LEARNING AND USING ENGLISH AND SWEDISH BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: activity systems of six upper secondary school students

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract

Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli katsoa englannin ja ruotsin oppimista koulun ulkopuolella toiminnan teorian ja erityisesti Engeströmin (1987, 1999) toimintajärjestelmämallin näkökulmasta, josta aihetta ei ole aiemmin lähestytty. Tutkimus vastaa seuraaviin kysymyksiin: 1) Ovatko abiturientit enemmän kielenkäyttäjiä vai -oppijoita englannissa ja ruotsissa koulun ulkopuolella? 2) Millaisia eroja ja yhtäläisyyksiä heidän toiminnassaan on englannissa ja ruotsissa? 3) Mitkä tekijät selittävät aktiivisuutta ja passiivisuutta?

Tutkimus on toteutettu tapaustutkimuksena. Tutkimusaineistona on kuusi puolistrukturoitua haastattelua. Haastateltavat ovat 18-vuotiaita lukion kolmannen vuosikurssin opiskelijoita: kolme tyttöä ja kolme poikaa. Haastattelut nauhoitettiin, litterointiin ja analysoitiin laadullisen sisällönanalyysin keinoin.

Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittivat, että abiturientit olivat olleet koulun ulkopuolella englannin kielen aktiivisia käyttäjiä, jotka olivat kuitenkin myös tietoisesti pyrkineet oppimaan kieltä, esimerkiksi katsomalla tv-ohjelmia ilman tekstityksiä. Ruotsin kielen suhteen he olivat olleet melko passiivisia, mutta varsinkin lähestyvät ylioppilaskirjoitukset olivat tehneet monista aktiivisia kielenoppijoita myös koulun ulkopuolella. Viisi kuudesta haastatellusta oli tuottanut englantia useammin itse kuin ruotsia. He myös kokivat oppineensa englantia enemmän ja helpommin, ja se oli selvemmin sidottu tavoitteisiin kuin ruotsi. Yhtäläisyyksiä kielten välillä oli oppimisen kannalta hyödyllisimmiksi koetuissa välineissä sekä käsityksissä koulussa ja vapaa-ajalla opitun välisestä suhteesta. Englannin oppimista edistivät erityisesti kokemukset oppimisen helppoudesta, yhteisöltä saatu tuki, korkealle asetetut tavoitteet sekä englannin kielen kokeminen osaksi identiteettiä, kun taas ruotsia kannusti oppimaan erityisesti ylioppilaskirjoituksiin valmistautuminen. Oppilaat tiesivät, että mahdollisuuksia oppia ruotsia olisi saatavilla, mutta oppimista estivät esimerkiksi käsitykset siitä, että ruotsin oppiminen koulun ulkopuolella ei ole tarpeen sekä ”pakkoruotsi”-asenteet ja heikko luottamus omiin taitoihin. Yhdellä haastatelluista englannin oppimista olivat vaikeuttaneet heikko luottamus omiin taitoihin, negatiiviset kokemukset oppimisesta koulussa sekä näiden seurauksena aktiivisuuden puute. Sen sijaan ruotsin oppijana ja käyttäjänä hän oli ollut aktiivinen, mitä olivat edistäneet muun muassa suomenruotsalaiset ystävät ja positiiviset kokemukset ruotsin oppimisesta koulussa.

Tulosten pohjalta herää kysymyksiä esimerkiksi siitä, miten motivoida oppilaita kielten opiskeluun koulun ulkopuolella sekä miten tukea myös heikkoja oppilaita kielten oppimiseen koulun ulkopuolella.

Asiasanat – Keywords second language acquisition, activity theory, human activity system model, learning beyond the classroom	
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1 INTRODUCTION

Language learning is not only limited to classroom. Even though looking at learning of languages beyond the classroom is not a new phenomenon as such, the number of studies conducted on language learning beyond the classroom is growing at present, as interest in independent learning and autonomy has increased, and, new environments are constantly opening up for language education (Benson 2011: 5, 8). The linguistic environment of language learners has changed significantly during the past decades because of several factors, such as globalisation, the Internet, social media and the many new forms of information technology (Pitkänen et al. 2011: 7). The growing importance of language learning beyond the classroom has raised the question of, for example, how to bridge the gap between learning beyond the classroom and learning at school. For example, the practices connected with school often differ from those connected with learning beyond the classroom, and, there are also differences between the media practices of teachers and students, for instance (Luukka et al. 2008). For example, information technology is still often used rather passively in teaching English: teachers show students materials in English on the Internet, but interactional opportunities provided by games or the social media are not made use of (Opettaja 2011: 5). Moreover, students seem to connect the concept of learning with school and do not seem to value their engagement with languages beyond the classroom as learning (Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta 2008, Kalaja et al. 2011a, 2011b). Thus, the growing importance of learning beyond the classroom is an important resource and challenge at the same time.

In Finland, many studies have been conducted on how Finnish students use and learn English and Swedish beyond the classroom. Practically all pupils in comprehensive schools (grades 1-9) and upper secondary schools (grades 10-12) study English and Swedish in Finland (Suomen kieltenopettajien liitto 2010). However, these two languages have a fairly different status (Kalaja et al. 2011a). English does not have an official status in Finland, but it is in many ways present in people's everyday lives and it is also employed as *a lingua franca*, a language of communication for people who do not speak it as their first language. Swedish, in turn, is a national language of Finland, in addition to Finnish, and has long roots in the history of Finland. Moreover, these two

languages are surrounded by different discourses: “compulsory” Swedish is contrasted with usefulness of English. Even though English and Swedish have a different status in Finland, they both are present in the media and in everyday life. However, students often seem to fail to look for and make use of the affordances to learn Swedish (Kalaja et al. 2011a, 2011b). In addition, there is great variation in how students know the Swedish media, for instance (Green-Vänttinen 2010: 66). By contrast, the studies have shown that learning English beyond the classroom is often incidental, that is, it takes place without an effort, and can even serve as an empowering experience for some students as they become experts in specific areas of language use (Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta 2008). Lately, for example, the contribution of video games for learning English has been paid attention to, as nowadays boys earn better marks in the test of English as part of the matriculation examination, and this has been shown to be partly due to playing video games (Opettaja 2011: 5). Thus, in addition to having a different status and being surrounded by different discourses, there are differences in how English and Swedish are learnt beyond the classroom: especially, in how the affordances to learn these languages are made use of.

In the present study, learning of English and Swedish beyond the classroom will be approached from a novel viewpoint: the perspective of activity theory, and, more precisely, the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999). The human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) has rarely been employed in second language research, and, the few studies employing the model have focused either on macrostructures of learning, such as the effects of curricular reforms (Kim 2008 and Ahn 2009), or, on motivation (Kim 2009, 2011, Allen 2010). In activity theory, language learners are seen as agents, who actively construct the terms and conditions of their own learning (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 145). The human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) has its foundation in the primary tenets of activity theory: it emphasises that goal-orientedness and artifact-mediatedness are fundamental features of human activity, and, highlights that human activities are social and collaborative in nature (Kim 2008: 29-30). The human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) illustrates the components that are essential for human activity, and, analysing these components in students’ learning and using of English and Swedish beyond the classroom enables exploring their activities systematically.

Thus, in the present study, upper secondary school students' activity systems in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom will be described within the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999). The study consists of six cases of third-year students in upper secondary school (grades 10-12). The aim is to find out whether they can be characterised predominantly as learners or users of English and Swedish, what kind of differences there are between their activity systems in learning English and Swedish and what kind of factors enhance or restrict their learning of these languages beyond the classroom, that is, what kind of reasons there are for being active or passive.

The present study will consist of eight chapters. After this introductory chapter, in Chapter 2, history of activity theory will be outlined and some central concepts within the theory discussed, as these form the foundation for the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) which, in turn, will be described in detail in Chapter 3. In Chapter 4, the concept of learning beyond the classroom will be looked at in order to find out what it involves. In addition, earlier studies on learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom as well as one study where these two are compared will be described. In Chapter 5, the focus will move from the theoretical background to the present study and the research design will be described. In Chapter 6, the results will be presented. In Chapter 7, these findings will be discussed by the research questions. Finally, in Chapter 8, the methods employed in the study will be evaluated and some suggestions for further research provided.

2 ACTIVITY THEORY

Activity theory has its roots in the work of L.S. Vygotsky, A.N. Leontiev and A.R. Luria, who laid the foundation for sociocultural theory in the 1920s and 1930s (Engeström and Miettinen 1999: 1). Later on, several scholars, such as Davydov, Engeström, Wertsch and Zinchenko, have contributed to current thinking on the theory (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 143-144). From the perspective of activity theory**,** *second language (L2) learning* is not merely acquisition of forms, because, in addition to that, it is also developing or not being able to develop new ways of mediating ourselves as well as our relationships to others and to ourselves" (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 145). Thus,

as Lantolf and Pavlenko (2001: 145) illustrate, learners are seen as "more than processing devices that convert linguistic input into well-formed (or not so well-formed) outputs". Instead, they are seen as people, as agents, who actively construct the terms and conditions of their own learning.

Researchers have different views on the definition of activity theory, and, therefore, the first section of this chapter will aim at defining activity theory by exploring how it relates to sociocultural theory and what its essential features are. After that the development of activity theory from the original works of Vygotsky to the third generation activity theory will be described. In the last section, the concepts of *activity, mediation* and *agency* will be looked at, because they are essential for understanding the principals of activity theory.

2.1 Defining activity theory

Before starting to define what activity theory is, it is necessary to look at sociocultural theory, where the foundation of activity theory is. Lantolf (2004: 30-31) characterises *sociocultural theory* as follows: "despite the label 'sociocultural' the theory is not a theory either of the social or of the cultural aspects of human existence…it is, rather, …a theory of mind…that recognizes the central role that social relationships and culturally constructed artifacts play in organizing uniquely human forms of thinking". Individual cognition is, thus, regarded as inseparable from its social and cultural context (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 1). Therefore, Vygotsky (as summarised by Lantolf 2000: 3) proposed that higher mental activities should be studied on four genetic domains: 1) *phylogenetic domain*, which refers to how human mental activity became to be different from mental processes in other forms of life because of mediational means, 2) *sociocultural domain*, which is focused on how the kinds of mediation and thinking which are favoured change over history, 3) *ontogenetic domain*, where the interest is in how children take mediational means, especially language, into their thinking as they grow, and 4) *microgenetic domain*, where the development of mediation is looked at over a short period of time, for example, when learning a word As it can be seen, what is central in sociocultural theory is the concept of mediation, which will be described in greater detail later. However, it is important to bear in mind that there, actually, is not

one sociocultural research paradigm, instead, many researchers, such as Alex Kozulin, James Wertsch and Michael Cole have developed the theory further (Alanen 2003: 55).

As activity theory is part of sociocultural theory, there are, consequently, many features that they share (Daniels 2001: 1). Firstly, both approaches originate from the work of Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky, and, thus, describe development and learning as mediated processes. Secondly, both perspectives aim at theorising and producing methodological tools which help at examining the historical, social and cultural factors that influence the processes which in turn affect human functioning. Last, but definitely not least, they both also acknowledge that human beings themselves are active and shape the forces that shape them. Thus, the concept of mediation, taking into account the role of context and recognising the agency of human beings are central issues also in activity theory, in the same way as in its foundation, sociocultural theory.

Now the question arises of what, then, actually, distinguishes activity theory from sociocultural theory, that is, what makes it necessary to have activity theory as its own theory? To answer the question, it is useful to look at the definitions of activity theory, in turn. However, defining activity theory is not a simple task either. Firstly, some researchers argue that activity theory is by no means a unified theory (Holzman 2006: 5-6), and, secondly, there are also differences in how activity theory is seen in relation to sociocultural theory. The complexity of defining *activity theory* can be seen, for example, in the variety of names employed for it**,** such as, *the cultural-historical theory of activity, cultural historical activity theory (CHAT), socio-cultural psychology, cultural historical psychology and cultural psychology* (Holzman 2006: 5, Prenkert 2010: 641). Furthermore, referring to the difficulty of defining the theory, Mitchell (2011: 686) even describes activity theory as “ambitious” and “elusive”. Lantolf (2000:8) has defined activity theory simply as “a unified account of Vygotsky’s original proposals on the nature and development of human behaviour”. He, thus, defines it as fairly synonymous with sociocultural theory. Daniels (2001: 1), by contrast, calls activity theory “a near relative” of sociocultural theory, whereas Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 224) describe the current activity theory as follows:

> The current approach seeks to understand collective action, individuals and goal-directed activity as the focus of analysis and the key to transformation and innovation. From the analyst's perspective, constructing an activity system as a research object involves defining the roles that people, institutions, and artifacts play in moment-to-moment practice --- This framework privileges human agency while understanding it as mediated and constrained by technologies (for example, computers, books and writing instruments), semiotic tools such as language and literacies, pedagogical frameworks and conceptions of learning, by the relevant communities, and by the historical and emergent rules and divisions of labor that structure the ongoing activity.

It is, thus, emphasised by Lantolf and Thorne's (2006: 224) that the focus of analysis in activity theory is, in addition to collective action and individuals, on the goal-directed activity, and it is, actually, that specific difference in emphasis which separates activity theory from sociocultural theory. As Daniels (2001: 1) points out, the main difference between sociocultural theory and activity theory is that in sociocultural theory the emphasis is on semiotic mediation and particularly on speech, whereas in activity theory the main emphasis is on the activity itself. In sum, even though there are many features that sociocultural theory and activity theory have in common and some researchers even regard them as nearly synonymous, the main difference lies in emphasis: in activity theory, the goal-directed activity is central.

As it can be seen from the complexity of defining activity theory, there are several perspectives on activity theory and consequently different names employed for it, but the ideas behind them more often overlap than are different (Holzman 2006: 6). Importantly, all perspectives on activity theory focus on studying human mind in its historical and cultural contexts. Culture, and, of course, dialectical human activity are placed in the centre when attempting to understand human nature. Furthermore, the central principles within the studies are "the hierarchical structure of activity, object-orientedness, internalisation/externalisation, tool mediation and development". Thus, the focus is not on the individual, but rather "on the interaction between an individual, systems of artifacts and other individuals in historically developing institutional settings". In sum, *cultural and historical context, mediation, object orientation and activity* itself are central in all approaches to activity theory. In the following section, the development of activity theory through three generations to the present situation will be described.

2.2 Development of activity theory: three generations

Engeström (2001: 133-137) has divided the development of activity theory into three generations. Correspondingly, Daniels (2001: 85-94) has distinguished between three generations, but, in a slightly different way. Whereas Engeström (2001) regards the work of Vygotsky as the first generation, for Daniels (2001: 85-94), Leontiev's original works form the basis of the first generation, which, in turn, are the second generation for Engeström (2001). However, both Daniels (2001: 85-94) and Engeström (2001: 133-137) agree on that Engeström's model of activity theory is part of the second generation, and that dealing with multiple perspectives forms the foundation of the third generation. In the following the three generations of activity theory will be reviewed, mostly according to how Engeström (2001: 133-137) has distinguished between them.

The first generation of activity theory was based on the work of the Russian psychologist L. S. Vygotsky (1896-1934) who originally laid the foundation for the theory in the 1920s and 1930s (Engeström 2001: 134, Kozulin 1998: 1). He introduced and explained the idea of mediation through his famous triangular model (see Figure 1), in which a complex, mediated act replaces the conditioned direct connection between stimulus and response, that is, the simple stimulus-response process (Engeström 2001: 134, Vygotsky 1978: 40). Engeström (2001: 134) points out that the idea of mediation was revolutionary because "the individual could no longer be understood without his or her cultural means; and the society could no longer be understood without the agency of individuals who use and produce the artifacts". However, he states that the limitation of the first generation was that the unit of analysis remained focused on the individual.

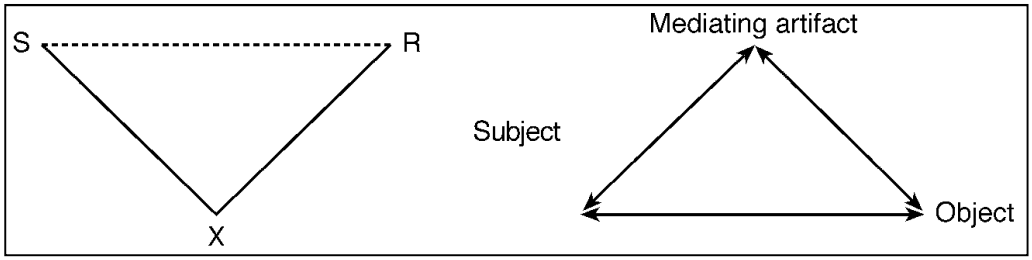

Figure 1. Vygotsky's model of mediated act and its common reformulation (adopted from Engeström 2001: 134)

The second generation was centred around the work of Vygotsky's colleague and disciple Alexei Leontiev, and was able to overcome the limitations of the first generation by expanding the analysis beyond the individual (Engeström 2001: 134-135). Engeström (2001: 135) points out that the movement from focusing on the individual to analysing the complex interaction between the individual subject and his or her community meant a huge step forward in developing the concept of activity. Most importantly, Leontiev argued that one activity is separated from other activities by its objects (Leontiev 1978, as cited in Daniels 2001: 86). However, during the second generation, in the Soviet Union, the researchers focused mostly on looking at play and learning among children, and contradictions of activity were not dealt with in detail (Engeström 2001: 135). As a result, during the decades following World War II activity theory was mostly developed within the psychology of play, cognition, learning and child development. It was also employed in research on L2 learning and experimental development of instruction, but mostly in the context of schools and other educational institutions (Engeström and Miettinen 1999: 2). Outside the Soviet Union, a great number of the publications related to activity theory were scattered and difficult to obtain, and, therefore, still in 1999, Engeström and Miettinen (1999: 1-2) described activity theory as "a well-kept secret".

From the 1970s onwards, activity theory spread into the west, where it was recontextualised, and as a result, new domains opened up for research (Engeström 2001: 135). From the 1960s to the 1980s, the works were translated into English and other languages (Holzman 2006: 6-7). After the collapse of the former Soviet Union, in the 1990s, many more original works by Vygotsky and his colleagues have been uncovered, translated and analysed, and the work of a group of Finnish scholars, Yrjö Engeström, Reijo Miettinen and Raija-Leena Punamäki, has drawn attention (Kim 2005: 309). Altogether, the research became broader in the 1980s and 1990s, and started to encompass also fields such as development of work activities, use of new cultural tools such as computer technology and issues of therapy (Engeström and Miettinen 1999: 2). Late in the second generation of activity theory also takes place the pioneering work of Yrjö Engeström (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 222-224), whose human activity system model will be described later. Importantly, now the idea of internal contradictions as the driving force of development and change in the activity system started to become the guiding principle of empirical research (Engeström 2001: 135).

However, as activity theory became more and more international, it faced the challenges of diversity and dialogue between multiple perspectives and traditions, and it is these challenges that *the emerging third generation* has had to deal with (Engeström 2001: 136). Therefore, multivoicedness and dialogicality started to be taken into account (Bakthin 1981, as quoted in Kim 2005: 310). Engeström has suggested a model for the third generation activity theory as well (Engeström 2001: 136). In it, the basic model of the second generation human activity system model is expanded to consist of at least two interacting activity systems (see Figure 2). Thus, the artifact-mediated activity is not merely a result of the interaction between the individual subject and the related elements, such as community, rules and division of labour, but, instead, two or more objects or proximal goals are continuously being negotiated, and they can be redefined as a new object as a result (Daniels 2001: 90-94).

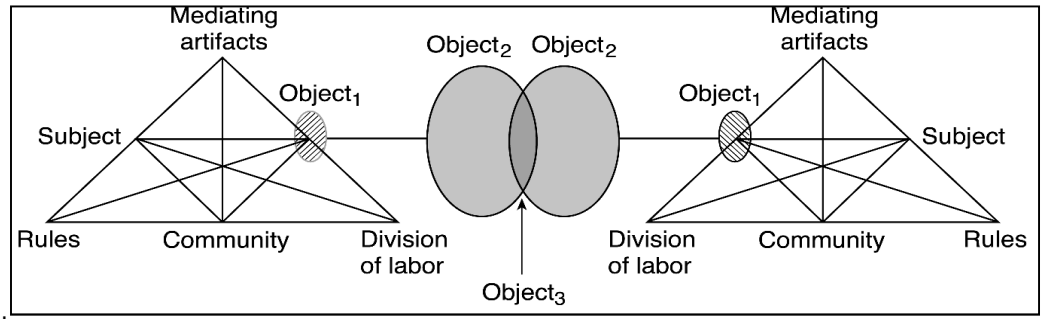

Figure 2. Two interacting activity systems as a minimal model for the third generation of activity theory (adopted from Engeström 2001: 136)

To sum up, activity theory has its roots in the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s and in the work of Vygotsky and his colleagues. Later on, it has been developed further by several researchers. However, the central concept of mediation has remained from the early days of the theory. The theory has also been forced to reflect its time, which can be seen, for example, in the third generation activity theory and its response to the fact that theory has become more international: multiple perspectives need to be taken into account. In recent years, activity theory has become a well-established approach to contemporary research in the fields of applied linguistics, human-computer interaction, psychology, cognitive science, anthropology, communications, workplace studies and education, for example (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 209). Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 210)

conclude that even though has also been used as a diagnostic framework for descriptive and analytic purposes, its essence is to look at a situation or a condition, and transform it in order to create something new. However, altogether, in L2 classroom research, activity theory has not been employed much (Mitchell 2011: 687).

2.3 Key concepts within activity theory

In this section, the key concepts within activity theory will be looked at. They are the concepts of *activity, mediation* and *agency*.

2.3.1 Activity

The first key concept of activity theory to be looked at, ***activity***, is the unifying element and fundamental unit of analysis within the theory (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 209). Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 233) point out that the term 'activity' is used differently in everyday language and within the cultural-historical tradition. Within the cultural-historical tradition, they define activity as "a unit of analysis for understanding and illuminating the historical, mediated and emergent qualities of human change", whereas Davydov (1999: 39) defines the term *activity* as follows:

> Activity is a specific form of the societal existence of humans consisting of purposeful changing of natural and social reality. --- Any activity carried out by a subject includes goals, means, the process of molding the object, and the results. In fulfilling the activity, the subjects also change and develop themselves.

Thus, Davydov (1999: 139) stresses the importance of goals, means, change and results as necessary features of an activity. Furthermore, Davydov (1999: 45-46) argues that the word *activity* as the English equivalent of the original Russian word *deyatel* is too broad and too inclusive, because activeness cannot always be defined as activity: instead, what can really be defined as activity must be linked with a change of the reality. To sum up, the definitions of the term *activity* provided both by Davydov (1999: 45-46) and by Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 233) emphasise the importance of change as a crucial feature of activity.

Leontiev's work on the concept of activity has been significant for activity theory. According to Leontiev (1978, as cited by Lantolf 2000: 8), activity is not only doing something. Instead, it is motivated either by a biological need, for example, hunger, or, by a culturally created need, such as being able to read. Needs become motives when they are directed at specific objects, for example, hunger becomes a motive when someone decides to search for food. *Motives*, in turn, are realised through *actions*, and carried out under specific *conditions* which are dependent on space and time, and through appropriate *mediational means*. Leontiev illustrated the structure of activity with his famous example of hunting:

> When members of a tribe are hunting, they individually have separate goals and they are in charge of diverse actions. Some are frightening a herd of animals towards other hunters who kill the game, and other members have other tasks. These actions have immediate goals, but the real motive is beyond hunting. Together these people aim at obtaining food and clothing – at staying alive. To understand why separate actions are meaningful one needs to understand the motive behind the whole activity. Activity is guided by a motive. (Leontiev 1978: 62-63, as cited in Daniels 2001: 87)

Consequently, Leontiev (as summarised by Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 216-218) divides human activity into three hierarchical levels: activity, action and operations. The taxonomy of activity types was produced in order to improve the analytic power of activity theory. Firstly, the *activity* level is the broadest level and always connected to a motive, biological and/or social/societal need or desire, even though sometimes the actor or actor-collective may not consciously realise it. The second level, *an action* realises the motive through goal-directed behaviour. The third level, *operations*, refers to automatized or habituated actions that work in response to the surrounding social-material conditions. Wells (1999, as cited in Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 216) points out that the levels can be employed as different analytical perspectives on the same event. However, they can also be seen as embedded or nested levels (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 216). Block (2003: 102) illustrates the levels as follows: "motives are about why something is done; action is about what is done; and operation is about how something is done". A significant consequence of the structure of activity is that one activity is distinguished from another by its object (Leontiev 1978, as cited in Daniels 2001: 86). Thus, to realise the same activity different actions and different mediational means can be employed, because it is objects and motives that differentiate activities, not their concrete realisations as actions. Correspondingly, the same actions can have different motives.

The significance of the object in specifying activities can also be seen in Coughlan and Duff´s (1994: 174-175) definition of activity. They highlight the distinction between a task and an activity. They propose that *a task* is a sort of "behavioural blueprint" that is given to subjects of a study in order to get linguistic data. It is motivated by the objectives of the research and restricted by time and other practical considerations. For example, long passages of speech involving the use of the past tense are a way of collecting data, and, the task is, thus, what the participants of the study are asked to do in order to elicit that sort of data. *An activity*, in turn, refers to the behaviour that takes place when individuals or groups perform a task. In sum, an activity is the process and outcome of a task looked at in its sociocultural context. It has no objectives in itself: instead, participants act according to their own objectives, and the objectives of the researcher. Thus, from Coughlan and Duff's point of view, what make an activity special are the objectives that participants give to it, and the definition in this way is linked to Leontiev's (1978) formulation.

In the present study, the concept of activity is important, because it is the focus of analysis within activity theory. For instance, importantly, on the action level, the students may perform actions beyond the classroom which are rather similar to surface, such as watching TV or listening to music, in order to learn English and Swedish, but they may have different goals for their actions.

2.3.2 Mediation

The second key concept of activity theory to be explored is *mediation*. Traditionally, social and behavioural sciences have tended to maintain the division of labour between the individual and the surrounding socioeconomic forces (Engeström 1999: 19). Even though the significance of the social environment has been acknowledged in some approaches, they have, however, failed in building a link between the individual and the social surroundings, and, consequently, in providing a framework where this dialectic and important link would be present (Lantolf and Genung 2002: 176). According to Engeström (1999: 29), the notion of mediation "breaks down the Cartesian walls that isolate the individual mind from the culture and society". The notion of mediation, thus, serves as a link between the individual and social structures.

The notion of mediation is based on the fundamental claim of Vygotsky's thinking that higher forms of human mental activity, such as memory, attention, rational thinking, emotion, learning and development, are mediated by culturally constructed auxiliary means (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 59). Thus, human mind is seen as *mediated*: people do not act on the physical world only, but rely on tools instead (Lantolf 2000: 1-2). As activity theory is based on the tenets of Vygotskian sociocultural theory, it emphasizes that "human activity is fundamentally artifact-mediated and goal-oriented", that is, people use physical and symbolic artifacts to reach their goals (Johnson 2009: 78).

There are two kinds of *tools*: physical and symbolic (or psychological) (Lantolf 2000: 1-2). According to Vygotsky (1960/1981, as cited in Daniels 2001: 15), psychological tools are "devices for mastering mental processes". For example, mnemonic techniques, diagrams, schemes, algebraic symbols and, naturally, language are psychological tools, because all of them act as mediators for a person's mental activity (Lantolf and Appel 1994: 8). They are artificial and of originated in social relations rather than produced individually (Vygotsky 1960/1981, as cited in Daniels 2001: 15). Furthermore, tools can be either external and visible to an observer, such as a hammer used in nailing, or invisible and non-observable, such as inner speech (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 63). Moreover, the social context in the form of institutionalised structures mediates action (Engeström 1987). People mediate and are mediated by the social relationships they have with others, instead of functioning individually or independently of others (Johnson 2009: 78).

Both physical and symbolic (or psychological) tools are *artifacts* (Lantolf 2000: 2). They are created by human culture or cultures over years and are passed on from one generation to the succeeding ones (Lantolf and Appel 1994: 8). Thus, each generation may make its modifications to them, because the artifacts have to meet the needs of the communities and individuals who use them, which can be illustrated, for example, by the rapid development of computers. As artifacts are created under specific cultural and historical conditions, they, as a result, reflect the characteristics of the culture. They serve as means by which people act upon, but, also as means by which they are acted upon, and behind artifacts are social, cultural and historical factors (Daniels 2001: 14).

The concepts of tool and artifact need to be looked at for clarification. In a number of books and articles, the term *tool* is used instead of *artifact*, that is, as a synonym (Daniels 2001: 14) For example, in his study on Internet tools, Thorne (2003) makes no distinction between the terms. By contrast, Cole (1996, as cited in Daniels 2001: 14, 17) proposes that the concept of tool should be considered as a subcategory of artifact. In the present study, a tool and an artifact will be discussed synonymously.

Importantly, the idea of mediation and self-construction through and with physical and psychological tools emphasises that individuals are active agents in development (Daniels 2001: 15). In addition, it highlights the importance of the context: those tools are employed that are present "at a particular time at a particular place". Furthermore, the same tools can have different meanings for different people: for example, e-mail can be for some people a medium employed only for work-related issues, whereas some people may use it for free time (Thorne 2003: 40). Thus, people may use the same mediational means for different purposes, as mentioned earlier.

Mediational means include also beliefs. Alanen (2003: 61, 66-67) argues that *beliefs* are "a very specific type of mediational means, or rather mediational-means-in-the-making". In her study, she views beliefs as "a specific type of cultural artifact" that mediates human activity in a way that is similar to signs, myths, symbols and tools. Thus, also beliefs regulate problem-solving activities, learning and thinking. Moreover, beliefs are constructed in social interactions and are connected with the specific context of activity. As Alanen (2003: 66) illustrates, a child does not interact with another child or adult alone but also with goals and mediational means, information, values and problems that are provided to him or her by other people and the context of activity, and, beliefs are constructed through this interaction with the several factors in his or her environment. In her study, Alanen (2003: 66) assumes that if the beliefs constructed in this way are appropriated and internalised by children, they become part of their knowledge reservoir and can be used to regulate activities, for instance. To conclude, also in L2 learning, learners' beliefs about, for example, usefulness of a language or ease of learning L2 are affected by the context and other people.

In the field of L2 learning, more and more studies have focused on what kind of tools (or often called *mediational means*) second language learners use and on the ways in which they use them (Kalaja, Alanen and Dufva 2008: 189). Moreover, some studies have examined how the type and nature of a task mediates learning or its results (Kalaja, Alanen and Dufva 2008: 189). For example, Palfreyman (2006) studied a group of female students in the United Arab Emirates and explored what kind of resources were available to them in learning and using English outside the university, which of these resources the students usually employed and to what extent they acted as resources to others. Furthermore, Thorne (2003) introduced three case studies of intercultural contacts mediated by Internet communication tools. The cases show that Internet communication tools cannot be considered as neutral, instead, they are influenced by the users' previous individual and collective experience. Thus, mediational means have been the target of interest in many studied where language learning has been looked at from the perspective of activity theory, or sociocultural theory.

2.3.3 Agency

The last of the key terms of activity theory to be looked at is *agency.* The concept of agency has been associated with a long list of terms, such as *motivation, will, intentionality, purposiveness, freedom, creativity and choice* (Emirbayer and Mische 1998: 962). It has also been connected with concepts such as *volition, intentionality, initiative, intrinsic motivation and autonomy* (van Lier 2008: 171). Van Lier (2008: 171) argues that all of these terms refer to "very similar phenomena" and can even be regarded as synonymous, if "agency" is used as an umbrella term. However, Emirbayer and Mische (1998: 962) point out that despite the variety of terms connected with agency, the term agency itself has seldom received systematic analysis.

Ahearn (2001) has defined agency from the perspective of sociocultural theory. In Western theories on agency, agency has traditionally been assumed to be an individual property (Wertsch, Tulviste and Hagstrom 1993: 336-337, as cited in van Lier 2008: 163). However, from the sociocultural perspective, Ahearn (2001: 112) defines agency as "the socioculturally mediated capacity to act". The definition highlights that historical and cultural factors affect agency, and that agency is not defined as

"competence", or, "an individual possession", but rather as "action potential", which is mediated by interactional, social, cultural, institutional and other contextual factors (van Lier 2008: 163-164). The notion of mediation is, thus, central in connection with agency, because it provides individuals with agency, which enables them to control their own mental and physical activity, "from the outside" (Lantolf and Genung 2002: 176). Learning is no longer dependent on the input provided by teacher or textbook, instead, it depends on the learner's activity and initiative, even though texts and teachers, of course, have the essential mediating role in learning (van Lier 2008: 163).

Moreover, from the sociocultural perspective, agency is both "intermental" and "intramental", that is, instead of being merely an individual feature or activity, agency is "a contextually enacted way of being in the world", and, therefore, agency never takes place in emptiness, instead, it is always a social phenomenon, and, at least, interpreted or motivated socially (van Lier 2008: 163-164). Furthermore, Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 143) emphasise that agency is not merely "voluntary control over behaviour", but it also involves "the ability to assign relevance and significance to things and events". As agency is always "situated in a particular context", (van Lier 2008: 171), it is also connected with temporal aspects. For example, Emirbayer and Mische 1998: 962 conceptualise agency as follows:

> a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past (in its "iterational" or habitual aspect) but also oriented toward the future (as a "projective" capacity to imagine alternative possibilities) and toward the present (as a "practical-evaluative" capacity to contextualise past habits and future projects within the contingencies of the moment)

They, thus, argue that agency has connections with the past, where it has its roots, with the present, where it takes place, and with the future, where it in a way gets its inspiration from.

Some dimensions that agency can take are *individual and collaborative agency*, on the one hand, and *active-passive*, on the other hand. Firstly, agency can take place both on the individual level and within a group: in a classroom, for example, students can act individually or in groups, and, thus, it is possible for them to speak from "I" or "we"

perspective (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 143, van Lier 2008: 164). These forms of agency are referred to as *individual and collaborative agency* (van Lier (2008: 169)**.** Secondly, van Lier (2008: 178-179) argues that engagement has a central role in agency, but he still points out that ”also some forms of withdrawal and other indications of lack of willingness to communicate could be seen as an expression of agency”. Thus, the second and the most obvious dichotomy concerning agency is that of *active-passive* (van Lier 2008: 171-172). Learners can be active or passive, but there are many ways and degrees of being it. Some ways of being active may not be favourable for learning, whereas some forms of being passive may result in learning: for example, there is no evidence to show that a quiet student might be a weaker student.

To sum up, van Lier (2008: 172) proposes the following three core features of agency:

1) Agency involves initiative or self-regulation by the learner (or group)
2) Agency is interdependent, that is, it mediates and is mediated by the sociocultural context
3) Agency includes an awareness of responsibility for one’s own actions vis-à-vis the environment, including affected others.

Moreover, importantly, how learners exercise their agency has a great significance for their actions. Lantolf and Pavlenko (2001: 146) state that human agency is closely linked with the significance that people give to different things and matters, and hence, agency links motivation with action. What this means is that different learners have different motives and goals, and, therefore, even if they were completing the same activity, they cognitively are not necessarily engaged in the same activity. Furthermore, agency shapes also learners’ use of strategies as they work to pursue their goals in response to contextual changes (Gao 2010: 21). As Kalaja et al. (2011a, 2011b) describe, agency is also extremely closely connected with the question of what is the relationship between the individual language learner with his or her affective, cognitive and social self and the context.

The concept of affordance is closely related with the concept of agency. The concept of *affordance* was originally coined by the psychologist James Gibson and it refers to the

"relationship between properties of the environment and the active learner", as described by van Lier (2000: 252-253, 257). An affordance is a specific part of the environment that is of relevance to an individual, and, thus, it depends on the individual, what he or she does, wants and finds useful, what becomes an affordance. In L2 learning, an active and engaged learner will perceive linguistic affordances in his or her environment and employ them. Thus, "information is not passively received by the learner, --- rather affordances are actively picked up by the learner in the pursuit of some meaningful activity" (van Lier 2008: 176). To conclude, a L2 learner uses his or her agency in noticing the affordances in his or her environment.

Now that the principles of activity theory have been explored, in the following chapter, the focus will be on the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999), which is based on the principles of the theory. The model will serve as the analytical framework of the present study.

3 HUMAN ACTIVITY SYSTEM MODEL

During the second generation of the development of activity theory, Engeström (1987, 1999) extended Vygotsky's and Leontiev's models of activity into a model of a human activity system. As Engeström's model has its foundation on the primary tenets of activity theory, it, consequently, emphasises that fundamental features of human activity are goal-orientedness and artifact-mediatedness, and, moreover, highlights that human activities are social and collaborative in nature (Kim 2008: 29-30). Especially the emphasising of the social and collaborative nature of activity distinguishes the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) from the models of first generation activity theory: in the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) the original triangular representation of the activity system (*subject, mediating artifacts, object*) has been expanded to include also the elements of *community, rules* and *division of labour* (Daniels 2001: 89). In addition, the importance of analysing their interaction with each other is highlighted. Altogether, analysing activity systems helps to understand individual activity in relation to its context, and, furthermore, the ways in

which the individual, his or her activities and the context are affected by each other (Yamagata-Lynch 2010: 1).

In the following sections, the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) and how it has been employed as an analytical framework will be looked at. Firstly, the structure of the human activity system model will be looked at. In addition, it will be explored how the different components of the model can be applied to research on L2 learning. Secondly, the different types of contradictions which serve as the driving force within activity system will be explored. Finally, some studies on L2 learning and teaching which have employed the human activity system as an analytical framework will be described.

3.1 The structure of the human activity system model and L2 learning

The human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) (see Figure 3) illustrates the *elements* or *components* that are essential for human activity. They are *subject, object, instruments or mediating artefacts or tools, rules, community and division of labour.* In this section, the elements of the human activity system model will be defined according to the web pages of Center for Activity Theory and Developmental Work Research (2003) and illustrated with examples from L2 learning and teaching.

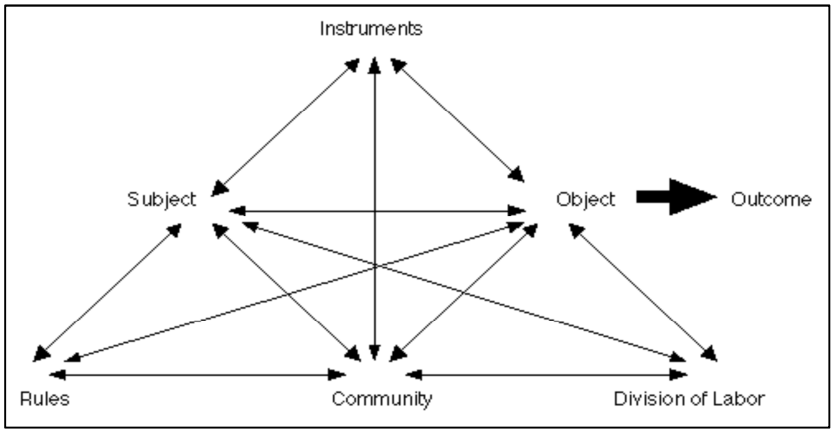

Figure 3. The human activity system model (adopted from Engeström 1999: 31)

Firstly, *the subject* of an activity system is the individual or subgroup whose agency is looked at in the analysis. In the case of L2 learning, it could be looked at how an individual teacher engages in a certain goal-directed activity, such as communicative language teaching in a particular learning context, for instance (Johnson 2009: 78). The subject can also, simply, be a L2 learner (Kim 2009: 274). Secondly, *the object* is "the problem space" or "raw material", where the activities are directed at. For instance, the L2 can be the object (Kim 2009: 274). Thirdly, the object is shaped and transformed into *an outcome.* Fourthly, the outcome, in turn, is shaped by *mediating artifacts*. Fifthly, *a community* consists of several individuals and/or subgroups who have the same general object and who see themselves as separate from other communities. Sixthly, *division of labour* is defined as the horizontal division of tasks between the people in the community. It, thus, refers to the way in which object-oriented actions are divided among members of the community (Kim 2009: 275). It also shows how power and status have been divided among them. In addition, it highlights how individuals need to work in collaboration with others, because their actions are incomplete without it (Kim 2008: 31). Finally, *the rules* consist of the explicit and implicit regulations, conventions and norms which regulate both actions and interactions within the activity system. Importantly, the components of the human activity system model are not separate, instead, they affect each other both directly and indirectly, which is illustrated by the multidirectional arrows between the components in the model (Kim 2008: 32).

Prenkert (2010: 652-654) illustrates the human activity system model further by dividing it into *a top sub-triangle* and *a lower sub-triangle* as well as into *the core elements* and *the mediatory elements*. The top sub-triangle consists of subject, object and mediating artefacts, and, thus, represents de-contextualised action. The lower sub-triangle, in turn, refers to how the interaction between subject and object is mediated also by the rules and division of labour, that is, not merely by artefacts. The whole activity system, the upper sub-triangle and lower sub-triangle together form contextualised collective activity. As a consequence, Prenkert (2010: 656) points out that mediation occurs in two levels: "the de-contextualised subject-level" and "contextualised collective level". Furthermore, Prenkert (2010: 654-655) divides the components of the model into two groups: on the one hand, there are the core elements: subject, object and community, and, on the other hand, there are the mediatory elements: instrument, rules and division of labour. Every advanced human activity

includes the core elements, apart from individual action which is treated as a separate instance. The relationships between the core elements are mediated by the mediatory elements. To conclude, the illustrations highlight the essential features of the human activity system model by emphasising the social nature of human actions and the important role of mediation.

In addition, Engeström (1999: 381) stresses the importance of separating between objects and goals. The difference between goals and objects is that *goals* are connected with specific *actions*. Actions are rather short-lived and have clear points of beginning and ending. Goals are formulated and reformulated during the action. *Objects*, in turn, are in the distance and are never completely reached, because they are connected with how *activities* and activity systems develop within a long time span, and, as a result, it is difficult to say where the beginning is and where the end is. Consequently, Kim (2009: 277) argues that it is necessary to operationalize the object into a goal or a set of goals, because these are easier to deal with. He states that the object of L2 learning may vary, but, usually, it is the ultimate attainment of L2 skills that the learner is satisfied with. In order to reach the distant object, a learner needs to set him- or herself "proximal, specific and moderately difficult goals". Therefore, even though it is not visible in the triangle model, goals also mediate between the subject and the object.

Importantly, Engeström (1987) points out that activity system is meant to be looked at as a whole, that is, not merely as separate connections. Thus, only when examined together with other elements does an individual part have a specific meaning (Kim 2005: 309). Cole (1996, as cited in Kim 2005: 309) calls this *a relational view*, which means that a factor which is classified as one element in one activity system may at the same time be another element in another activity system. Kim (2005: 309-310) illustrates this by the following example: in a L2 classroom, a native L2 teacher may employ the L2 as the medium of instruction, and, thus, the L2 serves as an instrument or artefact. However, from the learners' point of view, the L2 can be classified as the object or the learning goal. Thus, factors within each element of the activity system may get new positions if the focus of analysis is changed (Kim 2010: 10-11).

To sum up, in L2 learning, the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) can be illustrated as follows (Kim 2009: 275-277), for example. Within the framework, a L2 learner (=*subject*) who aims at acquiring sufficient skills in L2 (= *object*) uses many different *mediating artifacts* (= *instruments*). The learner lives in a variety of different language communities: L2 schools, family, work and peers (=*community*), which also bring about external demands on the learner. He or she needs to learn to follow the unique rules of learning and using L2 (=*rules*) and to co-operate with other L2 learners and users (=*division of labour*). The double arrows in the model illustrate that it is possible that elements oppose one another, and, as a result, *tensions* (=*contradictions*) may arise. L2 learning, when looked at over a long period time, is a process of experiencing and overcoming these tensions: if tensions remain, L2 learning does not progress, but if the learner is able to solve the tensions, better L2 skills can be achieved.

3.2 Contradictions as the driving force within activity system

An important concept for understanding activity systems it that of contradiction, or, as Kim (2009) calls them, *tensions*. According to Engeström (1987: 82, 91), *contradictions* are more than merely inevitable features of activity: instead, solutions to them create new stages and forms of activity, and, thus, contradictions can be seen "the source of dynamics and development in human activity". Moreover, Engeström (1995: 411) argues that contradictions should also be interpreted with regard to their history, that is, by taking into account their historical evolution and the developmental potential that the particular activity system has. Engeström (1987: 89) distinguishes between four levels of contradictions within the human activity systems: primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary.

Firstly, *primary inner contradictions* take place **within** each component of an activity system (Engeström 1987: 89). For instance, a teacher may face a contradiction between his or her role as a person who supports children's growth to becoming healthy adults, on the one hand, and, as a teacher preparing them for examinations, on the other hand (Kim 2008: 35). In this example, the primary inner contradiction, thus, emerges within

the subject, but, of course, primary inner contradictions may take place within any component of the activity system.

Secondly, *secondary contradictions* occur **between** the components of the central activity (Engeström 1987: 89). Engeström (1987) argues that they are the key in describing an activity system. Secondary contradictions, usually, take place when "a strong novel factor" is introduced into any of the components of an activity system (Engeström 1993: 72, as cited in Kim 2008: 35). For example, in L2 learning, *the object* of teaching for the teacher may be to improve students' overall communicative proficiency, but the students may need to pass a high-stakes grammar and reading comprehension test (= *a mediating artifact*) and, therefore, the outcome may be that they similarly as before attend to grammar and vocabulary rather than advance their overall communicative proficiency (Johnson 2009: 78). However, the new factor becomes "the moving force behind disturbances and innovation, and eventually behind the change and development of the system" (Engeström 1993: 72, as cited in Kim 2008: 35). Importantly, as Kim (2008: 35) sums up, when an activity system attempts to solve the secondary contradictions it faces, the activity system develops into a new form. Therefore, it is necessary to look at secondary contradictions in order to understand the activity system (Kim 2008: 35).

Thirdly, there are *tertiary contradictions* between "the object/motive of the dominant form of the central activity and object/motive of a culturally more advanced form of the central activity" (Engeström 1987: 89). These arise when a "culturally more advanced activity system", the government or other administrators, for example, orders a new objective or procedures, again "a novelty factor" to another activity system (Engeström 1987: 90, Kim 2008: 36). Engeström (1987: 90) points out that these novel factors may be formally taken into action, but still seen as secondary and they may be resisted.

Finally, *quaternary contradictions* occur between the central activity and its 'neighbour activities' in their interaction (Engeström 1987: 88-90). These 'neighbour activities' include four kinds of activities: 1) *object-activities,* in which "the immediately appearing objects and outcomes of the central activity are embedded" 2) *instrument-producing activities*, such as art and science, which give the central activity with its most important instruments, 3) *subject-producing activities*, such as education of the subjects of an activity system and 4) *rule-producing activities*, such as, for instance,

rules and laws. In addition, also central activities which are in connection to a given central activity for a longer or shorter time can be seen as neighbour activities, and may produce hybrids of themselves in their interaction. Kim (2008: 36) illustrates quaternary contradictions by an example of a contradiction which appears between a teacher and a subject-producing activity, in-service teacher training programme, when the teacher is not satisfied with the programme.

To sum up, contradictions are inevitable within activity systems and bring about changes in it. Thus, it is necessary to look at them when analysing activity systems.

3.3 Earlier studies based on the human activity system model in L2 learning

Originally, Engeström (1987: 27, 81) suggested that the human activity system model should be applied, particularly, when looking at the life practices of adults and adolescents, and, especially, in exploring the relationships between work and learning. He argued that the model helps in analysing an activity and its inner dynamic relations and the historical changes it goes through. Thus, the model is a productive framework for mapping and transforming the complexity of social practices in many fields of life (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 222).

However, activity theory has also been criticised. For example, Marjamäki and Pekkola (2006: 4) point out that activity theory as such is challenging to apply into practice and, therefore, it is often used in connection with some other theory. In addition, the human activity system model has been criticised for, for example, that the concept of tools or mediating artifacts does not encompass all new technologies, because a computer application, for instance, can be defined more as an environment than as a system (Kaptelinin and Nardi 2006: 255). Furthermore, Blunder (2010: 232) has questioned if community, rules and norms are, actually, a sufficient representation of the social context of activities. Critics have also claimed that analysis of activity would be inadequate for examining human psychology and culture, for instance (Yamagata-Lynch 2010: 27).

The human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) has rarely been applied to L2 learning research as such. However, it has been employed as a framework in studies on the effect of macrostructures on L2 learning, and, in studies where motivation has been looked at from the perspective of human activity system model. In the following, the studies by Eun-Ju Kim (2008) and Kyungja Ahn (2009) who have illustrated the effect of the curricular changes in South Korea by employing the human activity system model will be described. After that, the studies by Tae-Young Kim (2009, 2011) and Heather Willis Allen (2010), which have employed the human activity system in studying L2 learning motivation, will be looked at.

3.3.1 Studies on macrostructures

Studies concentrating on macrostructures of L2 learning which have employed the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) have often looked at the operating of teachers and what kind of inner contradictions are included in the activity systems related to them. Johnson (2009: 79, 94) argues that activity theory is a powerful analytical framework for this kind of analysis, because, on the one hand, it makes it possible to capture how each component in the activity system affects the others either directly or indirectly, and, on the other hand, it is possible to look at the situated activity system as a whole. The model, thus, serves as a useful lens through which to look at the macrostructures of L2 learning, because it is able to illustrate the activity system that teachers are operating in, and identify within it the contradictions which are working against the object and outcome, or, those contradictions which are changing the stated object and outcome altogether.

Eun-Ju Kim (2008) studied the power of educational reform policies in South Korea by employing the human activity system (Engeström 1987, 1999) as a theoretical framework. In South Korea, English has mainly been studied in order to get high scores on entrance exams to university, and because the main content of the exam is grammar and translation, the basis of teaching has been grammar-translation approach and audiolingualism. These practices resulted in poor speaking skills, and as English became a lingua franca, the inability to communicate in English was regarded as problematic in business life, politics and science, for instance. The importance of

English skills was highlighted, and, as a result, communicative language teaching (CLT) and teaching English through English (TETE) were introduced to the South Korean curriculum. Kim (2008) examined how Korean teachers perceived these current curricular reforms, how these reforms impacted their teaching practices, and, how their students perceived the teachers' instructional practices.

The participants in Kim's (2008) study were two middle school English teachers and seven students from the 7th grade. One of the teachers, Mi-Ra, had eighteen years of teaching experience and was teaching a low-proficiency class, whereas the other teacher, Hee-Won, had two years of teaching experience and was teaching a high-proficiency class. There were four students from low-proficiency class and three students from high-proficiency class in the study. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews, stimulated recall interviews, classroom observations and documents about the curricular reforms. In order to take historicity into account, the teachers' histories of learning and teaching English were described, as well as the students' backgrounds as learners of English.

Firstly, Kim (2008) found out that the most notable contradiction appeared between the new curriculum and how the teachers implemented it in their teaching. Even though both teachers agreed with the goals of the new curriculum, they did not implement it extensively. Hee-Won resorted to mechanical practice and rote memorisation, because of her own experience of how to do well on exams, even though she believed that communicative activities were the best way to improve communicative competence. Moreover, there was a secondary contradiction between communicative activities as mediating artifacts and school exams as Hee-Won's object: because learning in communicative activities was never measured in exams, she was uncertain about their use. In addition, there occurred many contradictions between Mi-Ra and the curricular reforms as well. For instance, in spite of her knowledge about the continuing discussion on CLT, and in spite of training and new materials, her teaching did not change much: grammar-translation and audiolingualism were still the primary mediating artifacts in her teaching. This was partly due to her beliefs about language learning and teaching, because she believed that mastering grammar and vocabulary is a prerequisite for communication. In addition, large group sizes, her own low proficiency in English, and

the importance of controlling classroom prevented her from applying new methods. Altogether, the teachers' views about new curricular policies reflected their personal beliefs and experiences in their context.

Secondly, with regard to the students in the study, Kim (2008) found out that their backgrounds in learning English were fairly similar, but their thoughts about learning English and their teacher's instructional practices differed because of their personal learning styles, strategies and attitudes. She illustrated the learning activity systems of high-proficiency students as one group and the learning activity systems of low-proficiency students as the other group. In both groups, exams were important for the students, being the object of high-proficiency students and the most important mediating artifacts of low-proficiency students. As a result, they did not regard communicative learning activities as crucial or necessary. For the high-proficiency group, the most powerful mediating artifact was the textbook, because it helped them to pursue their most important goal, passing the school exams. However, they also employed many other mediating artifacts: group work, quizzes and lectures, for instance. Both in the high-proficiency class and the low-proficiency class, division of labour was rather traditional: the teacher was the one providing knowledge and the students were recipients.

Correspondingly, in the context of L2 learning in South Korea as well, Kyungja Ahn (2009) studied how the CLT -oriented curricular reforms concerning teaching of English were supported in pre-service teacher education, that is, how pre-service teachers were able to internalise the principles, and to what extent they are able to include them in their teaching practices during their practicum. The participants of the study were two teams. Team A consisted of the mentor teacher Mrs. Ma and the student teachers, Sora and Yuna, Team B was formed by the mentor teacher Mr. Baek and his student teachers, Bohee and Jubin. The data included interviews, team conferences, classroom observations, student teachers' journals, lesson plans, and curricular reform documents, and it was collected during a four-week practicum. Grounded content analysis was employed in analysis. The practicum activity systems of both teams and the instructional activity systems of the student teachers were described and the contradictions within them were identified.

The student teachers in team A, Sora and Yuna, understood the benefits of the curricular reforms and aimed at employing learner-centred teaching and TETE-policies, but despite it, resorted to teacher-controlled lessons, speaking Korean frequently during the lessons and emphasising correct grammatical form. This was partly due to their mentor teacher, Mrs Ma, who socialised Sora and Yuna mostly into non-communicative methods. Several contradictions on many levels were, thus, observed. Firstly, a primary contradiction was that even though Sora knew the benefits of teaching in English, she still resorted to using mainly Korean as the language of instruction. Secondly, there were secondary contradictions between Sora (the subject) and the students (community), for example. The students remained passive, even though Sora expected active participation. These secondary contradictions were not solved and, thus, hardly any change was made. Thirdly, a quaternary contradiction occurred between Sora' instructional activity system (a central activity) and her coursework at university (neighbouring activity), because she thought that what she had learnt at university was too theoretical for being applied in teaching practicum. In sum, the student teachers in team A realized the benefits of curricular reforms, but because of their personal beliefs, experiences and contextual factors were not able to put them in practice during their practicum.

In team B, Bohin and Jubin were fluent speakers of English and had positive experiences of learning and teaching English using the communicative methods. Furthermore, Mr. Baek was not as controlling as Mrs. Ma, and was more open to student teachers' ideas. Thus, even though Bohin and Jubin sometimes felt that they did not get enough support, they were able to internalise the curricular reforms more deeply than the students in team A, and could implement them in their teaching as well. However, there were contextual constraints, which could be seen in the contradictions within their activity systems. Primary contradictions occurred between their frequent use of English as the language of instruction and the doubts that lack of participation from low level students was possibly caused by it. Secondary contradictions occurred for example between Bohin (subject) and her peer student teachers (community), because she thought that communicative activities should be game-like and enhance participation, whereas some of her peer student teachers thought that they should be more serious and produce something tangible, such as pieces of writing. Secondary contradictions appeared also between the activities in English that Jubin employed in the lessons and the noise that that the students caused. However, Jubin tried to solve the

problem with new classroom management techniques. Altogether, the Ahns's (2009) study shows that the mentoring that the students received had a significant role.

In sum, the studies on the macrostructures of L2 learning have illustrated activity systems of students and teachers, and identified contradictions within them. Both studies (Kim 2008 and Ahn 2009) showed that beliefs can cause many contradictions: for example, they can make it difficult to implement the curriculum, and, thus, appear as a secondary contradiction between communicative activities as the object and school exams as the mediational means. In the next section, the focus will be on studies where the model of activity system was employed in connection with motivation.

3.3.2 Studies on motivation

Tae-Young Kim (2005, 2010, 2011) argues that L2 learning motivation can be reanalysed from the perspective of activity theory. According to Kim (2010: 9), the main difference between activity theory and other theories of L2 motivation lies in the focus of research. The other theories of L2 motivation have not looked equally at the individual, on the one hand, and at the environment and affordances, on the other hand. Activity theory, in turn, aims at understanding the world as "an open system", where both the individual and the cultural act together and form the same interacting system (Kim 2010: 9, Daniels 2001: 84).

When motivation is looked at from the perspective of activity theory, L2 learners are seen as "subjects with their own agency" and it is thought that the elements in the human activity system model affect the motivation of L2 learners, as Kim (2005: 312-313) illustrates. For instance, teachers can be regarded as mediating artifacts, because learners promote their learning through them, and, as a consequence, L2 teachers act as instruments that mediate L2 learners (subject) and the L2 (object). Thus, teachers may promote learning motivation, but the motivational process in a classroom is, actually, bi-directional: also teachers have their teaching motivation. Simultaneously, teachers may have a significant role in the division of labour. The role distribution in the classroom affects learners' motivation and is closely linked with learners' and teachers' beliefs about their desired roles in their context. Furthermore, teaching methodology

and techniques, which can be defined as rules within activity system, affect learners' performance in the L2 classroom (Kim 2005: 313, 2010: 20-21). In addition, a learner's community has an effect on motivation (Kim 2010: 21). For instance, two different L2 learner groups, such as international L2 students and immigrants, may form different communities: for the students, the community consists of a L2 classroom, and for the immigrants of a workplace community, for instance. Their willingness to integrate into these communities may be different as well. The community may either promote or inhibit L2 learning. However, the most crucial factor is how the learner perceives the community.

Research focusing on L2 learning motivation from the perspective of activity theory, however, has been scarce in number in applied linguistics (Kim 2011: 96), but there have been studies on how motivation develops during a stay abroad, in a country where the target language is spoken. In the following, the studies by Lantolf and Genung (2002), Kim (2009, 2011) and Allen (2009) will be looked at.

Lantolf and Genung (2002) looked at the motivation of PG, an American PhD student of applied linguistics and a successful learner of languages, who enrolled in a summer Chinese language course in order to fulfil a programme requirement, but also with a purpose of learning the language. However, she became frustrated with the teacher-centred and grammar-focused programme of the course, as it was working against the principles of the department, and, as a result tried to change the nature of the course, but these attempts failed. Because of frustration, PG finally had to abandon her long-term goal of learning the language and focus on the performance that satisfied her instructors. Thus, the study indicated that L2 learners are also able to change their goals if they consider it necessary.

In a case study, Kim (2009) examined cases of two Korean *English as Second Language (ESL)* students, Joon and Woo. Both were university students in their mid-20s and had come to Toronto with the purpose of learning English. The data for the study was collected by interviews, picture-cued recall tasks, ESL classroom observations and language learning autobiographies. The semi-structured interviews

received the most research attention in the analysis. A computer programme, NVivo, was used in analysis and a qualitative thematic analysis was employed. The activity systems of Joon and Woo were illustrated and the contradictions, which Kim (2009 and 2011) calls tensions were identified.

In Kim's (2009) study, the focus was on looking at the relationship between the subject, goals and community. Joon aimed at a job where English could be used. He was not only interested in learning English, but also about travelling and spending time with other people in Canada. Thus, he had formulated two different goals in studying the English language to reach the object: firstly, to get a job in South Korea, and, secondly, to socialise with English-speaking people. The distal object, in turn, was to acquire English proficiency. The goal of being able to socialise with English-speaking people was daily confirmed in interactions with English speakers, and, therefore, there was no tension between the goal and the subject. However, the job-oriented goal was less internalised by Joon, and, in addition, he did not take part in any preparation courses in Toronto and, thus, no support from the community was given. There was thus a tension between the subject and the goal. By contrast, Woo, the other participant of the study, wanted to work in a steel exporting company in South Korea, and his motivation to learn English was connected with this goal only. During his stay in Toronto, Woo developed a close relationship with his English-speaking homestay owner, who can also be defined as the community of his activity system, and was really thankful for her support in learning English. In Woo's activity system, the relationships among the subject, the goals and the community overlapped: his community patrolled and guided his motivation in learning, and his only goal is internalised. There were, thus, no significant tensions between the goals and the community. To conclude, the support from community is essential for a positive self-image and for working towards the goals.

Kim (2011) also applied activity theory to the longitudinal study of L2 motivation of two Korean immigrant ESL learners in their thirties, Paul and Sandra, in Toronto. Paul had come to Toronto in order to get a doctoral degree in one of the major universities in Canada. However, his attempts to start an academic career failed again and again, and, consequently, his beliefs about English as a tool for a better job diminished as well.

There was, thus, a tension between English as a mediational means and the community he was living in. The other participant of the study, Sandra, in turn, had arrived in Canada mostly because of her desire to enrich her life by living in a foreign country. She aimed at finding a job in Canada and her long-term goal for learning English was to ensure getting a job. She actively took part in different communities where English was used, such as different courses and part-time work, and enjoyed these possibilities. The tensions in Sandra's activity system were smaller than those in Paul's, and were mostly connected with her wanting to get more corrective feedback. In conclusion, the results of the study showed that even though two L2 learners were located in similar contexts, the improvement of L2 motivation cannot be guaranteed. Instead, much depends on the L2 learner and how he or she sees the efficacy or meaningfulness of L2 learning activities.

Allen (2010) studied the development of language learning motivation during a short-term stay abroad programme. The participants were six American students with English as their first language who participated in a six-week programme in France. The data was collected mostly through questionnaires, interviews and learner blogs. The results of the study highlight the dynamic nature of motivation and how it is dependent on factors internal and external to learners. Two kinds of motives for learning French emerged: firstly, primarily linguistic motives, such as becoming fluent, and, secondly, pragmatic motives, which highlighted the benefits of having a French minor for their future jobs. The motives were connected with whether the motivation increased during the stay: if the motives were lower-level cognitive motives, such as getting a minor subject, the motivation was not increased. The goals, which the students described before the programme, were separated from motives and divided into three groups: linguistic, cultural and social goals. However, the students often were unable to specify their goals and their realisation. Conflicting goals emerged and some goals needed to be prioritized. In addition, agency played a significant role in the development of motivation. Altogether, Allen (2010) suggests that the way in which an individual controls and engages in language learning activity has an impact on the context rather than context has on the learner.

In the next chapter, the focus will be moved from activity theory and the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) to how learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom has been studied earlier.

4 LEARNING ENGLISH AND SWEDISH BEYOND THE CLASSROOM IN FINLAND

Language learning that takes place outside the traditional classroom is not a new area of research, because studies in the field have been conducted over the years (Benson and Reinders 2011: 5) and the first steps in the field were taken already in the 1980s and 1990s by Krashen (1981) and Ellis (1994). Firstly, Krashen (1981:1) distinguished between the concepts of *learning* a language and *acquiring* a language. *Learning* a language takes place in the presence of formal instruction and is a conscious process that produces conscious knowledge about the language. *Acquiring*, by contrast, is a subconscious process, which demands natural, meaningful interaction where the speakers concentrate on communication instead of form. For example, a child acquires his or her first language. Rather similarly, Ellis (1994: 12) made a distinction between *instructed* and *naturalistic* language learning. *Instructed language learning* includes a formal setting, and instruction or guidance from books, whereas *naturalistic learning* refers to learning through communication in real-life situations. To sum up, the earliest distinctions between formal and informal language learning were connected with the context where the learning takes place and possibly with the consciousness about learning. However, for instance, the strict distinction between learning and acquiring has been criticised and many researchers have employed the terms interchangeably (Block 2003: 95).

Learning beyond the classroom has traditionally been connected with adults and their language learning, for example, in the workplace, even though young people's learning takes place outside the institutionalised environments as well (Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta 2008: 171-172). At present, the number of studies conducted on language learning beyond the classroom is growing, which can be explained, for example, by the interest in independent learning and autonomy, on the one hand, and by the interest in qualitative case studies where the lives of language learners are looked at, on the other

hand (Benson 2011: 8). In addition, new environments are constantly opening up for language education. It is important to look at informal learning, because as Benson (2001: 203) states that studies on learning out-of-class reveal us also something about how learning in class fits into students' learning as a whole. However, examining language learning beyond the classroom is not simple, because as Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008: 171-172) point out, language learning beyond the classroom is "an all-pervasive phenomenon". Therefore, it is closely tied with everyday life and a person's interests, and, actually, it may not even be recognised as learning at all. In addition, the boundaries between school and out-of-school practices may not always be clear-cut.

The aim of the first section of this chapter is to define what is actually meant with the term *language learning beyond the classroom*, because there are a great number of terms employed in connection with it. In the second and third sections, earlier studies conducted on learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom in Finland will be looked at. Finally, a study where learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom in Finland have been compared will be described.

4.1 Defining language learning beyond the language classroom: four dimensions

Defining the concept of language learning beyond the language classroom is not simple, as there are a variety of terms which researchers have used in connection with it. Benson (2011: 9) employs the term *language learning beyond the classroom* as an umbrella term for all of these, and, groups the terms connected with language learning beyond the classroom into four dimensions according to what the focus is in their definitions. The four dimensions distinguished by Benson (2011: 9) are *location, formality, pedagogy and locus of control*, which are summarised in Table 1 and which will be illustrated in this section.

Table 1. Different terms connected with learning beyond the classroom grouped based on the focus of definitions, according to Benson (2011: 9-12)

Dimension	Terms included	The focus of definitions
Location	Out-of-class, out-of-school, after-school, extracurricular and extramural learning	Where does the learning take place?
Formality	Non-formal and informal learning	How independent learning is from organised courses resulting in formal qualifications?
Pedagogy	Self-instructed, non-instructed and naturalistic learning	What kind of pedagogy is involved in learning beyond the classroom?
Locus of control	Independent, self-directed and autonomous language learning	Who decides about learning?

The first dimension, *location*, includes the concepts of *out-of-class, out-of-school, after-school, extracurricular and extramural learning* (Benson 2011: 9-10). In all of them, the focus is on the location or setting of learning, and, the learning is usually seen as supplementary to classroom learning and teaching. The terms *out-of-school learning* and *out-of-class learning* are often employed in describing non-prescribed activities that learners carry out on their own in order to get more knowledge of a subject, whereas *after-school, extracurricular and extramural learning* usually include additional programmes organised at school which are less formal than usual lessons and which students themselves may organise. It is important to notice that *out-of-class language learning* may, in fact, take place at school as well. For instance, in Hong Kong, English-language activities, such as debates and school magazines, are popular at school. Different kinds of tutorials can also be seen as *out-of-school activities*. Furthermore, a person who participates *out-of-class*, *out-of-school*, *extracurricular and extramural learning* usually attends classes of some kind as well.

The second dimension, *formality*, encompasses the concepts of *non-formal and informal learning* (Benson 2011: 10-11). They can be contrasted with formal language learning. Eaton (2010: 15-16) defines these three terms as follows. Firstly, formal language learning takes place in an educational institution, is based on a curriculum and has trained teachers to instruct, assess and credit students' progress. Secondly, non-formal language learning is placed at work or in freely organised groups or institutions. It is led by a tutor or someone who has more experience, and it is adapted to learners' goals and needs. Thus, non-formal learning is classroom- or school-based, but a learner takes it because of his or her own interest and it does not include tests or qualifications (Benson

2011: 10). Thirdly, informal language learning may take place anywhere and anytime, and, it occurs spontaneously in everyday situations with family, peers, interest groups and even strangers, without teachers or instructors (Eaton 2010: 17). Informal language learning involves also learning through media. Livingstone (2006: 211), in turn, states that informal learning refers to "anything people do to gain knowledge, skill or understanding from learning about their health or hobbies, unpaid or paid work, or anything else that interests them outside of organised courses". Informal learning, thus, can be "non-institutional programmes or individual learning projects" (Benson 2011: 10) as well. Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008: 171-172) define informal learning rather loosely as "contacts with the language in everyday settings that arise from the needs and interests of the language users". Benson (2011: 10) sums up that the essence of the second dimension, formality, is in looking at how independent learning is from organised courses resulting in formal qualifications.

However, Benson (2011: 10-11) points out that language learning beyond the classroom may, in fact, include also tests and qualifications, as many students complete studies for qualifications independently, without educational institutions, and, in addition, it is not free of teaching either. Benson (2011: 10-11) suggests that the concept of *public pedagogy* (Giroux 1994) which has seldom been employed in L2 research may turn out to be useful when looking at the role of teaching in learning beyond the classroom. Sandling, Schulz and Burdick (2010: 2, as cited in Benson 2011: 10) illustrate that public pedagogy focuses on "informal spaces of learning such as popular culture, the internet, public spaces such as museums and parks, and other civic and commercial spaces, including both old and new social movements". Public pedagogy, thus, shows that learning, teaching and curricula also takes place outside the school. Benson (2011: 10-11) points out that, public pedagogy refers to ways in which learners of foreign languages are being "taught" when watching TV or movies or using the Internet.

The third dimension, *pedagogy*, includes the concepts of *self-instructed, non-instructed and naturalistic learning*, contrasted with *instructed language learning* (Benson 2011: 11). The focus in on the type and role of pedagogy that is involved in learning beyond the classroom. It is important to distinguish *instruction* from *teaching*: when learners watch, for example, a soap opera on TV in a foreign language, it would not be said that

the show is *instructing* them, it is, rather, *teaching* them. However, if learners started to watch a programme which is especially designed for language teaching purposes, it could be called instruction. Thus, Benson (2011: 11) defines instruction as "a particular kind of pedagogy, involving formal processes, such as sequencing of material, explicit explanation and testing". *Self-instruction* often implies that a person learns something on his or her own, but it can also be understood as "any deliberate effort by the learner to acquire or master language content or skills" (Benson 2001: 62). Furthermore, in self-instruction, the role of the classroom instructor is taken on by specially designed TV and radio broadcasts or books, and, importantly, the learner has "a strong intention to learn", whereas in *naturalistic* learning, by contrast, no instruction or materials designed for the purpose are present, and the learner has no intention to learn (Benson 2011: 11). Naturalistic may take place through direct communication with the users of the target language, but it can be extended to situations where a person only works with texts on the foreign language (Benson 2001: 62). However, Benson (2011: 11) argues that naturalistic learning may, in fact, be "a hypothetical state", and, as a consequence, introduces the concept of *self-directed naturalistic learning* to illustrate the more typical situation: a learner has the intention of learning a language and sets up a naturalistic learning situation, but during the situation the focus switches to enjoyment, communication or even learning something else than the language (Benson 2011: 11).

Finally, the fourth dimension, *locus of control*, includes the concepts of *independent*, *self-directed* and *autonomous language learning* (Benson 2011: 12). Sometimes, these terms are used to refer to learning that takes place without a teacher, but in a wider sense, they are used in connection with the question of whether it is the learner or someone else who mostly decides about learning and teaching. For example, for being able to characterise learning without a teacher as autonomous, the decision to learn without a teacher must be made by the learner him- or herself, and she or he can choose an instructed or taught course as well. There is, naturally, great variation in the underlying conditions for autonomous learning: younger people usually follow the compulsory school curriculum, whereas adults more opportunities to choose. It is also necessary to notice that there does not exist a simple relationship between where the learning is located, in or out of class, and locus of control, because there is a great interest in learner autonomy inside the classroom. However, the connection between

language learning beyond the classroom and locus of control is clear: many decisions are demanded from learners themselves in non-classroom settings.

Importantly, the four dimension of location, formality, pedagogy and locus of control interact (Benson 2011: 12). Benson (2011: 12) illustrates this interaction by saying that learners often, while learning in out-of-class settings, choose self-instructional materials with a high level of formality and content that can be defined as instructional. In this way, they, actually, move the locus of control away from themselves. Locus of control can be moved back to learners, if they gain more confidence in their abilities to learn to learn language in more informal and naturalistic ways.

4.2 Learning English beyond the classroom in Finland

The role of English in Finland has changed dramatically during the past decades: it has developed from a language that is used primarily with foreigners into a language used as *a lingua franca*, a common language of communication. Still from the 1960s to the 1980s, English was for Finns a foreign language which was studied for being able to communicate with foreigners (Leppänen and Nikula 2008: 16). However, today, as Leppänen and Nikula (2007: 343) point out, even though English is still officially a foreign language in Finland, in certain domains and settings, such as media, education and business, it is often officially or unofficially chosen as the only language of communication. There are domains in today's society where English is used in addition to Finnish and Swedish even though people could as well use their first language (Leppänen and Nikula 2008). English is, thus, not anymore used only when communicating with foreigners, but also in everyday life in the home country. Therefore, there has even been discussion if English could be called the third native language,' kolmas kotimainen' (Leppänen and Nikula 2008).

There is a variety of historical, political, economic, social and cultural processes behind the unique role and status of English in Finland (Leppänen and Nikula 2007: 339). The structural changes in the society, internalisation, urbanisation, efficient language training and the opportunities provided by the information and communication

technology, to mention but a few, have contributed to the present situation (Leppänen and Nikula 2008: 16, 20-21). Importantly, the spread of English received a boost in the 1960s when Finland gradually started to associate itself more with the Western, Anglo-American world, that is, its politics, values, way of life and popular culture (Leppänen and Nikula 2007: 339). Especially TV series and movies have brought English into the everyday life of Finns, because in Finland they are not dubbed into Finnish or Swedish. Furthermore, the growing role of English has already since the 1960s been seen in the youth media, advertising, job announcements, product and company names, and also in Finnish words and phrases (Leppänen and Nikula 2008: 20). The attitudes towards English and its importance are mostly positive and knowing the language is considered important (Leppänen et al. 2009). However, the subject has also created debates. The opposing views are mostly connected with seeing English as a threat to one's own language and culture (Leppänen and Nikula 2007: 9-10).

The most extensive study on Finns' use of English is *National survey on the English language in Finland: Uses, meanings and attitudes,* conducted by the Jyväskylä unit of the Centre of Excellence for the Study of Variation, Contacts and Change in English in cooperation with Statistics Finland in the autumn of 2007 where 1,495 Finns aged between 15-74 answered a questionnaire about their use of, attitudes towards and perceptions of the English language in Finland (Leppänen et al. 2009: 101, 103, 112). It was found out that in free time, the most common contexts of using English were listening to music and watching TV shows and movies. Of all age groups, respondents aged 15-24 were the most active in using productive language skills in English: writing stories and poems, writing web texts and expressing negative feelings and speaking with friends who have the same native language. They were also the most active in using the Internet on general: especially visiting web pages, playing games and chatting. For respondents aged 15-24 English was, thus, a natural part of everyday life.

Luukka et al. (2008: 179, 182-184, 237) studied the text and media use of Finnish 9th grade pupils and their Finnish and English teachers both at school and in free time in 2006. The media practices of the pupils in free time were multilingual. Even though the first language was used the most in media practices, 95 per cent of pupils mentioned English as the first foreign language to be used in media contacts. About three per cent

of media use in languages other than the first language was in Swedish. However, the traditional print media was read mostly in the native language, whereas the most popular media practices used in English were playing computer games and visiting web pages in addition to e-mail and chatting. Playing computer games was popular among boys, especially: there were only 13 - 15 per cent of boys who had not played computer games at all, whereas the corresponding rate for girls was 43 - 60 per cent, depending on the type of the game. In addition, pupils and teachers were also asked whether they considered gaming and discussion forums useful for L2 learning. Most of the teachers regarded them as useful. The boys were slightly more positive about their usefulness than the girls. Importantly, altogether, the text and media practices of the pupils and teachers were different. The world of texts where the pupils lived was multimodal, interactive and social, and, the Internet was used for searching for information, relaxing, spending time and keeping up connections with friends. For the teachers, by contrast, reading books as well as newspapers and magazines, that is, traditional printed media, was an important part of everyday life, and, the Internet was mostly employed for sending e-mails and browsing web pages.

In their study, Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008: 175, 177, 181, 184-185) explored the role of English in Finnish teenagers' lives beyond the classroom by asking them at first to take photographs of the situations where English from their point of view had had some significance, and later, by discussing with them about the photographs. They found out that the students told fairly similar stories of English in their everyday lives. Learning English at school was associated with accuracy and grammatical correctness, whereas beyond the classroom the emphasis was on making oneself understood. However, also beyond the classroom, English was connected with tools of learning employed in formal education, such as books, but books were read differently at school and in spare time. In addition, the practices learnt in formal settings, such as checking words in a dictionary, were taken to informal settings. Moreover, learning beyond the classroom appeared to be incidental: English was learnt effortlessly, the students simply "ended up speaking English", for example, in connections with their hobbies, such as skateboarding. For some students, informal learning of English was an empowering experience, as they became experts of a particular area of language use. However, altogether, although the students regarded everyday practices as meaningful sites for informal learning, they did not actually value their practices as learning.

Linnakylä (2010: 9, 44-45, 59-60, 66, 90-95) studied Finnish 8th graders' experiences of learning and using English informally in literacy practices that were interesting and meaningful in their lives. A mixed methods approach was applied: first, pupils answered a survey questionnaire, and, later on, a smaller group of pupils were interviewed. The literacy practices that the pupils found as most useful were entertaining and multimodal, such as watching TV shows, movies and YouTube videos in English, and listening to music. Slightly surprisingly, the activities that were regarded as most useful were actually passive and pupils were recipients. Pupils found these practices as useful because of their narrative content, emotionality, humor, easy availability and closeness to life. However, traditional printed media was read seldom. Different subgroups were identified among the pupils in regard to interests and experiences: the film and TV viewers, the gamers, the music and social media users, the multimedia actives and the face-to-face communicators. The pupils felt that they had learnt mostly everyday language and language that young people use, pronunciation, special vocabulary, clause structures and different ways of using the language through their informal practices. Furthermore, the girls who had read books had also learnt writing, written language and spelling. However, the only literacy practices which were in connection to a better grade in English were reading news, manuals and books.

Moncrief (2011: 111-112, 114, 116) studied how university students taking Advanced English Academic and Professional Skills courses in the University of Helsinki learn English beyond the classroom or academic setting. A two-part questionnaire was employed. In the first questionnaire, the students answered an open-ended question about how they were able to use and learn English beyond the classroom or academic setting. In the second questionnaire, the students were provided with a list of ways in which they might use English in their everyday lives and they were asked to estimate how useful they were. Almost all students felt that they had learnt English in their free time, and, altogether, the students had actively created and made use of the opportunities to learn English beyond the classroom. The ways of learning mentioned most frequently were reading, watching TV shows and movies and speaking, whereas writing was the least frequently mentioned way of learning. As in the study by Linnakylä (2010), passive activities, such as watching TV and reading, were considered more useful than the more active ones. Altogether, the activities that the students most often had participated in had also been those that they had found most useful. However,

only a few students regarded their free time activities as *learning*, instead, some students equated them with *fun*, whereas learning only took place in academic settings. Despite not considering free time activities as learning, the students felt that they had gained insights into cultural specificities, such as the vernacular use of language that would not have been possible to access otherwise.

In sum, it can be seen from the studies on learning beyond the classroom in Finland that English is often a part of everyday life and several mediational means are employed in learning. However, these practices are not often recognised as learning.

4.3 Learning Swedish beyond the classroom in Finland

The Swedish language has long roots in the history of Finland, because Finland was part of Sweden for six centuries, until 1809, and, still for decades after that Swedish was used as the main administrative language (McRae 2007: 14). In 2010, about 280.000 Finns, which is 5.5 per cent of the population, spoke Swedish as their native language (Statistics Finland 2011). Swedish is centralised in certain areas, because most Swedish-speaking people live on the coast in Southern and Western Finland (Folktinget 2011). However, Swedish is present in the media all over the country: on the radio, on TV, in literature and newspapers (Luckan 2010).

According to the Constitution of Finland (Constitution of Finland 1999: 3-4) Finnish and Swedish are the national languages of Finland. The public authorities, thus, must take care of the cultural and societal needs of both Finnish-speaking and Swedish-speaking population equally. For that it could be guaranteed, everyone has to study the other national language as a part of basic education, irrespective of whether the native language is Finnish or Swedish (Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteet 2004: 44). Swedish was made a compulsory school subject in 1968 in connection with the school reform (Palviainen 2011: 13, 52). Moreover, earlier, the test of Swedish was also a compulsory part of the matriculation, but in 2005, it was made voluntary, and after that, the number of students taking the examination has diminished, most drastically from 2005 to 2009, when the number of students who took the test of Swedish as part of

the matriculation examination diminished from 90 per cent to 68 per cent. However, there are differences between boys and girls as well regions and schools in how often the test is taken. Girls take the test more often than boys: for example, in 2009, 81 per cent of the girls and 51 per cent of the boys took the exam. The proportion of students taking the exam varied in different schools between 24 per cent and 100 per cent.

People have different opinions about the Swedish language and the fact that Swedish is a compulsory subject at school continuously creates debate in Finland: it is often discussed as "pakkoruotsi", compulsory Swedish. The discussion about the role of Swedish involves many aspects: relationship between language and culture, cooperation in the Nordic countries, historical and cultural heritage and usefulness of language in personal life and working life, to mention but a few (Kalaja et al. 2011a: 64-65). Furthermore, it has often been contrasted with English which is perceived as useful.

Teaching and learning of Swedish in comprehensive schools (grades 1-9) all over Finland was explored in a research project *Svenska i finska grundskolor* (University of Helsinki 2012). The data was collected by observing Swedish lessons and interviewing teachers, for example. Also 9th graders conceptions of learning and teaching Swedish were looked at. The study indicated that the majority of pupils had a positive attitude towards studying Swedish. Only 20 per cent of the pupils had a negative attitude towards studying Swedish. However, many pupils were also fairly neutral in their attitudes. The study indicated that the teaching of communicative skills was emphasised in schools, which could be observed in both answers by the pupils and classroom observations. The pupils hoped especially that they would learn to communicate in Swedish and they seemed to be fairly pleased with their skills: 73 per cent of the pupils felt that they were able to communicate in Swedish. Moreover, the pupils hoped that more culture and authentic material, such as videos, newspapers and online material, were included in teaching. Altogether, the importance of teachers was highlighted. Learning beyond the classroom was also looked at in the study: even though opportunities for speaking were scarce beyond the classroom, pupils in Northern Finland, for example, had been creative in finding opportunities to speak, such as speaking Swedish among friends or using Swedish on Facebook. The study, thus, indicated results that partly were controversial with discussion on compulsory Swedish.

With regard to upper secondary school students' (grades 10-12) learning of Swedish, Green-Vänttinen, Korkman and Lehti-Eklund (2010: 64-65) examined teaching of Swedish in seven Finnish upper secondary schools all over Finland where the results in the Swedish language in the matriculation examination had been good. The data was collected through interviews from principals, teachers and students as well as by observations of lessons in Swedish. The study indicated that the role of teachers was significant and it was important that they had employed varying methods and materials, and, furthermore, provided students with opportunities to use Swedish beyond the classroom. Most of the students in the study wanted to learn Swedish and had also themselves been active in trying to learn Swedish beyond the classroom, even though most schools were not located in Swedish-speaking areas of Finland. The students had been creative: they had spoken Swedish with their Finnish-speaking friends, "just for fun", chosen Swedish as the operating language in their mobile phones or written text messages in Swedish, used Swedish subtitles when watching DVDs, or used Swedish in the social media, such as on discussions forums or in online games.

However, Green-Vänttinen et al. (2010: 65-66) found out that there was great variation in the students' use of media in Swedish: some of the students were not able to identify any media, whereas some listened to the radio in Swedish, *Radio X3M*, as often as every morning. The students in Western Finland were more familiar with the Swedish media than students in Eastern Finland. The best-known media among the students were the Finnish newspaper *Hufvudstadsbladet* and *FST*, a Finnish TV channel for programmes in Swedish. Some students mentioned the online versions of Swedish newspapers *Aftonbladet* and *Dagens Nyheter*, but reading newspapers in Swedish from Finland, such as *Hufvudstadsbladet*, online was not mentioned. Some students read magazines connected with their hobbies in Swedish. When asked whether the students listened to Swedish music, watched films or read books, music was mentioned most often, and artists such as *Bo Kaspers*, *Eva Dahlgren* and *Kent* were named. Some students were interested in detective series, such as *Wallander* and *Beck*. Few students had read books in Swedish. Altogether, it seemed that upper secondary school students did not know the Swedish media well, even though, for example, the social media offers plenty of material in Swedish.

The students in the study by Green-Vänttinen et al. (2010: 66-67) were also asked about how they were going to maintain their skills in Swedish in the future. The students seemed to be aware that they would need Swedish also in their future studies, and, many of them said that they would maintain their skills by reading newspapers and books as well as by watching news and TV shows. Actually, only seven students of a total of 84 participants in the study said that they would not aim at maintaining their skills in Swedish at all, either because of wanting to forget the language, or because they felt that they would forget it when they were not using it. Altogether, the students were interested in keeping up their skills in Swedish, and, many of them wanted to have more contacts with Swedish-speaking people or use Swedish, for example, in the working life and when travelling. Thus, also these findings reflected the positive attitudes of the students.

4.4 Learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom in Finland compared

As part of a longitudinal project *From Novice to Expert*, Kalaja, Alanen, Dufva and Palviainen (2011a, 2011b) studied the role of agency and context in learning English and Swedish both in the classroom and beyond the classroom. Palviainen (2012) also analysed the data concerning Swedish from the perspective of nexus analysis. In the following, the results of the study will be looked at in order to highlight what kind of differences were observed between learning English and Swedish.

In the study (Kalaja et al. 2011a, 2011b, Palviainen 2012), first-year university students majoring either in English or Swedish were asked to fill in a questionnaire where they were asked questions about their experiences of learning English and Swedish when they still were at school, that is, they were asked about their past experiences back in comprehensive school (grades 1-9) and upper secondary school (grades 10-12). The responses revealed that there were differences in how the students had exercised their agency, and, as a result, in how they had been able to seize the learning opportunities, especially in their free time.

At school, learners of both English and Swedish tended to see themselves as consumers of textbooks and more as learners than as users of a language. Social resources of the classroom, teachers and peers, were hardly mentioned. The focus of learning at school had been on formal aspects of language, that is, on grammar and vocabulary. Altogether, the experiences of school learning were fairly similar in English and Swedish. However, there were differences between the students in whether school was considered an important context of learning: whereas some learners of English argued that they had learnt nothing at school, learners of Swedish admitted that they had learnt "at least something".

More differences appeared when learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom was looked at. In both languages, the students had learnt mostly vocabulary beyond the classroom. Learners of both English and Swedish mentioned watching TV and movies, and listening to music and radio in their free time, but learners of Swedish were more precise in describing these: they mentioned names of artists and TV shows, for instance. In addition, they mentioned product packages, such as milk cartons and labels, which have texts in Swedish as well, as sources of learning, and, for some students, these had been the only way of learning Swedish beyond the classroom (Palviainen 2012). The Internet was mentioned only once in connection with Swedish: visiting fashion blogs in Swedish (Palviainen 2012). Altogether, the learners regarded themselves as recipients - readers or listeners - of the Swedish language. Productive users of language, for example, speakers, they had been only occasionally, in trips or at summer jobs.

By contrast, learners of English felt that they had had opportunities to use the language also in real situations, with real need for communication, which had increased their confidence in their language skills. They had actively employed material resources, such as TV shows, radio, movies and music, for instance, and also social resources, other people, in their learning. Thus, the learners of English saw themselves not only as learners, but also as users of English. However, even though the learners of English said that they had learnt English in their spare time, there was variation in whether school or free time activities were considered the most important learning context.

Perhaps most importantly, the students emphasised that they had been required special effort and being active for being able to learn Swedish beyond the classroom. Some of the students, in fact, said that they had actually been passive in learning Swedish beyond the classroom and had not made use of the opportunities to learn. At the same time, some students complained that there had not been enough opportunities to learn. Many students explained their minimal learning beyond the classroom by the location of their home in an area where one does not hear Swedish often, for example, in Eastern Finland. Thus, it seemed that the students were not able to make use of the multiple opportunities of learning Swedish in Finland, and tended to explain that they had not learnt much Swedish beyond the classroom for lack of opportunities to learn. As potential reasons for being passive in finding opportunities to learn Swedish Kalaja et al. (2011a: 72-73) suggested the following: negative attitudes towards the Swedish language, the position of English as a lingua franca, better confidence in skills in English and that the students are not instructed from school well enough to find materials in Swedish.

5 RESEARCH DESIGN

In the previous chapters, activity theory and the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) as well as some studies employing the model were discussed. In addition, learning languages beyond the classroom was looked at as a concept and some studies conducted on learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom in Finland were viewed. In this chapter, the research design of the present study will be outlined. First, motivation for the present study and the research questions will be presented. Next, the participants of the present study and the method of collecting data will be described. Finally, the method of data analysis will be explained.

5.1 Motivating the study and research questions

As discussed in Chapter 3, the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) has seldom been employed in research on L2 learning. Furthermore, the studies conducted from the perspective of the model have mostly focused on macrostructures of

learning and teaching L2 (Kim 2008, Ahn 2009), or, on L2 learning motivation (Kim 2009 and 2011, Allen 2010). In the present study, upper secondary school students' learning of English and Swedish beyond the classroom will be looked at from the perspective of the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999). Thus, the present study employs a novel way of approaching learning and using English and Swedish beyond the classroom.

The human activity system model allows taking into account the individual, the environment and affordances at the same time (Kim 2010: 9), and, therefore, suits the present study well, because the aim is look at the students' activity systems in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom in Finland: these two languages have a different status in Finland and people have different beliefs about them, as was discussed in Chapter 4. Therefore, much depends on the individual and how he or she is able to make use of the affordances in the environment, as was emphasised, for example, in the study by Kalaja et al. (2011a, 2011b). Thus, the human activity system serves as a useful analytical framework in exploring these issues, and, enables observing differences between learning and using English and Swedish beyond the classroom in a systematic way.

In Chapter 4, some earlier studies on learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom were described, and, they had participants who were of different ages and on different levels of schooling: teenagers (Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta 2008, Linnakylä 2010) university students (Moncrief 2010), or university students who were looking back on their school years (Kalaja et al. 2011). Upper secondary school students were the focus of study merely in the study by Green-Vänttinen (2010). In the present study, the participants will be third-year students in upper secondary school (grade 12). Exploring their views on learning will also provide insights into the role of the matriculation examination, a high-stakes test in the Finnish school system, in their activities beyond the classroom. They also have attended school for about eleven years and are, thus, also otherwise able to reflect on the relationship between learning in the classroom and beyond the classroom. The difference between students' and teachers' free time activities has been acknowledged, for instance, in the study by Luukka et al. (2008: 238), and, therefore, the study in its part will provide teachers with practical

information about free time activities of students. Furthermore, as students do not always regard their practices as learning (Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta 2008), it is also necessary to discuss whether they can be characterised predominantly as learners or users of English and Swedish beyond the classroom.

The present study has six participants and is conducted as a case study, which enables looking at the students' activity systems in detail and comparing the students' activity systems in English and Swedish. In a case study it is possible to focus on an individual in a way which usually is not possible when studying groups (Mackey and Gass 2005: 171-172) and a very thorough analysis can be conducted (Duff 2008: 43-44). In traditional L2 case studies, profiles of prototypical "good" language learners have been created (Duff 2008: 62) and in the present study, the descriptions and illustrations of learners' activity systems can be regarded as learner profiles. Furthermore, importantly, conducting the present study as a case study enables exploring some possible reasons for why students are active or passive in finding opportunities to learn English and Swedish beyond the classroom, which is a question which has been asked for example in the study by Kalaja et al. (2011a: 72-73).

Thus, the aim of the present study is to shed light on the upper secondary school students' learning and using of English and Swedish beyond the classroom from the perspective of the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999). The aim is to describe the students' activity systems and the most notable contradictions within them in order to answer the research questions. The research questions are the following:

1. Can the students be characterised predominantly as learners or users of English and Swedish beyond the classroom?

2. How do the students' activity systems differ in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom and what kind of similarities are there?

3. What kind of factors enhance or restrict their learning and using English and Swedish beyond the classroom, that is, what kind of reasons there are for being active or passive agents?

In the present study, Benson's (2011) concept of *language learning beyond the language classroom* will be employed to refer to upper secondary school students' learning of English and Swedish when they are not at school, and, there is no need to set more limitations, as the students themselves will describe the experiences. Moreover, the definition by Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008: 171-172) of informal learning as "contacts with the language in everyday settings that arise from the needs and interests of the language users" is also relevant for the study as it emphasises that learning beyond the classroom is closely connected with everyday life and person's own interests, thus, highlighting the roles of both a learner and a context.

5.2 Collection of data: participants and the method

The data for the present study was collected by means of semi-structured interviews. Altogether six students, three girls and three boys, aged 18, were interviewed. The interviewees were third-year students (grade 12) in an upper secondary school in Jyväskylä, which is located in central Finland. Jyväskylä is in a Finnish-speaking area of Finland and the proportion of the Swedish-speaking population is 0.2 per cent. Third-year students were chosen because they have experience of learning Swedish already for about six years and of learning English about ten years on average, and thus, are able to reflect on their experiences of learning these languages at school and beyond the classroom. Moreover, they were approaching the matriculation examination and they are also planning their future studies and career, which may be important for their goals and objects.

The participants were contacted with the help of their teacher who asked for volunteers. The original aim was to get students with different levels of achievement at school, but, in the end, there were students who mostly had marks from 8-10, and, only two students had received marks under that: Perttu who had 7 and Toni who had 5 in Swedish. The starting of studying English and Swedish, the latest marks they have received at school in these languages, on the scale from 4-10, as well as participating in the exams in matriculation examination are listed on the following table (see Table 2). All the names introduced here and employed in the analysis are pseudonyms.

Table 2. Participants of the study

Name	Started studying English	Started studying Swedish	The latest mark in English	The latest mark in Swedish	Test of English in the matriculation examination	Test of Swedish in the matriculation examination
Liisa	Grade 3	Grade 7	10	10	Autumn 2011	Autumn 2011
Roope	Grade 3	Grade 7	9	9	Spring 2012	Autumn 2011
Janita	Grade 3	Grade 7	8	9	Spring 2012	Autumn 2011
Perttu	Clubs in pre-school, grade 3 at school	Grade 7	8	7	Spring 2012	No
Netta	In pre-school	Grade 7	9	8	Autumn 2011	Autumn 2011
Toni	Grade 3	Grade 5 or 7	8	5	Autumn 2011	No

The data was collected by employing semi-structured one-on-one interviews. The interviews were conducted in the end of November 2011 and in the beginning of December 2011. All participants filled in the consent to the study (Appendix 1). The interviews took place at school after school days or during the day when students had free time, because this procedure was easiest for the participants. Each interview lasted for about 40 minutes. All interviews were conducted in Finnish. Interviews provide the subjects with an opportunity to tell their opinions as freely as possible and to let them create meanings (Hirsjärvi, Remes and Sajavaara 2009: 205), and, in the present study, the purpose was to hear the students' voice as much as possible and let them talk about issues that are meaningful for them. An interview, therefore, served the purposes of the present study well. Furthermore, Benson (2001: 203) suggests that interviews are useful for gaining a better insight into why the students choose particular activities and what kind of value they attach to them, instead of employing a questionnaire, which can be employed to find out what kinds of activities learners engage in. In addition, interviews have often been employed as one part of a variety of methods of collecting data (Kim

2009 and 2011, Kim 2008, Ahn 2009 and Allen 2010) in illustrating activity systems. In semi-structured interviews, a written list of questions is used as a guide, but the researcher still has a chance to ask for more information (Mackey and Gass 2005: 173). Thus, there were questions which everyone was asked, but, when necessary, the interviewer asked additional questions, for example, to elicit clarification or more reflection on the issue.

The interview schedule consisted of two main parts: learning English beyond the classroom and learning Swedish beyond the classroom (see Appendix 2 for the interview questions). In addition, there were two questions concerning the difference between learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom. The questions about learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom were focused on the different components of the human activity system model: *subject, mediating artifacts, outcome, rules, goals, community and division of labour*. There were the same questions concerning English and Swedish, because the aim of the study was to illustrate activity systems in both of the languages. The interview started with English, and, learning Swedish beyond the classroom was discussed only after the questions concerning English had been dealt with. This enabled focusing on one language at a time and, thus, aimed at avoiding contrasting the two languages on purpose.

All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for the analysis. A broad transcription was employed (see Appendix 3 for the interview transcription notes), because it was not necessary to provide a detailed transcription, as the focus of the analysis was on the content, not on conversation analysis.

5.3 Analysis of data

The data was analysed by content analysis. In content analysis, the aim is to organise the data into a clear verbal description of the phenomenon that is being studied, without losing the information it contains (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2009: 110). In the present study, the transcribed data set of each student was at first read through for grasping a general overview of each case. After that, the transcribed data set of each student was read

carefully by employing the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) in order to code the data according to which component of the human activity system model they belonged. The coding of the data was partly guided by the interview questions, because the interview questions had been arranged according to the components of the human activity system model, but this was not strictly followed: if data on, for example, *outcome*, appeared in responses to questions about other components, it was coded under the component *outcome*.

After coding, the categorisation of the data according to which component of the human activity system they belonged was done in a separate file on the computer, and, at this stage, the choices made in coding could be checked. For example, many factors, such as foreign friends, could be categorised under both mediating artifacts and community, and, there were many other factors that could have been categorised into many components. Furthermore, the limits of the two contexts, classroom and beyond the classroom, overlapped: teachers, the matriculation examination and what had been learnt at school could be characterised as belonging to the student's activity systems in learning English and Swedish at school. However, they were included in the activity systems beyond the classroom, because they were of great significance to the participants also in their activities beyond the classroom. For example, what the students had learnt for the matriculation examination was included in the component of *outcome*.

After coding and categorisation, meaning condensation was employed. In meaning condensation, meanings expressed by the participants of the study were abridged into shorter formulations where the main sense of the original expression was rephrased in only few words (Kvale 1996: 192). In the present study, meaning condensation made comparing the different components and activity systems more simple. After that, the illustrations (triads) were created for each student's activity systems in English and Swedish separately. This helped in analysing the activity systems as entities.

The second research question about whether the students can be characterised predominantly as learners or users of English and Swedish beyond the classroom was

answered by looking at each student's activity systems in English and Swedish separately. Attention was paid especially to the participants' contacts with the language and the reasons for them and how they described the ease or difficulty of learning the languages beyond the classroom.

Next, the contradictions within the activity systems were identified by comparing the different components of the activity systems in learning English and Swedish separately. In identifying the *contradictions*, each component of the activity systems was at first looked at individually in order to identify possible *primary inner contradictions*. After that the other components of the activity system were compared with each other in order to identify other contradictions. Analysing the contradictions contributed to answering the third research question about the reasons for being active or passive in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom. Even if there were not many contradictions, it helped in analysing what kind of factors made the person put more effort into learning English or Swedish, or vice versa, because, on the one hand, it was possible to look at the components in detail individually, and, on the other hand, it enabled analysing the relationships between them.

Finally, the activity systems of each student concerning English and Swedish were compared with each other, and, the differences and similarities between them analysed. In analysing these, each component of the activity systems was compared individually: for example, the mediating artifacts employed in English were compared with those in Swedish. Through this procedure, the second research questions concerning the differences and similarities between the systems was answered.

6 RESULTS: SIX CASE STUDIES

The aim of the present study was to shed light on the upper secondary school students' learning and using of English and Swedish beyond the classroom from the perspective of the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999). Through analysing their human activity systems and the most notable contradictions within them, the purpose was to find out whether they can be characterised predominantly as learners or users of these languages beyond the classroom, what kind of differences and similarities there are between their activity systems in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom, and what kind of factors enhance, or restrict their learning of these languages beyond the classroom, that is, why they are active or passive in learning these languages beyond the classroom.

In this chapter, the findings from six case studies will be reported. Each case will be looked at individually. First, the student's self-evaluation and some background information will be provided. Next, the activity system in learning English beyond the classroom will be described and an illustration of the student's activity system provided. In addition, the contradictions within the activity system will be described. After that, the activity system in learning Swedish beyond the classroom will be looked at in the same way. Finally, the differences and similarities between the activity systems are described, and, a short characterisation of the participant as a learner or user of these languages provided. After all cases have been looked at, in the final section of the chapter, a summary of the results according to the research questions will be provided.

The findings will be illustrated with extracts in Finnish from the interviews. All extracts are numbered and the English translations can be found in Appendix 4.

The first two cases to be looked at will be Liisa and Roope, who were mostly active users of English and who had been motivated by the matriculation examination to put effort into learning Swedish beyond the classroom as well. The third case to be described will be Janita, who was an opposite to other participants of the study: for her,

learning Swedish was easier and more natural than learning English. The fourth case will be Kasper who had primarily used English on the Internet and whose mother's family was mostly Swedish-speaking. The last two cases, Netta and Toni, resemble each other in that they both clearly expressed their passion for the English language, on the one hand, and their dislike of the Swedish language, on the other hand.

6.1 Liisa: English daily, Swedish for the matriculation examination

The first case to be looked at is Liisa. Liisa was a high-achiever in English and Swedish at school, as her latest marks at school in these languages had been 10. She had taken the tests of English and Swedish as part of the matriculation examination the autumn the interview was conducted. Liisa was fairly confident in her skills both in English and Swedish (see Table 3). However, she wanted to have more confidence in her skills in speaking in both languages, and, she pointed out that even though she was able to handle basic situations in Swedish and knew a great deal of grammar and vocabulary, she felt uncertain of her skills, because she had not heard much Swedish beyond the classroom. In listening, by contrast, she was able to follow what was said, and, in English the fact that she has listened to the radio helped her in listening comprehension. Liisa, thus, connected her skills with how she had used the languages beyond the classroom. In writing, she felt that in English she was able to use structures variably, but she still wanted to become better. In both languages she felt that she was able to get the main points when reading a text, and, thus was pleased with her reading comprehension.

Table 3. Liisa's self-evaluation of her skills

	Speaking	**Writing**	**Listening**	**Reading**
English	**9**	**8**	**9 or 10**	**9 or 10**
Swedish	**8**	**9**	**9**	**9**

The structure of the activity system in learning English beyond the classroom

Liisa had used and encountered English through different *mediating artifacts.* Firstly, her encounters with English had included many activities connected with entertainment, such as watching TV shows and movies, listening to music and radio programmes in English, and reading articles and newspapers on the Internet. These encounters with the media had been frequent, every day or at least once a week depending on the activity, as Liisa illustrates in Extract 1.

(1) ihan päivittäin ja monta kertaa, että joskus kuuntelen ihan radiota englanniks. sitä tulee ainakin viikottain tehtyä ja tietysti telkkaria päivittäin katottua ja jotain nettiartikkeleita tai lehtiä luettua ihan päivittäin.

Secondly, she had used English for communicating with her foreign friends on the Internet about once or twice a month. English had been most likely employed as a lingua franca, because her friends were from Germany and France, for instance. She had also talked with her relatives in the USA using Skype. Thirdly, her sister, who was studying to become a translator in English, had often brought phrase books and novels in English to Liisa and encouraged her to learn English. Thus, fourthly, books had been an important mediating artifact beyond the classroom for Liisa. Altogether, the mediating artifacts that Liisa had employed in her learning had enabled her to be both a recipient and producer of English.

Watching TV shows and communicating with foreign friends had been the most useful mediating artifacts. They had had different functions, however: communicating with friends had given Liisa more confidence, whereas by watching TV shows she had learnt new things the most, for example, words. In addition, she had learnt about the culture and everyday life in English-speaking countries by watching documentaries, cooking programmes and TV series. When asked why TV shows had been useful, Liisa also referred to her auditory learning style: because she learnt best by listening, it was possible for her to learn sentence structures and correct expressions from TV, as is evident from Extract 2.

(2) musta tuntuu et mun oma oppimistapa on semmone (…) aika kuulokeskeine eli sieltä jää sitten päähän, esimerkiks kieliopista niinku lauserakenteita, esimerkiks et mikä kuulostaa oikeelta.

When looking at the *outcome* of learning, Liisa felt that she had really learnt English and, especially, vocabulary beyond the classroom. Moreover, Liisa felt that she had been able to utilise at school what she had learnt beyond the classroom and that she had learnt vocabulary and cultural knowledge which had been necessary in the matriculation examination as well. In fact, Liisa did not consider learning at school as sufficient. On her own it had been possible to learn skills, such as idiomatic language, which had not been possible to learn at school because of lack of resources. She felt that it was probably impossible to achieve the best marks in the matriculation exam only based on the learning at school, and, thus, learning on her own was needed, as is she describes in Extract 3.

(3) eihän se oppi tarttuis jos pelkästään koulussa istuis (…) sen paria tuntia viikossa (…) et sitten kun sitä oppimista jatkaa koulun ulkopuolella ni sitten ne tulokset vasta alkaa näkyä ja just ei ylioppilaskirjoituksissa varmaan niihin parhaisiin arvosanoihin pääse jos pelkästään sillä koulun opilla mennään että siellä kyllä vaaditaan aika paljon sellaista omaa, omaa oppimista.

With regard to the *rules*, learning English beyond the classroom had been rather easy for Liisa and it had occurred without consciously aiming at learning, as a by-product of everyday activities. Liisa often described how English "just had stuck to her", as is illustrated in Extracts 4 and 5.

(4) Se on aika helppoo, se tulee aika itsestään, sille ku tekee tällasia arkielämän juttuja ja viihdyttää elokuvilla ja tällasilla ni ei siinä ajattele et opinpa nyt englantia, se niinku tulee, tulee aika luonnostaan.
(5) joo, totta kai, sitä (englantia) tarttuu mediasta aika paljon.

However, learning beyond the classroom had had features of intentional or conscious learning as well. For example, if Liisa had encountered new words when reading a book, she had checked their meaning in a dictionary and considered it a good way of learning, as is illustrated in Extract 6:

(6) ja sitten jos esimerkiks lukee jotain kirjoja (…) englanniks ja jos siitä tulee jotain vieraita sanoja ja niitä alkaa tarkastelemaan vaikka sanakirjasta ni siitä oppii hyvin.

Furthermore, Liisa felt that the foundation for learning beyond the classroom had been laid down at school and expanded later. If she had not attended lessons at school, she would not have been able to learn from TV, for instance, as much as she was learning at the moment, and, there were many exceptions in the grammar, such as tenses, which she had not noticed or internalised without school. Furthermore, a great number of words had been learnt at school, and Liisa said that it was because at school one had to study for vocabulary tests, and in this way, emphasised the role of tests at school.

The objects and goals in learning English beyond the classroom were connected with Liisa's future plans, achieving fluency and passing the matriculation examination. Liisa was sure that she would need English in the working life and everyday life. Her object was to have as good as possible competence in English, but she pointed out that she was ready to invest only a reasonable amount of work in it. She wanted to become fluent, but recognised that it required effort. When asked about what she did beyond the classroom in order to reach her goals, she mentioned reading books and completing homework assignments, but emphasised that learning usually takes place without conscious effort.

The *community* in learning English beyond the classroom included her sister, parents, teachers, Finnish friends, foreign friends, and idols. Her sister had had a significant role as a supporter and a provider of books and other materials in English. In addition, Liisa's parents had highlighted the importance of language skills and encouraged her to study also other languages than English and Swedish. Extracts 7 and 8 show how Liisa described the support from her family.

(7) joo, ja mulla on semmonen kannustin että mun sisko on myös, opiskelee englannin kääntäjäks ni hän kannustaa koko ajan, tuo mulle aina kaikkia kirjoja ja sellasta ni siinä saa aina jotenki itelleenki sitä puhtia, puhtia sitten oppia.

(8) äiti ja isä (…) jos on joskus tullut epätoivoa että en jaksa enää opiskella, en osaa ni sit on ain autettu sen mukaan että jatkais eteenpäin.

In addition, the teachers had encouraged students to learn English beyond the classroom by advising them to take part in writing competitions and to watch DVD films without

subtitles. The activities they had had at school could also be continued and expanded at home, such as watching documentaries and the TV shows of Jamie Oliver. Thus, Liisa perceived a connection between the activities at school and the activities beyond the school. The Finnish friends had positive attitudes towards learning English, even though they had not practiced English together. In addition, Liisa had earlier had idols whose Tweets she had read, and, in this way she had been forced to practice her English skills. In sum, the community supported Liisa's learning beyond the classroom in multiple ways.

To sum up, Liisa's activity system in learning English beyond the classroom is illustrated in Figure 4.

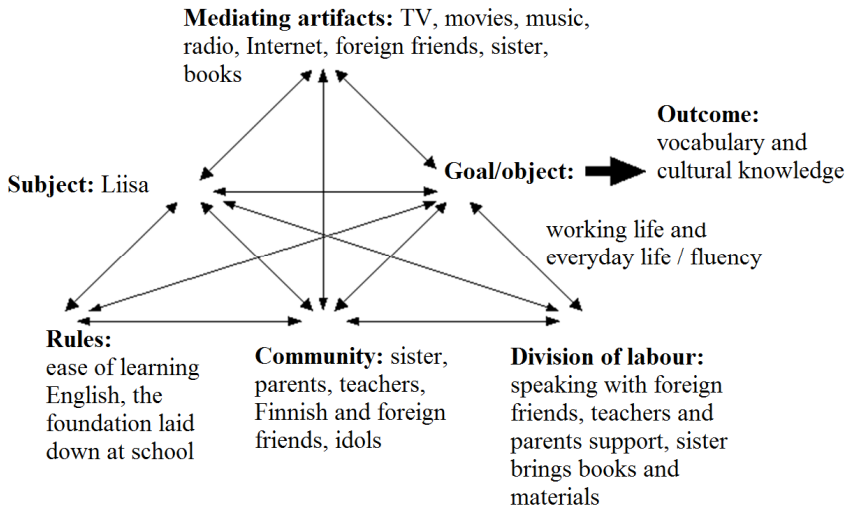

Figure 4. Illustration of Liisa's activity system in learning English beyond the classroom

There were no significant *contradictions*, because the different parts of the activity system seemed to support Liisa's learning beyond the classroom: her free time activities provided her with opportunities to use the language and her goals supported learning. In addition, Liisa was pleased with the connection between learning at school and beyond the classroom: at school, she could make use of what she had learnt of English beyond the classroom, and, she was also encouraged to learn English beyond the classroom.

The structure of the activity system in learning Swedish beyond the classroom

Liisa had used Swedish beyond the classroom less than English. The most important *mediating artifacts* had been music, newspapers in Swedish, TV, movies, and radio. Liisa had encountered the Swedish language in her everyday life about once a week and mostly as a recipient. The most useful mediating artifact had been music, because it was mostly through music that she had encountered Swedish, and, furthermore, her auditory learning style made learning from music easier. Liisa had learnt listening comprehension and speaking by listening to music the most. TV, in turn, had been useful for learning speaking and culture, in the form of royal weddings, for instance. She had learnt reading comprehension the most by reading Hufvudstadsbladet, the major newspaper in Swedish in Finland. She had learnt to know her own skills best when she had had courage to speak Swedish when travelling in Sweden, and these were actually the only situations where she produced the language, as she had never written anything in Swedish beyond the classroom. Liisa was a little uncertain of her skills in Swedish, as can be observed from Extract 9:

(9) no joskus jos tulee käytyä vaikka ruotsin risteilyllä tai viikonloppureissulla ni ehkä siinä jos uskaltautuu käyttämään sitä ruotsia vaikka niinku esimerkiks kaupassa tai tälleen näin ni siinä kyllä huomaa sitten, omia rajojaan.

In order to prepare for the matriculation examination, Liisa had put more effort into learning Swedish beyond the classroom than usually. She had searched for Swedish music that she liked on YouTube, rent films, and sometimes listened to radio on the Internet in Swedish. She had watched movies with her friends - for the purpose of learning, in particular. In Extracts 10 and 11 Liisa describes how she had prepared for the matriculation examination.

(10) no ehkä nyt ku oli yo-kirjoitukset ni niihi tuli enemmän satsattua niin ku koulun ulkopuolella siihen oppimiseen..

(11) no mä netistä hain,, niinku ruotsinkielisiä artisteja ja kuuntelin youtubesta, sitten sen kautta lähin hakemaan enemmän musiikkia mikä sitten niinku itteä miellytti, minkä tyyppinen musiikki, ni (---) sitten vuokrasin elokuvia ruotsiks ja katoin niitä, ja taisin joskus ruotsia kuunnella nettiradioistakin.

The *outcome* of learning consisted of what Liisa had learnt for the matriculation examination and what she had learnt overall. Using and encountering Swedish beyond the classroom before the matriculation examination had helped her to "get to grips with Swedish" and she had also learnt some vocabulary. Overall, Liisa was slightly doubtful of what she had learnt concerning the Swedish language beyond the classroom. She felt that she had learnt almost everything at school and what she had learnt beyond the classroom had merely reinforced what had already been learnt at school. However, by listening to music she maybe had learnt word order and pronunciation. Furthermore, she had gained some fluency and confidence in her skills, and, thus, having at least some contacts with Swedish beyond the classroom had made her school work easier, as is evident from Extract 12:

(12) mmm, no, mä en tiiä oonko mä niin hirveesti mitään uutta oppinu koulun ulkopuolella ruotsista mutta kyllä se varmuus ja se sujuvuus, siitä on hyötyä sitten, et on ees vähän ollu tekemisissä niinku koulun ulkopuolella ni helpottaa sitä koulutyötä.

Concerning the *rules*, learning Swedish beyond the classroom had been slightly challenging for Liisa, because she had heard Swedish rather little. She emphasised that hearing Swedish required her own effort : there were not may programmes in Swedish on TV and she would not watch them merely for entertainment purposes. Instead, if she watched them, it would be more because of wanting to learn. She pointed out that in the capital region of Finland it would be easier to get to know Swedish-speaking people. In addition, she had not regarded as necessary to learn Swedish beyond the classroom, because she had thought that it would be possible to learn the language at school. However, Liisa hoped that Swedish was more strongly present in her everyday life and that there were more TV series on interesting themes in Swedish, because it would make learning Swedish beyond the classroom easier and more natural. Extracts 13 and 14 illustrate Liisa's beliefs.

(13) noo, se on vähän haastavaa koska aika vähän, vähän, tulee kuultua kieltä koulun ulkopuolella. että ei tuu hirveesti ainakaan televisiosta tietääkseni tai voishan kattoa jotain ruotsinkielisiä kanavia tietysti mutta niitä ei ehkä tuu katottua niinku oma- tai siis silleen niinku iha muute vaan. et niitä kattois sit varmaan enemmän sen takia että tahtois oppia sitä kieltä. ni se on vähän haastavaa koska sitä ei itsestään niinku hirveästi kuule ellei sitä hae ite.

(14) no ehkä siihe ei oo kokenu niin hirveetä tarvetta vaikka se tietysti hyvin tärkeetä oiski, ni jotenki sen on kokenut että sen kielen pystyy oppimaan siellä koulussaki vaikka se saattaaki olla vähän

> harhakuvitelma, mutta se ehkä vaatis ehkä jotenkin enemmän ponnistelua, ja, sitä oma-aloitteisuutta sen kielen hakeminen et englanti tulee niin paljon enemmän niinku itestään että enemmän on tarjontaa englanniks.

Concerning *the objects* and *goals*, Liisa thought that she would need Swedish in the working life and that knowing Swedish would help in learning other languages. Her aim was to get basic skills in Swedish and she did not have a need for a high fluency.

The community included family, Finnish friends and teachers. Liisa received support and encouragement from home, such as the subscription of Hufvudstadsbladet. With her friends, Liisa had watched movies in Swedish, but, otherwise, they had not practiced Swedish together, and, none of them made a special effort to get in contact with Swedish, perhaps, because of the limited supply of the Swedish language, or, maybe, because they simply could not search for materials that would interest them. Because there was a great supply of the English language, for example, in movie theatres, English had been natural and Swedish had received the second place. At school, teachers had played music that one would probably like to listen in one's free time as well. They had also had visitors and teachers had encouraged to follow their life on the Internet, for instance.

Liisa's activity system in learning Swedish beyond the classroom is characterised in Figure 5.

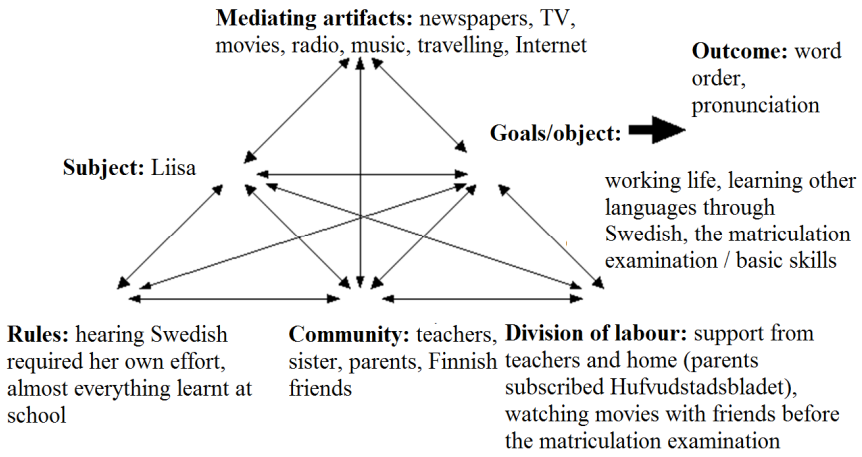

Figure 5. Illustration of Liisa's activity system in learning Swedish beyond the classroom

Contradictions could be identified. Firstly, *primary inner contradictions* occurred within Liisa as the *subject* of the activity system. Even though Liisa had been successful in her studies, she was insecure of her skills. In addition, even though she had a positive attitude towards studying Swedish in general, she had not had a need to learn Swedish beyond the classroom, as she had felt that necessary language skills could be obtained at school. Secondly, there was *a secondary contradiction* between the encounters with Swedish which Liisa had had (*mediating artifacts*) and what Liisa thought she had learnt (*outcome*). Even though Liisa had searched for opportunities to learn Swedish, she felt that she had not learnt anything new. Altogether, there were contradictions, but it seemed that Liisa had somehow learnt to solve them. Although she felt that learning Swedish beyond the classroom had required effort, she was able to make use of the mediating artifacts when she felt it necessary, such as when preparing for the matriculation examination. However, otherwise she did not otherwise search opportunities for learning, because it would have required extra effort.

Comparison of the activity systems in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom

There were differences, but also similarities between Liisa's activity systems in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom. First of all, English and Swedish were encountered and used differently. What they had in common was that movies, TV shows, music and radio were employed to learn both English and Swedish, and, Liisa referred to her auditory learning style in both languages when choosing the most useful mediating artifacts. However, the *mediating artifacts* employed in Swedish mostly promoted receptive skills, whereas Liisa also produced English. For instance, the Internet was employed in Swedish for listening to online radio stations and music on YouTube, but in English it was used for communicative purposes as well. Importantly, the most significant difference was in how Liisa perceived the mediating artifacts were available. English was employed naturally for entertainment purposes, whereas watching TV shows in Swedish would be for the purpose of learning, not for the purpose of enjoying. As a result, English was mostly learnt as a by-product of everyday activities and often unconsciously, whereas learning Swedish required more conscious effort.

Secondly, Liisa thought that in both languages the foundation for learning had been laid down at school, and, thus, she regarded school as the primary context of learning. However, regarding English she emphasised that learning beyond the classroom was necessary for achieving good results, whereas in Swedish she had thought that learning at school would be enough, even though she recognised that it might be a misconception. In addition, in English she thought that she had been able to expand her knowledge beyond the classroom, whereas in Swedish it had mostly reinforced the knowledge learnt already at school.

Thirdly, there were differences in the role of the matriculation examination, *community* and *goals*. Preparing for the matriculation had made Liisa to put more effort into learning Swedish beyond the classroom more than normally, whereas the same was not reported in English. In both languages, the community supported learning beyond the

classroom, but foreign friends enabled communicating in real life, and the support and inspiration from the sister was probably more significant regarding English than Swedish, and she had not practiced Swedish with her friends beyond the classroom. In addition, Liisa's objects in the two languages differed slightly. The object in English was set higher than in Swedish.

Based on the illustration of Liisa's activity system in learning English, she can be described as an active user of English, who mostly unconsciously, but also intentionally, learns English through different activities which are part of her everyday life, thus having features of a learner as well. In Swedish, she is mostly a learner of the language, as she mostly was in contact with the Swedish language for the purpose of learning it.

6.2 Roope: listening and writing in English, occasional encounters with Swedish

The second case to be looked at is Roope. His latest mark in both English and Swedish had been 9. He had taken the test of Swedish as part of the matriculation examination the autumn the interview was conducted and the test of English would be the following spring. Roope evaluated his skills to be better in English than in Swedish (see Table 4). He was pleased with his skills in the English language, but he thought that he should develop his skills in listening comprehension. Furthermore, speaking was sometimes demanding, because he had not often faced situations where he would have needed to speak, and, in addition, the themes of the discussions could not be known beforehand. Writing was easier, because, having time to think enabled using more complex structures. In Swedish, he felt that the difference between speaking and writing was not as significant as in English, but writing was easier in Swedish as well. Importantly, when evaluating his skills, he also referred to the marks he had been given at school: he pointed out that his skills in English would earn mark 9, because it was the mark he had usually been given at school, and, his evaluation of his skills in listening comprehension in the Swedish language was based on his achievement in the matriculation examination.

Table 4. Roope's self-evaluation of his skills

	Speaking	**Writing**	**Listening**	**Reading**
English	**8**	**9**	**8**	**9**
Swedish	**8**	**8**	**7**	**8**

Activity system in learning English beyond the classroom

Roope had employed *mediating artifacts* which had enabled him to be both a producer and a recipient of English beyond the classroom, but he had not often spoken the language as his encounters had involved mostly listening and writing. He had learnt English the most from TV, because the majority of the TV shows he watched, such as the Friends, were in English. In addition, Roope he had read different kinds of texts and music reviews on the Internet, and communicated on Facebook with his foreign friends, from the Nordic Countries and Japan. In addition to the three most important mediating artifacts, that is, TV, the Internet and foreign friends, Roope mentioned playing the Alias game in English with her sister, helping tourists who had asked for the directions on the streets and learning English from the books.

When asked about the *outcome* of learning English beyond the classroom, Roope answered that he had mostly learnt pronunciation and phrases. He emphasised especially the role of TV in learning pronunciation and thought that he had mostly learnt pronunciation from TV, as is illustrated in Extract 15.

(15) (---) no varmaan just näistä telkkariohjelmista ni just se ääntäminen siit se varmaan aika pitkälti tulee et vaik koulussa sitä opetetaan ni kyllä silti sitä kuulee niin paljon telkkarissa esimerkiks et siitä sen varmaan eniten ottaa sen ääntämisen .

Roope had also learnt listening comprehension and the features of the culture in English-speaking countries from TV, and, improved his skills in reading comprehension

and writing by reading texts on the Internet. However, he had had opportunities for speaking merely with a Japanese exchange student, whom Roope met in connection with hobbies. Speaking with him had helped Roope to know what he actually could do with the language and where his limits were.

However, Roope was doubtful about the *outcome* of his learning in writing skills and for the matriculation examination. He had written comments in English on Facebook, but was not sure about whether he had learnt anything, or, if he merely had used what he had learnt already earlier, and, thus, he regarded these activities as rather insignificant for learning, or, perhaps he had not realised that they had possibly involved learning as well, as Extract 16 shows.

(16) (---) sitä on tullut niitä jossain facebookissa kirjoiteltua mutta siinä nyt ei ehkä oo ihan hirveesti oppinut välttämättä, että siinä nyt on sitten käytetty mitä on sattunu osaamaan.

Furthermore, Roope was doubtful about what he had learnt beyond the classroom concerning the matriculation examination, because the examination was focused mostly on grammar, which could better be learnt better at school, as is illustrated in Extract 17.

(17) (---) se on kuitenkin semmone kielioppipainotteine ehkä se yo-kirjoitus ja niitä kielioppijuttuja ehkä sit koulussa enemmän tulee ku muualla sitte, kyllä ne varmaan koulussa paremmin (---)

Concerning the *rules*, learning English beyond the classroom had been fairly easy for Roope, because the language was present everywhere and, consequently, he could not avoid learning it. At the same time, using English beyond the classroom was more demanding than at school, because it was more spontaneous, but something that he could learn a lot from. Beyond the classroom he used the theoretical issues learnt at school, such as grammar and most of the vocabulary. Extract 18 illustrates Roope's beliefs about how learning English beyond the classroom differed from learning in the classroom:

(18) no just tietenki sillei et ei oo niin paljo teoriajuttuja ni siinä just niinku käytetään niitä mitä on koulussa oppinut, (---), pitää ite tehä enemmän, tavallaan, niinku just siinä puhumisessa, että ku ei mitään tiettyä tilannetta vaikka niinku koulussa et nyt puhukaa tästä vaan pitää niinku ite puhua mistä nyt sattuu sitten puhumaankaan, se on ehkä vähän semmosta vaikeempaa, mut samalla siinä ehkä oppii sitten paljon.

Roope's *goals* included the need for English in the working life and in personal life when communicating with friends and travelling abroad, and his *object* was to achieve language skills which were as good as possible. He was planning to work in the field of business or communication, and was ready to put effort into learning to understand and write English in the future, however, speaking was most difficult. He had not yet consciously put much effort into learning English beyond the classroom in order to reach his goals, apart from sometimes watching TV shows without subtitles for the purpose of learning.

The *community* included teachers, sister, parents and foreign friends. Roope was pleased with the support he had received from his teachers: they had encouraged the students to learn and get into situations where they might need English, but not interfered too much with what they should do in their free time. Roope's parents wanted him to learn English and his sister had given advice for the matriculation exam. With foreign friends he had had opportunities to use English. All his Finnish friends had positive attitudes towards English, and, actually, many of them considered learning at school too theoretical and longed for more speaking, and, thus, preferred independent learning. Roope did not have any specific idols who would have had an effect on his learning, but he had read the lives of interesting sportsmen in English in Wikipedia. When looking at the *division of labour*, Roope took the initiative, and, the community not only supported but also made Roope to use and encounter the language: communicating with foreign friends forced him to use English and his sister had asked him to play Alias, for instance.

In sum, Roope's activity system in learning English beyond the classroom can be illustrated as in Figure 6.

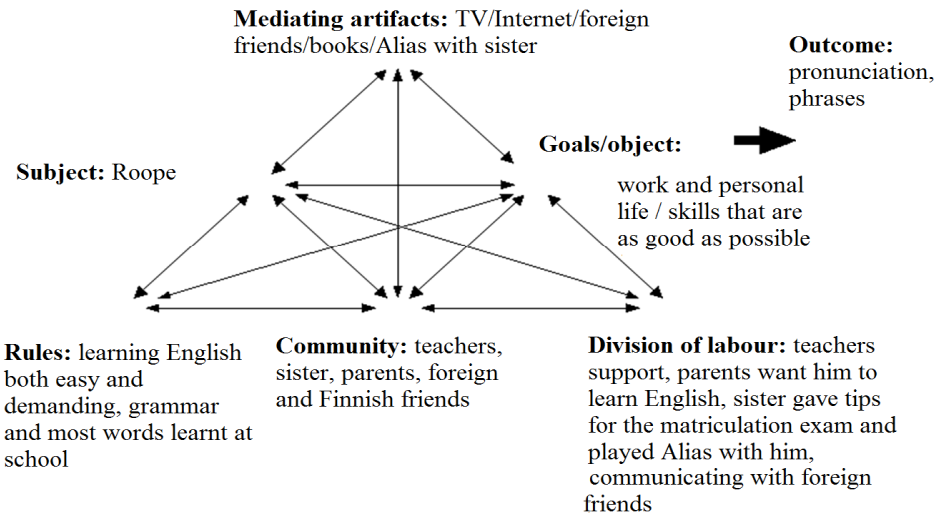

Figure 6. Illustration of Roope's activity system in learning English beyond the classroom

The different components of the activity system supported Roope's learning beyond the classroom, but *secondary contradictions* could be observed between *the mediating artifacts* and *the outcome of learning*. Roope had used and encountered English in many ways, but he was uncertain of what he had learnt for the matriculation examination, because it had mostly focused on grammar. In addition, he did not value his experience of writing English on the Internet as learning.

Activity system in learning Swedish beyond the classroom

Roope had seldom encountered or used Swedish in his everyday life, perhaps once in a half year and mostly as a recipient of the language. He did not usually speak or write Swedish, but sometimes heard it on TV or read it on the Internet. The situations where he had spoken Swedish were limited to the trips to Sweden, but he had used English there as well. He had written Swedish beyond the classroom only once: when writing a comment to a Swedish person on the Internet. In Finland, he had not often encountered the Swedish language and had never been asked for the directions in Swedish, for instance. However, he had played the Alias game and tried to speak Swedish with his sister. In order to prepare for the matriculation examination, Roope had watched

cartoons in Swedish. Altogether, Roope pointed out that the Internet and TV were the only *mediating artifacts* through which he had actually learnt Swedish, because his contacts with Swedish were scarce otherwise, even though he had Swedish-speaking relatives, for instance, as he describes in Extract 19.

(19) ruotsinkielisiä lehtiä saatavilla mut ei oo tullu hommattua sellasia, eikä oo mitään kavereita tai sukua, no sukulaisia ois, suomenruotsalaisia, mut ei niitten kanssa oo hirveesti tullu oltua, ja nekin kuitenkin osaa suomea ni ei oo tullu puhuttuakaan ja semmosta, ei vaan semmosia tilanteitakaan oikeen tuu.

Consequently, Roope felt that the *outcome* of learning beyond the classroom had not been significant, mostly some separate words or phrases that he had been able to make use of in the conversation exercises at school, and he was also doubtful about his learning for the matriculation examination. However, he had learnt reading comprehension by reading Swedish web pages and comments on YouTube videos. He had also improved his listening skills by watching cartoons, and, learnt about the culture when visiting Sweden and by watching TV and news. Concerning the matriculation examination, his sister had advised him to read grammar and prepare for the themes, such as visiting a doctor, which may be in the assignments in the exam.

Thus, with regard to the *rules*, Roope felt that he had learnt almost everything about the Swedish language at school, all grammar and most words, for instance. Extract 20 shows what Roope answered when asked about what he had learnt at school:

(20) no, about kaiken. ((naurahdus)) ei sitä hirveesti oppinu siellä muualla, ni varmaan ne kaikki on melkein koulussa tullut, tietenki kaikki kielioppi ja suurin osa sanoista. (---)

Roope regarded learning Swedish beyond the classroom as rather demanding, as there had not often been situations where he would have needed the Swedish language. However, he pointed out that if one wanted to learn it, there would be no obstacles for it, as materials in Swedish were easily available, but he had not regarded learning beyond the classroom as important for himself and, therefore, he had not put much effort into it. Extracts 21 and 22 illustrate these beliefs:

(21) no aika, vaikeeta, sillä tavalla ku semmosia tilanteita ei tuu hirveesti missä sitä tarttis mutta sitä vois siis opiskella jos sitä haluis, ei sille oo mitään esteitä, ei se sillä tavalla oo vaikeeta, jos sitä vaan haluais opiskella, ite ei oo ehkä niin tärkeenä nähnyt sitä sitten. et sitä ois ruvennu sen enempää.

(22) (---) ku sitä suomessa kuitenki jossain päin puhutaanki ja suomalaiset kaikki on sitä jonku verran opiskellu ja jokainen sitä jonku verran osaa ni sitten semmosia lehtiä ja kirjoja ois helposti saatavilla ja on ruotsinkielinen kanava ja radiokanavia et kyllä sitä voi niinku kuulla ja lukea ja vaikka mitä jos haluaa.

Roope was not sure about whether he would need the Swedish language in the future, but he thought that it would be useful when travelling in Sweden and that being able to speak Swedish would make a good impression in the workplace if there were Swedish-speaking people. He also said that people pay attention to the mark in Swedish in the matriculation examination, but was not sure whether it meant that the Swedish language was needed. Extract 23 illustrates how Roope was uncertain of the role of the Swedish language in his future, even though he could see the benefits of it as well.

(23) jaa, paha sanoo, saattaahan sitä jossain, kyllähän siitä jotain hyötyä on että sitä on käynyt (---) yo-numero katotaan mutta eihän se nyt periaatteessa tarkoita et sitä tarttis missään mutta jos nyt joskus tulee taas ruotsissa käytyä kyllä sitä siellä ehkä tarttee ja voihan sitä jossain kyllähän ehkä jonkinnäköisen vaikutuksen jos sitä osaa jos vaikka ois ruotsinkielisiä ihmisiä jollain työpaikalla tai jossain ni osais sitten niien kanssa puhuu ruotsia. ei siitä varmaan haittakaan oo mutta ei sitä oikeen voi tietää tuleeko semmosia tilanteita.

Roope's *object* was to get good "basic" language skills in Swedish and he did not aim at a "perfect" command of Swedish, but he pointed out that he wanted to know it better than Finns on average. He had not put conscious effort into learning Swedish beyond the classroom in order to reach his goals, because he had felt that he did not have energy for it, in addition to learning at school.

The *community* included sister, parents and teachers. His sister and parents had been the most important people in learning Swedish beyond the classroom. His parents had encouraged Roope, and he had had a chance to ask for advice from them and his sister. Teachers had also encouraged him. Some of his friends were not interested in learning Swedish, whereas the others were, but, he had not practiced Swedish with his friends.

To sum up, Roope's activity system in learning Swedish beyond the classroom is illustrated in Figure 7.

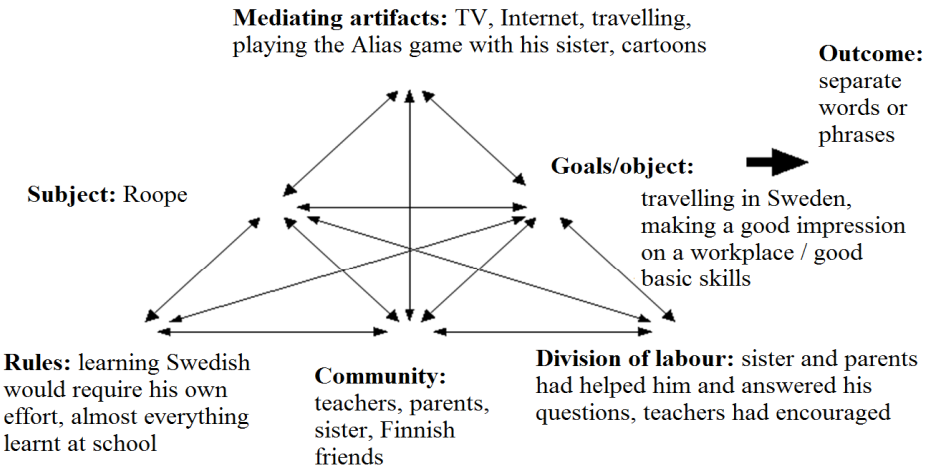

Figure 7. Illustration of Roope's activity system in learning Swedish beyond the classroom

There were *secondary contradictions* within Roope's activity system in learning Swedish beyond the classroom. Firstly, there was a secondary contradiction between the use of *mediating artifacts* and the *rules of learning*, because Roope knew that there were many mediating artifacts available for learning Swedish, but he had not made use of them, because learning Swedish beyond the classroom had not been important for him and he had not had energy for it, in addition to schoolwork. Secondly, there was a secondary contradiction between the *mediating artifacts* and the *outcome of learning*, because even though Roope had prepared for the matriculation examination beyond the classroom, he was doubtful about whether he had learnt anything.

Comparison of the activity systems in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom

With regard to the use of *mediating artifacts*, Roope had had significantly more encounters with English than Swedish. He knew that there would be affordances to use

Swedish, but he had not actively made use of them. It was probably because he had not considered it important and learning Swedish at school had caused enough work. Secondly, in both languages, TV and the Internet were employed. However, in English, the Internet was used more for communicative purposes, even though Roope was aware of the opportunities for communicating in Swedish as well. Altogether, the encounters with English enabled producing the language, especially, writing, whereas in Swedish the scarce encounters were mostly receptive, reading or listening. However, there were not many opportunities for talking either of the languages, and, as a consequence, Roope found speaking difficult in both languages.

Concerning the *outcome* of learning, Roope felt that in Swedish he had only learnt some separate words and phrases, whereas he pointed out that he had learnt the pronunciation in English especially from TV, not from school and, thus, the learning beyond the classroom had been significant for him. However, in both English and Swedish, Roope was doubtful about the outcome of learning concerning the matriculation examination, which was probably due to his beliefs about the importance of grammar in the examination.

In addition, there were differences in the *goals* and *objects*. Roope regarded English as important for his future career, whereas he was not sure of the need for Swedish, even though he did not consider it totally useless either. In addition, the object was set higher in English. What was in common was that in both languages Roope denied that he would intentionally put much effort into learning beyond the classroom in order to reach his goals. However, Roope pointed out that he studied also German, but English and Swedish were his strongest languages. Thus, he basically had a positive attitude towards learning them also beyond the classroom, because the fact that he could make progress in them promoted his motivation, as is illustrated in Extract 24.

(24) enkku ja ruotsi periaatteessa on niinku aika helppoja kieliä, senkin takia niitä vois niitä niinku opetella tälleen koulun ulkopuolella itekin (---) kuitenkin ruotsissa ja enkussa ois niinku mahollisuuksia kehittyä niinku aika hyvin.

In sum, Roope had encountered and used English in many ways beyond the classroom, for entertainment and communication, even though he had seldom spoken it. He felt that

learning beyond the classroom had been useful, for example, for learning pronunciation, but he can mostly be characterised as a user of the language, Concerning Swedish, Roope can be characterised as a learner when he was preparing for the matriculation examination, whereas he usually was a recipient of the language, who did not often actively search for opportunities to use and encounter Swedish.

6.3 Janita: more confidence in skills in Swedish than in English

The third case to be discussed is Janita, who differed from the other cases, because she had a more positive attitude to Swedish than to English. Her latest mark in English had been 8 and in Swedish 9. She had taken the test of Swedish as part of the matriculation examination the autumn the interview was conducted and was going to take the test of English the following spring. She had more confidence in her skills in Swedish than in English (see Table 5). She emphasised her different attitudes and beliefs considering these two languages, as is illustrated by Extract 25.

(25) (---) mul on jotenkiin nii eri suhteet näihin kieliin että se on ihan hassua.

Especially, listening comprehension was more difficult in English than in Swedish. In addition, she had more courage in speaking Swedish than speaking English: even though pronunciation was not difficult in English, it was sometimes demanding to express herself spontaneously.

Table 5. Janita's self-evaluation of her skills

	Speaking	**Writing**	**Listening**	**Reading**
English	**8**	**8**	**6 or 7**	**8**
Swedish	**9**	**8**	**9**	**9**

Activity system in learning English beyond the classroom

Janita had not used English much beyond the classroom: primarily, when talking with her godson's father and in connection with her hobby, dancing. She had at least once been asked for the directions in the street in English, but, usually, she had not faced situations like that, and, as a reason for that she provided the location of her home in Central Finland, as can be seen from Extract 26.

(26) kuitenkin täällä ku ollaan keskisuomessa ni ei täällä välttämättä tuu niin helposti, ei sekä ruotsin että englanninkielisiä ((tilanteita arkielämässä))

Furthermore, Janita had seldom read any kinds of texts in English, but she had sometimes watched movies with English subtitles and listened to music. In addition, she had occasionally chatted with her foreign friends on the Internet in English. Altogether, the situations where Janita had used English had been scarce, but they had enabled her to be both a producer and recipient of the language.

When looking at the *outcome* of learning beyond the classroom, Janita felt that she had not learnt much. She compared herself with her friends, who had learnt more English in connection with their free time activities, watching movies and playing computer games. She described how English had always been difficult for her, because her teacher in grades 7-9 had not focused on teaching the weaker students. As a result, Janita had lagged behind in learning English, and in grades 10-12 she had been forced to study hard in order to keep up with the others by reading revision books and rehearsing with her little sister, for instance. She had also bought a grammar book. Thus, also the books which were connected with school served as *mediating artifacts* in her learning beyond the classroom. In addition, Janita was doubtful about whether she had learnt anything for the matriculation examination because it was more focused on the theoretical aspects of the language, which were studied at school more. However, she thought that listening to music had been good practice for the listening comprehension test, and, when practicing reading comprehension part she had been able to remember some words from songs.

Even though Janita felt that she had not learnt much English, she recognised that she had learnt pronunciation and expressions which were meaningful for her: necessary words connected with dancing and everyday language and slang from movies. She had learnt words the most by listening to music. At school, she had been able to make use of the vocabulary in listening comprehension exercises, for example. Altogether, she appreciated the situations where she had learnt something, and, they had created positive emotions, as Extracts 27 and 28 illustrate.

(27) tietysti aina sillon kun joutuu kohtaamaan jonkun kanssa ja puhumaan englantia ni totta kai sillon niissä vähän aina kuitenki oppii sillei.

(28) ku on kuullut jossain elokuvissa ku jotkut puhuu ni saattanut napata jotain sanoja siitä. tai sitten kuunnellut kun ne tanssinopettajat kertoo meille niinku jotain kehoon liittyviä juttuja ni niistäkin on saanut aina semmosen hyvän kun on ymmärtänyt mitä ne puhuu ni se on ollut tosi kiva.

However, when Janita was asked about where she had learnt to know what she could in English, she mentioned situations where she had noticed her own limits, as can be seen from Extract 29. It also illustrated how the insecurity of her skills seemed to be an important factor in her learning, and, how she felt that she should put more effort into learning.

(29) ehkä niissä tilanteissa ku ei ymmärrä ni muistaa taas että omat taidot ei oo niin hyvät tai että joku asia jää epäselväksi ni se aina harmittaa, pitäs enemmän ite opiskella.

Janita's beliefs about her poor skills in English can also be seen in the *rules* of her activity system: learning English beyond the classroom was rather difficult. She felt that she had not been active enough in searching opportunities for learning, which, in turn, depended on her feeling of not being good at English. She felt that her free time activities did not support learning English, as she did not like playing games, watching movies or reading newspapers in English. She pointed out that she should start watching movies, for instance, in order to prepare for the matriculation examination. Extract 30 illustrates these thoughts:

(30) no se on aika vaikeeta. tai se tietysti riippuu paljon siitä miten aktiivinen ite on mutta ku mä en oo koskaan joutunu tai en oo koskaan tykänny pelata pelejä missä on englantia tai tykänny lukee

lehtiä tai mitään just sen takia ku tuntuu että ite ei oo niin hyvä englannissa niin sitte on se niinku aika vaikeeta ainakin mulle ollut mut jos ite ois aktiivinen ja kattois elokuvia ja kaikkee mitä varmasti pitää ruveta tekemään nyt ku keväällä on kirjoitukset ni oppis sitäki kautta (---)

At school Janita had learnt grammar and a great deal of vocabulary, such as words connected with art and science. She regarded the school context as the primary context for learning: important things had been learnt at school, whereas everyday and practical language had been learnt beyond the classroom, as is evident from Extract 31:

(31) no se on ehkä enemmän semmosta arkipäivästä ja käytännöllistä mitä oppii koulun ulkopuolella ku koulussa käydään just nää kieliopit ja mikä on tärkeetä mutta se on enemmän sitten semmosta elämää mitä oppii koulun ulkopuolella.

Janita's *goals* were connected with her need for English in the future. She was interested in politics and influencing other people. Her *object* was to learn to speak English effortlessly and naturally, without stressing about it. Therefore she felt that she should put more effort into learning beyond the classroom, for example, by watching movies without subtitles or with subtitles in English, or by taking part into international activities where she would a chance to speak English. However, she pointed out that there were time constraints as well, and learning English required more patience than learning Swedish.

The *community* included Janita's godson's father, Finnish friends, teachers, parents and visiting dance teachers. The most important people for Janita had been her godson's father, and a Finnish friend of hers who had sent her text messages in English in order to give her practice in the language. Altogether, Finnish friends supported her learning in many ways: they had watched a movie together because of the language, her friends had helped her with her homework and a friend of hers had translated lyrics for her. Her family, in turn, had not especially encouraged her in learning English, but Janita thought that there had not been a need for that either, because she had always been determined herself. The teachers at school had encouraged students to learn English also beyond the classroom, but, had not given any concrete instructions. Instead, the text books often provided recommendations about interesting books or movies. However, Janita pointed out that more support from the school might be useful, and, teachers could suggest

translating lyrics or watching movies which have language that is easy to understand, as it was difficult to get started with movies which included special vocabulary, as is described in Extract 32.

(32) oishan se ihan hyödyllistä jos vaikka opettajat enemmän kannustais vaikka et lähde liikkeelle näin, yritä suomentaa biisejä, tai katot näitä helppoja elokuvia koska se on vaikeeta lähteä niinku katotaanpas harry potteria ku sit ei ymmärrä sanastoo, kaikkee tylypahkaa ja mitä kaikkee muuta siellä on.

In addition, she mentioned the language workshops organised at her school, where students had an opportunity to get help with their homework or do listening comprehension exercises, or anything that may promote their own learning. Janita had not yet participated in it, but thought it might be useful as well.

To conclude, Janita's activity system in learning English beyond the classroom is characterised in Figure 8.

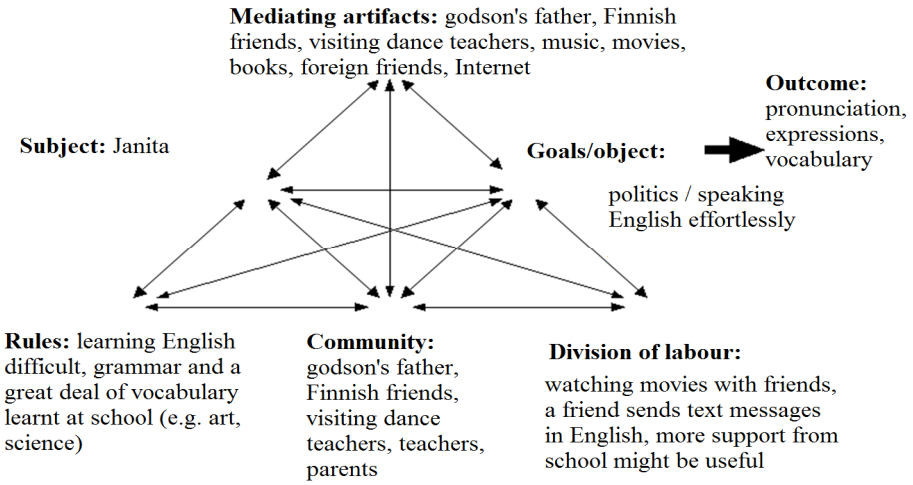

Figure 8. Illustration of Janita's activity system in learning English beyond the classroom

Contradictions were identified. There was *a primary inner contradiction* within Janita as the *subject* of the activity system: she recognised the importance of learning English beyond the classroom, but she did not put enough effort into it, because she felt that

English was difficult for her. In addition, she felt that her free time activities did not support her learning, even though she had visiting dance teachers, her godson's father and friends as social resources. There was also a primary inner contradiction in how Janita perceived the support from her teachers at school: they had encouraged her, but, perhaps, in a wrong way, because they had employed too demanding materials. In addition, there was *a secondary contradiction* between the *outcome* of learning English for the matriculation examination and the nature of *mediating artifacts*, because Janita found the examination theoretical and, therefore, learning at school was the most useful way of preparing for it, instead of preparing for it on her own.

Activity system in learning Swedish beyond the classroom

When Janita was asked if she had used or encountered Swedish beyond the classroom, she mentioned, at first, the location of her home in Central Finland as a factor which had restricted learning, and, especially, opportunities for speaking. However, she had had contacts with Swedish-speaking people already since she was small, as her childhood neighbours had been Swedish-speaking. Moreover, her participation in the youth council in her home town and her hobby where they sometimes had had Swedish-speaking dance teachers had enabled her to have contacts with Swedish-speaking people about four times a year. In addition, she had Swedish-speaking friends in Finland, whose Facebook status updates she had read about once in a week or two. Furthermore, she had sometimes ended up watching TV shows, such as BUU-klubben on FST5 and listening to the radio, YLE Vega. She had also travelled in Sweden. In order to prepare for the matriculation examination, she had watched the Moomins, listened to Swedish music and sometimes talked Swedish with her Finnish-speaking friends. Extracts 33, 34 and 35 illustrate Janita's contacts with the Swedish language:

(33) (---) tuntuu et ku jyväskylä on niin keskellä kaikkee et täällä ei tuu niin puhuttua ei mitään venäjää tai ruotsia, mutta ehkä kun mä kuulun nuorisovaltuustoon, ni sitten meil on semmosia tapaamisia mis on myös suomenruotsalaisia. (---)

(34) (---) meillä käy just noita (---) vierailevia opettajia niin nekin saattaa siinä keskenään puhuu ruotsia ja siinä tulee ymmärrettyä ja välillä voi itekin kommentoida jotain. on mulla yks suomenruotsalainen kaveri joka saattaa niinku just heittää jotain jag saknar dig, ja ite on sillee joo, kuin myös.

(35) (---) ehkä joskus radiosta ku selaa kanavia saattaa tulla vaikka joku yle vega tai just ku kattoo jotain vaikka BUU-klubbenia välillä,vaan sattuu kanava päälle (---)

Thus, Janita was mostly a recipient of the language, as her encounters with Swedish involved mostly listening and reading. However, she wrote to her friends on the Internet and also spoke sometimes, even though not often.

As Janita had used the Swedish language more than English beyond the classroom, she felt that she had also learnt it more. Moreover, she had had a better teacher in Swedish than in English in grades 7-9, and, therefore, her learning had been effective right from the beginning. In addition, she felt that everybody was supposed to know English, whereas in Swedish some students were weaker, and, having a good command of Swedish gave her confidence.

When looking at the *outcome* in greater detail, Janita had learnt especially everyday vocabulary from Facebook profile updates and from TV series. Concerning the receptive language skills, she had learnt reading comprehension by reading Aftonbladet or other newspapers when travelling in Stockholm, and, by comparing the safety instructions in Swedish and Finnish on the cruises to Stockholm, and listening comprehension mostly from TV, the radio or songs in Swedish. Furthermore, she had learnt about the culture in Sweden by visiting Stockholm and by watching the news. In productive skills, she had not had many opportunities for speaking, but writing with Finnish Swedish-speaking friends on the Internet had been useful because she had received instant feedback on her production (Extract 36):

(36) no välillä just jos vaikka kirjoittelee suomenruotsalaisten kavereiden kanssa ja miettii miten joku asia sanotaan ruotsiks (---) kyl se toinen aina ymmärtää ja sanoo sitten suomeks hei toi ei menny oikein, pitäs olla tolleen noin. ehkä niissä sitte on oppinu enite. kirjoittelee sellaisia pieniä arkipäiväisiä juttuja ni niissä.

Encounters with Swedish had further reinforced her confidence in her skills in Swedish. She had often remembered words in Swedish, but not in English. At school, she had been able to make use of the vocabulary, such as *youth council* and other difficult words in Swedish learnt beyond the classroom. Concerning the matriculation examination, Janita had learnt especially listening comprehension, words and phrases, and, she felt

that especially the fact that she had heard Swedish beyond the classroom had helped her in the listening comprehension test.

The *rules* for the learning were formed by beliefs that Janita had about ease or difficulty of learning Swedish beyond the classroom and by what had been learnt at school. Janita said that because English was present everywhere, learning it would be easier than learning Swedish. However, she emphasised that in both languages, English and Swedish, much depended on her own effort: if she wanted to learn the languages it would be possible, even though encountering and using Swedish was more difficult in Central Finland than in the capital region (Extract 37):

(37) kyllä nyt ruotsiakin jos ite viiittii vähän lukea tai kuunnella ni kyllä sitä oppii, mut samahan se on englannissakin, jos ite viittis jotain tehä ni sitte oppis mutta on se nyt varsinkin täällä keskisuomessa niin paljon hankalampaa ku vaikka pääkaupunkiseudulla missä siihen kuitenkin törmää päivittäin. että että. siellä kuitenkin kaikki kyltitkin on monella kielellä mutta täällä ku ei.

Janita had learnt practical and everyday aspects of Swedish beyond the classroom, whereas at school she had learnt grammar and things that were necessary in the matriculation examination. She had also learnt at school idioms and phrases which she had not realised otherwise, as they were different in different languages.

The *goals* were connected with her desire to use the Swedish language also in the future and her *object* was to get language skills which enabled her to manage in everyday life. She felt that she would manage well also in an area where the skills in Swedish that were above average were needed. In order to reach her goals and object, she had tried to maintain her skills in Swedish also after the matriculation examination by reading newspapers on the Internet, for example. Extract 38 highlights also the importance of the matriculation examination:

(38) (---) varsinkin nyt ku ei enää lukiossa oo ruotsia, ni koittaa pitää kuitenkin kielitaitoa vähän yllä (---) et ny ei kaikki meee hukkaan mitä on päntänny syksyä varten hirveen innokkaana (---)

Janita's community consisted of her Swedish-speaking friends, childhood neighbours, parents, sister, Finnish friends and teachers. The most important people had been Janita's Finnish Swedish-speaking friends and her childhood neighbours who had spoken Swedish as well. Her teachers had for instance encouraged the students to get a job in Sweden via the Nordjobb-organisation. Janita's father had not studied Swedish at school and sometimes pointed out that Swedish as a school subject was not necessary, but it had not had an effect on Janita who liked the Swedish language. Janita, her sister and mother had sometimes also used Swedish as a secret language. Janita had talked Swedish with her Finnish-speaking friends in order to practice for the matriculation examination, but otherwise their attitudes varied largely.

In sum, Janita's activity system in learning Swedish beyond the classroom is characterised in Figure 9.

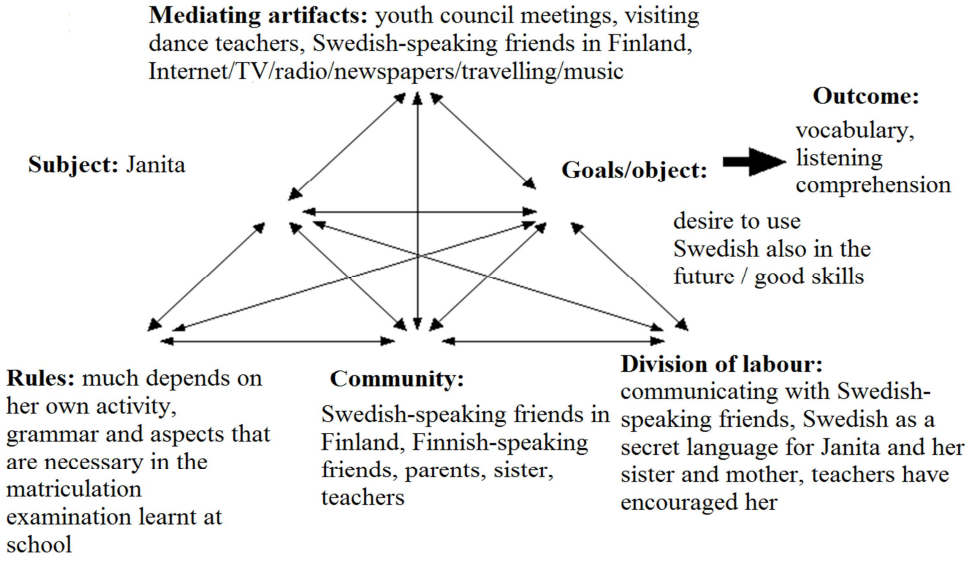

Figure 9. Janita's activity system in learning Swedish beyond the classroom

There were no observable *contradictions*. Even though Janita pointed out that much depended on her own activity, her contacts with Swedish-speaking people engaged her in learning Swedish. Furthermore, her confidence in her skills supported her learning.

Comparison of the activity systems in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom

As Janita herself pointed out as well, her perceptions of learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom differed. Firstly, the most important difference was that Janita had better confidence in her skills in Swedish than in English. Her judgement of her skills in English was based on her experiences at school and on comparing herself with her friends. The discussion in the media about the usefulness of playing online games for learning English could be observed in Janita's beliefs: that she had not played games like many of her friends was one of the reasons why learning English had been difficult for her. Furthermore, the situations where she had encountered English had made her recognise her limitations, whereas the encounters with Swedish had reinforced her confidence in her skills. She also emphasised the location on her home in central Finland as a factor that hindered learning in both languages. However, importantly, in both languages, she emphasised that much depended on her own effort and will.

Secondly, Janita felt that she had learnt more Swedish than English beyond the classroom. However, in both languages, she had learnt especially vocabulary that was needed in everyday life or that was somehow connected with her interests. At school, in turn, she had learnt grammar and things that were necessary in the matriculation examination.

Thirdly, the *community* supported Janita's learning in both languages, however, the support from the Finnish-speaking friends and from home was even stronger for the English language. For instance, her friends had helped her in learning English in many ways, but in Swedish, the support from Swedish-speaking friends had been more important. She had also encountered negative attitudes towards Swedish from her friends, as is evident from Extract 39.

(39) (---) osa on niinku sitä just et kävin pakolliset kurssit, keskiarvo on vitonen ja en varmasti puhu sanaakaan enää. Just se mun kaveri joka pistää aina englanninkielisiä tekstiviestejä ni vaikka mä vastaisin sille ruotsiks ni ei varmaan vastais enää mulle sen jälkeen, on niinku silleen et ruotsia EI, EI, EI, ei todellakaan halua puhua. (---)

In sum, Janita had used English beyond the classroom both as a producer and recipient, but the situations had been scarce, and because she did not have confidence in her skills, she had often not actively searched for opportunities to learn. She actually wanted to become a more active learner of English. In Swedish, in turn, Janita had confidence in her skills, and she used Swedish because of her contacts. In both languages, Janita was both a learner and a user, because she needed the languages in her activities, but also intentionally aimed at learning. However, altogether, she had used the Swedish language more than English.

6.4 Perttu: English on the Internet and listening to Swedish-speaking relatives

The fourth case to be discussed is Perttu. His latest mark in English had been 8 and in Swedish 8. He was going to take the test of English as part of the matriculation examination the following spring, but was not going to take the test of Swedish at all. He had more confidence in his skills in English than in Swedish (see Table 6). His strongest skills in both languages were in listening comprehension, partly, because he had listened to English and Swedish also in his free time. Reading comprehension was difficult in Swedish, because there were a great deal of words he did not know, and, also in English it was sometimes difficult for him to understand special vocabulary. Concerning the productive skills, he felt that he was able to produce basically understandable written text in Swedish, even though he pointed out that he did not have "an ear for language" in the same way as in English, and, consequently, he sometimes made grammatical errors. Speaking in English was fairly natural, except if he had not spoken it for a while. He pointed out that his spoken Swedish was not as rich as his spoken English.

Table 6. Perttu's self-evaluation of his skills

	Speaking	**Writing**	**Listening**	**Reading**
English	**8**	**8**	**9**	**8**
Swedish	**6 or 7**	**7**	**8**	**7**

Perttu's activity system in learning English beyond the classroom

Perttu had used and encountered English beyond the classroom in ways that had enabled him mostly to be a recipient of the language, but sometimes also a producer. The Internet had been the most important *mediating artifact.* On the Internet, Perttu had used English a couple of times a week by following forum discussions and reading the news that had not been published in Finnish. In addition, he had spoken English with his foreign friends when he had met them. Even though he did not use English every day, he had heard it much on TV. He had also watched movies in English.

The *outcome* of learning English beyond the classroom included especially listening comprehension and conversational skills. Perttu was sure that the fact that he had listened to English a great deal also beyond the classroom would help him in the matriculation examination, and, it had already been useful in listening exercises at school. In fact, Perttu felt that he had learnt listening comprehension mostly beyond the classroom, instead of school, as is evident from Extract 40:

(40) no joo kyllä ainaki toi kuuntelupuoli melkein kokonaan opittu jossain muualla ku koulussa, justiin television ja tämmösten kautta. (---)

The most useful mediating artifacts in learning listening comprehension had been TV and movies. Learning listening comprehension had often occurred without even noticing it, as is illustrated in Extract 41:

(41) varmaan just sillee huomaamatta jostain elokuvista ja muista, sieltä on tullut oikeestaan se kuuntelupuoli vaan ehkä kaikkein vahvimmin. (---)

In addition, reading the news on the Internet had been useful for improving reading comprehension, also in the matriculation examination, and he had learnt to know English-speaking culture from TV and other media. He had also visited London twice. He had practiced his productive skills when talking with his foreign friends and from writings on discussion forums. Communicating with friends had also offered him

opportunities to test what he could do with the language. Altogether, Perttu felt that it had been useful in all courses and tests at school that he had learnt English also independently.

Concerning the *rules*, Perttu pointed out that if he wanted to learn English properly beyond the classroom it would be rather challenging, because there would not be support from the teacher, as he describes in Extract 42:

.

(42) no varmaan just jos haluu oikeesti opetella tai oppia ni se voi olla oikeesti aika vaikeeta. sitä ei oo periaatteessa kukaan opettamassa ku sitä pitäs ehkä itelleen osata opettaa. se voi olla vähän haastavampaa ku koulussa. kyl sitä tietysti helpommin oppii ku joku opettaa ne asiat mitä pitää oppia.

However, beyond the classroom he had had a chance to learn what he wanted and employ learning methods not usually employed at school, such as watching movies. Learning at school, in turn, was mostly centred on learning theoretical aspects: structures and rules, which had not been learnt beyond the school merely by "an ear for language". In addition, at school he had learnt reading comprehension and vocabulary as well.

Regarding *goals* and *objects*, Perttu was sure that he would need English in his career, probably in customer service, and in his studies, and his object had been set high as he wanted his English to be on the same level with his Finnish. Extract 43 illustrates Perttu's objects and goals:

(43) no mä haluun et se on semmosta sujuvaa ja justiin semmosta et sitä voi vaikka puhuu samalla tavalla ku suomeekin. et ois hyvä hallita kaks kieltä silleen, vaikka just suomi ja sitten englanti yhtä vahvasti, että voi puhuu kummalla haluaa

Perttu felt that in order to reach his object it would be necessary to put effort into learning English also beyond the classroom by using it always when it was possible. He also mentioned that achieving his goals at school, as well, had demanded a great deal of

work also beyond the classroom, and in this way, he connected learning beyond the classroom with learning at school.

The *community* included Perttu's teachers, Finnish friends and foreign friends. Perttu regarded his teachers as the most important people in his learning of English beyond the classroom, because they had actively encouraged students to learn also in their free time and especially to make use of the possibilities on the Internet. They had, indeed, emphasised that it was crucial to get in touch with the English language also beyond the classroom, as Extract 44 shows.

(44) kyllä ne aina painottaa että se on oikeestaan se asian ydin että se ei jää pelkästään niinku kouluun se opiskelu vaan pitää muuallakin opiskella, niin paljon ku mahollista.

Perttu's Finnish friends also had targets set high in learning English and considered good skills in English as extremely useful, even though they had not practiced English together with Perttu, whereas with foreign friends he had had opportunities to speak as well. Altogether, the community highlighted the importance of learning also beyond the classroom, and thus, supported Perttu when he took initiative in order to use the language.

In sum, Perttu's activity system in learning English beyond the classroom can be characterised as in Figure 10.

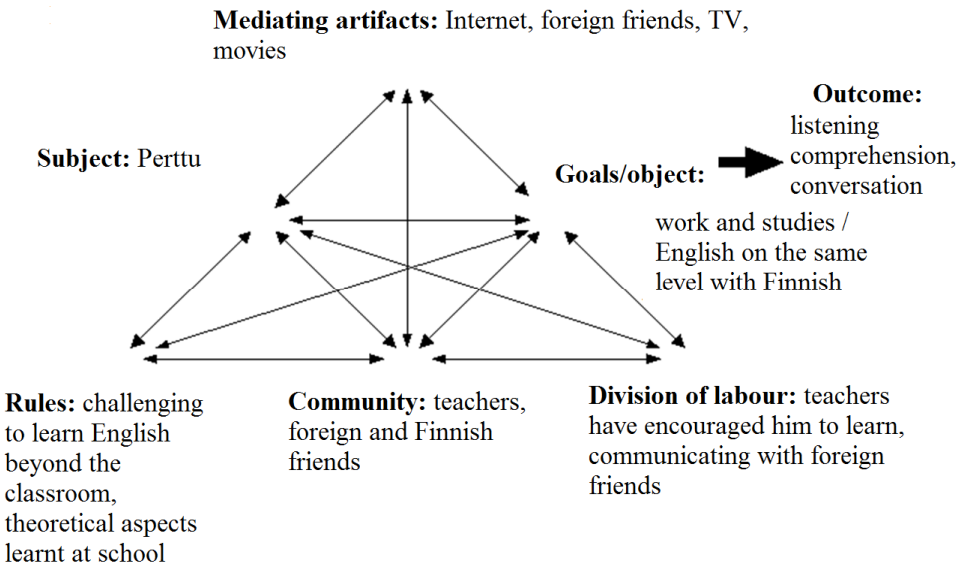

Figure 10. Perttu's activity system in learning English beyond the classroom

No significant *contradictions* were identified. The components of the activity system seemed to support Perttu's learning beyond the classroom, and he had motivation for it, as he considered it necessary in order to reach his goals, even though he pointed out that he had learnt English without even noticing it. However, he felt that learning English beyond the classroom alone would be difficult, and, thus, highlighted the importance of the school context as well.

Perttu's activity system in learning Swedish beyond the classroom

Perttu had not used the Swedish language much beyond the classroom, even though he had had a close contact with Swedish-speaking people: his mother's family was mostly Swedish-speaking. He had seldom met his relatives and when they had met the language of communication had been Finnish. In fact, Perttu was slightly regretful for not having learnt much Swedish through these contacts, as can be seen from Extract 45:

(45) se on ehkä vähän harmittanut mua että mul ois ollut periaatteessa valmiudet oppia aika hyvin ruotsia mutta se on aina vaan tullut suomea puhuttua ni en oo sitten oppinut sitä niin hyvin.

Even though Perttu had not used the Swedish language often, he had watched FST5 sometimes, because there had been good TV shows as well, and listened to the radio in

Swedish. In addition, he had listened to the stand-up comedians such as André Wickström. He had spoken Swedish when travelling in Sweden or in the Swedish-speaking areas of Finland. The *mediating artifacts* that Perttu had employed beyond the classroom were, thus, mostly the ones that enabled him to be a recipient of the language, a reader or a listener, and, in fact, he pointed out that he had probably never written anything in Swedish beyond the classroom.

Even though Perttu felt that he probably had not learnt Swedish as much as he could have, he regarded the contacts with his Swedish-speaking relatives as somewhat useful; actually, they were the only mediating artifacts through which he had actually learnt Swedish at all. He had learnt some new words and, especially listening comprehension when listening to his relatives speak. The Swedish-speaking relatives had also served as a gateway to the traditions of the Swedish-speaking population in Finland, such as the ways of celebrating Midsummer, whereas Perttu had learnt to know the culture in Sweden when travelling there. However, Perttu had not usually spoken Swedish with his relatives, and, Perttu also felt that he was not good at producing the language himself. He had spoken Swedish merely sometimes when travelling in Sweden or in the Swedish-speaking areas of Finland. To conclude, what Perttu had learnt the most beyond the classroom was listening, in particular, and, because he had heard Swedish also beyond the classroom, it had been fairly easy at school as well.

Perttu was not going to take the test of Swedish as part of the matriculation examination, but the thought that it would have motivated him to put more effort into learning Swedish if he had participated. He would have practiced, especially, writing and reading comprehension. However, he had not wanted to put more pressure on him with the examination, and he had chosen the subjects that suited him better. Extracts 46 and 47 illustrate how Perttu felt that he would enjoy the freedom of Swedish no longer being compulsory in the exam and how the exam would have demanded systematic preparation for it:

(46) no mä nyt ajattelin nauttia siitä vapaudesta, että sitä ei tarvii enää kirjoittaa. mulla löyty nyt sopivammat aineet mitä kirjottaa ni en aikonut enää ottaa ylimääräistä stressiä. että oisin vielä ruotsin lisännyt sinne.

(47) varmaan ne ois motivoinut ehkä sitten opettelemaan (---) , no se oin sit ollut sitä, et ois pitänyt ihan järjestelmällisesti lähteä opettelemaan. (---)

With regard to the *rules*, Perttu considered learning Swedish beyond the classroom rather difficult, because it would have demanded more contact with the Swedish-speaking relatives, and, in this way highlighted how strongly he connected learning the Swedish language with his relatives. He did not have the motivation for that, partly, because he was not going to take the test of Swedish as part of the matriculation examination, and, in addition, because he did not consider knowing Swedish necessary, as it was almost always possible to use English, as is evident from Extract 48:

(48) (---) en esimerkiks justiin kirjoita sitä ruotsia ni en tiiä niinku niin hirveesti mihin mää tulisin sitä tarviimaan. kyllähän niinku sitä nyt tietysti saattaa aina täällä suomessa tarvita joissain paikoissa mutta tietää että englannilla enimmäkseen pärjää ni ei oo vaan jotenkin tullut opeteltua puhumaan niin hyvin ruotsia.

In addition, learning Swedish beyond the classroom would have required systematic learning, because it was not as strongly present as English was. However, somewhat controversially, Perttu felt that compared with learning at school, learning Swedish beyond the classroom had usually occurred without conscious effort, as is demonstrated by Extract 49.

(49) no se on semmosta, ainakin mun osalta, aika tahatonta oppimista että niitten sukulaisten kautta vaikka just. ni sitä on vahingossa vaikka oppinut joitain juttuja. niinku vaik ei oo varta vasten lähtenyt opettelemaan mitään. koulussa se oppiminen on taas semmosta että opetellaan ku pitää opetella.

At school, by contrast, Perttu had learnt especially writing, vocabulary, and sentence structures that he would have not learnt otherwise.

When looking at the *goals* and *objects*, Perttu thought he would need Swedish only in some occasional situations in the future, and he could not imagine himself a situation where knowing English would not be enough. His *object* was to know the basics, and he did not have a need to know Swedish as well as English and Finnish. Learning Swedish beyond the classroom had not been necessary for reaching his goals, as he had been able to reach his goals, basic skills, already at school, as is evident from Extract 50:

(50) musta tuntuu et aika lailla tulee koulussa saavutettua ne tavotteet mitä on itelle asettanu että ei oikeestaan koulun ulkopuolella tuu hirveemmin mitään.

The *community* consisted of Perttu's teachers, family, Swedish-speaking relatives and Finnish-speaking friends. The most important people for Perttu had been his Swedish-speaking relatives. The teachers had encouraged students to learn Swedish beyond the classroom. At home, Perttu talked Finnish with his mother, and he did not know why he had not been spoken Swedish at home. However, Perttu did not consider it a problem, because he felt that he was not going to need the Swedish language in the future and he had already reached his goals as Extracts 51 and 52 show:

(51) kyllähän sitä kun nyt jälkeenpäin ajattelee ni oishan se ollut kiva oppia ihan pienestä pitäen sitä ruotsia puhumaan mut en mä nyt tiedä. nyt kun sitä, ei oo oppinu oikeestaan muuta kuin koulussa ite käyttämään ni, ei kyl tuu mieleenkään et enää tulevaisuudessa tarviis, ni en mä tiiä oikeestaan sitten.

(52) niin, ni ei sitä tulevaisuudessa tarvii oikeen sitä tukea enää, sitä kieltä ei täs tulevaisuudessa enää tarvii, osaan perusjutut ni se riittää mulle henkilökohtasesti.

Perttu pointed out that those of his friends who had taken the test in Swedish as part of the matriculation examination had been motivated to study it also beyond the classroom, nearly in the same way as English, as their goals had been set high. Perttu described that they had watched movies with the subtitles in Swedish and listened to radio stations in Swedish, as is illustrated in Extract 53:

(53) kaverit on aika paljon kirjottanut sitä ruotsia nytten ja kirjottaa vielä ens keväänä ni ne on tietysti esimerkiks, aika usein jos on vaikka autolla mennään johonkin, ni jotkut on sanonut että laita vaikka ruotsinkielinen kanava päälle ja muuta että niil on ollut enemmän motivaatioo opiskella sitä.

To conclude, Perttu's activity system in learning Swedish beyond the classroom is illustrated in Figure 11.

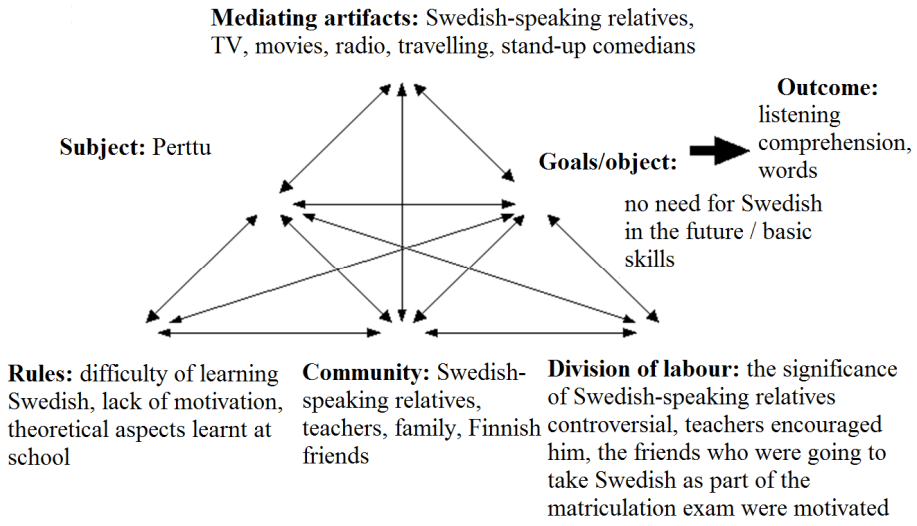

Figure 11. Perttu's activity system in learning English beyond the classroom

Some *contradictions* were identified. There was *a primary inner contradiction* within the *community* or the use of *mediating artifacts*, because Perttu had had contacts with Swedish-speaking people, but he had not made use of these. It can be speculated what had caused it: was it because of the community or because of Perttu's motivation. In addition, there was a primary inner contradiction within Perttu as the *subject* of the activity system: on the one hand, he had learnt Swedish without even noticing it, but, on the other hand, he felt that learning Swedish required a great deal of effort.

Comparison of the activity systems in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom

There were significant differences between Perttu's activity systems in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom. Firstly, the most obvious difference was in Perttu's *goals and objects* in the two languages: he considered English necessary in his future and wanted his English skills to equal his Finnish skills, whereas he thought that he would not need Swedish in the future, and that he had already reached his goal of achieving basic skills. This had led to better motivation in English than in Swedish, as Perttu himself put it (Extract 54):

(54) (---) mulla on ainakin henkilökohtasesti siihen ((englantiin)) paljon enemmän motivaatioo.

Consequently, Perttu felt it necessary to learn English also beyond the classroom in order to reach his goals, whereas the same was not necessary in Swedish. In addition, he highlighted that in English he had had to put effort into learning also beyond the classroom in order to reach the goals he had set him at school, but the same was not said about Swedish. Furthermore, Perttu was going to take the test of English as part of the matriculation examination, whereas not the test of Swedish. Perttu pointed out that if he had taken Swedish in the exam, he would have practiced Swedish more systematically beyond the classroom.

Secondly, when looking at the *mediating artifacts*, the Internet was employed to learn English, but in the connection with learning Swedish it was not mentioned at all. TV and movies were present in both languages. Importantly, the role of Perttu's relatives as a mediating artifact, as a social resource and as a part of the *community*, is difficult to estimate: on the one hand, the contacts had been rather scarce and the language which Perttu had used with his relatives had been Finnish, but, on the other hand Perttu regarded those contacts as useful for learning listening comprehension and culture. Perttu felt that he had not learnt Swedish as much as he could have, but it is difficult to say what it had depended on: was it because of the surrounding community had not provided him with any opportunities to learn or Perttu himself had not made use of the affordances, or possibly both.

Thirdly, in both languages, Perttu felt that beyond the classroom he had learnt mostly without intention of doing so. He had mostly not aimed at learning, but simply learnt in connection with watching interesting TV shows, for instance. However, in contrast, learning beyond the classroom was also rather challenging, but for different reasons in English and Swedish: in English, the support from the teacher was missing and in Swedish, he did not have the motivation for searching for more opportunities to learn the language. However, in both languages, he had mostly learnt listening comprehension beyond the classroom. He had been able to make use of that skill at school also. Concerning English, he pointed out that he had mostly learnt listening comprehension beyond the classroom, instead of school. However, in neither of these languages, especially in Swedish, had he had many opportunities for producing the language himself.

In conclusion, Perttu was mostly a user of language in both languages, even though he mostly used the languages receptively. He had mostly learnt as a by-product of his contacts with the languages, even though he especially in English also had searched for opportunities to learn. However, the greatest difference was in goals and objects, and as a consequence, in his motivation.

6.5 Netta: novels and music in English, stand-up comedies in Swedish

The fifth case to be looked at is Netta, whose latest mark in English had been 9 and in Swedish 8. However, Netta pointed out that the teacher had said that her skills in English would earn 10, but because she had not been active in the lessons the mark was 9. She had taken both the test of English and the test of Swedish as part of the matriculation examination the autumn the interview was conducted. Netta was confident with her skills in English, but more doubtful about her skills in Swedish (see Table 7). She felt that her pronunciation in English was good and, altogether, that she was good at speaking. Writing in English was, actually, more natural for her than writing in Finnish. In addition, she was able to understand even complicated texts. She trusted in her skills in listening as well: because she had listened to music a lot, she could distinguish between different accents and understand also fast speech. In Swedish, by contrast, especially reading was difficult, and, sometimes she had had to read texts, especially on difficult themes, in the textbooks, many times in order to understand. Furthermore, in writing, word order and conjugations were sometimes problematic. Listening was also more difficult than in English, because she had not heard Swedish much beyond the classroom.

Table 7. Netta’s self-evaluation of her skills

	Speaking	**Writing**	**Listening**	**Reading**
English	**9 or 10**	**9 or 10**	**9 or 10**	**9 or 10**
Swedish	**7 or 8**	**8**	**7 or 8**	**7**

Netta's activity system in learning English beyond the classroom

The mediating artifacts through which Netta had encountered English were mostly connected with entertainment: listening to music daily, watching movies and TV shows and reading books. In addition, she had written e-mails to her French friend in English about once or twice a week. She had not watched TV much, but the TV shows and movies she had watched had usually been in English. She had read almost all kinds of books in English, such as Harry Potter book series and books by Jane Austen. Netta's mediating artifacts, thus, mostly enabled practicing receptive skills.

When looking at the *outcome* of learning English beyond the classroom, Netta was positive about what she had learnt. Most importantly, she had learnt vocabulary by listening to music. She had also learnt writing from it the most, because she had read lyrics at the same time as she had been listening to music. Extract 55 shows what Netta answered when she was asked from where she had learnt writing the most:

(55) jaa, varmaan aika yhteisvaikutus, koska kun kuulee ne asiat ja näkee kirjotettuna, ni sitten siitä pystyy niinku vetää sen yhteyden että nää asiat lausutaan näin ja oppii sen oikeinkirjoituksen siinä.

Thus, she showed signs of intentional learning as well. However, TV shows and movies had been the most useful mediating artifacts, because the combination of picture and sound had helped her to learn. Furthermore, the native speakers on TV had been useful for learning how words are pronounced. Reading books, in turn, had helped her to improve her skills in reading comprehension, especially, if she had read the same book both in English and in Finnish. Netta had also noticed her development in the English language through the mediating artifacts connected with entertainment: she had learnt to comprehend some lyrics she had not comprehended before, and she no longer needed subtitles when watching movies in English. Thus, the encounters with English had been rewarding for Netta.

At school, Netta had been able make use of the words learnt beyond the classroom. When preparing for vocabulary tests, there had been more familiar words (or words the meanings of which she had been able to infer) than new words. Thus, Netta had not needed to learn so many words, as is evident from Extract 56:

(56) sanasto (---) sen osaa tavallaan jo valmiiks, ni ei tarvii niitäkään opetella niin paljon

For the matriculation examination, Netta had learnt especially listening comprehension beyond the classroom. She had familiarised herself with different accents and it had helped her to understand different kinds of speech, as is illustrated in Extract 57.

(57) mä pystyn kuitenkin ymmärtään sinänsä aika hankalaakin puhetta, (---) esimerkiks skottiaksenttia oon yrittänyt opetella.

Learning English beyond the classroom had been easy for Netta, because she had had a good basis on which to build, by adding new vocabulary, for instance. Moreover, learning beyond the classroom had been free and not as controlled as learning at school. Learning had occurred without the intention of doing so. Extracts 58 and 59 illustrate Netta's beliefs:

(58) (---) mulla on siis aika vahva pohja mille lähtee rakentamaan ja sitten siihen on tosi helppo liittää ja ymmärtää jotain esimerkiks sanastoa (---). et jos tulee vaik jotain yksittäisiä uusia sanoja ni ne pystyy päättelemään aika helposti lauseyhteydestä kun tietää ne muut ja silleen nii.

(59) ku koulussa pitää ehkä opetella jotain asioita mutta sitten vapaa-ajalla ne vaan oppii ((painotettu)), tajuaa yhtäkkiä et nyt mä tajuan tän, mä ymmärrän mitä täs sanotaan, (---) eikä se oo niin ohjattua ku koulussa.

Netta was sure that she would need English in her future studies and career, because her *goal* was to study English at university in Finland, or to study something abroad, possibly in Britain, and she wanted to get an international job. Her *object* in her English skills was set high: she wanted to achieve native-like skills. Netta emphasised that she had put effort into learning English in order to reach her goals also beyond the classroom in connection with the activities where she had used or encountered English, and aimed at learning especially new words and accents.

The *community* included Netta's teachers, family, Finnish friends, a friend in France and idols. The teachers had encouraged her to learn English beyond the classroom to some extent, but she could not remember any concrete tips. At home, she had been encouraged to learn English. With her Finnish friends, Netta had read the same books in English and discussed English used in the movies they had watched together. The attitudes of her friends were, thus, positive, and they wanted to learn English, because it was a world language. However, the most important people for Netta in learning English beyond the classroom had been the bands and artists whose music she had listened to, because they had contributed to her learning, as she had been willing to find

out what was said in the songs. Altogether, Netta felt that she was able to learn English independently as well, and, did not seem to need more support.

To conclude, Netta's activity system in learning English beyond the classroom is illustrated in Figure 12.

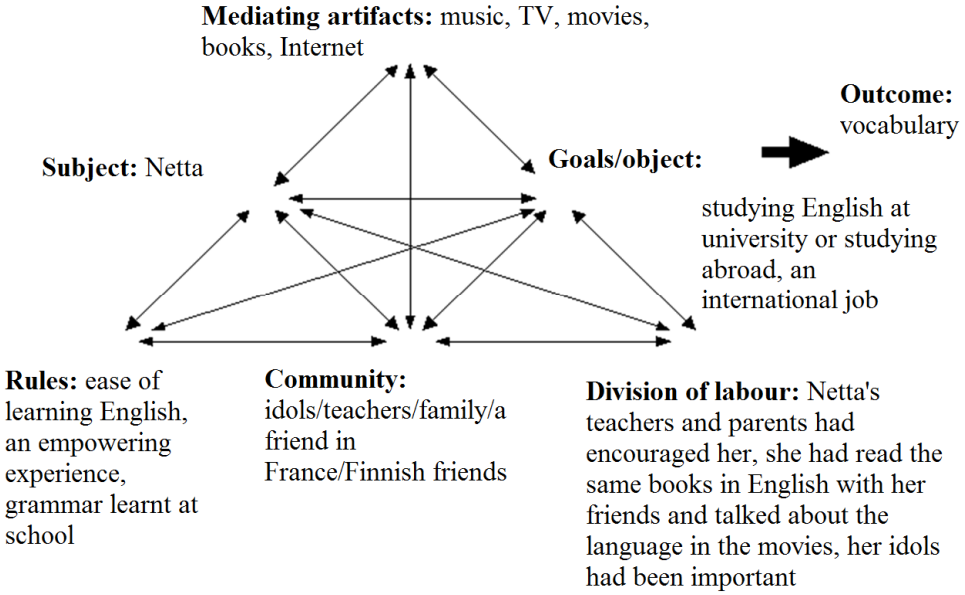

Figure 12. Netta's activity system in learning English beyond the classroom

No significant *contradictions* were identified. The components of the activity system supported Netta's learning. She had used and encountered English, and learnt it in connection with these activities, but also actively aimed at learning English independently as well, because it was important for reaching her goals.

Netta's activity system in learning Swedish beyond the classroom

When Netta was asked whether she had used Swedish beyond the classroom, the answer was a strict "no", and the reason for that was that because she lived in Central Finland, there had not been any need for using Swedish, as is evident from Extract 60:

(60) ku ei täällä tarvii missään oikeestaan ni ei sitä tuu käytettyä.

However, when Netta was asked about the possible encounters she had had with the Swedish language, she mentioned that she had watched YouTube videos of some Swedish-speaking stand-up comedians, such as André Wickström, in order to prepare for the matriculation examination, and that she had sometimes listened to Swedish music. She also had second cousins who spoke both Swedish and Finnish, but she had not often met them. Altogether, Netta's encounters with the Swedish language had been scarce and she had been mostly a recipient of the language.

Looking at the *outcome* of learning Swedish beyond the classroom, Netta felt that she had not learnt much, if at all, but possibly some simple things connected with vocabulary or pronunciation. However, the most useful artifacts had been listening to music and watching stand-up comedies. Watching stand-up comedies on the Internet had been useful for improving listening comprehension, because the language had been rather simple. In addition, she had learnt about pronunciation. The Swedish spoken by the Finnish stand-up comedians had been easier for her to understand than if the Swedish had been spoken by people from Sweden. She felt that she had not learnt about reading comprehension, writing or culture at all beyond the classroom. However, she had noticed that her skills had developed, but not as much as in the English language. In all, Netta felt that she had not learnt that much that she could have made use of it at school, and, concerning the matriculation examination, she had learnt some words and listening comprehension but not much.

With regard to the *rules*, learning Swedish beyond the classroom had been rather difficult for Netta, because it had required more effort, as the Swedish language had not been as strongly present in her everyday life as English, as is illustrated in Extract 61:

(61) aika vaikee. just koska siihen pitää nähä sitä vaivaa enemmän.

Learning Swedish beyond the classroom had also been rather minimal, as she had worked on her Swedish more at school than beyond the classroom. At school, she had learnt grammar, in particular, which she thought was impossible to learn elsewhere, as people's speech was not always grammatically correct.

Concerning the *goals* and *objects*, Netta hoped that she would not need the Swedish language in the future and felt that being able to use Swedish when travelling in Sweden

would be enough. As can be seen from Extract 62, she pointed out that she did not like the language or regard it as useful, mentioning that it was only used in Sweden, and, therefore, she would rather put more effort into learning English and French, which can be used in many more situations:

(62) koska mä en oikeen tykkää ruotsista, siis silleen, ku ruotsia ei kuitenkaan puhuta ku ruotsissa ni se on vähän jotenkin tavalla pienet piirit sinänsä, et mieluummin suuntautuu jonnekin englannin ja ranskan puolelle et millä on selkeesti enemmän käyttöö.

Because Netta had not regarded the Swedish language as interesting as the English language, she had not had similar goals in it, and, therefore, it had not been necessary to learn much Swedish beyond the classroom in order to reach the goals. Consequently, Swedish had always felt "compulsory", not as natural as English had been. Extracts 63 and 64 illustrate these thoughts:

(63) (---) ruotsi ei oo niin mielenkiintosta ku englanti (---) ei siinä oo niinku semmosia tavoitteitakaan.
(64) (---) se on aina tullut että ruotsia on pakko oppia (---) onhan englantiakin pakko oppia, mut sitä tulee niin paljon muualtakin, se on kuitenkin sellainen tavallaan luonnollinen (---)

The *community* consisted of Netta's teachers, family, Finnish friends and stand-up comedians. The teachers had encouraged students to look for music in Swedish and emphasised that it was possible to read texts even with minimal language skills. Netta's parents, by contrast, had noticed that she had not been interested in the Swedish language and had not put the pressure on her. The attitudes of her friends towards learning Swedish beyond the classroom varied from those who had liked it, found it easy and read magazines in Swedish in their free time to those who had not wanted to study it more than was compulsory at school. Sometimes, Netta had received recommendations of interesting Swedish songs from her friends. When beings asked about important people, Netta mentioned André Wickström, whose stand-up comedies she had enjoyed watching, but pointed out that he had not been extremely significant for her learning of Swedish. Importantly, Netta felt that support from the community which would increase her motivation for learning Swedish might be useful, because it would help her to maintain the language skills she already had in Swedish. However, it was difficult to define what it might be, as is evident from Extracts 65 and 66:

(65) jotain mikä sais sen ruotsin niinku tuntumaan kiinnostavammalta ja hyödyllisemmältä.
(66) just jotain semmosta arkipäivästä että jos löytys jotain ruotsinkielistä musiikkia mistä mäkin tykkäisin ni joo.,ois hyvä. mut sitä ei, en oo ainakaan ite törmänny niihin.

She, thus, longed for more support in order to increase her motivation, but also longed for support for finding opportunities to encounter and use Swedish.

In conclusion, Netta's activity system in learning Swedish can be characterised as in Figure 13.

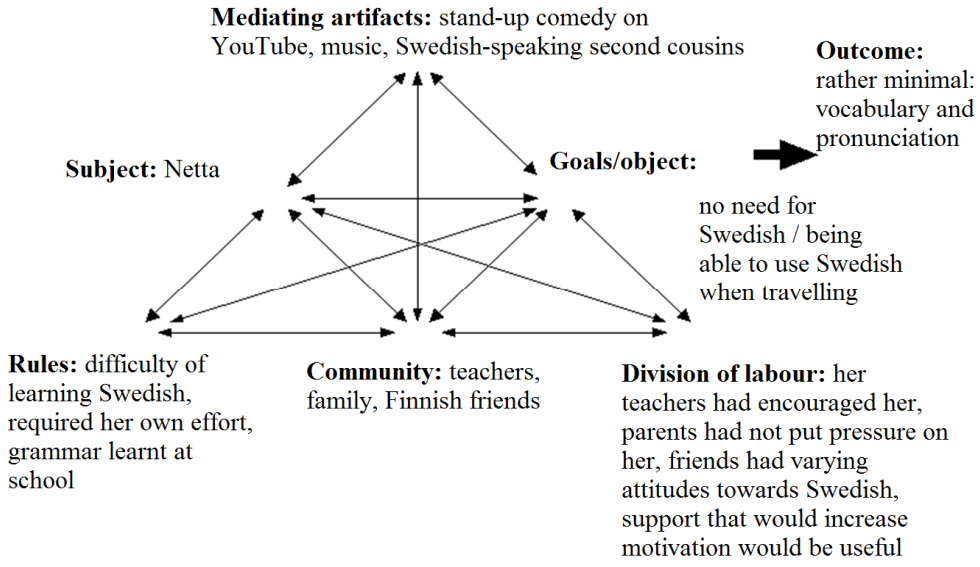

Figure 13. Netta's activity system in learning Swedish beyond the classroom

There were not many *contradictions*. Instead, the different components were mostly in line with each other. On the one hand, Netta had considered learning Swedish beyond the classroom difficult, because finding opportunities for it would have required effort. On the other hand, she had not considered learning Swedish beyond the classroom necessary for her, as she had not set her goals high and did not like the language. Thus, all factors supported Netta's in being passive in learning Swedish beyond the classroom. However, in order to prepare for the matriculation examination, she had put effort into learning. However, *a secondary contradiction* had occurred between the *outcome* of learning Swedish for the matriculation examination and the *mediating artifacts*: Netta felt that she had not learnt much.

Comparison of the activity systems in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom

Netta's activity systems in learning English and Swedish were notably different from each other. Firstly, Netta had used and encountered English through many different mediating artifacts, especially, connected with entertainment, whereas the encounters with the Swedish language had been scarce. Secondly, Netta was positive about the *outcome* of learning English, whereas she felt that she had not learnt much Swedish. Thirdly, learning English beyond the classroom had been easy and natural, whereas learning Swedish had been difficult and would have required a great deal of effort. Fourthly, and, perhaps, most importantly, the *goals* and *object* were set higher in English, as the English language was going to have an important role in her life. In addition, Netta did not like the Swedish language. Fifthly, the members of her *community* were more supportive regarding English and the friend in France enabled her regular use of the language. Thus, the activity systems were different, and, Netta also often contrasted the two languages.

However, some similarities could be observed as well in connection with the mediating artifacts, the outcome of learning and community. In both languages, music had been a useful mediating artifact, even though it was more employed in connection with English. Concerning the outcome, Netta felt that in both languages she had learnt especially vocabulary. Thirdly, in both languages support from her friends would have probably been available.

To sum up, Netta was active in searching for opportunities to learn English also beyond the classroom. She was both a user and a learner, as she also intentionally aimed at developing her language skills. Her goals supported the activities. By contrast, she had not actively searched for opportunities to learn Swedish and she had not regarded it as necessary either. However, before the matriculation examination she had been a learner.

6.6 Toni: English sometimes more natural than Finnish, passive in Swedish

The sixth case to be discussed is Toni. His latest mark in English at school had been 8 and in Swedish 5. He had taken the test of English as part of the matriculation examination the autumn the interview was conducted but was not going to take the test of Swedish. With regard to his skills in the English language, Toni felt that both his reading and listening skills were good: there had seldom been a text he would have not understood (see Table 8). His writing was also good, but he should pay more attention to checking the details. Speaking was difficult: it was not spontaneous and he felt that his pronunciation was not good. In Swedish, speaking was also difficult: words were in the wrong order and his speech was not spontaneous, but pronunciation was probably the only area that was fine. He felt that he was also poor at writing, as he did not know grammar or words. Listening comprehension was difficult for not knowing enough words, but reading was his strongest area as he had been able to infer meanings of words. Altogether, Toni evaluated his skills to be clearly better in English than in Swedish.

Table 8. Toni's self-evaluation of his skills

	Speaking	**Writing**	**Listening**	**Reading**
English	**7**	**8 or 9**	**9**	**9**
Swedish	**5 or 6**	**6 or 7**	**6**	**6 or 7**

Toni's activity system in learning English beyond the classroom

Toni had used and encountered English through many *mediating artifacts* beyond the classroom, both as a producer and a recipient of the language, and the encounters had been daily. Especially, computer games had been important for him. He had also often watched TV shows and movies without subtitles. In addition, he had often read different kinds of product reviews on the Internet and Top Gear Magazine in English, as Top Gear was one of his favourite TV shows. He also had a friend in Sweden with whom he had spoken English on the Internet. In addition, Toni's mother was an English teacher and they had sometimes had small conversations in English at home. Moreover, he pointed out that he used to mix English words and expressions into his Finnish, because

he liked the English language very much and some things were easier for him to express in English than in Finnish, as Extract 67 shows:

(67) mä tykkään englannin kielestä hirveesti (---) välillä se tuntuu paljon luontevammalta sanoa joku asia englanniksi kun suomeks ni mä välillä sanon sen englanniks.

With regard to *outcome* of learning English beyond the classroom, Toni felt that he had learnt especially words and sentence structures. He had learnt many words that the classmates had not known, and, thus, learning beyond the classroom had been an empowering experience for him, as is evident from Extract 68:

(68) huomaa et muut ei tiiä mut ite tietää.

Toni estimated that at least a half of his learning of English beyond the classroom had been based on playing computer games, and, the many kinds of texts in the games had enabled learning vocabulary, dialogues and questions, as is evident from Extract 69. In addition, he had learnt reading comprehension from the games.

(69) no, veikkaan et se on aika pitkälti se sanasto koska siellä on monenlaisia tekstejä (---) ne on aika pitkälti mitä siellä on näitä tehtäviä, aina semmonen esitys mitä pitää tehä (---) siellä on aika paljon erilaisia sanoja ja ne on niin monipuolisia mihin ne saattaa liittyä ni sieltä se varmaan ja dialogeja käy ni saattaa keksiä et mitä ne sanoo, ni kirjottaisin just samalla lailla sieltä suoraan (---)

Also the product reviews he had read on the Internet had been important for his learning. However, Toni pointed out that the best way for him to learn English had been watching TV and movies without subtitles, because the language in them had been versatile. He also considered them the best way to learn listening comprehension and pronunciation. He had also learnt about the culture in English-speaking countries from them. Talking with his Swedish friend on the Internet had required knowing a wide vocabulary, because they had discussed also difficult themes. However, Toni pointed out that he had not had many opportunities to learn speaking beyond the classroom, apart from the small conversations at home, and, he felt that he had learnt to know his weaknesses and strengths in English only at school.

At school, Toni felt that learning English beyond the classroom and the special skills acquired there could be seen only in essays, not otherwise. With regard to the matriculation examination, by contrast, Toni considered learning English beyond the classroom useful. In order to prepare for the listening comprehension part it had been useful to learn to listen also English which was spoken quickly. In addition, he had been able to make use of the phrases learnt from computer games, and, by reading the reviews on the Internet written by the native English he had learnt phrases which had given fluency into his texts. For example, he had remembered some questions from the games and got confirmation for his answers. Extracts 70 and 71 illustrate these thoughts:

(70) varmaan esseissä se sitten näkyy jos on erityistä tämmöstä osaamista, mutta ei se oikein muuten.

(71) varsinkin nyt kun siinä yyoossa oli että piti jotain haastatella, niin mää mun mielestä sain osan niistä jostain pelistä, et mä muistelin miten se lähtee kysymään niitä tiettyjä asioita, sain siitä niinku varmistusta et kyllä se tulee tälleen.

Learning English beyond the classroom had been easy for Toni: it had been more relaxed than learning at school, because nobody had forced him to do it, and, thus, it had been motivating. He had simply heard new, interesting words and acquired them. Extracts 72 and 73 illustrate Toni's beliefs about how it felt to learn English beyond the classroom:

(72) no se on just sitä rennompaa, spontaanimpaa. ja se tulee niinku itestään se motivoituminen**,** mikään ei pakota sua tekemään sitä.

(73) siellä tulee kaikkia uusia sanoja, ne on mielenkiintosia, sen vaan omaksuu.

However, he felt that the great amount of knowledge provided by school had been more condensed and explained in nature, and, therefore, it took more time to make progress when he was learning English beyond the classroom, but he did not regard it as a problem, because as Extract 74 illustrates, it had been learning little by little:

(74) on se ((koulun ulkopuolella oppiminen)) varmaan hidasta mutta pikkuhiljaa.

With regard to the *goals* and *objects*, Toni was sure that he would need English in his future career as an engineer in the car industry, because he was planning to move to Britain for better career prospects, as he describes in Extract 75:

(75) autoalalle varmaan tähtään ja suomessa ku se on aika pientä, ni se on varmaan britteihin mihin mä pyrin töihin, eli siellä tulee todennäköisesti se englanti käyttöön.

His object was to achieve language skills near the level of a native speaker. In order to reach the object, he had continuously aimed at developing his language skills also beyond the classroom: by watching TV shows, and, checking his language, as he had wanted his writing to be good also beyond the classroom, as Extracts 76 and 77 illustrate:

(76) : kun mä kirjotan englanniks ni mä pyrin koko ajan siihen, et se on oikein.

(77) ja korjaan heti jos tulee virheitä siinä.

Toni's *community* included his mother, Finnish friends, foreign friends and idols. His mother had supported him in learning English also beyond the classroom. Toni felt that he did not need more support, since he had been able to get a teacher's support whenever he had needed it, as is evident from Extract 78:

(78) jos mä tartteen jotain, mä kysyn meidän äidiltä, äiti tietää lähes oikeestaan niin hyvin kuin olla ja voi siitä asiasta,

Toni had also travelled abroad with his family and the importance of good language skills had always been highlighted. Extract 79 shows how also the people in the TV show Top Gear had been significant for how his language skills had developed:

(79) mitä mä nyt oon tätä top gearia kattonu aika paljon ni sieltä varmaan ne henkilöt aika paljon vaikuttanut tähän miten englanti kehittyy.

Moreover, the attitudes of Toni's Finnish friends had been mostly positive towards English, but they had practiced English on their own. However, as a whole, the

community supported learning, but Toni also strongly took own initiative to learn English.

To sum up, Toni's activity system in learning English beyond the classroom can be characterised as in Figure 14.

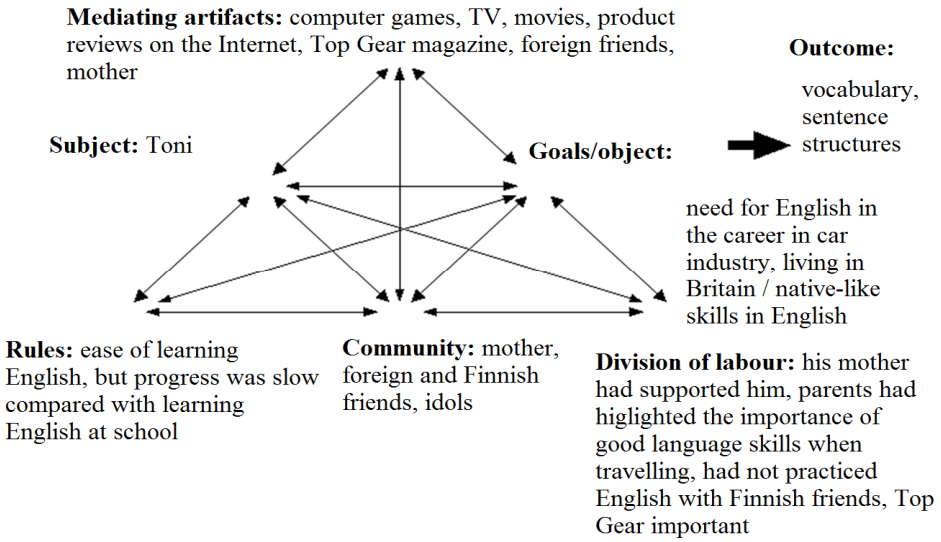

Figure 14. Toni's activity system in learning English beyond the classroom

There were no major *contradictions* in Toni's activity system in learning English beyond the classroom: his goals and community supported his learning. However, there was *a secondary contradiction* between the use of *mediating artifacts* and *outcome* of learning. Even though Toni had learnt English in many ways, he felt that he had not been able to make use of it at school, apart from some essays. In addition, he pointed out that he had not had many opportunities to speak English beyond the classroom.

Toni's activity system in learning Swedish beyond the classroom

Toni had seldom used Swedish beyond the classroom, if at all. The situations where he had used Swedish had been limited to the discussions with his Swedish friend, but they

had usually spoken English and used Swedish perhaps once in a half year. When Toni was asked why it had been so he answered that he felt that he could not speak Swedish well enough to make a conversation possible, as is illustrated in Extract 80:

(80) just sen takia kun mä en osaa paljon ruotsia ni ei me saatas aikaseks mitään keskustelua, mun pitäs käydä kattomassa kaikki sanat jos mä yrittäisin puhua.

Otherwise, using Swedish beyond the classroom had been minimal. Toni had sometimes read texts on the Internet. In addition, he had heard Swedish on TV.

With regard to the *outcome,* Toni felt that he had not learnt much Swedish beyond the classroom: perhaps, some words from the texts or from his friends, and some reading comprehension. In addition, reading texts written by other people on the Internet had taught him something about writing. However, he was doubtful about whether he had learnt anything in other areas of language skills, such as listening comprehension, as is illustrated by Extract 81:

(81) sitä ei varmaan ollenkaan, en usko, jos ei sit joku oo jossain teeveeohjelmassa puhunu ruotsia, mut en mä varmaan, varmaan ymmärrä siitäkään yhtään mitään enää.

Toni was not going to take the test of Swedish as part of the matriculation examination, because he felt that he was not good at Swedish, and he did not have the motivation for it. He felt that knowing Swedish was not necessary. His attitude towards Swedish had its roots in grades 7-9, where he had lagged behind in learning, and, consequently, in upper secondary school it would have required a great deal of effort to do well in Swedish, as is illustrated by Extract 82.

(82) mä koen sen vaan et se on turha ja yläasteelta tullut (---) pitkälti semmonen asennoituminen et se on turhaa eikä sitä kukaan jaksa opiskella ni se on, ei sitä saa täällä lukiossa mitenkään kiinni, et sä vaan pärjää siinä, koska täällä menee asiat vielä vaan nopeemmin eteenpäin, sä et vaan pysty kuromaan sitä kiinni jos et sä tekis hirveesti töitä sen eteen.

In addition, Toni felt that he had not learnt anything beyond the classroom that would have been useful in the matriculation examination.

Toni described that his skills in the Swedish language were mostly based on what had been taught at school and learning Swedish beyond the classroom had been difficult for him, because he had not had the motivation or interest in it, and, thus, he was unwilling to learn Swedish voluntarily, as Extract 83 shows:

(83) se on vaikeaa, ku ei mulla oo motivaatiota siihen, ei oo kiinnostusta ni se on aika pakon eessä jos mä jotain yritän oppia.

As a result, learning Swedish beyond the classroom had been minimal and unsuccessful, and meaningless for Toni, as is evident from Extract 84:

(84) (---) , se on vähästä ja se on yhtä huonoo, (---) , se on aika merkityksetöntä ei se vaikuta oikeestaan mihinkään.

With regard to the *goals* and *objects*, Toni hoped that he would not need Swedish in the future, but as Extract 85 shows, admitted that he might need Swedish in his work in the car industry when meeting Swedish people, or perhaps, he might even end up working in Sweden:

(85) varmaan siellä työssä tulee varmastikin ruotsalaisiin törmättyä jossain vaiheessa, ei sitä tiiä vaikka ruotsiin päätysin töihin, siellä varmasti joutusin käyttämään kieliä.

Toni's object was to achieve language skills which enabled managing in everyday life in Sweden and he did not have a specific goal, and he had not put effort into learning Swedish beyond the classroom in order to reach his goals, as is evident from Extract 86:

(86) ei oo oikeestaan tavotetta. kuhan nyt selviäis ruotsin maalla. jotain just jos silleen että löytää jonkun bussiaseman ja tällanen, ku ne selviää ni se riittää.

The *community* included Toni's teachers, parents, Swedish friend and Finnish friends. Toni's teachers and parents had supported and encouraged him in learning Swedish also

beyond the classroom. His teachers had encouraged students to read different kinds of texts and listen to Swedish, and, his parents had tried to motivate, even put pressure on him. However, the efforts had been rather meaningless for Toni as Extracts 87 and 88 illustrate:

(87) on ne ((opettajat)) varmaan jotain sanonut että jotain kannattais tehä mutta en oo sitten tehny

(88) kyllä ne ((vanhemmat) yrittää painostaa, motivoida ja perustella miks se ois hyvä opiskella sitä ja tälleen näin, antaa kyllä kaikkensa jos sitä yrittäs opiskella että.

By contrast, the attitudes of Toni's friends towards studying the Swedish language had been varying. He had not studied Swedish with his friends beyond the classroom, but he thought that if he had wished support from his friends it possibly would have been available. In addition, with his Swedish friend he had, at least sometimes, had opportunities to speak Swedish. In sum, in the community, Toni's parents and teachers had been supportive, whereas his friends had had more varying attitudes.

In sum, Toni's activity system in learning Swedish beyond the classroom can be illustrated as in Figure 15.

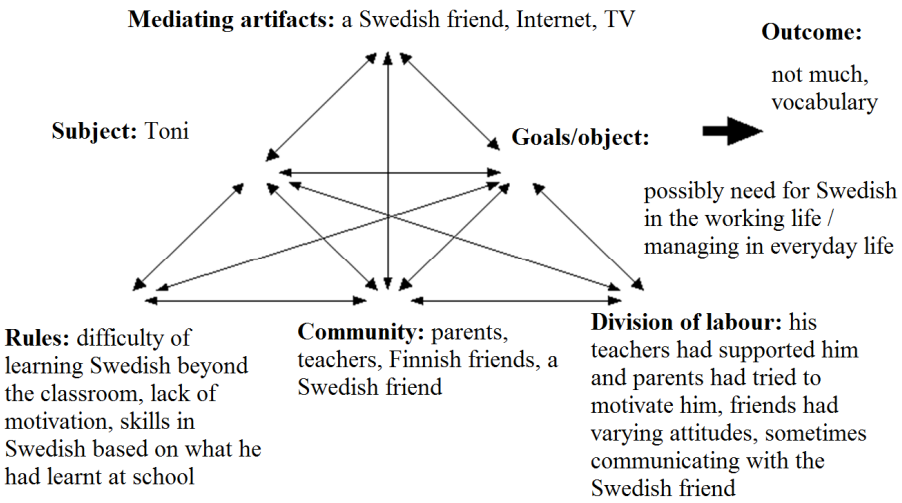

Figure 15. Toni's activity system in learning Swedish beyond the classroom

There was a *secondary contradiction* between the *mediating artifacts* and the *community*. Even though his parents and teachers had encouraged Toni to learn he had not done so. Otherwise, the different components of the activity system were in harmony, and supported Toni's passiveness in learning Swedish beyond the classroom.

Comparison of the activity systems in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom

There were major differences in Toni's activity systems in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom. Firstly, there were differences in the use of the *mediating artifacts*: Toni had encountered and used English in many ways, both productively and receptively, and his interests enabled these contacts, but in Swedish the mediating artifacts had not been as versatile and the encounters with had been scarce in number, whereas English was a part of everyday life, as Toni describes in Extract 89:

(89) englantia opiskelen lähes joka päivä, jostain tulee kaikkea, ruotsia en ollenkaan, se on se iso ero siinä.

Secondly, there were differences in the *outcome and rules* of learning. Toni felt that he had learnt especially vocabulary in English and it had improved his confidence in his skills, as he had learnt words the others did not know. In the matriculation examination, he had been able to make use of what he had learnt. In Swedish, by contrast, he felt that he had not learnt much. Altogether, learning English beyond the classroom had been easy and Toni had had motivation for it, whereas learning Swedish had been difficult, mostly because he lacked the motivation for it.

Thirdly, there were significant differences in the *goals* and *objects*. Toni was going to have a career in the car industry in Britain and, thus, this goal supported his learning and motivated him, whereas he was not sure if he was going to need Swedish in the future, and had not set his object high. The difference in goals certainly had a significant

role in his learning and motivation. Importantly, with regard to English, Toni had also had his mother and the stars of Top Gear as significant people in his learning.

To sum up, Toni was an active user of English in his everyday life, who also intentionally aimed at developing his language skills, apart from the fact he had not had many opportunities to speak, which can also be seen from his self-evaluation. His goals and community supported his learning. By contrast, Toni seldom used Swedish and did not actively search for opportunities to learn it, for many reasons: lack of motivation, lagging behind in learning in grades 7-9 and not having his future plans connected with it. Thus, he can characterised as a passive user of Swedish.

6.7 Summary of the findings

In the earlier sections, the findings of the present study were described one case at a time. The aim of this section is to draw the results together and sum up the main findings. The findings of the present study, based on the descriptions and illustrations of the activity systems are summarised by the research questions in Table 9. Firstly, the table summarises the findings about whether the students can be characterised predominantly as learners or users of English and Swedish beyond the classroom. Secondly, it shows where the main differences between the activity systems could be identified: for instance, in learning English beyond the classroom, the participants were both producers and recipients of the language, whereas in learning Swedish they were mostly recipients. Thirdly, it shows the major similarities between the activity systems, that is, what the activity systems of the students in English and Swedish often had in common. Fourthly, it displays the factors that enhanced learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom and, thus, shows the reasons for why the students had been active in learning these languages. Finally, the factors that restricted learning, that is, the reasons for being passive are showed. As Janita differed from the other cases, some points concerning her are included in the table and marked with (Janita).

Table 9. The findings of the study summarised

	Learning and using English beyond the classroom	**Learning and using Swedish beyond the classroom**
Can the students be characterised predominantly as learners or users?	- Mostly users: English used for entertainment and communication - Also learners: e.g. checking words from dictionaries, watching TV shows and movies without subtitles	- Mostly learners, exception: Janita who used Swedish with her Swedish-speaking friends - Many students were passive in using Swedish
The main differences between the activity systems in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom	- Both producers and recipients - Mostly positive about the outcome of learning: sometimes an empowering experience - Learning is easy and natural - Need for English in the working life - Object: as good as possible skills - Learning beyond the classroom necessary for reaching good results - The role of the matriculation examination not highlighted	- Mostly recipients - Doubts about whether they had learnt anything - Learning is challenging and requires more effort - Varying beliefs about the need for the language in the future - Object: basic skills - Many students felt that they could reach their goals at school - The role of the matriculation examination significant
Major similarities between the activity systems	- In both English and Swedish, especially vocabulary learnt beyond the classroom - Some doubts about learning for the matriculation examination - At school: grammar, vocabulary, foundation for learning	
Factors that enhanced learning	- English present everywhere - Goals and objects - Community - English as part of the identity	- The matriculation examination was a significant motivator - Connections with the Swedish-speaking people in Finland (Janita) - Confidence in one's own skills (Janita)
Factors that restricted learning	- Insecurity of one's own skills (Janita) - negative experiences of learning English at school (Janita)	-It required effort to find interesting materials in Swedish - Insecurity of one's own skills - Lack of motivation - Beliefs about "compulsory Swedish"

Thus, overall, the students in the present study can be characterised as active users of English who also intentionally aimed at learning beyond the classroom by watching movies without subtitles or by checking words from dictionaries. In Swedish, they were mostly rather passive in using Swedish and finding opportunities to learn, even though many of them were more active learners especially before the matriculation examination.

Furthermore, the present study indicated that the students' activity systems in learning English and Swedish differed significantly from each other. In five of the six cases, English was encountered and used more than Swedish beyond the classroom, the goals and objects were set higher in English, and, the general attitudes towards learning English beyond the classroom were more positive than towards learning Swedish beyond the classroom. However, there was variation among the cases. For example, Liisa had encountered both Swedish and English through many mediating artifacts beyond the classroom, whereas Netta and Toni clearly expressed their negative attitude towards Swedish on the one hand and their passion for English on the other hand. The contrast to the five other cases was Janita, who had used Swedish more than English beyond the classroom and had more confidence in her skills in Swedish.

Based on the students' activity systems and contradictions within them, an attempt can be made to analyse reasons for being active or passive in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom. The reasons for why the students been active in learning English beyond the classroom were fairly similar, whereas there was more variation in the reasons why the students had not been as active in learning Swedish beyond the classroom.

In the following chapter these findings of the present study will be discussed.

7 DISCUSSION

The aim of the present study was to shed light on the upper secondary school students' learning of English and Swedish beyond the classroom from the perspective of the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999). The purpose was to find out by analysing the students' activity systems and the most notable contradictions within them, whether they can be characterised predominantly as learners or users of English and Swedish beyond the classroom, what kind of differences and similarities there were in their activity systems in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom, and, also to make an attempt to answer what kind of factors enhanced or restricted learning,

that is, why the students had been active or passive in learning these languages beyond the classroom.

The human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) has not been employed in connection with L2 learning in Finland earlier. The previous studies employing the model have focused on the effects of curricular changes in the context of South Korea (Kim 2008, Ahn 2009), or, on motivation of students or immigrants who move to a foreign country (Kim 2009 and 2011, Allen 2010). Because the earlier studies have been conducted on different themes and in different contexts compared with the present study, there are not any studies that could be directly compared with the present one. The findings of the present study will, therefore, be mostly compared with the earlier studies conducted on learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom in Finland, which, however, have different theoretical backgrounds. Moreover, it must be remembered that the participants of the present study were in grade 12, and, many of the earlier studies have participants who are in different levels of education compared with them, such as teenagers (Luukka et al. 2008, Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta 2008 and Linnakylä 2010), university students (Moncrief 2011) or university students of English and Swedish looking back at their experiences of learning English and Swedish during their school years (Kalaja et al. 2011a and 2011b). The study by Kalaja et al. (2011a and 2011b) is the study that mostly resembles the present study, because it compares learning of English and Swedish beyond the classroom, even though the school context was taken into account in it as well.

In the following sections, the findings of the present study will be discussed in more detail and compared with the earlier research, when possible. The results will be discussed in order of the research questions: starting with discussing whether the students can be characterised as predominantly learners or users, succeeding to the differences between activity systems in English and Swedish, and, finally, trying to answer what kind of factors enhanced or restricted learning. After that, the implications of the study will be discussed.

7.1 Learners/users

Based on the illustrations of their activity systems, the subjects of the present study can be characterised predominantly as users of English, but, who also intentionally aimed at learning English beyond the classroom (Table 9). They had used English in many ways in their everyday lives: for entertainment, searching for information and communicating with their foreign friends. Learning had usually occurred incidentally as a by-product of these activities. However, their learning of English had also had intentional features, as they had watched movies without subtitles or with subtitles in English, with the purpose of learning the language. In addition, Janita, who found learning English difficult, had employed revision books and grammar books, that is, books usually connected with formal settings (see Kalaja et al. 2011a). Even though the students pointed out that they had learnt without even noticing it, many of them emphasised that they continuously put effort into developing their skills. To conclude, English was both used and learnt actively beyond the classroom.

By contrast, there was much more variation with regard to Swedish: from Toni who had been passive in finding opportunities to learn the language to Perttu and, especially, Janita, who can be defined as users of Swedish, albeit often recipients. Somewhere in between these extremes were Roope, Liisa and Netta who had not usually made use of the affordances available, but in order to prepare for the matriculation examination had put more effort into learning Swedish also beyond the classroom. Liisa aptly illustrated the thoughts of many students by saying that she would not watch TV shows in Swedish for entertainment purposes, but, instead, in order to learn the language. Altogether it, thus, seems that the encounters with Swedish had been fairly occasional, such as ending up watching FST5, or, connected with the purpose of learning.

Moreover, the results indicated that the school context and the context of beyond the school coincide in students' learning and using of English and Swedish beyond the classroom. In the study by Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008: 39), students took practices learnt in formal settings to informal settings, and, it could be seen in the present study as well, especially in connection with English: employing dictionaries and correcting errors in one's writing were mentioned. Furthermore, for example, Liisa

pointed out that many of the activities they had had at school could be continued beyond the classroom as well. Thus, several of the activities the students had been inspired by the school and teachers, such as watching TV shows without subtitles. Especially this could be seen in Swedish: a number of students mentioned stand-up comedians and the Moomins, and, these probably had been activities to which they had been encouraged by teachers. This highlights also the importance of the support from the teacher.

However, it must be remembered that the students in the present study had different beliefs about what can be defined as language use, and, thus they did not regard all their activities as using the language. Actually, it seemed that many of them regarded only producing the language, speaking or writing, as language use. This could be seen in that some of them asked the interviewer if watching TV could be regarded as language use. Thus, the students even themselves were not aware of all their contacts with English and Swedish and what they had learnt from them. Also in the study by Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008: 185), students regarded everyday practices as meaningful sites for informal learning, but did not value their practices as learning. In addition, the four dimensions of informal learning by Benson (2011) could be seen: learning languages beyond the classroom had had versatile forms.

7.2 Differences and similarities

The first major difference between the activity systems was that beyond the classroom, the students had used and encountered English mostly through mediating artifacts which had enabled them to be both producers and recipients of the language, whereas with regard to Swedish, they had been mostly recipients, that is, readers or listeners (Table 9). The results of the students as users of English and recipients (or consumers) of Swedish agree with the study by Kalaja et al. (2011a: 70). Furthermore, the role of English as a lingua franca could be seen in the present study as well: English had been mostly employed in contacts with non-native speakers, even with Swedish-speaking people.

However, it seemed that in both languages, the students had not had many possibilities to speak. Boys, especially, pointed out that they had not had many opportunities for

speaking English and it could also be seen in that they found speaking difficult. Communication in English had, in fact, often involved writing on the Internet, even though the language use there can also be seen as a mixture of written and spoken language, and, thus, cannot be strictly characterised as written language. This finding of communicating often by writing is slightly different from the study of Kalaja et al. (2011a: 70), where the students of English had been mostly speakers.

By contrast, speaking Swedish had been clearly limited to trips to Sweden and Swedish-speaking areas of Finland, as in the study by Kalaja et al. (2011: 70), and, many students said that they had never written anything in Swedish beyond the classroom. In the study by Kalaja et al (2011a: 71), the respondents had not mentioned their contacts with the Swedish-speaking population of Finland, but, in the present study, even Perttu who had had regular contacts with his Swedish-speaking relatives in Finland pointed out that he had seldom produced the language (especially speech) in these contacts. The reason for this can be speculated and Perttu did not know it either: was it because of lack of confidence, ease of using Finnish as the language of communication, lack of support from the community, or, had there been another reason for it. Thus, even the contacts with Swedish-speaking did not always make the students speak, which could be seen also in that, for example, Roope mentioned that he had spoken English when travelling in Sweden and Toni said that he had spoken English with his Swedish friend, instead of speaking Swedish.

The fact that English was used more productively could also be seen in the use of the Internet. The Internet had been one of the most important mediating artifacts in both languages, but in Swedish it was mostly employed for reading and listening, whereas in English it had been used for communicative purposes as well. However, it was interesting that the Internet was mentioned by all students except one in the present study. In the study by Kalaja et al. (2011a) Internet was mentioned hardly at all in connection with Swedish, which can be explained by the fact that the students were looking back on their years at school. The students have, thus, become more aware of the opportunities provided by the Internet, and, they have also been encouraged by the teachers to use it also for finding materials in Swedish.

The second major difference was that the students were mostly positive about what they had learnt beyond the classroom about English, whereas they were often doubtful about whether they had learnt anything at all about Swedish. In the study by Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008) becoming an expert in one particular area of language use was seen as an empowering experience, and, in the present study, learning words had also been an empowering experience for some students: fewer words to study for vocabulary tests and knowing words that the others did not know. In addition, school had not been the primary context of learning for some skills in English: Roope claimed that he had learnt pronunciation mostly from TV and Perttu felt that listening comprehension had been learnt beyond the classroom. Thus, even though the students did not regard all their activities in English as learning either, they had recognised that they really had learnt something. These results are also in line with the study by Kalaja et al. (2011a: 71).

The third major difference was that the students usually described how easy and natural learning English had been, whereas they emphasised how learning Swedish would have required more effort, as the mediating artifacts had not been as easily available. With regard to Swedish, they highlighted that it was because their home town, Jyväskylä, is located in Central Finland, and some of them pointed out that learning Swedish would have been easier in the capital region, for example. This also agrees with the study by Kalaja et al. (2011): opportunities for learning Swedish were regarded as scarce, and they were thought to be available mostly in Swedish-speaking areas. The students were aware of the opportunities for learning Swedish, but had not made use of these affordances for many reasons which will be discussed more in detail in the following section.

The fourth major difference was that the goals and objects for learning these languages were different. As the objects were set higher in English, many students felt that it was necessary to learn the language also beyond the classroom in order to reach the goals, whereas in Swedish, it would be possible to obtain the desired language skills at school. Thus, the students seemed to regard the school as the primary context of learning Swedish, whereas their objects in English could not be reached at school alone.

The fifth major difference was the significance of the matriculation examination for learning Swedish beyond the classroom. The matriculation examination had made many of the students put more effort into learning Swedish also beyond the classroom, whereas in English it was not highlighted in the same way. This confirms how English had been naturally present in everyday life and often learnt as a by-product of it, whereas contacts with Swedish had often been for the purpose of learning. However, the role of the matriculation examination altogether was slightly controversial: at the same time, in both languages, there were also doubts about whether it was possible to learn much for the matriculation examination beyond the classroom, as it is focused on grammar, which was learnt more at school. Thus, the students regarded it as necessary to prepare for the matriculation also beyond the classroom, but were not sure whether they could make use of what they had learnt.

However, there were also three major similarities between the activity systems in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom. Firstly, TV or movies were considered the most useful mediating artifacts in both languages by many students, which agrees with the findings by Linnakylä (2010) and Moncrief (2011) that the ways of learning that the students find the most useful are actually those that favour receptive language skills. The reason could be, in addition to their easy availability, that the students always did not regard productive activities as learning. For example, Roope had written comments in English on Facebook, but was doubtful about whether he had learnt anything new. In addition, Liisa highlighted the difference between communicating with friends and watching TV by stating that from TV she had learnt new things the most, whereas communicating with friends had given her more confidence. Thus, productive activities are probably regarded as reinforcing what had already been learnt.

Secondly, the division between what had been learnt at school, and, what had been learnt beyond the school was fairly similar. Both in English and Swedish, the students felt that they had learnt especially vocabulary, such as necessary words connected with their interests, beyond the classroom. In addition, they had learnt reading comprehension and listening comprehension for the matriculation examination. Many of them referred to the importance of learning listening comprehension beyond the

classroom: because they had heard English or Swedish beyond the classroom a great deal, it has also been easy at school. By contrast, grammar, but also a great deal of words, had been learnt at school. This division was shown also in the study by Kalaja et al. (2011: 68).

Thirdly, many students emphasised that also in English, the foundation for learning had been laid down at school, and this knowledge was only used and expanded beyond the classroom. However, they estimated that in the case of English, something new was probably learnt as well. None of the students in the present study felt that he or she would have learnt everything about English beyond the classroom, as some students felt in the study by Kalaja et al. (2011a:). Thus, the students in the present study seemed to value their learning at school as well, and, one of them emphasised that it probably would be impossible to learn English properly on his own. However, the school context seemed to be much more important for Swedish, as some students highlighted that now that they had finished their courses in Swedish at school, it was necessary to maintain the language skills beyond the classroom, which once again shows how they had mainly connected the language with the school context.

7.3 Reasons for being active or passive

The aim of looking at the factors that enhanced and restricted learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom was to make an attempt to find out the students had been active or passive in using and learning English or Swedish beyond the classroom. One of the core principles of activity theory is that human agency is closely linked with the significance that people give to different items and matters (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 146) and it could clearly be seen in the answers: how ready a student was to put effort into learning English or Swedish depended to a great extent on what kind of significance the language had for him or her, even though, for instance, confidence in one's own skills was also a significant factor which regulated the encounters with the language. As in the studies by Kim (2008) and Ahn (2009) beliefs about learning were significant factors in being active or passive. It can be argued that fairly similarly with the study by Allen (2010), it often seemed that the way in which an individual engaged

in language learning activity had on impact on the context rather than the context had on the learner.

The reasons for being active in learning English were fairly identical: mediating artifacts had been easily available, the community had supported learning and most importantly, the students' goals had been set high, because they regarded English as important for their future (Table 9). Two of them even mentioned that they wanted to achieve near-native skills, and, one wanted his English to be on the same level with his Finnish. The importance of goals highlights the fact that the goals mediate between the subject and the object as well (Kim 2009: 277): for example, Toni was planning a career in Britain, and, this goal motivated him to put effort into learning English also beyond the classroom, in order to reach the distant object of near-native pronunciation. For Netta and Toni, English also seemed to be a part of their identity: sometimes using English felt more natural than Finnish. Both Netta and Toni had clear goals and they were committed to them. To sum up, the factors that enhanced learning English included the beliefs about the ease of learning English, support from the community and having the goals set high. This is in line with Kim (2009): motivation for learning seemed to increase if the community patrolled and guided motivation, and the goals were internalised.

By contrast, in learning Swedish beyond the classroom, the matriculation examination was the major factor that had made the students put effort into finding opportunities to learn Swedish. Thus, it was an important goal for their learning of Swedish, also beyond the classroom. It can be compared with the role of the school exams for students in the studies by Kim (2008) and Ahn (2009). In the South-Korean context, the ultimate goal of learning English was passing school exams, and, it can be argued that the matriculation examination had a similar role for many students in the present study: the matriculation examination was, actually, the goal of their activities connected with Swedish, which, of course, is at the same time an investment in the future, and, thus, in connection with the working life, for instance.

The reasons why the students had been passive in learning Swedish beyond the classroom were more versatile. Kalaja et al. (2011a: 73) have speculated what kind of factors have an effect on whether the students are active or passive in making use of the affordances available, and, in the present study, many of them could be observed. Firstly, the students believed that learning Swedish beyond the classroom was not necessary for them personally, as they had felt it could be learnt at school or that their goals could be reached at school. Secondly, some students also felt that they would not need it in the future or referred to the beliefs about compulsory Swedish that they had learnt during the grades 7-9. Thirdly, sometimes also a lack of confidence in their skills had prevented the students from communicating in Swedish. In addition, the students had the goals set high in English and invested their efforts into it, instead of Swedish. Thus, the reasons were versatile and reflected the beliefs of the individuals and surrounding community.

However, Janita had different relations to the languages than the others, and analysing her activity systems indicated some important factors that affect whether a learner is active or passive. Importantly, for her the connection between the goals, community and subject was not as straightforward, as, for example, in the study by Kim (2009). Janita had not been active in finding opportunities for learning English and felt that learning English had been difficult, even though her community had supported her in learning in many ways and she felt that she would need English also in her future, if not at work, in connection with her interest, politics. The main reason for this seemed to be her lack of confidence in her skills, which had its roots in the negative experiences of learning English, as she had lagged behind in learning in grades 7-9. She also compared herself with her friends who had learnt more English in connection with their free time activities, such as watching movies or playing computer games. Because Janita was not interested in those activities, she felt that it was not easy for her to learn English. Thus, the beliefs about the ease of learning English beyond the classroom had, actually, turned against Janita: because she was not learning English as much as others, she had felt inferior. In addition, the case of Janita highlights how the experiences of learning a language at school have an effect on how willing a student is to continue learning beyond the classroom.

By contrast, learning Swedish beyond the classroom had been an empowering experience for Janita: as there were students who were weaker in Swedish, having a good command of Swedish gave her self-confidence, and she felt that she had been able to make use of what she had learnt beyond the classroom also at school. Her learning had been promoted by many factors: positive attitudes, contacts with Swedish-speaking people through her hobbies and participation in the matriculation examination and her desire to use Swedish also in the future. Furthermore, importantly, she felt she had a good foundation on which to build as her learning of Swedish had been effective right from the beginning. She had maintained her will to learn Swedish despite the negative attitudes that some members of her community had towards the Swedish language. Moreover, like the successful learners in the study by Green-Vänttinen et al. (2010), she had also been creative in finding opportunities to learn, also in the context of Jyväskylä: she had sometimes talked Swedish with her Finnish-speaking friends. Altogether, she had been able to make use of the affordances available for learning Swedish.

7.4 Implications of the study

Overall, the present study indicated that there were significant differences between learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom, but also similarities, and thus, confirmed the findings of the study by Kalaja et al. (2011a and 2011b). The study indicated that learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom is affected by several individual, social and educational factors, and, extremely strongly by the beliefs that learners have about the languages and learning them. In this section, some of the most important factors that were evident in the study will be discussed further.

Firstly, most students in the present study had been more active in making use of the affordances to use and learn English than to learn Swedish. They emphasised that finding opportunities to learn Swedish beyond the classroom would require effort, and, for many reasons, had not been ready to put that effort into learning Swedish also beyond the classroom. This, naturally, raises the question of how to motivate students to use Swedish also beyond the classroom. One way is, of course, to inform students about different possibilities of learning Swedish, as it seemed that the mediating artifacts mentioned by the students had been rather similar. However, the students seemed to be

aware of the affordances, but had not made use of these. Thus, the question of affecting beliefs behind these decisions is a more difficult question.

Secondly, the case of Janita and how she perceived learning English beyond the classroom as difficult raised the question of supporting weaker students in learning English beyond the classroom, so that they could also have feelings of success in their contacts with English beyond the classroom. For example, Janita had found some of the materials that her teachers had recommended as too challenging. In addition, Janita felt that as she had not liked playing computer games or watching movies in English, she had not learnt English as much as her friends beyond the classroom. Thus, popular beliefs about the ease of learning English and the ways in which it is learnt best beyond the classroom may reduce some students' motivation to study it beyond the classroom. Therefore, students should be helped to find their own ways of learning, because learning beyond the classroom provides excellent possibilities for this and builds a foundation for life-long learning.

Thirdly, the study also indicated that the gap between the classroom and the activities beyond the classroom is not completely bridged. The students did not always appreciate their experiences as learning. Even Toni, who had been active in using English beyond the classroom and for whom learning English had even been an empowering experience, felt that at school the special skills could only be made use of in composing essays. Thus, more ways to bring school and learning in one's free time closer to each other should be found. For example, by bringing free time activities into the classroom in different forms: also free time activities, which promote productive skills would be important in Swedish, where the language has mostly been used receptively beyond the classroom.

8 CONCLUSION

The aim of the present study was to shed light on the upper secondary school students' learning of English and Swedish beyond the classroom from the perspective of the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999). The purpose was to find out by looking at their activity systems, firstly, whether they can be characterised predominantly as learners or users of English and Swedish beyond the classroom, secondly, what kind of differences and similarities there were in their activity systems in learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom, and, thirdly, also to make an attempt to answer what kind of factors enhanced or restricted learning. The data consisted of six semi-structured interviews and was analysed by the means of qualitative content analysis. Overall, the findings of the present study indicated that Finnish upper secondary school students learn and use English and Swedish in different ways beyond the classroom, even though they live in the same town, and, basically, have the same affordances available.

In the present study, learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom was approached from a new perspective, as the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) has not been employed in connection with learning L2 beyond the classroom earlier. The human activity system model takes into account personal, social and institutional factors, and, thus, sees learning as an entity. This was its strength and weakness at the same time: on the one hand, employing it was rather challenging as several factors had to be taken into account at the same time, but, on the other hand, it served as an analytic framework which enabled analysing the phenomenon systematically. The present study would have been more concise and a more in-depth analysis would have been possible, if it had focused on looking at the relationship between, for example, goals and mediating artifacts. This would have made it possible to describe these in more detail and also the contradictions within them could have been explored more extensively. However, according to the original idea by Engeström (1987), the human activity system is meant to be looked at as whole, not merely as separate connections, and, furthermore, in the present study the aim was to give a holistic picture of the phenomenon, and, thus looking at all components of activity system suited the purpose.

The data was collected through semi-structured interviews. Interviewing was a good way of collecting data for the present study, as it gave an opportunity to make clarifying questions and ask for elaborations. The participants were willing to reflect on the issues, and, as a result, a great deal of data was collected. The data collected through interviews enabled illustrating activity systems as the students perceived them. However, in order to make the descriptions of activity systems more comprehensive, it would have been good to make use of also other ways of collecting data. The earlier studies employing human activity system (e.g. Ahn 2009) have made use of multiple ways of collecting data, and interviews have been only one part of them. In the present study, it might have been useful to employ a short questionnaire in the beginning of the interview, where the participants would have been asked about their contacts with English and Swedish beyond the classroom. It would have activated them to think about their use of English and Swedish, and, probably, helped them to provide even more in-depth answers. Use of journals may have been another useful way of collecting data, where the participants would have daily written down what kind of encounters they had had, and these would have been discussed in the interviews. Also Benson (2001: 203) has suggested keeping journals of activities and feelings as an alternative. Data triangulation would have also increased the reliability and internal validity of the study (Merriam 1998: 207).

Interviews as a method of collecting data also have disadvantages. Because the interview situation does not allow anonymity, it is possible that the participants tried to present themselves in a better light (Dörnyei 2007: 143-144), and were not willing to describe their negative attitudes, experiences or feelings. It can be that the students were not willing to express their opinions about the roles English and Swedish in their life freely as the interviews were conducted in school premises. In addition, retrospective interviews include a risk that the nature of the learning experience may be changed over time (Benson 2001: 203). For example, some of the participants had already finished their courses in English and Swedish at school, and, this might have made it difficult to reflect on the advice from teachers, for instance.

Moreover, it must be noted that the participants of the study may have been from socio-economically privileged backgrounds and there were not many weak students in the study. However, in case studies, having many participants increases the sense of representativeness or variation among cases (Duff 2008: 22, 36), and, in the present study, six cases were looked at and, thus, there was also variation in their experiences and beliefs.

Furthermore, learning languages beyond the classroom is a complex matter to be studied. It can be difficult for students to discuss, for example, the outcome of their learning, as learning beyond the classroom may not be recognised as learning at all. In addition, the term "using a language" can be understood differently and, this may have an impact on the validity of the study. However, in the present study, also "encounters with the language" were discussed in addition to "using a language", and, if the participant was hesitating, some prompts were given in order to get the participant think about even the most minimal encounters. Furthermore, English and Swedish have a different status and historical background in Finland. The discourses around them are different: useful English is often contrasted with "compulsory Swedish". Thus, there was a risk that the participants would have contrasted them strongly in the interviews as well, and, thus, could not focus on reflecting on one language at a time. In order to avoid this, the interview frame was planned so that one language was discussed at a time.

The data was analysed by means of content analysis. In the analysis, the data was classified based on which components of the activity system they belonged. This made the analysis challenging. There was not a model available for identifying the different components of the activity system, and, this grouping had to be made with the help of earlier studies which have been conducted on different themes (Kim 2008, Ahn 2009, Kim 2009 and 2011) and many of the categorisations were based on the researcher's own ideas. The issues were complicated further by the fact that the same issues may belong to several components. Moreover, it proved useful to include also the matriculation examination, teachers and what had been learnt at school into the activity systems, because they were factors of great significance. In addition, identifying the contradictions was challenging, because it was not always clear which components

where in contradiction with each other. Thus, some contradictions may have been missed in the analysis. Furthermore, the inexperience of the researcher might have had an effect on the analysis of the data by increasing the subjectivity which is a general concern in analysing qualitative data. To prevent it, plenty of excerpts from the interviews were provided. In order to increase the reliability of the findings, the method of analysing the data was explained in detail when describing the research design.

The present study was conducted as a qualitative case study, and, therefore, the aim was to provide an in-depth analysis of the phenomenon. Having a small number of participants enabled analysing their activity systems individually and thoroughly. In case studies, it is possible to focus on an individual in a way which usually is not possible when studying groups (Mackey and Gass 2005: 171-172). The study succeeded in illustrating in detail how upper secondary school students encounter English and Swedish as learners and users beyond the classroom as well as what kind of differences, but also similarities there are in their activity systems in learning these two languages. The study also shed light on the reasons why students are active or passive in learning these languages beyond the classroom. The findings raise many questions of relevance for language teachers, for instance, about supporting students in learning these languages beyond the classroom and about how to bridge the gap between activities at school and beyond the classroom. Furthermore, applying the human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) also provided a new way of approaching the issue. As the model has not been employed in Finland earlier, the way in which it was employed in the present study will also give ideas for the possible further research on the model. In the present study, the model helped in analysing the versatile and wide phenomenon systematically.

In the future, there is a great need for more studies on learning English and Swedish beyond the classroom. It would be interesting to find out about how learners in Swedish-speaking areas of Finland see these languages. In addition, it would be useful to look at how students who are low-achievers in languages at school perceive learning these languages beyond the classroom, as there have not been many studies on this yet. The human activity system model (Engeström 1987, 1999) has seldom been employed in connection with L2. It would also be an interesting challenge to look at motivation in

learning languages from the perspective of the human activity system model, for example, by focusing of the analysis on the relationship between subject, goals and community, as in the study by Kim (2009). Furthermore, especially the connections between learning in the classroom and beyond the classroom should be explored more in order to find ways to bridge the gap between them, and, thus, it might be beneficial to compare activity systems at school and beyond the classroom, and what kind of contradictions there might be between these systems.

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APPENDIX 1: Consent to the study

TUTKIMUSLUPA

Hei!

Opiskelen englannin ja ruotsin opettajaksi Jyväskylän yliopistossa. Teen pro gradu -tutkielmaani lukiolaisten englannin ja ruotsin kielten oppimisesta koulun ulkopuolella.

Tutkimuksen aineisto kerätään haastatteluilla. Haastattelut nauhoitetaan. Haastatteluissa annettuja tietoja käytetään ehdottoman luottamuksellisesti. Haastateltavien henkilöllisyys ei paljastu missään vaiheessa tutkimuksen tekoa eikä myöskään raportoinnin yhteydessä. Haastattelussa annettuja tietoja käytetään ainoastaan tutkimustarkoituksiin.

Kiitos osallistumisestasi haastatteluun!

Jos Sinulla on kysyttävää tutkimukseen liittyen, vastaan mielelläni kysymyksiin.

Ystävällisin terveisin,

Tarja Fagerlund

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TUTKIMUSLUPA

Minä _____ suostun haastatteluun ja siihen, että haastattelu nauhoitetaan. Annan myös luvan käyttää haastattelussa antamiani tietoja tutkimustarkoituksiin.

Haastatteluissa annettuja tietoja käytetään ehdottoman luottamuksellisesti. Haastateltavien henkilöllisyys ei paljastu missään vaiheessa tutkimuksen tekoa eikä myöskään raportoinnin yhteydessä. Haastattelussa annettuja tietoja käytetään ainoastaan tutkimustarkoituksiin.

_____

Päivämäärä ja paikka Allekirjoitus

APPENDIX 2: Interview schedule

HAASTATTELURUNKO

Haastattelussa on samat kysymykset koskien englannin oppimista koulun ulkopuolella ja ruotsin oppimista koulun ulkopuolella. Aloitamme englannilla.

Englannin oppiminen koulun ulkopuolella

Haastateltavan taustatiedot (subject)

- Minkä ikäinen olet?
- Milloin olet aloittanut englannin opiskelun?
- Aiotko kirjoittaa englannin ylioppilaskirjoituksissa? Milloin?

Oppimisessa käytetyt välineet (mediating artifacts), kokemukset opitusta (outcome)

- Käytätkö englantia koulun ulkopuolella? Missä? Kuinka usein? Huomioi pienetkin kohtaamiset.
- Oletko mielestäsi oppinut englantia koulun ulkopuolella?
- Millaisia asioita olet oppinut koulun ulkopuolella?
- Miten olet oppinut englantia eniten, eli mikä on ollut hyödyllisintä oppimisen kannalta? Miksi?
- Miten olet oppinut eniten
    - luetunymmärtämistä, kuullunymmärtämistä, puhumista, kirjoitusta, kulttuurintuntemusta, omien taitojen tuntemusta?
- Mitä asioita olet oppinut englannin tunneilla koulussa, joita et olisi oppinut koulun ulkopuolella?

Oppimista edistävät ja rajoittavat tekijät (rules)

- Onko sinusta helppoa vai vaikeaa oppia englantia koulun ulkopuolella? Miksi?
- Millaista koulun ulkopuolella tapahtuva englannin oppiminen on verrattuna oppimiseen koulussa?

Tavoitteet kielen oppimiselle (**goals)**

- Tarvitsetko tulevaisuudessa englannin kieltä? Missä?
- Millaisen kielitaidon haluat saavuttaa?
- Pyritkö kehittämään kielitaitoasi koulun ulkopuolella saavuttaaksesi tavoitteesi? Miten?
- Oletko oppinut jotain koulun ulkopuolella ylioppilaskirjoituksia ajatellen? Mitä, anna esimerkkejä.

Yhteisö (community) ja työnjako (division of labour)

- Ovatko opettajat kannustaneet tai ohjanneet englannin opiskeluun koulun ulkopuolella? Miten?
- Oletko voinut hyödyntää koulun ulkopuolella oppimaasi koulussa? Anna esimerkkejä.

- Tuetaanko kotonasi englannin opiskelua koulun ulkopuolella? Miten?
- Ovatko kaverisi mukana englannin opiskelussa koulun ulkopuolella? Miten? Asenteet?
- Ketkä ovat olleet tärkeitä henkilöitä, kun ajattelet englannin oppimista koulun ulkopuolella? Voit mainita myös julkisuuden henkilöitä.

Vastaa vielä seuraaviin kysymyksiin englannin osalta:

- Käsitykset itsestä: Arvioi itseäsi englannissa kouluasteikolla 4-10 ja perustele valintasi.
    1. puhujana. 2. kirjoittajana 3. lukijana 4. kuuntelijana
- Mikä on viimeisin kouluarvosanasi englannissa?

<u>Ruotsin oppiminen koulun ulkopuolella</u>

Haastateltavan taustatiedot (subject)

- Milloin olet aloittanut ruotsin opiskelun?
- Aiotko kirjoittaa ruotsin ylioppilaskirjoituksissa? Milloin?

Oppimisessa käytetyt välineet (mediating artifacts), kokemukset opitusta (outcome)

- Käytätkö ruotsia koulun ulkopuolella? Missä? Kuinka usein? Huomioi pienetkin kohtaamiset.
- Oletko mielestäsi oppinut ruotsia koulun ulkopuolella?
- Millaisia asioita olet oppinut koulun ulkopuolella?
- Miten olet oppinut ruotsia eniten, eli mikä on ollut hyödyllisintä oppimisen kannalta? Miksi?
- Miten olet oppinut eniten
    - luetunymmärtämistä, kuullunymmärtämistä, puhumista, kirjoitusta, kulttuurintuntemusta, omien taitojen tuntemusta?
- Mitä asioita olet oppinut ruotsin tunneilla koulussa, joita et olisi oppinut koulun ulkopuolella?

Oppimista edistävät ja rajoittavat tekijät (rules)

- Onko sinusta helppoa vai vaikeaa oppia ruotsia koulun ulkopuolella? Miksi?
- Millaista koulun ulkopuolella tapahtuva ruotsin oppiminen on verrattuna oppimiseen koulussa?

Tavoitteet kielen oppimiselle (**goals)**

- Tarvitsetko tulevaisuudessa ruotsin kieltä? Missä?
- Millaisen kielitaidon haluat saavuttaa?
- Pyritkö kehittämään kielitaitoasi koulun ulkopuolella saavuttaaksesi tavoitteesi? Miten?
- Oletko oppinut jotain koulun ulkopuolella ylioppilaskirjoituksia ajatellen? Mitä, anna esimerkkejä.

Yhteisö (community) ja työnjako (division of labour)

- Ovatko opettajat kannustaneet tai ohjanneet ruotsin opiskeluun koulun ulkopuolella? Miten?

- Oletko voinut hyödyntää koulun ulkopuolella oppimaasi koulussa? Anna esimerkkejä.
- Tuetaanko kotonasi ruotsin opiskelua koulun ulkopuolella? Miten?
- Ovatko kaverisi mukana ruotsin opiskelussa koulun ulkopuolella? Miten? Asenteet?
- Ketkä ovat olleet tärkeitä henkilöitä, kun ajattelet ruotsin oppimista koulun ulkopuolella? Voit mainita myös julkisuuden henkilöitä.

Vastaa vielä seuraaviin kysymyksiin ruotsin osalta:

- Käsitykset itsestä: Arvioi itseäsi ruotsissa kouluasteikolla 4-10 ja perustele valintasi.
    1. puhujana. 2. kirjoittajana 3. lukijana 4. kuuntelijana
- Mikä on viimeisin kouluarvosanasi ruotsissa?

Lopuksi vielä molemmista kielistä yhteisesti

- Onko englannin ja ruotsin oppimisessa vapaa-ajalla eroja? Anna esimerkkejä.
- Mistä mahdollinen ero mielestäsi johtuu?

APPENDIX 3: Interview transcription notes

full stop (.) = a longer pause, end of a speech section

comma (,) = short pause, question

three full stops in brackets (…) = there has been speech before or after the extract

(xx), (xx) = unclear speech

((nauraa)) = clarifications by the interviewer

APPENDIX 4: English translations for the interview extracts

(1) It's daily and many times a day, sometimes I listen to the radio in English, that's what I do at least every week, and, of course, I watch TV daily and read some articles or newspapers on the Internet as often as every day.

(2) I think that my way of learning is (---) quite centred on hearing. When I listen, things stick to my head, such as sentence structures from grammar, and, what sounds right, for example.

(3) You wouldn't learn if you just sat at school (---) a couple of hours a week (---). It's only after you continue learning beyond the classroom when you first begin to see the results, and, in the matriculation examination, it is probably impossible for you to get the best marks if you merely rely on what you have learnt at school, learning on your own is needed pretty much there.

(4) It's fairly easy, it happens just by itself, when I'm doing everyday things and entertaining myself with movies and such. I'm not thinking that "o, now I'm learning English". It just happens, quite naturally.

(5) Yes, of course, quite much English sticks to me from the media.

(6) And when I for example read some books (---) in English and come across some new words and start to check them in dictionaries I learn well in that way.

(7) Yes, and I have a such source of motivation that my sister is studying to become a translator in English and she encourages me all the time, brings me books and other things, so that gives also to me energy for learning.

(8) Mom and dad (---) if I have sometimes been desperate and felt that I have no longer energy for studying and that I am not good at it, they have always helped me so that I can move on.

(9) Well, sometimes if I'm on a cruise to Sweden or on a weekend trip in Sweden, I may have had courage to use Swedish for example in a shop and that's when I've noticed where my limits are.

(10) Maybe when I had the matriculation exam, I put more effort into learning ((Swedish)) beyond the classroom.

(11) Well, I searched on the Internet for artists who sing in Swedish and listened to music on YouTube, I started to search for the music that I liked in that way (---). I rent movies in Swedish and watched them, and maybe I also listened to Swedish on online radio channels.

(12) I don't know if I have learnt anything new about Swedish beyond the classroom, but probably I have got some confidence in my skills and fluency, so having at least some contact with the Swedish language beyond the classroom has made schoolwork easier.

(13) Well, it's pretty challenging because I hear the language rather little beyond the classroom. There's not much Swedish on TV as far as I know, or, of course, I could watch Swedish-speaking TV channels, but I don't watch them simply for fun, I would

watch them more because of wanting to learn. It's pretty challenging, because I don't hear it much unless I search for it myself.

(14) Maybe I haven't felt a great need for it, even though it would be important. Somehow I have felt that is possible for me to learn the language at school as well, even though it might be an illusion, however, learning Swedish would require more effort, so English comes more by itself, there's more supply in English.

(15) I have acquired pronunciation probably mostly from TV shows, even though it is taught at school as well. I hear it so much on TV so it's mostly from there that I've acquired it.

(16) I've written in English on Facebook but I feel that I haven't learnt much from it. I have only used the skills I've got.

(17) (---) The matriculation exam is focused on grammar and you come across those grammatical issues more at school than elsewhere, so you probably learn them better at school.

(18) Well, of course, so that there are not so many theoretical things, you just use what you've learnt at school. (---) You sort of need to do more by yourself, for example, when speaking, you don't have a special situation like at school that "now talk about this", instead, you talk about whatever happens to the topic. Maybe it's more difficult, but at the same time you learn a lot.

(19) Newspapers in Swedish are available but I've never bought those. I don't have many ((Swedish-speaking)) friends or relatives, or, actually I do have Swedish-speaking relatives, but I haven't met them often, and, because they can speak Finnish anyway, we haven't had conversations in Swedish, there just simply aren't so many situations ((where I would need Swedish)).

(20) Well, about everything ((laugh)), I haven't learnt it much elsewhere, so I've probably learnt everything at school, such as grammar and most words, of course.

(21) Well, pretty difficult, because there are not many situations where I would need it, but it would be possible to learn it if I wanted to, there are no obstacles for it, it's not that difficult, if I just wanted to learn it, I just haven't considered it so important that I would have done it more.

(22) People anyway also speak it somewhere in Finland and all Finns have studied it for some time and everyone can it to some extent and newspapers and books would be easily available and there's a TV channel in Swedish and radio stations, so that it would be possible to hear it and read it and whatever if I wanted to.

(23) Well, it's hard to say, maybe I need it somewhere. It's anyway useful that I've studied it. (---) People check the mark that I've got from the matriculation exam but it does not mean that I would need it anywhere, but if I visit Sweden some time, I will probably need it there, and it makes a good impression if I can it, for example, if there are Swedish-speaking people on the work place, and, then I could speak Swedish with them. It doesn't do any harm, but you never know if there will be situations like that.

(24) English and Swedish are quite easy languages in principle and also therefore I could learn them also beyond the classroom (---) in English and Swedish I would have a really good possibility to develop my skills.

(25) I've got somehow so different attitudes towards these languages that it's silly.

(26) Because we are, anyway, here in central Finland, there are not so many situations in English and Swedish ((in everyday life))

(27) Of course, every time I have to meet someone and speak with him or her, I learn at least a little.

(28) I may have grasped some words when listening to people speak in movies or then I have listened to the dance teachers tell us some things about the human body. It has always been really nice to understand what they are saying.

(29) Maybe in those situations when I haven't understood something, I have remembered that my skills aren't so good, or, it makes me frustrated when something remains unclear. It makes me think that I should study more.

(30) Well, it's quite difficult, or, of course, it depends much on how active you are, but I have never ended up or liked playing games in English or reading magazines or anything because I feel that I'm not good at English. Therefore, it has been difficult for me, but if I was active and watched movies and things like that which I probably should start doing now as I will have the matriculation exam in the spring, I would learn.

(31) Well, maybe what you learn beyond the classroom is more everyday and practical, whereas at school you go through grammar and what's important, but it's more about life that you learn beyond the classroom.

(32) It would be useful if, for example, teachers would encourage that "start in this way, try to translate lyrics into Finnish, or watch these easy movies" because it's difficult to get started by watching Harry Potter movies, when you don't understand the vocabulary, such as Hogwarts, and all the other words that there are.

(33) I feel that Jyväskylä is so in the middle of everything that you don't need to speak Swedish or Russian here, but because I'm in the youth council, we have meetings with Finnish Swedish-speaking people.

(34) We have those (---) visiting teachers so they may speak Swedish and I understand them and maybe comment on something too. I also have a Swedish-speaking friend in Finland, who always says to things like "jag saknar dig"((I miss you)) and I'm always like "miss you too".

(35) (---) Maybe sometimes on the radio when I browse through the stations, I may stop at YLE Vega or sometimes I watch BUU-klubben, for example, just when I end up on that TV channel.

(36) Well, sometimes when I'm chatting with my Finnish Swedish-speaking friends and think about how to say something in Swedish (---) my friend always understands me and says in Finnish if it wasn't correct and tells me how it should be. Maybe that's how I've learnt the most. By writing small everyday things.

(37) I would learn also Swedish if I put a little effort into reading or listening it, but of course, the same is true about English as well: if I put more effort into learning it, I would learn it, but it is especially here in Central Finland more difficult than, for example, in the capital region where you every day come across it. There are also all signs on the streets in many languages but not here.

(38) Especially now when I no longer have lessons in Swedish at school I have to try to maintain my language skills (---) for that everything that I've eagerly studied for the matriculation examination in the autumn wouldn't go wasted.

(39) (---) Some of them are like "I took the compulsory courses, my average mark was five and I'm not going to say a word in Swedish". A friend of mine who always texts me in English would no longer text me if I replied to her in Swedish. She is always like "Swedish NO NO NO, I really don't want to speak it".

(40) Well, I've learnt listening comprehension almost completely beyond the classroom, from TV, for example.

(41) Maybe without noticing from movies, for instance, that's where the listening skills have mostly been learnt from.

(42) Of course, if you really wanted to study or learn it, it would be really quite difficult. Nobody is teaching you and you need to know how to teach it to yourself. It can be a bit more challenging than at school. Of course, you learn more easily, if you have someone to teach you.

(43) Well, I want it to be fluent and have such skills that I can speak it in the same way as Finnish. It would be good to master two languages, for example Finnish and English, equally well, so that I could speak the language I want.

(44) They always emphasise that it's the crux of the matter that learning is not limited to school, instead, you need to learn it also elsewhere, as much as possible.

(45) I've been maybe a bit sad for not learning so much because, principally, I would have had good possibilities to learn it well, but we have always just spoken Finnish, and, therefore, I haven't learnt it so well.

(46) Well, I thought I would enjoy the freedom of not being forced to take the test. I found the subjects that suit me better and I did not want to have any extra stress by adding the test of Swedish there.

(47) Maybe it would have motivated me to learn it. (---) Well, I would have needed to start systematically to learn it.

(48) (---) Because I don't take the test of Swedish as part of the matriculation exam, I don't know where I would need Swedish. Well, I may need it somewhere here in Finland, but I know that I can mostly manage well in English, and, therefore, I haven't aimed at learning to speak Swedish so well.

(49) Well, it's, at least for me, quite unintentional learning, for example, from the relatives. I have learnt some things by accident, even though I hadn't especially aimed at learning. Learning at school can be characterised as "studying because you have to study".

(50) I feel that I've reached the goals I've set myself already at school and, therefore, I don't need to put much effort into it beyond the classroom.

(51) Now as I think about it afterwards, it would have been nice to learn to speak Swedish ever since I was little, but I don't know about it actually, because as I have only used to using it at school, I don't see a need for it in the future.

(52) Well, I won't need support in the future anymore, because I won't need Swedish in the future, I know the basics and that's enough for me.

(53) My friends have taken the test of Swedish as part of the matriculation exam lately and will continue next spring, and, for example, when we've driven somewhere in my car, some of them have said that "choose a Swedish-speaking radio station" and things like that, so, they have more motivation for studying it.

(54) I personally have more motivation for studying it ((English)).

(55) It's probably a combination of hearing the music and seeing the lyrics written, so in that way I can make the conclusion that these words are pronounced in this way and at the same I learn the spelling.

(56) Vocabulary (---) I sort of know it already beforehand, I don't need to study it so much.

(57) I kind of understand pretty difficult speech as well (---) I have tried to learn Scottish accent, for instance.

(58) (---) I've got a quite strong basis on which to build and it is easy to connect more words on it and understand words on that basis. (---) If I encounter new words, it is easy to infer their meanings from the context and so on.

(59) At school, I have to study some things, but at free time I just *learn* ((emphasised)) them. I just realise that now I understand this, I understand what is said here (---) It is not as instructed as at school.

(60) Because you don't need it here, you don't end up using it here.

(61) Quite difficult, especially, because you need to put more effort into it.

(62) Because I don't actually like the Swedish language, as Swedish is spoken only in Sweden, and, therefore, it has a limited use in some way, so I rather aim at learning English and French, which have clearly more use.

(63) Swedish is not as interesting as English. (---) I don't have similar goals in the Swedish language as in the English language.

(64) (---) It has always been so that you must learn Swedish. (---) You must learn English too, but you hear it so much also beyond the classroom, it is in a way natural.

(65) Something that would make the Swedish language more interesting and useful.

(66) Something practical, so that if there would be, for example, music in Swedish that I would like. It would be good, but at least I haven't encountered it.

(67) I like the English language so much. (---) Sometimes it feels much more natural to say something in English than in Finnish so I sometimes say it in English.

(68) I notice that the others don't know but I know.

(69) Well, I think it's mostly vocabulary, because there are many kinds of texts. There are mostly different tasks, always an introduction of what you need to do. (---) There are quite many different words and they can be connected with many things, so I've learnt words from there, and, when I'm taking part in dialogues, I may guess what they might say, and, I would say it exactly in the same way.

(70) Special skills can probably be seen only in essays, not otherwise.

(71) Especially, when there was an assignment in the exam where I had to interview someone, I think that I remembered some of the answers from the games, that is, I tried to remember how some questions had been formulated in the game and so I got confirmation that my answer was correct.

(72) It's more relaxed and more spontaneous, and, you easily become motivated, nothing is forcing you to do it.

(73) There are all kinds of new words and they are interesting, I just acquire them.

(74) Learning beyond the classroom is probably slow, but little by little.

(75) I probably aim at car business and as it is pretty small-scaled here in Finland, I will probably search for a job in Britain, so that's where I likely will make use of the English language.

(76) When I'm writing in English, I aim all the time at it would be correct.

(77) And I always correct when there are mistakes.

(78) If I need something, I ask my mum, she knows everything as well as it's possible about that.

(79) I've watched Top Gear and the people there have had an effect on how my skills in English have developed.

(80) It's exactly because I don't know the Swedish language much. We would not be able to have a conversation, as I would have to go and check every word if I tried to speak.

(81) Not at all, I think, unless someone has spoken Swedish on TV, but I'm not sure, I think I wouldn't understand anything about it anymore either.

(82) I just feel it's not necessary. Since grades 7-9, I've had the attitude that it's not useful and nobody has energy to study it. You can't reach the others here in the upper secondary school ((grades 10-12)), if you have lagged behind in learning it earlier, you just can't do well in it, because here everything goes on so fast, you can't reach the others unless you work very hard for it.

(83) It's difficult, I don't have the motivation for it, I have no interest in it. I study it only if someone forces me to do it.

(84) (---) It's minimal and equally bad (---) It's fairly meaningless, it does not have an effect on anything.

(85) I will probably meet Swedish people in my job someday, you never know if I ended up working in Sweden and there I would need to use the languages.

(86) I don't actually have a goal. If I just got along in Sweden somehow, like that I would find a bus station and such, if I just got along, it would be enough.

(87) Yes, they ((the teachers)) have probably said that it might be good to do something, but I haven't done it.

(88) Yes, they ((the parents)) have put a pressure on me, motivated and told me why it would be good to study it and such, they would give everything they've got if I just tried to study it.

(89) I study English every day, hear all kinds of things from somewhere, the Swedish language not at all, that's the major difference.