UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE CHANGES AND
CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH IN FINLAND

A Pro Gradu Thesis in English

By

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Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on selvittää englannin kielen opettajien näkemyksiä ja asenteita koulun muutokseen liittyen. Opettajien asenteet ovat tärkeitä koulun muutoksessa, koska he ovat viime kädessä vastuussa muutosten käyttöönotosta. Tutkimuksen aineisto koostuu 50 kyselylomakevastauksesta sekä kuudesta 25-40 minuutin puolistrukturoidusta haastattelusta. Kyselylomakevastauksista tehtiin yhteenveto laskentaohjelmaa apuna käytäen. Kuusi haastateltavaa opettajaa valittiin niiden yhdeksän opettajan joukosta, jotka kyselylomakkeessa ilmoittivat olevansa vapaaehtoisia. Haastattelut litteroitiin ja analysoitiin teemoittain luokittelumenetelmää apuna käyttäen.

Tutkielmassa vastataan kysymyksiin: 1) Minkälainen asenne englannin opettajilla on koulun muutosta kohtaan? Millä tekijöillä on suurin vaikutus näihin asenteisiin? 2) Mitkä asiat ovat opettajan näkökulmasta suurimpia haasteita ja merkittävimpiä muutoksia englannin opettajan työssä? 3) Miten englannin opettajat valmistautuvat näihin haasteisiin sekä tuleviin koulun muutoksiin? Lähtökohtana tutkimukselle on koulun muutos opettajien näkökulmasta.

Tutkimusaineiston perusteella voidaan sanoa, että opettajien asenne koulun muutosta ja uudistuksia kohtaan on pääosin positiivinen ja että suurin osa opettajista pitää koulun muutosta tarpeellisena. On kuitenkin tekijöitä, joilla on selkeä vaikutus opettajien asenteeseen. Muutoksella täytyy ensinnäkin olla hyvät perustelut ja sen täytyy vastata johonkin tarpeeseen. Monet opettajat olivat sitä mieltä, että muutoksen suunnittelijoiden näkemykset koulusta eivät ole realistisia. Muutokseen liittyvän tiedotuksen täytyy olla selkeää ja täydennyskoulutusta tulisi tarjota enemmän. Myös työympäristöllä ja koulun johtamiskulttuurilla on vaikutusta. Aikaisemmissa tutkimuksissa on myös todettu edellä mainituilla tekijöillä olevan vaikutusta opettajien asenteisiin. Pääasiassa englannin opettamisen tulevaisuus nähtiin positiivisena. Suurimmiksi haasteiksi koettiin uusi kansallinen opetussuunnitelma, työmäärän kasvaminen, palkkauksen ongelmat, kuntien heikentynyt taloudellinen tilanne sekä erityishuomiota vaativien oppilaiden määrän kasvu. Tuleviin muutoksiin opettajat valmistautuivat lukemalla ammattikirjallisuutta, osallistumalla kokouksiin ja täydennyskoulutukseen sekä keskustelemalla kollegoiden kanssa.

Tutkimukseen käytetty aineisto on jokseenkin suppea, joten lisätutkimusta tarvitaan, jotta saataisiin enemmän yleistettävissä olevaa tietoa koulun muutoksesta. Tutkielman tulokset viittaavat kuitenkin siihen, että mikäli koulua halutaan uudistaa tehokkaasti, tulisi opettajien näkemykset ottaa paremmin huomioon. Lisäksi olisi hyvä luoda avoin kommunikaatioväylä hallinnon ja opettajien välille.

Asiasanat: teacher perspectives and attitudes, educational change

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1 INTRODUCTION

Everybody has been to school and most of us still have some kind of relationship with school as a parent, a teacher, an administrator or a student. Many of us have also heard that there is something wrong with our school system and educational change is desired. However, one often hears about the not-so-successful educational change efforts. In this study I will take a closer look at language (English) teaching in Finland. To this end I will ask English teachers who are currently working, what they consider to be the biggest changes and challenges in their work, and how they are planning to prepare themselves for the possible changes in the future. Moreover, I am interested in finding out their attitudes towards change. The present study is thus an investigation of teachers' perceptions, views and attitudes. Its field of study is social studies in the sense that it discusses changes in education. Moreover, it is a study of pedagogics. This study is also action research in the sense that I will work in cooperation with teachers in order to develop their working environment.

Educational change has attracted the interest of several scholars in Northern America (e.g. Fullan and Stiegelbauer 1991, Fullan 1994; Sarason 1996 and Hargreaves 1994), but in Finland not many studies have been made. I have not been able to find Finnish studies where teachers' perceptions and opinions are taken into consideration. There are, however, studies such as by Sahlberg (1996) which have investigated the challenges of today's school in general, but there has been no emphasis on teachers' perceptions. Hence, in this study my objective is to emphasize the practical point of view and teachers' personal experiences. This is because, as Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991: 117) put it: "If educational change is to happen, it will require that teachers understand themselves and be understood by others". Moreover, Välijärvi (2005: 110) argues that decisions that concern teachers and education have an effect on the whole society.

Schools change because society changes. Therefore, development in schools is inevitable and necessary. In my opinion, the nature of language teaching is nowadays changing also because of the rapidly developing information and communication technology (among other things). For these reasons, we need to understand the ways in which school staff define and experience problems in their daily work if we want to change some established ways in their daily work and want their co-operation (Sarason 1996: 43). Change and development are extremely stressful for most people. If we knew how teachers perceived change, we might be able to ease their burden and make the inevitable change processes easier. After all, teachers are those who implement the changes in daily practices.

It has been indicated, for instance, by Fullan (1994) that changes from administration to the practical level without the co-operation/understanding of the practical level (e.g. teachers) will most likely be unsuccessful. Society would, therefore, save time and financial resources if changes were implemented efficiently and effectively. In this, teachers are the key. Bailey suggests that "Much more could be done if researchers, policymakers and administrators worked *with* teachers rather than *on* them" (Bailey 2000: 113). I also have a personal motivation to study this particular topic. Like most people, I tend to be very sceptical towards change and development. Hopefully, this study will also help me understand change better and teach me to welcome new ideas open-mindedly instead of rejecting them at once. In addition, if I do become a teacher, this study will help me to prepare myself for the change processes I will face.

One should bear in mind, however, that teachers vary on a number of dimensions: the grade level they teach, the kind of children they teach, their subject matter, experiences as a teacher, type of teacher training background, and sex (Sarason 1996: 185). Not to mention that they are all individuals. Therefore, one problem is that there will be as many opinions as there are

teachers. However, if it is possible to group the answers under a certain number of statements, this research should be considered a success.

My study can provide useful information on the change process for other teachers of English, teacher education, and those administrators who are in charge of planning and implementing changes. With the help of this information, administrators and the masterminds of educational change could improve the implementation of an educational change and, thus, make it more effective and efficient. Consequently, the intention of this thesis is not to try and make every teacher blindly accept and embrace every possible change that comes their way, but rather help them think critically about and reflect on possible changes. Even if a teacher sees a possible change as something negative, she or he should be able to analyse it and decide only after analysing if it indeed is unnecessary or would have negative affect. The point is that teachers cannot avoid change and those who are not comfortable with it could very much profit from reorganizing their ways of handling change. I also aim to discover some factors that would support the teacher in the educational change process.

In chapters 2 and 3 the theoretical framework for this study is presented by first discussing the general context of educational change and then describing the educational change process. In addition, those factors that previous studies have found influential in the success or failure of a change are presented. After the general context, the teachers' role in and attitudes towards educational change are discussed in more detail. Chapter 4 then describes the research questions of and the methodology used in the study. The findings are viewed in chapter 5. The results from the online questionnaire are reported first and then the results from the interview. A summary of the findings and implications are presented in chapter 6. In addition, an overall evaluation of the study is given in chapter 7.

2 EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

In this section and in chapter 3 the theoretical framework will be presented. I will first briefly discuss the context of educational change and what is already known about it. Secondly, I will more specifically discuss what is known about teachers' attitudes and role in the context of educational change, and how they have been studied.

Relevant concepts in this study are educational change, attitude and teacher perspectives. Educational change occurs on several different levels, for instance, there can be a change in national policies or on school or individual levels. For the purposes of this study it is important to find out about the major changes and challenges i.e. those that will, in the teachers' opinion, have the most significant effect on their daily routines.

The second relevant concept, attitude, is defined by the *Collins Cobuild English dictionary* (1999) as "Your attitude to something is the way that you think and feel about it, especially when this shows in the way you behave." Kennedy and Kennedy (1996: 355) define attitude as being "an individual's affective and evaluative response to something". The idea here is that when a person's general attitude is negative, s/he is likely to consider a change more stressful than a person who thinks positively about the change. A negative attitude will probably be hindering or even harmful to the change process. In other words, teachers' emotionas in a context of change are significant to the manner in which they react to and implement a change (van Veen and Sleegers 2006: 106). Kennedy and Kennedy (1996: 351-352), however, point out that as a statement of attitudes does not always lead to a behaviour one might expect, knowing about teachers' attitudes is not enough for enabling successful change. For example, a teacher may claim that their attitude towards in-service training is positive and s/he considers it important but in reality s/he does not participate in in-service training that is offered to

him/her. Kennedy and Kennedy (1996: 352) explain this by arguing that there are other factors that can override attitudes and, thus, result in behaviour that is different from that which might have been predicted. Nevertheless, I think that when the goal is successful educational change, it is important to be aware of teachers' attitudes towards change.

The third relevant concept, teacher perspective, has been studied in great detail. Scholars, however, disagree a great deal on its definition. For the purposes of this study the most useful definition is suggested by Tabachnick and Zeichner (1984: 28). They defined "*teacher perspectives* as the ways in which teachers thought about their work (e.g., purposes, goals, conceptions of children, curriculum) and the ways in which they gave meaning to these beliefs by their behaviour in classrooms."

In addition to educational change, attitude and teacher perspectives, concepts such as administrators, internal and external change are used. Administrators refer not only to headmasters, city or municipality officials who are involved in the educational system but also to policy planners in the Ministry of Education and the Finnish National Board of Education. Internal or self-initiated changes refer to those that teachers alone, or with colleagues, design and implement (Hargreaves 2004: 298). Finally, external changes are those that are introduced by administrators, for example legislated government reforms and reform processes (Hargreaves 2004: 298).

2.1 Context of educational change

The purpose of this section is to discuss the context of educational change in general and to provide the reader a clear view of the context of educational change and what the change process is like and what are the problems in making a successful change in schools.

Society is changing rapidly and the educational system is the only national institution that has the potential to support people in this changing world (Fullan 1994: 20). However, in reality, the school tends to act in an opposite way. In order to change this situation, teachers should start to consider themselves as professionals of the change forces and become change agents (Fullan 1994: 20). Moreover, as schools are supposed to teach children abilities and knowledge that will enable them to cope in society, and as the current practices in schools do not necessarily lead to that goal, it is self-evident that the practices need to be developed and changed.

Hargreaves (1994: 23; see also e.g. Sahlberg 1996 and Sarason 1996) considers the transition from a period of modernity to postmodernity to be a major change of society that also greatly affects the school environment. Hargreaves (1994: 47) argues that the signs of postmodernity include the globalization of economic activity, political relations, information, communications and technology. Thus, the postmodern world brings with it pressures for "greater flexibility, improved responsiveness, speed of change and dispersal of control" (Hargreaves 1994: 33). He distinguishes seven key dimensions of the ironies and paradoxes of postmodernity that are the most important elements of the postmodern society and the most significant for education and teaching: Flexible economies, The paradox of globalization, Dead certainties, The moving mosaic, The boundless self, Safe simulation and Compression of time and space (in detail in Hargreaves 1994: 47-85). I believe that everybody would agree that society is not the same it was when our parents were in early adulthood and also that society will be different twenty years from now. Therefore, the schools should change so that they will be able to teach children to manage in the society of change.

Fullan (1994: 19) claims that the educational system should be directed towards becoming a learning organization. In Fullan's (1994: 19) opinion, schools today handle educational change by merely implementing the latest

educational policy that comes from the administration, whereas in learning organizations educational change would be a way of life and a natural part of work. Indeed, it does seem reasonable to want changes to happen in a "deeper level". To clarify the difference between different levels of educational change, definitions from Evans (1996) and Hargreaves (1994) are given. Evans (1996: 5) differentiates first- and second-order educational changes. The first-order changes refer to changes that aim to improve current practices, whereas second-order changes are systemic and intend to change the whole structure of an organization by modifying its assumptions, aims, roles, and norms (Evans 1996: 5). In Evans' view, the first-order changes are "single, incremental, and isolated" and they do not really change the so-called deeper structures or the school culture (Evans 1996: 5). Hargreaves makes a similar distinction. He suggests that first, there are branch changes "significant, yet specific changes of practise, which teachers can adopt, resist or circumvent, as they arise". Secondly, there are root changes that "address and affect how teaching itself is defined and socially organized" (Hargreaves 1994: 6).

Senge et al. (2000: 9-10) also suggest that schools should become "schools that learn" that is learning organizations. This way schools could keep up with demands of society, such as compensating for the shifts in society and family that affect children and fast changes in the requirements in working world. Senge et al. thus argue that as no one exactly knows what the society will be like in eighteen years creating schools that learn "represents an approach that galvanizes hope" (Senge et al. 2000: 10).

In my opinion, in order to become a learning organization teachers need to act in the way that is proposed by, for example, Välijärvi. He claims (Välijärvi 2005: 114) that in the future teachers constantly need to discover and try out new practices. This reflects the direction in which the working life and the whole society are going to. Well-being in the teaching profession,

experiences of success and enjoyment in one's work require opportunities to develop professionally through the whole career as an on-going process. Otherwise changes in society become a permanent threat to the teachers' capacity to manage their work.

Sarason (1996: 96) argues that when educational change is desired, the change has to alter the existing programmatic regularities; that is the way in which we are used to do things. Sarason further claims (1996: 104) that these programmatic regularities affect our behavioural regularities, which refer to our open behaviours (e.g. laughing, question-asking, writing). The point here is that the existing regularities are supposed to have intended outcomes and that behavioural regularities and their changes are among the most important intended outcomes of programmatic regularities (Sarason 1996: 104). For instance, a teacher may use a certain teaching method because, the intended outcome of this particular method is that the pupils learn better with that method than if something else was used. In Sarason's opinion "the attempt to introduce a change into the school setting usually (if not always) stems from the perception of a regularity that one does not like" (Sarason 1996: 98). When conscious changes are made to programmatic regularities, the goal (intended outcome) is to bring about change to the quality and quantity of behavioural regularities (Sarason 1996: 104).

However, it is difficult for us to recognize or to be able to justify these regularities. Moreover, we are often unable to see or consider other ways of thinking and acting (Sarason 1996: 96). This is rather provocative, but I do believe, however, that there is some truth in this comment. We often do everything the way in which we are used to do them without much reflection and it is difficult to think of new ways or ideas. It is not surprising then that when one attempts to question these regularities one usually gets very emotional reactions from, for example, school staff. What is more, having observed several schools and their existing regularities Sarason (1996: 116)

concludes that there are frequent discrepancies between regularities and intended outcomes. Moreover, these discrepancies are often unknown to the school staff (Sarason 1996: 116) which is very easy to understand and an essential fact in this study, even though its purpose is not to investigate the existing regularities in Finnish schools as such. Teachers and school administrators should reflect on their methods and regularities, think if they lead to the intended outcomes, and recognize possible discrepancies, as they can lead to problems when change is introduced. Sarason says that "what is not recognized or verbalized cannot be dealt with" (Sarason 1996: 110). In this sense it is also important to understand teachers' opinions and views, as they could be very helpful in recognizing the regularities. I also believe that more attention should be paid to teachers and they should be asked to share their views on the issues that should be changed in order to improve the learning environment.

In conclusion, society, schools, existing regularities in schools and school staff form the context of educational change. The rapidly changing society brings with it several challenges to the educational system, because the school has a significant role in teaching children to manage in society (Fullan 1994: 20). To keep up with the changes in society, schools should become learning organizations in which change is a natural part of work and a way of life (Fullan 1994: 19). In order to change schools, school staff should also be aware of the existing regularities and their intended outcomes (Sarason 1996). Understanding the context of change, i.e. society, school, existing regularities and school staff, is important in discussing educational change.

2.2 Educational change process

A change process is very complex: there are several inevitable surprising factors that may have an effect on it. These include, for example, government policy changes, migration, and the economic situation of the country (Fullan

1994: 40). Moreover, nobody is able to foresee how these factors affect the change process. However, Fullan (1994: 41) claims that complexity, dynamics, and unpredictability are not just intervening variables but, in fact, an essential part of the process. He also adds that the goal for those facing change is to learn to experience and think of the change processes as series of events in which dynamic phenomena affect one another (Fullan 1994:42).

Figure 1 represents nine critical factors in the change process that relate to three main categories, i.e. the characteristics of the change project, local roles, and external factors, that all affect the implementation of a change (Fullan and Stiegelbauer 1991: 67-68). The factors could be divided into several subvariables but the simplified model gives a good overview of the complexity of a change process by pointing out the various factors that are involved in the process. The figure suggests that the teacher is only one of the nine affecting factors and, thus, it could be argued that his or her influence over a change is not very significant. However, because a teacher is the one who usually implements a change in daily practices, his or her role in the success of change should be considered crucial. For this reason, the teacher perspectives on and attitudes towards educational change will be the focus in the present study.

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┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ A. CHARACTERISTICS OF       │
│ CHANGE                      │
│     1. Need                 │
│     2. Clarity              │
│     3. Complexity           │
│     4. Quality/Practicality │
└─────────────────────────────┘
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B. LOCAL CHARACTERISTICS
 5. District
 6. Community
 7. Principal
 8. Teacher

IMPLEMENTATION

C. EXTERNAL FACTORS
 9. Government and other agencies
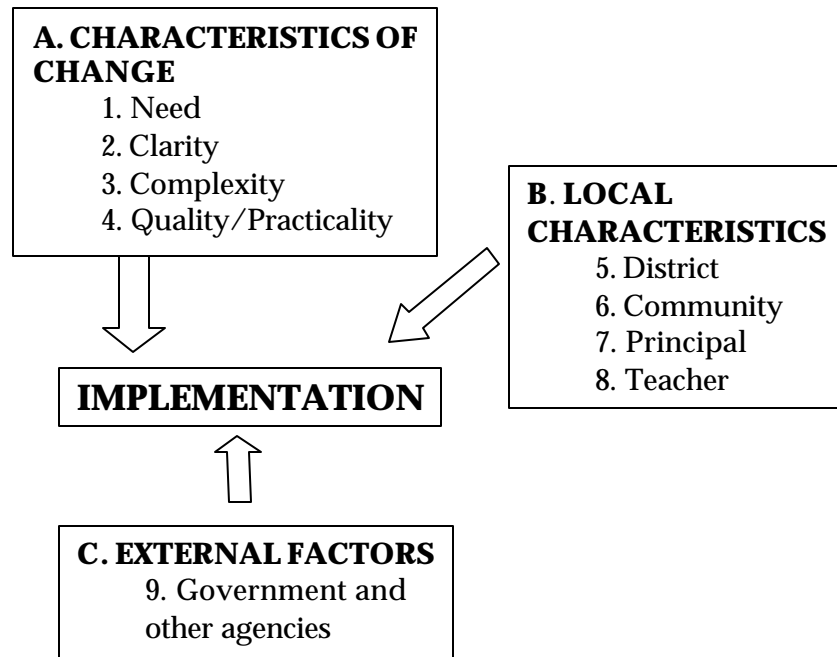
Figure 1 Interactive factors affecting implementation (Fullan and Stiegelbauer 1991: 68)

Fullan (1994: 43) has also introduced eight lessons on complex change that will be helpful in discussing the change process. These eight lessons form a useful system for understanding educational change in which no lesson can be dealt with individually but their dynamic dependency on each other has to be taken into consideration when implementing a change (Fullan 1994: 69).

> Lesson One: You can't mandate what matters. (The more complex the change the less you can force it.)
> Lesson two: Change is a journey not a blueprint. (Change is non-linear, loaded with uncertainty and excitement and sometimes perverse.)
> Lesson Three: Problems are our friends. (Problems are inevitable and you can't learn without them.)
> Lesson Four: Vision and strategic planning come later. (Premature visions and pla nning blind.)
> Lesson Five: Individualism and collectivism must have equal power. (There are no one-sided solutions to isolation and groupthink.)
> Lesson Six: Neither centralization nor decentralization works. (Both top-down and bottom-up strategies are necessary.)

Lesson Seven: Connection with the wider environment is critical for success. (The best organizations learn externally as well as internally.)
Lesson Eight: Every person is a change agent. (Change is too important to leave to the experts, personal mind set and mastery is the ultimate protection.) (Fullan 1999: 18, translations)

Sarason (1996: 59) offers yet another reason for the complexity of educational changes. He argues that any change affects and is affected by three general types of social relationships: "those among the professionals within the school setting, those among the professionals and pupils, and those among the professionals and the different parts of the larger society" (Sarason 1996:59). These types of social relationships often remain unchallenged and their influence on each other and change is not stated or faced in the change process.

To conclude, the educational change process is very complex. There are several factors that may affect it and often the influence of these factors is impossible to foresee. However, Fullan (1994: 41) claims that instead of considering complexity, dynamics and unpredictability of the change process problems, they should be regarded as an essential part of the process. The teachers' role in the complex change process is important because they are those who implement changes in daily practises.

2.3 Success or failure of educational change – influential factors

The findings of the previous research on educational change are extremely vital for the present study. I believe as already mentioned above that even though the studies have been conducted mostly in Northern America and might not be applicable as such to the Finnish context, their findings can still be helpful in studying educational change in Finland. After all, schools in all countries have the same goal, i.e. to educate and guide the children. In addition, I believe that schools in different countries face similar challenges, such as the pressure to be more efficient or to improve the school's daily

practices. The questions in the online questionnaire and interviews aimed to address the factors discussed in this section.

According to Sahlberg (1996: 50), change in schools requires learning from both individuals and the school as a system and community. Learning (change) is a constructive and social process in which information becomes meaningful after a joint analysis of the organization (Sahlberg 1996: 51). In addition, Sahlberg (1996: 56) argues that financial resources are not the answer to the problems involved in educational change. Change is likely to be successful when individuals involved want things to change and when the change is meaningful to them. Development in schools requires considerable change in both interaction and also in beliefs, attitudes, norms, and power constructions involved with interaction.

There have been several explanations on why attempts to change the school often fail or are not as successful as they ought to be. For example, Sahlberg (1996: 114) claims that one cause for the slowness of educational change is the fact that teachers' beliefs are often in conflict with the content of the change. This conflict has also been acknowledged by other researchers (e.g. Schmidt and Datnow 2005), and it will be discussed in more detail in chapter 2.2.1. Sarason (1996: 43) regards the poor quality of interaction between the school staff and "outsiders" as one major obstacle to changing and improving schools. The importance of communication in change processes is very clear and it will come up again later. Sarason (1996: 232) also points out two additional problems. Firstly, he argues that "those who attempt to introduce a change seem unaware that they are asking the teachers to unlearn and learn" (Sarason 1996: 232). Thus, what is asked of the teachers is a difficult process in itself. Secondly, that teachers are *told* what is the "right" way to act and think. Those who want change do not seem to realize that they are acting in exactly the same way they are criticizing the teachers for (Sarason 1996: 232).

Moreover, according to Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991: 130), strategies that are used to promote change do not work, because "they are derived from a world or from premises different from that of teachers". In addition, innovations are promoted with arguments that are rational to the promoters, not to teachers. The failure is sometimes due to the fact that "innovations are rationally sold on the basis of sound theory and principles, but they turn out not to be translatable into practice with the resources at the disposal of teachers. And finally, even though the desired changes contain good ideas, promoters assume different conditions teachers actually face (Fullan and Stiegelbauer 1991: 130).

The fact that people tend to see change as something negative is summarised well in the following comment by Sarason (1996:36-37):

> until we have more comprehensive and dispassionate descriptions of the processes of change in the school culture … any effort to introduce change maximizes the role of ignorance with its all too familiar consequences

According to Sarason (1996: 37), there are three major barriers to our observing and understanding the school culture:

1. We put undue reliance on a psychology of individuals that is no adequate basis for studying structural characteristics of a society or one of its important parts.
2. Observers are not neutral, and what they observe about their own or someone else's setting is to an undermined extend biased by the structure, traditions, and ideology of their own setting.
3. Particularly in relation to the school culture, our ignorance about how change occurs is vast.

Educational change requires that we overcome major culturally determined obstacles that, according to Sarason (1996: 43), we generally fail to recognize, confront and to overcome. This is because even though there is a diversity of

views towards educational controversies, the ideas of what school and school system should be like are surprisingly similar. Due to this mutual but inarticula ted similarity, people with apparently very different views tend to be equally insensitive to changes in school-community relationships until,

> so to speak, those changes hit them in the face, i.e., the pictures and conceptions with which they started led to views and conclusions that misled them and others. (Sarason 1996: 43)

Finally, the shared similarity in the idea of what a school and school system should be like accompanied by defective and deficient information they

> provide about the problematic ways society impacts on schools, and vice versa, give rise to conceptions of the change process that almost always are self-defeating. (Sarason 1996: 43)

According to Sarason (1996: 44), the problem of change is not only a problem of schools but also of every major institution in our society. He continues that this fact implies that our conceptions of institutional change have deep roots in the nature of our society.

Sarason (1996:60-61) argues that there is necessarily no intrinsic relationship between a person's conception of the change process and the depth of understanding or familiarity with a setting. Even though one knows the school setting well and one's information is correc t, it does not guarantee that one is successful in changing schools. This is because the change process "arouses different reactions in different people (and between and among groups), has different meanings for different people, brings to the fore infrequently expressed reactions, and arouses all kinds of protective and defen sive attitudes" and it is thus impossible to foresee what the process will create and encounter (Sarason 1996: 61).

According to Sarason (1996: 78), the success or failure of an attempt to change something depends more on how the change process is

conceptualized than the educational method or content one seeks to implement. This implies that we could improve the success rate of attempts to change the school if we paid more attention to the way a change process is introduced and presented to those in charge of the practical implementation of the change, i.e. teachers. In introducing change it should be made clear to people involved how change is meaningful and necessary because it is crucial for the success of the effort at change. The more the effort identifies and meaningfully it involves all those who will be affected, the more successful the effort will be (Sarason 1996: 79). For example, the policy makers should not introduce change just for the sake of change but to make sure that it is indeed meaningful.

The data could help us decide whether the teachers' approach is like the one that Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991: 103) considers the most beneficial. they state that one has to be able to understand the process of change, locate one's place in it, and act "by influencing those factors that are changeable and by minimizing the power of those that are not".

3 TEACHERS AND CHANGE

In the following, the factors that have been found to be the most significant in determining teachers' attitudes towards change are discussed in more detail. In addition, the teachers' role in the complex change process is described.

3.1 Teachers' role in the change process

It has now been established that the role of teachers in a change process is merely one of many but, nevertheless, extremely important. Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991: 117) argue that if we want educational change to happen, it requires that the teachers understand themselves and are understood by us. What are the teachers' working conditions like nowadays and how could we increase our understanding of them? The appreciation of and respect for teachers has, according to Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991: 117) decreased over the past two decades. Even though these two scholars write from a Canadian point of view, I believe that schools in Finland are facing similar challenges brought about by postmodernism

Fullan's opinion (1994: 30-31), in the context of these challenges teachers should become change agents and he describes some of the features that are important to them. Change agents have to be aware of the character of a change process. They should come up with ideas and ways to survive and improve different parts of the process in order to reach the goal. Change agents should also be easily influenced and able to come up with new goals. Fullan also lists four qualities that are important: a personal vision, the ability to do research, management skills, and the capability of cooperation. Fullan emphasizes the role of the teacher because in his view, change is most powerful on the individual level (Fullan 1994: 30-31). It is obvious that teachers are the final key for implementing change. Therefore, I find it extraordinary that, for example, future teachers receive rather little guidance

in facing change. In teacher training, which I also recently completed, past or future change are barely mentioned.

In Fullan's (1994: 69-70) view teachers should have the following abilities when facing change: The ability to work with opposites: to simultaneously promote change and to allow spontaneous development; to see problems as sources for creative decisions; to adopt the vision but not be blinded by it; value both the individual and the group etc. The "insiders" (e.g. teachers, principles) and "outsiders" (administration) of school should not fight each other but accept that both sides are as valuable and necessary in the change process.

3.2 Teachers' perspectives on and attitudes towards change

In the following, teachers' perspectives on and attitudes towards change are discussed. I will concentrate on those factors that, on the basis of previous studies, have been found to have the most significant influence on teachers' perspectives and attitudes.

How do teachers determine their attitudes toward an upcoming change? According to Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991: 127-128), they use four main criteria in assessing any given change and its balance of rewards and costs. These they present in the form of the following questions:

1. Does the change potentially address a need? Will students be interested? Will they learn? Is there evidence that the change works, i.e., that it produces claimed results?
2. How clear is the change in terms of what the teacher will have to do?
3. How will it affect the teacher personally in terms of time, energy, new skill, sense of excitement and competence, and interference with existing priorities?
4. How rewarding will the experience be in terms of interaction with peers or others?

These four main criteria that teachers use in assessing a change seem reasonable and could, with some modifications, be the same that everybody uses when facing change.

The administrators' awareness of teachers' perspectives could lead to more successful educational change. For example, Schmidt and Datnow (2005: 949) suggest that when teachers feel that their ideologies are uniform with a reform they usually support the changed and have positive attitudes towards the change. Alternatively, when the teachers feel that their beliefs and values are threatened by the reform agenda their attitudes toward the change may be more negative (Schmidt and Datnow 2005: 949-950). Moreover, Goodson et al. (2006) have found evidence that support the view of Schmidt and Datnow. They found that "teachers feel demeaned and insulted by standardized reform, which ignores their professional experience, reframes their work as technical, and values compliance over creativity" (Goodson et al. 2006: 55). What is more, Smit (2005: 304) argues that at the level of policy implementation the local knowledge of teachers of education policy can offer a more profound understanding of the complexities at the level of change implementation. Smit further suggests that

> Policy makers take cognizance of teachers' experiences and pay attention to the often minimized emotional reactions of policy and the intended accompanying change for education. Resistance is mostly a covert process and manifests overtly in the final outcome and probable nonimplementation. (Smit 2005: 304)

Sahlberg (1996: 114) also claims that one reason for the slowness of change in schools is that teachers' beliefs are often in conflict with the content of change. This seems almost self-evident, for how can teachers be expected to be thrilled about a change if it is against their beliefs. When this kind of conflict between the teachers' beliefs and the content of change is noticed, the conflict should be taken into closer consideration. A more thorough investigation of the conflict could help to determine, what exactly those

issues that cause this clash are and what could be done about it. Moreover, a solution to the conflict that would benefit both teachers and administration could be found. It has also been suggested that the expectations and targets of an educational change should not be too ambitious as that might wear out teachers and lead to a situation where "change generates a paradox where school development becomes a self-defeating activity" (Syrjäläinen 2000, as quoted by Webb et al. 2004b: 183).

Another factor that influences teachers' attitudes towards educational change is the way in which the change is introduced to them. Indeed, Warrigan (2006: 1) points out that the masterminds of change often have difficulties in getting teachers to take on those practices that research has discovered to be beneficial. Warrigan claims that the reluctance by teachers to change their practice is "attributed to the way in which the innovation is introduced to them" (Warrigan 2006: 1). The communication between different stakeholders, such as teachers, headmasters, and administrators, should be clear and open. Especially when a change is introduced to schools, the administrators should acknowledge the fact that there will always be people who misunderstand or misinterpret some part of the change and, therefore, it is essential that the administrator has good interpersonal skills so that he or she can communicate concisely and clearly, and also listen to people perceptively (Fullan and Stiegelbauer 1991: 199).

Webb et al. (2004b) found in their York-Jyväskylä teacher professionalism project (a follow-up study to a earlier case-study research in Finland and England on the impact of educational reforms on teachers' work) that national-level curriculum and assessment reforms had significantly increased the teachers' workloads on top of their earlier tasks. The increased workload exhausted the teachers, had a negative effect on their morale and caused depression and stress (Webb et al. 2004b: 183). Webb et al. (2004b: 185) argue that raising the self-reliance, status and public appreciation of teachers

through improving teachers' salaries and working conditions is necessary for the future of the profession and for teacher retention.

In addition to the factors mentioned above, Goodson et al. (2006) found out that especially when a reform intensified, teachers reported feeling less proficient and confident. The reasons for these feelings were that the teachers did not have enough time to prepare their teaching as scrupulously, to spend as much time with their pupils, or grade their work as punctually (Goodson et al. 2006: 55). The findings of Goodson et al. suggest that those in charge of the change process should create structures and processes that "bring teachers together in inclusive collegial learning partnerships that focus on the change process itself and its implications for teaching and learning" (2006: 56).

In conclusion, teachers' perspectives and attitudes are significant when talking about educational change. In my opinion, awareness of those perspectives and attitudes would benefit both teachers and administrators and probably increase the success rate of educational changes.

3.2.1 Internal and external change

In their study of teachers in Jordan, Al-Daami and Wallace (2007) studied teachers' involvement in a curriculum reform. The teachers in Al-Daami and Wallace's study had several suggestions for future reforms. First, the teachers hoped to debate curriculum changes before they were implemented; secondly, they wanted to have more in-service training; and thirdly, they hoped that the Ministry would pay more attention to the annual reports submitted by teachers. In addition to these three most frequent propositions, the teachers wanted in-service training on curriculum planning and development (Al-Daami and Wallace 2007: 354). The results of the study confirmed that teachers, head teachers and senior officials willingly

supported "the view that the participation of teachers in curriculum planning and development process is important" (Al-Daami and Wallace 2007: 354).

In a recent study, where he interviewed fifty Canadian elementary and secondary schools, Hargreaves (2004: 294) found that for today's teachers educational change is external, "unwanted, imposed, repetitious and sometimes repellent, compared with more professionally positive, self-directed change realities in the past." The major causes of negative emotions among the teachers were that they felt that change was forced on them without taking their opinion into account, and that the changes were poorly designed, which made it impossible to teach the students effectively. Primarily, what brought about negative emotions was working in the reform environment where there was too much pressure without sufficient support, too high workload, shortage of time, and the implementation of the change was poor or leadership weak (Hargreaves 2004: 295). In addition, Hargreaves (2004: 298) found that high school teachers who are in mid or late career, teach mainstream subject, and work in more conventional organizational environments are most likely to have negative emotions towards mandated change.

In addition, Hargreaves (2004) investigated what kind of emotions the teachers' had when they were dealing with internal change. He found out that teachers were "overwhelmingly enthusiastic and animated about their experiences of self-initiated change" (Hargreaves 2004: 299). However, 39 per cent of the changes that the teachers considered self-initiated had actually derived from government and/or school district reform movements (Hargreaves 2004: 301). Based on these results, Hargreaves suggests that it is not so significant whether changes are external or internal, but whether "they exclude or include teachers' purposes, commitments and capacities to change within reallocated timelines and resource allocations" (Hargreaves 2004:

301). Despite the Canadian context of Hargreaves' study, I believe that his findings are also relevant when studying Finnish educational change. Moreover, by investigating English teachers' views (in Finland) on their role in the change process we can find out several factors that influence the success of the change. In addition to Hargreaves, Van Veen and Sleegers (2006: 85) also argue that because teachers are often only included in the implementation phase of a reform and in the planning phase, they lack of control over the actual improvement process. Therefore, in my opinion, they do not take a very active and dedicated role in the change process which then has an effect on the level of success of the change.

Bailey (2000) conducted a study on teachers' experiences of mandated change in Canada. She found out that nearly all teachers in her study had made serious efforts to work with mandated changes. They had gone to additional training and workshops, worked with consultants and read the material from the Ministry of Education. However, as they finally began to feel that they somewhat understood and mastered the mandated change that change was replaced by "some new enthusiasm" (Bailey 2000: 121). Bailey (2000: 123) argues that mandated changes lead to the marginalization of teachers and because they do not correspond with teachers' realities and proficiency, teachers cannot be committed to their implementation.

What also seems to matter in mandated or imposed changes are teachers' self-identities and educational ideologies (Vulliamy et al. 1997). Vulliamy et al. (1997: 111) suggest that teachers' self-identities have an effect on their interpretation of and responses to imposed changes.

3.2.2 Teachers' work environment, networking and educational change

In Finland teaching is traditionally considered a profession in which one has to manage alone (Välijärvi 2005: 116). However, Välijärvi (2005: 117) also

argues that collegiality is an important feature of a successful school that is capable of development. Moreover, in the middle of current changes more collaboration with other teachers is needed (Välijärvi 2005: 105). There are clear indications that the more teachers interact with and provide technical help for each other (i.e. teacher collegiality) the more successful a change will be. In other words, collegiality among teachers is a strong indicator of implementation success. According to Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991: 131-32), "significant educational change consists of changes in beliefs, teaching style, and materials, which can come about *only* through a process of personal development in a social context".

Nevertheless, there are also problems with collegiality. In some schools, attempts are made to increase the level of collegiality just for its own sake and this is then called contrived collegiality (Sahlberg 1996: 131). Contrived collegiality could be described as interaction that is ordered from the outside (administration) and is not voluntary or spontaneous. At its worst, contrived collegiality may suppress teachers' willingness to spontaneous collegiality. In this case collegiality does not support the development of a collegial school culture but, on the contrary, it promotes individuality (Sahlberg 1996: 132).

Another problem of collegiality is group thinking. In an ideal situation a group can support and encourage its members and achieve a better outcome than an individual. Group thinking, on the other hand, means that ideas are accepted without consideration and that individual disagreements are suppressed (Sahlberg 1996: 132-33). For the group, group thinking can become a shield against external threats and changes. Some forms of collegiality like assistance are also superficial in nature and do not promote the kind of "deep" interaction that collegiality is at its best (Fullan and Stiegelbauer 1991: 135-36).

In addition to collegiality, leadership in school plays a significant role in educational changes. Fullan claims that "the job of the headmaster or any educational leader has become increasingly complex and constrained" (Fullan 1998: 6). Further, he formulated four guidelines for educational leaders that will guide them in educational change processes (Fullan 1998: 7-8):

1. Respect those you want to silence
2. Move toward the danger in forming new alliances
3. Manage emotionally as well as rationally
4. Fight for lost causes (Be hopeful when it counts)

The first guideline suggests that educational leaders should learn from those who disagree with them as conflict and differences can be extremely instructive. Listening to the views of those who resist change can provide educational leaders with alternatives or understanding of problems they would never have thought about. The second guideline encourages educational leaders to not only collaborate internally (in the school) but also to establish good relationships to the community outside the school boundaries. The third guideline reminds educational leaders to pay attention to their own emotional health. Moreover, an emotionally intelligent leader can help other people in the school to create an environment of support, where problems are not seen as weaknesses but as issues to be solved (Fullan 1998: 9). The fourth guideline means that leaders with hope are more likely to handle problems. In addition, leaders who have and display hope and show that they are ready to fight for lost causes, can reduce stress among teachers and give them more energy especially when problems appear (Fullan 1998: 9). In the present context of educational change, proactive leadership in schools is necessary (Fullan 1998: 6).

Eilers and Camacho (2007) conducted a two-year case-study in an elementary school in the USA where they used a mixed-method approach in investigating, among other things, the role of leadership in a school-level

change process. In the case-school the headmaster's leadership style was based on collaboration, evidence-based practice, and the use of communities of practice (2007:619). By being proactive in the change process and showing the teachers that he himself saw collaboration as a learning opportunity, the headmaster managed to influence the school culture, despite the resistance at the beginning (2007: 631). The headmaster strongly supported collaborative leadership, developing teacher professionalism and co-operation with other teachers but also with the school district. As the case-study school was on the United States list of schools not achieving annual yearly progress (AYP, under the No Child Left Behind Act), it received considerable amount of support from the school district, however, the role of the proactive new headmaster cannot be underestimated (2007: 619). The results suggest that the leadership style in a school can make a difference in the outcome of a school change (2007: 633). Therefore, it is also pertinent for this study to find out how the teachers feel about co-operation and leadership in their schools.

3.2.3 Preparation for change and professional development

In my opinion, teachers' professional development is important in educational change. Appropriate in-service training can help teachers in taking an active role in a change process. For instance, when new assessment policies are introduced or as the inclusion of special needs children increases, it should be self-evident that teachers need proper training in order to handle these challenges.

In the York-Finnish project conducted by Webb et al. (2004) it was found that even though in-service training that dealt with government initiatives and addressed school needs was good, there were not enough opportunities for training. The offered training did not seem to meet teachers' specific individual needs that could be different from those of their school. Inadequate in-service training was found to contribute to the teachers'

anxiety, stress and job satisfaction because the training constrained teachers' understanding of, and ability to implement, the curriculum reform programme (Webb et al. 2004b: 184).

As part of an international research project *Teachers and Students as Active Learners* that investigated the active learning of teachers and of pupils in the educational practices of eight countries, Kimonen and Nevalainen (2005) report the findings of a case study of a small rural school in Finland. They followed a process of a curriculum change and the professional development of the teaching staff of the school. Kimonen and Nevalainen found that in their case-study school some of the main factors promoting educational change were

> teachers' in-service training and personal interest in professional development, … school's tendency for rich innovation, management, teachers' cooperation skills, collegiality, trust, interaction and open communication (Kimonen and Nevalainen 2005: 632)

Indeed, it has been argued that if fundamental changes in practise are desired, teachers must develop new attitudes that match with the change in question through professional development (Webb et al. 1997, as quoted by Kimonen and Nevalainen 2005: 632).

4 THE SET-UP OF THE PRESENT STUDY

The set-up of the present study is explained in this section. I will describe the research questions and the research methods used in this study. The research questions are introduced first. In the research methods section, the data used in the questionnaire will be discussed first and then the data used in the interviews.

4.1 Research questions

The present study aims to find out how teachers of English in Finland perceive educational change and how this information could be used in making educational change more successful. The study is based on the observations of Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991), Fullan (e.g. 1994, 1999), Hargreaves (1994), Sahlberg (1996) and Sarason (1996) who have investigated the factors that lead to successful educational change.

According to Fullan (1994: 30-31) change is most powerful on the individual level and, therefore, he emphasizes the teachers' role in the change process. Consequently, the teachers' general attitude towards educational change is one of the most important factors when the subject of interest is educational change. Firstly, the attitudes will determine the way in which the teachers commit to the change at the beginning of the change process. Secondly, the knowledge of the attitude of teachers will provide the administrators and education policy planners with information on how to handle the implementation of change. For example, when the attitude to change is negative, the administrators need to pay more attention to the ways how to change that attitude to more positive direction. It has been shown that the more positive the teachers' feelings toward the change are, the more likely it is that the change will be successful. The importance of the change to the teachers is also significant to the success rate of the change. When the

teachers consider the change to be very meaningful to their work, they will be more enthusiastic about it (Sahlberg 1996: 56). When the administrators want to change things that the teachers do not find so significant, the teachers' level of commitment will not be that high either. Moreover, what also matters in educational changes is whether teachers' purposes, commitments and capacities to change are excluded or included (Hargreaves 2004: 301).

When it comes to a successful educational change, it is also essential that the teachers take an active role in the change process. To this end it is worthwhile to investigate what actions the teachers take on when facing a change. Searching additional information and discussions with colleagues are important ways to prepare oneself for and to understand the change. Without a solid understanding of the purpose, content and the desired result of a change, one can hardly expect the change to be a success.

The research questions of the present study are:

1. What is the teachers' of English general attitude towards educational change? Which factors have the greatest impact on the attitudes of teachers?

2. What are the biggest changes and challenges in teaching English in Finland from the teacher's perspective?

3. How do teachers prepare themselves to the up-coming changes and challenges?

   Do they actively search additional information on the subject, consult colleagues, attend meetings or reflect on their own views? What kind of support is needed from external sources, such as administrators?

4.2 Research methods and collection of data

The research methods used in this study are explained in this chapter. The methods used in the questionnaire and the interview are described separately.

The data were collected with the help of questionnaires with open-ended questions and interviews. There were not enough resources to get enough data on the basis of which it would be possible to draw conclusions that apply to the whole of Finland. The reason why multiple research methods (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2001: 39) were used is that using both quantitative and qualitative methods diversify the data. Giannikaki (2005: 323) suggests that "combining quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study can help elucidate various aspects of the phenomenon under investigation, providing a more holistic understanding of it." The questionnaires provide information from a larger sample and then the understanding of the issues that come up could be deepened with the help of interviews.

4.2.1 Questionnaire

In the following the purpose, background, teachers and the contents of the questionnaire are discussed in detail.

4.2.1.1 Purpose and background

The purpose of the questionnaire was to identify certain teacher types as a basis for further and more detailed inquiry and to also investigate the perceptions of a larger sample of teachers. An online questionnaire was used for easy access and simple logistics. After piloting the online questionnaire with twelve future teachers in March 2006, English teachers throughout Finland were invited to reply to the questions. An e-mail invitation was sent out to 163 teachers of English, whose addresses were collected from various

city and school websites. It was a conscious risk to use e-mail and an online questionnaire as it could bias the results. This is because some teachers may have a negative attitude towards technology or may not be comfortable with using computers and might not answer the questionnaire. They might not even use e-mail at all. This aspect is, however, unlikely nowadays to be the main reason for not responding to these kinds of questionnaires.

4.2.1.2 Teachers

The 163 teachers came from six different cities, the smallest having a population of 5100 and the largest 200 000. Three cities had less than 10 000 inhabitants and could be described as country towns. The teachers' e-mail addresses were collected from the websites of the particular cities. The cities were chosen on two grounds; they represent different parts of Finland (Eastern-, Central-, and Western-Finland) and different municipalities, which gave a wider perspective to my study, since the municipalities have quite a lot of influence on how the schools are managed. The municipalities are responsible for hiring staff, maintaining the schools and designing a curriculum for its schools, which is based on the national core curriculum. Secondly, it was easy for me to travel to these cities with as low a cost as possible.

Teachers had about a month to answer the questionnaire and I resent the e-mail invitation to them a week before the deadline. To increase the answer rate a small lottery was also arranged. I received the anonymous answers into my e-mail. In case a teacher was willing to be interviewed or wanted more information about the thesis, they included contact information in their answers.

4.2.1.3 Contents of the questionnaire

The questions were inspired by the literature on educational change by scholars, such as Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991), Fullan (e.g. 1994) and Hargreaves (e.g. 1994), and especially by those issues that have been discovered as influential for successful implementation of change. My aim was to find out how the teachers would describe their perceptions of educational change and if their perceptions correspond to the findings of previous studies.

The questionnaire (Appendix 1) contained a section for background information including such variables as age, sex, work experience in years, the level taught and if they had been in in-service training. The second section included eight statements that were answered on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = I fully agree., 2 = I somewhat agree., 3 = I somewhat disagree, 4 = I fully disagree., there was also a checkbox if a teacher did not have any experience on the matter or couldn't say, this is represented as 0 in the figures). The final section consisted of four open-ended questions and two semi-structured questions with checklists and a space for additional comments. Multiple options were allowed for the checklists.

The first statement was whether the teachers feel that changes and reforms in the school are necessary. The other statements related to the number of educational changes (statement 2), the objective of an educational change (statement 3), how well the administrators or supervisors give information about educational changes (statement 4), the clarity of the changes (statement 5), how teachers' opinions are taken into account when planning an educational change (statement 6), how well the administrators or masterminds of the change understand the every day school life (statement 7) and, finally, how willing the teachers would be to participate in the planning process of educational changes (statement 8). After the eight

statements there was a text field where the teachers could describe their typical view of educational change.

The six questions are the following: 1) What are the biggest changes in your work at the moment? 2) How much time do you spend on thinking of how you could develop the way you teach or your working environment? (with checklist and space for additional comments) 3) What do you consider to be your role in changes in schools? 4) How do you prepare yourself for upcoming changes? (with checklist and space for additional comments) 5) What has been the biggest change in your career? Did you have a positive or negative attitude toward it? How do you feel about it now? 6) Are you involved in any kind of development program at the moment? If yes, what kind of program is it? After these questions, there was an open field if the teachers had any other additional comments or opinions about educational change or the study.

4.2.1.4 Data analysis

The questionnaire was sent to 163 teachers; 50 of them answered. The response rate was thus 30.7 per cent. Four of the respondents were male and 46 were female. Although this amount of data is not sufficient to make general conclusions, there were some shared perspectives that appeared in the answers. The teachers who answered the questionnaire were given a reference number according to the order in which their answer had arrived (T1, T2, T3 and so forth). These reference numbers are used to identify the teachers' answers.

The geographical distribution cannot be presented in detail as a considerable amount of information was missing on that point. However, the age distribution of the respondents is presented in the Table below.

Table 1 Age distribution of the respondents

AGE					
under 30	31-40	41-50	51-60	over 60	Total
4	20	15	10	1	50

The answers to the statement section of the questionnaire were compiled using Microsoft Excel. The answers of each teacher were inserted into an Excel sheet show the overall distribution of answers.

As there were open-ended questions in the questionnaire, some quotations are used in the analysis section of this study. All quotations are numbered and the English translations with a matching number can be found in Appendix 3 : Translations of quotations into English.

4.2.2 Semi-structured interview

The purpose and procedure of the interview and the selection of teachers are described in this chapter.

4.2.2.1 Purpose of the interview

The purpose of the interview was to deepen the understanding of those issues that stood out from the answers to the questionnaire. The goal was to find out how teachers feel about the various issues related to change. The method of analysis is qualitative. I will be able to draw some kind of general statements from the data I will get. The emphasis will be on finding ways to help teachers in changing the school setting.

4.2.2.2 Selection of teachers

The selection of the teachers for the interviews was based on the online questionnaire. The teachers were asked to indicate in the questionnaire

whether they would like to participate in the interview part of the study. Only nine female teachers volunteered for the interview. The answers and the background of the nine volunteer teachers were then analysed, and six teachers were selected based on the analysis. The interview sample was selected to be as diverse as possible, which was, however, difficult since the teachers who volunteered had similar background information and were almost identical in their way of handling change. After the selection, the six volunteer teachers were contacted via email and arrangements for the interviews were made.

There were three teachers from each part of Finland, the age groups of the teachers from Central-Finland were under 30, 31-40 and 41-50 years, one teacher from each age group. The age groups of teachers from Western-Finland were 41-50 and 51-60 (two teachers) years and those from Eastern Finland were 41-50 (two teachers) and 51-60 years. Two teachers from each part of Finland were selected.

4.2.2.3 Interview procedure

A semi-structured interview (Appendix 2) was used in this study because in this way, I could get answers from all the six teachers to specific questions but they would also have the chance to speak of issues that I have not considered important. In this way the atmosphere of the interviews could also be mad relaxed. The questions were based on literature about educational change and on the answers of the questionnaire. I wanted to investigate those issues that came up after the analysis of the questionnaire answers in more detail. Some interview questions came up during the interview and were mostly clarifying in nature. In addition, the teachers were encouraged to speak freely if they thought about something that they considered meaningful; even though it was not mentioned by the interviewer.

The interview questions were based on the literature discussed in chapter 2 and also on the questionnaire. The questions were the following:

1. What does educational change or reform mean to you? How do you understand the concept educational change?
2. What is your general attitude toward change? Could you give an example of a change that you thought was positive and one that you thought was negative and tell me why your attitude was positive/negative?
3. Could you give an example of an internal and an external change? What kind of emotions did they provoke?
4. What do you consider the major prime mover of the changes currently taking place?
5. How would you like to change the work of a teacher, that is what do you think is the biggest problem in your work?
6. What are then issues in teaching or in school that you think should not be changed? Why?
7. Do you yourself try to influence educational changes? How?
8. How interested are you in developing yourself professionally, for example, in post-graduate studies?
9. What kind of networks are you involved in? For instance, SUKOL, local branch of the trade union and so forth.
10. How much time do you spend on developing your professionalism with other teachers? How much do you plan, try out, for example, a teaching method and then discuss these with other teachers?
11. How much time on the whole do teachers have to discuss matters together?
12. If a teacher has completed a course, how well does s/he pass on the new information to other teachers? How do teachers share information about practices they consider to be useful and efficient?
13. When facing change, what kind of support do you hope to have from your headmaster, administrators and those people who plan a change?
14. What are the reactions of your colleagues to the fact that you are involved in a development project? This question was only for those teachers that where, in fact, currently involved in such a project.

The interviews took place in the spring of 2006 in the interviewees' home towns. The place of the interview was most often the interviewee's school but one interview was conducted in the teacher's home and one at the University of Jyväskylä. The teachers were asked to reserve about an hour

for the interview. The interviews, which were tape-recorded, lasted from 25 to 45 minutes and were conducted in Finnish. The methods are explained in more detail in the following chapter. The atmosphere during the interviews was relaxed and informal. It was emphasized that answers would be handled anonymously and the teachers were encouraged to speak freely.

4.2.2.4 Data analysis

All the interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed using the following guidelines. Transcription was done in word for word, but some words were added to clarify either the questions or answers just to make the samples easier to understand for the reader. These additional words were separated with brackets, for example [text]. In case some text has been omitted in order to make the quotation more concise, the text is replaced by three full stops. As the emphasis is on themes and the teachers' views and opinions, the transcriptions do not include pauses, hesitations or changes in intonation. All indicators of the home town of the interviewees have been deleted in order to protect the interviewees' identity and school. It was decided to cite the teachers in Finnish since most of the readers of the thesis will be Finnish and, thus, able to understand the citations. All the quotations are numbered and the English translations with a matching number can be found in Appendix 3: Translations of quotations into English. The transcripts are available on request.

First the transcripts, 53 pages as a whole, were carefully read through several times. Second, a meaning condensation was produced. This means that statements that were clearly relevant for a certain theme were rephrased in a few words (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2001: 137). Some interview questions directly referred to a certain theme, for instance, the theme in question 2. was teacher's attitude (How do generally perceive change?); and in question 7. the theme was the teacher's role (Do you try to affect changes yourself?

How?). The rest of the themes were formed during the reading of the transcripts. In the next phase, relevant statements were collected under a number of themes. If themes overlapped each other significantly, they were merged into one bigger theme under which the two smaller themes could fall. This process is called classification (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2001: 147). The final six themes are: 1) Teachers' attitudes toward change, 2) Teachers' role in the change process, 3) Internal and external change, 4) Work environment and networking, 5) Preparation for change and professional development, and 6) Current challenges and the future.

5 FINDINGS

The methods of analysis and findings are presented in this chapter. The questionnaire findings will be discussed first and then, in chapter 5.2, the interview findings.

5.1 Questionnaire

In this section the findings of the questionnaire part of the study are discussed. The answers to the eight statements are examined first and then the answers to the open-ended questions.

5.1.1 Statements

The statements were answered on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = I fully agree., 2 = I somewhat agree., 3 = I somewhat disagree, 4 = I fully disagree., there was also a checkbox if a teacher did not have any experience on the matter or could not say, this is represented as 0 in the figures)

24 per cent of teachers fully agreed and 62 per cent somewhat agreed that changes and reforms in the school are necessary (Figure 2). This indicates that teachers do see issues that could be improved in schools. It is not that they see the school as a place that can stay the same from year to year.

Statement 1

□ No. of teachers	0	1	2	3	4
	1	12	31	6	0
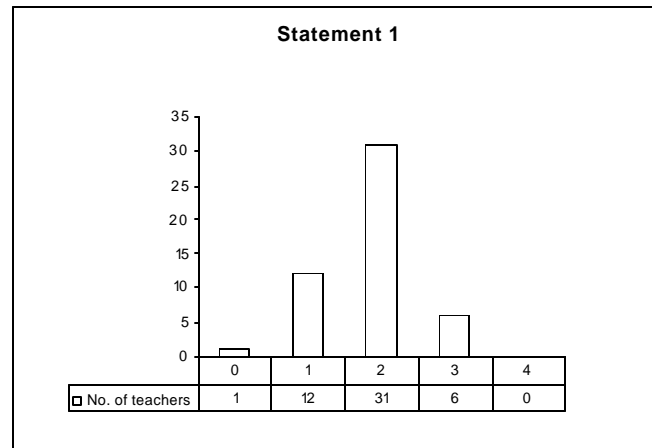
Figure 2 Statement 1 - In my opinion, changes or reforms in the school are necessary.

Answers to the second statement (Figure 3) seem slightly surprising but actually give some indication of the current processes of change going on in schools in Finland. In the first statement most teachers agreed that change is necessary but in the second statement 14 per cent fully agreed and 48 per cent somewhat agreed that that there are too many changes and reforms in schools. The results suggest that, for example, the changes and reforms implemented are not seen useful by the teachers. In addition, it may be that changes and reforms are introduced at a rate that is too fast and the teachers do not have enough time to fully understand all the issues underlying the change.

Statement 2

□ No. of teachers	0	1	2	3	4
	2	7	24	11	6
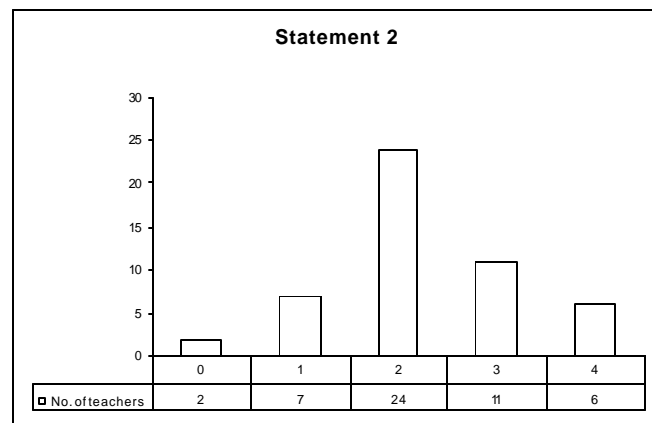
Figure 3 Statement 2 - There are too many changes and reforms.

Statement 3 addressed how teachers understand an educational change (Figure 4). Almost half of the teachers, 48 per cent, somewhat agreed that the objective of the reforms is often unclear to them. This is an important finding. If those that are in a key role in implementing a change do not feel that they fully comprehend the meaning and content of the change, how can the change really be successful?
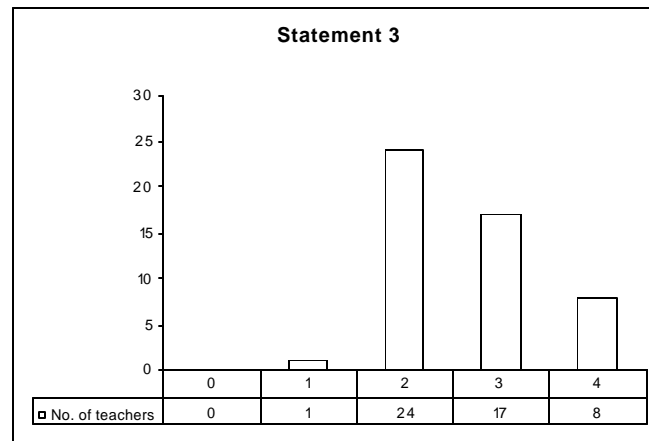
Figure 4 Statement 3 - Objective of the reforms is often unclear to me.

Statement 4 dealt with the amount of information given on the changes (Figure 5). 6 percent of the teachers fully disagreed and 50 per cent somewhat disagreed that detailed information on changes is given by the administrators. This indicates a clear demand for improving the dissemination of information to teachers about change. The administration should pay more attention to the amount of information given to teachers and how it is given to them as one key to a successful educational change is ample information.

Statement 4

	0	1	2	3	4
□ No. of teachers	0	5	16	25	3
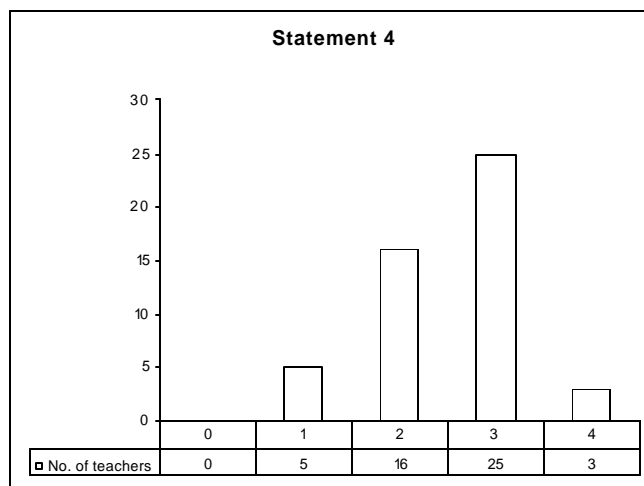
Figure 5 Statement 4 - Detailed information on changes is given by the administrators.

Statement 5 addressed the clarity of reforms and changes (Figure 6). Four per cent fully agreed and 52 per cent somewhat agreed that reforms are difficult to understand. When more than half of the respondents find the reforms and changes unclear, one can hardly expect the implementation of the reforms and changes to be successful. The idea, content and goal of the reforms and changes must be clear to those who are meant to implement them at school.

Statement 5

	0	1	2	3	4
□ No. of teachers	0	2	26	16	6
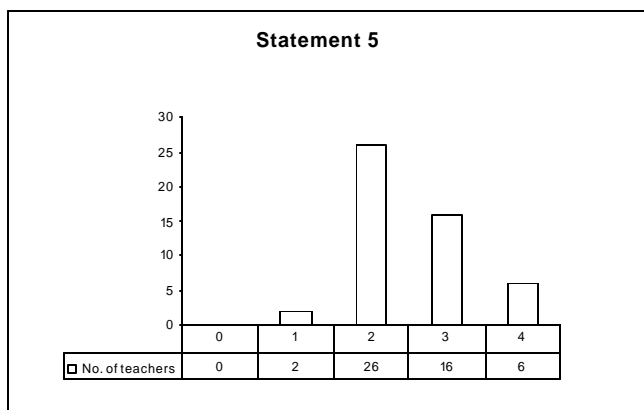
Figure 6 Statement 5 - Reforms are difficult to understand.

Statement 6 dealt with how well the teachers' opinions are taken into consideration in the planning process of a change or reform (Figure 7). Based on these answers it is clear that teachers feel that their opinions are excluded when educational change is planned. 36 per cent of the teachers fully

disagreed and 48 somewhat disagreed that their opinions are well taken into account. This fact may have significant implications for the success of a change because if teachers do not feel that the right issues are addressed with the changes, their motivation for getting involved with and supporting the educational change will most likely below. However, if administrators asked for teachers' views and opinions about the current state of teaching, the reforms that come up would most likely be more popular and successful than before.

Statement 6

	0	1	2	3	4
No. of teachers	1	3	4	24	18
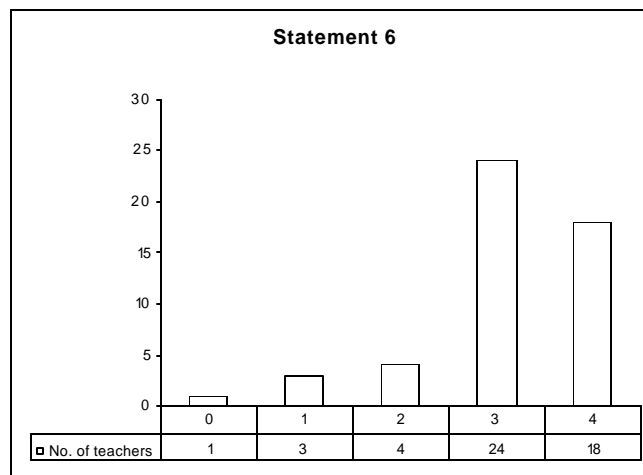
Figure 7 Statement 6 - Teachers' opinions are well taken into account when changes or reforms in the school are planned.

Statement 7 was about how well those who are in charge of the planning of a change understand the school environment (Figure 8). 48 per cent of the teachers fully disagreed and 36 per cent somewhat disagreed with the statement. This could suggest that teachers feel that changes that come their way do not address the needs of the real school world and their everyday work.

Statement 7

□ No. of teachers	0	1	2	3	4
	3	2	3	18	24
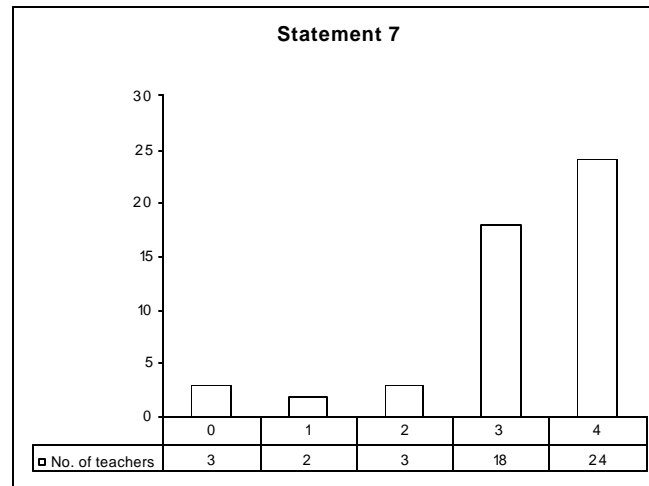
Figure 8 Statement 7 - Those in charge of the planning process of change understand the school environment well.

Statement 8 inquired after the teachers' willingness to be involved in the planning process of a change. 26 per cent of the respondents fully agreed that they would like to be involved in the planning process and 34 per cent somewhat agreed with the statement. However, 20 per cent somewhat disagreed and 16 per cent fully disagreed with the statement. One explanation for the relatively high percentage of teachers who are not that interested in getting involved can be that teachers do not have enough time for it or that they would not be compensated for their efforts.
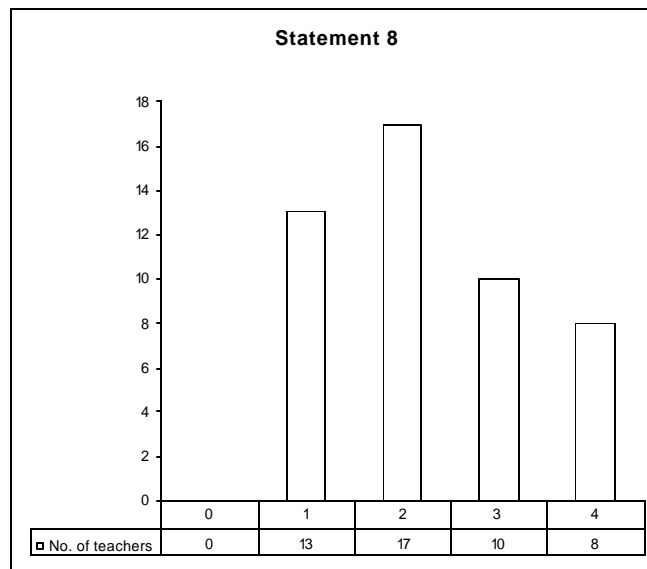
Figure 9 Statement 8 - I would like to be involved in the planning process of a change/reform.

After the eight statements the teachers could briefly describe their general attitude toward change. The teachers' attitudes were mostly positive and they found educational changes important for the development of schools and their own work. However, most teachers also stated factors that influence their attitudes toward change. The teachers' attitudes seemed to be more suspicious when the goal of and grounds for the change were not clear.

(1) Kiinnostun yleensä uusista asioista ja haluan uudistaa työtäni, mutta haluaisin nykyistä enemmän tietoa uudistuksesta ja syistä siihen. Haluaisin myös enemmän aikaa tutustua asiaan ennen käyttöönottoa. Lisäksi monet asiat muuttuvat usein jo ennen kuin aikaisemman muutoksen on omaksunut ja saanut käyttöön, eikä aina edes ymmärrä miksi. T1

(2) Muutos muutoksen takia on huuhaata. Koulua, opetusta pitää kehittää, mutta siinä tapahtuville muutoksille pitää olla hyvät perustelut – muutoksen tarve. T7

(3) En minä muutosta vastaan ole, mutta muutoksen täytyy johtaa perustellusti parempaan olotilaan. T10

(4) Pidän tärkeänä ajassa mukana elämistä ja muutokset ovat usein tarpeen. Joskus tosin mietityttää joidenkin asioiden monimutkaisuus. T13

(5) Olen muutosten puolella silloin, kun ne TODELLA ovat tarpeen. Minua ärsyttää muutokset, jotka tehdään vain, jotta paperinpyörittäjillä olisi töitä. Samoin minua ärsyttää muutokset, jotka on suunnitellut taho, jolla ei ole minkäänlaista kokemusta opettajan työstä. T16

    (6)   Olen kyllä avoin uudelle, mutta joskus uudistuksen päämäärä jää epäselväksi. T43

Some teachers had clearly a more negative attitude towards change. The reasons for this were that there are too many changes nowadays, changes and reforms were seen as "the necessary evil", a reform did not really change anything and that changes increased the workload of the teachers.

    (7)   Hyväksyn muutokset pakollisena pahana ja yritän saada niistä parhaa puolet irti. T44

    (8)   Stressaan ja otan paineita [uudistuksista/muutoksista] kunnes tajuan että lopulta paljon mikään ei juuri muuttunutkaan. T32

    (9)   Vastustan [uudistuksia] nykyisin. Uudistuksia on aivan liikaa! T24

    (10) Muutostenhan tulisi palvelaa, ei orjuuttaa! T41

Some teachers had been very active in planning and implementing change in the past but, they had become frustrated after noticing that they could not actually influence it. In addition, there was a general opinion that the teachers' opinions are not listened to when changes are planned. Moreover, quite a few teachers felt that administrators and others who plan the changes and reforms, do not have a clear understanding of the teachers' work and daily routines. Often the teachers' and students' opinions had been asked during a change process but still a change was implemented by force even though everybody had been against it; often because of financial reasons.

    (11) Olisi tärkeää että koulumaailman muutoksissa kentän ihmisiä eli meitä opettajia kuultaisiin enemmän. Nyt monissa päätöksissä meitä ei ole lainkaan kuultu. T9

    (12) Meille esim. tulee ensi vuonna 75-minuuttinen oppitunti käyttöön ja asiasta kysyttiin sekä opettajien että opiskelijoiden mielipidettä. Enemmistö oli kummassakin ryhmässä asiaa vastaan, mutta loppujen lopuksi se ei painanut päätöksenteossa. T16

    (13) Kaiken kaikkiaan koen, että olisi hyvä, jos muutos lähtisi liikkeelle ruohonjuuritasolta, käytännön tarpeesta. T34

5.1.2 Analysis of the open-ended and semi-structured questions

The first open-ended question asked the teachers what the biggest changes in their work were at that moment. Teachers felt that the biggest changes were the new national curriculum, bigger class sizes, new educational technology, integration, the increase of immigrant students and students with problems in reading and writing. In addition, the decrease of financial resources and lessons per week were also considered big changes. It seems that teachers are expected to do more and more work with fewer resources, both financial and professional (e.g. there are not enough new teachers or less opportunities to go to in-service training). For example, teaching immigrant students and the integration of special needs children into regular classes require special skills, i.e. in-service training. It appears that the administration does not really realize what they are expecting of the teachers.

Question 2 aimed to find out how much time the respondents spent on thinking how they could develop the way in which they teach or their working environment. The teachers seemed to be very active in thinking about ways to develop their work: they had paid attention to material selection and teaching methods. Moreover, they were constantly contemplating on ways to motivate their students, and on how to help students who require special attention and on how to teach immigrant students. Teachers were also learning to use new educational technology and were making teaching more effective by eliminating and combining (because of lack of time). Developing co-operation and communication with teachers across subject boundaries was also seen as something that would improve the teachers' work.

Question 3 asked the teachers to define their role in the change process. Teachers described their role in various ways. The most popular descriptions were a bystander, a doer and a realizer. A bystander merely watches a

change process from a distance as an "outsider". A doer implements the changes but is not involved in the change process. The realizer's role is more active and in addition to implementing a change, they are somewhat involved in the process. Some teachers also acted as planners. The roles of a bystander and doer could be described passive, whereas those of a realizer and planner are more active. What was intriguing was that often the teacher's role in the beginning was a bystander, but then in the final implementation phase his/her role changed to that of a realizer. The teachers' answers implied that either the teachers do not want or are not given the possibility to take a more active role in the change process. Indeed, in several answers the huge amount of work was seen as the reason for the fact that teachers' do not have the desire to be involved in planning changes. When a teacher participates in planning a change, s/he does not get additional pay and the planning takes place in the teacher's personal time. Teachers criticise their low income that is not in line with their heavy work load. They feel that they are expected to do more work, often without additional salary.

(14) Ne [muutokset] ovat useimmiten oppilaan edun mukaisia, mutta ovat vuosi vuodelta lisänneet minun työmäärääni aivan liikaa. T11

(15) Ristiriita kiinnostuksen ja epäröinnin välillä – epäröinti johtuu siitä, että kaikki muutokset vaativat opettajalta suurta määrää lisätyötä – useimmiten ilman eri korvausta. T29

(16) Opettajien palkkaus on ollut aina ongelmallinen ja pieni, mutta nykyään työmäärän nähden se on todella alamaissa. T37

Question 4 (with checklist) inquired after the ways in which the respondents prepared themselves for upcoming changes. 50 per cent of the teachers said that as preparation for changes, they attended in-service training. However, one teacher pointed out that sometimes teachers are not given the chance to attend in-service training due to financial or other reasons. It should be evident that when new practices are introduced, teachers should also be taught how to make the most of them. It is hardly possible to expect the

introduction of a new practise to be a success if teachers do not know what to do with it.

> (17) Minä aidosti pelkään, että kasvatuksen ja koulutuksen suurimmaksi määrääväksi arvoksi on tulossa taloudellisuus. T10

> (18) Jos jotakin muutetaan, pitäisi muuttajan (opetushallituksen) järjestää koulutus ilmaiseksi. T24

Attending meetings was also a way to prepare for a change; as much as 76 per cent of the respondents had attended meetings. The high participation rate is partly due to the fact that these meetings are often mandatory. Finally, 24 per cent said that they read literature or current research on the subject. Also other sources of information were mentioned. These included professional magazines and journals (e.g. *Opettaja* and *Tempus*), the media and the employer. One teacher mentioned that active participation in the planning process was one way to prepare for a change. In addition, collegiality was very much appreciated as 94 per cent of the teachers said that they prepared for changes by discussing them with their colleagues.

> (19) Kollegoiden tuki ja sitoutuminen muutoksia käytännössä toteutettaessa on erittäin tärkeää. T41

Questions 5 and 6 cannot be presented in detail as there were only few answers to these questions.

After the six questions there was a text field for any additional comments. In this section the teachers expressed a hope for more information on the changes. They felt that they did not receive sufficient amount of information especially on the rational for the changes or what they were supposed to improve. One teacher criticized the fact that those who plan the changes do not cover the costs of training although additional training is often needed when a reform is implemented. Reforms were generally considered too complicated and difficult to understand.

(20) Muutokset ovat usein tärkeitä, mutta useinkaan kouluille ei anneta riittävästi tietoa riittävän aikaisin. T48

Quite a few of the reforms that the teachers criticized were external changes. One teacher expressed well, what, for example, Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) and Hargreaves (1994) have said about the success of a change. She said that

(21) Mikäli opettajakunta kokeen muutostarpeen tulevan ulkopuolelta, koulun arki ei tule muuttumaan lukeepa opetussuunnitelmassa mitä tahansa. T6

I believe that many teachers would agree with this comment, that is, no educational change will be properly implemented if the need for a change comes from outside and teachers are not in agreement of that need.

All in all teachers do want to develop in their work and most of them have positive attitudes towards change. However, the change must be well grounded and it must serve the purpose of improving the current conditions. Many teachers criticized the fact that often it seems that a reform is implemented just for the sake of reform. Teachers also felt that sometimes there is a new reform before the previous one has been properly implemented and understood. The rapid pace of the changes and reforms obviously increases the teachers' already huge workload.

5.2. Interviews

The results of the six interviews are investigated next. The teacher reference numbers, which are used to identify each teacher, are the same as in the questionnaire part. As some of the interviewees are also quoted in the questionnaire section (Chapter 5.1), using the same reference number was considered the best approach in order to avoid unclarity. The interviews were analysed theme by theme.

The background information of the teachers is presented in Table 2. It shows the teacher's reference number, sex, age group, work experience in years and the grade levels in which she has taught and, finally, the grade level on which they currently teach.

Table 2 Background information of the teachers who were interviewed.

Teacher	Sex	Age group	Work experience in years and grade levels	Current level
T4	F	41-50 years	21, all grade levels	high school
T6	F	31-40 years	5, high school	high school
T23	F	41-50 years	13, all grade levels	grades 7-9
T31	F	51-60 years	23, high school	high school
T42	F	41-50 years	15, all grade levels	grades 7-9, high school
T45	F	51-60 years	22 (g. 7-9), 15 (high school)	grades 7-9

5.2.1 Theme 1 – Teachers' attitudes toward change

Theme 1 focuses on the teachers' attitudes toward educational change. The factors that, according to the interview data, appear to be influential to the attitude are investigated in the following.

In general the teachers appeared to have a positive attitude toward change. Educational change was considered inevitable and beneficial. The teachers felt that the school and teaching have to keep up with the times. In addition, the interviewees saw change as a positive challenge. However, the teachers pointed out several factors that have an effect on their attitudes.

The first apparent factor that seemed to bring about a positive attitude toward change was that the teachers had to consider the change as something that will clarify or improve their daily work somehow.

> (22) Mä tykkäsin niistä aihepiirikokonaisuuksien nimeämisestä opsiin [opetussuunnitelmaan] … Musta ne jotenkin oli ihan hyvät selkeet painopisteet. T4

> (23) kun mä koen, että ne muutokset on järkeviä, että ne siellä mun käytännön työn tasolla aiheuttaa niinkö positiivisia asioita, sillon mä noin keskimäärin suhtaudun niihin hyvin positiivisesti. T23

(24) Ainakin peruspurkimys on sitten muuttaa niinku parempaan suuntaan jotakin, että tavallaan niinku parannus pitäis olla. Sittenhän se selviää aina myöhemmin, että onko se vai ei [parantanut asioita] T45

A concrete example of a change that had a positive effect on one teacher's daily work was the improvement of the classroom environment. The whole school of T4, moved in to a completely new building and with it every classroom was equipped with a computer, a document camera and a video projector. The new technology made it possible to increase the amount and variability of the material used in classes.

The second factor that was considered significant was that the change is in the pupils' interest, for example, because it improves their working conditions, equality or well-being. This could mean that, for instance, the general guidelines for the contents of different courses and the final exam of the courses were formulated. Even though every teacher has his/her own personal way of teaching, in this way the basis for grading would be the same for every pupil.

(25) että oppilailla olis niinku tasa-arvo niinku, ikinähän ei voi kaikki enkunopettajat opettaa niinku samalla lailla, mutta tietyt periaatteet kuitenkin pitäis olla kunniassa, niinku että arvostelutaulukot jotakuinkin samat, kokeiden laajuus jotakuinkin samat. T4

The fact that the final goal of a change has to be enhancement of the current situation seems self-evident. One has to wonder if this is not the case with all educational changes that the administrators wish to implement. If the administrators' goal is also improvement, why do not the teachers feel the same about a change? A possible explanation is that there are problems in communication between the administrators and the teachers. Moreover, there might be serious differences in how the administrators and the teachers understand the school environment. These two themes come up later when Theme 2 (The teachers' role in the change process, 4.2.2) and Theme 3 (Internal and external change 4.23) are discussed.

Third, it was considered very essential that the change/reform is well-grounded. For example, T23 had experienced a situation, where the city decided to reorganize teaching in grades 7-9 so that all school subjects would be taught in courses within periods instead of the traditional two semester system. No reasons were, however, given for this change. T23 had hoped for some kind of pedagogical reasons for the change but she got no answers. It was suspected that the city wanted to implement this reform because of financial reasons.

(26) kaupunki on päättäny kurssittaa kaiken opettamisen ja sitten se johtanee keskittämiseen eli sellaseen järjestelmään ku lukiossa … sitä on yritetty tänä keväänä painaa kauheesti läpi, … todennäköisesti taloudellisista syistä, mut et sitä ei ole perusteltu, sitä on perusteltu hyvin semmosilla epätriviaaleilla asioilla, et sitä, esimerkiks pedagogiset perusteita ei oo opettajille esitetty ollenkaan. T23

(27) sillon mä näen nää muutokset erittäin huonoina, et joko ne on huonosti perusteltuja tai sit niitä tehdään vaan muutoksia muutoksen vuoksi. T23

The teachers considered it the most annoying when they felt that a change was introduced just for the sake of change, that is, when the teachers felt that the only motivation for a change is to do something differently than before.

(28) …meillä on rehtori vaihtunu ja on tota, tietysti jokainen ihminen haluaa jättää puumerkkinsä, mutta sillon kun sen näkee, että se on muutosta vaan sen vuoksi, että tehdään asiat toisin kuin on aikasemmin tehty, riippumatta siitä, onko se hyvä … sillon koen [sen muutoksen] erittäin huonoks. T23

If the reform or change was well organized, it increased the teachers' positive attitude towards it. The characteristics of a well organized reform included, for example, that it was clear who is in charge of each part of the implementation process, so that everyone knows where to turn if they have questions.

(29) Se selkeä tiedottaminen, niin se on niinku parasta, et mitä on tulossa, mitä siltä odotetaan, mitä pitää olla valmista, missä vaiheessa, kuka tekee mitä, kuka on vastuussa tästä, et semmonen selkeä työnjako. T6

(30) Tuo opetussuunnitelman muutos ensin vähän tuntu siltä, että ahaa tässä joudutaan taas kovasti hommiin, mutta sitten kun se aika hyvin oli täällä meidän talossa organisoitu ihan kaupungin tasolla, niin osallistuin siihen kyllä ihan mielelläni. T31

In addition, if the change required additional work, the teachers hoped that they would be financially compensated. I got the impression that teachers are often expected to do additional work without compensation. Not all people realize that even though the compulsory teaching time is 18-25 hours per week, teachers have to do more work than that: they have to plan their teaching, correct vocabulary tests, essays and exams, and participate in meetings.

(31) että se kaikista eniten se, mikä jurppii, on se, että sen normaalin työn päälle, joka on se palkan peruste, niin sen päälle sit tulee näitä muita tehtäviä, että lukion opettaja joutuu hoitamaan kaiken muun ylimääräsen työnsä ohella. T31

(32) et jos meillä teetetään ylimäärästä työtä, niin olis se nyt ihan kiva, jos siit joku maksaiskin jotain, et nää palkkauskysymykset on aina yks ongelma T42

(33) Ja myös tämmösestä ylimääräsestä työstä … sitten vähän maksettiin, joka on aina semmonen tärkeä. T31

The teachers hoped for more time for the implementation of changes. A change was seen in a negative light when it was introduced at too fast a speed:

(34) Jos hirveen paljon tulee vähälle aikaa muutoksia, niin se, vaikka muutokset sinällään voi olla hyviä, mut jos niitä tulee hallitsemattomasti ja paljon ja kun opettajilla ittellään on tilanne se, että moni, ainakin kielenopettaja on hirveän työmäärän kanssa touhuu lukiossa, niin sitten kun siinä koko ajan tulee ismiä ismin perään ja työryhmää toisen perään, niin siinä tulee semmonen vastustan kaikkea, vaikkei loppuviimeks vastustaiskaan. T4

(35) Ei kehittämisessä oo sinänsä mitään pahaa, mut tietysti se, ei niitä kehittämishankkeitakaan pitäis tulla aivan niinkun jatkuvalla syötöllä, että jonkinlainen kohtuus ja kontrolli siinäkin, et sit ihan rauhassa vois kokeilla jonkun jutun loppuun. T31

(36) Että joskus tuntuu, ettei pääse sisään johonki [muutokseen], ku jo vaihetaan toiseen. T45

It is clear that reforms have to be implemented gradually, especially when the reform in question is supposed to affect several issues. The administrators should ensure that teachers have enough time to get

acquainted with the change, to fully understand the contents of the change, the theory it is based on, and the objectives of the change.

> (37) Et muutosta pitää olla, mut se pitää olla vähän sellasta niinkö pikku hiljaa, vaikka suunta oliski, että lähdetään ihan vastakkaiseen suuntaan, niin se pitää tapahtua kohtuullisessa, sille, et siihen ehtii mukautua. T23

The teachers' attitudes toward change became unenthusiastic when they felt that it would complicate their work. For example, in T6's school a new practise concerning tardiness was implemented. The teacher felt that the new practise - where a pupil who was tardy had to be sent to the office and was not allowed to come to class - delayed and disturbed the class and noticed that it was more practical to leave the classroom door open for the first five to ten minutes and let the pupil slip into class quietly.

In addition, if a change decreased the teacher's influence in her/his own work, it would also be considered negative. Teachers are for cooperation with parents, but they would not like if they could influence in the contents of the teaching. This is because most parents do not have any pedagogic qualifications.

> (38) se vastuu ja päätösvalta jää sille aineenopettajalle, niin se on kyl mun mielest semmonen asia, mihin, mitä ei pitäis tulla kenenkään sitten siihen niinku sähläämään … Sen täytyy se vastuu saada kyl opettajan itsensä kantaa ja niinku tehdä ne asiat omalla tavallaan, et se on hirveen tärkeetä. T42

> (39) se että periaatteessa jokaisella opettajalla on aika paljon vapautta suunnitella itse omaa opetustaan, se on semmonen, et mihin mun mielestä ei hirveesti pitäis puuttua. T6

Another factor that aroused negative feelings was unsatisfactory training or if no training whatsoever was offered. For instance, T4 had bad experiences with training offered by the Finnish National Board of Education. In her opinion, the training was frustrating and too mechanical.

> (40) opetushallituksen koulutus tuntu turhauttavalta … Se tuntu niin turhalta ja mekaaniselta. T4

T23 had an example of a situation where a change was implemented first and training was offered only after the teachers demanded it.

> (41) se [erityisopetus] muutettiin ensin ja sit ku siitä ruvettiin vinkumaan, et me ei osata, me tarvitaan koulutusta, niin sit sitä vasta rupes järjestyyn. T23

Teachers are often accused of having a negative attitude toward change and that they are change resistant. However, based on the interview data this does not seem to be the case. On the contrary, the teachers appear to see change in a positive light. They consider change to be inevitable and feel that there is always room for development both on individual and higher levels. When the teachers said they had considered a certain change bad, they were able to clarify why. Moreover, the reasons for negative attitude appeared to be quite reasonable: the change was poorly grounded, insufficient or no training was offered, the change increased the teachers' workload and no compensation was offered, the teachers did not have enough time to get acquainted with the change and the change would complicate the teachers' work. In my opinion, when an educational change is planned and implemented, these factors should be taken into more careful consideration. Moreover, if teachers seem to be resistant to a certain change, those in charge should try to find out the actual reasons for that resistance.

5.2.2 Theme 2 – Teachers' role in the change process

Theme 2 deals with the interviewees' perceptions on their role in the change process. Changes in school happen on several levels, such as the individual, school, city and national levels. What was interesting here was that the teachers' perceptions varied quite significantly depending on the level a change affects.

If the change or reform came from outside their own schools, most teachers felt that they were outsiders in the change process. They were not included into the change process. However, they were interested in getting involved

in the process but they felt that they were not given the opportunity to do so or that the opportunity was given at a later phase of the implementation process.

> (42) Jossakin vaiheessa menemään siihen prosessiin mukaan, että tota sillon kun se mahdollisuus annetaan. T23

The interviewees seemed to be interested in being involved almost only in those changes that affect the school or city levels, whereas changes on the national level did not seem to be as interesting. Moreover, the more a change affected the teacher herself the more she wanted to be involved.

> (43) jos se on sellanen asia, et mikä kiinnostaa, niin ja koskee itseä, niin totta kai se sillon on tärkee juttu. T31

But when talking about changes in their own school or changing their own work, the teachers were clearly active in the change process. In these cases they seemed to act like change agents.

> (44) tää tämmönen ehkä tää työssä, ammatissa kehittyminen, se on se muutos mikä lähtee ittestään. Pitää muuttuu ja kehittyä koko ajan että olis hyvä opettaja. T4

> (45) I: Pyritkö itse vaikuttamaan muutoksiin
> T23: Kyllä ja voimakkaasti
> I: Miten
> T23: Sillon kun koen, että asiat on tärkeitä ja lähetään menemään, tekemään oppilaan kannalta vääriä asioita, niin sillon oon kyllä valmis [olemaan mukana] hyvinkin voimakkaasti

The teachers were also constantly thinking about how they could develop their own teaching and become a better teacher.

> (46) tavallaan niinku mä koen, et sen [muutoksen] pitää tulla tämmöseks sisäiseks jutuks... Pitää muuttuu ja kehittyä koko ajan että olis hyvä opettaja. T4

The motivation for a change came, for instance, from a course the teacher had taken. There the teacher had learned about a new method and wanted to see if it would work in their classroom. In addition, the teachers reflected on

their teaching methods, and if they noticed that their way of teaching did no work well, they would start thinking how they could change it.

> (47) se muutoksen tekeminen on mulle ainakin semmonen pr osessi, et ensin mä niinku havaitsen, et nyt on jotakin mätää, et nyt joku ei pelitä … [huomaa] että mun opetus ei pelaa siellä [erityisoppilaiden kanssa] niillä vanhoilla säännöillä … Ja se oli sit semmonen prosessi, et mikä tässä on niinkö vikana tässä mun opetuksessa, mitä noi tarvii noi erityisoppilaat. T23

> (48) Aika usein tulee mietittyä tunnin jälkeen, että menikö tää nyt oikeastaan perille, toimiiko tämä ja sitten miettii, että no kokeillaanpas nyt tätä. T6

In some schools, active efforts were made to create "a team organization" (tiimiorganisaatio), which means that through various working teams everybody was given the opportunity to influence the development of the school.

The teachers hoped that their opinions about what to change in the school were asked. For example, some teachers felt that the administrators did not have a realistic view about teaching or the school environment.

> (49) I: Oisko sitten jotain tota terveisiä tämmösille päättäjille tai suunnittelijoille koskien koulu-uudistuksia ja tämmösi ä?
> T31: Keskustelkaa opettajien kanssa. Niiltä saa hyviä ideoita ja tietoa koulun arjesta.

It seems evident that teachers need to be included in the change process. Administrators should pay more attention to getting teachers more involved with educational reforms. According to the questionnaire and interview answers, teachers see several issues that should be changed or improved; it could turn out useful to listen to those opinions. If a reform was motivated by teachers themselves, it would be easier to get the teachers involved and motivated to implement the reform.

5.2.3 Theme 3– Internal and external change

Theme 3 deals with internal and external change. It was at times difficult for the interviewees to say whether the changes that had occurred originated

from the "outside" (external) or within themselves (internal). However, there was one interesting observation to be made from the teachers' interviews: they seemed to perceive external changes as orders and internal changes as development.

As suggested above, teachers seem to perceive internal and external changes as something that happen on quite separate levels. It is as if external changes are mostly seen as orders that just have to be accepted and that one cannot really influence them. Sometimes external changes are merely suggestions and the extent to which a teacher follows these suggestions is up to her.

(50) No sieltä iteasiassa hirveen vähän tulee [ulkopuolelta] mitään semmosta niinko jota ois pakko ruveta tekemään, että kyllä mä niinku koitan, jos se nyt on joku semmonen, mutta ei välttämättä, jos ei se oo mikään semmonen, niin ei sitä oo pakko niinku noudattaa. T45

(51) Tuolta ylhäältä päin tulee niitä ehdotuksia, mut miten niihin sit tarttuu, niin kyllä se muutosvoima sit kuitenkin itsestä lähtee. T31

It almost feels like that teachers perceive external changes as something that is created to "hinder" their work or that they are automatically bad.

(52) Toi ylhäältä tullut muutos, mitäs mä nyt voisin, mä en ihan juuri muista, kun mä oon ollu [lomalla], niin mulla on kaikki ikävät asiat unohtunu. T31

The changes that the teachers themselves initiated were mostly quite small things that affect their classroom. The motivation for these changes came from the teachers' own reflections after a class; often the teacher had felt that something had not gone well and started thinking about how teaching could be improved. Internal change was, thus, seen as something that develops or improves ones daily work and routines in some way. The interviewees talked about internal change as something that is a positive challenge. They get ideas and hints from colleagues, they read literature, attend training or surf the Internet.

However, the teachers argued that it is not always clear whether the motivation for a change comes from the teacher herself or from outside. Two teachers (T4, T6) explicitly mentioned that on some occasions after they have began an internal change process, they notice that the same issues are discussed at, for instance, the national level.

> (53) Useimmiten se ennemmin herää se oma tarve uudistua ja sit huomaa, että sit tavallaan niistä samoista asioista puhutaan sit opetussuunnitelmatasolla tai jossain tai ainakin niin sanotusti yläpuolella. T6

In conclusion, as already suggested in the previous chapter on the teacher's role in the change process, teachers should be more included in educational changes. This way teachers would most likely see external changes in a more positive light. The interview data also implies that in order to increase the teachers' motivation, the objectives and contents of external changes should agree with the needs of the school. The teachers could also modify their attitude toward external changes by becoming more open to them. After all, the teachers' and administrators' goal is essentially the same: to improve schools. I feel that more open communication between the teachers and administrators is needed to improve the situation. In addition, the teachers should be given credit for the work that they do for their professional development.

5.2.4 Theme 4– Work environment and networking

Theme 4 deals with the impact of the work environment and networking on the teachers' work and the meaning of networking in a change process.

The teachers recognized the importance of a well functioning working environment and colleagues to whom they could talk. Cooperation with other teachers of English was found meaningful and all six teachers said that in their schools the atmosphere was very interactional and that there was quite a lot of cooperation. Indeed, T31 said that one cannot even work as a teacher without teamwork with others.

(54) Se [yhteistyö kollegoiden kanssa] on ihan semmonen keskeinen juttu ja ei tätä työtä muuten pystyis hoitamaankaan, muuta kuin tiiminä ja verkossa, et se on kaikkien etu. T31

Discussions with colleagues are especially important when teachers are facing change. For them talking about the change and exchanging ideas makes it easier to adapt to the change. T4 and T6 pointed out, however, that the amount of cooperation depends on the personalities of the teachers. There is more cooperation with teachers who think alike. T6 actually said that some teachers do not want to share their knowledge or they feel that cooperation involves judging other peoples' work.

(55) Se [yhteistyön määrä] riippuu tietysti persoonasta, et meitä englannin opettajia, niin meissä on hyvin voimakasluonteisia persoonia, just niinkun osa katsoo sitä, että yhteistyö on toisen työn arvostelemista ja sitten toisaalta sit katsotaan, ettei haluta jakaa niitä omia tiedon murusia. T6

T6 said that in her school when a new teacher starts his/her work there is always a great deal of cooperation so that the new teacher learns the ways of the school.

Cooperation with other teachers of English mostly involved planning courses and exams together. In addition, they exchanged teaching materials and experiences of trying out, for example, new exercises. With teachers of other subjects the interviewees talked about more general issues, for instance, teaching methods.

(56) jutellaan, vaihdetaan materiaalia, ootkos nähny tätä kirjaa… jatkuvasti joku [kysyy], et mites sää tän teet ja onks tämmöstä ongelmaa ollu edessä … Paljon yhteistyötä, käytetään samoja kokeita, kun on mahdollista. T4

Apart from T6 the interviewees hoped that there would be more time for discussions with colleagues. However, they also pointed out that because of lack of time, regular meetings are impossible to arrange. Moreover, teachers already have to participate in various meetings and it would be difficult to add yet another meeting to their schedule. In T6's school, however, regular

meetings with teachers from the same subject matter have been arranged every six weeks. The motivation for the regular meetings rose from previous school year and development discussions that were held then. At that time several teachers hoped for some sort of regular meeting time with teachers of the same subject and then the system was introduced the following school year (2006). T6 feels that with these regular meetings and more informal discussions during, for instance, breaks, there is sufficient time for discussions with colleagues.

T6 felt that the working environment has a great influence on the way the teaching staff reacts to educational change. In her school the atmosphere is very interactive and the average age is lower than it usually is which in T6's opinion has the effect that her school is positively oriented to change.

In addition, leadership in the school was considered very important. Especially T23 had come to the conclusion that the principal of the school has a strong impact on the way in which teachers perceive change and how much they participate in the process. She had thought about this issue a great deal after her school got a new headmaster whose ways of directing the school differed significantly from the previous headmaster. The new headmaster of the school has implemented several changes in the school which the faculty considers unnecessary.

> (57) mä olen nyt tän kevään kokemusten pohjalta [huomannut, että muutoksiin suhtautuminen] se on erittäin voimakkaasti johtamiskysymys. Pidetäänkö sitä opettajakuntaa asiantuntijaorganisaationa vai onko se kumileimasin, jonka täytyy totella rehtoriaan ja virastoa. T23

> (58) Kyllä mä koen, että meillä on mun mielestä ollu hyvä rehtori, joka on ollu tasapuolinen ... että keskustelulla aika paljon on saanu aikaseks. T 4

Whereas cooperation with colleagues within the school was found most beneficial for their daily work, the interviewees considered collaboration on a higher level (national or within the city) significant for their well being. The interviewees did also recognize the importance of the courses organized by

The Federation of Foreign Language Teachers in Finland (Suomen kieltenopettajien liitto, SUKOL) for their professional development. All interviewees were members of SUKOL, but they mostly merely participated in the courses it organized, read the message boards on the website and read the SUKOL magazine (*Tempus*). They did not actively participate in its operations There was a great deal of interest to be more active; however, the lack of time restricted their participation. T4 and T23, though, see a more active role in the local branch of SUKOL as a possibility in the future when their children are older. Especially T23 feels that through SUKOL she would be able to contribute to developing teachers' daily work.

The interviewees were also asked if they participated in the operations of the local branch of their trade union. Only T42 and T45 mentioned that they were involved in the operations of their trade union.

The interview data suggest that the importance of collegiality and work environment should not be underestimated. By creating an interactive and open atmosphere among the school personnel, the change process may become easier and more successful. In addition, the relationship between the headmaster and teachers should be respectful and both should take each other's views into consideration.

5.2.5 Theme 5 – Preparation for change and professional development

Theme 5 concentrates on the actions which the interviewees have taken to prepare themselves for change and, moreover, what kind of views they have on personal development. The teachers' participation in development projects and their colleagues' attitude toward it are also discussed under this theme.

All the teachers' felt that they are never totally competent and that there are always areas where they can improve their expertise. Three out of six teachers were more or less seriously interested in completing a post-graduate degree. However, the teachers who are interested in further studies all saw the lack of time as a major obstacle to doing so. They were all teaching the maximum number or hours per week, and in addition to that they were involved in various development projects. Other hindering factors were the family and their financial situation.

(59) mulla on niinku ikuisesti lisensiaattityö tekemättä ... Että ehkä siinä nyt on kun ite alkaa olla yli neljänkymmenen kyitenkin, niin on tullu jo mieleen, että mikä se on sitten se [lisensiaattityö], niin et se ois vaan sit semmonen oma keskeneräinen juttu, jonka tekis. T4

(60) kun [avio]mies on tehny väitöskirjan ja mä siinä vaiheessa päätin, että toista prosessia ei meiän perhe varmaan kestä ... mutta sekin [väitöskirjan teko] on kyllä nyt häilyny ajatuksissa. T23

(61) mun tekis mieli ihan niinku suoraan sanottuna jatkaa johonkin lisensiaattityöhän tai jotain muuta, mut että kun mulla on nyt ollu ihan täydet tunnit täällä, aina vähän ylituntejakin ollu mukana ja sit noita koulun omia projekteja ... niin ei sitä jää aikaa. T6

T42 did not really see post-graduate studies as something that was included in her job description. However, she was very enthusiastic about maintaining her language skills.

(62) jatko-opinnot ei kenties kuulu mun toimenkuvaani, mut sit kyl niinku tää kielitaidon ja englannin ylläpito, niin se on mun sydäntäni hyvin lähellä. T42

The two interviewees who were the most senior (T31 and T45) did not have any interest in post-graduate studies. Nevertheless, they had participated in various courses and were interested in developing professionally.

(63) No ei varsinaisesti ehkä sillä tavalla ainakaan mihinkään tutkintoon tähtäävää, mutta tota aina on kiinnostusta oman työn kehittämiseen ilman muuta. T31

(64) en mä nyt jatko-opintoja tiijä, mut siis mä oon käyny varmaan meijän koulusta eniten [osallistunut]... kaiken maailman mitä vaan on näitä kursseja ja koulutusjuttuja T45

Other teachers were, as well, very interested in participating in a variety of courses and in-service training. In this the only obstacle was whether the school could afford to cover the costs. For example, T31 hoped that there were more opportunities to spend longer times abroad and participate in training there.

(65) sen verran [olen osallistunut koulutukseen] kun on päässy, että eihän niihin oo rahaa, mutta että oon kyllä hirveen paljon ollu. T45

(66) mitä kaupunki sais maksaa vielä enemmän, ois nää ulkomailla kesällä tapahtuvat täydennyskoulutukset ja kurssit, et niihin ne vähän nihkeesti suhtautuu ... kyl pitäis olla vielä semmosii pidempii, ihan sellasii puolen vuoden täydennyskoulutusjuttuja kieltenopettajille, koska sen kielen kanssa ollaan tekemisissä. T31

(67) kun nyt mä tulin esimmäistä kertaa vuosikymmeniin lukioon, niin mä pyysin, et mä olisin päässy niinku ylioppilaskirjotuksiin, et ois saanu niist koulutusta, sitä ois ollu tarjolla, mut eip sinne päässyt T42

The extend to which and how a teacher passes on information from a course depends on the school. Once more the lack of time was brought up. According to the interviewees, there was hardly ever time to discuss the material and content of a course in-depth. The information was mostly passed on during breaks by copying possible materials to colleagues. If something that was considered extremely important was learnt, then a short information session may have been organized.

(68) kaikki materiaali, mikä sieltä [täydennyskoulutuksesta] tulee, niin se tuodaan aina kouluun … nyt kun meillä on intranetti, niin sinne voi laittaa vaikka miten paljon liitettä … jos on oikein tärkee asia, niin joku on voinu pienen keskustelutilaisuuden järjestää. T4

(69) sen [täydennyskoulutuksen] jälkeen me sit kokoonnuttiin yheks illaks erään kielten opettajan luokse ja mä olin monistanu materiaalia ja mä kerroin ja annoin niitä niinkö eteenpäin ... Ja kyllä se [tieto] sit niitten keskustelujen kautta myöskin menee eteen päin. T23

(70) Kyllä, jonkin verran [välitetään tietoa], mutta siinä on taas se aikapula ... kyllä niistä keskustellaan ja tosiaan halutaan sitten muidenki n käyttöön kaikki ideat. T31

In T45's opinion, however, it is impossible to share all the information of a three or four-day-training in an hour or so, which is why she hardly ever

discusses the contents of an in-service training course with other teachers. She did, nevertheless, distribute the material to other teachers.

One interesting fact was pointed out by T4. She said that in the teaching profession, one must be careful about the way in which, for example, new teaching methods are introduced to other teachers. In some teachers' opinion this kind of information sharing can be interpreted as criticism and as an attempt to correct their teaching.

(71) Mutta totuushan on se, että pitää olla vähän varovainenkin sitten, kun on ollu koulutuksessa, että semmosta ei katsota hyvällä, että joku alkaa niinkun luennoimaan sitten. Että opettajat on vähän oma koulukuntansa, et siellä niinkun jollekulle voi tulla äkkiä semmonen [tunne], että joku niinku tulee neuvomaan mua, et se pitää tehä hyvin sillei matalalla profiililla. T4

Other ways of developing themselves professionally included reading literature or magazines, surfing on the Internet and learning through work.

The interviewees' participation in various development projects was quite active and involvement in such a project was seen as beneficial for the teachers' work.

(72) kyllä ne kaiken kaikkiaan mulle ainakin on tuonu [kehittämishankkeet] … semmosta mielekkyytä, viihtyvyyttä työssä, koska hirveen helposti sitä kuitenkin kangistuu ja jo pelkästään se, että tapaa erilaisia ihmisiä eri kouluista, eri puolilta Suomea, se on must jo rikkaus. Kuulee, miten joku toinen tekee, hirveesti oppii toisilta. T4

(73) [Comenius –projekti] kyllä mun mielestä [sillä on myönteinen vaikutus työhön] et ku se on englanti meillä se yhteistoimintakieli siellä, niin kyllähän siinä oma kielitaito hioutuu ja sit kyllähän mä oon nähny sen, että oppilaitten kielten opiskelumotivaatiota se lisää ihan selkeesti … Samoin myös muiden aineiden opiskeluun sillä saattaa olla myönteisii vaikutuksii, et kun ne huomaa, et jossain toisessa maassa tiedetään ehkä enemmän EU –asioista, niin ne ajattelee, että no kyllä itekkin pitää ottaa niistä selvää. T6

The participation in a development project brought variety to and increased the teachers' enjoyment of their work. In addition, it was seen as a good channel to receive first-hand information on the subject. T23 also saw it also as a way to increase other teachers' motivation for becoming involved.

Only T42 and T45 were not involved in any development projects. They were asked if they would like to take part in a development project if the opportunity was offered. They said they would most likely not take the opportunity because of their already heavy workload and lack of time.

> (74) Kyllä mä oon kiinnostunu, mutta taas se on se, että mä en pysty sitä hommaa tekemään koulutyön ohella … mulla ei riitä ainakaan resurssit tehä kahta työtä yhtäaikaa. T45

> (75) Se [osallistuminen] vähän riippuu siitä, kuinka paljon se veis aikaa ja mikä mun tilanne työssä taas olis, et mä kyl aika tarkkaan nyt harkitsisin mihinkään projektiin ryhtymistä ... periaattees kyllä ... jos mä arvioisin sen [kehittämishankkeen] niin, et mulla riittää siihen voimia ja aikaa. T42

When the teachers had been involved in a development project they mostly received positive and encouraging feedback from their colleagues.

> (76) mä luulisin, että [kollegat suhtautuu] enimmäkseen hyvin … että joku saattaa sanoa, että kiva kun jaksat. ... että jos joku jaksaa kouluttautua ja vaikuttaa, niin sitä pidetään hyvänä. T4

> (77) [kollegat suhtautuvat] ihan myönteisesti T6

> (78) [suhtautuminen] hirveen positiivista ... että on hyvä, ku joku jaksaa olla mukana, jollonka sitä tietoo on koulussa. T23

> (79) [kollegat suhtautuvat] Ihan hyvin, musta tuntuu. Ihan hyvin ja kannustavasti. T45

However, as T4 pointed out, in this matter one has to be careful about the way in which one tells the other teachers about a development project. She said that some jealousy might appear and that you should not be self-important or start lecturing and telling other people how to do things "right". Moreover, T6's said that some teachers might complain about the fact that pupils miss some of their classes because of a project and, of course, if a teacher is away because of a project somebody has to take care of his or her classes as well. Nevertheless, T6 did not consider these minor complaints to be a serious problem.

> (80) Kyllähän joka työpaikalla varmaan jonkunlaista pientä kateutta voi olla. ... sitä karsastetaan, jos joku on niinku täynnä itteensä ja semmonen, että minä tiedän kaiken ja minä olen ollut koulutuksessa ja kuunnelkaas nyt kun minä teille neuvon. T4

(81) kyllähän sitä joskus kuulee sitten semmosia, että nyt ne taas lähtee ja sit ne on oppilaat poissa viikon ja sit niillä on kaikki läksyt tekemättä ja mitenkä ne hoidetaan ne opettajien tunnit ja että kyllähän siihen kuuluu sitä narinaa, mutta se on, mä en pitäis sitä kuitenkaan mitenkään niin vakavana ongelmana. T6

The interview data suggests that teachers are quite interested in personal professional development. They actively search information that is relevant to their work and take part in in-service training. Moreover, they would like to be trained more but often the obstacle is the financial situation of their school. The lack of time is also a reason, for instance, for not participating in development projects that would otherwise be interesting to the teacher. In my opinion, the fact that the interviewees take so much interest in their personal development offers some evidence that teachers may have a more positive attitude towards change than is perhaps generally believed.

5.2.6 Theme 6 – Current challenges and the future

Theme 6 deals with those issues that the six interviewed teachers consider challenging at the moment and that in their opinion are something that should be changed. After discussing the current challenges, the teachers' views on the future of teaching English in Finland are investigated.

Three teachers out of six said that the biggest challenge is the workload. However, it is not the actual teaching that the teachers feel is too much for them; it is all the other tasks that teachers have to attend to in addition to teaching, such as taking care of students' problems, participating in meetings and committees, different mandatory projects or the duties of a homeroom teacher.

(82) I: Mikä on tällä hetkellä niinku opettajan työssä suurin ongelma, mihin kaipaisit muutosta?
T4: Se on jotenkin tää työmäärä ehkä sit loppuviimeks kuitenki ja se, että hirveen usein on semmonen tunne, että sitä varsinaista työtä saa hirveen vähän tehdä. Siis, että mä keskityn luokassa oppilaitten kanssa touhuumaaan, oppimaan ja opettamaan. Sille jää hirveen vähän aikaa, kun kaikki muu

organisaatio vie niin hirveesti, työryhmää työryhmän perään, kokouksia, jotka on tärkeitäki, en mä sitä sano, mutta hirveesti on oheistöitä. T4

(83) T31: No ihan kyllä sellaseen, että työmäärä on kasvanu valtavasti, et opetusvelvollisuus pitäis saada pienemmäksi tai sit jollakin tavalla näitä muita tehtävii, mitä opettajalle kuitenkin kuuluu tässä työssä, niin niistä pitäis saada jollakin tavall huojennusta sitten tuohon opetustyöhön. … että se kaikista eniten se, mikä jurppii, on se, että sen normaalin työn päälle, joka on se palkan peruste, niin sen päälle sit tulee näitä muita tehtäviä, että lukion opettaja joutuu hoitamaan kaiken muun ylimääräsen työnsä ohella. T31

(84) T45: Siis mun mielestä nykyään on niin paljon kaikkee tuolla esimes välitunnilla oppilaitten asioitten hoitamista ja muuta … Et se ois hirveen helpottavaa ku jostain päästä, ku tuntuu, et tulee niin lisää kaikkee semmosta mutta, niin ehtis sitte niihin[oppilaisiin ja opetukseen] keskittyä ja joku hoitas nää tämmöset rutiinijutut. T45

It is obvious that if teachers have many tasks in addition to the actual teaching, it should be taken into account in their salaries. Like T31 said the salary is based on the number of teaching hours. If teachers were paid for the work they do for a change process, they would be more motivated to do that work. What is positive about these answers is the clear enthusiasm the teachers have for the actual teaching and working with the pupils.

Another cause for concern is the increasing class sizes and the integration of special needs pupils in the regular classrooms. The cities/municipalities that cover the costs of the public school system save money through bigger class sizes and by directing, for instance, that there needs to be a certain minimum number of pupils in one class. Furthermore, because of the increased number of pupils in one dass, teachers found it almost an impossible task to give the integrated special needs pupils the particular attention they need. Moreover, the number of immigrant students who also may have special needs has increased in the Finnish schools.

(85) I: Ja sitte tota, mikä on tällä hetkellä suurin ongelma sun työssä, mihin kaipaisit muutosta?
T6: No meidän lukiossa se on käytännössä niinkun nämä suuret ryhmäkoot, jotka tekee sen hyvin haastavaks, että voisi tarjota niinkun tällasta, tarjota mahdollisuuksia yksilöllisempään opiskeluun tunnilla … Se [oppilaat, joilla on LUKI-häiriö] on semmonen ryhmä, missä erityistukea kaipaavat, niin niitä on lukiossa enemmän nykyään ja opetussuunnitelmakihan velvottaa

ottamaan heidät huomioon. Niin se on semmonen, mihin pitäis saada enemmän resursseja. T6

(86) T23: Liian suuret opetusryhmät siihen nähden, minkälaista se oppilasaines on … sillon kun on paljon erityisoppilaita tai maahanmuuttajia, niin kyllä sillon pienemmät ryhmät on tarpeen. T23

(87) T31: työmäärä on kasvanu ihan valtavasti, et opetusvelvollisuus pitäis saada pienemmäksi tai sit jollakin tavall näitä muita tehtävii, mitä opettajalle kuitenkin kuuluu tässä työssä, niin niistä pitäis saada jollakin tavalla huojennusta sitten tuohon opetustyöhön. T31

T4 also said that as there has been an increase in the number of social problems in today's society, the teachers also increasingly have to deal with problems such as anorexia and depression among the pupils.

(88) Sitten hyvinvointiin liittyen se, että puhutaan entistä enemmän tämmösestä opiskelijahuollon merkityksestä nykylukioissa, kun on anoreksiaa ja on masennusta ja univaikeuksia ja burnouttia, niin että sen merkitystä ei voi vähätellä kouluissa. T4

Although the teachers could point out several matters that in their opinion should be reformed, they fortunately saw the future of teaching English in Finland in a positive light. Teachers said that English is an easy subject to teach because the pupils are often highly motivated to learn it. This is because the status of English as a global language is widely recognized among pupils.

Some challenges, however, are seen in the future. In particular, the financial situation of the school worries the teachers. They seemed to be concerned about the fact that financial concerns seem to define the way in which schools are run nowadays and maybe even to a greater extend in the future.

(89) et pitäis pyrkiä koulunkin niinku tällei taloudellisesti hyvään tulokseen, mikä on mun mielest kyl omituinen ajatus T42

(90) semmonen, että haettas jotain semmosta erityisempää tulosvastuullisuutta niin se mun mielestä ei sovi koulumaailmaan. Et joskus tuntuu, että tollaset liike-elämässä hylätut konseptit ne ajutuu vähän ajan kuluttua koulumaailmaan ... että kaikki yksinkertasesti ei sovi tämmöseen laitokseen, jossa niinku ei voi mitata mitään niinkun panos-tuotos –menetelmällä saavutettuja tuloksia T6

One teacher, T42, pointed out that if the teaching profession is not appreciated enough, it will make it difficult to get young people to choose that profession and there will not be enough teachers in the future. What is more, she also said that it nowadays seems that people try to get somebody else than the parents to take on the responsibility of their children.

> (91) et jos opettajan työn arvostusta ja niitä työoloja ei saada muutettuu, niin entistä vaikeempi varmaan on löytää opettajia. T42

> (92) et nykyään entist enemmän yritetään työntää vastuu lapsista jonnekkin muualle ku vanhemmille T42

Another cause of concern is the fact that not enough attention is paid to the well-being of teachers. Teachers are sometimes overwhelmed by their heavy workload and the risk of burnout is high.

The interview data suggest that it would be quite important to find ways in which to balance the teachers' workload and salary. It would not only have a positive effect on the teachers' well-being, but it would perhaps also assure that there will be enough qualified and enthusiastic teachers in the future. This is because nobody dreams of a profession where they would constantly be overwhelmed with a heavy workload and were not paid accordingly.

Despite the challenges that the interviewees mentioned, they have a positive outlook on teaching English in the future. Moreover, they still enjoy working with their young pupils regardless of the heavy workload, lousy income and some unsuccessful changes, to mention a few negative factors. On the basis of the present data it seems evident that teaching still is a vocation.

6 DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to find out how teachers of English in Finland perceive educational change. Furthermore, schools are constantly under a pressure to change and develop, but, at the same time, one often hears about failed attempts to change certain regularity in a school. To this end, it was my intention to investigate if this is the case and also to find out what kind of support the teachers might need in facing an educational change. In the following the concise answers are presented to the research questions first, then after this, in section 5.1 the results are compared with previous studies. Finally, in section 5.2 implications of this study are discussed.

1) What is the teachers' of English general attitude towards educational change? Which factors have the greatest impact on the attitudes of teachers? The results showed that the teachers' general attitude towards educational change was mostly positive. Educational change was considered important and inevitable. The factors that contributed to positive attitudes were good organization of the change, a clear need for a change, good leadership in the school and that its positive impact on teachers' daily practices. Negative attitudes were reported when the change was poorly or not at all grounded, did not seem to fit into the school environment (administrators' unrealistic ideas about the school), exclusion of teachers from the planning of change, disregard for teachers' views, increase in workload and poor or no training for the teachers.

2) What are the biggest changes and challenges in teaching English in Finland from the teacher's perspective? At the time of data gathering the biggest changes and challenges were, according to the teachers, the new national curriculum, the increasing number of immigrants and pupils with special needs, decrease in financial resources, and integration.

3) How do teachers prepare themselves to the up-coming changes and challenges? The teachers were quite active in developing professionally and preparing for the future. They read professional literature on developments in the "field", participated in meetings (some were mandatory, though) and discussed with colleagues issues that involved changes or development in schools. The teachers hoped that they would be more included in the change process and that their opinions were asked about educational changes that were going to be implemented. In addition, they wished to be better informed about changes and that they would have more time to adapt to the changes.

6.1 Summary of the findings

1) Teachers general attitude towards educational change

First, it was encouraging that the teachers seemed to have a more positive attitude towards educational change than is usually thought by administrators. The majority of the teachers who returned the questionnaire fully (24%, N=50) or somewhat (62%, N=50) agreed that changes in schools are needed. In addition, several teachers argued that it is important that the schools keep up with the times. However, the teachers also expressed negative attitudes towards educational changes, but seemed to have justified reasons for their attitudes.

One apparent factor that aroused the teachers' positive emotions towards changes was that the change would somehow clarify or improve their daily work. Moreover, the teachers felt that there should be a clear need for a change. As discussed in the chapter 3.2 of the study, Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991: 127-128) argue that teachers asses a change by four main criteria of which one deals with the need of that change. The teachers thought that it was the most annoying when they felt that a change was implemented just

for the sake of change. Moreover, even though some reasons for a change were given by those introducing the change, the teachers did not always agree with those reasons. Some scholars such as Sahlberg (1996), Schmidt and Datnow (2005), and Goodson et al. (2006) have already suggested that this conflict between teachers' beliefs and the content of change has a great influence on the success or failure of a proposed educational change.

In addition, most of the teachers thought that too many changes and reforms were being implemented in schools. Moreover, when the teachers felt that they had finally understood one reform or change, another one was already on its way. They felt then not have enough time to comprehend all the issues involved with the change and, thus, were not necessarily able to implement it properly. Bailey (2000) also discovered that reforms were introduced at too fast a speed which resulted in frustration and decreased the teachers' willingness to learn about reforms.

The teachers also felt that administrators do not seem to have realistic views on the school environment. What is more, the teachers' opinions and ideas about educational change were often ignored by administrators. Previous studies by, for instance, Hargreaves (2004) and Al-Daami and Wallace (2007) have reported teachers having these similar feelings in Canada and Jordan, respectively. The disregard for teachers' opinions and the administrators' unrealistic views on schools may lead to a situation where teachers do not feel that a change is necessary that there's no need for the change. The administrators should also pay attention to the way in which the changes or reforms are introduced to teachers. The teachers had often difficulties in understanding the content and objective of changes and reforms. Moreover, when a change was not well organized it increased the teachers' negative attitudes towards the change. These factors are directly linked to how the teachers are informed about the change, i.e. communication. These findings support the arguments of Sarason (1996) and Warrigan (2006) that good

communication between the schools' personnel and administrators is essential in successful educational changes. Furthermore, an open atmosphere in the school, collegiality and good leadership had a positive influence on the teachers' attitudes.

Other factors that were found significant in determining the teachers' attitudes were that if the change increased the teachers' workload, insufficient in-service training was offered or if the change decreased the teachers' influence on their work, the change was seen in a negative light. In previous research (e.g. Webb et al. 2004; Kimonen and Nevalainen 2005) these factors have also been found important when educational change is implemented.

2) The greatest challenges and changes from the teachers' perspective

In the teachers' perspective, the greatest challenges and changes in their work were the new national curriculum, decrease in financial resources increasing class sizes, increasing number of immigrants and special needs pupils. Some teachers also reported that the decrease of lessons per week and integration of the special needs pupils into regular were creating challenges. Especially in the interviews the teachers voiced their concern about the financial situation in their schools and cities. In many schools the lack of financial resources in the city has been the major motivation for increasing the class sizes and cutting down appropriation for teachers' in-service training. The teachers' increasing workload was to some extent connected to the financial problems as in some schools no substitute teachers were hired for absences that lasted only a couple of days. In these schools other teachers had to take care of the teaching of the absent teacher. Otherwise the increase in teachers' workload meant that the teachers had to participate in various meetings and committees etc. and they felt that they had less time to concentrate on their actual work, i.e. planning the teaching, teaching, and interacting with their students. Goodson et al. (2006) also made similar

observations and they argue that this kind of situation causes teachers to feel less proficient and confident (Goodson et al. 2006: 55). In addition, the teachers were not financially compensated for their extra work which decreased their enthusiasm to do that extra work.

Moreover, the changes in the postmodern society reflect to the daily work of teachers. Teachers' have to deal with the social problems more than before as there are more broken families, mental health issues, etc. that reflect on the behaviour of pupils in the schools. This is what, I believe, Senge et al. (2000: 9-10) mean when they say that schools should keep up with the demands of society. It is clear that schools have to pay attention to how the society around them changes but society should also take notice of schools and especially teachers. One interviewee pointed out that if respect for and appreciation of teachers continues to decrease, it will be difficult to find teachers in the future. Webb et al. (2004b: 185) also argue that improving public appreciation of teachers as well as their salaries and working conditions is necessary for the future of the profession.

However, despite these challenges and problems at least the interviewed teachers saw the future of teaching English in Finland in relatively positive terms. In their opinion, English is an easy subject to teach because usually, pupils recognize the importance of English as a global language and their motivation to learn it is typically quite good.

3) Teachers' preparation for change and professional development
The teachers were eager to develop professionally and to learn about, for instance, new teaching methods. All the interviewed teachers felt that they will never become fully competent and that there are always areas where they can improve their expertise. If the teachers were given the opportunity to receive in -service training, they wer e enthusiastic to take that opportunity. However, in some schools there were not enough financial resources to send

teachers to in-service training. Furthermore, in some cases in-service training was offered after a change was implemented and teachers had demanded it.

In addition, to prepare for upcoming changes the teachers participated in various meetings of which most, however, were mandatory. Discussions with colleagues were also considered important sources of information and new insights about a change. Moreover, meeting teachers from other schools or cities was considered to give a fresh outlook on issues involved with a certain change or development of the school system in general. Scholars, such as Välijärvi (2005), emphasize the importance of collegiality in creating schools that are capable of development, as well. Indeed, according to Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991: 131-132), changes in beliefs and teaching style happen through a process of personal development in a social context, which then helps to create significant educational change.

6.2 Implications

The study suggests that teachers are not as resistant to change as is sometimes believed to be the case. Change in general is always difficult for people. Even though the teachers' attitude toward change was positive to begin with, there are still several factors that can make the change process more fluent. Firstly, as the findings of this and previous studies imply, changes and reforms are most likely be more successful if teachers were given the opportunity and encouraged to become involved in the early phases of the change process, i.e. planning. If teachers were more involved in the process, it would be more likely that they would become those change agents who, according to Fullan (1994: 30-31), are the key to successful change. In addition, teachers' participation would bring more knowledge of everyday life of schools into the planning process. This would most likely increase teachers motivation for the change because their opinion would be heard and issues that are considered important would be dealt with. Thus,

the teachers would be more prone to see that the change is, in fact, necessary and useful.

Secondly, those in charge of planning and introducing the change should pay more attention to communicating about, explaining and giving reasons for the changes they want to implement. The better teachers understand the changes, the more willing they are to implement and approve them. Warrigan (2006), for example, argues that the way in which a change is introduced to teachers attributes to their reluctance or acceptance of that change. Teachers, in turn, should have an open mind when reforms or changes in schools are implemented, as well. Administrators should, furthermore, provide enough time for the implementation process and not implement new changes before the previous ones have been accepted, understood and are in (successful) daily use.

Thirdly, another critical issue is the fact that if issues concerning teachers' workload and salary are not "reformed", the administration can be quite sure that it will be almost impossible to get all the teachers very motivated to work for a change. Reforming teachers' working conditions and salaries is important not only for making successful changes in schools but also for the future of the profession on the whole.

This study has given some insight into how teachers of English in Finland perceive educational change and, thus helped we understand educational change in the Finnish school context. In addition, some suggestions on how to increase the success rate of educational changes have been made. These suggestions may prove useful for the school staff and those in charge of planning educational changes. Moreover, planners of teacher education could profit from these findings and develop teacher education so that it would be easier for future teachers to deal with educational changes.

7 CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this study was to find out how teachers of English in Finland perceive educational change, what their attitudes towards it are, what they consider to be the greatest challenges in their work, and how they prepare themselves for these changes and challenges. Moreover, one objective was to find out what kind of support teachers would like to have when facing educational change.

All things considered this study substantiates how important it is to take teachers into account when educational change is planned. For the success or failure of an educational change it is essential that teachers are motivated and well informed about the change. Moreover, it is encouraging to discover that there are certain guidelines that can be followed to help teachers in educational changes.

However, there are some problems and weaknesses with the present study. The subject of the study was perhaps too wide as educational change is quite a complex concept. It probably would have been better to narrow down the subject and to focus, for instance, on a single external change. In addition, there are some problems in using the kind of methodology that is used here. First, the sample was somewhat small and as was mentioned earlier, because the online questionnaire was sent via e-mail it could be that those teachers who do not feel comfortable with computers did not answer the questionnaire. Moreover, the questionnaire statements and questions should have been more carefully formulated. Here, however, the major reason for these shortcomings is most likely my inexperience as a researcher. This was the first time I conducted a study where qualitative methods were used.

Second, there are several problems in using interviews as research method: the interviewees tend to answer in a socially acceptable manner or they feel

threatened or scared in the interview (Hirsjärvi et al, 1997: 202-203). Even though it was emphasised that the interviews would be analysed anonymously, it could be that interviewees were afraid to express their true opinions. In addition, because teachers are sometimes considered resistant to change, the interviewees may have wanted to give the impression that this is not, in fact, true and, therefore, have displayed more positive attitudes towards change than what they actually have. Furthermore, more than one interviewee said that they feel positive about change that is "sensible". When do we know that a change is "sensible"? How do individuals decide whether a change is sensible? It can mean different things to different people.

Third, interview data is also bound to its context and situation. Therefore, the interviewees can speak in one way in the interview situation and in another in some other situation (Hirsjärvi et al, 1997: 203). The interview skills of the interviewer and the composition of the interview questions also have an effect on the data. Yet again, I admit that my lack of experience in composing interview questions and conducting interviews may have influenced the results.

Moreover, only nine teachers were willing to be interviewed and all these teachers had very similar attitudes towards change. The group of six teachers who were interviewed was relatively homogeneous. It is possible that teachers who have a more critical attitude towards change were not willing to reveal their thoughts. Another possibility for the small number of volunteers is that even though teachers are interested in the subject, they do not see why they should bother answering it. They can feel that their opinions are not taken seriously or that they do not lead anywhere, i.e. the results of a study will be buried in some storage room and they will not be taken seriously. The results, however, could be published by sending an article to, for instance, the language teachers' journal *Tempus*. Teachers are also overwhelmed with the amount of surveys and questionnaires they

receive during a school year. After discussing with several teachers, I concluded that sometimes, when a teacher receives mail or email with the topic "Survey" on it, they immediately throw it in the trash.

Some suggestions can be made for future research based on the results of this study. Future research could be conducted focusing on one single change, for instance, when the next major change in the national curriculum is implemented. When a study would concentrate on one single change, all aspects of that change, that is planning, implementing and end results, could be investigated in more detail. Conducting a longitudinal study on a specific change could also prove to be extremely fruitful. Another possibility could be to study individual factors that have an effect on the success or failure of educational change, such as the influence of the working environment on successful educational change. In addition, it would be beneficial if in the future more teachers could be surveyed or interviewed about educational change in order to get data that would be more generally applicable. Moreover, it might be useful to investigate the views of administrators, headmasters and even pupils as they all have their roles in the context of educational change. Nevertheless, additional research is needed in order to better understand educational change in the Finnish context.

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APPENDIX 1: EMAIL INVITATION AND THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Hyvä Opettaja!

Teen englannin pro gradua Jyväskylän yliopiston kielten laitokselle, jossa tutkin opettajien suhtautumista ja asenteita koulun muutokseen ja uudistuksiin. Koulun muutoksella tarkoitan kaikkia mahdollisia muutoksia, mitä koulumaailmassa tapahtuu (esim. uudet materiaalit, opetussuunnitelmat, opetusmetodit). Tässä vaiheessa tarvitsisin Sinun apuasi. Olen erityisen kiinnostunut juuri Sinun näkemyksestäsi ja olen varma, että saan vastauksistasi paljon arvokasta tietoa graduuni. Tiedän, että olet kiireinen, mutta olisin erittäin kiitollinen, jos vastaisit kyselyyni. Vastaamiseen menee noin 15 minuuttia. Kaikkien vastanneiden kesken arvotaan kaksi kirjapalkintoa! Kyselyyn pääset klikkaamalla alla olevaa linkkiä

http://www.cc.jyu.fi/~tataalas/kysely.htm
Vastaathan kahden viikon kuluessa!

Tarvitsisin myös 5-10 vapaaehtoista haastatteluun, joten laitathan kyselylomakkeen loppuun myös, olisitko halukas noin 60 minuutin haastatteluun, joka tehtäisiin huhti-toukokuussa (omassa kaupungissasi). Kirjoita tässä tapauksessa myös yhteystietosi. Yhteystietoja tarvitaan myös, mikäli haluat osallistua arvontaan.

Vastaukset ovat täysin luottamuksellisia, eikä yhteystietoja käytetä muuhun, kuin palkintojen postitukseen ja haastattelujen sopimiseen.

Mikäli haluat lisätietoja gradustani, kyselylomakkeesta tai haastattelusta, voit soittaa tai lähettää sähköpostia. Vastaan mielelläni kysymyksiin!

Ystävällisin terveisin,

Tuulia Taalas
tataalas@cc.jyu.fi
puh. 050 345 3223

Palkinnot:
Suomalaisen kirjakaupan lahjoittama Longmanin Dictionary of Contemporary English
Akateemisen kirjakaupan lahjoittama Soili Sinisalon "Hallen ja Tivan tarina – modernistit Sulho Sipilä ja Greta Hällfors-Sipilä

Kysely opettajille

Tässä lomakkeessa on kysymyksiä ja väitteitä, joiden avulla on tarkoitus kartoittaa näkemystäsi ja suhtautumistasi koulun muutokseen ja koulu-uudistuksiin.

Koulun muutoksella tarkoitan siis kaikkia mahdollisia muutoksia, mitä koulumaailmassa tapahtuu (esim. uudet materiaalit, opetussuunnitelmat, opetusmetodit).

Ikäsi	Sukupuoli	Kuinka monta vuotta olet ollut opettajana ja kouluaste?
☐ alle 30	☐ nainen	
☐ 31-40	☐ mies	☐ Alakoulu
		☐ Yläkoulu
☐ 41-50		☐ Lukio
☐ 51-60		
☐ yli 61		

Oletko ollut täydennyskoulutuksessa viimeisen kahden vuoden sisällä?

☐ Kyllä ☐ En

Jos olet, niin kenen aloitteesta?

☐ omasta halusta

☐ rehtorin

☐ kunnan

☐ jonkun muun, minkä

Suhtautumisesi muutokseen ja/tai koulu-uudistuksiin.

Alla on joitakin väittämiä koskien muutosta ja koulu-uudistuksia. Valitse mielipidettäsi vastaava vaihtoehto (1 = täysin samaa mieltä, 2 = jokseenkin samaa mieltä, 3 = jokseenkin eri mieltä, 4 = täysin eri mieltä).

Mielestäni muutokset ja/tai koulu-uudistukset ovat tarpeellisia.

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐   ☐ Ei kokemusta/en osaa sanoa

Muutoksia ja uudistuksia on liikaa.

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐   ☐ Ei kokemusta/en osaa sanoa

Uudistusten päämäärä on minulle usein epäselvä.

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐   ☐ Ei kokemusta/en osaa sanoa

Uudistuksista tiedotetaan hyvin.

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐   ☐ Ei kokemusta/en osaa sanoa

Uudistukset ovat vaikeaselkoisia.

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐   ☐ Ei kokemusta/en osaa sanoa

Koulu-uudistuksia suunniteltaessa opettajan mielipiteet otetaan hyvin huomioon.

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐   ☐ Ei kokemusta/en osaa sanoa

Uudistusten suunnittelijat ymmärtävät hyvin käytännön koulumaailmaa.

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐   ☐ Ei kokemusta/en osaa sanoa

Olisin mielelläni mukana muutosten/uudistusten suunnittelussa.

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐   ☐ Ei kokemusta/en osaa sanoa

Kuvaile vielä lyhyesti tyyppillistä tapaasi suhtautua muutokseen.

Mitkä ovat tämän hetken suurimmat muutokset omassa työssäsi?

Kuinka paljon mietit, miten voisit kehittää omaa opetustasi/työympäristöä jne?

☐ Erittäin paljon ☐ Paljon ☐ Jonkin verran ☐ Vähän ☐ En juuri ollenkaan

Minkätyyppisiä kehitysideoita olet miettinyt

Mikä on mielestäsi oma roolisi/opettajan rooli muutoksissa/koulu - uudistuksissa?

(esim. toimija/"muutosagentti", sivustakatsoja, suunnittelija, jne.)

Miten perehdyt tai valmistaudut tiedossa olevaan muutokseen/uudistukseen etukäteen?

Voit valita useamman vaihtoehdon

☐ en ollenkaan

☐ keskustelemalla kollegojen kanssa

☐ tutustumalla uusimpaan tieteelliseen tutkimukseen ja lukemalla kirjallisuutta

☐ osallistumalla kokouksiin

☐ hakeutumalla teemaan liittyvään koulutukseen

☐ jotenkin muuten, miten?

Mikä on ollut urasi tähän asti suurin muutos? Suhtauduitko siihen silloin myönteisesti vai kielteisesti? Miten suhtaudut siihen nyt?

Oletko tällä hetkellä mukana jossakin kehittämishankkeessa?

◯ Kyllä ◯ En

Jos olet, niin minkälaisessa?

Muuta:

Jos haluat sanoa vielä jotain muuta asiaan liittyvää, voit kirjoittaa kommentteja tähän. Mielipiteesi on todella arvokas, joten otan mielelläni vastaan lisäkommentteja.

Olisitko halukas haastateltavaksi

◯ Kyllä ◯ En

Nimesi ja yhteystietosi, mikäli haluat osallistua haastatteluun ja/tai arvontaan

---

_____
Tarkista, että olet täyttänyt kaikki kohdat. Kun olet valmis, napauta "LÄHETÄ" - painiketta.

| LÄHETÄ | Tyhjennä palautelomake |

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Mitä koulun muutos/koulu-uudistukset merkitsevät sinulle? ts. Miten ymmärrät käsitteen koulu-uudistus?
What does educational change or reform mean to you? How do you understand the concept educational change?

2. Kuinka yleisesti suhtaudut muutokseen?
- Anna esimerkki muutoksesta, johon suhtauduit positiivisesti ja
muutoksesta, johon suhtauduit negatiivisesti. Miksi?
What is your general attitude toward change? Could you give an example of a change that you thought was positive and one that you thought was negative and tell me why your attitude was positive/negative?

3. Anna esimerkki oma-aloitteisesta ja "ylhäältä" tulleesta muutoksesta sekä niiden herättämistä tunteista.
Could you give an example of an internal and an external change? What kind of emotions did they provoke?

4. Mikä on mielestäsi ollut tämän hetken muutoksissa suurin alulle paneva voima?
What do you consider the major prime mover of the changes currently taking place?

5. Mikä on mielestäsi suurin ongelma opettajan työssä, johon ensisijaisesti
kaipaisit muutosta?
How would you like to change the work of a teacher, that is what do you think is the biggest problem in your work?

6. Minkälaiset asiat opetuksessa/koulussa ovat sellaisia, mitä ei missään tapauksessa pitäisi muuttaa? Miksi?
What are then issues in teaching or in school that you think should not be changed? Why?

7. Pyritkö itse vaikuttamaan muutoksiin? Miten?
Do you yourself try to influence educational changes? How?

8. Miten kiinnostunut olet oman osaamisen kehittämisestä ja esim. jatko-opinnoista?
How interested you are in developing yourself professionally and, for example, in post-graduate studies?

9. Minkälaisissa verkostoissa toimit? SUKOL, paikallisyhdistykset, jne
What kind of networks are you involved in? For instance, SUKOL, local branch of the trade union and so forth.

10. Miten paljon kehität asioita yhdessä muiden opettajien kanssa, eli suunnittelet, kokeilet ja sitten puhut ja pohdit koettuja asioita.
How much time you spent on developing your professionalism with other teacher? How much do you plan, try out, for example, a teaching method and then discuss these with other teachers?

11. Miten paljon opettajat ylipäätään ehtivät keskustella asioista keskenään?
How much time on the whole do teachers have time to discuss matters together?

12. Miten esim. täydennyskoulutuksessa oleva opettaja "opettaa" oppimaansa
muille? Miten opettajat jakavat ns. hyviksi havaitsemiaan käytänteitä toisilleen.

If a teacher has completed a course, how well does s/he pass on the new information to other teachers? How do teachers share information about practices they consider to be useful and efficient?

13. Minkälaista konkreettista tukea kaipaisit muutoksen/uudistuksen edellä
päättäjiltä, suunnittelijoilta, esimieheltä?
When facing change, what kind of support would you hope to have from your headmaster, administrators and those people who plan a change?

14. Tämä kysymys vain niille, jotka mukana kehittämishankkeessa.
Miten kollegat suhtautuvat siihen, että olet mukana kehittämishankkeessa?
What are the reactions of your colleagues to the fact that you are involved in a development project? This question was only for those teachers that where, in fact, currently involved in such a project.

APPENDIX 3: TRANSLATIONS OF QUOTATIONS INTO ENGLISH

(1)   I usually get excited about new things and I want to improve my work but I would like to receive more information about a reform and the reasons behind it. I would also like to have more time to get acquainted with the reform before it is implemented. In addition, things often change before the previous reform has been adopted and properly implemented, and you don't always even understand why. T1

(2)   Change for its own sake is nonsense. School and teaching have to be developed but changes have to be well grounded – there has to be need for change. T7

(3)   I'm not against change but it has to lead to major improvement. T10

(4)   I think it's important that we keep up with the times and changes are often needed. However, sometimes I wonder about how complicated things are. T13

(5)   I'm for change when it is REALLY necessary. I'm annoyed with changes that are implemented so that the official machinery had something to do. I'm also annoyed changes that have been planned by someone who has no experience about teacher's work. T16

(6)   I'm open to everything new but sometimes the goal of change remains unclear. T43

(7)   I accept change as a mandatory evil and try to make the best of it. T44

(8)   I stress about change and reforms until I realize that nothing actually changed because of them. T32

(9)   I'm against reforms nowadays. There are too many of them! T24

(10)   Change should serve us, not enslave us! T41

(11)   In educational changes it would be important that the teachers' opinions were heard more. In many decisions our opinions haven't been heard at all. T9

(12)   Next year our lessons will last for 75 minutes. Both teachers' and pupils' opinions were asked. Even though the majority of both were against this change it will be implemented. T16

(13)   All in all I feel that the initiative should come from the grass-root level and stem from the needs of daily school work. T34

(14)   [Changes] are usually in the best interest of the pupil, but they have year by year increased my workload way too much. T11

(15)   [In my perspective] there is a conflict between enthusiasm and hesitation – hesitation because all reforms require extra work from teachers and often without additional salary. T29

(16)   Teachers' salary has always been problematic and too small, and with today's ever increasing amount of work it is even smaller. T37

(17)   I'm truly scared that being economic is becoming the greatest value of up-bringing and education. T10

(18)   If administration wants to change things, they should also provide free training. T24

(19)   Colleagues' support and commitment in the implementation phase is very important. T41

(20)   Change is often important but often schools are given important information too late. T48

(21)   If the teaching staff feels that the pressure for change comes from the outside, the daily routines will not change, no matter what is written in the national curriculum. T6

(22)   [about curriculum reform] I liked that subject matters were clearly written down in the curriculum. …They were good, clear emphasises. T4

(23)   My attitude towards a change is very positive if I feel that the change is reasonable and it brings about positive things into my daily work T23

(24)   The underlying intention [of changes] is to improve something … one always finds out later, whether it has improved something or not. T45

(25)   that pupils were equal. Even though all English teachers cannot teach in the exact same way but there should be certain principles that are followed, such as assessment principles and that the exams were about the same. T4

(26)   The city has decided to rearrange teaching in grades 7-9 and that will probably lead to the same kind of system than in high schools … they have strongly tried to implement it this spring … pr obably because of economical reasons but they haven't given reasons for it, they have justified it with very trivial fact but the pedagogical reasons for it haven't been explained at all. T23

(27)   I see a change in a negative light when it is either poorly grounded or if something is changed just for the sake of change T23

(28)   Our headmaster changed and well, of course everybody wants to leave their mark, but when one sees that something is changed just because one wants to make things differently than before, and does not care if its better… then I consider [the change] very bad. T23

(29) That explicit information is given about the change is very important. Everybody should know what kind of change is coming, what is expected of it, what needs to be ready, when, who is responsible and that the division of labour is clear. T6

(30) I first thought that the change in the curriculum would just increase my workload but then when I saw that it was so well organized in our school I was happy to participate in the planning of it T31

(31) What annoys me the most is that all this extra work and tasks have to be done in addition to the basic work [teaching] which is the basis of our salary. T31

(32) It would be nice that if we have to work extra, we would also get compensation for it, salary has always been a problem T 42

(33) We got paid for doing this extra work … that is always important. T31

(34) If there are several reforms that come in a short period of time, even though they good as such, but if there is an uncontrollable amount of them and because the teachers' workload is already huge…so when there is a new ism after another and committees after another it leads to an attitude that I'm against everything, even though that was not true. T4

(35) There's nothing wrong with developing [school] but reforms shouldn't be implemented continuously. There should be some moderation and control in the amount of reforms, so that people have enough time to think and implement reforms to the end. T31

(36) Sometimes I feel that I haven't even internalized the first reform and there's already a new one coming. T45

(37) Change is necessary but it should come little by little, even though the change was radical there should be enough time to adapt to it. T23

(38) I think it's important that the teacher is the one who has the responsibility for and the authority to make decisions about teaching. T42

(39) in principle, every teacher should have the liberty to plan his or her teaching; this is one issue that no one else should interfere. T6

(40) the training offered by the Finnish National Board of Education felt so frustrating … it felt so useless and mechanical. T4

(41) They changed the way special education was handled first and only after we [teachers] started to complain that we can't do this, we need training, the city began to organize training. T23

(42) At some point, when the opportunity is given, I try to get involved in the change process T23

(43) if it's an issue that I'm interested in and involves me, then of course it is important. T32

(44) this professional development is one change that comes from within yourself. One has to change and develop constantly in order to be a good teacher. T4

(45) I: Do you try to influence changes yourself?

T23: Yes and very strongly.
I: How?
T23: By getting involved in the process…. When I feel that the issues are important and somebody's trying to do things that are clearly wrong for the pupils, then I'm really ready to get involved.

(46)   I sort of feel that change should become an "inner" issue….One has to change and develop constantly in order to be a good teacher. T4

(47)   changing my own work is a process, first, I realize that something about it is not working … I notice that my teaching is not working for special needs kids… And then it's a process, [I start thinking] what is wrong with my current methods and what is it that those special needs kids need. T23

(48)   Quite often I think after class if the pupils had learned a specific thing, did my methods work and then I decide to try something different. T6

(49)   I: What kind of message would you like to send to administrators and those who are in charge of planning an educational change?
T31: Talk to teachers. They are full of ideas and knowledge about everyday life in the school.

(50)   Well actually, there are only few things [external changes] that you really have to implement, but I will try if it's something, but not necessarily, … if you are not forced to implement it. T45

(51)   There are some suggestions that come from "outside" but the way you implement them, "the change force" that is something that comes from yourself T31

(52)   External change, what could I say, I don't really remember because I have been [on holiday] I have forgotten all the bad things. T31

(53)   In most cases I get the need to change from within and then I notice that those same things are discussed on the curriculum level or somewhere, let's say, "upper" level. T6

(54)   That [collegiality] is a central issue in teacher's work, without collegiality and networking you couldn't handle this work. Collegiality is in the best interests of everybody. T31

(55)   The amount of collaboration depends on people's personalities, some teachers have a very strong personality and some people feel that collaboration is the same as judging other teachers' work and some people feel that they do not want to share their knowledge with others. T6

(56)   We talk, exchange materials, [ask] have you seen this book… somebody is constantly asking, how do you do this, have you had this problem…. A lot of collaboration, we use the same exams whenever it's possible T4

(57)   Based on this spring's experiences I have noticed that the leadership in the school has a very strong influence on your attitude towards change. Is the teaching staff just considered professional "organization" or is just a group of people that has to do obey the headmaster and administration. T 23

(58)   I feel that we have a good headmaster, who is fair… and a lot can be done by discussing issues. T4

(59) I haven't yet finished my licentiate's dissertation … I am after all over 40 years old and I have thought that maybe it is just this unfinished work that I should just put together. T4

(60) my husband completed his doctoral thesis and at that point I decided that our family won't survive another thesis … but I have thought about doing it [doctoral thesis] T23

(61) I would like to write a dissertation or something but now that I'm teaching full time and some extra and then there are those school projects … there isn't any spare time T6

(62) further studies aren't perhaps a part of my job description but maintaining my language skills and English is very important to me. T42

(63) I'm not really interested in further studies that would lead to a degree but I have always been interested in professional development. T31

(64) I don't know about post-graduate studies but from our school I have probably participated the most in in-service training. T45

(65) I have participated in in-service training as much as has been possible, there isn't always enough money to participate T45

(66) the city should offer more possibilities [money] to teachers to go to training abroad in the summer … there should be more possibilities for longer, even six-month, in-service training periods [abroad] because we language teachers deal with that language. T31

(67) when I started to teach in high school after several years, I asked for training that would deal with the matriculation examination, a course was offered but I was denied the possibility. T42

(68) all the material that is received [from in-service training] is brought to school … now that we have an intranet we can upload as much stuff there as we like … if something important is learnt we may have organized a quick meeting to go over that.T4

(69) after the training we got together at one teacher's home and I had taken copies of the material which I then handed out to others and told the others what I had learnt… The information is also passed forward through discussions T23

(70) we somewhat pass on the information but there isn't enough time … we do talk about what we have learnt and want the other teachers to have access to the ideas that we have. T31

(71) The truth is that when you have been in in-service training you have to be very careful because other teachers don't like it if you start lecturing them. Teachers are a peculiar profession in the sense that they very easily think that another person is trying to tell them how to do things, you have to do it [give information] very subtly T4

(72) all the development projects have brought more sense and meaning to my work because you often set in your ways and it is a source of wealth to just meet people from different schools, all over Finland. You learn a lot from listening how other people do things T4

(73) [The Comenius project] has had a positive influence on my work: as the used language is English your own language skills improve and I have also noticed that it increases the pupils' motivation… It can also have positive effects on pupils' motivation in other subjects because they might now that kids in another country know more about the EU and then they feel that they have to know as much about it. T6

(74) I am interested [in development projects] but I don't have the time to participate in them in addition to my teaching … I don't have enough resources to do two jobs simultaneously. T45

(75) It [participation] depends on how much it would take time and what my situation at work is. At the moment, I would think about getting involved very carefully … in principle yes … if I evaluated the situation so that I had enough energy and time for it. T42

(76) I think that my colleagues mostly have an positive attitude… someone might even say that it's nice that yo u have the energy… it is usually considered a good thing that someone wants to go to in-service training and influence T4

(77) [colleagues' attitudes] are quite positive. T6

(78) [attitudes] are very positive… it is considered good that someone has the energy to participate because that way they can also bring the information to the school. T23

(79) [colleagues' attitudes] are quite positive, I think. Quite positive and encouraging. T45

(80) I guess in every workplace there is some jealousy … nobody likes it if someone is full of themselves and acts as if they knew everything and saying that "I've been in training, listen to me when I tell you how to do everything" T4

(81) sometimes you hear some complaints that "now they are leaving again and the pupils are going to be away for a week and then they haven't done their homework and who's going to take care of the teacher's classes" so you hear some complaints but I don't think it's a serious problem. T6

(82) I: How would you like to change the work of a teacher, that is what do you think is the biggest problem in your work?
T4: It's this huge workload and the fact that I often feel that I get to do the actual work, teaching. too little. The school organization takes so much time, there are different committees and meetings that are important as well but they take the time from the actual teaching and working with pupils. T4

(83) T31: The workload has increased a lot, there should be less mandatory teaching hours or then these other assignments that teachers have should somehow be compensated in the mandatory teaching hours …. What annoys me the most is that all this extra work and tasks have to be done in addition to the basic work [teaching] which is the basis of our salary. T31

(84) T45: I think that nowadays there are all sorts of things that you have to take care of during the breaks… It would be a relief if there was somebody else to take care of those extra tasks and the teacher could concentrate on teaching. T45

(85) I: How would you like to change the work of a teacher, that is what do you think is the biggest problem in your work?

T6: The classes are too big in our school and it makes it very challenging to teach individual pupils. Especially pupils, who have problems in reading and writing, need more special attention. More resources are needed for that. T6

(86) T23: Classes are too big because there are so many kids with special needs and immigrants.

(87) T31: the workload has increased a lot, there should be less mandatory teaching hours or then these other assignments that teachers have should somehow be compensated in the mandatory teaching hours

(88) Then if one talks about wellbeing, nowadays there's more discussion of the meaning of student welfare work in the modern high school. Its importance cannot be understated when there are all kinds of problems, like anorexia, depression, sleeping disorders and burnout. T4

(89) In my opinion, the idea that schools should bring in a good return is strange. T42

(90) The idea the idea that schools should bring in a good return doesn't suit the school world. Sometimes I feel that ideas and concepts that have been abandoned in the business world are implemented in the schools … it just doesn't work in an organization where you cannot measure the results by investments and outputs. T6

(91) it will be difficult to find teachers in the future if the profession is not valued more and the work conditions are not improved T42

(92) It feels that nowadays people try to give responsibility for the children to someone else than the parents T42