think next term I'm maybe going to do history of art .. and hist.. history again, and contemporary Italian literature. And do something else so I'll have more to fill my day with.

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\2IL 3.12.6>]

A few months later, in a photo-based interview undertaken in February 2007, she also reported being fed-up (*mi stufo*) about watching Italian television, which she did not find very informative. The excerpt below shows this point quite clearly.

Excerpt 26 – *Ilaria feeling/being fed-up about watching Italian television*

S: E ti piace anche guardare la TV? O lo fai più come[:] un impegno per imparare l'italiano? [*And do you also like watching TV? Or do you do it more as[:] a commitment to learn Italian?*]

I: Er[:] non direi che sia un impegno, perché cioè[:] è sempre accesa, non è che è una cosa normale. Adesso non mi devo sforzare così troppo per capire, quello che stanno dicendo in TV, perché viene più una cosa (...) abbastanza passiva, non è più un'attività .. attiva. [*erm[:]I wouldn't say that it's a commitment, because actually[:] it's always on, this is not a normal thing. Now I don't have*

to struggle so much in order to understand, what they are saying on TV, because it comes more like a (...) quite a passive thing, it's not an activity any more.. active.]

S: [mh mh]

I: Però qualche volta mi[:] mi stufo! Della [:] della televisione italiana, perché qualche volta è un po' ... non è molto informativa. [*but sometimes I'm[:] fed-up! About Italian television, because sometimes it's a bit ... it's not very informative.*]

S: [sì? mh] [*yeah? mh*]

I: Tranne il TG. [*Except the news*]

[\[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\3IL\) 18.2.7 video>\]](#)

What made Ilaria feel very bored above all was not having enough work to do for both the Universities of Cagliari and Cambridge, in other words she did not feel challenged enough from an academic point of view. So, although she had many Italian friends, and went out with them frequently, the fact that she had little work to do for the University of Cambridge made her feel very bored and intellectually lazy, as she pointed out in Italian “*non ne avevo voglia*” (I didn't feel like it), in an interview conducted in June 2007. In the same interview in June, I asked her whether she had eventually changed her daily routine, in order to make it more interesting and not to get bored during the day, and this was her reply:

Excerpt 27 – *Ilaria keeping busy in order not to feel/be bored*

I: Mm.. é difficile da dire, perché da quando abbiamo fatto l'ultima intervista, sono tornata prima in Inghilterra, poi è venuta un'amica, e poi sono venute [i] ... mia zia coi miei cuginetti, quindi sono stata un po' più occupata. Però.. sì mi sto alzando un po' più presto, anche quando non ci sono stati loro; perché c'è troppo caldo e non riesco a stare più a letto. Oggi mi sono alzata alle 9. [*mm.. it's difficult to say, because since we did the last interview, first of all, I've been back to England, then a friend came, and then my aunt came with my little cousins, so I've been a bit busy. But.. yes I'm waking up a bit earlier, also when they were not here; because it too hot and I can't stay in bed any longer. Today I woke up at 9.*]

S: [eh eh], miracolo .. eh eh, sei contenta di questa cosa? [eh eh], *miracle .. eh eh, are you happy about this?*]

I: Sì, sì, sì. E poi perché so che io .. cioè ho il lavoro da fare, cioè la traduzione .. e allora... sì.. sto cercando di sforzarmi un po' di più. [YES, yes, yes. And also because I know that I .. actually I have work to do, namely the translation .. and so... yes.. I've been trying to make a bit more effort.]

S: E ti annoi, durante la giornata? [And do you get bored during the day?]

I: {...} mmm ... no. Direi di no, perché adesso se mi annoio, c'è ... posso andare a ... abbronzarmi, eh eh. [...} mmm ...no. I wouldn't say so, because if I get bored, there is...I can go to... get tanned (eh eh).]

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\5IL) 6.6.7>]

Thus, as the good weather arrived Ilaria felt less bored as she could enjoy going to the seaside and get suntanned. Indeed, she decided to stay longer than required in Cagliari, as she wanted to enjoy the summer by the seaside. Nevertheless, as pointed out earlier, not having enough to do academically made it difficult for her to persevere in her language learning motivation, even though she tried to keep herself busy with other outdoor activities, and with her academic work for Cambridge. These aspects are quite clearly shown in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 28 – Ilaria feeling/being less bored and more motivated

S: [...] E invece per quanto riguarda la tua motivazione, è cambiata la motivazione durante questi ultimi mesi? Come? Perché? [And, however, as far as your motivation is concerned, has your motivation changed in these last months? How? Why?]

I: Erm ... direi che .. adesso ho più motivazione, visto che devo finire questo progetto, a Cambridge, e so che.. l'avrò dovuto finire entro ottobre, e allora mi sto sforzando molto per finirlo, e allora[:] in questo senso sì. E poi[:], cioè, forse 8 settimane fa ho cominciato, cioè, a[:] camminare molto, fare degli esercizi, perché volevo fare una cosa per non annoiarmi. E allora sì, forse ho un po' di più motivazione adesso. [erm... I would say that .. now I have more motivation, given that I have to finish this project, in Cambridge, and I know that.. I will have to finish by October, and so I'm making a lot of efforts in order to finish it, and so[:] in this sense yes. And then[:], actually, maybe 8 weeks ago I started, actually, to[:] walk a lot, do exercises, because I wanted to do things in order not to get bored. And so yes, maybe I have a bit more motivation now.]

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\5IL) 6.6.7>]

7.4. Emotive accounts of cultural difference

In this penultimate section of the chapter, I will discuss the findings that emerged from my quantitative analysis of the participants' emotive discourse in relation to their perceptions of cultural difference. More precisely, I will examine some of the vocabulary (affective terms, and terms related to cognitive and external conditions) which Daphne, Ilaria and Lucy used to describe their experiences and the way they dealt with cultural difference in intercultural encounters.

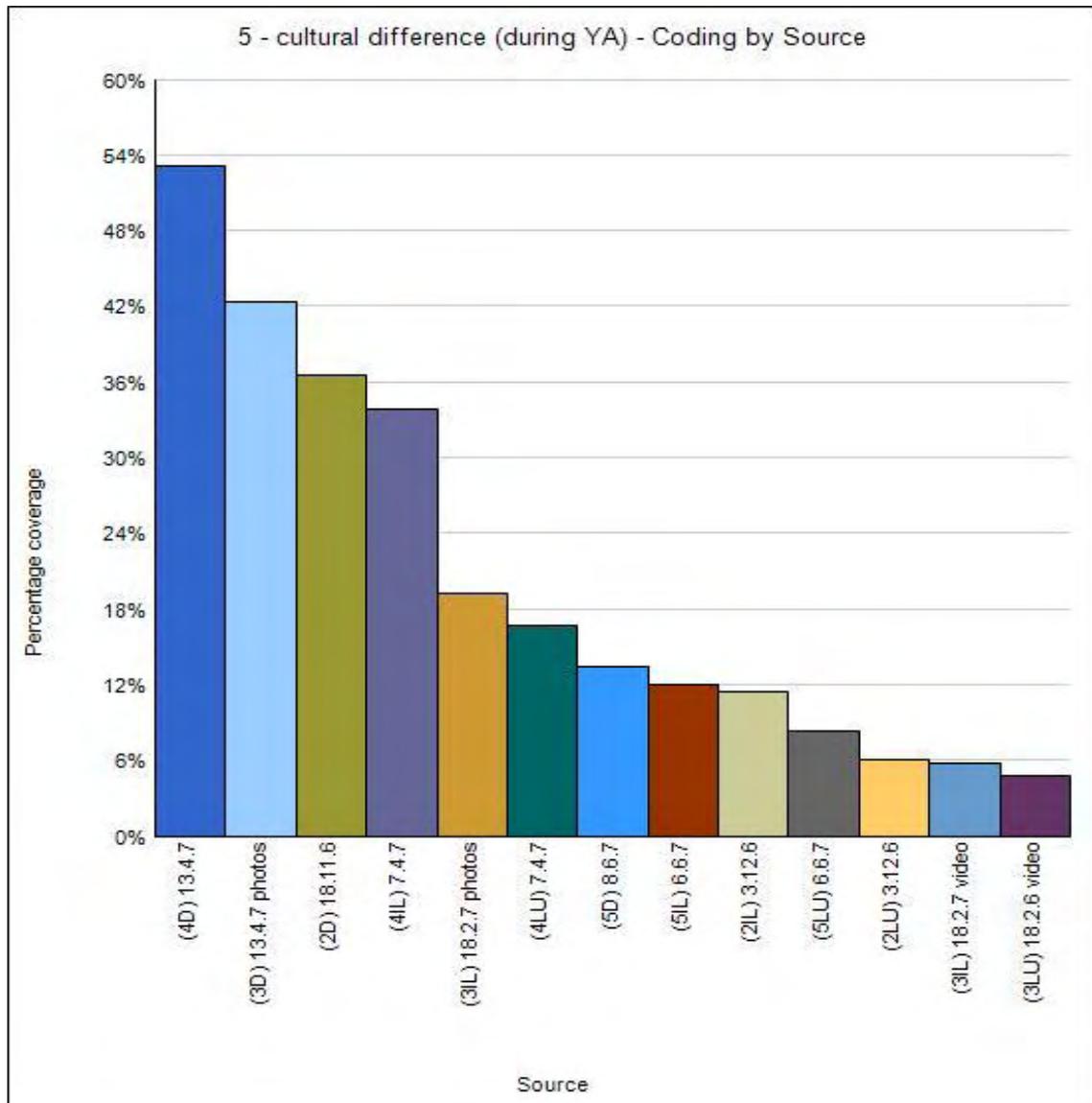
The graph below (*Figure 8*) shows the participants' emotive accounts of cultural difference, in each interview we undertook during their YA. I have coded the accounts, as in *Figure 7*, so as to capture the particular parts of the audio-recorded data in which participants used specific linguistic terms (adjectives, pronouns, nouns and verbs) to describe their perceptions of cultural difference. The numbers in the coding references refer to the number of accounts I have identified in each interview.

In order to utilise all the participants' emotive accounts of cultural difference in my corpus of textual data, I identified specific linguistic forms that were used, namely the following: adjectives, such as *difficult, strange, weird, rude, polite, awkward, different, offended, silly, confused, frustrating, special, interesting, irritated, uneasy, annoyed, English, Italian, European, cultural*; significant culture-related nouns, such as *culture, difference(s), people, England, Italy, U.K., Europe, continent*; pronouns, such as *we/they* and *us/them*; and verbs, such as *like/dislike, feel, annoy/bother* and *understand* (in their positive and negative forms).

In the subsections below (§ 7.5.1, § 7.5.2 and § 7.5.3), I will present the emotive accounts in which some of these terms were embedded. Many emotive accounts of

encounters with cultural difference have been omitted in this part of the chapter for reasons of space, but they are definitely worth further investigation.

Figure 8. Participants' emotive accounts of cultural difference coded by source



Source: NVivo 8

The graph above clearly shows that Daphne described her views of cultural difference more extensively than Lucy and Ilaria did (cf. *Figure 7*). Interestingly, both Daphne and Ilaria made considerable use of emotive discourse about cultural difference in the interviews conducted in April 2007, after having lived in Italy for seven months.

7.4.1. *Daphne*

From Daphne's accounts it emerged that her perceptions of the cultural difference between English and Italian people were first of all related to behaviour and to different attitudes about what contributes to being 'rude' and 'polite'. Indeed, when I asked her, in an interview undertaken in November 2006, to comment about Italian culture, this was her reply:

Excerpt 29 – *Daphne's perception of cultural difference as having different attitudes about what is rude/polite*

D: I think (...) I think it's the thing about politeness, because I think the English are kind of overly polite [*smiley voice*] like ... they would queue up for things or if somebody.. accidentally.. you know, knocks your shoulder or something like that, they are like "Oh Sorry Sorry" [*laugh*] BUT HERE, you know, when you get on the train and everyone's got there { } and they are a kind of pushing and They are not being rude, it's, that's just .. t h e - i t - i s {...} yeah.

S: Mm..

D: Yeah, at first it was a bit , I thought "It's so rude so rude" [*laugh*]

S: [*laugh*] And now what do you think?

D: No, I think that maybe a lot of English people are a kind of more polite than ... I don't think they intend to be rude, it's just a difference.

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D) 18.11.6>]

Daphne also noted differences in the ways in which people with Italian cultural and linguistic backgrounds verbally express themselves, e.g. by using expressions that in English would sound rude, such as "*dimmi*" (tell me) when addressing someone in Italian. Daphne showed a growing critical awareness of the type that is advocated in Roberts et al. (2001) and this is clearly shown in the excerpt below, taken from the same interview.

Excerpt 30 – *Daphne's critical thinking about her own cultural practices (e.g. the excessive politeness of English people)*

D: I think because English people IN GENERAL make quite an effort to be polite, and they are quite ... careful not to offend anyone, whereas I think, maybe English, maybe they take offence more easily, maybe, I don't know, I think maybe that's the reason why... they are quite careful to be polite all the time, because I do find, it's quite a difference, like I said before, whereas I think here people quite often interrupt each other, and they say things like “*dimmi*”, which I first I thought “it's so rude!”, because in England I never say “Tell me! Speak to me!” Because it's a bit rude, but actually it's nice just that way... it is, I think maybe ... maybe the English people are just careful not to offend because they may take offence more easily, I don't know..

[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D) 18.11.6>]

The excerpt above shows quite clearly her capacity to develop critical thinking and awareness in intercultural situations. This capacity was initially associated with negative emotional reactions (see e.g. **excerpt 12**) but her ability to regulate or control such negative emotions helped her to critically evaluate intercultural encounters and to develop further her cultural awareness (cf. Matsumoto et al., 2001). Indeed, in the first few months of her YA Daphne's use of lexical items to signal her perception of cultural difference was often associated with negative emotions, such as nervousness or frustration (see e.g. **excerpt 9**), but, as time passed by, her intercultural awareness developed and consequently her use of such terms became less and less frequent and was replaced by a more frequent use of cognitive and descriptive linguistic forms, such as “it's just a difference” (see **excerpt 29**) or “it's just ... a different way of being” (see **excerpt 32**).

Daphne also highlighted some of her perceptions of cultural difference in her diary entry, in October 2006, when she wrote, “*tutti parlano a voce alta e si interrompono. È una grande differenza fra Inghilterra e Italia. Forse gli inglesi sono qualche volta troppo misurati*” [everybody speaks in a loud voice and interrupts each

other. It's a big difference between England and Italy. Maybe English people sometimes are too measured] [[Source: diary entry October 2006](#)]. At first she thought that the Italian cultural practice of speaking in a loud voice was 'strange' as she stated in the excerpt below taken from a diary-based interview conducted in November 2006, but then she got used to it.

Excerpt 31 – *Daphne getting used to some aspects of cultural difference (e.g. Italian people interrupting each other while talking)*

D: Erm .. I don't dislike it, erm.. it is still strange to see people talking so loud at the same time, but it's quite, when you are in a group, it's quite **friendly** and so I like it, and it's not a rude, a r u d e thing when they interrupt each other, they've got something to say and they say it, so it's quite good, that .. they just say what they want to say.

[<[Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\2D 18.11.6](#)>]

As time passed by, Daphne got used to many Italian cultural practices, such as not queuing or expressing politeness in different ways from those she knew in her home country, and she was more prone to see them as just a 'different way of being', and accepting them as part of the new context. This is shown in the excerpt below taken from our last interview during the YA conducted in June 2007.

Excerpt 32 – *Daphne's awareness and acceptance of CD*

S: And are there any cultural differences that you dislike, still, or maybe you got used to them?

D: Erm ... I think I probably got used to most things, I still try to queue for everything, I'm always like "please and thank you" and...things like that, but I think once you realise that what seems to be **r u d e** lots of times is .. is not because they are rude, it's just ... a different way of being and ... so you can get used, I think I'm probably used to most .. to most differences now.

[<[Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\5D 8.6.7](#)>]

7.4.2. *Ilaria*

Ilaria seemed to be the most aware of the cultural differences she was experiencing in Italy and in Sardinia. She stated that she had no expectations before leaving for the YA, therefore, when she noticed that some of the Italian cultural practices were very different from the ones she knew in her home country (e.g. opening and closing times of the shops or the slower pace of life in small cities such as Cagliari), initially she found them a bit ‘weird’ and ‘strange’ but she soon got used to them. She showed from the very beginning a good capacity to control her emotional reactions, indeed very seldom did she use negative lexical items to index her emotions, and this seemed to help her to develop a more flexible attitude toward cultural difference together with a growing capacity for critical thinking. This is shown in the three excerpts below taken respectively from an interview conducted in December 2006 and one in June 2007.

Excerpt 33 – *Ilaria’s expectations with regard to cultural difference*

S: Ok, erm[:] so did you find what you expected in this city?

I: I don’t know if I really THOUGHT about what it was gonna be like before I came, I didn’t have any expectations ... and I think, as you know, the pace of life is maybe slower than what I might have thought it would be like. The way that shops shut at 1, every day, and they open at 5 every day, like for FOUR hours a day there is nothing to do, and if you go out there’s no one out there ... and that, that’s weird, for someone coming from England where everything is always open even at the weekends and bank holidays. That’s strange, but I think I got used to it.

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\2IL 3.12.6>]

Nevertheless, despite this apparent disinterest in cultural difference, on many occasions, Ilaria stated that she had felt annoyed by some Italian cultural practices, for instance, fussiness about food or the continuous noise of cars beeping their horns on the

streets. These aspects are clearly shown in the excerpt below taken from the same interview.

Excerpt 34 – *Ilaria getting annoyed because of the different cultural practices in Italy*

I: I don't know, like I get ANNOYED sometimes, when like the way the shops would close four hours a day... and things like that. Erm ...

S: Are there cultural things that you don't like?

I: mm... (...) I don't know, sometimes me and my flatmates have cultural disputes, often about FOOD... because they've been taught things about ... like I like putting pepper on my food, and they like putting salt on their food. And they say "that's bad for you" and I say "no it's not" and they say "yes it is!". Because in England we put pepper everywhere. Here you don't really use pepper. And just little things like that, but I guess it's a cultural thing and you have to live with them. And just ... I don't know, just live with them. I think. Just, or... the way Italians DON'T queue, that really annoys me. When I'm in a shop, sometimes like three different queues form, and the Italian seems to know who's next, but I have no idea, so I think I'm honest like I'm not pushing, but this really annoys me. And ... people beeping their horns really annoys me. Because I live in *via Alghero*, so lots of traffic and sometimes people just beep their horns and then **one** person never stops doing it, and that annoys me. I want to be patient, but, yeah, all in all, you just have to accept it. Yeah ...

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\2IL 3.12.6>]

Despite getting annoyed by these Italian cultural practices, Ilaria did change her attitudes and perceptions of cultural differences (even though only during her stay in Italy), as she thought she needed to do so in order to integrate herself and so to achieve her linguistic goals. However, unlike Daphne, Ilaria still appeared to be distancing herself from cultural practices she saw as Italian, using a revealing contrast between 'I/me/in England' and 'you/my flatmates/they/people/Italian/Italians'. In fact, as shown in the excerpt below, when I interviewed her at the end of her YA, in June 2007, she confirmed to me that she was still annoyed about some cultural differences.

Excerpt 35 – *Ilaria still annoyed about some cultural difference*

I: Allora (...) il .. fatto che gli italiani non facciano la coda, mi .. infastidisce ancora, perché sono inglese e noi facciamo sempre la coda. Allora mi da fastidio

quando ci sono tipo 5 persone, e sono tipo .. tutti in gruppo e non fan.. non si mettono in una coda. (...) però adesso sono più paziente, sono più tranquilla. IO adesso faccio l'italiana, anch'io quando faccio la coda, anch'io cerco di, eh eh. cioè ... ~~intra venire~~ [*mettermi in mezzo*], come loro. E poi ... cioè il fatto che gli italiani parlano a voce alta, (...) non mi infastidisce più, perché ci sono abituata. [*So (...) the.. fact that Italians don't queue, still irritates me.., because I'm English and we always queue. So it irritates me when there are like 5 people, and they are like .. all in a group and they don't do.. don't queue. (short pause) but now I'm more patient, more tranquil. I now behave like an Italian [person], me too when I queue, me too I try, eh eh, actually [*to go in the front*], like them. And then...actually the fact that Italians speak loudly, (...) it doesn't irritate me any more, because I've got used to it.]*

[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\5IL 6.6.7>]

As shown in the excerpt above, Ilaria's frequent use of the pronouns "we"/"I" in opposition to "they/them", and also of the terms "Italians" in opposition to "English", again reveals her stance with regard to the cultural differences she is describing. Although she showed a consistent and growing intercultural awareness during the YA, nevertheless, unlike Daphne, her attitudes towards cultural difference seemed more like a sort of temporary tolerance rather than thoughtful acceptance. This was most probably due to her awareness and determination to achieve her L2 investments before the experience abroad ended, and this seemed also to help her to regulate her emotions, both positive and negative, in a constructive and goal-focussed way.

Indeed, Ilaria defined the different cultural practices as being only 'superficial things' (cf. **excerpt 65** in Chapter 6) which she had to imitate for a while (such as meals times, cleaning the house, food etc.). But back in the U.K. she felt exactly the same as before the YA as she stated in December 2007 "inside myself I'm the same. Actually, I haven't changed [...] it now seems to me that I have never been abroad" [*<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\6IL 9.12.7>*]

Ilaria's reluctance to accept cultural difference can also be understood with reference to her perception of herself as only an 'English person who had to adapt in

Italy', as shown in the following quotation taken from our last interview conducted in Italy. There, she stated “*mi sento solo ... un'inglese ... qua in Italia, un po' ... diversa*” [I just feel like ... an English [person]¹¹... here in Italy, a bit ... different] [[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\5IL\) 6.6.7>](#)].

7.4.3. *Lucy*

Lucy was the one who experienced cultural difference with the greatest difficulty. From her accounts it appears that she was relatively unaware of cultural difference and of the necessity of dealing with it in constructive ways while abroad in order to integrate better and faster into the new environments. This is probably why she showed a great deal of difficulty in regulating her emotional reactions when confronted with cultural difference (cf. e.g. **excerpts** 14, 15 and 19).

Her awareness of cultural difference seemed to be related to her view of the new cultural experiences she was having. Like Ilaria, her first example of cultural difference was related to attitudes about food. In fact when I asked her, in an interview conducted in April 2007, to comment on some differences between cultural practices in Italy and in England, this was her reply:

Excerpt 36 – *Lucy's conception of cultural difference*

L: {...} erm ... YES I think I have. Erm ... I have sort of adapted with a few ... Italian habits. Like .. erm ... lemon in my tea instead of milk. Erm ... and ... what else? I've become very critical about food. Eh eh.

S: Really? Eh eh.

L: Food like ingredients and things, like when I got back to England I was [*acting out*] “Oh I want tomatoes from Sardinia, I want olive oil from Sardinia...” erm .. I feel like I have a sort of adopted (...) all of the Italian snobbery about food, if you like, eh eh.

[[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\4LU\) 7.4.7>](#)]

When I asked her, in the same interview, what she thought about some Italian cultural attitudes and whether she had got used to them, she said she was finding easier to accept individuals, from different cultures and countries, for what they were, therefore implying that she had found this aspect of her experience quite difficult to deal with. This aspect is shown in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 37 – *Lucy apparently accepting and adapting to cultural difference*

L: YES. I think so. I can ... I find a lot easier to listen to other people and accept them for what they are, without necessarily have to agree with them myself. Not necessarily in an Italian context, but for other people's cultures, from other parts of Europe as well.

S: So it's not a problem for you if sometimes Italian people shout or[:]? Yeah, you just got used to that.

L: I'm **more** used to it than I was, eh eh.

S: Yeah. So maybe there is something that has changed in your accepting this...

L: Mh mh. Yes I would say so. I do expect erm .. Italian waiters to be for example a bit more curt than I would expect in England for example. And it doesn't affect me when people don't necessarily say "please and thank you" after every sentence. It makes me more aware of *Englishism* ...

S: Ah ah[:]

L: Than *Italianism* , if you know what I mean?

S: What you mean by *Englishism*?

L: Erm ... {...} the manner that we say "please and thank you" in English for example. I was in a restaurant a week ago and the waitress said "You do not have to say "please" after everything to me" and I said "oh oh sorry"

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\4LU 7.4.7>]

It is interesting to see that Lucy made use of yet other terms to draw the boundary between English and Italian cultural worlds. She used the term "Englishism" (which she made up, meaning 'the way English people behave') in contrast to the term "Italianisms", to emphasise the differences in cultural behaviour she had noticed between individuals in Italy and in her home country. In Lucy's case, it seemed that her

own cultural practices were the only ones she could really understand and accept. In fact, although she stated that it was ‘a lot easier to accept people for what they were’, she also added in the same sentence that she did not ‘necessarily agree with them’, implying that after all the only way she could conceive the world was through her own native cultural lens (cf. **excerpt 57** in chapter 6).

Like Daphne, Lucy felt changed as a person during the YA, but, like Ilaria, her perceptions of cultural difference only changed to a certain extent. As shown in the excerpt below, she became aware of the ways in which ‘her cultural links’, as she defined them, made her feel different from her friends in the U.K., who had not lived abroad. But, like Ilaria, she continued to identify with her own cultural world. Indeed, when I asked her, in our last interview in June 2007, whether she felt more European after the experience abroad, this was her response:

Excerpt 38 – *Lucy feeling more European*

L: Mh mh. YES, I think I do. I feel sort of more {...} I have more cultural links with more ... European people who live on the continent, which ... er When I go back to England I feel very aware that my friends don't feel that. I'm ... I'm different, because I've lived abroad and ... I've just a sort of **absorbed** some of that **culture**. And I may be more European than I was before, eh eh.

[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\5LU 6.6.7>]

What Lucy meant by ‘absorbing some of the Italian/European culture’ remains unclear, since she did not further explain this statement on her own view of culture(s). She mentioned some Italian cultural practices she had noticed (see **excerpt 36**) and, from her accounts, we know that she did go out frequently with other ERASMUS students from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (see **excerpts 26, 27 and 28** in Chapter 6). Nevertheless, cultural difference, and the necessity of dealing with it, seemed to be fairly low on Lucy’s priorities during her experience abroad. Moreover, her constant use of contrastive terms to express her emotions, such as positive/negative

or happy/sad (see § 7.3.2) suggests a limited ability to control her emotional reactions and to evaluate them with a critical and constructive long-term view.

7.5. Summary and discussion

In sum, the participants in this study expressed their emotions in various ways verbally and non-verbally. In this chapter, only the direct verbal dimension of participants' emotive communication has been taken into consideration. This has been approached by means of qualitative and quantitative analysis of the affective lexicon used by participants to articulate their emotions and their perceptions of cultural difference during their sojourn abroad.

From the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data, it has emerged that all three participants made use of a wide range of affective lexical items to express their emotions during my fieldwork with them over their YA. The majority of the terms (59 in total) were expressed in English, their first language. Some of these terms were also expressed in Italian by Daphne and Ilaria, whereas Lucy used only her first language to express her emotions.

I added thirteen terms after identifying these as affective lexical items. For one term no suitable English equivalent could be found, therefore I considered it as 'linguistic and culturally untranslatable', because the Italian word covers a much wider semantic range, that is the word "*emozionato/a*", including the verb "*emozionarsi*", which was used by Daphne to signal her inner state of being/feeling *touched, moved, excited, light spirited, slightly emotional, slightly agitated and enthusiastic*.

The verbal expression of emotions varied notably from one participant to another, and this was influenced by the particular intercultural contexts in which they

found themselves during the YA and by the ways in which they perceived them, and dealt with them accordingly. Daphne was the participant who made the most use of affective lexical items (75 in total), switching from English to Italian, like Ilaria, depending on the context she was referring to and on the particular inner state she wanted to describe (i.e. being/feeling nervous, different and special). She used affective lexis to describe a variety of formal and informal environments in which she found herself, and also to explain her perceptions of cultural difference, with self-reflection and willingness to understand and accept it.

In contrast, Ilaria and Lucy used few terms for emotions when they described their perceptions of cultural difference. They seemed to conceive cultural difference as something they had to deal with only during their experience abroad, and most of the time they described it in superficial terms (this was the case for Lucy) or as a temporary adjustment (this was the case for Ilaria).

Lucy and Ilaria made use of similar amount of affective lexis (33 terms for Lucy, 29 terms for Ilaria), but their choice of terms to express their emotions was completely different. Whereas Lucy preferred to use strong and contrasting words to mirror her contrastive emotions (e.g. positive versus negative or happy versus scared); Ilaria made use of terms of a more 'moderate' and less contrasting nature, such as happy and satisfied or bored.

The participants' direct verbal accounts of cultural difference were also marked by their use of descriptive and evaluative lexicon. Indeed, among others, they made ample use of adjectives such as: rude, difficult, different, strange and weird. As pointed out earlier, Daphne made more use of these terms, whereas Ilaria and Lucy appeared more reluctant to give voice to their perceptions of cultural difference.

The participants' use of specific lexis correlated to their perception of cultural difference and the ways in which they experienced and dealt with it. Whereas Daphne described cultural differences as 'just another way of being', Ilaria defined them as 'only superficial things, which did not change her' and Lucy saw them as 'something with which she did not have to necessarily agree'.

It seems that the ways in which individuals such as those in this study use specific lexicon to express their emotions, is highly influenced by the ways in which they perceive themselves and others in new sociocultural and linguistic environments. The more individuals are prepared to understand, face, accept and deal with cultural difference, the more use they make of terms for emotions in different languages.

Daphne's, Ilaria's and Lucy's use of specific affective lexis shows quite clearly that 'words' indexing emotions are strictly linked to the sociocultural contexts in which they are used, and in which individuals' continuously negotiate their identities as second language learners capable of constructing legitimate emotive discourse. Hence, the need for ethnography, along with close analysis of language in use.

My analysis of affective lexis was quantitative in nature, and although this was decontextualised it was a very useful tool for my interpretative research since I used it as a compass point to guide me as an ethnographer and to enable me to see things otherwise concealed.

CHAPTER 7 – ENDNOTES

- ¹ The languages in which emotions were expressed are specified in brackets, except for the term n. 97, which is specified in an endnote for reasons of space.
- ² The abbreviation “It.” indicates my translation of the term for emotion which was expressed in Italian.
- ³ The abbreviation “Engl./It.” indicates that the term for emotion was expressed both in English and in Italian.
- ⁴ The abbreviation “ps.” indicates the adverb “psychologically”.
- ⁵ Word used both in English and Italian. For reasons of space the abbreviation in brackets (Engl./It.) could not be inserted in *Table 1*.
- ⁶ The square brackets demark the beginning and end of my translation.
- ⁷ My insertion.
- ⁸ My insertion.
- ⁹ My insertion.
- ¹⁰ The words in square brackets are my insertions and/or translations from English into Italian.
- ¹¹ My insertion.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1. Introduction**
- 8.2. Returning to my research questions**
- 8.3. Exploration of the implication for pedagogy**
- 8.4. A new window on institutional responses to the Year Abroad**
- 8.5. Constraints on this case study**
- 8.6. Recommendations for future research**

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS

8.1. Introduction

In this last chapter of the thesis I will begin by summarising the findings of this study. I will first review the key research findings and assess the extent to which I have been able to address the research questions I set up for this investigation (§ 1.2). Secondly, I will explore the implications for pedagogy (§ 1.3). Subsequently, I will consider the limitations of this particular case study (§ 1.4); and finally I will make some recommendations for future research in this field (§ 1.5).

As outlined in Chapter 2, the research context of this study was the Year Abroad, namely the European ERASMUS scheme in which the participants of this study took part for one academic year (2006-2007). In that chapter, I drew attention to the growing phenomenon of student mobility inside and outside Europe and I also pointed out the gap in the literature with regard to longitudinal ethnographic studies that take account of sociocultural and social psychological factors.

This case study was designed to explore these aspects, starting from the lived experiences of three young British women spending a Year Abroad in Italy as a part of their undergraduate degree course. My understanding of their experiences in Italy was mostly built up through my analysis of transcripts from a series of interviews that I conducted with them.

Indeed, as outlined in Chapter 4, semi-structured and in-depth interviews generated the main body of data for my research. Some of them were based on photographs, with accompanying captions, taken by (two) participants about their

learning environments, and some others were based on diaries, which (two) participants wrote for a limited period of time during their YA. All interviews were audio recorded and some of them were also filmed. The data collected consisted of interviews transcripts, audio and video recordings, photos with photo captions and diaries.

At the data analysis stage, I focused on the themes which recurred most frequently in the participants' discourse. I also examined the affective lexis that the participants drew on in expressing emotions and, focusing on this aspect of the data, I documented their perceptions of and reactions to cultural difference. In addition, I looked into their attempts to negotiate and (re)construct their identities as second language learners during the experience abroad. These were the main lines of analysis that I pursued. They will be summarised in the following section.

8.2. Returning to my research questions

My analysis gave primacy to the verbal expression of emotions and to the shaping of individuals' second language identities. In order to investigate these aspects, I adopted a cross-disciplinary approach that drew on sociolinguistics, social and cultural psychology.

More specifically, in order to answer the first and second research questions, I adopted poststructuralist concepts which are at the heart of research on social and affective dimensions of second language learning and identity construction. These are the concepts outlined in Chapters 3 and 6: the notions of *language investment* (Norton Pierce, 1995 and Norton, 2000) *emotional investment* (Pavlenko, forthcoming) and *language desire* (Piller, 2002 and Takahashi, forthcoming).

With regard to the third and fourth research questions, I approached emotions as an integral part of socially constructed dynamic and fundamentally interactive processes. In order to investigate the participants' expression of emotions I built on the literature that pertains to the study of the emotive dimensions of discourse. Here I approached the analysis of participants' emotions from a social psychological perspective, starting out from the identification of affective lexicon based on Clore et al.'s (1987) taxonomy of psychological conditions (as outlined in Chapters 3 and 7).

As far as the first two questions are concerned, my thematic analysis shows that the participants' language learning in the Italian contexts and their gradual orientation to Italian culture took place especially in environments other than formal language classes. Ilaria and Daphne's friendship with their flatmates opened up many opportunities to practice the language with Italian native speakers, whereas for Lucy these opportunities were constrained by the fact that her flatmates spoke a mixture of Italian, Spanish and Sardinian with her. This impeded closer socialisation with her flatmates and, unlike Daphne and Ilaria, it held her back from regular use of the target language.

My findings also demonstrate that the extent to which language learners, like the participants in my study, negotiate their L2 identities during a period of study abroad can be greatly influenced by the ways in which they envisage future possibilities deriving from their emotional investments. Achievements along the way can help them to adjust their goals and to consider new ones (as in the cases of Ilaria and Daphne), or conversely, the failure to achieve personal goals, due to the lack of realism, can lead to the abandonment of initial L2 investments, and to a decreased interest in new ones (as in the case of Lucy).

The examples reported in this thesis show also quite clearly that the extent to which individuals (like Daphne) are prepared to negotiate and reconfigure second language identities, or conversely to resist doing so (like Lucy) or to strategically perform them (like Ilaria), is directly influenced by the ways in which they perceive their relationships to the new contexts and the ways in which such relationships are constructed over time and across space. In fact, for Ilaria the reconfiguring of her L2 identity was a temporary adjustment, which was necessary in order to reach her linguistic goals during the YA; for Lucy her lack of second language confidence and of a clear vision of future investments, led her to opt for resistance to the (re)construction of her L2 identity, and to the reaffirmation of her L1 identity instead; whereas Daphne welcomed all the struggles faced in her second language learning, with a clear vision of the necessity to overcome them in order in order to accomplish her L2 investments.

In their struggles to negotiate, adjust to or resist the shaping of a new L2 identity, the participants in my study showed different degrees of agency, reflecting the intensity of their language learning desire. In fact, Daphne and Lucy, unlike Ilaria, had a romantic image of Italian life before their YA, but Daphne showed a great deal of agency in her romantic search for boundaries between ways of reconciling imagined micro-domains and the reality of the Italian macro-domains, while Lucy did not. For Ilaria and Daphne, language desire acted as a mediator between their motivation and investments in Italian, for Lucy it served as an L2 learning deterrent. Moreover, when confronted with power asymmetries, Daphne was able to contest institutional discourses of power and to engage in counter-discourses, reversing them in her favour, whereas Lucy and Ilaria chose avoidance, preferring to remain *silent* instead of struggling to gain access to informal interaction with Italian native speakers (as in the case of Lucy) or formal interaction (as in was the case of Ilaria).

As far as the third and fourth research questions are concerned, the qualitative and quantitative findings of my lexical and thematic analysis show that the verbal expression of emotions can vary significantly from one language learner to another, and that this variation relates to the particular intercultural contexts in which language learners find themselves during the YA, to the ways in which they perceive these contexts, and to the ways in which they deal with them. My research also provided evidence that YA students' use of their affective lexicon can switch from first to second language (like Ilaria and Daphne), depending on the context they are referring to and on the particular inner state they want to describe.

Additionally, my findings suggest that individuals' use of specific lexis correlates closely with their perception of cultural difference and the ways in which they experience and deal with it. It seems that the ways in which individuals, like the participants in my study, use specific lexicon to express their emotions, is highly influenced by the ways in which they perceive themselves and others in the new sociocultural and linguistic environments. The more individuals are prepared to understand, face, accept and deal with cultural difference, the more use they make of terms for emotions in different languages.

The use of specific affective lexis by the participants in this study showed quite clearly that 'words' indexing emotions need to be interpreted with reference to the wider sociocultural contexts, that is, the contexts in which individuals' continuously negotiate their identities as second language learners.

8.3. Exploration of the implications for pedagogy

The lived experiences in Italy of the young women who participated in this study show rather clearly that we need to take account of emotions and the social and affective dimensions of intercultural encounters in our research on second language learning and in our pedagogy. We need to base our pedagogy on students' real life observations, as in the approach set out in Roberts et al.'s (2001) project on language learners as ethnographers; and we need to build our pedagogical initiatives on empirical research that captures lived experiences in different contexts. We also need to do action research with a view to understanding more about the ways in which our students are responding to different approaches to preparation for the YA.

Moreover, it is important to promote intercultural experiences among language learners, in preparation for the YA, since, as stated by Alred et al. (2003), it is through reflection, analysis and action that the experience of any kind of otherness can lead to heightened intercultural awareness. In fact, part of the overall purpose of education should be to promote a sense of interculturality, which is particularly significant in the contemporary world with its global flows of people (Alred et al., 2003: 6).

As pointed out in Chapter 2, developing intercultural communicative competence and raising intercultural awareness seem to be the key resources for communication during the YA, since, as noted by Roberts and her colleagues (2001):

There is no such thing as a neutral culture-free language and [...] what students need is more cultural sensitivity and understanding, not less. In other words, for many language learners, one of the main goals is *intercultural* communicative competence.

(Roberts et al., 2001: 7)

Indeed, what students should aim for is the development of intercultural understanding and acceptance of cultural difference. In recommending that language learners should become ‘ethnographers’, Roberts et al. (2001) emphasise the need for individuals to be capable of closely observing and interpreting other social and cultural practices and to re-examine their own perspectives. These researchers have also developed teaching/learning material, which provides an orientation to ethnographic ways of observing and interpreting cultural practices (see the Language and Residence Abroad (LARA) project <<http://www.llas.ac.uk/lara>>). However, there are still relatively few initiatives of this kind and of research and pedagogy which deal with these issues.

8.4. A new window on institutional responses to the Year Abroad

At present only a few British institutions offer specific courses in preparation for the Year Abroad experience as an integral part of their degree programmes (Cf. § 2.5). It is, therefore, extremely important that new initiatives are developed within the higher education sector in order to help future ERASMUS students to have a successful intercultural experience. These initiatives should be based on ethnographic perspectives and should include discussion of cognitive and affective strategies which can help students to challenge and transform social practices of marginalisation (Cf. Norton, 2000)

As the stories of my participants have clearly shown, living in new sociocultural realities and managing a sense of self in contexts of relative disempowerment, entails considerable personal struggle. This needs to be considered in our pedagogy in preparation for the Year Abroad.

The ways in which the participants of this study dealt with their struggles, and particularly, the extent to which they managed to overcome their emotional struggles, can be attributed, at least in part, to their personal abilities and skills. However, the preparedness could surely have been enhanced before their experience in Italy. In other words, since intercultural learning experiences can be influenced by many social and individual components, we need to promote new initiatives which consider both psychological and social facets of individual language learning processes.

In order to do that, British universities and educational institutions which require students to spend a Year Abroad as part of their studies, should provide a compulsory element within their programmes which includes a wide spectrum of pedagogic activities aiming to develop students' intercultural communication skills, including an awareness of their own cultural perspectives and those of others.

My study opens a new window on preparation for the YA since it aims to draw attention to the necessity to prepare future Year Abroad students not only conceptually and analytically but also emotionally. The lived experiences of my participants have clearly shown that their perceptions of themselves and of others were very influential in the ways in which they dealt with cultural difference and in the extent to which they had a successful experience. Hence, the need to develop initiatives, which, as stated by Roberts (2003), help students to learn how to become ethnographic about their encounters, since this could offer them "some ways of structuring their experiences while still encouraging their sense of themselves as active agents in managing the period abroad". (Roberts, 2003: 114).

Indeed, it is through a deeper understanding of cultural difference and of the ways in which individuals can deal with it (intellectually and emotionally) that we, as

researchers and educational practitioners, could guide students towards a positive Year Abroad experience, both academically and on a personal level. As Alred (2003: 14) points out, we should aim for a 'pedagogy of intercultural experience', which would enable individuals to benefit rather than suffer during the experience of living in another cultural context, such as during the YA.

A series of models have been developed across various disciplines. Some of these were reviewed in Chapter 2. Nevertheless, this work focuses predominantly on the cognitive aspects of intercultural learning and tends to embrace very diverse concepts under the same theoretical umbrella of Intercultural Communication. There is a lack of a unified approach linking specific ideas across disciplines which treat emotional and cognitive aspects of the experience abroad as a compass point for the development of new pedagogies. Hence the need for more contributions from the field of Intercultural Communication, which treat separately the notions of intercultural competence and intercultural awareness since this would enable us to understand the multifaceted aspects of intercultural interaction and to act subsequently with more effective and specific pedagogic initiatives.

8.5. Constraints on this case study

In this section, I would like to draw attention to some of the constraints I faced in my research. These relate to my epistemological position as a 'long distance observer', my data collection methods and strategies for triangulation, and my analysis of the participants' affective lexicon.

During the project a specific concern arose. This was related to my epistemological position as a long distance observer and case study researcher. I believe

that a more consistent personal presence in participants' environments would have been fruitful for the research. However, this was not possible due to my teaching commitments here in the U.K. I was only able to make visits to Italy at regular intervals as shown in chapter 4.

Secondly, among the ethnographic data collection strategies adopted in this research, little space was given to triangulation of data with participants. This was due to the distance, and also to the fact that the email correspondence from participants was very infrequent. However, I could have engaged in online communication using software such as Skype, Messenger or Facebook. Nevertheless, the diary data proved to be very useful in documenting developments over the year abroad period. This data was amplified through the use of diary-based interviews. The diaries and photo-based interviews actually provided me with a rich and extensive corpus of data. Moreover, the use of NVivo enabled me to capture themes that recurred across data sources in a systematic way.

Thirdly, there may have been some constraints in my analysis of the affective lexicon data. We need to remember that the participants in this study may have used some terms for emotion, especially in their second language, to impress me (the interviewer, knowing that I was a native speaker of Italian). In other words, their use of some affective lexis might have been shaped by their developing relationship with me. It could also have been shaped by the particular genre (i.e. interview, photo caption or personal diary) in which particular words occurred. Because of time constraints, I was not able to take account of variation in the use of affective lexis across genre.

Moreover, I was unable to do any conversational analysis in my study, with a focus on prosodic or paralinguistic features. This was certainly a constraint with regard

to the analysis of the linguistic aspects of my data. However, my data consisted mostly of semi-structured interviews. I had few recordings of spontaneous conversational interaction of participants actually talking in Italian to someone other than me. Hence, the kind of data I gathered was not particularly suitable for conversational analysis and, in order to address my research questions, I carried out thematic and lexical analysis instead.

Finally, on some occasions, in the interviews it might have appeared that I steered the topic by using specific words, for example when I used the terms ‘identity’ or ‘motivation’ in some of the questions I raised with participants (see e.g. cf. **excerpt 71** in Chapter 6 and **excerpt 24** in Chapter 7). The use of these terms was purely made with the intention of expressing interest on my part and to possibly lead participants to express their view on their experiences following a series of ‘mini-tour’ questions (cf. Spradley, 1979). These terms were therefore used, as orienting ethnographic tools, which could have shed light on interesting themes (like in the case of identity) or dismiss the importance of others (like in the case of motivation) in the later stage of my interpretation and analysis.

8.6. Recommendations for future research

As I have shown in this study, the ways in which individuals face and deal with cultural difference during the experience abroad are highly influenced by their emotions and perceptions, or generate different emotions, which in turn are shaped by and depend on the contexts in which they continuously negotiate their identities as second language learners capable of constructing legitimate and powerful discourse.

There is a clear gap in the literature which addresses these issues and although

the Year Abroad is a flourishing area of research, there is clearly insufficient qualitative research which focuses on the affective and behavioural sphere of individuals' YA experiences. There is a pressing need for more ethnographically informed case studies in this field. Such studies should investigate not only academic-related experiences but also, and more importantly, the participants' emotional and emotive experiences, including their perceptions of themselves and of others during YA and the ways in which they deal with their experiences.

My study has also revealed the importance of developing pedagogical initiatives which promote an awareness of how language learners can challenge and transform social practices of marginalization. Since, as Norton (1995: 28) points out, we cannot take for granted that those who speak regard those who listen as worth being listened to, and that those who listen regard those who speak as worth speaking to.

As a final point, I would like to reassert the urgent need for more ethnographic research which can help us to understand the social, cultural and emotional processes at work during the YA and to provide adequate intercultural and psychological preparation to students before they embark on this experience. As Daphne, Lucy and Ilaria have shown us we need to assist future ERASMUS students to '*grow into their own skin*', to regulate and be reflexive about their emotions, and to recognise, evaluate and accept cultural difference as '*just another way of being*'.

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ENDNOTES

ENDNOTES

Chapter 2

¹ For a discussion in depth of culture shock and cross cultural communication see also Furham & Bochner (1990) and Ting-Tomey (1999).

² See <http://www.llas.ac.uk/lara> for further details.

³ For a more in-depth discussion of IAR examples of good practice see Hall & Toll, 1999: 18-19.

Chapter 3

¹ See Darwin (1904: 205) for the notion of emotions as biological adjustments to destabilising processes, which occur unexpectedly for subjects; cf. also Cannon (1929) and Leeper (1948: 17).

² For a sociocultural overview on the link between cognitive processes and language cf. also Vygotsky, L.S. (1962). See also Parrott & Harré (1996), who focussed on two apparently subtler emotions: embarrassment and modesty. In their view, embarrassment can be referred to as an emotion of social control and it can be useful in order to understand social happenings in which emotions emerge. It is also interesting to note their description of 'modesty' as a meeting point of social anxiety, self-esteem and role-performance (Parrott & Harré, 1996: 53-55).

³ For a full set of references see Pavlenko (2005), chapter 4.

⁴ Cf. the work by Berry (1997) on acculturation and adaptation.

⁵ Cf. Couper-Kuhlen, 2001 and Scollon & Scollon, 2001.

⁶ Traditionally *loudness*, *speed* and *pitch* are prosodic features (Cf. Couper-Kuhlen, 1986 and Gumperz, 1982).

⁷ Bloch (1996) defines *rapid flowing*, *melodious* or *direct speech* with reference to paralinguistic markers, however if we have a closer look these features are related to intonation speed, namely to prosodic rather than paralinguistic features.

⁸ Cf. the theory of "language desire" (summarised in § 3.5.3.) developed by Piller (2002), in which target language speakers are seen as the *desired* object of confident and powerful L2 learners, in search of gendered and romantically constructed new linguistic identities.

⁹ Cf. Gross (1998, 1999 and 2002) and Gross & John (2003), for current perspectives on the emerging field of *emotion regulation*.

¹⁰ On early social psychological theorisation on motivation see also: Gardner et al. (1977), Gardner & Lambert (1972), Gardner & Smythe (1975), Lukmani (1972), Mc Donough (1981), Dörnyei (2001, 2003) and Skehan (1989).

¹¹ Cf. the concept of ‘imagery’ in conversational analysis in Tannen (2007), 133-160.

Chapter 4

¹ See Appendix 1: Consent Form.

Chapter 5

¹ See Appendix 1 for participants’ formal consent to use their photos and videos.

² See Chapter 4 for more details about the local authorities that helped me to contact the ERASMUS students.

Chapter 6

¹ See Chapter 4 (§ 4.2) for my research project design

² Cf. early theories on language learning and social practice: e.g. the notion of ‘legitimate speaker’ proposed by Bourdieu (1977), the ‘affective filter’ and the ‘monitor model’ by Krashen (1981) and the ‘acculturation model’ by Schumman (1978).

³ My insertion.

⁴ My insertion.

⁵ My insertion.

⁶ For a more detailed discussion of personal and social identity according to an anthropological view see Archer (2000).

Chapter 7

¹ The languages in which emotions were expressed are specified in brackets, except for the term n. 97, which is specified in an endnote for reasons of space.

² The abbreviation “It.” indicates my translation of the term for emotion which was expressed in Italian.

³ The abbreviation “Engl./It.” indicates that the term for emotion was expressed both in English and in Italian.

⁴ The abbreviation “ps.” indicates the adverb “psychologically”.

⁵ Word used both in English and Italian. For reasons of space the abbreviation in brackets (Engl./It.) could not be inserted in *Table 1*.

⁶ The square brackets demark the beginning and end of my translation.

⁷ My insertion.

⁸ My insertion.

⁹ My insertion.

¹⁰ The words in square brackets are my insertions and/or translations from English into Italian.

¹¹ My insertion.

**LANGUAGE LEARNING, IDENTITIES AND EMOTIONS DURING
THE YEAR ABROAD: CASE STUDIES OF BRITISH ERASMUS
STUDENTS IN ITALY.**

by

SONIA GALLUCCI (B.A., M.A.)

APPENDICES

A thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

**School of Education
The University of Birmingham
June 2011**

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APPENDIX 1
CONSENT FORM

Sonia Gallucci
home address
email@address

October 16, 2006

Dear

Thank you for agreeing to become involved in my research about motivation in the learning of Italian as a foreign language. I am an Italian PhD student and I would like to carry out research among learners of Italian who will participate in the ERASMUS programme during this academic year. The purpose of my research is to understand how this one-year experience in Italy can affect your motivation, and to ascertain to what extent social and cultural experiences can influence your learning.

To gather the information that I need for this research, I would like to:

- Observe you in the classroom (in Italy);
- Interview you least three times in Italy (every two months);
- If possible, observe you in some out-of-class activities.

The observations I make in Italy will not interfere with your learning. All I wish to understand is what happens over time during your stay in Italy. My observations and interviews will be focused on understanding your learning experiences in terms of motivation. I will not be judging or assessing your work.

All information that you share with me, the researcher, will be treated as confidential and the principle of anonymity will be respected throughout my study. Moreover, your involvement in this research is voluntary. I hope that you will be involved for at least one year, but you can choose to leave the research project at any time if you wish.

To make sure that you agree with the way that I will use the information you give me, I would be grateful if you could complete the questions on the attached sheet of paper. If you have any questions or would like to

know more about the project, please ask me without any hesitation. My contact details are given above.

Please tick the relevant boxes:

I am happy for the information that I have offered through interviews, conversations, and notes used in this research project.

YES NO

I understand what is meant by anonymity and confidentiality.

YES NO

I am happy for photos and video clips including me to be shown to audiences during the presentation of the research.

YES NO

I am happy for audio recording to be done during the interviews

YES NO

Signed (*student*): _____

Date: _____

Student (*please print your name and surname*):

E-mail address: _____

Telephone number/s (*please include international code and specify whether landline or mobile*) _____

Please keep one copy of this letter for yourself and return the other copy to me.

APPENDIX 2

TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

word	stressed syllable/word/sentence
w o r d	slowing down
w o r d	stressed syllable/word/sentence and slowing down
WORD	louder tone of voice
WORD	louder tone of voice and stressed syllable/word/sentence
WORD	louder tone of voice, stressed syllable/word/sentence and slowing down
..	micro pause (less than two seconds)
...	short pause (less than three seconds)
(...)	pause (between three and six seconds)
{...}	long pause (more than 6 seconds)
{...} {...}	very long pause (more than 12 seconds)
[word]	overlapping speech
word	misspelling/mispronunciation
[<i>word</i>]	my insertion (comment/lexical item, paralinguistic feature or correction of misspelled/mispronounced word)
{ }	inaudible speech
[:]	prolonging the pronunciation of the final vowel/syllable
word'	truncation
'word	truncation
" <i>words</i> "	Italian or English lexical items (reported speech or from diary entries)

In the excerpts presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7, three additional transcription conventions have been used:

[<i>words</i>]	the Italian lexical items translated by me into English
<u>words</u>	relevant turns at talk
excerpt [...] excerpt	stretches of talk between turns that have been omitted

In the interview transcripts, the following abbreviations have also been used:

S:	Sonia
I:	Ilaria
L:	Lucy
D:	Daphne

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

DAPHNE

1. First interview

Audio recorded / Length: 00:06:00

Date / place: 24th May 2006 / Italian Department, University of Birmingham

- 1) **S:** Hello.
- 2) **D:** Hello.
- 3) **S:** Eh... how are you?
- 4) **D:** Good, thank you. And you? [*laugh*]
- 5) **S:** I'm ok, thank you. OK, eh... I would like to ask some questions and the first one is erm... 'To what extent was the 'year abroad' a factor that contributed to your choice to study Italian at the University of Birmingham?'
- 6) **D:** OK. Bu'... erm... most of the universities do the year abroad, so ... I didn't choose Birmingham just because of that ... but it was probably ... the thing that I was most excited about doing a language course, so that was yeah ... one of the things I was looking for when I chose to do languages.
- 7) **S:** OK. So you knew that there was a ... a good language course at the university of Birmingham.
- 8) **D:** Yeah, yeah that's right.
- 9) **S:** Good good. And ... have you been to Italy before?
- 10) **D:** I have been twice, I went twice last summer: once by myself to Rome for four days ... and ... I really really loved it, so ... I had to come home and about two weeks later I went to Rome again
- 11) **S:** Uh. [*laugh*]
- 12) **D:** For a week, so erm ... yeah ... but { } I really, really enjoyed it.
- 13) **S:** And ... when exactly did you go? In summer or winter?

- 14) **D:** Erm .. uhm... in summer I went ... the first time it was the end of July and then middle of August, when it was thi[:]...the holiday when everyone goes out of town, so it a lot quieter but it's so hot... it is really lovely.
- 15) **S:** Yeah, good choice, so it's not so crowded ... [*laugh*]
- 16) **D:** Yes.
- 17) **S:** And did you meet a lot of Italian people?
- 18) **D:** I DID, especially when I was by myself.
- 19) **S:** Really?
- 20) **D:** They felt sorry for me ... so they were really friendly ... and { } spoke to me a lot and I tried to practise Italian , speaking and they were really helpful when ... and if I made a mistake, they were, they didn't mind ... they just ..erm .. spoke slowly so I understand. So, yes.
- 21) **S:** Do you think, Italian people, in general, are friendly and nice
- 22) **D:** Mmm.. EVERYONE. Every .. yeah.. everyone I met, I met, when I was there, was really helpful and friendly and... if I was just having dinner with my FRIEND at THE RESTAURANT, and there was .. somebody sitting next to, he wanted to practise ENGLISH, and I wanted to practise ITALIAN, so we speak to each other, and also having dinner and things like that...
- 23) **S:** Ah .. OK. so, this something you like about eh.. Italian people
- 24) **D:** Yeah, everyone is really friendly, MORE THAN English people, I think.
- 25) **S:** [*laugh*] Why?
- 26) **D:** No, well, uh... IN, you know, IN LONDON sometimes, erm .. when you're in a big city it feels ... like ... you don't know anyone and it's really ... you feel really small and ... I don't know, I don't like London very much because of that. But in ROME, although it's still the capital city, it was a lot friendlier and I liked it more than being in London.
- 27) **S:** Yeah.. I live in London, and I feel the same: it's a big city, with many people, but sometimes you feel lonely.
- 28) **D:** Yeah.
- 29) **S:** Because .. so many people but .. maybe .. they are not so friendly ... I don't know ..
- 30) **D:** Yeah.
- 31) **S:** OK. And where are you going now, to Italy?

- 32) **D:** To Ferrara.
- 33) **S:** Ferrara. And why have you chosen this city?
- 34) **D:** Erm ... because .. although I loved Rome SO MUCH, I wanted somewhere a bit a bit SMALLER to live, to live for a nearly A YEAR. I though it would be good if I would go somewhere where I could .. really GET TO KNOW people, and it seems that in somewhere a bit smaller it easier to.. to get to know a lot of people and, I though it would have been a bit more COSY really .. and .. comfortable ..
- 35) **S:** Yeah, Ferrara is beautiful, it's a good choice..
- 36) **D:** Yeah, really?
- 37) **S:** Yes, everybody says that, yes, yes.
- 38) **D:** Oh good. [*laugh*]
- 39) **S:** Erm .. OK. Erm .. [*Daphne*] what do expect from this experience in Italy?
- 40) **D:** ... well ... I think ... firstly it will be really helpful for my Italian, I think I'll IMPROVE because at the moment, I think, my weakest point is my SPEAKING, I think, the grammar and the writing I can do, but speaking I get a bit nervous and I don't know { } to say straight away, so I think that will improve A LOT. But I think more ... I just ... it would be just been REALLY REALLY exciting and I'll be in a ... because the CULTURE is so different and it would be, everything I'll do will be NEW and it will be really fun, and I will meet lots of people, who are completely different .. to the English people, because I don't really know anybody who is not English [*laugh*]...
- 41) **S:** [*laugh*]
- 42) **D:** ... so it would be good to me, meet lots of new people ... and be completely different from everything now, so ...
- 43) **S:** So are you excited about going in a country with a different culture and language.. ?
- 44) **D:** Yeah, REALLY excited.
- 45) **S:** Mmm ..
- 46) **D:** I should probably be nervous, but I don't feel very nervous yet. I'm just thinking ...
- 47) **S:** No, why you should feel nervous? [*laugh*]
- 48) **D:** Yeah.
- 49) **S:** Don't worry. So how, how do you feel actually, going and living there for ONE year? What are your feelings?

50) **D:** Erm .. I think ... I guess at the beginning it will be a bit difficult because I just won't know anyone and ... and sometimes it's HARD to explain, like if { } to say if I don't know the words, then I'll just not be able to say anything. So I THINK at the beginning it will be difficult, but really .. I think I'll go over that quickly, and then it will just be ... the excitement of meeting new people and .. I think, yeah, I'm REALLY looking forward to it.

51) **S:** Yeah.

52) **D:** Yeah.

53) **S:** I'm sure you will have a great experience. [*laugh*]

54) **S:** OK. Thank you very much.

55) **D:** Thank you.

56) **S:** Thank you.

Source coded in NVivo as [[<Internals\DAHPNE\transcripts\1D\) 24.5.6>](#)]

2. Second interview

Audio recorded and diary-based / Length: 01:20:22

Date / place: 18th November 2006 / Ferrara, Daphne's home

1) **S:** Ok, Hello Daphne ... erm ... how do you feel about living in Ferrara?

2) **D:** Now?

3) **S:** Yes.

4) **D:** Er ... I love it. Really. I think I have settled in... because I have been here for two months, so I think I've settled in quite well and ... I've got a house and ... I've got my own routine now, so ... yap.

5) **S:** OK, how did you find this house? Erm ... did you have an accommodation when you were in the U.K. or did you find it here ...

6) **D:** No, I came here with ... nowhere to live and I stayed, I MET a girl, who I didn't know before, and I stayed with her for one night, and then I went to a **hostel** and I stayed there, but every day I was on the **phone**, you know, phoning boot, ringing up people to ask "can I come and see y o u r spare room?" ... and ... I rang up the girl who lives here and I came to see it and I just really loved it.

7) **S:** Ah .. ok, so when you came here you had no accommodation.

8) **D:** No, nothing.

- 9) **S:** You have been very **BRAVE** to come here without accommodation and look for it.
- 10) **D:** Mmm ... yeah ... in the beginning when I first got here, it was **horrible** and I was, I was a bit **CROSS** ... but [*laugh*] because I wanted to come here and find it when I got here and not on the internet, 'cause you can't.. can't see what you are getting.
- 11) **S:** Yeah ..
- 12) **D:** But when I actually got here and I didn't have anywhere to go ... I was really **cross** that my family would let me come and then ... that someone hadn't told me ... oh I don't know, because if someone had told me I'd have said 'No I'll be fine', but I wish that someone I had said to me 'it will be really difficult and you just have to wait and be **patient**'
- 13) **S:** Mm.. so nobody told you that it was going to be so difficult to find a house [in Ferrara].
- 14) **D:** [Yeah] I just didn't realise that it would have been so difficult not having anywhere to go, because I spent the all day looking for **somewhere** to live. And then I couldn't just **go** ... **HOME** or just went back to the hostel and ... but it wasn't really {...} I didn't have anywhere to go ... where relax, or just forget about looking for a house, so ... quite stressful.
- 15) **S:** So you were really good [you could find it].
- 16) **D:** [oh yeah I'm glad] I did do it in this way, because actually, I did have a chance to see the houses, and I'm glad I didn't take the first one I saw, because I think ... a lot of people took the first room they saw, because there were **SO KEEN** to have somewhere to live, but I'm glad I have waited until I have found one ... more suitable for me.
- 17) **S:** And now you live in a place that is [more suitable for you] ah, that's good.
- 18) **D:** [Yeah].
- 19) **S:** Erm ...so did you find here, in Ferrara, what you expected?
- 20) **D:** Mh mm ... I don't really know what I was expecting, it's hard to think about what it was to be like, erm..
- 21) **S:** Do you like the city? Or you'd rather go to a?
- 22) **D:** Mm.. no I like it, it is really small, you can see the city and no time at all, but for me it is really, I think it wouldn't be everybody, but for me it suits me really well, because ... in a small city whenever I go out to the shops or to university I see somebody that I recognise and they just say "Hi" to you and it's just a nice feeling to not, to not feel **lost**, because I went to Bologna, just for a day, I just thought "it's really small" and a bit ... there's a lot going on, I think in a small city it's easier to **find**, to find something that's comfortable and to get into living here and seeing the same people and ..

- 23) **S:** So you wouldn't live in Bologna?
- 24) **D:** No, no way. [*laugh*]
- 25) **S:** Erm .. you know many people here?
- 26) **D:** I know quite a few, I know all the Erasmus students, obviously, erm.. quite a few American Erasmus students, or international students, and I know .. erm.. quite a few Italian students from my courses[:], especially the courses where the class is really small with 5 or 6 people, because it's easier to, to speak to you there, and ...
- 27) **S:** Do you have Italian friends?
- 28) **D:** I do, but the Italian friends I have wouldn't, I probably wouldn't arrange with them to go out in the evening, whereas the Eng'.. erm.. Erasmus students so I would, but the Italian that I see during the day and we speak each other, we are friends, but we're not .. not closer .. we wouldn't go out together, maybe for a coffee or something but not ...
- 29) **S:** More classmates than ...
- 30) **D:** [*yeah*] frankly yeah ..
- 31) **S:** And what about you flatmate?
- 32) **D:** Ah she's, as I said, she's Italian and she doesn't speak English, but she's like my **best** friend here, yeah she's really really nice.
- 33) **S:** So you speak Italian with her?
- 34) **D:** Mm, yeah, but, and we do speak a lot, it's not awkward like the silence, because I'm trying to think of something to say, this is not like that all, we speak like I would speak with an English friend all the time so ...
- 35) **S:** Ah that's good
- 36) **D:** Yeah ..
- 37) **S:** And do you have many opportunities to speak Italian during the day?
- 38) **D:** Mmm ... mainly with my flatmate during breakfast time or dinner or .. but in the day (...) mmm ... if I'm in lesson I don't really, I don't have to speak, and if I DO speak in the lesson it's usually in the Italian lesson when I'm with English students, so I do speak Italian during the day but mainly with my flatmate or to the teachers I speak in Italian.
- 39) **S:** So you don't speak Italian during your lesson?
- 40) **D:** Lessons are lectures so we listen rather having a chance to speak. In Italian lessons, like thi: Italian for foreign students we do have a chance to discuss a newspaper

or news or something like that, so I do that ... but in the other classes it's mainly listening and writing down notes from the lectures so ...

41) **S:** Tell me some differences about the lessons in the U.K. and here in Italy.

42) **D:** OK.

43) **S:** What do you think about ..

44) **D:** Erm .. the lectures are kind of the same where there's like a lecture and they just speak and you write down what they say, erm ... in the other classes [short pause] we, I do French and that's a bit different because the French lessons are all in Italian and not in French, whereas the French lessons in England would be in French, so that's, I found that lesson really difficult actually, this translation from French to Italian..

45) **S:** Mm. Wow!

46) **D:** I know, and sometimes though, if the French teacher says "Ok speak in French now", I say "Ok" and then she asks me a question and I open my mouth to speak French, but it comes out Italian, because for me they are both, both foreign [*laugh*]

47) **S:** [Oh my God!]

48) **D:** And I gave up my stuff, and she thinks, I think she thinks that I don't know 'how to **speak** French, but it's just trying to get all three languages going at the same time, doesn't really work eh.

49) **S:** she doesn't realise that you are an English native speaker, but ..

50) **D:** [Yeah, she wants, yeah]

51) **S:** .. you want to speak French and then she asks you something in Italian!

52) **D:** Yeah, mm.. I know it's still gets a bit mixed up, so that's quite hard..

53) **S:** Ok, and what about your .. Italian classes, you told me you have some classes for .. in the first semester you had classes just for Italian..

54) **D:** Yeah ... it's a .. it's not really Italian grammar, it's mainly Italian learning about the culture and things like that, **for** the Erasmus students, so not, in my class there're English students, Mexican, Spanish, Germans it's just ALL the foreign students.

55) **S:** Mm ..

56) **D:** ... that learn a bit of grammar but it's more about ... culture, society and things that happen in Italy really.

57) **S:** And did you have the chance to speak Italian during these classes?

58) **D:** We did a bit, like we did, we read an article and we do discuss it together in Italian, 'cause the teacher doesn't speak all of our languages, so we have to speak Italian ... and we have to do presentations for this class as well, for like an oral exam, and so ...

59) **S:** Did you find it useful?

60) **D:** I did quite, because we had to, we wrote an essay and presented it without reading, so it was all kind of .. not spontaneous but kind of .. I did quite like it then ..

61) **S:** Ok, and are you trying to speak Italian as you wanted or..?

62) **D:** Yeah, I think even if I'm with an Italian person who speaks English I do try to speak to them in Italian because (...) because it's useful, really. Sometimes when I go to a shop and I ask err .. where is { } book, in Italian, thi[:] Italian... the person behind the counter speaks to me in English? And I don't like it, because I think if I try to speak Italian ... erm .. I'm sure they're trying to be helpful, but ... I don't want to be rude and say "no, speak to me in Italian" but erm ...

63) **S:** what if you say "I don't understand English"

[both laugh]

64) **S:** Do you think they, they know from your accent that you are English?

65) **D:** Yeah.

66) **S:** Oh[:].

67) **D:** I think so ...

68) **S:** Ok, it can be something related to the culture, do you think?

69) **D:** I think it could be, because there's a lot of English people who come as tourists and don't speak Italian, and don't try[:] and they just go around speaking English all the time, so the people who work in the shops get used to having to speak to English people in English. And so when an English person **he does** speak Italian instead, I don't (...) imagine that I can' speak to them in Italian, but I want to, I don't ..

70) **S:** yeah ...and when you were talking about your lessons, the classes, do you think there's a kind of DISTANCE between erm .. professors and erm... students, or among students? Do you think there's more distance than in the U.K.?

71) **D:** Yeah definitively more. I think it depends, some teachers there's a lot distance and they use the "Lei" form and speak to you like using our surnames, which is **strange** for me. Whereas in England.. some professors I would call them by their **FIRST** name, but here I don't think it would be a good idea eh eh...

72) **S:** Eh eh .. you can try, eh eh ...

73) **D:** I think because we are probably Erasmus students they are bit friendlier towards the Erasmus students, because they realise that we might have a bit of trouble, but ... I think, yeah, I think there's a lot, more distance than in England.

74) **S:** Ok, and are you proud about your progress in Italian?

75) **D:** I think so, because in the beginning I was quite nervous, and I did find it really hard when I first came here, just err... just to cope with **everything**. But I think I'm quite, I'm especially pleased to understand[:]. not everything, but I do understand almost everything that people say to me, and I think although my speaking got better, I really, it really frustrates me when I can't reply, because I understand what somebody says and I know what I want to say, but if I can't say it, I think they think I haven't understood ... but I think I'm quite pleased.

76) **S:** You are progressing a lot.

77) **D:** Yeah.

78) **S:** Erm ... do you feel that this experience is increasing your motivation to learn Italian, or do you think that with this experience you have less motivation than before?

79) **D:** No, I think I have more ... maybe not more for the language maybe, it's the same, I don't want to keep learning the language, but **definitively definitively** I have more motivation to learn about the culture, the history; because, even in England when you hear about 'THE culture, you don't, it's not the same as being here, and actually ... seeing the culture in a kind of 'being part of it, so I think here I **definitively** I have more.. enthusiasm to learn about the culture and history and things like that.

80) **S:** What have you learnt about the culture, the Italian culture?

81) **D:** Erm...[*laugh*]

82) **S:** You can say anything [*laugh*]

83) **D:** Anything?

84) **S:** Yeah.

85) **D:** Ok, the things I'm learning about erm ... the politics and things like that, because they're a lot different. Very different to in England and things like that. But also people's attitudes towards things in general, and ... people in the streets just thought as they act towards, because in general I'd say that probably Italian people are more friendlier than English people, and more hospitable, like when I got here I stayed here with a girl I didn't even know and she was **really** helpful and ... and things like that, but then ... also it's funny because if I walk down the streets and I smile at someone because, I don't know, just because I smile [*laugh*] erm.. quite often they just walk past, and they, but in England just people smile a lot and they... but they're not as friendly, I don't know if it does make sense but ... and also like the[:] ..

86) **S:** [ah ok]

- 87) **D:** .. and also with people who work in the **supermarket**, they're not very friendly at all, they are really cold and...
- 88) **S:** Really?
- 89) **D:** I once put the change down on the **TABLE** and on the counter and you take it, but they wouldn't give it in your hand.
- 90) **S:** Ok.
- 91) **D:** [Mh..mh] erm.. I don't know..
- 92) **S:** So do you feel Italian can be more friendly, but they smile less...
- 93) **D:** Yeah[:].
- 94) **S:** ... than English people, whereas English people maybe they are not so friendly, but they smile ... I mean if you smile them they may smile you back.
- 95) **D:** Yeah, and also the waiters and the waitresses and the people who work in the shops in England I would say are **friendlier**, or .. yeah friendlier, but maybe[:] (...).
- 96) **S:** Maybe more polite?
- 97) **D:** Yap. **Yes[:]** maybe more polite, but less... less hospitable and ... because I can't imagine meeting somebody in England and then saying to me "Oh don't stay in a hotel you can stay in our house" I can't, I don't think English people would do that.
- 98) **S:** But at the same time ..
- 99) **D:** [but whereas people working in a service] like...I'd say they are **f r i e n d l i e r**, oh yeah , more **polite**, maybe ...
- 100) **S:** So have you changed your mind about Italian people? Because you told me erm.... a few months ago that you thought Italian people were **very very** friendly...
- 101) **D:** Mmm...
- 102) **S:** But now you're saying that maybe they are not as friendly as you thought.
- 103) **D:** Definitely I have seen a different **site**, it's not like, it's not a criticism, because I'm .. but I'm definitely seeing ... mmm... maybe ... because before I've only been to Rome, and I think that now that I'm here I'm noticing the differences between other people, mm... the differences between the people in different regions, in Italy, because I've heard, and also when I've spoken to Italian people, and a lot of them said "ah people from Rome are really really friendly and they are really helpful in Rome" which is true for me, and I've heard a lot people saying that people from Ferrara are quite **closed** and difficult so ... to get on with. A lot of Italians I know they are not from Ferrara, they have come form other regions to study here, they're like form .. Venice, and they say "ah people from Ferrara it's very difficult to get to know them".

- 104) **S:** I see ..
- 105) **D:** So ..
- 106) **S:** And could it be also because when you came, when you went to Rome, you were a tourist?
- 107) **D:** Yes.
- 108) **S:** And now you are living here.
- 109) **D:** Yes.
- 110) **S:** So you are a kind of p a r t[:] of the society.
- 111) **D:** Yes I'm really a **guest** anymore, I have to look after, yeah I have to look after and ...
- 112) **S:** And do you **feel** like a part of the society, in a way?
- 113) **D:** Yes I do, I think .. that's why I don't like it when they speak to me in English, because then I feel I'm NOT (...) part o of it, and I feel like I come from somewhere else, but I talk to someone in Italian I DO feel like I actually live here and having a home, mm...
- 114) **S:** And what do you like about the Italian culture, and, a part from not being very polite, is there anything else you don't really like?
- 115) **D:** I think (...) I think is the thing about **politeness**, because I think the English are kind of overly polite [*smiley voice*] like ... they would queue up for things or if somebody.. accidentally .. you know, knocks your shoulder or something like that, they are like "Oh sorry sorry" [*laugh*] BUT HERE, you know, when you get on the train and everyone's got there { } and they are a kind of pushing and THEY are not being rude, it's, that's just .. t h e w a y i t i s {...} yeah.
- 116) **S:** Mm ..
- 117) **D:** Yeah, at first it was a bit , I thought "It's so rude so rude" [*laugh*]
- 118) **S:** [*laugh*] And now what do you think?
- 119) **D:** No, I think that maybe a lot of English people are a kind of more polite than ... I don't think they intend to be rude, it's just a difference.
- 120) **S:** Yeah and there's something, something you really like about the Italian culture?
- 121) **D:** I do like the way people are {...} open, and generally the people you talk to are more friendly, maybe not .. in each city and stuff, but people at the university are more friendly and I like it there. A lot of people are more demonstrative about their Feelings and they're not quite reserved ..

122) **S:** Ah, ok, so they are more open, they don't hide their feelings

123) **D:** Yeah.

124) **S:** Ok, this is very interesting, erm .. ok .. [*I'm opening the diary and reading some sentences*] Now, I'd like to have a look in your 'diary, and you have written something about your routine, first of all, can you describe me, very briefly, what you, how is your daily routine, what do you do on Monday, Tuesday and so on, just very briefly..

125) **D:** Ok, er.. on Monday I don't have any lesson until (...) 2, 2 o'clock in the afternoon, so have a nice line [*smiley voice*] and my flatmate has already gone to work, so I just {...} I just have a quick breakfast and then maybe a bit of studying, maybe watch t v , and then again to lectures until 6, then I come home, study and then have dinner with my flatmate. And sometimes we listen to some music. Tuesday I have 8 hours of lectures: I start at half past eight, the day it's horrible, I start quite earlier and then I go to lectures, I GET two hours of lunch time, so I come back usually, just have a rest [*laugh*] and then ..

126) **S:** Wow, so you have just the time to come back home and ..

127) **D:** [*Yeah*], it's about eight thirty to twelve and then two till six, so .. I do have a bit of a break..

128) **S:** Ah...

129) **D:** Yeah, but Tuesday is a .. I like the lessons I'm doing there, but at the end of the day I'm just {...} so tired, because I have to concentrate really hard all the time..and.. I have dinner with my flatmate and then a go to bed.

130) **S:** Ah ah, I can imagine ..

131) **D:** Yeah, and then Wednesday I don't have any lesson until about four o'clock? So I can line again. [*laugh*]

132) **S:** You can recover from Tuesday. [*laugh*]

133) **D:** Yeah [*laugh*]. And when I'm here at home, I usually study, sometimes I go into town and just look around the shops and then .. I always have dinner with my flatmate, we always eat together. On Thursday..

134) **S:** Do you like it?

135) **D:** Yeah I really like it, on Thursday .. I don't have Anything so sometimes I just go to I have been to Modena, Forlì, and hopefully, later in time, I'd like to go to Venice .. and Florence {...} Friday[:] .. em.. I just have **Italian**, on Friday, so there's only one lesson in the morning, and I get up early enough to have breakfast with my flatmate, we just chat a bit and then go to our lessons or to work, and then in the afternoon, because there is a market I go around in the "Piazza", and then have dinner with my flatmate, and then at the weekends.. erm {...} I don't really like the weekend .. because ..

136) **S:** Why?

137) **D:** Because I don't really have anything to do .. erm I can go .. mm {...} I can go to another city or something, but {...} maybe Saturday is al right because I need a rest and it's nice not to have anything to do, bit then (...) I don't know, I like to have something to do and somewhere to go and {...} mmm ... so.... I'm quite happy when Monday starts again, really. [*laugh*]

138) **S:** Mm .. maybe you could visit some other cities on Sunday.

139) **D:** Mm, yeah, that's what I want to do, and when my flatmate is not .. working, we have been to the cinema[:] or[:] went to theatre[:]. production ones and .. sometimes we just go out for lunch or for dinner together , which I really like so ..

140) **S:** oh that's nice

141) **D:** Yeah ...

142) **S:** OK, erm .. now I'm going to read some passages, from your diary, and I would like to ask you what did you mean by these... erm... you started your diary on Monday, and it was very interesting to seee, to reaad, that you went to a class and then you said errr... the lesson was "*difficilissima*" , very difficult, "*c'era molto lessico specifico e secondo me molti studenti italiani l'hanno trovato difficile anche loro*", so also Italian students found it difficult , how did you know that?

143) **D:** {...} {...}

144) **S:** Why in your opinion, they found it difficult?

145) **D:** {...} because the lesson was classic, classical coach, so it was like Latin literature and Greek literature.

146) **S:** Wow!

147) **D:** I think [*laugh*] {...} sometimes the teacher would explain something and the Italian students were asked them to go over again, and I think' I did understand a lot of what the teacher said, and I worked out what it meant in English, and I thought "well I don't actually understand that in English what

148) **S:** [*laugh*]

149) **D:** What that means[:] .. and .. because it was a a kind of, a bit of philosophy, and I don't know, it's quite a tricky subject, [*laugh*] so..

150) **S:** and did you talk about it with the other classmates? Like did you share these feelings?

151) **D:** Erm .. I've got an English friend who does the same class, and she actually studies classic in England, so she can help, because she knows a bit more about it, but she said: even she found it difficult, and she knows the subject already, so...

152) **S:** Ok, so you could see this from .. the faces maybe..

153) **D:** Yes, yeah .. and when people don't understand something they kind of stop taking notes as much and you can kind of see people like .. shifting in their chairs and kind of .. everything close down because there's not much of writing.

154) **S:** [I see] .. I see .. ok

155) **D:** And ..

156) **S:** Er.. that's very interesting, so here you say that you tried to speak Italian, that Monday you said "*non ho parlato molto in italiano*" so you didn't speak a lot, so (...) every day you try to speak Italian.

157) **D:** [yeah ..].

158) **S:** If you don't speak it, how do you feel if you don't have the chance to speak Italian?

159) **D:** Er .. if I haven't spoken Italian for most of the day and then i come home in the evening and then I speak to my flatmate even if just a few.. one day.. I find it a lot harder to speak quickly or like spontaneously, it takes me longer to .. to work out the sentences I want to say, even just after a day, so I like to speak, or maybe just reading it, like reading a book, or watching TV, erm, like form the morning because it kind of gets me started. And after being to lessons, obviously they are in Italian, then when I speak, in the evening, I've noticed I'm much more fluent and I speak much **f a s t e r** and.. I'm kinda without having to think' and translate in my head before I speak, I can kind of doing it straight away so..

160) **S:** So you're taking ALL your chances to speak Italian, if you can, that's good, that's good.

161) **D:** [yeah]

162) **S:** Erm .. on Tuesday the 17th you said er[:] "*era difficile, sono l'unica studente inglese 'straniera, quindi gli altri lo trovano più facile*" so do you feel a **STUDENTESSA straniera**? I mean why did you write "I was the only one, the only foreign student? Did you have this feeling of being a foreigner?"

163) **D:** Mm .. yeah, I think this class is quite a small class.

164) **S:** [yeah]

165) **D:** Sometimes if I don't understand something, ALL the others do, maybe they don't realise I don't understand, so the class continues and I feel a bit .. lost, because I'm the only ... foreign student, obviously they can slow down the class so I understand, but when there's an English student there, sometimes I say "Oh do you understand" and when they say "yes", they can explain and if they "no" I think "oh well ok, at least it's not just me..

166) **S:** [you feel better]

167) **D:** Yeah, when I'm the only one, sometimes it's a bit difficult ...

168) **S:** And what about all the other Italian students? They don't care? Or just, I mean, if you don't understand they just carry on taking their notes or they stop and maybe ask if they don't understand or ...?

169) **D:** [mm.. some ...] in SOME of the classes, like in the French class, maybe because we are both learning another language, they are a bit more, they are quite helpful, because they are learning French as well, so they understand if you don't understand something so .. they are quite helpful, but in .. in some of the classes if I miss, if I don't understand what the teacher says, sometimes I like snick a look at the notes of an Italian person, and I don't know because they don't know I'm 'English, and they think I'm trying to copy, but sometimes they don't .. they're like a sort of looking ...

170) **S:** Ah, they keep distance.

171) **D:** Mh mh [*affirmative tone of voice*] yeah[:]

172) **S:** I see, I see, ok, then you had a terrible experience [smile]

[*both laugh*]

173) **S:** Because you said "*Il prof. Mi ha chiesto di alzarmi e di parlare della storia inglese, davanti a tutta la classe d'italiano! Era terribile*"

[*both laugh*]

174) **S:** Why did you find it *terribile*? What happened? [*laugh*]

175) **D:** {...} I don't .. I don't like speaking in front of a group, even in English, because I just know I get red and that makes me even more nervous, but I didn't actually know the answer to the question he asked, which was a bit ..erm.. awkward, and also..I got so nervous I couldn't think in Italian, I couldn't think at a l l , and I couldn't think enough to say "I don't know the answer, or just to say "oh I can't speak" but the fact that I could FEEL myself going red and it was horrible, I think ..I don't know I just felt a bit silly in front of the other students, because I want to be Part of the class, and I don't want or be THE foreign student. When I have to speak in front of them , when I can't say anything, this makes it OBVIOUS that I am English and .. I feel .. I don't feel as much of the class if I l o o k like if I can't speak Italian

176) **S:** Yeah .. and then you weren't very confident, in the beginning, with your Italian,what did the professor do when ..? I mean he asked you to speak in front of the class...

177) **D:** [yeah] and then he's like "oh don't be nervous, stand up, don't be nervous" .

178) **S:** Stand up? [*laugh*]

179) **D:** [yeah] ... I didn't stand up in case to hide my red face.

[both laugh]

180) **S:** Oh God.

181) **D:** Then, I think, he just, I think he realized he couldn't do it and he let me not speak, but he asks EVERY lesson, at the beginning he says to the students what did we talk about in the last lesson, and quite often the Italian students say "oh no I want sit down, I don't wanna stand up" or quite often they say "oh no don't ask me, ask somebody else" so they don't like speaking in front of the class either.

182) **S:** Ah ok.

183) **D:** [and it's a kind of] easier for them to get an answer it and ...

184) **S:** Does it make you feel better that also .. Italian students don't know the answer and don't like speaking in front of the class?

185) **D:** [yeah, yeah]

186) **S:** So it's not ONLY you who because you are English, but nobody likes it maybe ..

187) **D:** Yeah, and as we are doing the history of England of things, AND I don't study history, in England, I don't know a lot the answers, which was a bit ...

188) **S:** Ah, so it was not only the language that you had to speak Italian, but also the **knowledge** [smiley voice] Oh my God, so that was a terrible experience

189) **D:** [yeah it was] because he quite often asks, I think he's quite interested in the foreign students now. [laugh]

190) **S:** Are you getting used to it?

191) **D:** Yeah, yeah, and now that he knows me better and I expect to be asked, it's a bit easier, and he knows not to ask me something REALLY complicated, and ... maybe, maybe he's a bit more patient.

192) **S:** [ok]

193) **D:** .. now the teacher

194) **S:** And you stand up in front of the class now?

195) **D:** No, I don't stand up, but I do speak if he asks, sometimes.

196) **S:** Wow[:], that's an improvement.

197) **D:** [laugh]

198) **S:** Well done, erm .. so I can read here, that you had this experience on Tuesday, and then on Wednesday again you said “*Ho dovuto ‘parlare’ ancora una volta, davanti a tutti gli studenti*” so you had to talk.

199) **D:** yeah, I knew he was going to ask me.

200) **S:** Ah, so you were prepared

201) **D:** Yeah, I wasn’t quite as nervous, because I was expecting it.

202) **S:** Ah, ok. And then on the same day you had to cook for your flatmate, and you were a bit nervous, why? [*laugh*]

203) **D:** I think all the English students are nervous of cooking for Italian people, because the Italian people cook really ... really well, and in England like the students just make toasts or soup, a soup out of a can, not a homemade soup, but here all the foods are like **homemade** and (...) not, I don’t know I think the students in England just make really quick food ready to eat, and ... go to bed or watch TV, but here the meals are much more of an event, which I really like..

204) **S:** [I see]

205) **D:** ... but I was a bit nervous [*laugh*]

206) **S:** And what did you cook at the end?

207) **D:** I think, I cooked roast potatoes.

208) **S:** Oh that’s nice ...

209) **D:** Because I thought it’s quite an English thing, and (...) and yeah, I think it’s quite like that

210) **S:** Did she like it?

211) **D:** Yeah she did [*laugh*]

212) **S:** Oh .. that’s nice. Ok now here, on Thursday, the 16th you say that **you** really like the Italian trains.

213) **D:** Yap!

214) **S:** “*I treni italiani mi piacciono molto.*” Why? And what is the difference between Italian trains and English trains?

215) **D:** Erm .. just ... the Italian trains are **clean**, all the ones I moved on and not just this one, are clean and it was quite and are just ... more comfortable and it’s like they need to be looked after, our English trains, but I have noticed that the Italian trains are often quite late.

216) **S:** Ah.

217) **D:** But they quite late in England as well so I'm used to it.

[*both laugh*]

218) **S:** Ah ok, don't you think that they are very cheap?

219) **D:** Yeah

220) **S:** Compared to ..

221) **D:** [everything] it's cheap compared to England.

222) **S:** I took the train from Forlì to Bologna today, a return ticket was six euros, six euros, when I go to Birmingham from London if I'm lucky I pay 30, 35 pounds.

223) **D:** [I know]

224) **S:** Otherwise 70 pounds.

225) **D:** I know, I know.

226) **S:** Ok, but you also say that "*penso che per gli inglesi gli europei possono sembrare ... brusco*"

227) **D:** [yeah]

228) **S:** Erm ... why? Why do you think that for English people European people could be "*brusco*" is like "rude"?

229) **D:** Yeah, I think.

230) **S:** [why?]

231) **D:** I think because English people IN GENERAL make quite an effort to be polite, and they are quite ... careful not to offend anyone, whereas I think, maybe English, maybe they take offence more easily, maybe, I don't know, I think maybe that's the reason why... they are quite careful to be polite all the time, because I do find, it's quite a difference, like I said before, whereas I think here people quite often interrupt each other, and they say things like "*dimmi*", which I first I thought "it's so rude!", because in England I never say "Tell me! Speak to me!" Because it's a bit rude, but actually it's nice just the way... it is, I think maybe (...) maybe the English people are just careful not to offend because they may take offence more easily, I don't know ..

232) **S:** But maybe English people that haven't lived abroad .. or in Italy, in general, you mean..

233) **D:** [mm mm]

- 234) **S:** .. English people who live in England or in the U.K.
- 235) **D:** [Yeah, yes!]
- 236) **S:** Erm, and you say “*gli europei*”, so European people, so you generalise, like it’s not TOWARDS Italian people, but also ..
- 237) **D:** [no I think] I think, I have also been to France and it’s kind of the same, and I think maybe in Spain as well, well .. because my auntie is Spanish and I thought, I thought, I always think “she is a bit, a bit rude”, but now I think maybe ... maybe it’s just .. maybe what she says she would translate from Spanish into like “Tell me”, and so she would say “tell me” in English, that comes across to be r u d e , but actually it’s what she says in Spain, and it wouldn’t be rude, so ... [laugh]
- 238) **S:** I see, so this is again a fact of a culture. Ok, that good. Now, erm, on Friday the 20th you say “*ho bisogno di concentrarmi moltissimo per capire e ci vuole molta forza, quindi divento stanca facilmente*”. Why? What happens? Why do you feel so tired?
- 239) **D:** Erm... I think because I know when I speak, no so much NOW, but I think more in the beginning, when I say, but even when I’m just having a conversation about something really b o r i n g , because the other person is speaking, well we are both speaking Italian, I can’t just ...kinda... because ... if I’m speaking English and somebody is speaking to me, I can kinda of switch off, and the English would still go into my head I would still understand, and I don’t really have to concentrate, because I understand ‘naturally, but when it’s in Italian I have to ‘listen to understand, I have to ‘pay attention otherwise the Italian wouldn’t just going into my head, it would just go straight past me, because I don’t understand it naturally. So I think just even to have a boring conversation I have to concentrate quite hard (...) to, to understand, not so much now, but mote at the beginning.
- 240) **S:** And this makes you very tired or used to be?
- 241) **D:** [Yeah, yeah , after] all day.
- 242) **S:** I see, but here again you say “*devo parlare italiano*”, so you feel like: you must, I must speak Italian, it’s a kind of must, it’s a must for you? Do you feel like something you really have to do or it’s also a pleasure?
- 243) **D:** No, I do want to speak in Italian, yeah sometimes ...
- 244) **S:** Do you enjoy speaking Italian?
- 245) **D:** Yeah, I do when I can express myself, but I do, I do get quite frustrated sometimes, if I can’t, because it’s just ... it’s quite hard if there something I really want to say and I can’t say it.
- 246) **S:** Are getting more and more frustrated or less and less frustrated?
- 247) **D:** Erm.. in a way I ‘think, because I’m getting ‘better, I’m more confident about speaking, so I speak more, which means I find more ... things[:] I can’t say, because I’m

trying more [*laugh*] so I think I'm getting maybe a bit more frustrated but I don't think it's because I'm getting 'worse, I think it's because probably I'm getting better, I don't know, maybe not.

248) **S:** Yeah, maybe you want to say things more complex.

249) **D:** [yeah that's why I think], yeah maybe I can actually say more and I'm finding the things ... like really complicated thoughts I have and I can't say them ...

250) **S:** This is a fact of the all process of learning a language

251) **D:** [yeah]

252) **S:** And you want to express yourself better and better.

253) **D:** Yeah.

254) **S:** Yeah, but you also say "*sono molto fiera di me*", so you are proud of you, why? What happened on .. that day? You said ..

255) **D:** [mmm]

256) **S:** "*Questo pomeriggio*" Ah yes "*ho finito tutte le 806 pagine di Harry Potter*"

257) **D:** [*laugh*]

258) **S:** Wow!

259) **D:** That was...

260) **S:** [did you] read 800?

261) **D:** Yeah[:]

262) **S:** In one day?

263) **D:** Not in one day.

264) **S:** [oh]

265) **D:** That was in a week, I think, I read it quite quickly.

266) **S:** Wow, in Italian?

267) **D:** Yes, I really enjoyed it!

268) **S:** [amazing]

269) **D:** And ...

- 270) **S:** Using the dictionary or just without..?
- 271) **D:** Erm, I think , erm, I didn't use it for every word I didn't understand, but I've used it for some of the words, erm ...
- 272) **S:** Well d o n e.
- 273) **D:** Thank you.
- 274) **S:** You must be **proud** of yourself, of course. Oh that's nice. Ok, on Saturday the 21st again you start .. your diary by saying "*é troppo frustrante*" and then something happened, you went out with Sara, you went to a restaurant and then she told you something about her life, yeah?
- 275) **D:** Oh yeah.
- 276) **S:** And you wanted to give her some advice?
- 277) **D:** Yeah she was having like a .. a problem with a colleague or a boyfriend or something like that, and I think she was quite .. not upset, but she was quite .. it was like a proper problem, and I was really pleased that we could talk about something like quite .. **personal**, like a proper friend, and I wanted to help her , like saying "maybe you could do this or do that, maybe it's because of this or something".
- 278) **S:** Yeah.
- 279) **D:** And I couldn't (...) it was like vocabulary I didn't know and I couldn't , I couldn't find a way to say it, and I wanted to help her and it was quite annoying because I wanted, I wanted to help, but I couldn't even think what or say so .. mm.. it was quite hard because I felt like I wasn't being helpful, but it wasn't because I didn't want or be helpful, but it was because I couldn't work out **how** to say what I wanted to say ..
- 280) **S:** Do you feel that she expected you to say something?
- 281) **D:** [no, no]
- 282) **S:** Or she just wanted to open her heart?
- 283) **D:** [yeah, yeah] I think so, and I think she understands that, I'm sure she does, but I can't always (...) I don't know all the words, so I don't think she felt like I was being a rubbish friend or anything, I think it's just that I had something in my head I wanted to say it, but I couldn't say it, but I don't think it was .. she was .. she didn't mind or anything, it's probably helpful just talk anyway[:] ...
- 284) **S:** Yeah ... sometimes it's very difficult just to have a friend who listens to us ...
- 285) **D:** [yeah]
- 286) **S:** .. so in way you felt erm .. frustrated but in a way did this make you feel a kind of good? ...because somebody was telling you something about her private life ...

287) **D:** Yeah it did, because I think erm .. maybe she does think of me maybe .. erm .. as a proper friend and not as an English, her English flatmate, or maybe as a flatmate who she can talk to about ... all sort of things, it's like there's not a GAP between us, because one of us, because we are from different countries.

288) **S:** You don't feel this gap.

289) **D:** [no]

290) **S:** You don't feel difference of culture ..

291) **D:** [no]

292) **S:** .. and do you do the same when you have problems? You talk to her?

293) **D:** Yeah, I do, like a couple of weeks, last week end I think, I just had a couple of days when I felt r e a l l y homesick and I think it was my friend's birthday and I wasn't there and this just reminded me my friends and things (...) and, and I think I thought I was a bit sad and she said to me "do you want to talk about it?" and I spoke and , yeah, it was really helpful..

294) **S:** So between you and Sara there are no cultural barriers ..

295) **D:** No, I don't think so ..

296) **S:** So, you are friends no matter the nationality.

297) **D:** [Yes and I think if there's something] mmm .. and if there is something like a difference I asked her about it and she explains it to me, so it's not like a .. **problem**, it's just {...}

298) **S:** Very good, yeah, of course.

299) **D:** Yeah.

300) **S:** Erm.. ok.. now.. on Saturday the 22nd er... you found it difficult to understand Italian when they talk ALL TOGETHER.

[both laugh]

301) **D:** Yeah.

302) **S:** Yeah? And you say "*tutti parlano a voce alta e si interrompono.* [mmm] *È una grande differenza fra Inghilterra e Italia. Forse gli inglesi sono qualche volta troppo misurati*" What did you mean by this?

303) **D:** [laugh] I think it's again a kind of the politeness and just .. yeah .. but .. I think .. I don't know where I was .. but .. a lot of Italian people were **having** a conversation, but there were having like two or three conversations a t the same time, between a group of them, and I was trying to follow ONE conversation, but then ... I was kind of getting

distracted by another voice, and it's, it's hard to (...) because I have to concentrate quite hard, when there's a lot going on, like if erm...if someone is speaking to me and it's being quite quietly I can understand very well, so when there's a lot of people talking at the same time and high it was really difficult.

304) **S:** Oh my God a nightmare! [*laugh*]

305) **D:** Yeah, and they did quite often interrupt each other [*amused/smiley voice*] and speak quite **loudly**, at first I thought "it's strange" but ..

306) **S:** And now?

307) **D:** I think I got used to it.

308) **S:** Do you like it? Or you'd rather prefer ..

309) **D:** Erm .. I don't dislike it, erm .. it is still strange to see people talking so loudly at the same time, but it's quite, when you are in a group, it's quite **friendly** and so I like it, and it's not a rude, a **r u d e** thing when they interrupt each other, they've got something to say and they say it, so it's quite good, that .. they just say what they want to say.

310) **S:** But when you say "English people sometimes are too .. *troppo misurati*", what do you mean er... *troppo misurati*, you mean they you'd prefer English people being less *misurati*, or you're happy about that, what do you think?

311) **D:** Erm[:] {...}

312) **S:** Would you like English people to be more .. I don't know, like Italian people sometimes?

313) **D:** Erm .. not necessarily louder, because I don't like it though, I think .. [*laugh*] erm .. maybe, maybe it's nice you don't have to wait and wait and wait to say what you want to say, if you interrupt somebody it's nice as well, maybe they don't take offence, I don't know my friend wouldn't take offence but ... I wouldn't ..

314) **S:** And now when you go back, will you interrupt ... I don't know if you say that you've been to Italy, maybe they wouldn't take offence ...

315) **D:** Yeah[:]

316) **S:** Er[:] ...Tuesday the 25th you went to a party, for a graduation and this: and you said "*Sono contentissima*" I'm very happy "*che in Inghilterra tutti gli esami siano scritti, sarei troppo nervosa di parlare*" What did you mean by that?

317) **D:** Erm ... I watched the girl that had .. like the presentation of her thesis, and she was in front of 5 or 7 'teachers, and they were in very posh robes, with these funny huts on, and it was quite .. for 800 it was quite [short pause] really traditional, and she had to stand up and present and they sat there and watched, they asked questions and they ... I just.. and she did really well, even if sometimes she got a bit.. she like interrupt herself

and .. and .. but she just, she did really well, she wasn't nervous, she didn't look nervous at all. But for me, because I'm not used to speak in front of people (...) I don't think I could do it. Because when I do, like, the oral exam, in England, for the languages, I get so[:] nervous before, I can feel my hand are shaking: ... I think if I don't know what to say you can't live a big 'silence or something .. whereas in the written exam if I don't the question, I can go to the next question and 'come b a c k, but with speaking you have to say something [*laugh*]

318) **S:** Mmm, so you prefer the **English** system?

319) **D:** [I do]

320) **S:** Than the Italian one, and do you think, when you go back, next year, maybe you will have to take some oral exams?

321) **D:** Yeah.

322) **S:** Do you think you will be more[:] **confident** about your ...

323) **D:** [yeah I think so]

324) **S:** ... presentation.

325) **D:** Definitely actually, because when I'm having a conversation, just with Sara, and she says something and then I have to, well I don't have to, but (...) I'm, we're used to having normal conversations, and to have to respond to somebody straight away, whereas ... in England, even in the oral exam, it's just like a presentation, it's wasn't really having to react to what somebody else says. So I .. I didn't really know how to speak spontaneously, but now I never know what somebody is going to say so .. I'm used to having to say to .. think something straight away to say, and so.. I HOPE to be a bit more confident. [*laugh*]

326) **S:** I'm sure you will, ok, erm... then you went to this party and you found it really really funny, because there was somebody trying to speak English.

[*both laugh*]

327) **D:** Yeah

328) **S:** What happened? [*laugh*]

329) **D:** Erm, quite often the Italian people like to kind of try out their English because even .. there was this girl's dad, and I think he hadn't actually spoken English for like twenty **years**[:] or something ..

330) **S:** [*laugh*] [oh]

331) **D:** He was really nice, and it was really strange because all of the sudden he thinks of an English word and he kind of shouted across the room to me, just like, I don't know like interrupt, trying out to speak English, and usually I could see ... like if I'd

heard the conversation so I knew when he said something, but this one time he started shouting ‘ankle’ at me, ankle I don’t understand what’s going on, I thought “I missed something”, and then I realised he was having a conversation about his family and was trying to say ‘uncle’, so, so I didn’t want to laugh at him because I thought “I know how it is like when you say something to somebody..” But it was so[:] funny.

332) **S:** [*laugh*] it’s funny to listen to Italian people speaking Ita’ .. erm in English.

333) **D:** Yeah ..

334) **S:** Ok, that’s good, ok, on Thursday the 26th you met a friend but you said “well not really a friend, I don’t really know her very well, but she’s very friendly, and you had a kind of exchange, like 30 minutes speaking Italian and 30 minutes, er, speaking in English, was it a good experience for you?”

335) **D:** [yeah] y e s[:]

336) **S:** Or .. are you still doing it?

337) **D:** yes, I had it a couple of day ago, because, just, I think, she doesn’t study English, she wants to practice speaking in English, so sometimes, the first time we did like 30 minutes in each language, when we met the other day, erm, I would always speak in Italian, and she’d always answer me in English, so we did it differently, which I preferred.

338) **S:** Really?

339) **D:** [*asserting voice*] mm, erm, so, yes it’s quite nice to, to help somebody with her English, and she corrects me a bit, she, like, corrects my mistakes, ‘cause when I speak with Sara, or somebody, if I say something ‘really wrong, she corrects me, but she doesn’t correct every mistake that I make, because we could be here forever ..

340) **S:** Yeah.

341) **D:** And I wouldn’t want, I would feel awful [*laugh*]. But because we meet especially for learning, it’s kind of (...) I like it that she corrects my mistakes, and it doesn’t seem .. to much, and I can help her with her English and corrects her mistakes as well.

342) **S:** So you wouldn’t like Sara correcting you for every single, I mean you don’t make mistakes in every single word [*laugh*] but you wouldn’t like her just saying “oh this is a mistake” or maybe yes?

343) **D:** Mm, if I make, if I say something a lot, like make the same mistake over and over again, then it would be help’, I’d rather she told me. But because I speak to her every day, for a lot ALL the time, I think if she corrected ALL my mistakes, I’d feel like I didn’t, I didn’t say anything, right, because I’m not very good at speaking ..

[*both laugh*]

- 344) **D:** But I think .. if I say something stupid, then .. yes .. I think other things .. you just did kind of, I think the mistakes, it's kind of gradually, I hope, I just gradually make less mistakes, without somebody correcting me all the time.
- 345) **S:** Maybe you correct yourself, because you realise that ..
- 346) **D:** Yeah.
- 347) **S:** Maybe you loose communication, if you, if she starts correcting you every ..
- 348) **D:** Yes, and it wouldn't be like a conversation, it would be like a lesson or so, yeah, I think I'd rather to speak.
- 349) **S:** Yeah, but what you did in the exchange it's good, because you know you're there for .. and this girl is not really your friend? Or is she becoming a friend now?
- 350) **D:** Yeah now, she is really .. I only met her once before we decided to meet up, but she straight away REALLY friendly, like if we had met each other before.
- 351) **S:** Oh that's nice.
- 352) **D:** Yeah, I have found out about the Italians, that actually the first time you 'meet them, it's like, you already know them, they are really friendly, like they touch you and they are like "oh hello, hello", and it's like you already know them, I really like it..
- 353) **S:** Ahh [*surprised voice*] ok that's good good. Erm .. and also you like the fact that ... you can hear erm.. common Italian, because you said "with Sara it's ok, but she has a very" err .. how can I say?
- 354) **D:** [yeah]
- 355) **S:** "*Italiano raffinato*" a very refined Italian, but with other people, especially with this 'girl: Chiara, err, at least you have the opportunity to listen to "*espressioni comuni*".
- 356) **D:** [yeah, mmm ..]
- 357) **S:** So you want to listen to this 'slang' sometimes, you don't ..
- 358) **D:** Yeah I like to, I like to learn something like the swear words and stuff, just because that's the way people actually speak, ad Sara doesn't use those expressions, I hadn't really head them. But I think 'students just use them a lot more, because Sara is quite a bit, well, like, is 10 years older than me, whereas students they'd just say anything, and it's nice to (...) to ... because you can't find those expressions in the dictionary and teachers in England they are never gonna say these things, so.. a good chance to .. hear how people actually speak, not out of the textbooks or something
- 359) **S:** And do you think if know more of this slang, you would be more a part of a group?

360) **D:** Yeah I think I, I think a feel m o r e Italian, because {...} mm... because I wouldn't be a student who speak using the subjunctive all the time, but actually be able.. 'cause the slang is the way of people, it's more part of the way people speak. {...}

361) **S:** Are you using it?

362) **D:** Mm. Something that people say all the time.

363) **S:** ok [*laugh*] I'm not going to ask you what are you using but I can imagine .. eh eh

[*both laugh*]

364) **S:** Ok, ok on Friday the 27th you went to a party, again, and you said "it was very nice"... but I felt a bit er ... excluded "*qualche volta mi sento un po' esclusa perché sono straniera*" ... so what do you mean by that? You felt a bit ... isolated.

365) **D:** Mmm. I think it was because I was in another party for graduation, and it was quite, there's a lot of traditions[:] a n dI just don't know, and 'cause (...) well it's hard to explain, but I didn't know the traditions, so[:] I didn't know what was going on some of the time, so I felt really awful, I don't know ... and a lot of times, not a lot of time, **WHEN I feel** excluded, it's quite often because there's a ... it with jokes a lot of times. And I think because erm....they're quite subtle sometimes, I think it's a quite hard thing, they usually play on words or ...like swear words or ... they're quite particular and also if somebody else is talking, you don't understand, it's a kind of '**annoying** but it's all right, it's kind of **wait** until they change their subject to something I understand. If everyone starts **LAUGHING** and I don't get it, it's a, I don't know it's a ... quite, maybe it's just a more obvious s i g n than a conversation, I don't know if it does make sense.

366) **S:** Yeah it does, do they then change subject or they just carry on with these jokes, when you were in this party for instance, they made these jokes, using Italian humour

367) **D:** Mh mh.

368) **S:** Did they realise that you weren't understanding this 'humour'?

369) **D:** Probably not, really, but I .. I don't really mind, 'cause I don't want them to **stop** or having to explain **everything**. But sometimes I do wish I had somebody there just [*smiley voice*] to t e l l me so I could understand.

370) **S:** Yeah[:], I have many problems understanding the **English** humour. [*laugh*]

371) **D:** Yeah[:].

372) **S:** Everybody laugh, even when you go to the cinema and I think "why are they laughing? Mmm, ok" and I was just pretending, I still have this problem, because the English humour and the Italian humour are quite different..

373) **D:** [yeah, are different are they?] yeah.

- 374) **S:** You have to know the language AND the culture really really well.
- 375) **D:** Yeah, and it is a hard thing to explain. Sometimes I can't explain why it's funny but it is, maybe it's not funny to a person or to another, it can't be because it's not just funny. [*laugh*]
- 376) **S:** [yeah] I think English people they make lots of jokes about, I don't know people they know, yeah? And it's obvious that's somebody, maybe I don't know him, and they make a joke and they laugh and I think "Ah ok" I pretend I understand [*whispering*].
- 377) **S:** [yeah]
- 378) **D:** It's easier just to pretend ...
- 379) **S:** One day maybe when you will know better the language ... the culture .. yeah
- 380) **D:** Yeah[:]
- 381) **S:** Ok, er .. on that day you felt like a bit isolated, and, but you also say "*qualche volta sembra di essere speciale*" so you feel special which is a 'positive thing.
- 382) **D:** Mh mh.. yeah..
- 383) **S:** But maybe, and you said "for Italians, because they like talking with me, but some other times it's like more I am ... different".
- 384) **D:** Yeah.
- 385) **S:** Because of this sense of humour or other things?
- 386) **D:** Yeah, mm ... I think it was sometimes because, like at the party, I just kind of 'people would pay a lot of attention ... and to me because they want me to speak to in English or they want me to do a toast in English to this girl, er ... which was all right, I don't mind, erm[:] ..., so I felt a kind of a centre of attention for a while, and then, but then suddenly the conversation change and they would be laughing at something and I'd be just sitting there, and no one, and they are like not **ignoring** but (...) I don't know ...
- 387) **S:** Just like this, without any ...
- 388) **D:** Yeah, it's a kind of ... it's quite a change, because I didn't feel part of the group, when I was ... being the English one that they wanted to speak English to them, and I didn't feel part of the group when I didn't understand, and it was, well, I didn't know whether I was special or whether I was just different, I didn't *f e e l* part of it, because when people pay attention because they want you to speak English, it's not, it's not like being part of the group, it's still being a foreign person, even if it's in a good way ... it's still being a foreigner, I'd rather be ... just ...
- 389) **S:** Yeah[:], so you would like people to pay attention, not because you are English and they want to speak English, but because it's you! You you!

- 390) **D:** YEAH[:].
- 391) **S:** No matter what your first language is?
- 392) **D:** [yeah I don't] really want to be in the centre of attention, I just want to ... like ...just speak to them, like they were speaking to each other or ...
- 393) **S:** We can, and also ...
- 394) **D:** [yeah]
- 395) **S:** ... maybe because you are the only English person in the group which is very brave for you
- 396) **D:** Yeah[:]
- 397) **S:** I remember when I first went to London I was with a friend all the time, but at the end I had a kind of identity crisis, because they use to refer at us like Sonia and my friend, my friend and Sonia, and I wanted to be just, just Sonia.
- 398) **D:** Yeah[:]
- 399) **S:** And that's it. So I can understand you, yeah. Well, on that day you missed your friends a lot, maybe because of this, you wanted to be part of the group.
- 400) **D:** [y e a h]
- 401) **S:** Do you still miss your friends in your town?
- 402) **D:** I do, yeah, not in a, not often in a sad way, like when I get sad sometimes and I thing "Oh I wish they were here..." If I see something **really** funny I really want to tell them about it or if I have a really horrible day, then I want to them, and sometimes I do miss them, but, but not u s u a l l y in a sad way.
- 403) **S:** When you miss somebody usually is a good feeling because *nostalgia* is related to positive memories.
- 404) **D:** Yeah[:]
- 405) **S:** And are you in contact with them? Do you call them or email them..?
- 406) **D:** Em .. I email them a lot and they email me back, and two of my friends phoned me, which is **really** nice to stay there and speak to them, it's quite expensive, so you can't really do it often .. er ..
- 407) **S:** Do you have, probably like Skype ...
- 408) **D:** Mm... no[:] I've got like msm so ... chatting and stuff, but ... yeah
- 409) **S:** Better then nothing.

410) **D:** Yeah ..

411) **S:** Ok, on Sunday you had dinner with *y o u r* .. flatmate and you say “*cenare e parlare con la mia coinquilina è la mia cosa preferita da fare la sera*” You know..

412) **D:** [yeah]

413) **S:** Why do you like it so much?

414) **D:** I think because er... I just feel really cosy, just being in a house and eating and ... it's like I don't have to do something, I like not having to do something special like go out somewhere, just stay at home and talking. I like the way in Italy meals last for three hours, but it's like, I really like it, you're just there and talk for ages, it's really nice.

415) **S:** Yeah, erm .. you had some **wine** on that Sunday ...

[both laugh]

416) **S:** And you said “Well, *ho trovato che dopo qualche bicchiere di vino diventa piuttosto difficile, ma più divertente.*” Is that true?

417) **D:** yeah [laughing] I just, I wasn't drunk but I couldn't, I couldn't ... work out I wanted to say, and it harder just to make a sentence that made sense. But I think er.. it was quite funny just to hear what I was trying to say, and because we are so, we are so good friends and so it's not oqquard but just funny eh eh..

418) **S:** sometimes people say that when you drink you can be more ... relaxed and you can er.. talk more

419) **D:** Yap [laugh].

420) **S:** but to you ..well you had some problems with ...

421) **D:** I did have yap. [laugh]

422) **S:** Ok. Ok err.. now.. on Tuesday you had, you always have a hard day because you have eight hours at the uni.

423) **D:** [yeah]

424) **S:** So you said “*un altro bel martedì*, I'm joking” and you had another bad day, again, you had to talk in front of the class ..

425) **D:** [yeah]

426) **S:** and you found it difficult but I can see it's a bit *e a s i e r* compared with the first time, so you're getting used to it, **but** again you used the word “frustrante” so, when you say “*lo trovo molto frustrante*” again you found it easier but very frustrating for you..to talk in front of other people..

427) **D:** [mh mh .. yeah] ... and I think it's probably because it's just make ... mmm... it's always **points** out that I'm a foreign student' although there are other, there are quite a few Americans in the class, and we're always... we're all sit together and if somebody doesn't understand the question, we can help each other to work out how to say it. But {...} yeah it just **mix**... points out the difference between me and the Italian students, I think.

428) **S:** Do you think that er..your American friends have the same problem orrr..they are more relaxed about it?

429) **D:** Erm... I think they are a bit more confident about speaking in Italian, so they don't find it quite, as **nerve** breaking to speak erm... and also they study history, so they often know what to say..

430) **S:** They have to know, they should eheh. Ok, but you are quite confident with your Italian now.

431) **D:** Mm. I think **now** because the teacher quite often asks, asks us and now...I don't really mind, I don't mind at all if I can answer better than usual.

432) **S:** That's good. Ok erm... then you did your presentation in Italian, in your Italian class, and you were quite confident, you said.

433) **D:** [yeahh]

434) **S:** And you could notice that not every student was listening [*laugh*], why? Why so?

435) **D:** [*laugh*] I don't know why ...

436) **S:** Was it just your impression or ...

437) **D:** I don't know maybe , maybe they were more... I think it was my presentation because I had already done it, I had already performed in front of Sara and she kind of helped me with it, so I knew the Italian was right, but I think maybe, maybe it wasn't quite interesting and the students were just a bit bored or a bit tired and they weren't just listening, maybe I did the same, I'm sure I did ... but I was standing in front of the class and I could see the kept looking at the **window** or looking at their **shoes** or doing something, and they made me think, maybe they are the aren't listening, maybe I said it wrong, and it kind of, really **put** me off and I'd like repeat myself and ..but the teacher, she was, I think she was pleased with it.

438) **S:** So it was good.

439) **D:** Yeah[:]. This is a funny intuition.

440) **S:** Just your class, maybe they were tired.

441) **D:** Yeah.

- 442) **S:** When they did their presentation, were you listening to them?
- 443) **D:** I tried to, but now actually erm... I went to a talk one day before one of my lectures and it was **so** boring, and I was a kind of, I wasn't listening, I was like duelling my notes or doing something, and I thought "oh but this is exactly what the other students were doing" trying to pay attention more because ..if you're speaking and obviously you're like, she must have put effort in this presentation, but if nobody is paying attention it's really, really off putting I think.
- 444) **S:** Ah, but when you did your presentation with Sara, did she say that it was boring or she was quite happy with it?
- 445) **D:** [nooo] yeah she said it was good.
- 446) **S:** So. Maybe the students were just a bit bored or tired I don't know. And then you said that when you are **very very** tired and then you are angry, it's very difficult for you to speak Italian.
- 447) **D:** Mmm ... yeah .. I think ..
- 448) **S:** So also, when are you angry? When ...
- 449) **D:** When I'm tired and I try to speak Italian, probably eh eh.
- 450) **S:** Ok, so related then.
- 451) **D:** Yeah, I don't usually, I don't usually get angry, because probably this when I'm tired and I want to do something I can't, this makes me a bit annoyed and ...
- 452) **S:** Yeah, but maybe it's normal sometimes when we are tired.
- 453) **D:** Yeah.
- 454) **S:** Ok, erm[:] on Sunday again, erm..., well you feel better because in the weekend you, you were ill ..
- 455) **D:** Yeah[:]
- 456) **S:** But then you said "*dopo due giorni di non parlare molto non è facile ricominciare n Italiano tutto il tempo*" So, again, when you don't speak Italian for one or two days, you think it's very difficult to start again ...
- 457) **D:** [yeah] yeah[:] ... yeah just after a little time that I'm not speaking Italian, it just takes, I can't speak, I can't answer straight away, it takes maybe a little bit more time to make the sentence, but when I've been talking or listening, maybe I just got thi[:] like I've got it round in my head soooo...I can kind of **speak** more on anything.
- 458) **S:** Good, good. Ok sometimes you go to the cinema and you watch movies but you said that you can understand almost everything of what they say and you wrote "*adesso*

posso capire quasi tutto di quello che mi qualcuno mi dice non in un film, ma nella vita reale.”

459) **D:** Mh Mh.

460) **S:** What’s the difference between films and real life? Why?

461) **D:** Erm ...

462) **S:** I mean, why you don’t understand movies?

463) **D:** I think they speak a lot, a lot more .. faster so ... and I think maybe there maybe more slang in it. Mmm... and I’m not sure, I think, the film I went to see it was like a crime one and the plot was quite complicated. And ... so ... erm... (...) yeah, it was just harder to follow what was going on and ... with a film you need to conce’ .. you **need** to follow what’s going on when conversations they change all the time and ... I don’t know...

464) **S:** Would you like to understand films as well?

465) **D:** yeah, that’s ... I thinkif I could understand a film almost all of it, that could be my next thing eh eh .. [*lauhg*]

466) **S:** I think you’ve watched another movie “Cento Passi”?

467) **D:** Mh mh.

468) **S:** And you could understand it.

469) **D:** I could understand quite well, but they used, there was quite a strong accent, er.. Sicilian, Sicilian accent. [*laugh*]

470) **S:** Yeah, and you could understand it.

471) **D:** I could understand bits of it. It was harder than .. than .. I’ve seen films that weren’t hard, and others that were ... I could understand what was going on if maybe not all of the words.

472) **S:** Ah[:] ..

473) **D:** So ..

474) **S:** This is another improvement.

475) **D:** Yeah, eh eh.

476) **S:** I can see that, yeahh. Ok, erm..on Saturday the 11th of November you are very proud of yourself again becuase you said “*prima di venire in Italia pensavo che sarebbe impossibile cavarmela con la lingua, le lezioni eccettera, ma desso me la cavo benissimo*” [*both laugh*] Is it true? So you are really proud of yourself.

- 477) **D:** I think so, with the lessons, especially, ‘cause I thought, I just imagined two hour lecture **all** in Italian, before I came here I thought that would be impossible, I didn’t r e a l l y know what was going on I had to open really English books, so to understand, but actually I think it’s as difficult I had imagined it would be, so...
- 478) **S:** Ohh that’s good, well done. Erm... ok, Sun on Sunday **again** you say[:] “*Oggi mi sono sentita la mancanza della casa e dei miei amici*” So as you said before, Sunday and Sunday, maybe because you are less busy.
- 479) **D:** [oh yeah] Yes I have time to think {...} what about my family are doing or ...
- 480) **S:** [ok, yeah]
- 481) **D:** And things like that.
- 482) **S:** Erm... but then something happened: you went out, and you were with this .. friend, and she was talking and talking. [*laugh*]
- 483) **D:** Oh yeah. [*laugh*]
- 484) **S:** And for you it wasn’t interesting. [*laugh*]
- 485) **D:** For me it was just to listen, it’s not like a lesson, like a...
- 486) **S:** Lecture? Eh eh [*laugh*].
- 487) **D:** It’s like learning when I listen, because for me it’s just practice, which means for me a conversation is like practicing Italian, so ... for me it was an attempt just to listen to her, but she didn’t think a lot. It was like a monologue [*laugh*].
- 488) **S:** Wow!
- 489) **D:** And she was really nice though. [*laugh*]
- 490) **S:** Good good. On Monday you start your week again, and then you say “*Mi da fastidio quando non posso spiegarmi chiaramente: è troppo frustrante*” So, as we said before you found it frustrating when you can’t express yourself. Do you think you are expressing more yourself or maybe better, now than before?
- 491) **D:** I think yeah ...
- 492) **S:** That’s good “*adesso cerco di parlare degli argomenti più complessi e per questo motivo trovo una nuova difficoltà.*”
- 493) **D:** Yeah[:], it’s only being in the last week or ten days I have started to think, I don’t get annoyed, it’s not like I get annoyed all the time, and I don’t ..
- 494) **S:** No[:] of course ..

495) **D:** But it's recently that I started feeling frustrated sometimes, when I try to speak, which is why maybe I **am** improving, but it doesn't seem working.

496) **S:** Mh.

497) **D:** So ..

498) **S:** It's a challenge

499) **D:** Mm.. it is at the moment, but hopefully I get pass to it. [*laugh*]

500) **S:** Ah you will you will. Then you were really, really tired and you wrote in English "I must be improving at Italian" [*laugh*].

501) **D:** [*laugh*]

502) **S:** I must, and ... "because now when I read Italian newspapers I understand the articles, as well as I understand English articles" this is very, very good if you can understand in Italian like in English

503) **D:** Yeah, that was really funny, because I was reading a newspaper like the English one the Italian one and I was explaining a story to my flatmate and I couldn't remember if it was in an Italian or English newspaper, so I didn't know whether it was an English newspaper I had understood, because I'm English, or it was an Italian newspaper and I had understood it without realising it. And I was pleased I had confused the two, because it meant that I could understand quite well. Eh eh.

504) **S:** Yeah! Wow. Erm...ok on Wednesday, again, you talked bout the language and you said "*vedo che dopo un giorno, quando ho molte lezioni, parlo molto meglio*".

505) **D:** Mh mh.

506) **S:** So this is something, you're trying to do every day, speak Italian, listen to Italian, speak and speak, because if you don't speak it or if you don't read it ... you, you find it more difficult.

507) **D:** [*yeah*]

508) **S:** To speak it again, so this is your kind of a **daily** practice. Yeah?

509) **D:** [*yeah*]

510) **S:** That's good. Err .. mmm ... on Wednesday, or, this is ok, this is when you watched the film "*I cento passi*".

511) **D:** Mh Mh.

512) **S:** And you said "it was very important "*e ho capito ogni parola*" [*I could understand every single word*] although there was a very strong accent.

513) **D:** Yeah, no but it was, er .. I think er, it wasn't important that I understood **every single** word, because I didn't understand every single word, but it didn't matter, because I understood the sentence of what was going on.

514) **S:** Yeah, oh yeah, that's right, I misunderstood "*non ho capito ogni parola, perché la storia era chiara.*" Yeah, yeah, that's good. Ok and then on Thursday the 17th you said "*Mi sono accorta che è molto più*" this is very very interesting "*che è molto più sconvolgente quando non hai capito qualcosa della cultura italiana che quando non capisco la lingua.*" Why it is so 'sconvolgente'?

515) **D:** I'm not sure, I only noticed it the other day, like two or three days ago, and it was something really silly, I was in a **supermarket** and I hadn't paid for carrying bag, or something, so it was like, it a really silly thing ... em.. but I just felt really, really not upset, but ... I was just... really ... just felt really different, I don't know ...

516) **S:** But why? What happened with the carrying bag? Did she shout at you? [*laugh*]

517) **D:** No I was just er ... I think it was just something different, and ... it's hard to ask people about (...) I think maybe because this culture and things like Italian people just **k n o w** , where they learn this stuff, they just know it, and stuff that ... it's **hard** to learn and nobody teaches you, things to **do** every day, whereas with languages, if people don't, people expect me to know, people expect that I don't understand every word, and so... they know that looking at a dictionary or using books is a different world. But when it's something like a **custom** that people do, I don't know, maybe I feel a bit a bit rude for not doing it or I won't just say anything 'cause I feel a bit .. strange or ... I don't I was definitively, I was quite upset because, not crying, but I was quite (...) yeah.

518) **S:** BUT what happened with this carrying bag, I didn't get it, did she say something? You had to pay this bag or ..

519) **D:** No, I was with er[:] Sara ..

520) **S:** Yeah.

521) **D:** And I ... I didn't realise that you have to pay for something like that, I don't know, it's just er.., an she had to explain it to me, and it wasn't a serious thing, no one was cross or anything, but I felt, I was just er .. oh ...

522) **S:** You felt like "Oh I should know this".

523) **D:** Yeah, like I should have known.

524) **S:** But how? How could you know it? Because in England we don't pay it, eh eh.

525) **D:** I know it's just a silly thing but I think, and then I'm sure there are other things as well, it just don't knowing when I'm doing it and I ...

526) **S:** Because you would like to know things about the culture ..

527) **D:** Yeah

528) **S:** .. you'd like to have somebody who says "look we don't do this, you do this instead of this"

529) **D:** Yeah [*laugh*] I wish I had known.

530) **S:** Mm .. now do you understand more about the culture?

531) **D:** I think I must do without realising, I must know different things that people do and like doing, like in the supermarket when you **pick** your f r u i t here people put on like a plastic glove..

532) **S:** Yeah.

533) **D:** .. to pick up the fruit, but in England or where **I** have been nobody ever does it [*laugh*]. And it's like a really ... not unfortunate thing, but something **different**, that people are used to, and maybe they think I'm weird that I just pick all the fruit that I like it, so they think maybe that I'm not hygienic or something, I don't know [*laugh*].

534) **S:** I see, I see, and if I use, if I take a plastic bag, in England, and I take the fruit, they may think "oh this is psycho wise".

535) **D:** Yeah, just weird ...

536) **S:** And are these small things that make you feel part of the society.

537) **D:** Yeah, I think it's probably the **small** thing that er .. not more important but, like the big thing, I don't know, maybe the small things people, the Italian people do and I don't realise that we don't do it in Engl.. in England, which is why no one has never told me, because it's not something, it's like to do it without thinking about. And it's like the things they do naturally, maybe I like to start doing as well...

538) **S:** Yeah .. maybe you could write a booklet, before next academic year about cultural tips.

539) **D:** Yeah[:]. [*laugh*]

540) **S:** Why not? You will be very famous.

541) **D:** Yeah, eh eh.

542) **S:** And they will be very grateful.

543) **D:** Yeah ...

544) **S:** Ok. Ok I think we have finished. Er .. just a very last thing, I would like to ask you, do you feel that after two months, your identity is changing? And if so, how?

545) **D:** I think it probably is, I think I probably don't notice all the way, I think I'm more confident, than I was, even just er .. I haven't got my ticket to go home, or I just things like that, I'm not like I was.. like rigid "I have to do this now; I have to be at the lesson at ten o'clock exactly" Now I'm just going like ten past ten and it doesn't matter.

- 546) **S:** This is an Italian attitude, not English, eh eh.
- 547) **D:** Yeah, and I think, I've noticed when I speak I use my hands, all the time, which I never used to do, but now I'm (miming the Italian gestures) ... so which is really not an English thing to do, I think, so[:]
- 548) **S:** When you come back in England, do you think you will be like you are now? Like a different person? Or would you go back to the old Daphne?
- 549) **D:** Er .. I think I will be a bit different, I think so, yeah[:].
- 550) **S:** Are you glad about it?
- 551) **D:** Yeah, I think so.
- 552) **S:** Ok, thank you so much.
- 553) **D:** You're welcome.
- 554) **S:** Thank you, bye bye.
- 555) **D:** Bye.

Source coded in NVivo as: [[<Internals\DAAPHNE\transcripts\2D\) 18.11.6>](#)]

3. Third interview

Audio recorded and photo-based / Length: 00:07:40

Date / place: 13th April 2007 / Ferrara, Daphne's home

Daphne describes some pictures, taken by her, which were representative of her learning environments inside and outside university.



Photo 1

University choir and switching on Xmas lights

- 1) **D:** OK, questa è la foto numero 1, è del coro all'università a Natale. Erm.. e il coro è andato nella piazza, dove c'era l'albero di Natale, per accendere le luci del .. dell'albero. E .. il coro ha fatto .. un giro di 5 posti della città dove ha cantato le canzoni .. per [di]

Natale. Io sono andata con qualche amico .. nella piazza, per vedere .. il coro .. e per ascoltare, perché nel coro ci sono molti studenti ERASMUS, quindi .. è stato .. è stata una sera molto bella .. perché eravamo tutti insieme a Natale e ..

2) **S:** Quindi questa è una foto relativa alla vita universitaria?



Photo 2

The strange graduation parties of the Italians

3) **D:** Sì. (...) Erm... {...} {...} (*choosing the next photo to describe*) ok, la foto .. due, che è della vita universitaria, questa è un'amica italiana che .. è .. ha.. sì è laureata a a.. a novembre, credo. Erm.. e.. (...) erm... (...) most mm... l'ho scelta perché.. le feste della laurea in Italia o anch' ... sì in Italia, in generale, credo, sono molto.. er.. stranø [e] per un inglese, eh eh. Erm .. perché ci sono i vestiti, molto buffi, e.. la festa.. poi le persone vanno in un bar del centro, tutti cantano la canzone ..

4) **S:** [mm]

5) **D:** Erm .. e .. sì sono andata a questa festa della laurea.

6) **S:** E da che cosa è vestita questa? Da .. sirenetta forse, eh eh.

7) **D:** [sì]

8) **S:** Ok, simpatica.

9) **D:** erm .. {...} e poi .. e poi .. {...} {...} (*choosing other photos to describe*). Queste sono della vita .. fuori de[a] ll'università.

10) **S:** Mh mh, sì.



Photo 3

Influence of religion in Italy

11) **D:** Questa è una foto, numero 3. Erm .. del tempio che abbiamo visto stamattina. È .. è enorme, e l'ho scelto perché quando sent' quando ascolto .. er .. il telegiornale o .. quando leggo il giornale (pause) erm.. mi sorprende sempre l'influenza della chiesa in Italia, perché mm.. in Ingh' o mm .. anche per una persona un po' religiosa, la chiesa in Inghilterra (...) non ha questo, secondo me, questo potere o .. quest'influenza {...} mm .. sulla vita .. normale delle persone, mentre in Italia erm... ~~su~~ [al] telegiornale c'è spesso.., dopo .. er .. ~~un articolo~~ [una notizia] dice spesso.. “il Papa dice *bla bla bla*” e ~~per~~ [a] me sembra molto strano, e anche e .. a Ferrara o .. ci sono molti mm .. segni della chiesa, della religione che ..

12) **S:** Quindi questa foto è anche come un simbolo della vita italiana?

13) **D:** Sì.



Photo 4

Sometimes it really is hard to believe I live here

14) **D:** Numero 4. Ah.. questa è [laugh] a Firenze, er.. la settimana scorsa con la mia amica, e non è una vista molto bella di Firenze, ma l'ho scelta perché e'è-[ci sono] anche io nella foto. Erm .. perché qualche volta, quando faccio .. erm .. o quando vado in un'altra città, o quando faccio un giro di-[a] Ferrara, e.. all'improvviso penso “Oh ma io vivo in Italia!” E.. questo è molto erm... per me è stato molto e .. erm .. buo' no, ~~sono stata~~ [ero] molto emozionata quando sono andata a Firenze, anche a Roma e Venezia, le città più famose, quindi l'ho scelta[a] perché [ci sono] io a Firenze {...} erm.. non mi ricordo 5 o 6... [laugh] 5.



Photo 5

The abundance of fiat 500s in Italy

15) **D:** Ok, questa è ~~un~~ [una] Fiat 500, che è la mia macchina preferita ~~del~~-[al] mondo, eh eh.

16) **S:** Mh?

17) **D:** E sì, eh eh. Ma in Inghilterra non *ei* [ce ne] sono molte [e], vedo forse.. una... o due.. in un anno. Ma in Italia e anche a Ferrara *ei* [ce ne] sono **moltissime** e.. quando le [e] vedo voglio sempre fare una foto [LAUGH], che è un po' ... un po' strano, ma per me è emozionante vedere tutte le cose italiane, che mi piacciono, quindi ...

18) **S:** Originale eh?

19) **D:** [eh eh].



Photo 6
Venice really is as beautiful as it looks

20) **D:** Venezia. Numero 6 credo. Sì sono andata a Venezia tre o quattro volte, ma la prima volta che sono andata .. er..., ~~sono stata~~ [ero] molto emozionata, ma .. ho er .. avevo molte *a s p e t t a t i v e* di Venezia, ma non sapevo che ~~forse non sarebbe~~ [fosse] così bella, come sembra nelle foto, ma invece secondo me er... **È** così bella, [come].. sembra nelle foto e nei libri e [in] TV in Inghilterra. Ho fatto questa foto da erm ... dal campani' dal campanile nella piazza, erm .. perché sembra molto bella e dimostra che erm ... non è, anche a Roma, non è.. perché molte città (...) [nella] vita reale sono un po' sporche, mm .. così belle ma secondo me Venezia .. non mi ha .. de l u s a. Mh mh sì.

21) **S:** è la tua città preferita in Italia?

22) **D:** [eh eh] sono divisa fra **Roma**, ma anche Ferrara.

23) **S:** Mm[:].



Photo 7
Why we do not celebrate the "festa delle donne" in England?

24) **D:** E questa ... non ... non è venuta molto chiara, ma questa è [sono] io e quattro amiche tutti e.. tutte studentesse ERASMUS. E.. erm... per.. il gio' alla festa delle donne, che **non c'**è in Inghilterra,

- 25) **S:** [ah .. è vero ...] l'hai festeggiata?
- 26) **L:** [sì] con le mie amiche er ... **tutta** è stata una giornata molto **bella**, perché quando sono andata al supermercato er.. la persona alla cassa mi ha dato fio' erm ... **mimosa** sì, e.. ho ricevuto uno sco' sconto.
- 27) **S:** Sì sì.
- 28) **D:** Erm .. nella libreria e .. allora la sera siamo andate in un bar er .. ristorante insieme e.. (...) [*sigh*] mi è piaciuto moltissimo ..
- 29) **S:** Quindi ti piace la festa della donna?
- 30) **D:** **Sì molto.** [*laugh*]e secondo me dovrebbe essere[ci] anche in Inghilterra.
- 31) **S:** Ok.
- 32) **D:** Er ... e .. e ba' è tutto
- 33) **S:** Ok, bene, grazie.
- 34) **D:** Ok.

Source coded in NVivo as: [[<Daphne's Photo based interview 13 April 2007>](#)]

4. Fourth interview

Audio recorded / Length: 0:32:55

Date / place: 13th April 2007 / Ferrara, Daphne's home

- 1) **S:** Ciao Daphne.
- 2) **D:** Ciao.
- 3) **S:** Molto bene, allora ci vediamo dopo diversi mesi, l'ultima volta che ci siamo incontrate era nove' novembre, se non sbaglio. Ecco vorrei chiederti è cambiato qualcosa nella routine quotidiana, da novembre? Per esempio ti svegli prima o ti svegli più tardi o segui lezioni diverse .. hai amici diversi, eccetera.
- 4) **D:** Eh sì, ho cambiato tutti i corsi, perché tutti ~~hanno~~[*sono*] finite[*i*] a Natale. Quindi adesso faccio tre corsi, uno .. di .. della letteratura angloamericana, er .. che per me è abbastanza facile perché posso leggere libri in inglese; er .. poi faccio anche la poesia francese del cinquecento e .. la poesia.. belga, del novecento. Er .. quindi adesso .. non ho molte lezioni, la mattina, quindi mi sveglio .. un po'.. più tardi di .. prima di Natale. Erm .. ma ho lezione lunedì, martedì, martedì comincio alle .. 2 di pomeriggio e finisco alle 7 e mezza. Che per me è un po'.. (...) non sono molte ore, ma **s e m b r a n o m o l t o** [e] .. è un po' pesante. {...} Erm.. ho lezione anche mercoledì .. , giovedì solo due ore, poi venerdì non ho niente. Erm .. quindi adesso .. vado spesso.. nel centro, più spesso di prima di Natale. E vado in un bar e faccio i compiti fuori, e bevo sì due caffè

forse per quattro ore, eh eh. E sì così, forse sono più .. più rilassata .. e non ... rimango a casa .. mm .. sì spesso.

5) **S:** Quindi stai più fuori, di prima di Natale?

6) **D:** Sì, adesso anche il tempo ~~fa meglio~~ [è migliore] e.. sì sono più ~~comoda~~ [a mio agio] a essere nel centro forse.. e non ho bisogno di stare a casa.. sì.

7) **S:** e per quanto riguarda le persone, le differenze culturali? Perché mi ricordo che prima di Natale parlavamo un po' dell'atteggiamento un po' ostile, oppure queste differenze culturali che no ti piacevano molto. Ora cosa ne pensi?

8) **D:** [sì] erm... ora.. forse perché sono.. andata.. più.. o fors' no, perché ho fatto **più** giri nel centro, erm.. le persone mi riconosco più e tutti dicono "ciao" e[:] (...). E quando vado in un bar il, la cameriera .. erm .. sì mi riconosce, parla con me un po' e[:] (...) sì, anche se solo.. er .. se er .. cammino nella strada, vedo .. spesso persone che conosco, quindi .. er .. tutti sembrano più simpatici, ma è anche solo .. perché sono più[:] (...) sono in giro spesso, quindi (...) sì sono molto più tranquilla, adesso, nella città.

9) **S:** Poi ti senti anche più sicura, per la lingua?

10) **D:** Sì, adesso sì, posso sì al supermercato, alla cassa, posso avere un piccolo discorso, con le persone, sì non ho paura .. anche se non, adesso se non capisco non ho paura di dire.. "ah mi scusi ma non capisco". Mentre prima di Natale, forse ... er[:] ero imbarazzata er[:] di ammettere che non capivo.

11) **S:** E come mai questo cambiamento? Cioè adesso non sei più imbarazzata?

12) **D:** Non so forse ... perché parlo meglio, quindi ~~di~~ ammettere che non capisco .. non è una .. er[:] non è grande .. è normale che non capisco tutto, quindi .. forse perché sono ~~meglio~~ [migliorata], è più facile dire quando c'è qualcosa che non.. che non capisco, che non è ~~tutto che no~~ [che non] capisco [tutto], è solo .. una frase o ...

13) **S:** E per quanto riguarda gli amici? Hai nuovi amici o, non so, più amici italiani o amici inglesi?

14) **D:** [mm] sì ho... più amici studenti ERASMUS, che parlano inglese, ma ho anche .. nelle mie lezioni ho conosciuto (...) più de' degli studenti italiani, er.. non erm.. non usciamo molto spesso insieme, qualche volta, per uno *spritz* , ma non, non siamo molto ~~vicini~~ [stretti] ma[:] (...) erm[:] mm[:] parliamo durante la lezione, e sono.. carini, quindi.. sì ho più amici ingles' o ERASMUS, anche italiani.

15) **S:** Quindi hai socializzato anche con gli studenti italiani?

16) **D:** Sì, sì con una ragazza a .. er[:] i s u o i amici che perché lei erm .. vuole fare ERASMUS l'anno prossimo in Inghilterra, quindi erm.. ci siamo conosciute, abbiamo parlato un po' dell'Inghilterra e Italia e[:] erm .. ~~d e i e~~ [d e i] vantaggi di fare.. un anno ERASMUS e .. e .. sì siamo uscite insieme due o tre volte, quindi [:] sì.

17) **S:** E poi c'è sempre la tua coinquilina, siete grandi amiche con Sara ..

18) **D:** Sì molto. Sì siamo molto amiche, secondo me, e **lei non parla inglese**, quindi parliamo sempre in italiano e usciamo o.. sì spesso al teatro, o in ristorante al cinema .. sì.

19) **S:** E c'è qualcosa che.. ha fatto.. aumentare la tua motivazione? O al contrario c'è invece qualcosa che fa diminuire la tua motivazione, di continuare a parlare italiano o a stare in Italia? Cosa mi puoi dire?

20) **D:** Erm ... la mia motivazione è aumentata, secondo me. Forse perché adesso che conosco.. più persone e italiane, voglio essere capace di.. er.. uscire con un gruppo di ~~tutti~~ italiani e.. di parlare (...) er[:] con il ragazzo del supermercato, con la cameriera al bar di parlare.. [con] più scorrevolezze[a]. Quindi .. sì forse perché ho cominciato a fare più amicizia, adesso vorrei migliorare ancora di più per.. essere più amici, con queste persone.

21) **S:** E le lezioni che segui all'università, ti aiutano per aumentare la tua motivazione?

22) **D:** Sì, secondo me sì, perché adesso erm ... l'ho visto dopo Natale che adesso (...) non faccio troppa fatica a capire tutta la lezione, quindi.. se dopo ... nel senso che ho capito quasi tutto, ... mmm... sono un po' un po' fiera, eh eh, che ho cap' che ho capito, e quando capisco qualcosa voglio fare più, e adesso comincio anche a capire anche la TV, perché è difficile, anche il cinema, ma adesso.. forse è più facile, anche le canzoni italiane (*smiley voice*), posso.. er.. cantare e un po' [*laugh*] in italiano, eh eh, quindi.. sì..

23) **S:** Ma per te la cosa più difficile era capire i film italiani vero?

24) **D:** O i film erm[:] americani, che sono doppiati, i film italiani, veramente italiani, non sono mm .. più difficili, ma è più facile capire dei film americani, o dei film stranieri .. che sono doppiati.

25) **S:** E ora è ancora difficile o un po' di meno?

26) **D:** Un po' meno[:].

27) **S:** E la radio, la capisci?

28) **D:** Mm .. un po', sì il giorn' erm .. non so er .. le notizie.. sì, ma quando[:] ci sono due persone che scherzano e *bla bla bla* è tutto così.. quindi è ancora difficile, ma forse è fa' più facile di .. prima di Natale.

29) **S:** E .. quando parli al telefono? Se parli in italiano è facile o difficile capire?

30) **D:** [er] è **più** difficile capire ~~sul~~ [al] telefono, forse perché non è .. erm .. completamente c h i a r o c'è un po' d' i n t e r f e r e n z a sì, quindi è un po' difficile ma (...), ma non ... non troppo.

31) **S:** Molto bene, ora vediamo un po' il diario che hai scritto. Allora, inizi mercoledì 7 febbraio e .. erm ... e scrivi che hai scritto **mille** parole in italiano “the most I have ever written in Italian” è vero?

- 32) **D:** Sì, sì è vero, ma non **s e m b r a v a** così lungo, alla fine, forse (...) forse all'inizio è stato un po' difficile, per cominciare a scrivere, perché non ho scritto niente per un po' di tempo (...) però .. er[:] non è stato (...) così difficile perché .. perché sono abituata a parlare ... italiano bene abbastanza, non natural' non naturalmente ma.. {...} sì non faccio fatica a scrivere .. o trovo le parole abbastanza ~~facile~~ [facilmente].
- 33) **S:** Quando segui le lezioni, prendi nota in Italiano o in inglese?
- 34) **D:** In italiano, ma se la prof. Comincia a parlare molto molto velocemente, poi scrivo in inglese, perché capisco ma non riesco a scrivere e .. così velocemente, ma .. di solito in italiano.
- 35) **S:** Ho capito, e .. erm .. e poi dici che hai letto più di cento pagine di storia italiana, un libro di storia italiana, eh eh, difficili?
- 36) **D:** [eh eh, sì] erm .. un po' pesante anche, perché in Inghilterra, all'università, non leggo i libri per il corso, forse alla fine, quando devi scrivere il saggio, ma durante il corso no, perché è.. un po' noioso. Ma .. questa volta ho comprato tutti i libri e ho letto, sì, più di cento pagine e che in Inghilterra **non faccio**, quindi ... sì.
- 37) **S:** Ti è servito leggere questi[:]?
- 38) **D:** [sì] anche interessante, eh eh, anche quindi sì.
- 39) **S:** E poi vedo che dici "watching a lot of films in Italian" you watch a lot of films, guardi molti film italiani e ti sembra molto difficile ..
- 40) **D:** Mh mh.
- 41) **S:** E però abbiamo già parlato di questo no?
- 42) **D:** Sì.
- 43) **S:** Piano piano è sempre meno difficile, e poi sei andata a Padova e hai scritto "Padova did have a very Italian feel to it", cosa significa? Cosa intendi?
- 44) **D:** Forse er ... non mi ricordo bene, ma non c'erano molti turisti e.. erm[:] {...} sì le strade **s e m b r a v a n o** un po' come l'Italia viene rappresentata ~~sulla~~ [in] TV. O[:] in Inghilterra, ma non' non così bella. Un po'.. mm.. un po' grigio, ma er.. la forma delle strade, il pavimento, tutto .. così .. er[:] sì sembrava italiano, eh eh, sì.
- 45) **S:** Ok, quindi hai avuto questo feeling, italiano?
- 46) **D:** Mh mh.
- 47) **S:** E anche a Ferrara hai questa sensazione?
- 48) **D:** Sì, molto a Ferrara, **anche** gli edifici sono er .. perché a Ferrara è più storico di .. o {...} mm .. forse non è più storico di Padova, ma **sembra** così, quando si vede la città, secondo me, sì.

- 49) **S:** molto bene, erm[:] poi sei andata a mangiare, con Sara, hai mangiato qualcosa di speciale: i cappellacci alla ferrarese, e dici “I’ll really miss it next year!” Vero?
- 50) **D:** Sì è il mio piatto preferito, lo mangerei tutti i giorni, sono pasta con la zucca dentro e con un sugo di ragù.
- 51) **S:** Quindi apprezzi la cucina italiana e anche la cucina ferrarese?
- 52) **D:** Sì la cucina ferrarese mi piace molto.
- 53) **S:** Molto bene, poi il giorno dopo, il sabato, ti senti molto stressata, ti senti stressata perché .. hai studiato molto e poi sembra che il lavoro che devi fare per Birmingham .. ti stressi. Perché così tanto?
- 54) **D:** Erm.. mm.. perché mm.. non c’entra niente con il lavoro che faccio a Ferrara per l’università, quin’ e non {...} mm[:] (...) è una cosa t u t t a diversa, ma è .. s e m b r a un po’ qualc’ è **qualcosa che devo** fare e non, **perché non ho** lezioni che vanno insieme con il saggio, mm ... non sono immersa mm[:] nel tema, non ho imparato anche se leggo i libri non mm[:] (...) mm ... è tutto staccato dalla mia **VITA** un po’, perché è per Birmingham e **non sono** a Birmingham. Non .. posso parlare con .. i prof. Se ho un problema e[:] (...) anche se il tema mi piacerebbe perché non ho le lezioni e non ho un, uno studio .. er .. completamente m’interessa..
- 55) **S:** E che tema stai analizzando per il tuo saggio per Birmingham?
- 56) **D:** Erm.. ho fatto uno in francese {...} ah di Ferrara della prostituzione a Ferrara, quello è stato più interessante, ma più difficile, perché ho dovuto scrivere in francese. E poi ho fatto l’altro er.. in inglese, sulla guerra in Iraq. È un tema interessante, ma[:] (...) sembra molto un dovere di farlo, perché non sto studiando questa cosa e quindi ...
- 57) **S:** Preferiresti dare gli esami qua in Italia?
- 58) **D:** Sì, sì perché ho seguito tutti i corsi e .. e m’interessano, quindi leggere i libri er[:] sarebbe un piacere un po’ ... quindi anche se è difficile fare un esame in italiano, non è, non è tanto difficile dopo un anno di parlare italiano, anche i prof. sono molto (...) in generale, con gli studenti ERASMUS, sono molto (...) erm[:] gentili, e quindi ... anche se è difficile..
- 59) **S:** Lo preferiresti?
- 60) **D:** Sì.
- 61) **S:** Ok, va bene. Poi vedo che .. vai qualche volta a teatro, qualche volta al cinema, poi hai girato altre città, sei andata a Padova, a Rimini, ti piace viaggiare e uscire la sera?
- 62) **D:** Sì molto, sì viaggiare mi piace molto e l’estate vorrei fare ancora di più, di vedere le città, anche quelle non, perché ho visto Firenze, Roma, Venezia .., ma er[:] ma .. erm .. vorrei anche vedere le città meno famose, ma forse.. sono anche, sì certo, sono anche belle.. più.. più **italiano** perché ci sono meno turisti e .. lì e[:]

63) **S:** Quindi per esempio sei andata in questa piccola città erm... per comprare dei biglietti, e scrivi infatti che “era molto tipica”, “it was very typically italian”, di nuovo, quindi, senti quest’atmosfera italiana

64) **D:** [sì..] c’era[:] la piazza dove c’era[:] il teatro e c’erano persone anziane, in giro, e c’era un caffè .. nella[:] nella strada, e.. erm[:] er .. sì è una città così piccola che non.. forse non.. vedi un’altra persona inglese erm .. eh eh, sembrava così, quindi[:] sì molto, molto più italiano, sì.

65) **S:** Molto bene. Erm... poi dici che c’era.. un.. una manifestazione o uno show, diciamo, per la festa dei diritti, quindi questa è una festa.. che si svolge il 10 febbraio?

66) **D:** Sì, per una settimana, credo, a Ferrara, solo a Ferrara, secondo me. Sì c’erano.. le **bancarelle** con informazioni e.. alla fine.. cera questo spettacolo gratis.. di un gruppo di ragazzi er... delle strade di Bucarest ..erm ... er[:]

67) **S:** Ti è piaciuto?

68) **D:** Sì molto, lo spettacolo sì, e anche che er ... mi piace che anche in una città .. abbastanza piccola come Ferrara, ci sono spesso le cose dei diritti, o ... dell’inquinamento, o le cose[:] er[:] che sono toccate socialmente ... che non ci sono, o almeno nella mia città, in Inghilterra, che è più grande di Ferrara, non ci sono cose del genere, per cui [:]

69) **S:** Ok, poi a proposito di feste, er .. invece quasi un mese dopo, c’è stata la festa della donna, che ti è piaciuta molto, perché?

70) **D:** [sì molto] mi sentivo .. molto .. speciale e.. sì sono andata solo al supermercato, per comprare il latte, e poi la persona alla cassa mi ha dato i fiori e un.. baci’ bacino sì, e ho ricevuto uno sconto.. erm.. in una libreria er.. e tutti hanno detto “auguri”, che sembra molto **buffo** per tutti gli ingle’ le inglese, perché “ma auguri perché sono una donna, ma non è difficile, perché sono io!” Eh eh er.. e poi la sera sono uscita con qualche amica inglese e anche americana.

71) **S:** Quindi ti sei sentita speciale quel giorno?

72) **D:** Sì, molto.

73) **S:** Molto bene, proseguiamo. Er[:] vediamo un po’. Er.. sì abbiamo parlato delle lezioni, qui nel tuo diario parli ancora delle lezioni, e poi **inizia il bel tempo**, perché dici “faceva troppo bello per rimanere dentro”, quindi con questo bel tempo e questo bel sole, ti piace uscire e rimanere all’aria aperta.

74) **D:** Sì molto, anche a **febbraio**, perché in Inghilterra a febbraio ... piove spesso e tira[:] er[:] uscire essere[:] mm[:] non di solito ... eh quindi erm[:] sembra[:] er[:] che[:] di sprecare il bello, bel tempo quando sono a casa e[:] ma è molto difficile studiare, quando er[:] c’è il sole, perché voglio sempre essere er[:] fuori eh ...

75) **S:** E studi fuori?

76) **D:** Sì, qualche volta sì. Sì er[:] in un parco o in un caffè, prendo tutti i libri e[:] e .. sì ci rimango sì per due o tre ore, ma tutti i[:] le persone che lavorano al bar .. a[:] mm[:] dicono che va bene anche così, se compro solo un caffè.

77) **S:** Magari se avessi un giardino eh?

78) **D:** Sì, certo.

79) **S:** Erm ... poi parli di nuovo di Birmingham “mi da fastidio il saggio” “it is stressing me out”, questo è il 18 febbraio, anche adesso è così? Oppure ti senti più rilassata per il saggio?

80) **D:** Ho finito i due saggi per francese quindi, e li ho mandati, quindi sono più tranquilla, ma devo scrivere ancora **uno** per italiano, (...) che[:] dovrebbe essere più interessante, ma sono un po’(...) un po’ stressata perché .. perché devo andare anche all’università, poi trovare il tempo .. forse non andrò a tutte le lezioni perché non posso dare[:] er[:] fare[:] tutto, quindi[:].

81) **S:** Certo.

82) **D:** [mh mh]

83) **S:** Erm[:] poi scrivi che hai un ammiratore, o dici che avevi un ammiratore, e dici “mi telefona tutto il tempo e io non rispondo mai”. Ti dava fastidio?

84) **D:** [non sapevo] erm[:] **all’inizio no**, ma poi .. erm[:] è **s t a t o**, perché non l’ho conosciuto [lo conoscevo], è **s t a t o** molto persistente, anche[:] erm[:] mi ha chiesto erm[:] una volta ~~per~~ [di] andare a bere, qualcosa, e ho detto “er.. forse forse sì un’altra volta”, perché l’avevo visto per cinque minuti, quindi non volevo andare (...) e poi mi ha mandato un altro messaggio e poi, non volevo essere er[:] maleducata, e gli ho risposto. Ma poi un altro dove ha detto “ah sì anch’io penso che sia importante conoscere una persona” (*acting out*) E poi dopo ha detto “e ma devo sapere questa cosa: tu hai un ragazzo?” perché io non ho un ragazzo, ma non volevo ‘mentire, ma non volevo dire no, eh eh, perché dovevo dare questo[:] er[:] segno? Che lui potrebbe continuare a essere così er ... sì, quindi non ho risposto er[:] {...}.

85) **S:** Quindi secondo te è un atteggiamento tipico italiano, il fatto di essere un po’ persistenti?

86) **D:** Non so perché quando l’ho raccontato alla mia amica, lei ha detto “*ah ma sì, forse in Inghilterra i ragazzi non fanno così, ma in Italia sì, è vero che.. er.. i ragazzi sono più*”.. er.. erm.. forward o..

87) **S:** Si fanno più avanti? Sono più aperti..

88) **D:** [sì, sì] più aperti, sì.

89) **S:** Non ti piace molto? Eh eh.

90) **D:** Mm[:] ~~di essere~~ [che siano] aperti **sì mi piace**, ma[:] (...) è ~~stato~~ [era] **ovvio** che io non v o l e v o[:] uscire con lui, quindi (...) non mi è piaciuto che ha, ha continuato[:] quando ho già detto “no!” quindi[:] eh eh.

- 91) **S:** E però è stato un ammiratore.
- 92) **D:** Sì, è vero [*laugh*].
- 93) **S:** Ok, er[:] è molto interessante leggere che parli di politica. Quindi ti[:] ti interessa anche la politica italiana?! Scrivi che appunto il[:] 20 febbraio è caduto il governo Prodi, Prodi.. è un peccato perché hai paura che possa tornare Berlusconi, eccetera, quindi la politica ti.. t'interessa un po'?
- 94) **D:** Sì molto, anche[:] sì in Italia m'interessa, che prima di venire in Italia no sapevo.. sì m'interessa, è sempre sul telegiornale, c'è sempre una storia fra Berlusconi e qualcuno[:] o (...) sì.
- 95) **S:** Guardi tutti i giorni il telegiornale?
- 96) **D:** Sì, mi piace, sì, sì cerco di guardarlo .. spesso, sì.
- 97) **S:** Bene, così ti tieni anche informata.
- 98) **D:** [mh, sì].
- 99) **S:** Molto bene. Poi invece il sabato hai deciso di pulire la casa con Sara, ma per te pulire la casa è una nuova abitudine italiana? O lo facevi anche quando eri in Inghilterra?
- 100) **D:** [sì] erm[:] lo faccio anche in Inghilterra, ma.. erm (...) qui non so se è è una cosa che fa Sara, ma.. qui lo f a c c i o tipo un intero pomeriggio, noi, e facciamo tutto: la cucina, i pavimenti, il bagno .. mentre in Inghilterra l'anno scorso ho fatto una.. ro' *rota* con (...) le mie, i miei coinquilini e abbiamo fatto .. un giorno il bagno, e poi, la settimana dopo, un po', ma qui è più un .. **tutto** insieme eh eh.
- 101) **S:** E ti piace? Oppure lo vedi come un dovere?
- 102) **D:** È un po' come un dovere, ma con un'altra persona non è tanto male, perché possiamo mettere la radio, molto.. er.. molto alta e..
- 103) **S:** [certo]
- 104) **D:** e[:] è più ...
- 105) **S:** Dunque sei andata a vedere un altro film, e ti è piaciuto moltissimo, il film era "*Saturno contro*", un film che ti ha emozionato, e tu dici che è fantastico, e poi la cosa importante è che tu dici che hai capito quasi tutto.
- 106) **D:** Sì, mi ha emozionato, è un film italiano, con.. attori italiani famosi, e[:] er[:] non è .. un film .. con molta azione, è più di un gruppo di amici che parlano molto, sì ho capito quasi tutto, è abbastanza triste e ho pianto ... e sì voglio comprarlo quando è in DVD, perché è fantastico, sì.
- 107) **S:** [ho capito] molto bene, anche qui a Ferrara c'è la tradizione degli aperitivi?
- 108) **D:** Sì, eh eh, anche questo mi piace. [*laugh*]

109) **S:** Oh[:] molto[:]

110) **D:** Sì.

111) **S:** E poi hai avuto una serata molto divertente, con delle amiche, un'amica non era molto su, era un po' giù, perché gli è successo qualcosa, però poi tu dici "*che strano è [sono] stata io la più capace di parlare italiano*", perché ?

112) **D:** [sì] perché le altre due.. sono state un po' ubriache, eh, quindi non hanno parlato molto, perché di solito in un ristorante io[:] non ordino, perché per un italiano è più facile, ma questa volta le altre due no sono state in grado di parlare e così l'ho fatto io..

113) **S:** Mm .. e ti sei sentita un po' orgogliosa quando hai ordinato?

114) **D:** Sì, un po' sì, eh eh, un po' più grande..

115) **S:** Ok, poi un giorno sei andata ad Agenta, e c'erano molte famiglie e hai sentito un po' la mancanza della tua famiglia, ti succede spesso?

116) **D:** [sì] erm .. adesso non mm.. non troppo spesso, ma quando ho visto tutte le famiglie molto felici, sì e.. mi ha fatto contenta, però.. ho pensato "ah ma cosa sta facendo la **mia** famiglia e[:] e[:] sarebbe stato bello di essere con la **MIA** famiglia nella gente, perché era un posto abbastanza bello, sì è un po' ...

117) **S:** E poi si sente l'importanza della famiglia, qua in Italia, vero?

118) **D:** Sì. Sì. ~~La~~ [il] fine settimana, anche a Pasqua c'erano molte famiglie in giro, e le nonne ..

119) **S:** Bene, bene. E poi, dunque passiamo al 12 marzo, hai viaggiato di nuovo, sei andata a Rimini eccetera, il 12 marzo, hai fatto le tue lezioni e poi scrivi una frase interessante dove dici "*bisogna avere un po' di pazienza con una straniera*"; perché parlavi con una ragazza e questa ragazza non ti non ti è sembrata molto simpatica?

120) **D:** No perché lei ha una voce abbastanza bassa, è difficile capire.. erm.. quindi non ho capito tutto e le ho detto, e secondo me forse lei è solo un po' timida, ma non ha ripetuto la frase, quindi non sapevo c o s a dire e[:] {...}

121) **S:** È stato imbarazzante?

122) **D:** Un po' sì, e pensavo[:] (...) ma se tu la ripeti, forse poi **capirò**, quindi basta solo provare un po' più e .. ma .. sì ... forse qualche volta bisogna avere pazienza con qualcuno che non capisce, ma se.. questa persona **ha un po'** di pazienza, poi dopo è più facile parlare insieme e ...

123) **S:** Ma tu .. quando dici "*bisogna avere un po' di pazienza con una **straniera***" tu ti senti una straniera?

124) **D:** Erm .. quando qualcosa così succede sì, un po' perché.. sì perché erm.. non ho capito e... mi sentivo un po' esclusa, e non è successo per molto tempo, forse perché questa volta e.. mi sono resa conto [di] più..

- 125) **S:** Ma in generale non ti senti così?
- 126) **D:** No, in generale no, anche perché questa ragazza adesso la conosco meglio, e secondo me è solo un po' timida e abbiamo parlato insieme e[:] sì.
- 127) **S:** ho capito, anche perché qualche giorno, ora non mi ricordo dove precisamente, però scrivi "mi sembra di appartenere di più alla città", quindi questo senso di appartenenza, *belonging*, quindi lo senti di più?
- 128) **D:** [sì] sì adesso, sì dopo Natale è molto più .. che sono molto più contenta a Ferrara e.. più.. sì mi sento che sì tengo un po' alla città e..
- 129) **S:** Ti senti più integrata?
- 130) **D:** Sì, molto più sì.
- 131) **S:** E poi ti senti .. cambiata? Nel senso che ti vedi la stessa Daphne prima di natale? O ti senti diversa?
- 132) **D:** Sono **m o l t o** diversa, e sì sono meno timida e.. sì se faccio errori (short pause) non è importante, sì sono meno nervosa di parlare italiano, se faccio errori, perché succede.. non, non vuole dire che **non posso** parlare italiano, è solo che .. sono un'inglese che parla, non sono italiana. Quindi.. sì.. sono molto cambiata, eh eh.
- 133) **S:** Molto bene, grazie mille, vorresti aggiungere qualcos'altro?
- 134) **D:** Er[:] no! Basta così.
- 135) **S:** Basta così. Grazie.
- 136) **D:** Di niente.

Source coded in NVivo as: [[<Internals\DAAPHNE\transcripts\4D\13.4.7>](#)]

5. Fifth interview

Audio recorded / Length: 00:13:40

Date / place: 8th June 2007 / Ferrara, Daphne's home

- 1) **S:** Hello Daphne.
- 2) **D:** Hello.
- 3) **S:** How are you?
- 4) **D:** Very good, thank you.
- 5) **S:** So, we are in Ferrara and er .. you are leaving very soon.
- 6) **D:** I know I'm leaving in about ... three weeks time. Erm [:] so .. I'm kinda of looking forward to going home, but I'm quite sad about' no I'm very sad about leaving,

when I **think** about it, and .. yeah, I want to come back to Ferrara, at Christmas or[:] and Ester, eh eh, and summer, to visit again, yeah ..

7) **S:** Why do you feel so sad?

8) **D:** Because I ... really like being here, when I think I really got into... being part of the town, and I know everybody and everybody recognises me and.. [*sigh*] it will sad to leave people .. that I think I know and yeah ...

9) **S:** Do you changed after this experience, well during this experience? Thinking about when you arrived, and ...

10) **D:** [*yeah*] I think, I think so it's quite .. I was really nervous when I arrived and I found it hard to speak to people, and I found it quite hard .. to get to know at beginning, 'cause I was nervous of making **mistakes**, as soon I spoke Italian and.. but now er.. (...) I don't mind if I make mistakes because .. people still understand what I'm trying to say, and everyone is really friendly and (...) [*sigh*] I think I'm a lot more **confident**, about speaking Italian, and I just get out and meet people in general .. yeah ...

11) **S:** Do you think your Italian has improved?

12) **D:** **DEFINITELY** , eh eh, yeah.

13) **S:** You're able to communicate, to say whatever you want in Italian?

14) **D:** **Pretty** much, yeah, sometimes' sometimes I do struggle, especially if I'm tired or.. or if I have been speaking English for like' with **friends** or something, and I try to speak Italian again, sometimes I get really confused (...) [*sigh*] but er[:] (...) but I think I could .. probably try and have a conversation about' pretty much anything I say.

15) **S:** And what about the environment and the people? Because I remember in the beginning we said er[:] you said that people seem a bit **cold** and sometimes not really polite, what do you think about it now?

16) **D:** [*mm*] I think erm.. maybe' it just take a bit of t i m e (...) when people' because I think, because Ferrara is so **small** .. everybody **recognise** each other, or they know each other, and, you know, when there is somebody they don't know, maybe you feel more like an outsider because it's **such a small**, such a small environment. (...) [*sigh*] but then, when they recognise you, it makes you feel even **more** part of the town, I think. So .. yeah, now everybody is really friendly and they're lovely.

17) **S:** They recognise you.

18) **D:** [*yeah*] yeah, yeah, even if I don't .. like even if I don't know their names or anything, people say "hello" and .. that's really nice .. er[:].

19) **S:** Are you happy about your choice erm .. about Ferrara?

20) **D:** Yeah!

21) **S:** You wouldn't change it.

- 22) **D:** No. Definitively not.
- 23) **S:** Ok, and are there any particular situations, where you still feel nervous, here in Ferrara?
- 24) **D:** Er[:] mm[:] {...}
- 25) **S:** And you .. you think about some constraints maybe for your ...
- 26) **D:** I **don't** .. think so ..
- 27) **S:** Or maybe not ..
- 28) **D:** [maybe] if I was in rebuff ... Italian people, like if there were all Italian and I was the only foreign person and .. that may be a bit difficult because .. when people are in groups they talk **loud** and they talk at the same time and they talk more quickly (...) but .. I don't think so, and .. not really.
- 29) **S:** And are there any cultural differences that you dislike, still, or maybe you got used to them?
- 30) **D:** Erm ... I think I probably got used to most things, I still try to queue for everything, I'm always like "please and thank you" and...things like that, but I think once you realised that what seems to be **r u d e** lots of times is .. is not because they are rude, it's just (...) a different way of being and (...) so you can get used, I think I'm probably used to most .. to most differences now.
- 31) **S:** And are you like that as well?
- 32) **D:** I don't know, I think' I think I probably have' picked up a few habits like (...) erm... like in Italian when you say.. "*dimmi*" or something like that, then now when I speak to someone in English I'm like "tell me", eh eh, and it's just like a bit.. a bit ...
- 33) **S:** It's a bit rude in English if you say it?
- 34) **D:** It would be like "oh ok! Hang on ... " it's sounds like if you're **ordering** somebody to tell you **RIGHT NOW** and[:]
- 35) **S:** [*laugh*]
- 36) **D:** And ... yeah, and like' when you say "**ascolta**" it's like **LISTEN**. It's sounds like ... like you're r e a l l y ordering something .. yeah.
- 37) **S:** Ok, and anything in particular special about Ferrara, and about your experience here as an ERASMUS student?
- 38) **D:** Mm ... I think .. just getting to know people, and being in a small town is really nice (...) because you get to know just the people who are working in the town and.. I think it was really **special** being part of a small town.
- 39) **S:** Do you feel more European now?

- 40) **D:** Yeah, definitely! (...) definitely, I think .. probably ‘cause I got to know another.. another European culture, it is quite different from English culture, I think. And also I think erm.. probably because’ Britain is like an island, we’re quite far away from Europe, but Italy is mm[:] (...) mm[:] kind of ... it’s m o r e the European country, like, because is nearer the other countries isn’t it? It seems to ... play a bigger role in Europe, or[:] or be **willing** to be more of a part of Europe, whereas Britain is always like “mm... I don’t .. should we be with Europe? Or should we stick by ourselves?” whereas Italy is a part of Europe, so[:]
- 41) **S:** And now you told me, you’re going to France?
- 42) **D:** Yes, yeas I am, for a month to do an intensive language course (short pause) which I’m not looking forward to.
- 43) **S:** Why?
- 44) **D:** I think, I think probably because it’s .. it’s gonna be like going **to school**, it will be 9 till 5, and I think it won’t be ... very easy to be .. it won’t be like a **cultural** experience, I think it will be like just a **course**.
- 45) **S:** Is it a part of this ERASMUS project as well, or you’re going..
- 46) **D:** [no] it’s not ERASMUS, but it’s obligatory for students, because I spent the all year in Italy, I **have** to go to France, so it’s founded. I don’t know if by the university or by the European Union or what, but (...) we have to go so.. hopefully I’ll be all right, but ...
- 47) **S:** And what about the[:] your opinion about the university, the Italian university system? And.. have you taken any exam? Or .. did you like them or not?
- 48) **D:** Erm .. yeah .. I did an exam, last week, which was an oral exam, because almost all the exams are oral, which erm ... was quite a change because in England all the exams are written. I was quite’ no, I was **very nervous** in the beginning, I was shaking and I was so nervous (short pause) erm.. another time I did not, I didn’t like it at all, because (short pause) because there were like four exams going on in the same room, and there were other students who were **waiting** for the exam in the same room, so.. one of the teachers kept saying “be quiet, I know it’s a public exam, but you have to be quiet” but it seems to be stupid to do four exams in one room .. and have all students there, but say “you can’t t a l k and (...) I don’t know, it was a bit, a bit odd. Erm[:]
- 49) **S:** [how] did it go, your exam?
- 50) **D:** It was all right, eh eh, even the teacher was **so nice**, I think he liked the foreign students, because he gave me and my friend the top marks. Even though, eh eh, .. yeah.
- 51) **S:** [sei contenta?]
- 52) **D:** Yeah, I think, even though, we did, or I certainly answered something wrong, I think he was like “wow, you did well”. And with the exam all in Italian, so (...) it was kind of hard, in two weeks we had to know the’ the materials for the course that we had to do the exam in another language, so.. that was nice of him, eh eh.

- 53) **S:** [mh mh] was it compulsory for you to take this exam? Or it was your choice?
- 54) **D:** No, was compulsory, we have to do one exam in each semester (...) so .. I've chosen to do this one, because it was about French, which I have to study (...) erm...
- 55) **S:** And if you had to compare the Italian university system and the English system which one would you prefer?
- 56) **D:** Erm ... I think the English system is fearer (pause) or I think the English system is better because (...), for example if I'd done this course in England, for the exam, I probably would have had to write a two-hour essay on it, and I could **not** have done it this year **at all**. Or[:] I could have .. because even the speaking exam, even if you don't know the stuff, you can kind of make it up as it go, like you can plug it, really, but when you've got to write an essay, like for two hours, you've got to know the things, you can't just make up ... like kind of blinders row, you've got to know... so I think in a way (short pause) some making it .. it's probably a bit harder, in a way, for making **y o u l e a r n** the course material it's probably better, I would say.
- 57) **S:** [mm] ok, and do you have any advise for future ERASMUS students? Mm.. any' anything you'd like to say or..?
- 58) **D:** Erm .. yeah ... erm... I think at the beginning "don't worry" if you get er .. if you just wanna go home, because.. **I did it** at the beginning, I thought "I never gonna found a house, they speak a different language (...) but I think it was normal, at the beginning, and then er ... so "don't worry if at the beginning it is a bit **horrible**, but then you've got to like it and get to know.. the people who live in the town and.. (...) I think that's really' important. Yeah.
- 59) **S:** And do you, do you suggest erm ... erm ... future ERASMUS students, to go and live in a smaller town or bigger town? And some tips er[:] for .. to enjoy it better this time.
- 60) **D:** [yeah] I think erm... **DEFINITELY NOT** like Florence or Venice, or.. a town.. because even I can speak Italian quite well, but even when I go there, and even if I speak Italian ... like perfectly... the people still speak to you in English! So even you KNOW how to speak Italian, if they know you're English, and they'll to you they speak to you in English. I don't think sometimes I like to.. I like they practice their English, so I **DEFINITELY NOT** recommend that. I think maybe {...} maybe in terms about the **size** of Ferrara, like not .. tiny like' a village tiny, because then probably you would feel {...} a bit even more .. homesick probably, if you were in a really small place, {...} erm {...} {...} yeah .. maybe somewhere NOT a tourist place, I think, definitively and ..
- 61) **S:** And what about going out with other ERASMUS students?
- 62) **D:** YEAH I think that's good. Mm .. but .. maybe when you got a time not to speak English, even with the other English students, maybe you speak Italian together or .. or .. if you get to know, I don't know, somebody who's German and then you have to speak Italian to each other and then[:] (...) even if you go with ERASMUS students, try to make friends with Italian students as well ... because, 'cause otherwise you can end up speaking English all the time, yeah.

63) **S:** And if you could change something about erm[:] the ERASMUS er[:] system, how it is organised and, I don't know, communications, if there was something you could change, what would you change?

64) **D:** (...) er[:] I think, probably more... advise and guide, and some information **before** you go, because .. although the university of Birmingham was good, they did try like arrange meetings and things, we didn't really know {...} when we got here, when you finally get to Italy, (...) it.. it does feel like you are completely by yourself, mm.. so things maybe or maybe.. regular.. like an e-mail once a month, once every two months, from university .. just to[:] (...) just to know you're still in contact, because I haven't know from Birmingham a l l year. (...) which is quite {...} I don't know if I need it, I don't need anything from them, but if I did I don't **think** .. I don't know it wouldn't have been very easy to[:] (...) to be in contact. So maybe ... yeah .. just ... just to know that they're there and they haven't just **abandoned** you for the year.

65) **S:** And .. what about the **exam** system, are you happy with that? Because you have to[:] write the project.

66) **D:** [yeah] I didn't mind doing the exams here, erm[:] (...) but I think' with the project we had **to do**, it wasn't or some of them, I had to do before, and I think either two or three of them weren't related to the courses that I was doing in Italy[*sigh*] which meant that, although I was still following my courses, I could do the exams at the end, I was also having to study something else, I **never** had any lectures thorough, I didn't have the tutor really, to discuss it with, so that was a bit difficult, to study two things at the same time and .. mh.

67) **S:** You would have preferred just to .. attend the Italian lectures and..

68) **D:** [yeah] and then do the exams, yeah[:].

69) **S:** .. ok, anything else you would like to add?

70) **D:** [erm...]

71) **S:** In our last interview?

72) **D:** Erm... I don't know what to say, no..

[*both laugh*]

73) **S:** In general? Erm[:] your general impression about this er[:] ERASMSUS experience?

74) **D:** [er] I really loved it, and I will be very sad to leave.

75) **S:** Oh[:] are you ready to go back?

76) **D:** [eh eh] erm.. I'm really keen to see my friends, again, but .. I think once I've been in England for a few weeks I'll probably miss Ferrara, a lot, so..

77) **S:** Ok, thank you very much.

78) **D:** Thank you.

Source coded in NVivo as: [[<Internals\DAAPHNE\transcripts\5D\) 8.6.7>](#)]

6. Sixth interview (first part)

Audio recorded / Length: 00:05:29

Date / place: 21st November 2007 / University of Birmingham, School of Education

- 1) **S:** Ciao Daphne.
- 2) **D:** Ciao.
- 3) **S:** Come ti senti?
- 4) **D:** Bene grazie. Molto bene.
- 5) **S:** Allora, siamo .. a Birmingham, quindi.. facciamo un'intervista.. nel posto appunto dove hai studiato per tanti anni, e sei tornata, appunto, dall'Italia, ecco come ti senti qua di nuovo .. a Birmingham? Com'è stato il tuo rientro?
- 6) **D:** Erm[:] è stato molto .. strano ritornare .. all'università, e quando sono arrivato, no, quando sono arrivata erm[:] ho dimenticato dove sono tutti gli edifici e ... **sembrava** un posto molto diverso, però adesso, dopo qualche settimana, sembra che non sono mai stata in Italia. Sembra anni fa adesso, che è un po' triste, ma .. è un bel ricordo comunque.
- 7) **S:** E come hai trovato l'università all'interno, le lezioni .. i tuoi colleghi .. sì qui a Birmingham?
- 8) **D:** Erm[:] (...) è molto diverso dall'Italia, c'è molto da fare.. erm.. er[:] {...} e sembra.. è molto pesante o molto più lavoro, che in Italia, e.. anche i miei colleghi, tutti sono.. molto stressati, eh, quest'anno, quindi è molto[:] è un po' difficile tornare a.. un'atmosfera di.. di **vero** studio, perché in Italia, come studentessa ERASMUS, non avevo tanto da fare in realtà, quindi[:]
- 9) **S:** Quindi l'ambiente è più rilassante in Italia, dal punto di vista dello studio?
- 10) **D:** Sì molto, anche dal punto di vista del.. dei prof. er[:] per esempio uno può .. arrivare dieci quindici minuti in ritardo per una una lezione, non c'è problema, è normale. Invece a[:] a Birmingham [*il sistema*] è molto più[:] erm[:] {...} organi' non organizzato, ma più erm ... **stretto** [*severo*]!
- 11) **S:** Bene, senti e per quanto riguarda i tuoi colleghi, come ti sono sembrati, insomma, dopo un anno che non vi vedevate?
- 12) **D:** All'inizio è stato molto strano, perché non ci siamo visti da molto tempo, e tutti hanno avuto un'esperienza.. molto.. diversa.. dagli altri e[:] {...} e adesso parliamo molto tutti bene l'italiano, con accenti diversi e[:] erm. . cono' conosciamo cose diverse dell'Italia e[:] sì abbiamo tutti vissuto esperienze molto, molto diverse direi.
- 13) **S:** E ti sembrano cambiati loro, come persone?

14) **D:** Erm .. sì un po', sì quelli timidi adesso sembrano più[:] erm .. estroversi, hanno più .. erm .. confidenza, erm .. però mi erm[:] mi ha sorpreso anche che erm.. per esempio la prima lezione Paola ha chiesto "chi vorrebbe tornare a vivere in Italia, anche per due o tre anni?" e s o l o tre o quattro, quattro persone hanno detto "Sì", e ho detto "*Ma come? Perché non vole' non volete tornare?*" Io sì, eh eh.

15) **S:** [e tu?]

16) **D:** Eh sì, eh eh.

17) **S:** E tu ti senti cambiata?

18) **D:** Sì molto, non sono così timida come prima e[:] (...) adesso non m' importa quel che pensano gli altri, invece prima, forse perché in Inghilterra {...} erm[:] l'atmosfera è diversa e[:] in Italia è più libera. Quindi adesso sono più .. me stessa.

19) **S:** Molto bene, senti e come passi le tue giornate, qui a Birmingham, generalmente?

20) **D:** Erm[:] ho molti, molte lezioni mm. Devo svegliarmi abbastanza prima, adesso, [cough] erm.. e.. te o quattro giorni della settimana, sono in campus tutto il giorno, dalle nove alle sei, e poi la sera studio un po', non molto perché voglio riposarmi un po', e non ci sono molte possibilità per uscire, perché anche tutti gli altri vogliono studiare, è molto più.. ~~serioso~~ [serio].

21) **S:** E il fine settimana?

22) **D:** Studio, sono andata erm.. a trovare amici che vivono vicino, ma a d e s s o voglio erm.. rilassarmi un po' di più, ~~la~~ [i/l] fine settimana, perché la settimana è molto, è un po' difficile, quindi.. (...) erm.. voglio guardare i film, italiani o francesi, per studiare, ma anche rilassarmi allo stesso tempo, eh eh.

23) **S:** E stai praticando il tuo italiano?

24) **D:** Sì .. non tanto, è .. è difficile trovare opportunità per parlare perché gli studenti ERASMUS italiani vogliono parlare inglese, e in Italia quando gli italiani hanno parlato inglese con me, ho detto "ma no, non è giusto, eh eh, quindi.. voglio parlare inglese con loro, perché ... è meglio. Erm[:] però.

25) **S:** Quindi conosci molti studenti ERASMUS?

26) **D:** Sì quest'anno ci sono molti, e sono molti, sono tutti amichevoli, e vogliono .. essere amici con gli inglesi, sì e .. sì sono molto, sono molto divertenti, quindi è bello.

6. Sixth interview (second part)

Length: 00:05:34

27) **S:** Ma .. Parli italiano ogni giorno?

28) **D:** No! Erm[:]

[both laugh]

29) **D:** Erm[:] ho un coinquilino italiano e cerco di parlare con lui, ma anche lui voglio, vuole parlare.. inglese, un po'. Però.. ascolto spesso la.. radio.. sull'internet, e all'università parlo italiano due o tre giorni alla settimana, anche con gli italiani qualche volta. Però .. le lezioni d'italiano sono in inglese, che non mi piacciono, no, e non .. dobbiamo scrivere .. erm[:] i saggi in italiano è tutto in inglese, a parte d e l l a traduzione, ma tutto l'altro è in inglese. Quindi ...

30) **S:** Quindi preferiresti che fossero tutte in italiano?

31) **D:** Sì! Sì sarebbe difficile scrivere tutto in italiano, ma sarebbe meglio.

32) **S:** Senti e hai ancora contatti in Italia? Qualche amico italiano o[:] la tua ex-coinquilina..

33) **D:** Sì, la mia coinquilina mm.. ci scriviamo spesso via e-mail o una lettera.

34) **S:** In italiano?

35) **D:** Sì, in italiano. Ma adesso vuole, eh eh, parlare inglese, perché vuole venire in Inghilterra. Che non è mai, non è mai venuta. {...} E poi a dicembre erm[:] andrò a Ferrara, per.. per trovarla ancora e.. però un po' mi rilasso, eh eh.

36) **S:** Sei contenta che andrai di nuovo in Italia?

37) **D:** MOLTO. Perché la settimana scorsa ero di un umore terribile, quindi sono andata a casa e ho prenotato il volo, eh eh, subito, non vedo l'ora di tornare e allo stesso tempo di .. sì in Italia, di tornare.

38) **S:** Come mai questo umore terribile? Il tempo, l'atmosfera a Birmingham, l'università, cosa ti fa sentire così?

39) **D:** Erm .. il .. lavoro, perché c'è molto, molto da fare, è difficile trovare il tempo per tutto, anche[:] {...} erm[:] è difficile perché dobbiamo anche pensare di trovare un lavoro per l'anno prossimo, quindi è difficile fare lo studio e poi pensare di lavoro, erm[:] perché si deve erm[:] cercare il lavoro adesso e .. non si può aspettare.

40) **S:** È molto stressante quindi?

41) **D:** Mh mh, c'è molto da, molto da pensare, e da fare .. quindi sì.

42) **S:** Bene. Senti ma questa esperienza ERASMUS, quindi l'anno all'estero che hai fatto, ti e' servito?

43) **D:** Sì molto, anche per la lingua **moltissimo** e.. e per la confidenza per parlare, perchè adesso anche se faccio errori e.. capisco che non e' molto, non e' tanto importante perché ora.. Non importa se faccio errori, a volte, e' più importante di.. Provare. E poi anche.. nella lingua, ma anche come un'esperienza in generale, per me stessa, nella vita, perché una cosa che.. ricorderò per sempre.

44) **S:** Quindi in generale pensi che sia stata un'esperienza positiva, negativa o

indifferente?

45) **D:** Molto, molto positiva, non è negativa.

46) **S:** E per quanto riguarda invece la tua motivazione? Pensi che l'anno all'estero sia stato d'aiuto per la tua motivazione? Oppure erm .. no? Cosa ne pensi?

47) **D:** Erm[:] mi ha aiutato molto per la motivazione, perché adesso capisco più della cultura italiana, quindi voglio ancora di più provare a scoprire le cose. Erm ... adesso vorrei tornare, quindi voglio studiare di più, sembra che sono una par' non una parte dell'Italia, ma ho vissuto nel paese, quindi..

48) **S:** E ti senti più europea ora?

49) **D:** Sì, perché er .. erm .. ci sono gli stereotipi degli altri paesi, ma quando uno vive in un altro paese si capisce perché gli italiani sono così.. e non è ... si capisce perché capisci un'altra cultura e..

50) **S:** Quindi pensi di aver capito la cultura italiana, o perlomeno adesso di poterla accettarla meglio?

51) **D:** Sì, spero di sì.

52) **S:** Ti senti un po' italiana ora?

53) **D:** Un po' sì, eh eh.

54) **S:** Per esempio cosa fai di italiano? Che non è tipicamente inglese ...

55) **D:** Erm[:] sono più rumorosa di prima e.. non voglio aspettare [*laugh*].

56) **S:** Fai la fila?

57) **D:** Mm[:] non voglio [*laugh*].

58) **S:** Ascolta un'ultima domanda, se tu er[:] dovessi dare dei consigli per i futuri studenti ERASMUS, che tipo di consigli daresti? Cosa gli diresti?

59) **D:** Mm[:] erm[:] anche se sembra difficile all'inizio, perché è difficile, (...) erm .. bisogna aspettare perché poi diventa un'esperienza **fantastica**, anche bisogna .. essere amichevole [*i*]e .. provare ~~di~~ [*a*](...) parlare con gli altri e ~~di~~ [*ad*] accettare gli altri come sono, erm[:].

60) **S:** Va bene, grazie mille Daphne, grazie ciao.

61) **D:** Ciao, eh eh.

Source coded in NVivo as: [[<Internals\DAPHNE\transcripts\6D 21.11.7>](#)]

ILARIA

1. First (group) interview

Audio recorded / Length: 00:10:13 (interview includes contributions from other interviewees who withdrew from this study-these contributions were transcribed but are not included here because of space constraints)

Date / place: 16th October 2006 / Cagliari, in a café by the University

- 1) **S:** Eh ... ciao come ti chiami?
- 2) **I:** Eh .. mi chiamo Ilaria..
- 3) **S:** Hello Ilaria, shall I ask you some questions?
- 4) **I:** OK, yeah, that's fine.
- 5) **S:** OK, to what extent was the 'year abroad' a factor that contributed to your choice to study Italian at the University of ... erm[:] Cambridge?
- 6) **I:** Erm ... well, I knew I wanted to study languages erm ... so the year abroad back... it didn't contribute that much 'cause I would have done a languages degree, whether there was the year abroad or not. But when I saw there was the year abroad I thought {...} "Cool, a year of holiday, that good" Eh eh.

[...]
- 7) **S:** OK, thank you very much. Very interesting. OK let's see ... erm ...Lily, no, eh... Ilaria. Ilaria have you been to Italy before and if yes, when and why?
- 8) **I:** The first making to a trip was 2002 and I went to Milan ... ah for a shopping weekend for my mum's birthday. And then the second time I went to Florence to do a language course and... it was for six weeks, and that was in the summer 2004...and since then I have been to Florence a couple of more times to do another course, and I have been to Venice and .. Siena.
- 9) **S:** Did you like it?
- 10) **I:** YES. YES. But I have come to Cagliari because I want to sort of discover a bit of Sardinia and not just the mainland of Italy.

[...]
- 11) **I:** Ehm...I expect to ... improve my Italian, ehm... because that's the aim of .. my year abroad, my university course, and I hope I'll be fluent by the time I leave. And I also expect to understand a bit more about the Italian culture and the Italian way of life. And so hopefully, within a year time there will be no mysteries and I hope I'll be able to

understand like ... why the Italians don't queue and why they like beeping their horns on their cars and stuff like that.

[...]

12) **I:** Erm... I did German at the University, so my level of German is the same as my Italian, and then ... I did French at school but ... it's kind of fading RAPIDLY.

13) **S:** And why and when did you learn them?

14) **I:** Ehm[:] well ... my parents both speak French so ... I have been learning French since when I was tiny... and ... erm... German I started learning it at school and didn't want to stop, so I ... still do German.

15) **S:** OK, and why language learning did become interesting for you?

16) **I:** Erm ... since I was little 'cause my parents they were always trying to teach me French, and they always sent me on courses and stuff to do it, so ... even since I was little I was good at languages and that's why I wanted to do it at University, and then became interesting.

Source coded in NVivo as: [[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\1IL 16.10.6>](#)]

2. Second interview

Audio recorded / Length: 00:17:16

Date / place: 3rd December 2006 / Cagliari, Poetto Beach

1) **S:** Hello Ilaria, how are you?

2) **I:** Fine, thank you.

3) **S:** Are you happy ... that you are in Cagliari?

4) **I:** Erm[:] yeah I think I'm happy here, although sometimes life can be a bit **boring**, because there is not really so much to do **HERE**.

5) **S:** Would you like to live in a bigger city? Or[:] **DO** you regret your choice of .. Cagliari?

6) **I:** Erm[:] I don't regret my choice, because Cagliari is probably the same size as Cambridge. But it's just when I'm in Cambridge I always have work to do for Uni, so it keeps me occupied, but here because like, we have lectures, but we don't have to do any work for them, and it's like **more** Self-motivating, and it's quite difficult to make myself to do extra work.

7) **S:** Ah[:], so do you think that your ... motivation would be higher if you had more ... work to do, more lectures ...?

- 8) **I:** Definitely! And also because the lectures aren't compulsory, and it's really to think "I'm a bit tired today, I'm not, I'm just not gonna go. Whereas if I were in Cambridge, the lectures would notice if I weren't there, and you get told off if you don't go there, whereas **here** no one really cares, that's make it a bit hard.
- 9) **S:** So do you think your motivation is decreasing over the time? Or it's the same maybe?
- 10) **I:** Erm ... it's probably decreasing, like sometimes, a lot of the times I get up quite late, in the morning, because I know there isn't anything to do here. And I think "If I get up earlier I just could feel more **bored**."
- 11) **S:** So, can you tell me something about your daily routine? What do you usually do, your **weekly** routine, every day from Monday to Sunday.
- 12) **I:** Er .. [*laugh*] it's sounds really bad, but I normally get up at about 10 o'clock. And then... I just sort of rambling around the flat, really doing not so much .. because my flatmates they're often there around lunch time, so we're sort of mess around together, and we always have lunch together in the flat. And then.. we watch TV, and normally, we probably go out around 5 o'clock and the shops are open. Some days I go to lectures but I don't have many lectures, because I follow two courses I do: Italian literature and history, and that's only four hours a week of lectures. So it's not really so much to do and in the evening I have dinner with my flatmates, and sometimes we go out, we may go to some bars with some friends or ... some of our Italian friends may come around. Generally days are a bit like that: very l a z y in the morning and we do more in the evenings.
- 13) **S:** What about Saturday and Sunday?
- 14) **I:** Mmm .. Saturday and Sunday just follow the same patterns, really. Normally on Saturday morning I get up a bit earlier and I go to the shops on my own, like go shopping a bit ... erm ... and then Sundays I just stay at home maybe tidying things up...
- 15) **S:** Ok, so do you get on very well with your flatmates?
- 16) **I:** I think that since I've moved in we've become like sort of Best friends, they treat me like everyone else, and ... ALL their friends have become my Friends, so whenever They go out, they ALWays invite me, they don't just leave me at home, just like the English girl who lives in front.
- 17) **S:** Oh that's nice.
- 18) **I:** Yeah.
- 19) **S:** So you feel part of their .. group of friends.
- 20) **I:** Yap, definitely. Like ALL their friends, they are REALLY nice to me. If I MEET one of their friends in a street, without them, they stop and talk to me, it's really, really nice.

- 21) **S:** Mm, ok, very nice. So do you have many friends, here, in Cagliari?
- 22) **I:** I think I have. Most of my friends are Italian, and ... I haven't got any friends I've made without the help of my flatmates, or their friends who have become my friends. 'cause I think in lectures it's quite hard to make friends with Italian, they don't really want to make friends with English people. And also because when we go to lectures, me and Keith and Tara and Gemma, we always stick together, so it's like all the international people at the back, so the Italian, I think, they don't want to mix with us for that.
- 23) **S:** Have you tried to mix with Italians, during the lectures?
- 24) **I:** No [*laugh*], not really eh eh. But you find that, I don't know, you just get the impression they thought "Oh the Erasmus they all stick together".
- 25) **S:** Ah.
- 26) **I:** Because I've noticed that I don't really hang around the Erasmus people much, because they all speak English, and the idea FOR ME for this year, is to improve my Italian. And I think when they are together, they just, they just all speak English, and just can't see the point for me to spend time with them. I much prefer spending my time with Italians.
- 27) **S:** Ok, erm[:] so did you find what you expected in this city?
- 28) **I:** I don't know if I really THOUGHT about what it was gonna be like before I came, I didn't have any expectations ... and I think, as you know, the pace of life is maybe slower than what I might have thought it would be like. The way that shops shut at 1, every day, and they open at 5 every day, like for FOUR hours a day there is nothing to do, and if you go out there no one out there ... and that, that's weird, for someone coming from England where everything is always open even at the weekends and bank holidays. That's strange, but I think I got used to it.
- 29) **S:** Ok, so that's fine, because you were feeling a bit bored sometimes ...
- 30) **I:** Yap, mh mh, ya.
- 31) **S:** And do you feel your motivation is going away?
- 32) **I:** Yeah, I keep thinking I should take like a hobby, then ... yeah the motivation is less than when I started. I go jogging, sometimes, but yeah ... it takes a lot a lot of motivation to get out and to do it.
- 33) **S:** Maybe because people do ... a lot of sport here, a part from jogging, they go maybe ... outside.
- 34) **I:** Yeah[:] ...
- 35) **S:** ... doing other sports or going to the gym, yeah ...

- 36) **I:** I think it's also hard because in Cambridge we have a lot of clubs, like sport clubs, music clubs for students, and I've asked my flatmates if they have anything like that here, at the university, and they said "not really", they're sort of private things, it's not like university football club or university hockey club or anything. I think that's hard as well, whereas in Cambridge, we will, we're really, really encouraged to join things like that. And in the beginning of every year they have like a big fair, to try to attract everyone to come and join clubs. And here, you have to be more active, it's not ... it's not, you HAVE to do it yourself, if you want to get involved ...
- 37) **S:** There is not a university life here? I mean you go to the lectures, but outside the lectures ...
- 38) **I:** Yeah, that's it. You find a lecture and the right seat. That's a bit weird.
- 39) **S:** And do you like this?
- 40) **I:** Not really.
- 41) **S:** You'd rather have ...
- 42) **I:** [**a university community**] it would be quite nice. Maybe like, I don't know, maybe if we all lived in university accommodation, like *casa dello studente*, it may be different. But I think because we all live separately, we don't really get the community feeling.
- 43) **S:** I know in the *casa dello studente* they make a lot of parties or ... so if you know ONE person who lives in the *casa dello studente*, then you can ...
- 44) **I:** Yeah ...
- 45) **S:** ... and what about the people in the Erasmus office? The people we met in the meeting.
- 46) **I:** Erm[:].
- 47) **S:** Do you meet them?
- 48) **I:** Not really. Erm ... I went on a trip with them, they organised a trip to *Sorgono* and I went there, that was quite nice. But it was also hard for me, because I don't go to all the Erasmus parties, because I don't really like having to speak English all the time, I much prefer speak in Italian. It was hard for me to sort of 'joining them on the trip because everyone already knew each other, whereas I don't know so many people. And ... and that's why I don't tend to go to Erasmus parties.
- 49) **S:** You prefer being with Italian people, integrate more in the society ..
- 50) **I:** Yeah, exactly.
- 51) **S:** Ok, that's good. Erm[:] do you have a lot of possibilities to speak Italian? Opportunities...

- 52) **I:** I speak Italian all the time, like I only ever speak English if I meet the other, the other girls in the lectures. So I probably only speak English maybe twice or three times a week. So ..
- 53) **S:** Ok, or when I come, with me, eh eh.
- 54) **I:** Yeah ...
- 55) **S:** Maybe next time we can speak Italian if you want.
- 56) **I:** Erm .. mmm ... ok.
- 57) **S:** And now you're happy about that?
- 58) **I:** Yeah. Definitely. But I think I have improved so much, than when I came ... I mean I could speak really well, but ... I made a lot of mistakes, but now I correct my mistakes when I speak. And I stopped making the same mistakes, so ... and I can speak a lot faster now, and I can understand pretty much everything what people are saying.
- 59) **S:** So you are happy about your progress?
- 60) **I:** Yap, definitely.
- 61) **S:** Ah good good, that's good. Erm ... so you're trying to speak Italian as much as possible?
- 62) **I:** Yap. Mh mh.
- 63) **S:** And ... you speak Italian with your flatmates and friends ...
- 64) **I:** Yap, when I go out, like when I go to shops ... all the way really...
- 65) **S:** You think other people understand you?
- 66) **I:** Yap.
- 67) **S:** [that's good]
- 68) **I:** Although sometimes they say to me that I've still got an English accent, and it's been really hard for me to lose it. My flatmate said "you speak really good Italian" but they can still tell I'm English, because I haven't got the intonation.
- 69) **S:** When they said that, did you get offended?
- 70) **I:** Erm ... when they FIRST said it, I was a bit offended, then they said "EVEN for someone who has been living here for five years, six years, they could still tell, an Italian can still tell if someone is English or foreign. I think I'd need to live here for a long time, before being able to pick up the intonation. Or maybe just like listen to tapes or while someone is speaking in Italian.
- 71) **S:** So you would like to have the Italian accent?

- 72) **I:** I want someone to think I am Italian, because they always know I am foreign.
- 73) **S:** Why do you want someone to think that you are Italian?
- 74) **I:** Because then I think it would be my ultimate goal. I will have achieved such a level of Italian, that people think I am Italian. That would be really nice. But I don't think it could happen this year, I think I would need to live here for a bit longer for that to happen.
- 75) **S:** Well, I don't know, how long have you been living here?
- 76) **I:** Erm .. mmm[:] since the beginning of September (...) three months.
- 77) **S:** Three months, well ... till June ... and what about you and yourself, do you think you have changed your personality, your identity?
- 78) **I:** Erm ...
- 79) **S:** You feel different?
- 80) **I:** Not really, I don't have really thought about that that much, erm[:] (...) I don't know... I went home in October for a week, because a friend got married, so I was DEFINITELY the same person when I went home, it wasn't a weird thing with all my friends at home, but I don't know (...). No I think I'm the same.
- 81) **S:** What about your attitudes towards Italian habits or Italian ... I don't know... attitudes?
- 82) **I:** I don't know, like I get ANNOYED sometimes, when like the way the shops would close four hours a day... and things like that. Erm[:].
- 83) **S:** Are there cultural things that you don't like?
- 84) **I:** Mm[:] (...) I don't know, sometimes me and my flatmates have cultural disputes, often about FOOD... because they've been taught things about ... like I like putting pepper on my food, and they like putting salt on their food. And they say "That's bad for you!" and I say "No it's not!" and they say "Yes it is!" Because in England we put pepper everywhere. In here you don't really use pepper. And just little things like that, but I guess it's a cultural thing and you have to live with them. And just ... I don't know, just live with them. I think. Just, o the way Italian DON'T cue, that really annoys me. When I'm in a shop, sometimes like three different queue form, and the Italian seems to know who's next, but I have no idea, so I think I'm honest like I'm not pushing, but this really annoys me. And ... people beeping their horns really annoys me. Because I live in *via Alghero*, so lots of traffic and sometimes people just beep their horns and then 'one person does never stop doing it, and that annoys me. I want to be patient, but, yeah, in the all, you just have to accept it. Yeah ...
- 85) **S:** Yeah, let's talk a little bit about your lectures, do you enjoy them?

86) **I:** Mm .. yeah I do enjoy them, but I think I find very easy to lose concentration. Because it's very hard for me to concentrate for the ALL two hours.

87) **S:** Two hours?

88) **I:** Yeah, A - because in England my lectures are fifteen minutes long, and B - because they're in Italian, so I REALLY have to concentrate, and I make my notes in Italian as well, so I have to think about my grammar when I'm writing my notes. And sometimes I get behind before the lecturer saying ... and sometimes if I get behind I stop understanding and I get REALLY frustrated that I don't know what they're saying.

89) **S:** So you don't have a break during these two hours? Just two hours like ...

90) **I:** [we have] like five minutes break after the first hour, but that's all!

91) **S:** What about the content, is it interesting? Or you find it a bit boring? Maybe too theoretical.

92) **I:** [erm] ... the history I find it really interesting, I really like history. But Italian literature is not what I expected, because we're doing, at the moment we're doing .. erm .. seventeenth and eighteenth century THEATRE: Goldoni, things like that. I'm NOT really interested in theatre that much. So (...) I've only been to one of those lectures and I've found it quite boring, and so it's making hard for me to go to the next one. And I think "Oh well, I'm not really interested in it, whenever I go". What I really wanted to study here was history of art. I went to the history of art lecture and they said "Oh this is a specialist course" and the ... the professor said "We module the course the next term, first week during the next term, and we'll simplify it" And that's bit hard really, because that's what I really wanted to do, and now having to do something I didn't necessarily want to do, because history, I've done one history before, so history, history of art would be really new for me.

93) **S:** And are you doing any Italian .. language courses?

94) **I:** I've decided not to do it because I thought that my level of Italian was already good enough. And from what I've heard from the others, the classes are really really simple, they are doing the basic stuff.

95) **S:** It's not compulsory?

96) **I:** No.

97) **S:** And what about the relationship between students and professors, or among students? You already told me about this thing about Italian students and you being an Erasmus student, but what about the professors?

98) **I:** Our history professor, he approached us saying "Oh you are Erasmus, oh ..." but he hasn't really explained that thing to us, even if he knew we are Erasmus, but when we watched a film he said "Oh you are Erasmus, we have the English subtitles." Even after that, he hasn't really spoken to us. I think he left all to us to go and see him in his hours, you know, when students can go and speak to him.

99) **S:** Did you speak to him?

100) **I:** No I haven't. I haven't got any problem I don't need to speak to him. (...) but I don't know about the others, because I think the others often find it really hard to understand what's going on in the lectures. And sometimes I would make my notes in English so they can copy them, otherwise they don't really understand what's going on.

101) **S:** I see. Ok erm ... and to finish with, what would you like, what is your wish for the next few months? What would you like to do or ... something to change ... I don't know ... or it's ok, you are happy with everything?

102) **I:** Erm .. I think I wish I could travel around Sardinia a bit more. My parents were here this week and we hired a car, so we went to *Villassimus Bugerru*, and that was really nice to see other parts of Sardinia, because Cagliari it's a bit boring sometimes. But then it's something I'll probably not going to be able to realise, because I'm scared of driving here, so don't want to hire a car. I think IDEALLY I'd like that one of my flatmates .. she'd hire a car, because since I'm living here she'd take me around.

103) **S:** Oh, that's nice. Will you change your daily routine or weekly routine?

104) **I:** I think so. I really want to. After Christmas I really want to start doing something else. I quite like starting dancing salsa, em... and I'm also gonna try NEXT term I want to do more courses, so I'm not gonna be SO bored. Because that's the thing, because I don't have many lectures so I don't know what to do in the week. So I thin next term I'm maybe going to do history of art .. and hist' history again, and contemporary Italian literature. And make something else so I'll have more to fill my day with.

105) **S:** And will you have to write assignments er[:] for these er[:] lectures you are attending?

106) **I:** No.

107) **S:** So you're just you're doing them because you like them?

108) **I:** Yeah. I mean I'm not OBBLIGED to do exams, so I just in Cambridge they don't really want me just to do anything COMPulsory, I just have to get the signatures, to see I was here. So they don't, they don't mind if I do exams or not, but I quite like to do the exams in February in history, just to see how I do.

109) **S:** Yeah[:], why not? Ok well good luck.

110) **I:** Thank you.

111) **S:** And see you soon. Ciao.

112) **I:** Ciao.

Source coded in NVivo as: [[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\2IL 3.12.6>](#)]

3. Third interview

Audio recorded and photo-based / Length: 00:11:24

Date / place: 18th February 2007 / Oristano – at my parents' home

- 1) **S:** Ciao a tutti eh eh ... questa è [:] la terza intervista?
- 2) **I:** [*sì la terza*]
- 3) **S:** La terza intervista a ... con Ilaria, e[:] oggi è il[:] 18 febbraio, eh eh , e siamo a Oristano. Ti piace Oristano?
- 4) **I:** Sì, molto. È molto tranquilla come città.
- 5) **S:** Mh mh. E[:] ti e' piaciuto il carnevale?
- 6) **I:** Sì. È un'esperienza che io non avrei se io .. non fossi ~~andata~~ [*venuta*] qui in Sardegna, sì.
- 7) **S:** Ah sono contenta. Ok. Ilaria ha portato delle foto, e ora le commentiamo insieme. Dunque quante foto hai scelto?
- 8) **I:** Allora della vita universitaria solo tre [*photos 1, 2 & 3*], perché (...) siccome non seguo lezioni, adesso, da[:] da dicembre, da quando io non ho seguito lezioni, siccome è il periodo di dare esami ..
- 9) **S:** [*sì*]
- 10) **I:** Siccome io non ne devo dare, non ho seguito lezioni, perché sono state e[:] annullate diciamo.
- 11) **S:** Ok, sì.
- 12) **I:** Allora ho scelto solo tre [*foto*], nell'ambito universitario.
- 13) **S:** Ok. Va bene.
- 14) **I:** Cominciamo con questø [*a*].
- 15) **S:** Oh[:].
- 16) **I:** **È il mio letto.** [*photo n. 3*] Perché [:] sì forse passo troppo tempo a letto, e [:] mi sveglio (...) diciamo un po' tardi, però ogni giorno mi sforzo di alzarmi prima della dieci. **E ce la faccio.**
- 17) **S:** Sì?

- 18) **I:** E[:] allora non sto passando così tanto tempo a letto come p r i m a , perché[:] non so mi sto sforzando di più. Allora nell'assenza di qualche foto della vita[:] cioè nelle aule, ho la foto del letto.
- 19) **S:** Ok, bene, interessante, quindi ora ti svegli prest' prima delle dieci.
- 20) **I:** [sì].
- 21) **S:** E perché ti stai sforzando?
- 22) **I:** E[:] perché [:]
- 23) **S:** [*pensi che sia meglio?*]
- 24) **I:** **SI'** perché[:] mi sono resa conto che[:] [short pause] si perde il giorno che si[:] si alza tardi. Anche perché [:] parliamo della seconda foto .. [*photo 2*]
- 25) **S:** [sì]
- 26) **I:** .. e[:] sto facendo il lavoro per la mia laurea a Cambridge. E[:] ho cominciato ~~di~~ [ad]andare in biblioteca, ogni giorno, allora[:] è per ~~quello~~ [*questo*] che mi sto alzando un po' più prima. Siccome la biblioteca chiede per pranzo e allora è importante che io ci vada prima ..
- 27) **S:** [ah]
- 28) **I:** .. dell'ora di pranzo e[:] sì praticamente ogni giorno vado in biblioteca, e poi torno per pranzo e .. qualche volta torno anche dopo pranzo o la sera ...
- 29) **S:** Quindi questa è una cosa che è cambiata della tua routine settimanale?
- 30) **I:** [sì]
- 31) **S:** Vai tutti i giorni in biblioteca?
- 32) **I:** [sì] quasi tutti, tranne il weekend.
- 33) **S:** [*molto bene*]
- 34) **I:** Perché rende molto più ... interessante la settimana. Anche perché le mie coinquiline, anche loro devono studiare, allora è meglio per me, mentre loro studiano, ~~anzi che io resto~~ [*anziché' restare*] a casa senza ~~che faccio~~ [*fare*] niente.
- 35) **S:** Certo.
- 36) **I:** Allora, non vedo l'ora che comincino le lezioni all'università, così (...) avrò una[:] una settimana **pienissima** degli impegni, che renderà, non so, molto più[:] (...) non so, più interessante la[:] settimana normale.
- 37) **S:** Ho capito, molto bene. E questa foto che hai scelto di Grazia Deledda?
- 38) **I:** Eh .. perché è la ricerca che sto facendo, tutti questi libri su Grazia Deledda.

- 39) **S:** Quindi stai leggendo molto? Anche in italiano?
- 40) **I:** Sì perché il mio docente, che mi sta aiutando in questo progetto, mi ha dato un .. un elenco **grandissimo** dei libri, che devo[:] leggere, cioè fare ricerca e sono tutti italiani, e allora ..
- 41) **S:** Molto bene, molto.
- 42) **I:** [sì]
- 43) **S:** Benissimo, poi? Un'altra foto?
- 44) **I:** Sì, c'è[:] e questø [a] della vita universitaria, guardando la TV. [*photo 1*]
- 45) **S:** Ah ...
- 46) **I:** Perché ogni giorno, torno sempre per pranzo e guardiamo sempre la TV.
- 47) **S:** [sì?]
- 48) **I:** Nel nostro appartamento la TV è quasi sempre accesa.
- 49) **S:** Sì?
- 50) **I:** Sì. Però va bene, perché io imparo, le cose nuove della TV.
- 51) **S:** E ti piace anche guardare la TV? O lo fai più come[:] un impegno per imparare l'italiano?
- 52) **I:** Er[:] non direi che sia un impegno, perché cioè[:] è sempre accesa, non è che è una cosa normale. Adesso non mi devo sforzare così troppo per capire, quello che stanno dicendo in TV, perché viene più una cosa (...) abbastanza passiva, non è più un'attività .. attiva.
- 53) **S:** [*mh mh*]
- 54) **I:** Però qualche volta mi[:] mi stufo! Della[:] della televisione italiana, perché qualche volta è un po' ... non è molto informativa.
- 55) **S:** [sì? *mh*]
- 56) **I:** Tranne il TG.
- 57) **S:** Mm .. sì capisco, capisco. Va bene, quindi queste sono le tue foto relative alla[:] vita ... in casa, diciamo, o comunque ...
- 58) **I:** E devono essere le foto relative alla vita universitaria.
- 59) **S:** Universitaria, però non dentro l'università ma ...
- 60) **I:** E sì, ho detto che manca adesso, siccome non ci sono lezioni adesso.
- 61) **S:** Esatto. E poi comunque tu studi a casa, e anche in biblioteca.

- 62) **I:** [sì, sì]
- 63) **S:** Ho capito, va bene.
- 64) **I:** E poi[:] e ... è il tappeto elastico [*laugh*] [*photo 7*].
- 65) **S:** [*laugh*]
- 66) **I:** Al Petto
- 67) **S:** [dai, che bello]
- 68) **I:** Perché spesso, il sabato sera, andiamo alla casa degli amici, per una pizza e giochiamo a carte.
- 69) **S:** Con le tue coinquiline?
- 70) **I:** Sì e poi con i loro amici.
- 71) **S:** Ah.
- 72) **I:** E poi spesso andiamo dopo al Poetto, per giocare sui tappeti elastici.
- 73) **S:** Ah, quindi hai proprio un gruppo di amici italiani?
- 74) **I:** Sì.
- 75) **S:** Che bello. Sei proprio integrata bene, diciamo.
- 76) **I:** Sì. forse perché sono inglese e[:] loro vogliono sempre parlarmi, che sono una cosa[:] sono una novità, si può dire. Sono una[:] una persona nuova nel gruppo, nel gruppo.
- 77) **S:** Ma parlate italiano?
- 78) **I:** Sì. Loro non parlano inglese.
- 79) **S:** E quindi[:]
- 80) **I:** Però sono sempre[:] (...) hanno sempre la voglia di mostrarmi le cose sarde, le cose italiane, la cultura italiana.
- 81) **S:** Che fortuna però eh!
- 82) **I:** Sì.
- 83) **S:** Ah ci voglio andare anch'io, eh eh.
- 84) **I:** Sì fa troppo ridere.
- 85) **S:** Sì?

- 86) **I:** Sì. Qui eh ... sono io e le mie coinquiline, Tiziana e Simona, e[:] questo era la settimana scorsa, quando siamo andati[:] fuori a cena, con un amico. Perché[:] cerchiamo di mangiare fuori, a cena, almeno una volta al mese [*photo 6*].
- 87) **S:** Oh ...
- 88) **I:** Perché loro vogliono farmi avere l'esperienza e .. della cucina sarda, in ristorante.
- 89) **S:** Dai, che bello!
- 90) **I:** [sì]
- 91) **S:** E qui dove siete? In un ristorante a Cagliari?
- 92) **I:** Sì, nell'Antica Osteria, che è nella Marina, in via Cavour.
- 93) **S:** Però, che bello.
- 94) **I:** Sì.
- 95) **S:** Ok, bene.
- 96) **I:** Poi, questa sono con dei miei amici: Marcello e Gigi, un martedì sera al "Sol", che è un locale nel Corso Vittorio Emanuele, dove vanno quasi tutti i giovani ERASMUS il martedì sera, perché si può comprare una birra per due euro [*photo 5*].
- 97) **S:** Ah, eh eh, quindi hai amiche .. diciamo ragazze e anche ragazzi.
- 98) **I:** Sì.
- 99) **S:** Hai molto amici quindi.
- 100) **I:** Sì, questi sono gli amici di Tiziana, però a lei non piace uscire nei locali, allora loro mi chiedono di[:] di andare con loro. E' diventata un'abitudine, ogni martedì, e non lo so ...
- 101) **S:** Che bello, quindi non ti annoi tu a Cagliari ...
- 102) **I:** No, eh eh.
- 103) **S:** Tra la vita universitaria, lo studio, gli amici ...
- 104) **I:** Mo, perché a casa ci divertiamo sempre e[:] (...) sì perché siamo giovani, e giochiamo sempre. Ci sono sempre gli scherzi a casa. Diciamo, che è bello.
- 105) **S:** [sì?] E tu capisci anche gli scherzi italiani? Perché a volte l'umorismo ...
- 106) **I:** Sì.
- 107) **S:** Che brava. Quindi questo vuol dire, comunque, che il tuo italiano sta diventando[:] a livelli proprio ... molto ...
- 108) **I:** [sì] sì adesso possiamo[:] **scherzare insieme.**

- 109) **S:** Che bello. E sei contenta, in generale, di questa esperienza che stai facendo?
- 110) **I:** [sì, molto]
- 111) **S:** In Italia?
- 112) **I:** Sì, perché le mie coinquiline sono diventate (...) amiche strette.
- 113) **S:** Che bello.
- 114) **I:** Sì.
- 115) **S:** Erm ... adesso da qui[:] a ... diciamo a giugno, hai degli obiettivi particolari?
- 116) **I:** {...} erm ...
- 117) **S:** Oppure sei contenta delle cose che stai facendo, giorno dopo giorno ...
- 118) **I:** La prima cosa è di finire questo progetto, per Cambridge, lo devo finire entro la fine di giugno.
- 119) **S:** Sì.
- 120) **I:** E poi voglio (...) ovviamente voglio ... migliorare, l'italiano.
- 121) **S:** Ancora? Eh eh.
- 122) **I:** E perché le persone mi dicono che[:] quando parlo è ancora ovvio che io sia inglese.
- 123) **S:** Davvero?
- 124) **I:** Sì.
- 125) **S:** Ma io sai che sento l'accento sardo? Eh eh.
- 126) **I:** Sì anche[:] Gianpiero mi ha detto ...
- 127) **S:** E infatti ... secondo me parlare un'altra lingua con **l'accento del posto**, vuol dire che la parli veramente molto bene.
- 128) **I:** Però, cioè mi .. mi rende un po' triste quando le persone mi dicono "*Nooo sei, hai ancora la voce un po' inglese*".
- 129) **S:** Sì?
- 130) **I:** Poi una delle mie coinquiline mi ha detto "*tu non riusci' riuscirai **mai** di parlare come un italiano vero!*"
- 131) **S:** Beh ... mai dire mai. Questo è impossibile dirlo. E ... ok quindi tu vorresti: parlare senza accento inglese, e poi hai questo obiettivo dello studio, quindi finire, c'è una scadenza, per questa tesina?

132) **I:** e[:] (...) e in teoria è ottobre, però il mio docente (...) deve[:] fare il primo trimestre dell'anno accademico prossimo, tipo da ottobre lei sarà in sabatico.

133) **S:** Ah sì.

134) **I:** E allora non vuole lavorare d'estate. Mi ha detto "e se possibile potrei finire il lavoro entro i primi di giugno".

135) **S:** Ah ok.

136) **I:** Allora mi da ...

137) **S:** Certo. Va bene. Grazie mille. Ok allora .. alla prossima intervista?

138) **I:** Ok. Grazie.

139) **S:** Grazie a te.

Source coded in NVivo as: [[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\3IL 18.2.7 video>](#)]

La vita universitaria:



Photo 1

Siccome non seguo tante lezioni, guardo spesso la tv italiana – soprattutto all'ora di pranzo, quando mangio sempre con le mie coinquiline.

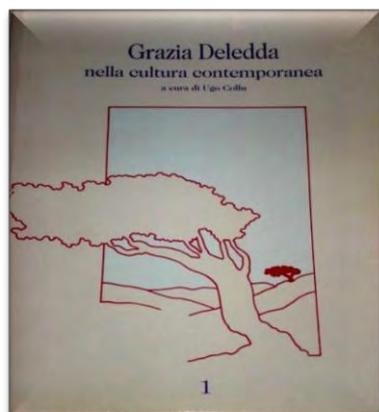


Photo 2

Non avendo lezioni qui a Cagliari in questo periodo (cioè tra il primo e il secondo semestre – non devo sostenere gli esami) sto preparando in questi giorni una traduzione per la mia laurea. Vado quasi tutti giorni nella biblioteca universitaria di Cagliari per fare la ricerca.



Photo 3

Non avendo gli impegni la mattina, forse mi alzo un po' tardi, però mi sforzo molto di alzarmi sempre prima delle dieci!

La vita sociale:



Photo 3

Da noi c'è quasi sempre un'ospite a pranzo o cena, oppure qualche festa. Ci divertiamo un sacco insieme. Questa foto era fatta due settimane fa quando abbiamo organizzato una festa sorpresa per il ventesimo compleanno di un'amica – era veramente divertente!



Photo 4

Questo è Café degli Spiriti, al Bastione. Ci andiamo spesso la sera per prendere delle cose da bere, per incontrare gli amici. E anche molto vicino a casa, un vantaggio enorme!



Photo 5

Spesso esco il Martedì con i miei amici Gigi e Marcello per bere qualcosa al Soul, un locale nel Corso Vittorio Emmanuele. Il Martedì ci vanno tutti i giovani e ci divertiamo sempre.



Photo 6

Ci piace cenare fuori e cerchiamo di cenare fuori almeno una volta al mese, è sempre bello conoscere i piatti tipici sardi. E ancora più bello quando non si deve fare i piatti dopo aver mangiato! In questa foto sono io con le mie coinquiline, Simona e Tiziana.



Photo 7

Spesso [æfɪl] Sabato sera andiamo ~~alle~~ [a] casa degli amici per mangiare una pizza e giocare a Tombola o le carte. Dopo andiamo spesso al Poetto per giocare sui tappeti elastici, che fa sempre troppo ridere, soprattutto quando si è ubriachi.

Source coded in NVivo as : [[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\3IL\ 18.2.7 photos>](#)]

4. Fourth interview

Audio recorded and diary-based / Length: 0:10:10

Date / place: 7th April 2007 / Cagliari, on a bench by the harbour

- 1) **S:** Ciao Ilaria, come stai?
- 2) **I:** Sì, sto bene grazie, eh eh.
- 3) **S:** Bene. Allora ti piace questa esperienza a Cagliari?
- 4) **I:** Sì, sì molto, soprattutto perché il tempo adesso comincia ad essere più bello. C'è ... c'è più caldo.
- 5) **S:** Allora ci siamo viste[:] .. l'altro .. lo scorso mese, è cambiato qualcosa dall'ultima volta che ci siamo viste?
- 6) **I:** Eh[:]... sì forse che le lezioni hanno cominciato adesso, allora la mia vita è un po' più piena ... nel senso che ogni giorno ho una lezione, e ogni giorno eh[:] ... diciamo ha uno scopo. C'è sempre qualcosa da fare.
- 7) **S:** Molto bene. Io ho letto il diario che mi hai mandato, quindi hai fatto il diario per due settimane, e vorrei farti qualche domanda sul diario. Intanto ... intanto ... mi ricordo che l'altra volta hai detto che uno dei tuoi obiettivi era cercare di alzarti un po' prima [laugh] puoi commentare su questo?
- 8) **I:** [smiley voice] eh forse devo ancora[:] .. sforzarmi un po' per .. non so.. ottenere questo traguardo ... e però quando c'è più caldo mi alzerò un po' più presto per andare al mare, per abbronzarmi. Adesso però.. non so, siccome non ho lezione la mattina, solo ... una.. martedì ho una lezione alle 8, allora .. non so io penso sempre "ah va bene ho una lezione nel pomeriggio" allora ... mi alzo un po' più tardi.
- 9) **S:** Quindi .. non prima delle 10?

- 10) **I:** No. No, anche perché, non so, sono sempre un po' stanca ... forse perché e mi stanco molto facilmente perché sto sempre parlando italiano ... mi sforzo col cervello, almeno questa è la mia scusa. Eh eh.
- 11) **S:** Ma[:] .. la sera vai a letto tardi?
- 12) **I:** Eh[:] ... dipende, cioè, sì spesso vado a letto a mezzanotte, mezzanotte e mezza.
- 13) **S:** Bene. Eh[:] a che punto è il tuo lavoro sulla traduzione?
- 14) **I:** Eh[:] ... l'ho quasi finito. C'è la traduzione [*che*] è [*di*] 3000 parole, io ho fatto forse er ... 2700. Allora ho quasi finito.
- 15) **S:** [brava]
- 16) **I:** Però ... dopo la traduzione devo fare una ... introduzione di[:] forse 5000 parole, quello non è ancora cominciato, perché voglio finire la traduzione prima, cioè perfezionarla, fare un po' di ricerca e allora[:] ... Quando avrò finito la traduzione, dovrò andare in biblioteca, eccetera, cercare i libri, per fare la ricerca.
- 17) **S:** E ti sta piacendo fare questa traduzione?
- 18) **I:** Sì, perché ... non so è un lavoro abbastanza difficile, però mi piace la sfida, diciamo.
- 19) **S:** E poi leggendo le pagine del tuo diario, ho visto che ti piace molto andare al Poetto.
- 20) **I:** Sì, sì, perché .. cioè vivendo in Inghilterra, in un posto che **non** è vicino al mare. E' bello avere il mare così **vicino**, e allora[:] sto **sfruttando** di questa opportunità che non ho solitamente in Inghilterra.
- 21) **S:** Poi oltre ad andare al Poetto, ti piace anche molto un'altra cosa, eh eh.
- 22) **I:** Eh sì anche il gelato mi piace molto, cioè anche del gelato sto, diciamo, sfruttando questa opportunità che non ce l'ho in Inghilterra.
- 23) **S:** Poi ho notato che spesso pulisci la casa, allora è una cosa che facevi anche prima o è una nuova abitudine?
- 24) **I:** (...) eh[:] ... forse è una nuova abitudine, perché non so, mi sembra che la casa diventi sporca facilmente, perché abbiamo sempre gli ospiti che stanno entrando con i piedi **sporchi**, con le scarpe **sporche**, e poi siccome le mie coinquiline sono un po' più **occupate** in questi giorni con gli esami, la tesi, forse loro non hanno il tempo [*di*] pulire, e allora tocca a me, a pulire. Però mi fa piacere, perché non voglio vivere in un appartamento sporco.
- 25) **S:** Ma pensi che questa .. eh eh, pensi che questa abitudine sia molto italiana, cioè .. il fatto di ... pulire spesso la casa? Pensi che pulire spesso la casa sia un'abitudine italiana? Molto? O anche in Inghilterra pulisci la casa così spesso?

- 26) **I:** Erm[:] ... no, perché in Inghilterra a casa mia fa mia madre o mio padre e poi all'università abbiamo una donna delle pulizie. Non è una cosa nuova per me, però è una cosa buona perché er[:] .. mi sto abituando ad essere un po' più indipendente.
- 27) **S:** Ma pensi che gli italiani, o comunque le persone che conosci tu, italiane, siano un po' fissate con la pulizia? O no?
- 28) **I:** Mm ... sì. Quando sono arrivata, ad agosto scorso, le mie coinquiline stavano sempre pulendo, cioè ogni giorno dopo pranzo cominciavano a pulire l'appartamento, però adesso mi sono accorta che forse questa cosa era causa del fatto che loro sono ... erano recentemente trasferite, nell'appartamento. E' un appartamento in affitto, e allora sicuramente loro volevano mantenere la pulizia dell'appartamento, non volevano sporcare le cose. (...) forse anche perché stavano facendo una ... impressione per me, cioè volevano eh ... fare le cose belle per me.
- 29) **S:** Quindi molto gentili anche.
- 30) **I:** E adesso sono diventate pigre forse, eh eh.
- 31) **S:** Le hai contagiate tu? Eh eh.
- 32) **I:** Eh[:] .. non lo so, spero di no.
- 33) **S:** E poi ho visto anche, dal tuo diario, che mangi spesso in compagnia.
- 34) **I:** Sì è raro che io mangi da sola, perché noi mangiamo sempre **insieme**, e forse è la parte del giorno più importante, soprattutto per le mie coinquiline, come è molto importante l'ora di pranzo, l'ora di cena. Sì è molto raro che io mangi da sola.
- 35) **S:** E invece in Inghilterra?
- 36) **I:** Mm ... in Inghilterra, cioè. Io mangio sempre con i genitori, quando sono a casa. All'università mangio sempre con gli .. gli amici (...) però ... in generale in Inghilterra i **pasti** non sono così importanti. Cioè in Inghilterra per pranzo mangio un panino, qualcosa piccola, mentre qua noi cuciniamo, cioè, ogni giorno, per pranzo e per cena.
- 37) **S:** Quindi hai preso anche un po' questa abitudine italiana, di mangiare in compagnia?
- 38) **I:** [si] sì, sì e' molto importante, anche con laa... compagnia della TV. Cioè la TV è sempre accesa.
- 39) **S:** Invece in Inghilterra la TV?
- 40) **I:** Eh[:] ... spesso è spenta. Cioè ... forse se c'è er ... non so qualche programma che piace a mia mamma, all'ora di cena allora la TV e' accesa, però o[:] ... solitamente no. È spenta.
- 41) **S:** [ho capito]. Molto bene, erm... per quanto riguarda la tua motivazione? Ti senti ancora abbastanza motivata? Di più di meno di prima? E perché?

42) **I:** Er ... forse adesso sono un po' più motivata a cause delle lezioni, cioè nel senso che .. ho una lezione ogni giorno, allora, come ho detto prima, cioè uno scopo al giorno, ... allora sì. Anche perché se ci sono delle belle giornate, io vedo, dalla finestra, che è una bella giornata, cioè esco per un po'. E allora sì. Mentre nell'inverno, era difficile, cioè, uscire, fare delle cose quando c'era buio, c'era la pioggia, l'inverno. Sì è più facile adesso.

43) **S:** quindi sia il tempo, sia il fatto che tu abbia delle lezioni all'università, aiutano la tua motivazione a rimanere alta?

44) **I:** Sì certo. Sì.

45) **S:** Erm ... e poi un'ultima domanda, per quanto riguarda invece te stessa, per quanto riguarda la tua identità, ti senti cambiata o ti senti sempre la stessa?

46) **I:** ... forse[:] e sono un po' cambiata nel senso che .. sto, non è che sto diventando una italiana, però ho notato che ci sono delle cose che[:] .. mi mancheranno ... Quando tornerò in Inghilterra. Cioè ...

47) **S:** Per esempio?

48) **I:** Mmm ... non so .. forse solo sentire le persone parlare italiano er ... la **pubblicità** italiana, la **TV** italiana ... qualche cibo italiano, il gelato soprattutto [*whisper*]. E non lo so forse la vita italiana in generale. Secondo me ... quando ritornerò in Inghilterra .. la vita mi sembrerà molto[:] ... frenata ... cioè molto ... non so ... un po' ... ci sarà un po' più di *casino*. In Inghilterra, cioè. I negozi sono sempre aperti, le persone sono sempre in fretta {...}.

49) **S:** Qui invece è più rilassante la vita?

50) **I:** Sì, molto più rilassante.

51) **S:** Ho capito. C'e' qualcos'altro che vuoi aggiungere, che mi vuoi dire a proposito di questa tua esperienza?

52) **I:** Mm[:] (...). No, non lo so, cioè, è un'esperienza che mi piace molto, e ... sono molto contenta che sono qua in Sardegna, e ... anche se qualche volta io penso che.. e va bene io preferirei essere in una grande città, per esempio Firenze, Milano", però poi .. penso e no va bene mi piace qua perché ... cioè è meno trafficato, è più tranquilla la vita. Allora sono felice della mia scelta.

53) **S:** Sei soddisfatta di aver scelto Cagliari?

54) **I:** Sì. Ok, molto bene, ti ringrazio, ah[:] .. un'ultima cosa ... mi dimenticavo, fino a quando rimarrai qui in Sardegna?

55) **I:** E io ci rimarrò fino alla fine di agosto.

56) **S:** Quindi l'anno dovrebbe chiudere a giugno, però tu hai deciso di rimanere altri due mesi?

57) **I:** Sì perché voglio godere del mare, del sole, sì voglio fare una vacanza lunghissima, in Sardegna.

58) **S:** Molto bene, grazie.

59) **I:** Grazie ciao, eh eh.

Source coded in NVivo as: [[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\<4IL> 7.4.7>](#)]

5. Fifth interview (first part)

Audio recorded / Length: 00:02:04

Date / place: 6th June 2007/ Cagliari, Poetto beach

1) **S:** Ciao Ilaria ...

2) **I:** Eh ciao Sonia (eh)

3) **S:** Come stai?

4) **I:** Sì molto bene, grazie.

5) **S:** Benissimo, allora questa è la nostra ultima intervista. L'ERASMUS sta per finire, come ti senti?

6) **I:** ... eh ... mi sento un po' triste che fra due mesi dovrò andare a casa. Però[:] ci ho vissuto una bella esperienza qua, è una cosa che io ricorderò per sempre e allora[:] sono anche felice.

7) **S:** Fino a quando rimarrai qui a Cagliari?

8) **I:** Er ... sino al 23 agosto, mi pare.

9) **S:** Quindi hai deciso di rimanere **o l t r e** la fine dell'anno accademico?

10) **I:** Sì vol' ... perché volevo godere [mi] il **sole**, poi perché sapevo che se io[:] fossi tornata in Inghilterra prima, io sarei stata un po' triste perché in Inghilterra non c'è il **sole**. E poi siccome ho l'esame orale.. in italiano, a settembre, perciò so che ... vale la pena stare qua, se possibile.

11) **S:** Senti e per quanto riguarda, appunto l'università e gli esami, cos'hai deciso di fare con l'università di Cagliari? Devi dare degli esami o no?

12) **I:** Allora, io non devo dare esami, però[:] ... cioè li potevo dare se io volevo, ma ho deciso di non darli, perché non voglio sforzarmi per una cosa che non è necessaria. Perché sono pigra.

13) **S:** [eh eh] eh.. poi stavi facendo una traduzione di un libro di Grazia Deledda, giusto? Come va con la traduzione?

14) **I:** [sì] eh .. va abbastanza bene, l'ho.. l'ho fatto, cioè l'ho **rifatto** tante volte, e la settimana scorsa gliel'avevo mandato alla.. al docente che mi sta aiutando, e lei me lo spedirà tra una settimana con i commenti, per dirmi come lo posso migliorare.

15) **S:** E ti senti soddisfatta di questo lavoro che hai fatto? E mmm ... sì

16) **I:** Eh .. mi sento soddisfatta nel senso che l'ho fatto, però non so se è di un livello molto alto, cioè, ci sono ancora dei cambiamenti, miglioramenti da rifare {...}

5. Fifth interview (second part)

Length: 0:17:50

17) **I:** [...] allora (...) sì mi sento soddisfatta, forse però quando l'avrò migliorato, un po', mi sentirò ... ancora più soddisfatta.

18) **S:** Senti e pensi che ti abbia aiutato a migliorare il tuo italiano? A livello scritto, di comprensione .. scritta, la lettura eccetera?

19) **I:** (...) sì, forse mi ha aiutato a imparare dei sinonimi. Perché ci sono tante parole, cioè, ho scoperto che ci son tante parole italiane che vogliono dire la stessa cosa. E poi mi ha aiutato anche a[:] scoprire un po'.. la mia lingua, l'inglese, perché ho dovuto **esprimere** ... cioè questo senso italiano, in un modo inglese.

20) **S:** Ho capito, e pensi che .. mmm ... ci poteva essere stato qualcos'altro per migliorare il tuo italiano? Per esempio adesso hai fatto questa traduzione, e quindi ti sembra che hai migliorato il lessico. E[:] ci poteva essere qualcos'altro, secondo te, per **migliorare** il tuo italiano?

21) **I:** Sì, e[:] avrei potuto leggere ogni giorno, il giornale. E questa è una cosa che non l'ho fatto, perché per me i giornali italiani sembrano sempre molto difficile [i], e allora ... non l'ho fatto perché ... boh non lo so .. non volevo .. sforzarmi ogni giorno, prendere tutti i giornali che usano un lessico molto formale [*bored tone of voice*] che usano un registro troppo alto. {...} però forse, boh, prima di partire mi compro ... un giornale eh ... mi sforzerò a leggerlo, eh eh.

22) **S:** E comunque il tuo italiano è migliorato tantissimo. Mi sai dire **come** sei riuscita a migliorare il tuo italiano, cos'hai fatto in particolare o se è stato un processo naturale?

23) **I:** **Boh** .. non lo so, non è che io ogni sera mi siedo, col vocabolario e cerco di preparare[:] cioè un nuovo lessico (...). Però forse una cosa **utile** è stato che la mia coinquilina mi[:] corregge.. quando sbaglio. E questo è stato molto utile, perché io[:] ho imparato ~~dei~~ [*dagli*] sbagli, e adesso non sbaglio più[:] le cose semplici, diciamo.

24) **S:** Quindi ti è servito essere stata corretta?

25) **I:** Sì, molto. Non mi piace quando la gente non mi corregga [e], eh.

26) **S:** Senti invece .. tu avevi degli obiettivi, er ... di cui abbiamo parlato, per esempio: parlare l'italiano bene, senza accento, finire questo saggio eccetera. Pensi che ci siano

state delle cose che abbiano .. limitato, dei limiti al raggiungimento di questi obiettivi? Cioè qualcosa che abbia un po' frenato.. questi obiettivi?

27) **I:** {...} eh .. forse {...} mm .. non lo so .. forse solo la mia[:] la mia voglia, forse io sono stata un po' pigra, nel senso che ... avrei potuto studiare più grammatica, mentre sono stata qua. (...) però sono soddisfatta del progresso che ho fatto {...}. So che è uno degli obiettivi che avevo era di sapere perché gli italiani suonano così tanto il clacson, eh eh.

28) **S:** [sì?]

29) **I:** Però adesso ho capito che fa una parte della mentalità italiana, che voi ... voi guidate in un modo diverso da noi, eh ... è una cosa normale per voi di suonare il clacson, eh.

30) **S:** E ti ricordi che all'inizio mi avevi detto che c'erano anche delle cose culturali che un po' ti davano fastidio, a parte il clacson, la coda o il fatto che gli italiani parlassero a voce troppo alta? Adesso cosa ne pensi di queste cose?

31) **I:** Allora (...) il .. fatto che gli italiani non facciano la coda, mi .. infastidisce ancora, perché sono inglese e noi facciamo sempre la coda. Allora mi dà fastidio quando ci sono tipo 5 persone, e sono tipo .. tutti in gruppo e non fan.. non si mettono in una coda. (...) però adesso sono più paziente, sono più tranquilla. IO adesso faccio l'italiana, anch'io quando faccio la coda, anch'io cerco di, eh eh. cioè ... ~~intravvenire~~ [mettermi in mezzo], come loro. E poi ... cioè il fatto che gli italiani parlano a voce alta, (...) non mi infastidisce più, perché ci sono abituata.

32) **S:** E c'è qualcos'altro che ti fa pensare, appunto, alle differenze tra gli italiani e gli inglesi?

33) **I:** Mm[:] {...} {...} no, per adesso no. Non mi viene in mente niente.

34) **S:** Ok, molto bene. Allora erm ... dunque dall'ultima intervista, che abbiamo fatto ad aprile, è cambiato qualcosa?

35) **I:** Eh[:] {...} mmm ... eh eh ... no, direi di no. Cioè sono ancora contenta, sto ancora migliorando l'italiano (...), no solo che ... è cominciata l'estate, e le giornate sono ~~più~~ ... migliori per andare al mare, diciamo. (...) eh .. poi non ho più lezioni, sono finite e allora .. sono più libera di godere il sole ...

36) **S:** E la tua routine quotidiana è cambiata?

37) **I:** Mm .. è difficile da dire, perché da quando abbiamo fatto l'ultima intervista, sono tornata prima in Inghilterra, poi è venuta un'amica, e poi sono venute [i] ... mia zia coi miei cuginetti, quindi sono stata un po' più occupata. Però.. sì mi sto alzando un po' più presto, anche quando non ci sono stati loro; perché c'è troppo caldo e non riesco a stare più a letto. Oggi mi sono alzata alle 9.

38) **S:** [eh eh], miracolo .. eh eh, sei contenta di questa cosa?

39) **I:** SÌ, sì, sì. E poi perché so che io .. cioè ho il lavoro da fare, cioè la traduzione .. e allora... sì.. sto cercando di sforzarmi un po' di più.

- 40) **S:** E ti annoi, durante la giornata?
- 41) **I:** {...} mmm ... no. Direi di no, perché adesso se mi annoio, c'è... posso andare a ... abbronzarmi, eh eh.
- 42) **S:** [eh eh]
- 43) **I:** Allora no.
- 44) **S:** Ho capito, e usi internet o questi programmi tipo *skype*, *messenger* per comunicare? Telefonino?
- 45) **I:** Er ... allora uso l'internet, per controllare l'e-mail eccetera, e io mando e-mail spesso agli amici. Però *skype* e *messenger* non li uso. Perché se li usassi, io perderei un sacco di tempo. {...} e poi uso il telefono, per parlare coi genitori, una volta alla settimana.
- 46) **S:** E se dovessi quantificare .. ? Tipo .. quante ore stai davanti al computer o[:] sì davanti al computer quanto..?
- 47) **I:** (...) direi un'ora al giorno, per controllare le e-mail, e poi .. per fare la[:] il lavoro, la traduzione la faccio sul computer, però solo ho cercato di limitare .. questo tempo, cioè facendo le cose inutili solo un'ora al giorno.
- 48) **S:** Senti e tu, durante questa esperienza, e ora che siamo quasi alla fine della tua esperienza ERASMUS, ti senti cambiata?
- 49) **I:** {...} mm ... è difficile da dire, però per adesso direi di no, cioè mi sento ancora la stessa persona. Però se mi chiedessi fra[:] boh .. tre mesi, forse avrei una risposta diversa. Quando ... cioè potrò fare i paragoni con i miei amici, cioè, poi io .. cioè a settembre io tornerò alla mia vita[:] cioè universitaria che ... è solo eh a settembre che potrò fare i paragoni veri, per vedere se io sono cambiata o no.
- 50) **S:** allora possiamo riparlare a settembre, magari per vedere se c'è stato questo cambiamento. E invece per quanto riguarda la tua motivazione, è cambiata la motivazione durante questi ultimi mesi? Come? Perché?
- 51) **I:** Erm ... direi che .. adesso ho più motivazione, visto che devo finire questo progetto, a Cambridge, e so che.. l'avrò dovuto finire entro ottobre, e allora mi sto sforzando molto per finirlo, e allora[:] in questo senso sì. E poi[:], cioè, forse 8 settimane fa ho cominciato, cioè, a[:] camminare molto, fare degli esercizi, perché volevo fare una cosa per non annoiarmi. E allora sì, forse ho un po' di più motivazione adesso.
- 52) **S:** E la motivazione invece per[:] continuare a migliorare l'italiano? È sempre la stessa? È un po' di più, un po' di meno?
- 53) **I:** Un po' di più, perché l'anno è quasi finito e allora so che io dovrò tornare a Cambridge, tra poco; e che a settembre c'è l'esame orale[:] e allora[:] sì c'è molta più motivazione per imparare tutto all'ultimo momento.
- 54) **S:** E quali opportunità prendi per cercare di imparare di più? Cosa fai?

- 55) **I:** E boh, forse[:] (short pause) per esempio **prima** quando guardavo la TV, guardavo sempre MTV, adesso, eh, cerco di guardare, no, RAI UNO, RAI DUE.. CANALE 5 ..
- 56) **S:** Ok, e quindi guardi di più la TV, ascolti la radio?
- 57) **I:** No, lo sai che non lo faccio? Cioè, cioè io ascolto la radio solo quando sono[:] boh.. nelle poche occasioni che sono in macchina, in pullman (...). No, perché non ho una radio, e allora ... però forse potrò cercare[:] qualche canale in internet.
- 58) **S:** Ti piacerebbe averla una radio o non è importante?
- 59) **I:** (...) mm.. non è molto importante perché è sempre accesa la TV, a casa nostra.
- 60) **S:** Per quanto riguarda invece la cerchia di amicizie? Hai sempre tanti amici italiani, oppure è cambiata?
- 61) **I:** No, ancora, cioè, tanti amici italiani, quelli che sono dei miei co.. coinquilini, sì, e sì, ho ancora una vita sociale abbastanza vivace. Facciamo le cose insieme, andiamo al cinema insieme, faccio le cose così ..
- 62) **S:** E hai anche amici della tua stessa nazionalità, oppure no?
- 63) **I:** Eh... solo Cate.
- 64) **S:** Allora, poi ti volevo chiedere una cosa a proposito della religione. Sai che qui in Italia la religione è molto importante eh... ti vorrei chiedere: per te quanto è importante e quanto è stata importante in questa esperienza ERASMUS?
- 65) **I:** {...} mm.. diciamo che non è stato molto importante per me, perché .. allora delle mie coinquiline una è ateista, l'altra è molto molto cattolica, però non va mai in chiesa, è una cosa che **lei fa** quando torna in paese, però[:] qua non lo fa, e allora non è stato molto importante. Io non sono mai andata in chiesa. Cioè diciamo che l'unica volta è quando sono tornata a casa per Pasqua, con la[:] con Simona, la mia coinquilina, e tutti mi hanno chiesto perché non ero cattolica. Cioè perché non andavo in chiesa[:] perché noi non credevamo, cioè, nelle cose cattoliche. Però no, non è stato importante.
- 66) **S:** Tu sei .. protestante?
- 67) **I:** Sì, sono protestante, però ... vado in chiesa forse solo a Natale, eh eh.
- 68) **S:** Ho capito, e senti ci sono state delle occasioni in cui .. hai .. erm .. hai sentito una sorta di scontro tra religioni? Per esempio mi raccontavi dello zio di questa tua amica ...
- 69) **I:** Eh sì ... quando lo zio di Simona mi ha detto che io andrò all'inferno, perché non sono cattolica, sono rimasta un po' male! Però in generale, no, io .. cioè tutti **rispettano** il fatto che io sono **protestante**, e la maggior parte delle persone **sa** che io[:] cioè in Inghilterra siamo[:] cioè per lo più protestanti. Allora ... e poi non mi sono sentita **costretta** ad andare in chiesa qua, a **conformare** al cattolicesimo, no. E poi, poi non ne avevo la voglia, no, le chiese cattoliche mi fanno paura, eh.
- 70) **S:** Davvero?

- 71) **I:** Sì, tutte le statue, e poi quella cosa che spruzzano..
- 72) **S:** L'incenso.
- 73) **I:** Sì l'incenso.
- 74) **S:** Quindi per te non è stato rilevante il fatto di non far parte di una comunità religiosa, vedo che ti sei ambientata comunque. Quali sono state le cose che ti hanno aiutato **di più** a integrarti nella società italiana e di Cagliari?
- 75) **I:** Eh... forse la musica italiana, e forse anche il cinema, italiano, ~~perché i più film italiani che io ho visto, cioè .. e[:]~~ il più che io mi sento un po'.. italiana, [più film italiani vedo e più mi sento italiana] diciamo. E poi io condivido i gusti musicali con le mie coinquiline, cioè ascoltiamo Tiziano Ferro, Negramaro.. allora .. queste cose mi fanno sentire[:] un po' più integrata. E poi la TV, adesso noi abbiamo, cioè, i programmi **preferiti**, cioè anch'io. Cioè ~~ei sono~~ [c'è] qualche programma italiano che mi piace **molto**. E (...) e allora forse ~~la~~ [i] media, mi ha[*nno*] aiutato.
- 76) **S:** Quindi, secondo te la televisione in Italia, ricopre un ruolo molto importante? O uguale, come in Inghilterra secondo te?
- 77) **I:** Eh .. forse uguale, però so che qua in Italia per gli italiani è **molto importante**, perché unisce le famiglie e .. cioè tutti possono mettersi davanti alla TV, mangiare, cioè tutte le cose del genere. Però sì è utile, direi.
- 78) **S:** Ok, em .. poi mi ricordo che nell'altra intervista mi hai detto che parli anche altre lingue..
- 79) **I:** Sì, parlo tedesco, perché la mia laurea è tedesco e italiano, però, eh, (...) cioè forse ho perso un po' la capacità di parlare tedesco. Cioè, ho provato, qualche volta io parlo qualche parola [di] tedesca [o] e poi dico "sì", oppure una cosa italiana. Però una mia amica, che sta a Berlino quest'anno, che sta[:] sta facendo l'ERASMUS, lei l'altro giorno mi aveva mandato una cartolina, e l'ha scritta in tedesco, e l'ho capito tutto, e allora ovviamente è solo[:] la capacità di parlare .. che ho perso un po', però fra un po' lo riprenderò. Alla fine di giugno vado a Berlino e ~~fra~~ [in] due giorni sicuramente lo riprenderò.
- 80) **S:** Secondo te ti ha aiutato il fatto che conoscessi già il tedesco, cioè sapere già un'altra lingua?
- 81) **I:** Mm ... no. Perché il tedesco è molto diverso dall'italiano, però .. forse il fatto che avevo studiato anche il francese, a scuola, m'ha aiutato molto coll'italiano. Perché la grammatica è simile, ci sono dei **nomi** che sono molto simili, e allora quando io non sapevo la parola.. boh.. in italiano, qualche volta ~~la~~ [a] potevo **indovinare**, perché era simile al francese.
- 82) **S:** E poi, sempre parlando di questa esperienza ERASMUS, sai a livello europeo, ma tu ti senti più europea?
- 83) **I:** Devo dire di no. {...} Perché ... boh non lo so, il fatto che l'Inghilterra è un po' a parte dall'Europa. Noi non abbiamo l'euro, e poi siamo un'isola, cioè siamo un po' diverse [i] della .. della [dall'] Europa. E poi il fatto che io non ho passato tempo con gli

altri ERASMUS, quest'anno, gli altri studenti ERASMUS... forse se io avessi passato più tempo con loro mi sentirei molto più europea (short pause). Però .. no, mi sento solo ... un'inglese .. qua in Italia, un po' ... diversa[:]

84) **S:** E[:] ti frequentare altri ragazzi ERASMUS o sei contenta della scelta che hai fatto?

85) **I:** Cioè ... a essere sincera sì sono molto contenta con quello che ho fatto, però sarebbe stato bello conoscere i ragazzi di altri Paesi, però se io avessi passato più tempo con loro avrei parlato sempre inglese. E poi ho l'impressione che **loro..** fanno tutto insieme. E non è che io potevo venire qualche volta, qualche volta no, era oppure tutto o niente! E allora ... eh.

86) **S:** [sì?]

87) **I:** Sì.

88) **S:** Quindi ecco non rimpiangi ciò che hai fatto, sei contenta di aver vissuto la vita così?

89) **I:** Sì, molto.

90) **S:** Erm .. allora visto che questa è l'ultima intervista, vorresti dirmi qualcosa, non so, a proposito della tua esperienza? Qualche consiglio per i futuri ragazzi ERASMUS? Qualcosa che ti piacerebbe dire proprio ...

91) **I:** Eh ... forse l'unico consiglio che io ... ehm.. dirò è {...} che è meglio passare il tempo con i nativi del Paese, cioè con le persone del Paese. Perché è inutile andare all'estero per un anno e poi passare tutto il tempo con le persone della stessa nazione. (...) Se io avessi, cioè come ho detto, se io avessi passato tutto il tempo con gli inglesi, se io avessi parlato sempre inglese, non sarei migliorata molto. Allora il fatto che io ho passato tutto il tempo con gli italiani, mi ha aiutato sia a migliorare la lingua, sia a integrarmi, con gli italiani.

92) **S:** E .. è stata un'esperienza positiva, o così-così?

93) **I:** No, molto positiva, sono molto contenta ~~con~~ [di] quello che ho fatto, e .. lo rifarei se avessi l'opportunità.

94) **S:** Benissimo. Ok grazie.

95) **I:** Prego (eh eh).

Source coded in NVivo as: [[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\5IL\) 6.6.7>](#)]

6. Sixth interview

Audio recorded / Length: 00:14:52

Date / place: 9th December 200 / Birmingham, at my home

- 1) **S:** Ciao Ilaria...
- 2) **I:** Ciao Sonia.
- 3) **S:** Come stai?
- 4) **I:** Sì, sto bene grazie.
- 5) **S:** Allora ci rivediamo qua, però questa volta non siamo in Italia, ma siamo in Inghilterra, precisamente a Birmingham. Come ti senti?
- 6) **I:** Sì mi sento bene, grazie, sì.
- 7) **S:** E com'è stato il tuo rientro in Inghilterra?
- 8) **I:** (...) sì è andato bene. Cioè all'inizio era un po' strano essere a casa, però piano piano mi sono riabituata ... ad essere a casa, a stare coi miei genitori eccetera.
- 9) **S:** Quando sei tornata precisamente?
- 10) **I:** Er .. a fine agosto. Magari il.. il 23 mi pare, sì.
- 11) **S:** Ho capito, quindi no è stato un rientro troppo sconvolgente? Troppo difficile?
- 12) **I:** NO, no, era abbastanza facile, perché ero.. emozionata a vedere gli amici, i parenti. Sì ero triste di partire ma (...) sì.
- 13) **S:** [contenta anche di tornare?]
- 14) **I:** Sì, sono felice, sì.
- 15) **S:** Ho capito. E senti, invece quando sei tornata all'università, come hai trovato l'università? Come ti sei sentita dentro l'università di .. Cambridge?
- 16) **I:** All'inizio era un po' difficile. Siccome io sono adesso nel quarto anno, e la maggior parte dei miei amici erano del terzo anno. E loro si sono già laureati. Allora è un po' strano perché non riconoscevo nessuno (...) avevo poche amiche, però piano piano mi sono riabituata. Però.. abituarci allo studio era un po' difficile, perché dopo un anno in Sardegna, dopo non aver fatto quasi niente, dover fare tutte queste cose all'università adesso, è un po' difficile, ma {...}.
- 17) **S:** Quindi si lavora di più all'università a Cambridge di quanto tu abbia lavorato all'università a Cagliari?

- 18) **I:** Sì, molto di più, io direi che nella prima settimana a Cambridge, ho lavorato di più .. di tutto quello che ho fatto durante l'anno a Cagliari! Eh eh.
- 19) **S:** [veramente?]
- 20) **I:** Sì!
- 21) **S:** E quale sistema ti piace di più? Il sistema universitario di Cagliari oppure quello di Cambridge, quale preferisci dei due?
- 22) **I:** Mm .. devo dire quello a Cambridge, perché è più regolato, e poi mi costringe a fare le cose, mentre quello a Cagliari era molto rilassato, ma.. non ero costretta a fare niente, per quello sono diventata un po' pigra.
- 23) **S:** Mm .. ho capito. E hai incontrato i tuoi colleghi, le persone che l'anno scorso hanno fatto l'esperienza ERASMUS? Hai avuto modo di' incontrarli?
- 24) **I:** Sì, perché er[:] la mia migliore amica lei, lei ha fatto ERASMUS a[:] a Berlino, e poi ci sono altre, e allora.. abbiamo una cosa in comune e possiamo raccontarci delle nostre esperienze.
- 25) **S:** E hai notato[:] in questa esperienza ERASMUS, che tu hai fatto a Cagliari, e la tua amica in Germania, hai notato delle cose simili e delle cose diverse che avete vissuto?
- 26) **I:** Sì, la prima cosa è che siamo tutte diventate un po' pigre.
- 27) **S:** Eh eh.
- 28) **I:** E poi .. boh .. abbiamo avuto un'esperienza molto.. speciale, abbiamo vissuto una vita diversa, una vita straniera. Allora magari siamo diventate più aperte. {...} alle varie[:I ai vari paesi eccetera.
- 29) **S:** Invece l'esperienza ERASMUS in Italia? Hai incontrato dei tuoi colleghi o amici che hanno fatto l'ERASMUS in Italia, ma non a Cagliari?
- 30) **I:** Sì ho due amici che hanno fatto ERASMUS a Bologna, e anche loro mi hanno detto che sono diventati pigri. E poi ho un'amica che è anche lei è stata a Bologna e lei non ha avuto un anno.. cioè un bel anno. Cioè lei non si è divertita, e .. non le è piaciuto Bologna, e quindi per lei l'anno all'estero è stato un po' inutile, infatti lei è tornata Cambridge infatti tipo dieci volte. E le è manato così tanto.
- 31) **S:** Ah .. e poi invece mi hai detto anche di qualche collega che stava a Milano, e anche degli accenti diversi, delle esperienze diverse, perché?
- 32) **I:** Sì, perché tipo lei lavorava in uno studio, per un avvocato, allora lei magari è diventata più motivata, perché doveva andare al lavoro ogni giorno, allora sì, la sua esperienza è stata diversa dalla mia. Però anche una bella esperienza per lei, cioè, non vuol dire che la mia è stata brutta, però, perché non ho lavorato ..

- 33) **S:** Certo. E dal punto di vista sociale, adesso guardando indietro, ti sembra che tu sia riuscita, comunque, a integrarti nella società italiana o sarda di Cagliari, o anche in confronto alle tue amiche, hai notato qualche differenza?
- 34) **I:** Sì, io direi che mi sono integrata un po' di più, mm .. siccome io abitavo con le italiane, con le sarde, mentre la mia amica, lei abitava con una ragazza inglese. E lei sì, certo lavorava, però lavorava con le persone più grandi, allora[:] non aveva .. il caso di[:] frequentare locali con loro, eccetera.
- 35) **S:** Ho capito. Erm .. e ora come passi le tue giornate generalmente? Mi ricordo la tua routine di Cagliari ...
- 36) **I:** [eh eh]
- 37) **S:** ... e invece la tua routine di qua è diversa o è uguale?
- 38) **I:** Sì è molto diversa. Cioè **mi alzo** ancora un po' tardi, perché non ho mai lezione di mattina, allora mi alzo tardi però ... tutto il giorno sono sempre occupata, e vado a letto verso le due, le tre perché sto sempre studiando, la sera sì.
- 39) **S:** Quindi studi tanto?
- 40) **I:** Sì, sì molto, perché ci sono tutte le cose da fare, cioè ogni settimana devo consegnare un tema, e allora sì.
- 41) **S:** E allora.. ho notato che il tuo italiano è sempre molto buono, ma tu parli italiano ogni giorno? Con chi?
- 42) **I:** no, allora all'inizio lo parlavo con la mia amica Simona, a Cagliari, però poi ho dovuto smettere, perché mio padre mi ha rimproverato ..
- 43) **S:** [al telefono?]
- 44) **I:** Al telefono sì, allora qualche volta parlo italiano con le, i colleghi, però è rarissimo. E poi in classe, parlo italiano, però una parola qui, una parola là, cioè è ... raro.
- 45) **S:** Quindi non hai moltissime possibilità di praticare l'italiano?
- 46) **I:** No. {...} cioè ascolto la radio italiana, però per parlare non ho tante opportunità.
- 47) **S:** Però complimenti, perché il tuo italiano è sempre molto buono. E allora per quanto riguarda invece te stessa, io mi ricordo nell'altra intervista ti avevo chiesto "ti senti cambiata?" e tu mi avevi risposto "ma forse per questo ti posso dare una risposta più in là". Ecco se io ora ti chiedo appunto "ti senti cambiata dopo questa esperienza?" cosa mi rispondi?
- 48) **I:** Mm{...} sì direi che sono diventata più aperta alle altre nazionalità, però in me stessa magari sono uguale. Cioè non sono cambiata, troppo, anche perché mi sono reinserita nella vita a Cambridge molto facilmente, adesso sembra che io non sia mai stata fuori, cioè ... cioè..

49) **S:** Veramente?

50) **I:** Sì .. mh .. magari la mia passione per l'Italia è aumentata, cioè ora sono molto più.. rilassata, alle cose che studiamo, perché.. boh' magari perché sono integrata così tanto con la società sarda.

51) **S:** Quindi per esempio non ti sembra, ti sembra di aver preso delle abitudini .. un po' italiane ..? Non so nel modo di parlare, di comportarti, nel modo di pensare, ti sembra di essere uguale a prima?

52) **I:** {...} {...} mm[:] il mio modo di pensare è uguale ...

53) **S:** [è uguale]

54) **I:** ... mm.. però magari le abitudini mm.. tipo l'ora di cena, quella è diventata più tardi. Poi.. l'abitudine di prendere il caffè, cioè le cose superficiali diciamo.

55) **S:** Ho capito, cucinare magari ..?

56) **I:** Sì, sì.

57) **S:** Ho capito, e invece i tuoi amici, i tuoi colleghi che hanno fatto ERASMUS, son cambiati o sono sempre uguali?

58) **I:** Sì alcuni sono cambiati, sì, sono diventati più.. estroversi diciamo, ho due che son stati a Berlino, cioè una grande città, loro sono diventati moto più.. vivaci, sì, cioè vogliono sempre uscire, perché sono stati abituati a vivere in una grande città dove c'è di tutto.

59) **S:** E invece gli altri che sono stati in Italia in altre città, sono cambiati?

60) **I:** Mm[:] non saprei dire perché ci vediamo sono in classe.

61) **S:** Ok, e invece per quanto riguarda l'esperienza ERASMUS, in generale, e.. ti sembra che ti sia servita? E se ti è servita perché e in che modo?

62) **I:** Sì mi è servita perché ho imparato a .. **tollerare** le altre culture, sono diventata più aperta. Poi.. ho avuto un'esperienza che tanti non' non hanno, è una cosa **rara**. Per esempio i miei genitori non avrebbero **mai** avuto l'occasione di andare all'estero per un anno, (...) e ora posso dire "sì, sì, io abitato, cioè fuori, per più di un anno!" allora sì, e poi (pause) boh[:] ho[:] ho .. magari mi sento un po' più europea, avendo ...

63) **S:** [ah sì..?]

64) **I:** ... partecipato a questo programma, sì.

65) **S:** Bene, bene, e invece per quanto riguarda al tua motivazione, ti sembra che questa esperienza ERASMUS ti abbia aiutato .. nella tua motivazione per imparare l'italiano, o verso una lingua straniera oppure non così tanto?

66) **I:** Sì, perché prima per me l'italiano era una cosa.. abbastanza astratta. Però dopo un anno in Italia, è diventato molto più concreto. Perché ho, cioè, ho visto le cose di cui

parliamo, in classe, cioè (short pause) boh è una cosa.. della **cultura** italiana, che per me, adesso, è molto più vivace, di prima. È una cosa **viva**, mentre prima era una cosa in un libro.

67) **S:** Ecco. Tu la.. la insegneresti la cultura? Mi stai dicendo che la cultura è molto importante, che prima la vedevi come una cosa astratta, per, per esempio, i prossimi ragazzi, studenti ERASMUS, che andranno in Italia, c'è un modo, secondo te, per .. fargli **vedere** questa cultura, però prima di andare? Un modo per.. non so, insegnargliela, dividerla .. con loro?

68) **I:** [mm] sì, magari sì, cioè magari ..

69) **S:** Come?

70) **I:** Potrei s p i e g a r e la burocrazia in Italia, com'è, eh eh, com'è lenta, come funzionano le cose, però {...} è difficile, spiegare questa cosa, perché è una cosa che.. (long pause) boh.. vedi, cioè, in realtà, cioè è difficile spiegare (short pause), come per me è stata sempre **astratta**, questa cosa, perché non l'ho mai vista. Sì, si ~~può~~ [possono/potrebbero] spiegare tutte le abitudini italiane, però bisogna viverle.

71) **S:** Certo. Quindi .. ecco, magari in classe.. in modo teorico, come dici tu, è molto difficile, bisogna proprio viverle sul posto. E mi ricordo nell'altra intervista ti avevo chiesto "se dovessi dare dei consigli ai prossimi studenti ERASMUS, che consigli daresti?" e tu mi avevi detto qualcosa, adesso, che sei tornata, mm.. appunto cosa diresti, vista anche la tua esperienza del rientro, ecco, cosa diresti ai futuri studenti ERASMUS?

72) **I:** Magari mm[:] cioè **integrarsi**, con la gente del posto è molto importante. Vivere, se possibile, con gli stranieri, cioè con la gente del posto. E poi .. prendere ogni opportunità, perché è molto importante. Magari io, qualche volta, restavo a casa, perché non avevo la voglia di uscire, (...) e magari adesso penso "se lo potessi fare di nuovo, io uscirei ogni volta!"

73) **S:** Sì.

74) **I:** ~~Che ero chiesto~~ [me lo chiedevano], sì. Cioè io son stata un po'.. non lo so forse era Cagliari, perché era piccola, allora ogni volta che uscivamo era sempre uguale, andavamo sempre nello stesso posto, sì.. Però integrarsi troppo può essere uno svantaggio, perché io mi sono integrata e adesso mi manca troppo .. Cagliari. Mi manca la vita che avevo là, è una cosa che io non potrò mai riacquistare, cioè, non esiste più il nostro appartamento, ci vive qualcun altro.

75) **S:** Quindi è pericoloso affezionarsi troppo? Integrarsi troppo?

76) **I:** Sì, magari sì. Però una bella cosa, cioè..

77) **S:** È comunque un bel ricordo, che ti è rimasto?

78) **I:** [sì]

79) **S:** Invece per il rientro? Che consigli daresti per il rientro? Sai molte persone e.. se si sono appunto integrate troppo, magari rientrano e sono tristi, c'è una sorta di malinconia, che mm..

80) **I:** [sì] all'inizio non c'era. Perché ero a casa e ero emozionata di vedere tutti, e poi la mia amica Simona e il suo ragazzo Francesco, loro sono venuti a Londra, la settimana dopo, allora ci siamo visti di nuovo ...

81) **S:** [certo]

82) **I:** ... era solo quando sono tornata a Cambridge che mi è cominciata a mancare .. la Sardegna.

83) **S:** [mh mh]

84) **I:** Magari perché ero tornata alla mia.. alla mia vita {...} cioè, sì.

85) **S:** Ma preferisci la vita com'era in Sardegna, oppure la vita a Cambridge? Oppure sono diverse e non hai una preferenza?

86) **I:** Ci sono aspetti di tutte e due che mi piacciono, cioè **l'aspetto** della mia vita in Sardegna dove io non facevo niente, ero sempre a letto, quello non mi piace, e magari in un certo senso (...) mm.. ho perso un po' il mio tempo. {...} Però era un bel riposo, era un cosa di cui avevo veramente bisogno, dopo due a' due anni di studio, (pause) ma ora, cioè anche se la vita a Cambridge è molto stressante, sono felice di essere.. di nuovo stressata.

87) **S:** Mm.. ho capito.

88) **I:**[sì].

89) **S:** Va bene. Ok, vuoi aggiungere qualcos'altro nella nostra ultima intervista?

90) **I:** Mm[:] no a posto così.

91) **S:** Va bene, grazie mille.

92) **I:** Prego, eh eh.

Source coded in NVivo as: [[<Internals\ILARIA\transcripts\6IL 9.12.7>](#)]

LUCY

1. First (group) interview

Audio recorded / Total length: 00:10:13 (interview includes contributions from other interviewees who withdrew from this study-these contributions were transcribed but are not included here because of space constraints)
Date / place: 16th October 2006/ Cagliari, in a café by the University

[...]

- 1) **S:** And, what about you and the year abroad?
- 2) **L:** Erm, yeah I REALLY REALLY wanted to come originally, erm, it's why I chose to erm ... take the course in... at Warwick. Erm, it was like choosing my course for university at the end of A-levels, that was the main point: I HAD TO GO ABROAD for a year. I REALLY REALLY wanted to. I start to feel differently over the year, the last year studying, but ... it was like the main reason why I have chosen to do a language course.
- 3) **S:** OK, grazie. And you?
- 4) **L:** Erm... I came to Italy on a student exchange when I was sixteen, for ten days, and I had lot of fun! Lot of fun and .. I started to engage in learning Italian and the Italian way of life eh eh.
- 5) **S:** Where did you go?
- 6) **L:** Ehm... Formo.
- 7) **S:** Where is it?
- 8) **L:** In the centre, I think.
- 9) **S:** OK thank you. And to finish with, what about you?
- 10) **L:** Erm ... I studied Spanish in school ... up to A-level.
- 11) **S:** Why Spanish?
- 12) **L:** Erm ... I did Spanish and French, but I couldn't speak French: it was too difficult, so I decided to do Spanish. And I just it turned out that I was quite good at it so I thought "If I can, why not?" Because I REALLY love to have been able to speak a second language.
- 13) **S:** And why Italian now?

14) **L:** Erm ... because I wanted to be up to it, I thought “go and moving to University I want to expand, push myself a bit more” but ... I kinda of had to try to forget my Spanish in order to learn Italian because they are too similar to me.

Source coded in NVivo as: [[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\1LU 16.10.6>](#)]

2. Second interview (first part)

Audio recorded / Length: 00:03: 3:36

Date / place: 3rd December 2006/ Cagliari, Poetto beach

- 1) **S:** Hello Lucy, how are you?
- 2) **L:** I'm ok thank you.
- 3) **S:** Good. I would like to ask something, erm... first of all ‘how do you feel about this experience in Cagliari?
- 4) **L:** Erm (...) I think I'm enjoying it. Erm ... it's .. I'm finding it difficult ... it's still a **challenge**. And I feel ... erm ... I just feel I'm really looking forward to going **home** at the moment. And getting the first .. **CHUNK** of this experience out of the way. Go home and then re-assess how I feel, and then come back out here “fresh”. I feel erm ... yeah.. I feel like a need a holiday. [*nervous laugh*]
- 5) **S:** Oh ... do you miss your .. country or your family?
- 6) **L:** Erm ...I don't really miss England exactly (...) erm ... the weather in England it's not so nice and gets you down, but I really r e a l l y really miss my sister, and my boyfriend, especially my boyfriend, I miss him very much.
- 7) **S:** Ah[:]
- 8) **L:** ... very much, eh eh.
- 9) **S:** Is he coming to visit you?
- 10) **L:** [yes] yes ... I'm counting down the days eh eh
- 11) **S:** Ah that's good. Erm ...Are you happy about your decision to live in Cagliari, or you regret it?
- 12) **L:** Cagliari as opposed to another city?
- 13) **S:** Yeah, yeah.
- 14) **L:** Erm... I do really like Cagliari, but I find it a bit repetitive sometimes (...). As we always do the **same** things when we go out. And .. it's a bit boring now, and winter

is coming, and it's very pleasant, I **think** when it'll get to summer I will enjoy it a lot more. Because there are more things to do.

15) **S:** Would you ... like to be in a bigger city? Would you prefer living in other places like Milan or .. Rome .. or you're quite happy about it?

16) **L:** Erm[:] I'm quite happy about here. I think if I went to Milan or Rome there would be a lot of tourists. I really **value** the fact that Cagliari feels quite Italian.

17) **S:** Mm. Ok. Do you have erm[:] opportunities to meet Italian people?

18) **L:** **Yes!** Yes. My .. erm .. I live with three Italian girls and they have friends over quite a lot, we've dinner together and chat, but erm... when I go out most of the times, I just socialize with other Erasmus students ...

19) **S:** Ah ... so, and do you speak Italian or English with the other Erasmus students?

20) **L:** erm[:] a **mix**, erm ... but for, for example if we go out for an evening, the first part of the evening I try to speak Italian to erm[:] especially the Spanish Erasmus because they don't speak English.

21) **S:** Ah ah.

22) **L:** So I'll try and talk in Italian, but as the day, like the evening goes on, you get more worn out, you just want to relax, so I spend more time talking to people in English.

23) **S:** Ok, and do you speak Italian every day?

24) **L:** **Yes!** I'll try and practice a little bit every day. Even if it's the space of sentences ...

25) **S:** How **much**, let's say every day? One hour, two hours or ...

26) **L:** One hour! At the most. It not very much!

27) **S:** Would you like to speak it more?

28) **L:** Mm[:] {...} mm[:] y e s ... I think so... [*hesitant voice*]. I get very shy... very shy speaking Italian, and I'm scared of making mistakes. I **know** people say that by time you'll improve, but {...} yeah I get very shy.

29) **S:** Eh eh . ok let's talk about your daily routine. What do you usually do, no, let's say, weekly routine, what do you usually do on Monday, Tuesday... and also Saturday, Sunday? Can you describe it to me please?

30) **L:** Mm[:] I don't feel I have like a particularly **rigid** routine. Yep. Erm ... can I answer my phone?

2. Second interview (second part)

Length: 00:04: 8:39

31) **S:** Ok so, your weekly routine?

32) **L:** OK. Erm...well I don't have any lesson in the **morning** on Monday so I tend to get up at about midday ... and .. make myself a snack for lunch and sit and talk to my roommates, and eat. (...) and ... then I go to my room and just *r e a d i n g* and studying ... erm ... write emails to my friends. *A n d* then go to my lessons. Monday we only have one in the evening, which is the language course. It's my favourite one though, because it's more like .. a **social** event, because that's where we ... all the Erasmus go. And then Monday evening we go out after the class, and ... Tuesday I have a lot of lessons so ...

33) **S:** Which lessons?

34) **L:** Erm ... {...} erm ... Tuesday it's literature and history and I've got two hours ...

35) **S:** Wow.

36) **L:** Yeah {...} and Tuesday night is ... erm ... it's a popular night to go to the "corso", to the "Soul" bar, because there's a .. a special offer on beer in one of the pubs, so we used to go there on Tuesday, but last week we didn't. Erm ...

37) **S:** Ok.

38) **L:** Because there is a new favourite bar, eh eh, on Tuesday, but then erm ... Wednesday I have to get up early, for a lesson at 9 o'clock. Wednesday is the day when we have the most lessons; I think six hours all together. It's very hard. A lot of the times I may miss the last one, because I'm just tired. And I find the lessons SO frustrating!

39) **S:** Really?

40) **L:** Because I don't understand. Even, even if I can find myself saying ... erm ... "I recognise that way, I recognise that way!" I can't strew in it together and make a sentence ... I find the teacher going off and speaking of something else, so ... I .. I may not get very much out of the lesson. And I find it quite [pause] demoralising, when like, my friends, erm ... the other girls at the interview, say "oh I wrote a lot of notes today, did you write notes Lucy?" [*acting out/ imitating the other girls' voices*]. "No! I didn't write notes." [*lower and deeper tone of voice referring to herself*]. Eh eh. They seem to understand, erm .. their listening is a lot better than mine.

41) **S:** Oh[:].

42) **L:** Eh eh, but I think if I take your advice, listen to the radio or ...

43) **S:** Oh yes, *radio uno*, even if you're not listening to it, you know as a background. Do you watch television?

44) **L:** We don't have a television in the house.

- 45) **S:** [ah I see]
- 46) **L:** I wish we did erm ... I use to go to Keith erm
- 47) **S:** Your friend?
- 48) **L:** Ah my friend's house, and watch television at hers, erm... it's **so useful** because you can see people's **expressions** and **gestures**, and that helps you understand. It's got the edge on radio, eh eh.
- 49) **S:** Can you get a television? Could you?
- 50) **L:** I don't know. I might be able to, my roommates think they like to buy one. Maybe something to discuss with them, over dinner maybe, eh eh.
- 51) **S:** Yeah. Ok what about Thursday?
- 52) **L:** Erm... (...) Thursday erm ... two lessons on Thursday, both in the afternoon, so I haven't a line usually. I get up around midday I make myself a snack, talk to my roommates. {...} do a bit of reading or homework, whatever I need to do. In the evenings, it just depends on what people are doing, I'd like to go out in the evening because I get bored if I stay indoors. (...) We tend to go to a restaurant at least once a week, because we have a Swedish friend who loves to go to restaurants, he always proposes "Come to this restaurant..." It's quite expensive though, as a routine, but ...
- 53) **S:** So usually once a week you go to restaurant?
- 54) **L:** Usually yeah ...
- 55) **S:** Wow!
- 56) **L:** Eh eh.
- 57) **S:** Do you have a very rich social life? Eh eh. Going out every day.
- 58) **L:** This is quite a generalisation, and then, for example last week I had three evenings in, by myself, but usually we try to go out. Eh eh.
- 59) **S:** Do you have many friends?
- 60) **L:** I have a lot of acquaintances {...}. I find it quite hard to make friends.
- 61) **S:** Where are they from?
- 62) **L:** Erm[:] {...} erm ... I'm very friendly with Jojo, she is from erm ... London; and her housemate Bojar, he is from Spain. Erm ... we spend some time, erm ... with most of the people from my language class, so there is Paul who is German, Arthur who is French, so a **mix** of people from across Europe. Mostly we speak English. I find it so much easier to make meaningful friendship to if I can speak English.
- 63) **S:** Because you speak the same language? Or maybe because you have the same culture? Why so?

- 64) **L:** I think more because of the language. And [pause] I feel more confident that they understand **who I am**. And I understand **who they are**. It makes more a **fulfilling** friendship.
- 65) **S:** Why? Do you think that if you speak Italian with somebody else, is not you, is another person?
- 66) **L:** A **little bit**, because I have to form sentences in ways that ... I wouldn't normally {...} yeah, it does feel like I'm being a little artificial, **still** ... because Italian isn't ... it doesn't come so naturally ... speak ... **yet** ... I'd like it was, eh eh.
- 67) **S:** Maybe you don't want to be another person, you want to be 'who' ... 'you who speak' in English, could it be?
- 68) **L:** Maybe, it could be that, **yes** [*laugh*].
- 69) **S:** Has there been a lot of friends ... well acquaintances?
- 70) **L:** Yes?
- 71) **S:** Do you get bored?
- 72) **L:** **Yes**.
- 73) **S:** When?
- 74) **L:** Mmm (...) at the weekend a lot ... and you haven't much to do during the day, and may { } the boys, they always go back their own { } and ... and I used to go out a lot with ... the ... other girls mmm ... we've been talking to, but they have stopped calling me so much ... it's a bit ... **strange** ... on that **point**, and I don't spend as much time with them ... so I have (...) **gaps** where I have nothing to do [*laugh*].
- 75) **S:** Maybe because they want to meet Italian people and speak Italian?
- 76) **L:** Erm, I don't think so! They ... they wouldn't **put** me off going out **with them**.
- 77) **S:** That's true!
- 78) **L:** We've just drifted apart a lot!
- 79) **S:** Maybe **it's** a clash of personalities.
- 80) **L:** I think so.
- 81) **S:** Ehi, tell me something about Friday. What do you usually do on Friday?
- 82) **L:** Mmm, there is always **something** going on ... usually. Erm, last night there was a party, and a Spanish girl had her birthday and ... or **maybe** someone would just say: "Hey, all these Erasmus people, let's go to the *bastioni*", for example! Or ... Friday is usually in the back of everyone's mind ...
- 83) **S:** Really?

84) **L:** ... all the way through the week, like “what shall we do! We have to have a plan for Friday night!”

85) **S:** Oh, okay!

86) **L:** But, erm ... yeah, it was a nice party last night! I spoke Italian, **and talked** quite a lot, it was nice! Erm (...) finished quite early ... **to bed!** [*laugh*]

87) **S:** Quite early what time?

88) **L:** Erm ... **two!**

89) **S:** Well .. it’s not early. Early in the morning.

[*both laugh*]

90) **L:** Yeah! Early in the morning.

[*both laugh*].

91) **S:** Ok, **so** you usually go out on Friday. That’s good. That’s good. What about Saturday and Sunday.

92) **L:** Mmm (...), it depends on what is planned (...) ehm like ... a lot **of it** I didn’t do anything. I just stayed in my room ... all weekend. I feel myself get less and less motivated, it doesn’t sound very well.

93) **S:** Really, why?

94) **L:** Erm ... I find it quite difficult to talk about.

95) **S:** Oh ... ok, never mind.

96) **L:** (...), erm, I had **depression** before I **came** here, and I feel it **coming back**.

97) **S:** Oh[:] ... ok.

2. Second interview (third part)

Length: 00:05: 3:20

98) **S:** So Saturday and Sunday sometimes are a bit boring ...

99) **L:** Yeah

100) **S:** ... and you feel less motivated ... so maybe you would like to meet other people? ... Or ...

101) **L:** Yeah. ... Erm ... part of me wants to meet other people and part of me wants to **strengthen** the relationships I already **have** with people.

102) **S:** Yeah. Are you trying to speak Italian as much as possible?

123) **L:** Yeah, because I told them I could speak Spanish, because I studied it for six years, and I got confused with Italian and Spanish, so they were like “ok, we’ll speak in Sardinian to her, so she will understand”

124) **S:** Oh my God!

125) **L:** And I was like ... **so confused** and was like “I don’t understand anything my roommates are saying! I can understand a bit of what my lecturers say, what’s going on? ”

126) **S:** Oh[:] ...

127) **L:** And then after a while they told me ... and I was like “No, no, I’ve been studying Italian, I want to practice that.” Eh eh.

128) **S:** Where do they come from do you know?

129) **L:** Erm .. oh .. I never remember the name of those villages, but ...

130) **S:** Do they come from here? Or from the inland?

131) **L:** Erm ... I think nearby Cagliari, two of them, they’re always saying , Simona, the third girl, she is from the North, she’s closed minded, but we like her (eh eh)

[*both laugh*]

132) **S:** Tell them to speak Italian to you, Sardinian is another language ...

[*both laugh*]

133) **S:** It is your main goal: to speak Italian to your flatmates, not Sardinian.

134) **L:** So we’re getting on, I’m teaching them to learn how to juggle.

135) **S:** Ah[:] ... ok ... can you juggle?

136) **L:** Yap.

137) **S:** Oh well done.

138) **L:** [eh eh]

139) **S:** Ok, thank you very much Lucy.

140) **L:** That’s ok.

141) **S:** Thank you.

Source coded in NVivo as: [[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\<2LU> 3.12.6>](#)]

3. Third interview

Audio recorded and video recorded / Length: 00:14:30

Date / place: 18th February 2007/ Oristano, at my parents' home

1) **S:** Ciao.

2) **L:** Ciao.

3) **S:** Come va?

4) **L:** Bene grazie.

5) **S:** Ok, erm ... this is our second interview. It's the[:] 16th or 17th..?

6) **L:** 18th!

7) **S:** 18th today, eh eh eh.

[both laugh]

8) **S:** Sorry, 18th of February, and we are .. in Oristano.

9) **L:** Yap.

10) **S:** For .. a special event, for the Carnival, er.. did you enjoy it?

11) **L:** **Very** much. I'm **r e a l l y g l a d** I came.

12) **S:** Oh .. that's good. What did you like the most?

13) **L:** Mm... (...) erm ... I enjoyed watching thi[:] "S'Istella", a lot. Erm[:] (...) and .. also .. (...) also thi[:] ... when we did a "*giro*", to see the all town, to see other people, dressed up, having fun. Erm... and..

14) **S:** "Le scuderie"?

15) **L:** [oh no] yeah, my favourite place was "*le scuderie*", yes, yes, very much [smiley voice].

16) **S:** Eh.

17) **L:** I found them really... **traditional** and...just **GENUINE Sardinian** countryside, food, and everyone was so friendly, eh eh.

18) **S:** *Bevi bevi* ..eh eh.

19) **L:** Yeah .. eh eh.

20) **S:** [this is nice] ok erm.. thank you for coming, of course, erm... ok we[:] last met in[:] November, I think, and.. I would like to ask **you** erm... what has been your experience since **then**, because we met erm.. before Christmas, then you spent some time in Cagliari, then you went back to [:] England, and so on, so what have you been doing so far?

21) **L:** **W e l l** ... after we last saw each other, I decided that I wanted to put some distance between me and the other girls, I was spending the time with, and I was always ... speaking English erm[:] we had a lot of differences and (...) I just decided I wanted to move forward and make some new friends. But erm... being, not being a proactive person I found it quite easy to decide what I was **NOT** going to do, rather than what I wanted to do and do instead. So ... I spent a lot of time in my room, I told myself I was trying to **study**, work on **that** aspect of the ERASMUS experience, but I didn't, because studying is boring. Erm... I watched a lot of films and (...) erm... (...) erm ... I have mostly dedicated my time waiting for my boyfriend would visit for my birthday, erm.. which is shame.

22) **S:** When is your birthday?

23) **L:** Erm .. it's the 16th of December [*smiley voice*].

24) **S:** Ah.

25) **L:** Erm ... Tom came on the 15th and we had { } and my birthday celebration was **so much fun**, so much fun, and ... unfortunately not many ERASMUS students could come because hey were all already on their way home for Christmas, but erm... but a few of us erm... had some drinks at my apartment and we went to my favourite little b a r , round the corner from my house, which **I think is the** best bar in Cagliari, but it's not very popular because it's quite far from the centre.

26) **S:** Ah, what's the name of this bar?

27) **L:** **It doesn't have** a name, as far as I can tell, in fact it may be illegal..

28) **S:** Ops. Eh eh.

29) **L:** Yeah, but it's very friendly there, cheap drinks, nice atmosphere and I spent a.. **lovely week** just with Tom, and then we went back to **England** and .. I .. spent all my time with him! A L L my time and ... it made me **really happy**, but I don't think it was healthy. I neglected pretty much e v e r y other aspect of my life, a part of my relationship, with him .. erm ... and by the time it came round to[:] the day I'd booked my flight for coming back to Cagliari, I wasn't read to leave, **at all!**

30) **S:** [ah]

31) **L:** And (...) I was actually really happy when I couldn't find my passport, **anywhere**. My parents weren't happy. But I felt **relieved** and that when I told myself I was ... going to make .. more than an effort to take control of things myself, make myself .. I don't know {...} decide what I wanted to achieve, and make myself trying to achieve it, rather than just doing things to **make each day** rather feel comfortable with. If you see what I mean ..

32) **S:** Yeah.

33) **L:** So .. when I visited friends in England, and tried to do all my English business, so when I came to the time to come back to Cagliari I felt ready. And I DID. It was quite good, I felt **VERY DEPRESSED** in the first few days, when I got here, I spent **so long** with Tom, and I was sitting in my room in Cagliari and I wanted to be and say “Oh Tom ...” and of course he wasn’t t h e r e , it was **very strange** not to have **his presence** next to me. But ... as the days went on I feel like erm... [*I was*] **GROWING INTO MY OWN SKIN**, more, and er[:] **not** going out with the other girls, who I know they like to spend their social lives out in bars, and things, it has been **r e a l l y** good for me, because I don’t wake up with hang over.

[*At this point the video camera stopped working so we had to repeat part of the interview.*]

34) **S:** Ok, so yes, then you came back and you were quite relieved in a way, because you couldn’t find your passport ...

35) **L:** Yes, I was relieved, I wasn’t ready to come back after spending three weeks there, because I just spent all this time with my boyfriend, and only him. But .. and I neglected every other aspect of my life a part from this relationship, which is probably the most important thing to me, but it’s by no means the **only** thing. And {...} after the **gift**, if you like, of another three weeks waiting for my passport, and being a able to spend some time in England, I went to visit all university friends, school friends, and this **made myself** get out more and push myself to take advantage of the time. So when I did have to come back to Cagliari, I erm... I felt ready. And it was really hard to leave, **r e a l l y**, but [short pause] I think it was a lot better that if I has come back a few weeks before. And I missed him terribly, for the first few days, expecting him to be next to me and he wasn’t, so almost feeling **his presence** there, but he wasn’t. Erm ... I feel a lot more confident about our relationship actually.

36) **S:** Really?

37) **L:** Erm ... getting through **three months** without seeing each other as well as we did, then we feel **really strong** and positive about the next few months. {...} and I know that we don’t have to go that long again without seeing each other, which is nice. Mmm ...

38) **S:** Then what happened when you came back? You ... you made some important decisions about your life in Cagliari?

39) **L:** Yap. I think what my prompt input was my realising that I was roughly half way through my ERASMUS year, and I hadn’t really **achieved** very much. I had spent a lot of time **s p e a k i n g** English, although with other students across Europe it was still English that I was speaking every day, I hadn’t bonded very well with my flatmates, an I hadn’t really followed my classes, very well, erm ... I decided if I return to Warwick, in another few months time, at least this was still the case, I would have let an **amazing** opportunity, just passing me by. So ... I decided that I was gonna make some **CHANGES**. These were to spend less time with other ERASMUS students, or at least the ERASMUS students who at least just speak English, erm .. and go out less, which means that I could spend more time, in my apartment, with my roommates, they cook

lovely meals **every** night [eh eh]. And we sit around, well they sit around talking, and I sit there trying to listen and follow the conversation.

40) **S:** Why? You don't understand them?

41) **L:** No, I don't really understand them very well at all, and I say "speak very slowly" that in way I imagine in the way they speak to small children, eh eh.

42) **S:** Do you think is this because you don't understand Italian, or maybe for some other reasons?

43) **L:** Well, after spending today with you and your sister and her boyfriend, we have spoken in Italian all day, and I've managed **a lot better** than I expected really, it's good for me, and this has given me a lot of confidence. Erm .. I think it's a firm that perhaps it's the accent, that's confusing me and the use of Sardinian dialect ...

44) **S:** That's why, do they speak Sardinian?

45) **L:** Yes! I asked them when I arrived if they speak Sardinian and they said "well we mix half and half, but we'll try and speak Sardinian with you [*Lucy*], because we know you've studied Spanish, and it's quite similar".

46) **S:** Oh my God.

47) **L:** And I was like "No please I have been studying Italian for the last year, that's why I'm here." Yeah, but I think they mix it a lot, well .. I'm just glad to find out that I can speak Italian better than I thought I could. I think I might mention this to them and say "please can you try and speak more Italian to me?"

48) **S:** Yeah, because when I was in Oristano I could understand, eh eh.

49) **L:** Mh mh, exactly.

50) **S:** Yeah.

51) **L:** So that's good. Basically, if when I can back to Warwick, at the end of the year, and I can speak Italian, not fluently, I don't mind if I can't speak it fluently, but enough to .. to hold a conversation, with Italians, and get by, and if I have got a few Italian friends, and.. proper contact, whom I can visit, they can visit me if they want, then I'd be **re a l l y** pleased for what I have achieved.

52) **S:** Oh, this is your main goal now?

53) **L:** Yap.

54) **S:** Oh this is very very good. And er[:] you said you've changed, why? What happened before this decision? What did you used to do er[:] like did you have a different routine from the Italian routine?

55) **L:** Yes. I think erm... since returning to Cagliari erm.. I've realised that part of me, all of me really, is being **resisting** ... Italian lifestyle.

- 56) **S:** In what ways?
- 57) **L:** Mm .. I noticed my roommates whether they have **lessons**, or they have to do some work or anything, **it doesn't matter THEY WILL NOT sleep beyond 10 in the morning!**
- 58) **S:** Eh eh.
- 59) **L:** **They don't do it.** I think {...} I wouldn't like to call myself l a z y but in comparison (...) YES, I'm a lot **lazier** than them. And .. I don't have any classes at the moment, or a job, there's no **need** for me to wake up early. So if I feel like staying in bed, I just stay in bed. And [short pause] at the time erm... I I do this because I just think it would make me happy but [short pause] in general it doesn't, it doesn't build a **positive** mental attitude [pause] always giving to the[:] **easier** option, if you like, "I don't want to go and talk to my roommates, it's too difficult, I don't understand! Ill just sit there and be ... **silent**, I don't want to!" So I don't understand my roommates, I read my English books, or[:] go online and email my boyfriend or .. for example "I don't want to get up, there nothing to do, I just stay in bed and get some more sleep". Things like that {...} but (...) over the last few days I've decided to **push myself** , t r y i n g and **change** this routine. {...} Almost trying **copying** what my roommates are doing, if you like, and ...
- 60) **S:** Yes, yes. Does this make you feel better?
- 61) **L:** [mh mh]
- 62) **S:** Like trying to .. be more with Italian people and ..
- 63) **L:** Definitely! I think {...} making myself doing things I find **s c a r y** or intimidating, is a **HORRIBLE** prospect at the time, but when I actually do it, and even if I've only **half achieved it**, it gives me so **much confidence**. I'm really trying to learn that: perhaps doing the opposite of what I think it would make me happy, **really does make me happy**.
- 64) **S:** [really?]
- 65) **L:** YES! it seems like a **c r u e l twist of fate**, but I'm glad I'm learning it now, eh eh.
- 66) **S:** That's good. So I wish you good luck.
- 67) **L:** Thank you.
- 68) **S:** And we'll see in our next interview if you have achieved or if you are half way through your goals.
- 69) **L:** [yap] hopefully we can do it in Italian, eh eh.
- 70) **S:** Yeah...yes. Thank you very much.
- 71) **L:** It's ok.

Source coded in NVivo as : [[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\<3LU> 18.2.6 video>](#)]

4. Fourth interview

Audio recorded/ Length: 00:12:21

Date / place: 7th April 2007 / Cagliari, on a bench by the harbour

- 1) **S:** Hello Lucy, how are you?
- 2) **L:** I'm ok thank you Sonia.
- 3) **S:** Are you enjoying this experience in Cagliari?
- 4) **L:** (...) **y e s** , yes I am. The last time we spoke erm ... two months ago? And since then .. erm ... I think I'm having a more positive experience.
- 5) **S:** Erm ... for example what happened? What have you changed about your daily practices or everything?
- 6) **L:** Erm ... **I h a v e n ' t p a r t i c u l a r l y c h a n g e d** the daily routine in a great sense erm ... but I have been making efforts to change them. It's more of a work in progress. I have been trying to change my sleeping patterns and to wake up early. So ... erm.. manage to get myself up at 10 in the morning, eh eh, which is good [*amused tone of voice*]. Erm ... and I **eat breakfast** every day now, so I don't feel tired, or grumpy during the day as **much**. And er... I've been trying to make more than an effort to talk to my roommates, which is working (...) slowly, but it's working, eh eh.
- 7) **S:** Ok, so do you feel your Italian has improved or is improving since last time we met?
- 8) **L:** **Y E S**, it has improved. Not as much as I wanted but ... it's improving so .. I'm happy . eh eh
- 9) **S:** Ok, because I remember you saying "I want to wake up earlier and I want to make friends to my flatmates as well, so you're trying to do this?"
- 10) **L:** [y e s , yes]
- 11) **S:** And you managed to do it actually
- 12) **L:** Yes, eh eh.
- 13) **S:** Oh well done, and tell me ... what happened ... anything special? Anything that surprised you in good or bad?
- 14) **L:** Erm ... I came back after Christmas, after quite a long **rest** in **England** (...) and I was here for two weeks, before going back to England **again**. And (...) when I came back, again, I was expecting Cagliari to be very different, and most people were saying [*acting out, imitating voices of others*] "when it will be **summer** there will be **so much more** to do. There will be **so much** lively. I was really excited. Erm ... so when I came back I was with my **friend**, we had a week together, and it **r a i n e d!** It **r a i n e d**

a l l w e e k. And she said “Oh Lucy you poor thing, you live in this **boring** city, the best thing it is the good weather hasn’t arrived yet”. I was like [*acting out / imitating the voice of her friends*] “I know I feel sad.”

15) **S:** Oh[:].

16) **L:** So (...) I was feeling slighter pessimistic (...) but ... last week there was a ... erm ... a public star concert for free, in a piazza and I went along to that and I felt so **fun**, it’s the sort of things I like to do in summer, in England, but in Italy ... erm... that was really good. And ... I have been spending a lot more time with the ... **new** English girl ... Sara ... erm ... she lives with two Italian girls, really friendly. We’ve been going out with them a lot more .. and .. I have more of a social life .. now, which I’m happy about, and ... erm... my two Italian roommates seem really happy to help me practice in Italian, so ... everything is looking good, eh eh.

17) **S:** Ok, ok, that’s good. And then erm ...you went to Rome .. and .. when you came back from Rome, you told me, you had quite a good feeling about Cagliari, what happened?

18) **L:** [erm] **Y E S** , well .. I didn’t enjoy Rome very much, so I was looking forward to getting **away** anyway (...) erm ... part of me was thinking [*acting out*] “oh no I’m going back to Cagliari I just want to go **HOME**.” We got back to the airport, got back home and I sat down in my front room and turned on the television ... and I recognised all the adverts, and it made me feel so **homey**. It was like if I had come **back** to England and recognised this soap powder advert, for example. It made me feel like I do actually **belong** here, because there is a place for in Cagliari where I fit, eh eh. This is really satisfying. It’s quite a little thing but it has a big meaning, eh eh.

19) **S:** Yeah. Erm ... what about the streets in Rome and in Cagliari? Did you notice the difference?

20) **L:** [yes] there’s a **H U G E** difference. The street in Rome was **so c r o w d e d** . And I was always pushed out away by people, and .. erm ... even in the **back** streets, full of people. I suppose one in five was Italian, **so** many tourists, it ... it didn’t really feel very much like Italy, eh eh. And then I walk back to Cagliari, and walk half an hour to meet you (...), the streets were so quite and tranquil, and it was a nice, it was a **relaxing** walk from one place to another, rather than a **STRESSFUL** “got to get **through this**” sort of experience. And (...) it made me feel that I’m really glad that I chose Cagliari.

21) **S:** Oh[:] ...

22) **L:** Because even during the winter, when it’s boring, I always wandered (acting out) “oh maybe I should have gone to Rome, Rome is so **glamorous** and **exciting**” but last week showed me that the reality would have been a lot more stressful. And ... it reaffirmed ... erm ... it reaffirmed that ... I’m happy with Cagliari.

23) **S:** So now you’re glad about your choice about Cagliari now?

24) **L:** Mh mh, yeah.

25) **S:** So you made new friends you told me, are they Italian? You ... you are friend with this English girl, and what about Italian friends?

- 26) **L:** Yes, she lives with two Belgian girl, who I know already, and with two Italian girls ... erm (...) erm ... Valeria and Sara, they are **very** friendly. (...) and ... we've gone out with them twice now, with their boyfriends who are Italian, their friends, they all seem very very nice people, easy to talk to. So that's good, eh eh.
- 27) **S:** Ok, so you're making new friends as well. Ok, erm ... so you've changed your daily routine in a way, what has changed, a part from the fact that you're trying to wake up earlier?
- 28) **L:** Erm ...
- 29) **S:** anything else has changed?
- 30) **L:** (...)
- 31) **S:** About the lectures, the university?
- 32) **L:** I have been trying to go to my lessons more, I have been to more lesson this semester than last semester. Which is good.
- 33) **S:** Are you happy with the university environment now? Because you told me you weren't really really satisfied with it. Or it's the same?
- 34) **L:** [it's] pretty much the same, but (...) for example this term I'm taking *letteratura inglese* instead of *letteratura italiana*, and so (...) I know the book it's been talked about, and it makes it so much easier to understand what's been said about the book. There's still a .. problem whereas ... I can't take notes very easily ... my listening skills aren't good enough yet. (...) erm .. but I'm getting more **out** of the lectures than I did before, and it doesn't feel like as much as a waste of time, eh eh.
- 35) **S:** Ok, whereas in the beginning you felt like a waste of time.
- 36) **L:** [yeah] yes, eh eh.
- 37) **S:** Are these lectures in Italian?
- 38) **L:** They're all in Italian.
- 39) **S:** Even the English literature?
- 40) **L:** Yap. Even English literature (eh eh).
- 41) **S:** Ok, ok that's good. And .. any plans for this month, next month?
- 42) **L:** Erm ... now it's getting warmer, I want to ... maybe get a few ERASMUS friends or the Italian friends I've made, and I want to rent a car or get a train and go and see more of Sardinia.
- 43) **S:** Ok.
- 44) **L:** [that's my plan]

45) **S:** And what about your motivation Lucy? Do you feel as motivated as before or maybe your motivation is increasing? What can you tell me about your motivation being here and studying Italian?

46) **L:** It changes from day to day. I still have days where I feel like, I just want to stay in bed all day (...) but ... I think ... I think the sunshine is helping, it helps me feel more motivated, and it's **definitively** making me feel more positive about the next, the last two month, eh eh.

47) **S:** Ok, and than you told me that you want to leave in July?

48) **L:** Yes, I want to be back in England for a music festival in the end of July. **Perhaps** I'll go back sooner, I'm not sure (...). I f e e l like I still miss my family and my boyfriend **m o r e** than ever.

49) **S:** Ah[:].

50) **L:** And I expected to start to miss them less as the year went on, but ... I've been missing them **more and more and more**. So ... perhaps when the lessons have finished I might go back sooner. Although it does feel it would be a shame to waste ... **almost a free** holiday in Sardinia. (eh eh) so I'm not sure. At the moment my plan is ... mid July to go home.

51) **S:** Yeah. Day by day you will see. Anyway you're still here, eh eh.

52) **L:** Eh eh.

53) **S:** Half way through and then ... you've been very brave.

54) **L:** {...} Yes. I think I have, eh eh. I feel proud of myself.

55) **S:** And what about yourself? Do you think you[:] you have changed a bit more? Because last time you told me "yes I feel changed in a way, towards Italians, Italian attitudes" do you feel it now, that you have changed? Or not?

56) **L:** {...} erm ... YES I think I have. Erm ... I have a sort of adapted with a few ... Italian habits. Like .. erm ... lemon in my tea instead of milk. Erm ... and ... what else? I've become very critical about food, eh eh.

57) **S:** Really? Eh eh.

58) **L:** Food like ingredients and things, like when I got back to England I was [*acting out*] "Oh I want tomatoes from Sardinia, I want olive oil from Sardinia..." erm .. I feel like I have a sort of adopted (...) all of the Italian snobbery about food, if you like, eh eh.

59) **S:** And what about people? People's attitudes? Erm ... did you get used to that a bit more? I mean, because last time we said "well sometimes it's a bit difficult to accept different attitudes"

60) **L:** YES. I think so. I can ... I find a lot easier to listen to other people attitudes and accept them for what they are, without necessarily have to agree with them to myself.

Not necessarily in an Italian context, but for other people cultures, for other parts of Europe as well.

61) **S:** So it's not a problem for you if sometimes Italian people shout or[:]? Yeah, you just got used to that.

62) **L:** I'm **more** used to it than I was, eh eh.

63) **S:** Yeah. So maybe there is something that has changed in your accepting this ...

64) **L:** Mh mh. Yes I would say so. I do expect erm .. Italian waiters to be for example a bit more curt than I would expect in England for example. And I doesn't affect me when people don't necessarily say "please and thank you" after every sentence. It makes me more aware of *Englishism* ...

65) **S:** Ah ah[:]

66) **L:** Than *Italianism* , if you know what I mean?

67) **S:** What you mean by *Englishism*?

68) **L:** Erm[:] {...} the manner that we say "please and thank you" in English for example. I was in a restaurant a week ago and the waitress said "You do not have to say "please" after everything to me" and I said "oh oh sorry"

[both laugh]

69) **S:** Ok

70) **L:** Things like that.

71) **S:** Ok, anything else you would like to add?

72) **L:** Erm[:] {...} no, no , I think that's everything.

73) **S:** Ok, thank you very much.

74) **L:** Thank you Sonia.

Source coded in NVivo as: [[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\<4LU> 7.4.7>](#)]

5. Fifth interview (first part)

Audio recorded / Length: 00:08:10

Date / place: 6th June 2007/ Cagliari, in my car (outside Lucy's house)

1) **S:** 6th of June 2007 last interview with Lucy. Hi Lucy.

2) **L:** Hi Sonia.

- 3) **S:** How are you?
- 4) **L:** I'm well thank you. How are you?
- 5) **S:** I'm fine. Thank you. Erm ... so how do you feel? You've nearly finished your experience as an ERASMUS student, in Cagliari, and how do you feel about it?
- 6) **L:** Erm ... I feel a big sense of [*self-*]satisfaction, because it was difficult at times, and now it's over and I feel I made it, I got through, so I'm proud of myself.
- 7) **S:** So you managed to stay, nine months? How long have you been here?
- 8) **L:** Nine months, yes.
- 9) **S:** Nine months. And do you have a general positive feeling about this experience or negative or so-so? What is your general impression of it?
- 10) **L:** Mmm[:] it's quite **mixed**. I feel negative ... because ... I think I could have got out more from this experience if I'd in Italy arrived with a more ... positive attitude, because I was erm... in a bit of a dark rut, eh eh, when I arrived. And I think it affected how I picked up the language and ... **definitively** my motivation.
- 11) **S:** Oh[:].
- 12) **L:** And (...) but ... I feel very positive because I still managed to gain **so much** from this experience. My language skills have improved, greatly, and {...} I've got a lot more confidence, in general, I feel like a more a outgoing person.
- 13) **S:** Oh that's good. And ... do you feel more **European** after this experience? You know ERASMUS is in a European context ...
- 14) **L:** Mh mh, YES, I think I do. I feel a sort of m o r e {...} I have more cultural links with more ... European people who live on the continent, which ... er When I go back to England I feel very aware that my friends don't feel that. I'm .. I'm different, because I've lived abroad and ... I've just a sort of **absorbed** some of that **culture**. And I may be more European than I did before, eh eh.
- 15) **S:** Ok, so you feel quite positive about this experience, that's good. And what about the university, anything you would like to change about the university system or you're quite happy about it? About y o u r lectures and everything?
- 16) **L:** I think the university system as **part** of the ERASMUS experience I feel **most negative** about, or the least positive, eh eh, because (...) I don't think I gained anything from the lessons, really! I **NEVER** came to a point where I sort of thought "Ok yes, I can understand this lesson , I feel confident with things. Erm[:] (...) I never found easy to take notes, or ... to **learn** anything (sort pause) and (pause) in general I didn't go to very many lessons, because of this [*very low tone of voice*] {...} so ... I'm not sure what I would do to change it if I have come again, probably (...) try and motivate myself a lot more and keep in persevering. {...} but (...) no ... I just feel negative about the university environment, I feel I have gained more living with my roommates and ... spending time with ... other ERASMUS students.

- 17) **S:** If you could give some advice to the university, I don't know system or ... tutors in general, what you'd you change? What would you suggest them doing about this? Because you feel quite negative about the system, what would you change, any suggestions?
- 18) **L:** mm[:] {...}.
- 19) **S:** To increase motivation in students ...
- 20) **L:** {...} erm[:] {...} I think perhaps if I had closer contacts with my personal tutor (...). I saw her **once** when I first arrived, and then she went on **holiday** for two months!
- 21) **S:** In Italy or ...?
- 22) **L:** In Italy.
- 23) **S:** So you had a personal tutor in Italy.
- 24) **L:** [YES] but I saw her **once**! I can't even remember her name. She did such a small role, but I think it would have helped if I had had ... a personal tutor to discuss problems and things [*very low tone of voice*].
- 25) **S:** She wasn't available or Mmm[:] well yeah ... was she available or not? I mean, she was away, but er ...
- 26) **L:** I **think** she was available ... but it was so hard to get hold of her and in the end I just gave up, eh eh.
- 27) **S:** So she wasn't really helpful?
- 28) **L:** Not helpful at all!
- 29) **S:** Ok, so you maybe you would suggest having a personal tutor and ... so you could meet her more often.
- 30) **L:** [yap]
- 31) **S:** Ok, and any advice to the **future** ERASMUS students, coming to Cagliari or to Italy?
- 32) **L:** {...} {...} I can't think of anything after talking in my head
- 33) **S:** [in your experience]
- 34) **L:** Mm[:] {...} {...}
- 35) **S:** In what you succeed? And you want to pass on this ... you know .. experience, telling them "do this, don't do that ..."
- 36) **L:** [mmm] I think my advice would be to ... **i g n o r e** any fear you have about making mistakes, and push yourself to practice. Because I didn't practice my Italian to start with, and ... almost after all, because I was scared of making mistakes. And ... now I'm trying to practice more, even though I'm so painfully embarrassed 'cause I'm

aware of the mistakes I make, but (...) I feel satisfied that at least I'm trying. I think that's important. That would be my piece of advice I think {...} {...}.

37) **S:** thank you. And we met ... last time we met it was in April, anything has changed since then? Or ... it's more or less the same? I don't know, your routine or your friends, anything ...

38) **L:** I think my routine is more or less the same (...). I probably go out even less {...} erm ... {...} because {...} my social life ... it's still with English people, mostly. And erm ... two of them have gone home now, so, eh eh, I have even less of a social life I suppose. And this is, this is making me wanting to go home as well ...

39) **S:** When are you going?

40) **L:** Erm .. in two weeks now.

41) **S:** Oh[:].

42) **L:** Not long, eh eh, I think I'll just enjoy the sunshineand then go home.

43) **S:** Yeah, so this has changed, actually, that you are having less social life.

44) **L:** Mh mh.

45) **S:** And ..

46) **L:** [exactly]

47) **S:** Your routine is the same?

48) **L:** Yeah, pretty much the same: I wake up very late, I go to bed very late. I call Tom every day, I try to speak to my roommates as much as possible ...

49) **S:** Do they speak Italian or Sardinian?

50) **L:** Erm ... a mixture, eh eh.

[both laugh]

51) **S:** Ok, and do you feel you have changed thank or because of this experience? Do you feel a change in your life?

52) **L:** erm ... I think I'm more prepared to ... deal with ... difficult situations (...) I think I'm a stronger person. {...} and ... I feel more European, and ... those two things ... I think, it's **strange** because it's almost things like .. the year abroad has reinforced my *English* feelings as well. {...} {...} and ... I feel ... I never before had any kind of **yearning** or passion towards **England**, but being away for a while ... erm ... I really have ... a sort of love for my home country. At the same time there's a soft spot for Italy as well, eh eh.

53) **S:** Maybe you better yourself and

54) **L:** [yap]

- 55) **S:** And your feelings have contributed ...
- 56) **L:** Yeah, yes, mh mh.
- 57) **S:** Anything else you would like to add? In our last interview?
- 58) **L:** [mmm[:] mmm] {...} {...} I can't think of anything, no.
- 59) **S:** Ok, ok, so thank you very much. Hope to see you soon.
- 60) **L:** Yap. Eh eh.

5. Fifth interview (second part)

Length: 00:01:44

- 61) **S:** So Lucy this is your second year at the university? So you're doing your ERASMUS experience in your second year
- 62) **L:** [mh mh]
- 63) **S:** What do you think about that?
- 64) **L:** Erm ... at the beginning erm ... I thought indifferent towards it, but er .. Warwick seemed to think that it worked very well for them in the past, so I ... I trusted them and .. I thought it should be ok. {...} but now, now I've come to the end of the year, I feel differently, I think that .. for me.. it would have been a lot better, if I had had another year with university studying in England. And ... working more on grammar for example, sentence structures, and boarding up my vocabulary a bit more, before I came out here. I think it probably would have been, would be a beneficial skill for people that have studied Italian, perhaps at A-level or GCSE already, but not for someone like me, who went ... if I like I was dropped in a deep pan, that sort of things. Mm[:]
- 65) **S:** So this is something that you ... you would like erm ... to be changed, you ... I mean a kind of advice you're giving, and er[:] based on your experience, because when you came here your level of Italian, of course it wasn't excellent, because it is just your second year.
- 66) **L:** Yes, my second year.
- 67) **S:** [and if you'd have been] erm ... in your third year ...
- 68) **L:** Yap. **Although** erm ... I do like the fact that I have another **two years** left, when I return to university, I think this is positive. I'm not sure ...
- 69) **S:** Mmm ...
- 70) **L:** Yah, I think I would have benefit a lot more from the year abroad if I had had another year of studying in Warwick first ...
- 71) **S:** Yeah, ok thank you.

Source coded in NVivo as: [[<Internals\LUCY\transcripts\5LU 6.6.7>](#)]

APPENDIX 4

SAMPLES OF DIARY ENTRIES

1. ILARIA

Diario per Sonia:

Venerdi il 23 Marzo (2007)

Mi sono alzata abbastanza tardi a causa del mio amico che sto ospitando questi giorni. Dopo aver fatto colazione sono andata a una lezione di letteratura inglese. Sono tornata a casa verso le 16.00 e poi ho fatto un giro della zona storica col mio amico. Verso le 19.30 siamo tornati a casa. Abbiamo mangiato con Simona e Tiziana e poi abbiamo guardato un film.

Sabato il 24 Marzo

Dopo essermi alzata alle 10 ho pulito l'appartamento un po' mentre aspettavo che il mio amico si svegliasse. Abbiamo pranzato a casa e poi siamo usciti. Abbiamo fatto un giro per i negozi e poi abbiamo preso un gelato. Siamo tornati a casa per ascoltare la partita (Inghilterra) alla radio. Abbiamo mangiato cena tutti insieme e poi abbiamo guardato la tv.

Domenica il 25 Marzo

Oggi siamo andati al Poetto per far vedere al mio amico il mare. Abbiamo camminato sulla spiaggia e poi abbiamo mangiato un gelato. Per sbaglio abbiamo preso il pullman per Quartu e Selargius, allora dopo un girone del[l'] hinterland di Cagliari siamo finalmente tornati a casa verso le 18.00. Abbiamo guardato la tv e verso le 20.00 sono venute due amiche e abbiamo ordinato la pizza. Poi abbiamo guardato Signor degli anelli in tv.

Lunedì il 26 Marzo

Dopo essermi alzata verso le 9 ho fatto colazione e poi sono uscita col mio amico. Abbiamo fatto un giro per la zona di Castello per fare delle foto. Dopo 3 ore di camminare[ta] siamo andati in Piazza Yenne per prendere un gelato. Poi siamo tornati velocemente a casa prima di uscire di nuovo. Siamo andati a Monte Urpino per fare un giro e per fare le foto dei pavoni, che in questo periodo tengono sempre aperte le code! Siamo tornati a casa verso le 17 e dopo aver guardato un po' di tv e [è] arrivato il mio studente per la ripetizione. Lui se ne andato via alle 20.30 e dopo abbiamo mangiato.

Martedì il 27 Marzo

Come al solito ci siamo alzati verso le 10 e dopo colazione siamo usciti. Siccome era una bella giornata abbiamo deciso di andare al Poetto di nuovo. Ci siamo seduti alla [in]

spiaggia e abbiamo parlato. Poi abbiamo preso un gelato. Siamo tornati in città[à] verso le 16.00 e poi abbiamo preso il pullman per *Le Vele*, dove abbiamo comprato la roba per cena. Siamo tornati a casa intorno alle 19.00 e ho preparato una cena inglese, ~~siccome~~ [visto che] era l'ultima notte a Cagliari per il mio amico. Dopo cena abbiamo guardato la tv insieme e poi siamo andati a letto.

Mercoledì il 28 Marzo

Oggi ci siamo alzati alle 10.30 e dopo aver fatto colazione e preparato la valigia del mio amico siamo andati a [in] Piazza Matteotti per prendere il pullman per l'aeroporto. Dopo aver salutato il mio amico all'aeroporto sono tornata a Cagliari e sono andata alla lezione di storia dell'America. Sono tornata a casa verso le 16.15 e ho pulito la stanza e rimesso in ordine le mie cose. Alle 19.30 e[è] venuto il mio studente per fare la ripetizione. Alle 20.30 lui se ne [è] andato via e ho cenato con Tiziana e Simona e poi ho letto l'ultima trascrizione e ho fatto delle correzioni prima di andare a letto.

Giovedì il 29 Marzo

Mi sono alzata verso le 9 e dopo aver fatto colazione ho studiato per la mia traduzione. Non ho pranzato e ho studiato sino alle 18.30 quando siamo usciti per fare la spesa. Siamo tornati verso le 19.15 e ho ricominciato a studiare. Alle 21 abbiamo cenato e dopo aver guardato *Scrubs* in tv sono andata a letto.

Venerdì il 30 Marzo

Mi sono alzata alle 10 e dopo aver fatto colazione ho compilato un modulo per la mia università[à] in Inghilterra. Alle 13.30 sono andata a una lezione di letteratura inglese e poi sono andata all'Isola del Gelato con Lucy. Dopo aver mangiato un gelato abbiamo fatto un giro per i negozi e verso le 18 sono tornata a casa. Quando sono tornata sono uscita di nuovo con Tiziana per fare una passeggiata. Quando siamo tornati[e] abbiamo parlato con Simona e il suo ragazzo, Francesco, che resta con noi per il weekend. Abbiamo cenato verso le 22 e poi sono andata a letto.

Sabato il 31 Marzo

Oggi mi sono alzata alle 5.15 e alle 6.15 sono uscita con Tiziana per andare a Tortoli con un'amica in macchina. Dovevamo fare il pa[g]liaccio nel negozio *C Fadda*! Dopo due ore di viaggio siamo arrivate a Tortoli e alle 9 abbiamo cominciato. La nostra mansione era di distribua[i]re palloncini, truccare i bambini e fare un casino in generale! Dopo quattro ore di lavoro abbiamo pranzato e poi alle 15 abbiamo ricominciato. La sera c'era un sacco di gente ed era molto difficile di rimanere felice[i] e contenta[i]. Alle 20.30 abbiamo finito – finalmente! Siamo partite alle 21.30 e siamo arrivate a Cagliari verso le 23.45. Quando sono tornata a casa sono andata a letto subito, era esausta!

Domenica il 1 Aprile

Oggi mi sono alzata abbastanza tardi, ~~siccome~~ [perché] avevo lavorato così tanto ieri! Dopo avermi fatto la doccia sono uscita verso le 14.00. Sono andata al bastione per leggere un libro e poi ho preso un gelato. Dopo aver mangiato il gelato sono andata al mare, ma c'era troppo vento allora sono tornata a casa verso le 18.00. Quando sono

tornata ho continuato a leggere mio libro e poi ho guardato un film. Verso le 21 ho cenato e poi sono andata a letto, essendo ancora stanca da ieri.

Lunedì il 2 Aprile

Dopo essermi alzata alle 9 ho lavorato sulla mia traduzione sino alle 15.30 quando sono andata alla lezione di Letteratura Inglese. Dopo la lezione ho comprato un biglietto d'auguri per un amico e poi sono tornata a casa alle 18.45. Alle 19.30 è venuto il mio studente, Alberto, per la ripetizione. Dopo la ripetizione ho cenato con Simona e Tiziana e poi abbiamo guardato la tv. Sono andata a letto verso mezzanotte.

Martedì il 3 Aprile

Mi sono alzata verso le 10 e poi ho cominciato a studiare. Ho studiato fino alle 15, quando sono uscita per spedire una lettera. Sono tornata subito perché stava piovendo e ho ricominciato a studiare. Poi ho guardato un film e ho fatto delle cose in internet. Sono andata a letto all'una.

Mercoledì il 4 Aprile

Oggi mi sono alzata verso le 11 e ho passato la mattina ~~su~~ [al] computer. Alle due ho pranzato con Tiziana e poi ho cominciato a studiare. Ho studiato fino alle 19.15 quando Simona e Tiziana sono andate in palestra. Alberto, il mio studente, non poteva venire allora ho deciso di pulire l'appartamento, non avendo altro da fare! Simona e Tiziana sono tornate alle 20.30 e abbiamo cenato. Dopo aver guardato un po' di tv sono andata a letto verso mezzanotte.

Giovedì il 5 Aprile

Mi sono alzata verso le 10 e ho cominciato a lavorare sulla mia traduzione. Ho lavorato sino alle 17 quando sono uscita per fare una passeggiata. Dopo aver girato un po' per i negozi ho preso un gelato. Alle 18.30 sono tornata a casa e ho chattato in *msn* con gli amici. Verso le 20 è venuta un'amica e abbiamo cenato tutti insieme. Ci siamo un po' ubriacate e sono andata a letto intorno alle due.