

A STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL WORK CAMP VOLUNTEERS'
ATTITUDES AND EXPERIENCES OF
ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA

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Tiivistelmä ó Abstract Yhä useammalla nuorella aikuisella on omakohtaisia kokemuksia englannin kielen käytöstä monikulttuurisessa ympäristössä, esimerkiksi vaihto-opiskelun tai vapaaehtoistyön kautta. Kyseisissä tilanteissa puhuttu englanti poikkeaa monin tavoin oppitunneilla opituista ja natiivien käyttämästä englannista. Tutkielman aiheena on selvittää, kuinka Suomessa vuonna 2012 järjestetyille vapaaehtoistyöleireille osallistuneet nuoret kokivat englannin kielen käytön leireillä ja millaisia asenteita heillä on englannin kieltä kohtaan. Tavoitteena on selvittää, kuinka he asennoituvat omaan ja toistensa kielenkäyttöön, aksenttiin, natiivien kanssa viestintään, mukauttamiseen ja koodinvaihtoon ja millaisia keinoja he käyttivät parantaakseen viestintää ja estääkseen ongelmia viestinnässä. Selvittääkseni leiriläisten kokemuksia tein Internetpohjaisen kyselylomakkeen, johon vastasi 48 ympäri maailmaa kotoisin olevaa nuorta aikuista. Kyselyn vastauksia peilattiin aiempiin kieliasenne- ja englanti lingua francana tutkimuksiin. Tuloksien perusteella leiriläisten kokemukset viestinnästä ovat hyvin positiivisia. Leireillä käytettiin pääasiassa englannin kieltä, mutta myös jonkin verran leiriläisten osaamia muita kieliä. Viestinnässä oli ongelmia vähän, sillä leiriläiset mukauttivat puhettaan ja kielenkäyttöään toistensa mukaan. Leiriläisten asenteet omaa englanninkieltään ja esimerkiksi aksenttia kohtaan olivat tiukemmat kuin toisten englannin kieltä kohtaan. Vaikka he vertasivat leirillä puhuttua englantia toistuvasti natiivien englantiin, vastauksissa oli havaittavissa, että leiriläiset kokivat leirin viestinnän iloisena ja innostavana ja he viestivät siellä sujuvasti englanniksi, virheistä välittämättä. Kyselyn tulokset antavat samansuuntaisia viitteitä kuten aiemmat alan tutkimukset: englannin kieli lingua francana poikkeaa monin tavoin natiivien kielestä ja siinä tarvitaan erityisesti mukautumista toisten mukaan. Lisäksi esimerkiksi oikeakielisyys kieliopin ja ääntämyksen suhteen on toisarvoista. Aihe tarjoaa mielenkiintoisia jatkotutkimusmahdollisuuksia vastaavissa konteksteissa esimerkiksi kenttätutkimuksen avulla siitä, kuinka puhujat mukauttavat englannin kieltään.	
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION	7
2 BACKGROUND	10
2.1 International voluntary work camps.....	10
2.2 The English language in Europe and Asia.....	12
2.3 English as a lingua franca	13
2.3.1 ELF interaction and pragmatic features of ELF.....	15
2.3.2 Accommodation and code-switching.....	18
2.4 Language attitudes.....	19
2.4.1 Previous ELF attitudes studies	21
3 METHODOLOGY.....	26
3.1 Key aims and research questions	26
3.2 About the questionnaire	27
3.3 The questionnaire section by section.....	29
3.4 Sampling and data collection.....	31
3.5 Methods of analysis and reporting	32
4 RESULTS	34
4.1 Background.....	34
4.2 General ELF attitudes.....	42
4.3 Attitudes of the communication in the camp: Using English and other languages in the camp.....	47
4.4 Different ways of communication.....	58
4.5. Problems in communication	62
4.6 Accent	64
4.7 Attitudes to native-speakers of English	67
4.8. Experiences of ELF and intercultural communication.....	69
5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	75
Bibliography	81
Appendix: The survey	84

LIST OF TABLES, FIGURES AND ABBREVIATIONS

Lists of tables and figures

Table 1. Participants' nationality, first language(s) and additional language(s)	37
Table 2. Self-evaluation of language skills	39
Table 3. How often do you use English in everyday life?	42
Table 4. Attitudes towards the English language	45
Table 5. Using English and other languages in the camp	50
Table 6. Statements on the use of English and other languages in the camp	53
Table 7. Language skills and different ways of communicating	60
Table 8. Cultural differences	62
Table 9. Telling about oneself	63
Table 10. Problems in communication	63
Table 11. Accent	65
Table 12. Interaction with native speakers	67
Table 13. Interaction with NS	69
Figure 1. Distribution of age	35
Figure 2. Distribution of sex	36
Figure 3. Occupation	36
Figure 4. Previous experience of voluntary work camps	40
Figure 5. Other intercultural experiences	41
Figure 6. The length of the project/camp	41
Figure 7. Accommodation	41
Figure 8. It is very important for me to speak grammatically correct English	46
Figure 9. I like my own accent	46
Figure 10. I understood what the others were saying without any difficulties	51
Figure 11. I paid a lot of attention to linguistic correctness and precision when I spoke	

English	54
Figure 12. When speaking with fellow non-native speakers, I was bothered by their linguistic errors and the varying levels of their skills in English.	54
Figure 13. I adjusted my communication (e.g. repeated, rephrased) to help the others to understand me.	55
Figure 14. I switched languages during conversations.	57
Figure 15. Were there native speakers of English in the camp?	67
Figure 16. Which grade would you give to how successful the communication between the participants in the camp was on the whole?	72

List of abbreviations

BELF	Business English as Lingua Franca
CofP	Community of Practice
ELFA	English as a Lingua Franca in Academia
EFL	English as a foreign language
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
ENL	English as a native language
NNS	Non-native Speaker
NS	Native Speaker
VOICE	Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English

1 INTRODUCTION

Intercultural communication and the use of English as a *lingua franca* (henceforth ELF) have been and still are highly topical issues. English has become the global lingua franca that people from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds use as a communicative tool. Especially for young people studying or starting their careers, international experiences and global social networks and thus the use of ELF is a natural part of their life. At the same time this increasing popularity of intercultural communication and ELF has attracted a great deal of research interest, especially during the past few years. This is not surprising, since there are various issues to be researched and so many questions to be asked, including, for example, the questions how the communication between people from various different cultures works in reality, what kind of linguistic forms are used in ELF communication and how people use ELF in practice. These questions, among others, led me to research the attitudes and use of ELF in intercultural interaction. In this study, I am interested in finding out how the normal, non-professional users of ELF perceive their own and others' language use. More specifically, what this research task entails is finding out what kind of *attitudes* people have.

Today's young people have a vast number of opportunities for obtaining international experiences, ranging from short language courses or travelling abroad to a year as an exchange student or internship abroad. One way of gaining international experience is the context of this study - volunteer work. Interestingly, there are no previous studies on ELF made in the context of voluntary work, which makes the present study particularly worthwhile. The use of English as a lingua franca has, however, been studied in various contexts, especially in the academia, education, business, but also in tourism and politics (Jenkins, Cogo and Dewey 2011: 297). Another issue that is less frequent in the field of ELF studies is that this study does not concentrate on the linguistic or pragmatic features of ELF, but the focus is on insider evaluations and participant experiences of the ELF communication.

The group of people, who provided me with the data for my study, consist of young

people who attended a work camp or a volunteer work project in Finland in 2012. The group members are non-linguists, i.e. they are not experts in the scientific study of English, and they are young adults who have met for a limited period of time for a specific purpose. According to Meierkord (2012: 153), this is a typical example of ELF interaction, since it takes place among individuals who have never met before and who interact on an ad hoc basis for a limited period of time, usually for one specific purpose and which, typically, will not meet again after the interaction has come to an end. The reason why I chose non-linguists as my focus group is that I wanted to know about the views of people who do not look at the issues from a professional perspective. On this point I agree with Hynninen (2010: 25) who argues that if scholars focus on language teachers and learners, the studies do not tell us much about the views of people who are using ELF on a daily basis, people for whom ELF is already a part of their life rather than a future possibility, or a part of their study/teaching program.

In addition, I make use of my own experience as a participant in one of the camps arranged in 2012. In particular, this experience has been very beneficial when designing the survey, since I have been able to include some items that address features of ELF interaction that I noticed taking place in the camps. In order to find out their attitudes, the participants were asked to comment on their experiences of English in the international work camp in which they had participated. On the whole, this study of participants' attitudes towards intercultural ELF interaction draws on a number of research paradigms, but, among these, the most significant paradigm is provided by previous ELF attitude studies.

My particular focus will be on the participants' attitudes towards the use of English as the camp's lingua franca and how they recall their use of languages on these camps. In addition, I will make an attempt at assessing their general attitudes towards the English language and their experiences on intercultural communication. Also, one of my main goals in this study is to find out how participants valued their communication. What lies behind this goal is my own observation that the volunteers got along extremely well, although their language skills were on very different levels. Hence, my key questions of this research are, *how the camp members experienced themselves the use of English as a*

lingua franca during their stay in the work camp and what kind of attitudes they have on their own and others' communication in ELF.

Although one cannot make generalisations on the basis of the results of a study like this where data consists of only approximately 50 persons' survey answers, my findings can nevertheless deepen the understanding of the use of ELF in intercultural communication and help in developing more efficient communication in events such as work camps. The results of such studies make it easier for us to understand the complex nature of intercultural lingua franca communication. For instance, according to Cogo (2010: 204), the study of ELF attitudes/perceptions is very important in order to understand to what extent the changes in the use of English as a lingua franca reflect shifts in attitudes towards ELF and vice versa. Cogo (ibid.) highlights also the importance of studying the attitudes of young people since they constitute the future players in ELF communities in the future. Furthermore, studies like this can help in designing training and education for cross-cultural experiences and communication.

2 BACKGROUND

In this chapter I discuss the theoretical background of this study. I will introduce the main ideas and relevant previous studies, concentrating on the following research paradigms: English as a lingua franca and language attitudes. I will also discuss concepts that will be addressed in the survey, such as accommodation and code-switching. Firstly, before discussing these theories, I introduce the context of this study - voluntary work camps and my own experience related to the camps. I will also discuss briefly the status of the English language in Europe and Asia.

2.1 International voluntary work camps

International voluntary work camps have approximately a century long history. The first camp in Europe was arranged by a Swiss pacifist Pierre Ceresole after World War I in France. Seven different nationalities took part in the camp to rebuild demolished houses on a former battle field. In Finland, the first project was also launched in a former battle field - in Lapland after World War II. Ever since the first camps, their main goal has been to combine people from different social groups and nationalities to work and live together voluntarily and thus reduce conflicts and prejudice. (Kansainvälinen Vapaaehtoistyö ry n.d.)

According to European youth portal (2013) the organisations which coordinate these international voluntary work camps in Finland, include Allianssi, Kansainvälinen vapaaehtoistyö and Maailmanvaihto. In addition there are other forms of international voluntary work in Finland, for example the EU based European voluntary service ó (EVS) program is funding projects that can last for several months.

Usually international camps have no participants from the host country, thus, for example, in the Finnish camps the only Finnish participants are the hosts and coordinators. In addition, the camps have usually a Finnish volunteer working as a camp leader. These camps are organised all over Finland from Hanko to Lapland, especially

during the summer. Most volunteers are adults, usually aged 18-25, and they come from all around the world. The language most commonly used for communicating in these camps is English. The volunteers work for approximately two weeks for a non-profit organisation. As a compensation for their work they are provided with accommodation, food and some free-time activities. The participants pay for their travel costs, but everything else is free. This is a way of rewarding the volunteers for their work contribution. The participants work for approximately 30 to 40 hours a week: 6-8 hours five days a week. The work is often helping the community youth work or a local organization, association or project. The actual work that the volunteers do varies: it can involve cleaning the environment, such as carrying branches, painting buildings, helping in renovations, working on a children's camp or arranging a local festival. (Suomen Nuorisoyhteistyö Allianssi ry n.d.)

The camps are often arranged outside towns and accommodation is a dormitory-like arrangement, e.g. in a school or a cottage where the participants cook their meals together. Therefore, during the two week-periods the participants are intensively in contact with each other. Voluntary work camps are, however, not only work. Since the main goal is to familiarise oneself with different cultures and work together, the work is often done in pairs or small groups and arranged so that everybody will work with each other. What seems to motivate many of the persons to take part in such a camp is the wish to travel and spend time in a new country and get to know people from different nationalities and cultures. For example, the hosts often organise some free time activities in which the participants can get to know local customs and the locals' way of live.

As I mentioned earlier in the Introduction, I have my own experiences of international voluntary work camps. The idea of making this research was actually generated during one of the camps in 2012. I was working in Lapland as a camp leader; my duty was to work as a contact person between the volunteers and the host organisation. My own experience has been important and it has helped me in designing and analysing the questionnaire.

2.2 The English language in Europe and Asia

Most of the work camp participants, whose attitudes and use of English as a lingua franca are the focus in this study, come from countries that are part of the EU or Asia. In order to have a better understanding of their lingual background it is useful to discuss briefly the role of the English language in both these areas.

Although the European Union has been relatively successful in increasing multilingualism amongst Europeans, English could nevertheless be said to be the dominant language in Europe. Especially since English has spread also into the countries of the former Eastern Europe which originally used Russia as a lingua franca. (Meierkord 2012: 135.)

The Eurobarometer survey: *Europeans and their Languages* (2012) which studied European citizens' language knowledge, use and attitudes, offers interesting figures and information on the status of the English language in the European Union. The survey shows that the English language is extensively spoken in the EU: 38% of EU-citizens speak English as a foreign language, which makes it the most widely spoken foreign language. French is the second most spoken language with 12 %. In addition, at a national level English is the most widely spoken foreign language in all, except six countries. (Eurobarometer 2012: 7, 11.)

Many Europeans seem to regard themselves to have good skills in English. According to the Eurobarometer survey, the majority of Europeans speaking English as a foreign language consider that they have better than basic skills, and 21 % rate their skills *very good*. There is also a positive correlation with the perceived fluency and the frequency with which that language is used: English is the most likely language to be used more than occasionally (47%) and a fifth (19%) says that they use it almost daily or more often. (Eurobarometer 2012, 12).

On the basis of the Eurobarometer (2012: 3), it seems that the majority of Europeans

have positive attitudes towards the English language. According to the survey, eight in ten Europeans perceive English as the most useful language to be taught for children as a second language. Interestingly, although EU bureaucracy itself is promoting intensively multilingualism, European citizens are widely favouring the idea of a common language for people to speak in the EU. As many as seven in ten (69%) *agree* and one in three (31%) totally *agree* with this viewpoint. Despite these high figures, according to Eurobarometer, Europeans do not consider that just one language should be prioritised, eight in ten (81%) agree that all languages in the EU should be treated equally. (Eurobarometer 2012: 4-5).

As to the status of the English language in Asia, unfortunately there is no such similar large scale study as the Eurobarometer (2012). However, English as an Asian lingua franca has triggered research and been in the focus of scholars, such as Kirkpatrick (2010) and Kachru (e.g. 1997). For instance, according to Kachru (1997, as cited in Meierkord 2012: 136), English has been for some time the most sought after language for the acquisition of bi- or multilingualism and has spread across the continent. English has been used in diverse genres such as advertising, the Internet and emailing, the media and popular and youth culture (Kachru 2005, in Meierkord 2012: 136). In addition, English has a major role in organisations such as ASEAN, the associations of Southeast Asian Nations, where English is the only working language in the large organization consisting of ten nations and more than 1000 languages are spoken in that area. (Kirkpatrick 2010: 214).

All in all, according to the above mentioned studies on the English language in Europe and Asia one can draw some conclusions. On the basis of the Eurobarometer one can assume that the European volunteers have a positive attitude towards the English language, they are not communicating in English for the first time and are relatively fluent in English. In Asia the English language has a strong role in many areas of life in a number of Asian countries, thus the Asian work camp participants have also probably been in contact with the English language and culture already in their home countries.

2.3 English as a lingua franca

This study makes use of the theories, perspectives and previous works done in the

English as a lingua franca (henceforth ELF) discipline. In the following, I will introduce the research field of ELF, starting with the definition, continue with typical features of ELF interaction and ELF pragmatics. I will conclude this chapter by discussing concepts that are used in my research: communities of practice, accommodation and code-switching.

The research of ELF has evolved and expanded especially after the millennium. This has had an effect on the definition of ELF and, as the concept of ELF has evolved, there has also been a change from the originally narrow definition of the concept (Jenkins 2007: 2). The website of VOICE (the Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English) gives a basic definition of ELF, defining it as 'an additionally acquired language system which serves as a common means of communication for speakers of different first languages'. This definition does not exclude native speakers of English and is thus not as strict as the earlier definitions of ELF which excluded native speakers completely. However, since ELF is not the same language as the native language English, native speakers must also 'additionally acquire' it (Jenkins, Cogo and Dewey 2011, 283). In my study, I have followed the guidelines suggested by Jenkins (2007: 3): native speakers are not excluded from ELF, but they are not included in the data collection, and when they take part in ELF interaction they do not represent a linguistic reference point.

In addition to ELF, the international use of English is studied under a number of different labels, such as ESL (English as a second language), EFL (English as a foreign language), Global English, International English and EIL (English as International language). However, the research done under the ELF label is different from all of these in that it emphasises the role of English in communication where the speakers have different L1s. From the ELF perspective, mixing languages and making use of multilingual resources is acceptable. Further, retaining some characteristics from one's L1, such as accents, is not seen as a sign of failure. (Jenkins 2007: 2-4.) Thus, ELF can be said to be a controversial concept and the proponents of ELF have actually been criticised for many reasons. They have been criticised, for example, for aiming at an accurate application of a set of prescribed rules that ELF should be taught to all non-native speakers. However, according to Jenkins, many of the accusations are based on

misconceptions and misinterpretations. (Jenkins 2007: 20-21.)

As a modern phenomenon ELF was first identified and reported on by German scholars in the 1980s (such as Knapp 1985). It remained as a minority field of study until the start of this century, when the publication of Jenkins (2000) and Seidhofer (2001) caught widespread attention among applied linguists and English teaching professionals. Since that, two major ELF corpuses have been compiled: the previously mentioned VOICE (the Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English) and ELFA (the Corpus of English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings). The latter was compiled in Finland, at the University of Tampere (currently in Helsinki). (Jenkins, Cogo and Dewey 2011: 282.)

The use of ELF has been studied in various contexts. According to Jenkins, Cogo and Dewey (2011: 297), ELF research has concentrated especially on the academia, education and business, but there are also recent studies on other contexts. In Finland, ELF interaction research has focused on education and universities, for instance, by the University of Helsinki's ELFA project (originally situated in Tampere), and on international business, such as Kankaanranta and Louhiala-Salminen (2010). In recent years ELF interaction has widen its scope, resulting in studies such as Rogerson-Revell (2008) which studied ELF in an international association, and Bruyel-Olmedo and Juan-Garau (2009) which studied the use of ELF interactions in tourism. Also attitudes have been investigated; the recent studies on them will be discussed in more depth in chapter 2.4.2.

2.3.1 ELF interaction and pragmatic features of ELF

In this chapter I will discuss some of the typical features of ELF interaction. Although the linguistic features and pragmatics of ELF are not the main focus in this survey, this chapter is necessary as it will give light to what ELF is in practice. As I mentioned earlier, a great deal of work has been carried out in studying the linguistic features of ELF. However, I will only briefly look at these features before moving on to the more recent research on ELF interaction that has shifted its focus from the surface level and description of linguistic features onto pragmatics. In other words, research now pays

attention to the skills and strategies that underlie and determine the choices of features that ELF interaction acquires (Jenkins 2011: 5).

At first, a few words of the typical linguistic features of spoken ELF interaction that the intensive ELF research has listed. It has become evident that ELF differs from native English speech in several ways: the phonetics and word stress are different from native English and so are also the lexical and morphological features. (Jenkins 2011: 5-6.) ELF speakers have also a tendency to create new words and collocations. In addition, the use of so-called false friends is frequent. For example, ELF speakers often seem to change uncountable nouns into countable ones such as *informations* and omit the 3rd person singular -s in the present tense. (Jenkins 2011: 5-6.) The preference for zero articles is also a frequent linguistic feature of ELF speech (Seidhofer 2011: 125). All in all, many of these features that are regarded traditionally as L2 users' common mistakes are in fact typical linguistic features of ELF.

However, although ELF communication involves these frequently used forms, it is also very fluid and hybrid in nature. Several previous researches have shown that interlocutors taking part in ELF interaction use language effectively as a communicative resource. For example, Seidhofer (2011: 92) points this out in her statement:

What it means to be communicatively competent in English can no longer be described with reference to norms of linguistic knowledge and behaviour that are relevant only to particular native-speaker communities. Conformity to these norms is neither necessary nor sufficient to meet the international demands for effective use of English as a *lingua franca*.

One of the features of ELF that differs from native English is idioms. The use of idiomatic native English manifestation is seen as a sign of fluency, and it functions co-operatively in communication among native speakers, but idioms can actually be more of a problem source in ELF interaction. In ELF interactions the use of idioms, especially ones that are semantically non-transparent, may cause misunderstandings instead of working co-operatively. This is because the interlocutors may not have the knowledge or shared conventions of phraseology and may result often in changes in wording and the use of local idiomatic coinages. (Seidhofer 2011: 129-143.) Thus the intention to speak native-like English may turn into misunderstandings or incomprehensible expressions in

ELF contacts.

These misunderstanding and lack of shared conventions of phraseology lead us to problems in communication - topic that is often connected to ELF communication. In addition to the previous mentioned features, the different linguistic and cultural backgrounds and the reliance on the norms of one's mother tongue are often listed as the reasons of why ELF communications is evidently filled with problems. (Kaur, 2009: 107) Yet, although one could assume that typically ELF interaction is filled with problems, it is not the case. Kaur (2009: 107-108) points out that several scholars have proved that ELF-interaction is not filled with problems *and non-native speakers of English can and do manage to communicate quite successfully using ELF.*

Many scholars do in fact argue against the common stereotype of ELF interactions being filled with problems, and for example probably the most eminent ELF scholar House (2003: 567) talks about the "paucity of misunderstandings" in ELF interaction and states that in opposition to her analyses of NS - NNS, ELF communication included "remarkably few misunderstandings." Similarly, Meierkord (2000 n.p.) describes ELF communication as a "form of intercultural communication characterised by cooperation rather than misunderstanding."

Research has identified ELF pragmatics that is contributing to this lack of problems. Repetition and paraphrasing have been mentioned in several studies such as Cogo (2009) (Jenkins, Cogo and Dewey 2011: 293). Mauranen (2006) has also observed few misunderstandings in her ELF data, suggesting that this may be due in part to the participants' efforts in preventing such understanding problems from the outset. Mauranen discusses *proactive work* which is said to be "a striking feature of this ELF interaction" (2006 135). In my study I address these problems and the lack of them and look for finding out how the participants self-reflect this proactive work and accommodation.

Meierkord (2012: 193-194) makes an interesting observation as she notices that many of the communication strategies in ELF and the highly cooperative character of ELF, may

be reactions of insecurity to the other interlocutors' conventions and skills in English or as appreciation of their potential production and comprehension problems. Thus, speakers may select only those forms they believe will be intelligible and appropriate to everybody else in the interaction. In addition, speakers accommodate by avoiding complex sentences when they find the other participants less capable of processing complex linguistic structures. In my study I address these strategies, in addition to the possible problems and the lack of them and look for finding out how the participants self-reflect this proactive work and accommodation

2.3.2 Accommodation and code-switching

The recent research on ELF pragmatics has paid particular attention to the two pragmatic processes that are also addressed in this study: accommodation and code-switching. These processes are seen as the core features of ELF interaction. For example Jenkins (2011: 5) states that accommodation is "possibly the single most important pragmatic skill in ELF communication."

Accommodation is a term originally used by scholars in speech accommodation theory (SAT). It is used to explain what motivates certain shifts in people's speech in different social situations, and what social consequences come from these shifts. More precisely, accommodation is used to clarify what cognitive and affective processes underlie speakers' use of linguistic strategies in order to either gain approval or to show distinctiveness in their interaction with others. (Beebe and Giles 1984: 7-8) In ELF interaction this would be accommodating according to the other interlocutor's *level* and taking into account also the intercultural aspect: what to say and how to reshape and reformulate one's message.

Code-switching, the alternate use of two or more language within one sentence, utterance or interaction, is an accommodation strategy that is an integral part of ELF interaction. In situations with an ELF-contact there are usually at least two languages present: each speaker's L1 and English, and code-switching is enabled to all of them (Klimpfinger 2009: 350, 267). This can make the code-switching process rich and complex, as ELF interlocutors can even make use of additional languages that they both

speak in addition to English. Code-switching involves all from single words or phrases to whole sentences (Grosjean 2008: 160).

ELF speakers' accommodation strategies have been investigated by, for example, Cogo (2009: 269-270) and Klimpfinger (2009). Cogo calls code-switching a way for the ELF interlocutors to draw on their multilingual resources, whereby they are able to switch into their own first languages and even into languages that are not the mother tongue of any participant in the interaction. In her study on ELF speakers' accommodation strategies she states that "repetition and code-switching are two vital and creative strategies of ELF talk which contribute to accommodate linguistic and cultural differences to make communication successful" (Cogo 2009: 269).

One must not forget that sometimes code-switching is simply filling in a linguistic gap, but Cogo (2009) sees it as a minor function in contrast to the meaning making function that it has. Cogo (2009: 269-270) points out, that code-switching functions are as an additional tool for the multilingual speakers and enable them to achieve various conversational goals such as signal solidarity and membership in the same multilingual community. In addition, code-switching can be a means to protect the speakers' social and cultural identities and provide nuances of expression that would be unavailable in English. The accommodation strategies make the creativity of ELF speakers evident: they use language skillfully, draw on their multilingual and multicultural repertoire. Thus they not only make ELF communication successful, but enrich it.

2.4 Language attitudes

As I am assessing attitudes of people who have used English as a lingua franca, in addition to English as a lingua franca, another core concept in my study is language attitudes. The assessment of attitudes, in this study, will be done with help of both direct questions and by looking at the informants' reports on their experiences from the camp which are filtered through their attitudes, for example in the choice of words or the way they evaluate their experience.

Before discussing language attitudes, I begin by looking at the latter part of the term - *attitudes*. Since the concept of attitude is not easily defined, I will make use of three

established definitions, which vary in their emphasis and degree of elaboration. These are taken from Garrett (2010: 19-20). In 1931, Thurstone (quoted by Garrett, *ibid.*) called attitude in short as *an affect for or against a psychological object*, emphasising the positive and negative emotional responses that attitudes embody. Whereas Allport (1954, as cited in Garrett, *ibid.*) highlighted that attitudes concern also thought and behaviour when he defined attitude as "a learned disposition to think, feel and behave toward a person or object in a particular way." Finally, Sarnoff (1970: 279) called an attitude straightforwardly as "a disposition to react favourably or unfavourably to a class of objects."

As situated in the field of linguistic and language attitudes, this *class of objects* could refer, for example, to language variation, language communities and speech styles. Along these lines, Meyerhoff (2006: 292) defines the study of language attitudes as the "study of what people think about different linguistic varieties and how those perceptions about language relate to perceptions of attitudes about different users of language." Meyerhoff's definition reflects how people's attitudes towards the speakers and their linguistic variety are interconnected – one accent or language can trigger negative or positive attitudes towards the speaker, or presumptions of the speaker's personality if s/he speaks English let's say with a strong East-European accent.

But where do these complex language attitudes rise from? By nature, our own experience and social environment, as well as for instance the media influence our communication. Language attitudes influence how we react and response to other language users around us. These attitudes also help us to anticipate, how others respond to our speech and writing - thus language attitudes influence our language choices: what kind of expressions we use to communicate to make a friendly or intelligent impression to our interlocutors. (Garrett 2010: 21-22.)

Three components are often mentioned when discussing language attitudes: cognition, affect and behaviour. Cognition refers to the beliefs about the world such as that learning English will be a useful in working life. The affective components are a barometer of favourability and un-favourability or the extent to which we approve or

disapprove of the object, such as being enthusiastic about the English culture. As the name suggests, the behavioural components refer to the predisposition to act in a certain way, such as take part in an English conversation in order to ask for guidance. (Garrett 2010: 23.)

Attitudes are closely connected to a number of issues, such as social stereotypes and ideologies. According to Garrett (2010: 31-33) social stereotypes are social categorisations that tend to exaggerate similarities among members within a social group and differences between groups. Stereotypes are generally difficult to change, such as *the Finns are shy and reserved*. Garrett adds that language varieties and styles can trigger beliefs about a speaker and their social group membership, and these are often influenced by language ideologies, leading to stereotypical assumptions about shared characteristics of these group members. In addition, the process of standardisation is often influencing people's language attitudes. Interestingly, people tend not to be conscious of the influence that these ideological positions have, and the norms are regarded as questions of common sense. (Garrett 2010: 31-33) In my analysis I will come back to these issues, as social stereotypes and different accents of English were something that I came across in the survey answers.

There are three main approaches to the study of language attitudes; according to Garrett (2010: 37) these are the analysis of the societal treatment of language varieties, indirect measures (or the matched guise techniques) and direct measures. The last one is the approach taken in this study: the participants are approached directly by asking questions about preferences and language evaluation. Thus, for the purposes of this present study, attitudes are primarily viewed as the participants evaluative and affective reactions to the issues studied, focusing on the use of English as a lingua franca.

2.4.1 Previous ELF attitudes studies

In this chapter I will focus on previous ELF attitude studies, the number of which has been on increase during the past decade (Jenkins 2007: 93). Studies have been made especially on teachers, just as Jenkins's own ELF attitude -study, but also learner attitudes have inspired scholars. From the field of ELF attitude research, I have chosen

to discuss studies that are most influential to my study. These are the studies by Jenkins (2007), Hynninen (2010), Ranta (2010), Kolocsai (2009), Zeiss (2010) and Tóth (2010). In addition, I will briefly discuss findings from previous language attitude studies that are relevant also for the study of ELF.

When discussing ELF attitude studies, the major study that cannot be left unmentioned is Jenkins' (2007) study in which she explored ELF attitudes, focusing particularly on ELF accents. Jenkins (2007) studied language attitudes of English teachers in speech, writing, questionnaires and interviews, and aimed at finding out if standard language ideology of native speaker English had an impact on 'NNS' teachers' attitudes, beliefs and feelings about their own and others' ELF accents, and whether it could lead to linguistic insecurity and ambivalent ELF identities. Jenkins found out that the teachers regarded the concept of ELF as difficult and identified strongly with NS norms. According to her survey, NS accent were most preferred and highly valued in all respects, and the NNS accents that are closest to NS, such as Swedish-English, were the least non-preferred. The accents furthest from them, i.e. East Asian English accents most non-preferred. According to Jenkins, the fact that correctness seemed to be the single most important criterion in evaluating English accents - although the participants were teachers - shows the influence of standard language ideology in formation of language attitudes. (Jenkins 2007: 186-8)

In addition, Jenkins (2007) highlights the complex and ambivalent nature of attitudes towards NNS varieties and ELF in particular, and towards the relationship between language attitudes and socio-political attitudes. She suggests that, despite that shift in the use and users of English over recent decades, the majority of teachers of English in the expanding circle countries seem to continue to believe that proper English resides principally in the UK and US (Jenkins 2007: 186-8). However, there are signs of change, also in Jenkins' (2007) study, in which linguistic insecurity was certainly in evidence, yet some respondents felt reasonably positive about their own accents. Jenkins suggests that it is an indicator of shift or perhaps globalisation also has something to do with it (Jenkins 2007: 188). Clear indicators of change from the standard language ideology are studies, such as Kolocsai (2009), in which young Erasmus students show favourable perceptions of ELF and creativity, and in which

efficient communication is foregrounded over correctness and standard language ideology.

In addition to teacher attitudes, student attitudes have interested a number of scholars. For example, Ranta (2010) conducted two questionnaire surveys on students and English teachers in Finnish upper secondary schools. According to her study, young Finns and English teachers, who belong to the younger-generation, are in general well aware of the role of English as a lingua franca and the implications it ought to have on English teaching at schools. The participants expressed liberal attitudes and were open to diversity, but their answers also gave evidence that, they, too, shared the view of the division between standard language and native speakers, and the ELF approach, the 'real-world English' (Ranta 2010: 175).

Another study that focused on learners' attitudes is Kolocsai's (2009) interview study on Erasmus exchange students' ELF attitudes. Interestingly, the students found ELF easier to understand than native speaker English. According to her findings, the students oriented favourably towards ELF and found their English use as *creative* and *fun*. However, they did not consider it *correct*, since they compared ELF to NS English which they described as *real* and *correct* English. Despite this, the participants learned that they do not need to follow any external norm, but can cope with *incorrect* forms and structures. In addition, they recognised that inventing new forms, borrowing from other languages or maintaining their accent functioned effectively as communicative tools (Kolocsai 2009: 33-34).

A similar study was made by Hynninen (2010). She interviewed 13 students in the University of Helsinki in order to find out how they describe the use of English in ELF settings, and what that reveals about their ELF views in general. The interview accounts that Hynninen analysed foregrounded schematic aspects of language regulation. Language regulation, i.e. the negotiation of acceptable and correct language in lingua franca interaction, includes both schematic and emergent aspects. The schematic aspects refer to ideological conceptions of language, what the speakers construct as acceptable, appropriate and correct language. The latter, emergent aspects refer to language-

regulatory practices that actually emerge in the course of interaction. One aim for Hynninen was to find out the schematic aspects of practice that the informants take with them to interactions (Hynninen 2010: 31).

According to Hynninen's results, and similarly to Kolocsaï (2009), the students made a distinction between L1 English and ELF, and preferred native English as their language learning model, although the actual ELF use was described as different from that. In the same way as the Erasmus exchange students, Hynninen's interviewees linked NS English to correctness and naturalness and the target of their language learning, whereas in ELF they relied on accommodation instead of correctness (Hynninen 2010: 40). According to Kolocsaï (2009, 40), the experiences of ELF interaction made the exchange students reconsider the value of NS norms, and they learned to think of the strategies of accommodation, negotiation and cooperation as keys to successful communication. The students also took advantage of the multilingual group they belonged to. In addition, they made an effort to improve their foreign languages with each other, or learned new foreign language from each other (Kolocsaï 2009: 41).

Among the many ELF attitude studies focusing on young people and students there are also Zeiss (2010) and Tóth (2010) that both studied attitudes towards ELF by European students. Zeiss' (2010) questionnaire assessed attitudes related to different levels of language, such as grammar and idiomatic language use. The findings of her purely quantitative survey (no open items included) were complex and supported the assumption that attitudes towards ELF are affected in a complex manner by a multitude of different factors like language contact, motivation, attitudes towards native speaker norms and many more. Standard language ideology was present in the students' minds when their own language use was concerned, but they were tolerant of other people's use of ELF (Zeiss 2010: 114). Toth (2010) had a similar finding in her interviews on Erasmus students. She studied the general attitudes, native speaker norm and Standard English in an international context, and also the students' perceptions of EU's linguistic situation. In addition, Toth's (2010) findings suggest the same as Hynninen's (2010): NS norms were seen as models, but not as the most appropriate choice in international contexts. In addition, code-switching in ELF was discovered to be common and the

NNS version of English was reported as easy to understand as the NS version.

As we now have noticed, ELF interaction and the attitudes related to it are complex and multidimensional phenomena. The studies and scholars that I have described all have been very influential in my survey and especially in the analysis. As a result, I will reflect my findings to, for example, Kolocsi (2009) excellent comments. All in all, as Cogo (2010: 304) points out, "focusing on ELF perceptions is necessary to understand to what extent changes in the use of English, and its associated social practices reflect shifts in attitudes towards ELF and ELF communities of speakers." In this sense it is particularly interesting and important to focus on attitudes of young people, who may constitute the future players in ELF communities of practice.

3 METHODOLOGY

In order to find out about the ELF attitudes of the work camp participants, I conducted a survey questionnaire. In this chapter, I will describe how the survey was designed, conducted and analysed. I will also introduce briefly each of the survey sections. At first, I will discuss the aims and the research questions of this study.

3.1 Key aims and research questions

As I discussed in chapter (2), previous research on ELF has focused especially on linguistic and pragmatic features of ELF communication. In addition, there has been a recent and growing interest towards ELF attitude studies. However, many of these ELF attitude studies have been focusing on the academia and exchange students. In this study, I wanted to look into another context, and that is why I chose to collect perceptions and attitudes from people who had participated in a voluntary work camp in Finland in 2012. I had myself participated in one of the Finnish work camps during the same year, so the target group was easily approachable due to my personal connections. My interest was triggered especially, when I found out that no previous ELF attitude research was made of international short term voluntary work camps. This was rather surprising since a 2-week intensive period of time where people, most young adults, from various cultural backgrounds interact informally with each other, offers a great deal of interesting questions worth studying.

The aim of this particular study is to gather information about the use of ELF in an intercultural context from the perspective of the actors themselves. My intention is to find out how young people coming from various cultural backgrounds experienced the use of ELF during a short-term voluntary project, and what kind of attitudes they have to the English language, especially in ELF settings.

In addition to directly addressing their attitudes, I am interested in how the participants describe their experiences of using English in the work camp settings, and what their descriptions reveal about their views - their attitudes. The explicit research questions are the following:

- 1) *What kind of attitudes they have on their own and other's communication in English?*
- 2) *How did the camp members themselves experience the use of English as a lingua franca during their stay in the work camp?*

Especially the following topics will be addressed: accommodation, code-switching, accent, problems in communication and NS (native speaker) - NNS (non-native speaker) interaction.

3.2 About the questionnaire

As the data gathering method I chose to do a web-based questionnaire survey. A questionnaire that provided me with both qualitative and quantitative data was designed and the survey was conducted with the help of the web-based program Webropol 2.0. Several factors led me to choose a web-based questionnaire survey as my data-collecting method, instead of conducting interviews. Firstly, a web-based questionnaire is easily and globally accessible. Secondly, a survey enabled me to get a wide perspective to the issues and collect data from several work camps arranged in Finland 2012. Thirdly, a questionnaire gave the participants the possibility to stay anonymous, and, accordingly, they had more freedom to express their opinions and share their experiences. In an interview the participants might not have been keen to express their attitudes, since participants from the camp I worked in, might have felt it difficult to express problematic or personal issues.

However, a direct approach such as a questionnaire survey in a language attitude study can be seen as controversial, as such a direct method may direct the participants to answer in a certain way and, therefore, affect the reliability of the answers. Especially asking hypothetical or strongly slanted questions may affect the reliability of the answers. Moreover, the social desirability bias and the characteristics of the researcher may have an effect in the answers. Social desirability refers to the tendency for people to give answers in ways that they believe to be socially appropriate and the characteristics of the researcher. (Garrett 2010, 43-46.) For these reasons, one can argue that in this survey the fact that I had been a camp leader and was known by many of the respondents may have affected their answers.

Although these factors may have influenced the participants' answers, they may also well have increased their eagerness to take part in the survey rather than a survey conducted by a stranger. Moreover, as I mentioned earlier, because the survey was made anonymously, and they could not be identified, the participants should have been able to answer freely and without any possible social constraints or conform to the organisers.

In the process of making the survey I was guided by previous ELF attitude studies, especially the studies by Zeiss (2010) and Toth (2010), which are both discussed in chapter (2). However, since the focus and the context of my research were different from these studies, their studies were of use solely in the questions that were assessing the respondents' general attitudes towards English in the first section of the survey. Otherwise the survey and its items were my own design, based on my own experience from a voluntary camp and, most importantly, influenced by findings of all the previous ELF attitude research discussed in the Background. In addition, in the design process I made use of Dörnyei's (2007) general guidelines of making applied linguistic research studies which was in help in planning the wording of the items and designing the scales.

The questionnaire consists of both close- and open-ended items. In the statements I used the Likert scale which is one of the most famous close-ended items used in questionnaires. It is formed with a statement and the participants indicate their agreement or disagreement by marking one of the five alternatives (Dörnyei 2007: 105). Each response option is marked with a number so that the results can be scored and thus are faster to analyze. Attitudes of the participants were gathered with the help of statements and they indicated their agreement with them in the following way: *1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=disagree and 5= strongly disagree*. In addition, I used numerical rating scales when the participants were asked to evaluate for instance their language skills.

The open-ended questions were used in order to allow the participants for more freedom of expression than the numerical scales in the statements, and an opportunity to provide me with examples on the use of ELF on the camp. Most of the open-ended items were additional questions linked to the statements, giving a chance for the participant to give

examples of the communication practices or share their thoughts, such as the items 19: "*Comments or examples of how you adjusted your communication?*" and 20: "*If you switched languages during conversations, can you identify reasons why you did so? (E.g. topic/situation/other speaker/language skills)*". However, I was aware of the downsides of including open-ended items in the questionnaire: although the answers are qualitative in nature, they can be regarded as rather superficial and the participants' engagement is quite brief. Therefore the answers are not as detailed and informative as for instance in interviews (Dörnyei 2007: 105).

In the questionnaire I tried to use wordings that would be as easy to understand as possible and not very ambiguous, since the informants represented many linguistic backgrounds and levels of English as well as cultural differences. For example, when I asked about accommodation or code-switching, the concepts were described for the participants. Especially in assessing the respondent attitudes and mental variables wordings were carefully chosen since even the minor differences can produce significantly different levels of agreement or disagreement (Dörnyei 2007: 103).

3.3 The questionnaire section by section

To give my readers a better idea of the survey and its contents, I will briefly discuss each of the sub-section of the survey. In addition of explaining the contents, I will also give reasons to why those particular items were chosen. The questionnaire survey included 41 items, 12 were for gathering background information and the rest were related to English language, ELF and intercultural communication in the camps.

The background information collected in the survey included six (items 1-6) items that addressed the respondents' age, gender, nationality, occupation, first languages, language skills and the use of English in everyday life and previous intercultural experiences. In addition, there were questions concerning the type of camp that they had participated in. All the background information was gathered in order to picture what type of people participated in the camps in Finland 2012 and how heterogeneous or homogenous the group was, which was important to know when I was explicating their

attitudes.

The general attitudes - section included 11 statements which examined the participants' attitudes towards the English language. Questions were focusing especially on their own speech; the respondents' attitudes towards native speaker models, grammar, accent, fluency, and also whether they thought that English is weakening the status of their first language. Some of the issues were addressed in two or more questions but from a different angle; this was done in order to see if that had an effect on their attitudes. One of the aims with this section was to see whether there were differences or similarities between their attitudes here and later in the survey when the same issues were addressed in the work camp context.

The third part of the survey concentrated on the participants' experiences during the camp: their use of especially English, but also whether they used other languages for communication.

Using English and other languages in the camp included five (5) open items and sixteen (16) statements. The statements and open items addressed the participants' language-choices during the camp: in which situations they spoke other additional languages, and in which situations English was chosen instead of their mother tongue or other languages, how they found their own and other's language use, regarding for example politeness, joking and linguistic errors, and how the participant reacted to have adjusted their communication. This section reveals not only the participants' attitudes on English as a lingua franca, but also their language use during the camp, especially code-switching.

Different ways of communicating included one (1) open item and nine (9) statements. The aim here was to find out the respondents' attitudes towards cultural and linguistic differences and how much they used non-linguistic means of communication, i.e. body language. This section addressed also group dynamics and the effect of cultural differences and language skills on the formation of the group. Several of the items in this section are based on my own experiences as the camp leader.

Problems in communication included three (3) statements and three (3) open items, which addressed the possible problems in communication, for example comprehensibility and how the participants adjusted their communication in instances of miscommunication.

The accent section included two (2) statements and one (1) open item that investigated the participants' attitudes towards accents, how they regarded their own and other participants' accents. The meaning was to find out whether there was a difference in their attitudes towards their own and other accents and which accents they found especially easy or difficult to understand. As previous research has shown, people tend to evaluate their own accent more negatively than the accent that others speak with. (Jenkins 2007, 88-90).

Native speakers of English - there were also four (4) statements and one (1) open item of NS-NNS communication. These items were answered by the participants who took part in the camp that included also native speakers of English. The goal was to find out whether the participants saw a difference between communicating with a native or non-native speaker of English and in what way was the communication possibly different.

In the final section, **Experiences of ELF and intercultural communication**, I wanted to approach ELF communication also through interculturality, since interculturality is an essential part of both the voluntary work camp and ELF communication concepts. Attitudes and issues related to intercultural communication were addressed already in the sections *Different ways of communicating* and *Problems in communication*, but at the end of the survey there were also three (3) open items directly addressing participants' perceptions of intercultural communication. Finally, the questionnaire included an item in which the participants could grade on how successful they found the communication in the camps and two concluding open items giving the participant a chance to comment freely the survey or the camp.

3.4 Sampling and data collection

The questionnaire was forwarded to people who had participated in a short-term

voluntary project in Finland 2012. But before sending the survey to the volunteers, I made a small scale pilot study in order to improve the contents, especially ambiguous wordings, and to find out how long filling in the survey would take. I gathered answers from few of my acquaintances and friends and on the basis of their comments I shortened the questionnaire so that filling it in would take approximately 15-30 minutes.

The final questionnaire was sent to approximately 100 volunteers. These voluntary project organizers were chosen because of my personal connections. Firstly, there were about 80 individuals who had participated in 2012 one of the Finnish work camps, coordinated by the large national youth organization Allianssi for which I had worked as a volunteer. My email, with a link to the survey, was forwarded to the participants by one of the managers in the organization. Secondly, the questionnaire was sent to 16 volunteers who worked for a similar type of 4 week project in fall 2012. This project was organized by a different volunteer service organization and the project host was my ex-colleague and friend.

The questionnaire was made public on November 28, 2012 and it was closed on December 14, 2012. One week after the launching I sent a reminding e-mail which helped me to almost duplicate the amount of answers. All in all, during that approximate two week period I gathered 48 answers.

3.5 Methods of analysis and reporting

Before discussing the results, a few words about the methods of analysis and reporting used in this study are in order. The open-ended items were optional and many of the items did not attract enough comments for appropriate quantitative analysis. However, several of the comments describe well the communication in the camp, and reveal some incidents from the camps and thus provide concrete examples for the reader. I will point out the themes and topics from the answers to the open items. The statements were processed with the help of Webropol 2.0 tools for reporting surveys, and were analysed quantitatively, by looking at the distribution of the statements in both figures and percentages. Because the data is so small, no statistical SPSS analysis is done to the answers of the statements.

I will illustrate the results of the statements with the help of figures and diagrams and with carefully chosen examples from the open ended answers, which show well the possible similarities and difference in the themes represented in the answers. Occasionally the answers have been shortened by using [...], this was the case if the original answer was long or if it included personal information, such as names. The open answers' spelling and typing has not been changed. When discussing and analyzing the results I am referring to the respondents as 'participants' or 'respondents'. The 'amount of comments' refers to the amount of comments that I gathered to that particular item, excluding all the comments unrelated to the survey's topic, and "no" or "I don't know"- answers.

4 RESULTS

In this chapter I will go through the results of the survey questionnaire and discuss them with illustration and analysis. I will present the items in the same order as they were organized in the questionnaire. Thus, first I will discuss the participants' background information: age, sex, nationality, occupation and previous intercultural experiences. Then I continue to discuss their language skills, general attitudes towards the English language and finally concentrate on their experiences in the use of the English and other languages and the intercultural communication in the camp. Finally, I will draw the strings together in the Discussion chapter, where I draw conclusions and point out the general tendencies in the answers that I found most interesting and central in regards to my research questions. A comparison with findings in relevant previous research will also be made there.

4.1 Background

As described in the methodology chapter, the first part of the survey consisted of questions about the participants' background information: their age, nationality, sex, occupation, language skills and previous experiences of intercultural communication. According to the results, the participants of voluntary work camps held in Finland 2012 formed a highly heterogeneous group of individuals, especially when looking at their first languages and nationalities, but rather homogenous when looking at their age and previous experiences abroad.

Item 1. As we can see from Figure 1, the participants were aged 16-47 years. The median age was 21 years (N=12, 25%). In addition, two large age groups were 19 (N=6) and 23 (N=9) years. The large number of participants from these particular age groups suggests that taking part in a work camp is popular after graduation from some level of education, since in many countries high-school, college or university are often finished at the age of 19 or 23.

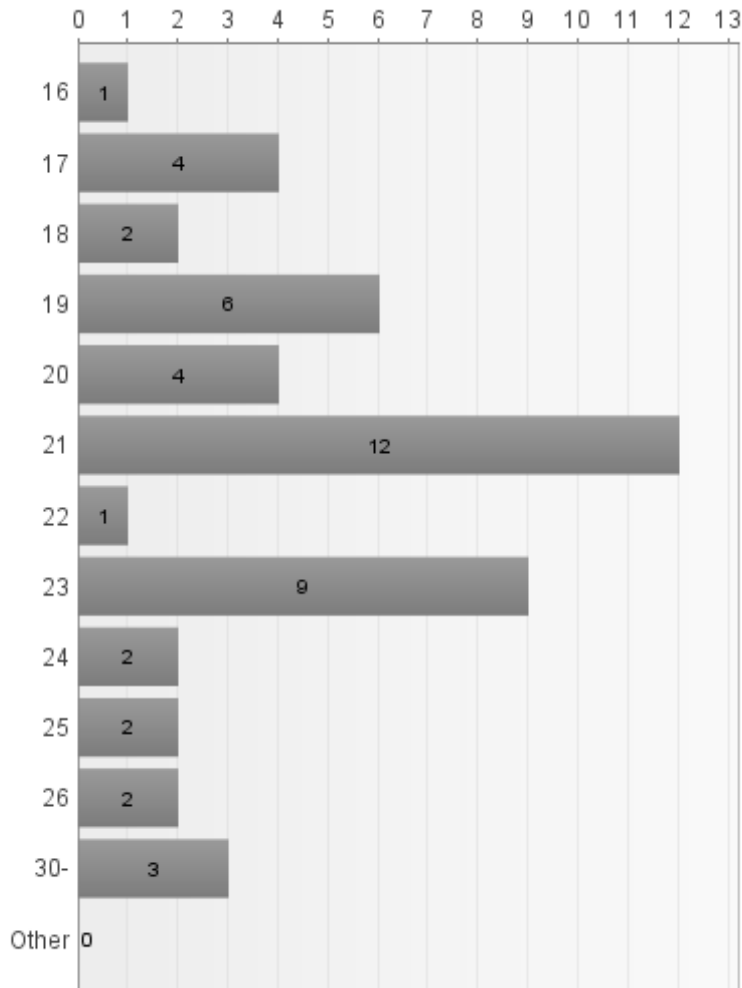


Figure 1. Distribution of age

Item 2. All in all, the participants represented a wide variety of different nationalities; altogether there were individuals from 17 different countries participating in the camps. However, some nationalities were dominant, with several participants, while most were represented with 1-2 participants. Taken together, Spanish, Czech, German and French comprised (N=30) 62,5% of the participants. As it can be seen on page 38 in Table 1, the largest national groups were Middle and Southern European.

Item 3. Distribution of the two sexes in the data was the following: males 37,5% (N=18) and female 62,5% (N=30).

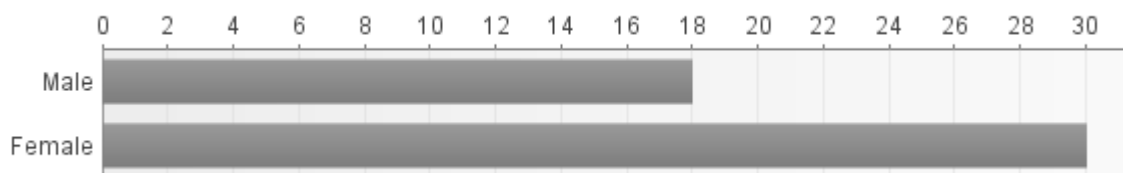


Figure 2. Distribution of sex

Item 4. The participants' most common occupation was 'studying'. 75% of the participants were students (N=36), 17 % (N=8) were working and the rest (N=4) (8%) listed their occupation as "other". The students were studying a wide variety of subjects according to their answers; these ranged from medicine, industrial engineering and business administration to languages, architecture and environmental science. The ones, who listed their occupations as 'working', were working for example as social workers and as IT experts. The ones, who listed their occupations as 'other', answered for instance that they were, unemployed, looking for work, spending a gap year or working as an Au Pair.

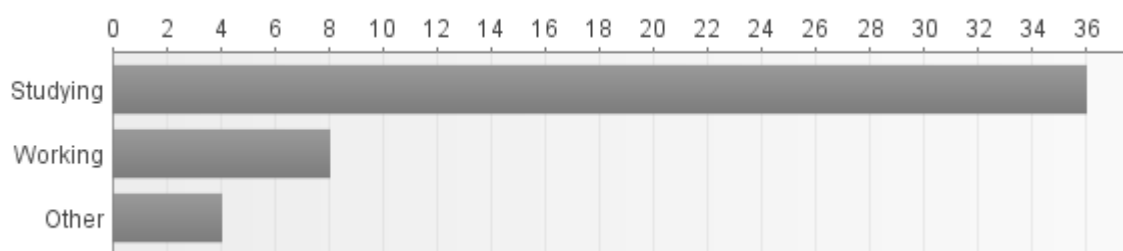


Figure 3. Occupation

Item 5. Almost all the participants' first language was the same as the largest official language of their home country, such as the German language for the German participants or French for the French participants. In addition, there were some exceptions. Firstly, some participants had two first languages, such as Finnish and Swedish or Berber and Arabic. Secondly, several Spanish participants listed their first language as Catalan and some listed both Spanish and Catalan. However, the most common L1s are easy to judge from the list of the participants' nationalities: Czech (8), German (7), French (6), Spanish (4), Catalan (3) and Russian (3).

Item 6. According to the number of languages the participants mention to speak, the participants could be described as a group of people with good multilingual skills: all the 48 participants told they speak at least a L2. The most common L2 was English: 83% of the participants (40) listed it as their second language. The rest of the participants had French (4), Spanish (3) or Russian (1) as their second language. A third language, L3, was also spoken by 85% (N=41), out of which seven (7) list English as their third language. The most common third language was French, which was the L3 of 15 participants. Almost half of the participants, 44% (N=21), told they could speak a fourth language and 8% (N=4) mention to speak a fifth language. In addition 2 participants answered that could speak also a sixth language. All in all, 83% (N=40) of the participants listed English as their second language and 15% (N=7) as a third language.

Here is a table with information of all the 48 participants (in random order): their nationality, first languages and additional languages. This gives a picture of what kind of linguistic backgrounds the participants have.

Table 1. Participants' nationality, first language(s) and additional language(s)

Nationality	First language(s)	Additional language(s)
Danish	Danish	English, German, Spanish
Taiwanese	Mandarin Chinese	English, French Spanish, Japanese
French	French	English, Spanish, Czech
German	German	English, French, Spanish, Italian, Finnish
Czech	Czech	English, Polish
Spanish	Catalan	Spanish, English, French
Russian	Russian	English, Spanish
Ukrainian	Russian	English, French, Ukrainian
Italian	Italian	English, French, Russian
South Korean	Korean	English, Japanese
Spanish	Catalan	Spanish (English, French) *

French	French	English, Spanish
Taiwanese	Chinese	English, German
Spanish	Spanish	English, French
French	French	English, Spanish
German	German	English, Latin, Spanish
Spanish	Spanish, Catalan	English, French, German
German	German	French, English, Spanish
South Korean	Korean	English
Czech	Czech	English, French, Spanish
Czech	Czech	English, French
German	German	English
Japanese	Japanese	English
Slovak	Slovak	English
Serbian	Serbian, Slovak	English, German
Finnish	Finnish, Swedish	English, German, Spanish
Ukrainian	Ukrainian	Russian, English, Polish, German, French
German	German	English, Spanish
Czech	Czech	English, German, French
German	German	English, French
Czech	Czech	English, French, Spanish
French	French	English, Spanish
French	French	English, Chinese
French	French	English, Spanish, German
Czech	Czech	English, French, German
Russian	Russian	English, French
Spanish	Catalan	Spanish, English
Czech	Czech	English, Finnish, German, Latin
Spanish	Spanish	English, French, German
Turkish	Turkish	English, German
Spanish	Catalan, Spanish	English
German	German	English, French, Finnish
Spanish	Spanish	English, French
Algerian	Berber, Arabis	French, English
Algerian	Berber, Arabic, French	French, English
Lebanese	Arabia	French, English

Czech	Czech	English, French, Russian
Spanish	Spanish	English

*This participant mentioned only Spanish but later in the survey writes that he spoke French and English in the camp, that is why I took the freedom to add French and English to his language skills.

Item 7. *To what degree do you speak these languages?* The participants were asked to evaluate their skills in their additional languages and their answers to this question revealed that although they mentioned to speak several languages, most of them could do so fluently only in their L2. The table below shows the participants self-evaluation of their language skills.

Table 2. Self-evaluation of language skills

	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Median
L2	0	3	12	20	12	47	4
L3	10	12	11	7	2	42	2
L4	10	8	2	1	1	22	2
L5	1	4	0	0	0	5	2
L6	3	1	0	0	0	4	1
L7	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
Total	24	29	25	28	15	121	2

1= basic, 5= almost like a native speaker

Number of respondents: 48

For the goal of this survey, the most important item in the background section was the participants' self-evaluation of their English skills. The participants, who listed English as their second language, evaluated their abilities as 'good', 'very good', or 'almost as native speaker'; 19% (N=8) graded their skills as 5, 42% as 4 and 30% as 3, only 2 participant evaluated their English skills less than 2. The participants who listed English as their L3 evaluated their skills as 'good' or 'almost good' 2/5 graded as 2 and 3/5 as 3. All in all, according to their self-evaluations majority of the participants speak 'very good English'

Item 8. The survey also included a question about the participant's previous voluntary work camp experience. Approximately a half of the participants (46%) had never before participated in a similar kind of voluntary work camp and the other half had done it once or twice. Only five (10%) participants had taken part in three or more voluntary camps. This suggests that the participants could be divided into two groups: one half knew what to expect from the camp, whereas the other half was facing a new and exciting situation.

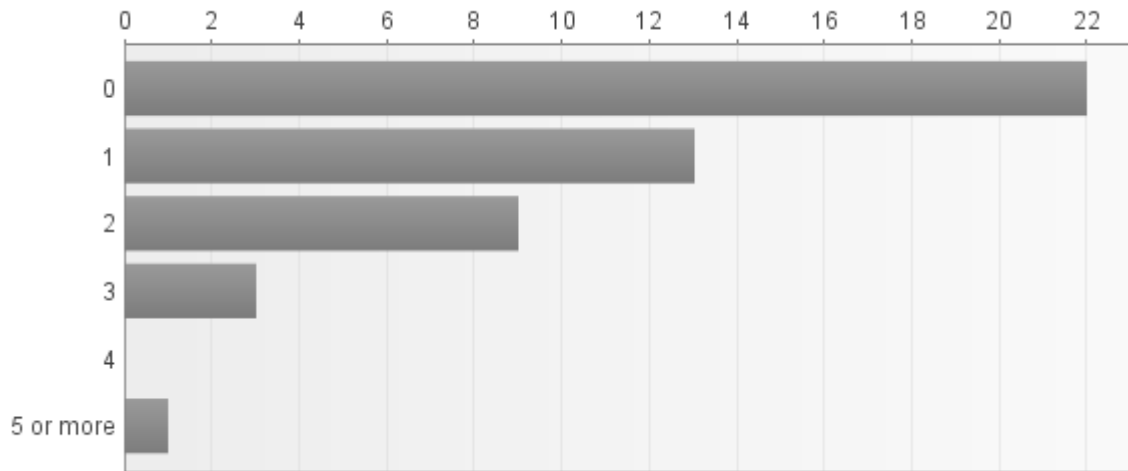


Figure 4. Previous experience of voluntary work camps

Item 9 asked about whether the participants had other forms of intercultural experience, such as being an exchange student. 54% of the participants reported that they had other intercultural experiences, they had participated on a short term language course, been an exchange student or taken part in some other kind of intercultural project. Of the 22 participants who had not taken part in a voluntary work camp, 12 had gathered other kinds of intercultural experience. That leaves 20% (N=10) of the participants without previous intercultural experiences. All in all, the majority of the group had intercultural experiences also before the work camp - these have unquestionably been in help when communicating in the camp.

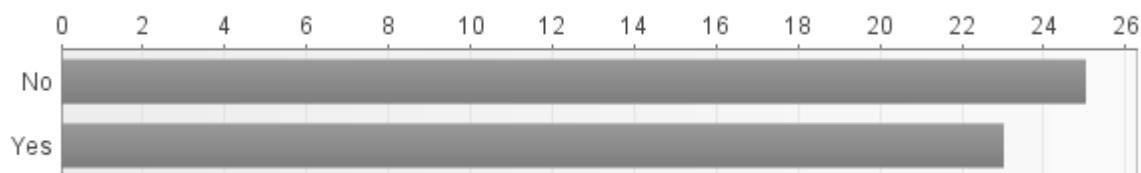


Figure 5. Other intercultural experiences

Items 12 and 13. Two items which enquired information about the camp - its length and accommodation - were included in the survey in order to compare the experiences from participants of the short (1-2 weeks) and long (3-6 weeks) projects. However, this became irrelevant since I gathered only five answers from the projects that lasted 3-6 weeks and thus their answers were not comparable with the ones from participants of the short projects (N=43). The same was with the questions concerning the accommodation since I gathered only three responds from participants that accommodated in a host family instead of accommodating together with the other participants at the project. However, these items describe what kind of voluntary camps the participant had taken part in, typically a 1-2 weeks project and the accommodation was arranged at the same location as where the work took place.

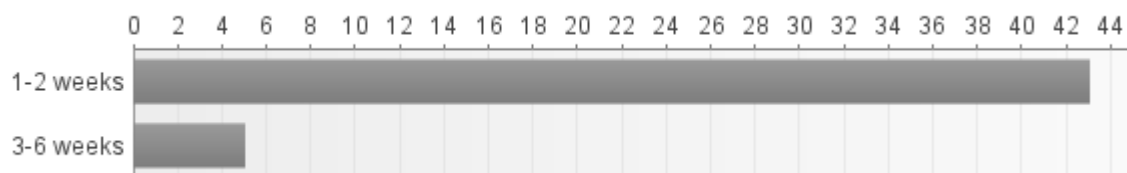


Figure 6. The length of the project/camp

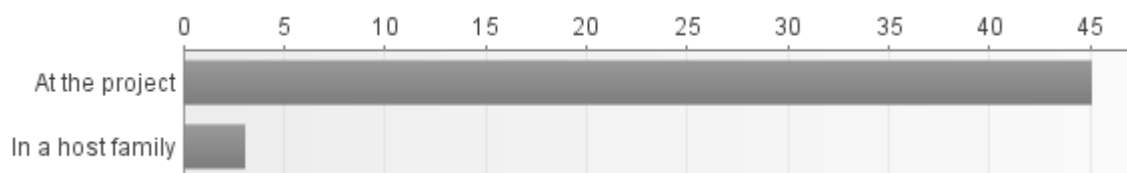


Figure 7. Accommodation

Item 10 was asking about the respondents' use of English in everyday life. It aimed at

finding out how frequently the participants were in contact with the English language. Their use of English was investigated in four different categories that were writing, speaking, reading and listening.

The distributions are presented in Table 3 below. 90% of the participants (N=45) listened and 88% (N=42) read English at least once a week. When it comes to writing and speaking, i.e. using the language actively, the use of English is not that active. Almost one third, (29%, N=14) report writing in English less than once a week. Speaking is even more infrequent, 43% (N=21) speak English less than once a week.

Table 3. How often do you use English in everyday life?

	More than 4 times per week	3-4 times per week	1-2 times per week	Less than once per week	Total	Median
Writing	9	8	17	14	48	3
Speaking	4	6	17	21	48	3
Reading	19	15	8	6	48	2
Listening	18	12	13	5	48	2

According to their answers, the participants use English very differently in their everyday life; in their free time, work or studies. Thus, the work camp participants seemed to form a heterogeneous group also in how much they are used to communicate in English. In general, it seems that the participants were more used to read and listen to English than to write and speak it.

In summary, we have now an overall picture of what kind of a group of individuals took part in the Finnish voluntary work camps 2012. They were a group of relatively young people, with different cultural and national backgrounds and according to their self-evaluation, varying levels of language skills. Nevertheless, most of them reported on being exposed to English in their normal life at least 1-2 times per week through reading or listening. Another common characteristic was their age: 66% of them were aged between 19-23 and over 90% under 27.

4.2 General ELF attitudes

Item 11. The second part of the survey ‘General opinions’ assessed the participants' perceptions and attitudes towards the English language on a general level, i.e. not

exclusively in the camp context. The first item of this section, item 11 included eleven statements that were related to different aspects of the English language and especially NS English. The statements in Table 4 surveyed the participants' attitudes on accents, correct grammar, native speaker models and grammar, and in addition their attitude towards English and learning the language.

The main goal with this section was to gather information on how the participants approach these questions in general and then later to compare, what kind of correlation there is between these items and the later items that assess the use of ELF during the camp, and if there was differences of similarities in the participants' attitudes. In addition, I was seeking to find out their attitudes towards NS English, whether it was something that they considered important in their speech, or whether they rated the communicative aspect of language - i.e. the ability to communicate a message - over native-like speech. The participants indicated their agreement to the statements with the help of a scale of five (1-strongly agree, 2-agree, 3-neither agree nor disagree, 4-disagree, 5-strongly disagree).

According to the results, which can be seen in Table 4, the participants strive for fluency, when they speak English and find correct grammar valuable. A clear majority, 79%, answered that they find it very important for themselves to speak grammatically correct language and over half, 54% of the participants agreed that they 'make an effort to use English like a native speaker'. In addition, fluent speech was also regarded as very important: 69% found it more important to speak fluently than sound native-like. Thus, although a majority of respondents made an effort in sounding as native like as possible, fluency was valued even more - almost 2/3 of the participants rated fluency over native-likeness.

Most of the statements concerning the respondents' own use of English divided the group. Clear tendencies could not be found, if not their lack is an interesting finding itself. The group's feelings towards their own accent were varied: 33% liked their own accent, whereas 29% did not like the accent they spoke with. Likewise, the participants were not purely seeing themselves as users or learners, but the answers were divided:

40% saw themselves as users and 30% as learners. Also the use of idiomatic language divided the group: 40% agreed with the following statement 'It is important for me to use English idioms/saying.' whereas 31% did not find it important. Similarly, 34% of the participants agreed that the most important for them was that understandability ó correct grammar and pronunciation were secondary, and 31% disagreed.

There were, however, statements where the participants were almost unanimous. Their positive attitude towards the English language was evident in how the participants regarded the language as a prospect and a useful skill instead of a threat towards their own native languages. They did not regard the high status of the English language as something that would be a threat to their own first language, only 10% agreed on that. In addition, the English language was regarded as very useful by 83% of the participants.

In addition, two of the statements touched on the standard language ideology. 35% of the participants recall that their 'teachers thought it was important to follow native speaker models as closely as possible and to try to speak like native speakers'. However, as many as 25% of the participants disagreed with the statement. Also the statement which measured their attitude towards native speaker model was divided: 34 % disagreed and 33 % agreed that people should learn to speak like native speakers. The latter statement is not however direct consequent of the former; support of standard language ideology cannot be simply explained with what kind of English teachers they had in schools - it is only one of the factors that shape a person's language attitudes.

Table 4. Attitudes towards the English language (The agreement to the statements was indicated with the following scale: 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=disagree and 5= strongly disagree.)

	1	2	3	4	5
I make an effort to use English like a native speaker.	10	16	14	5	3
I consider myself a user of English rather than a learner of English.	6	13	14	13	2
English is a very useful language.	34	6	1	1	6
It is very important for me to speak grammatically correct English.	16	22	5	4	1
People should learn to speak English by using the British or American accents as closely as possible.	5	11	15	14	3
It is more important to be able to speak fluently than to sound native-like.	17	16	6	5	4
I like my own accent.	7	9	18	8	6
The high status of English language devaluates my mother tongue.	2	3	14	13	16
It is important for me to use English idioms/sayings.	7	12	14	11	4
For me the most important thing is that people understand what I say - correct grammar and pronunciation are secondary issues.	8	8	17	13	2
My teachers thought it was important to follow native speaker models as closely as possible and to try to speak like native speakers.	6	11	19	9	3

All in all, there were some dominant attitudes that were shared by a clear majority: English was not seen as weakening the status of the respondents' own first language and it was regarded as a very useful language. These positive responses were foreseeable, as for example in the large-scale EU-survey Eurobarometer (2012), the English language was regarded positively by the majority of the respondents. In addition, fluency was seen as more important than sounding native-like. In addition, grammatically correct

language use was regarded as very important in their own speech. as we can see in Figure 8. Over half of NS of English. However, the statements concerning the respondents' own use of English divided the group and as we can see in Figure 9. The group's feelings towards their own accent were varied: 33% liked their own accent, whereas 29% did not like the accent they spoke with. The participants also made an effort to speak like NS of English.

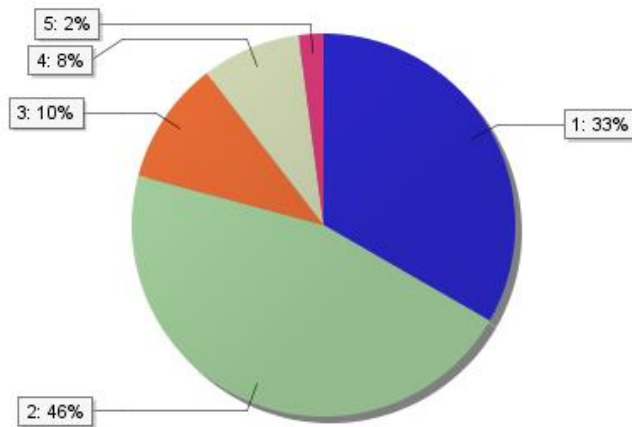


Figure 8. It is very important for me to speak grammatically correct English

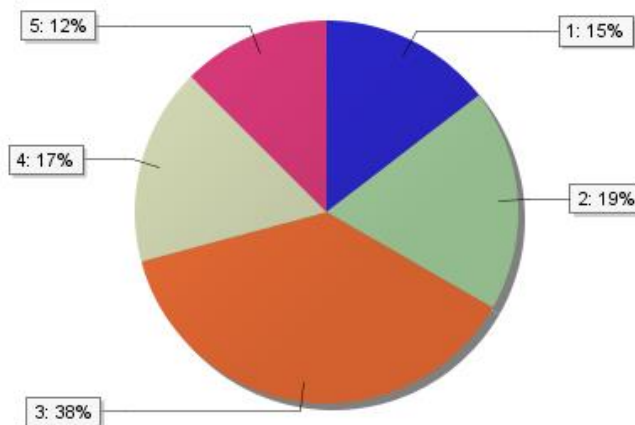


Figure 9. I like my own accent

4.3 Attitudes of the communication in the camp: Using English and other languages in the camp

The second half of the survey concentrated on the communication during the work camp. I assessed the participants' use of different languages; the effects of the participants' varying levels of language skills and the different ways of communicating; the communication problems they possibly encountered, and the participants' perceptions of different accents and communication with native speakers of English. In addition, I enquired about the respondents' perceptions concerning intercultural communication.

This section of the survey included seven items that addressed the participants' language choices. My aim was to find out how multilingual the communication during the camp was and how the participants experienced the communication. The first two items, 14 and 15, were open items in which the participants were asked to report which languages they used in the camp. Item 16 included nine statements and item 17 was an open item accompanying these statements.

Item 14. *Which languages you used (in addition to English) during the camp?* This item was a compulsory one, making the answer rate 100%, (48 comments). 20% of the participants replied that they were using only English in the camp. The rest of the participants, 80%, mention speaking other languages in addition to English. Many of the answers included descriptions of how frequently they used these additional languages. According to the respondents' background information, many of the camps had a number of participants coming from the same country, such as Germany or Spain, so thus it was natural that they were communicating also in their native languages. Although it was not asked, some participants also described with whom they were using the languages and in which situations. There were mentions that the use of other languages than English was an exception or it was used for special purposes. The comments show, for example, that some of the participants have been thoughtful in their use of additional languages, and used them only when there were native-speakers present.

According to their answers, it seems that although English was the main language used in communication, there were simultaneously also many other languages in use. English was the language used in work and free time and other languages were used in some specific situations. According to the comments, there were three different types of situations in which the participants used another language than English: they were speaking with their friends or with other native speakers; they wanted to practise or learn a new language or in order to explain issues to people with non-fluency in English.

All in all, one fifth of the participants mention that they spoke only English during the camp. English was the most important language, and for example (1) one participant recalled using only Finnish phrases in addition to English.

(1) actually only English but I learned some greeting words like " Good morning" in Finnish

It is also noteworthy that several participants pointed out that languages other than English were not used in the presence of people who did not speak that language.

Item 15. *In which situation you spoke in English?* This was a compulsory open item in which the participants' comments were very much in line with answers to the previous item. In other words, some of the participants reported that they spoke only English and the use of other languages was not frequent. All the comments here indicate that English was the main language used for communication in the camps and the use of it was not limited to work or free time or talking with the staff of the camp. According to the participants, English was in most situations the first option, even if the participants could have chosen another language to convey the message, but English was the language that everybody could understand. For example, one Spanish respondent points out that s/he spoke English also with the Spanish participants, *because if we talked in Spanish, the others didn't understand us.*

It seems that for many of the participants' use of another language than English was marked, thus it had a special purpose. The use of other languages than English was

somewhat less frequent than expected, although there were a few mentions of similar making use of the multilingualism of the group as Kolocsai (2009: 41) reported; the participants made also efforts to improve their foreign languages with each other or learned new foreign language from each other. However, all in all, the results of this and the previous item indicate clearly, that by far the most used language in the camps was English and it was used all the time, in all situations.

Item 16 The two open-ended items were followed with a list of statements that addressed their attitudes of language use in the camp. This item included nine statements concerning the use of English and other languages in the camp and the participants' answers are presented in Table 5. The statements were assessing, for example, the status of the English language during the camp, whether language and understandability caused problems, and if the camp had an effect on the participants' language skills.

According to the answers, speaking English in the camp was not problematic for the majority of the participants. Almost all, 92% agreed that English was the most important language in the camp and 65% agreed with the statement 'Language caused no problems in the camp.' Most, 56% would not have wanted to use other languages than English and 77% agreed that they preferred to use English over other languages.

The majority, 69%, responded that they understood what the others were saying without difficulties. Since humor and joking played a strong role in the camp's group dynamics that I participated in, I wanted to know how the participants experienced the joking and humor in English: joking was problematic for 31%, but over half, 59% did not have problems in expressing humor in English.

The improvement of language skills was the reason to take part in the work camp for over a half, 58% of the participants. Over a half, 57% was also satisfied with their English skills during the camp, whereas 23% felt dissatisfied in how they were able to speak English during the camp. 67% thought that their English skills improved during the camp.

Table 5. Using English and other languages in the camp 1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= neither agree nor disagree 4=disagree 5 = strongly disagree Number of respondents: 48

	1	2	3	4	5
Language caused no problems in the camp.	15	16	11	4	2
English was the most important language in the camp.	38	6	1	1	2
I would have liked to use other languages more than English.	6	8	7	18	9
During the camp, I preferred using English over other languages.	21	16	7	3	1
I took part in the work camp because I wanted to improve my language skills.	16	13	11	4	4
It was hard to make jokes in English in the camp.	6	9	5	14	14
I was unsatisfied with my English skills.	4	7	10	20	7
My English skills improved during the camp.	15	17	7	8	1
I understood what the others were saying without any difficulties.	11	22	7	6	2

All in all, according to the responses to the statements above, the participants' communication was for the majority problem-free, their English skills improved during their camp, and they were satisfied with the way in which they could communicate in ELF in the work camp. Interestingly, over a half of the participants responded that they took part in the camp in order to improve their language skills. Figure 10 shows how many participants understood each other during the camp. The participants' answers indicate a lack of problems and success of ELF interaction in the camps, which is in line with findings of for example Mauranen (2006) and Cogo (2009). The statements in item 18 will shed light on what kind of proactive work the participants did in order to make the ELF interaction so easy and fluent, since issues such as accommodation are addressed in these statements.

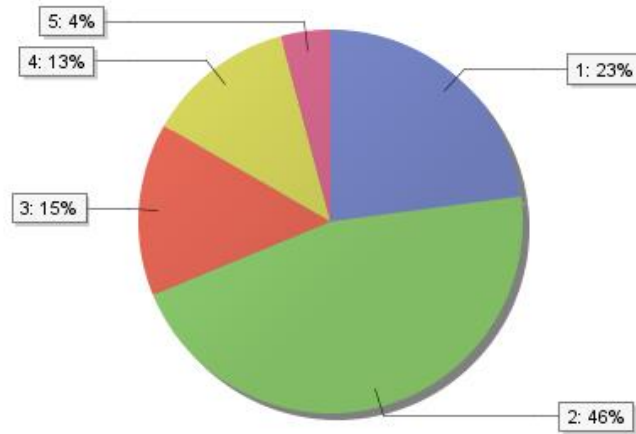


Figure 10. I understood what the others were saying without any difficulties.

Item 17. The statements in item 16 were accompanied by an open item "Comments or examples about the use of humour or joking during the camp", in which the participant could freely comment on the statements or give examples. This item gathered 18 comments: twelve were related to the use of humour or joking in the communication. The rest of the comments were related to other aspects of communication, such as accent, difficulties in or the differences between NNS-NS and NNS-NNS communication; these will be discussed later in this chapter in connection to the themes that they were related to.

As far as humour is concerned, the participants pointed out the easiness or difficulties of joking during the voluntary camp. It seems that for some of the participants humour and joking in English was natural and easy, but others reported that, due to a number of factors, humorous small talk was problematic for them. The difficulties that the participants mentioned were caused by a language barrier or the lack of fluency. However, problems in communication or lack of fluency also seem to have been sources for humour. For example, the respondents mentioned the use of so called false friends. In addition, cultural differences in humor and, for example, ironic jokes were recognized, although, as one respondent mentioned, *there are many jokes equal in all countries*. Another participant pointed out that since the world is more and more connected through the internet, humour and youth culture are more and more global.

Item 18 included seven statements that were related to multiple aspects of communication, such as politeness, accommodation, code-switching and linguistic errors. According to the answers, which can be seen in Table 6, it seems that in many respects the communication in the camp was fluent and unproblematic. For example, according to the participants' answers, a majority, 69% of the participants were able to communicate without problems, when they wanted to express politeness in English.

Two of the statements aimed at assessing linguistic precision and errors: one of them asked the respondents to assess their attitude towards their own speech, and the other their interlocutors' speech. According to the answers, there was a difference in their attitude in connection to whose speech they were focusing. 40% of the participants report paying a great deal of attention to speaking correct English in the camp, but the number of participants who report that it was not something to which they paid attention was also almost as large, 31%. When it came to their interlocutors' speech, 60% did not bother about the kind of English their fellow participants spoke and only 23% were taking notice in their interlocutors' linguistic errors. In addition, 52% of the participants recalled that the English they talked in the camp was different from the English they had learned at school. 52% also thought that their first language did influence their communication and English in the camp.

It seems that accommodation was something that the participants did consciously. 83% of the participants recall that they adjusted their communication, for instance by repeating or rephrasing, in order to help the others to understand them better. Code-switching was less frequent, but still almost half of the respondents, 44 %, pointed out that they had switched languages during conversation.

Table 6. Statements on the use of English and other languages in the camp 1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= neither agree nor disagree 4=disagree 5 = strongly disagree Number of respondents: 48

	1	2	3	4	5
It was difficult for me to express politeness in English.	3	6	6	20	13
The way I talked in the camp was different from the English I learnt at school.	9	16	12	10	1
I paid a lot of attention to linguistic correctness and precision when I spoke English.	3	16	14	13	2
When speaking with fellow non-native speakers, I was bothered by their linguistic errors and the varying levels of their skills in English.	4	7	8	15	14
My first language influenced my English use and communication during the camp.	8	17	7	15	1
I adjusted my communication (e.g. repeated, rephrased) to help the others to understand me	13	27	4	2	2
I switched languages during conversations. (language switching = saying a word or a phrase in one language while talking in another language	8	13	7	12	8

Regarding their own language use, correctness and grammar were important for the participants ó as an observation, this has become evident already in other items, too. However, the answers indicate that in the camp context these have not been as important as in the so called general context, i.e. according to item 11 which addressed the respondents' attitudes towards the English language in statements which were not situated in the camp context. According to the previous item, Item 11, 79% of the participants find it personally very important to speak grammatically correct language. But, when the same issue was addressed in a statement situated in the camp context, the rate was 40%. This shows a clear difference between the ideal scenario and the reality of the respondents' lives. It can be argued to be a positive sign that in actual ELF interaction correct grammar does not play such an important role as fluent and successful communication - which depends on other factors, such as accommodation.

From Figure 11 and Figure 12 we can see that there was once more a difference in how the participants respond to their own language use and in how they assess their interlocutors' speech and communication: they evaluated their own speech more strictly. This phenomenon was also present in Zeissø (2010) and Toth's (2010) studies; the respondents were committed to L1 English and standard language ideology when their own language use was concerned but they were tolerant of other people's use of ELF.

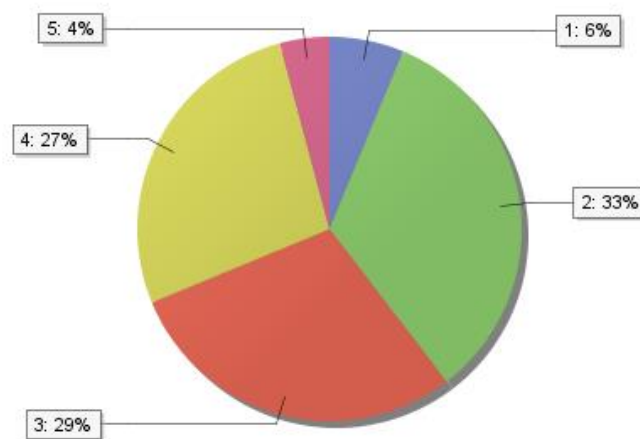


Figure 11. I paid a lot of attention to linguistic correctness and precision when I spoke English.

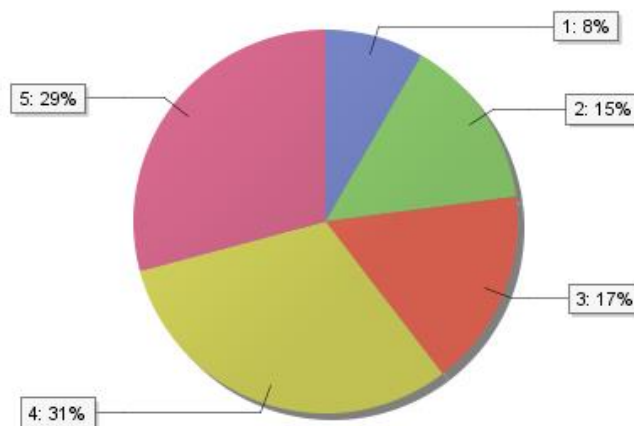


Figure 12. When speaking with fellow non-native speakers, I was bothered by their linguistic errors and the varying levels of their skills in English.

Item 19. The statements were followed by two open questions. The first item like this, 19, was an open question: *Comments or examples of how you adjusted your communication?* To this item I received 20 answers. (In addition, there were two comments from item 22 that were related to accommodation and they were analysed together with these items.) The participants described their experiences regarding the communication and adjusting one's speech in the camp, and, according to their comments, rephrasing was often used in order to make their message more understandable. Rephrasing, repetition and *simplifying* were mentioned in 70 % (N=14) of the comments. Two participants mention using also their native language if they could not remember the right word. Some also described how they concentrated on improving their communication by, for example, listening to how the others were speaking.

Figure 13 below shows how many of the participants used accommodation in the camps. 83% report to have accommodated their speech, and hence these comments describe an essential part of the camps' interaction.

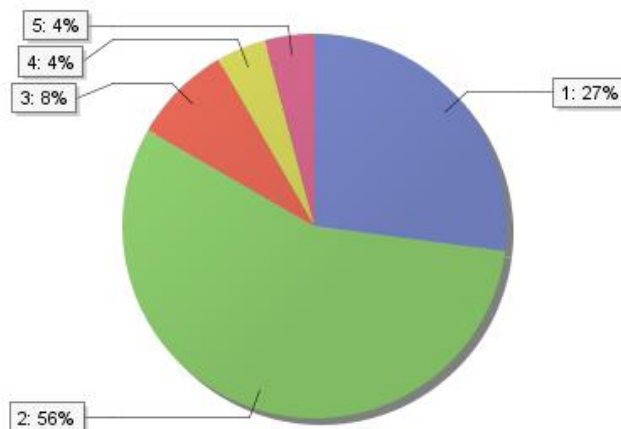


Figure 13. I adjusted my communication (e.g. repeated, rephrased) to help the others to understand me.

Among the comments I gathered in this item, there were some that pointed out interesting details of accommodation in the camps. For example, one respondent pointed out that s/he was varying his/her wordings in order to teach his/her interlocutor new words and phrases. In extract 2, this participant recalls all the different ways s/he adjusted her/his speech, and including also code-switching to French in order to explain the meaning of words to a Spanish participant:

(2)When i understood the level of the people I was talking slower or faster it depends. Or i was using the same kind of words to get understood, then sometimes I was using a "better" word like this i could learn him or her a new word. I used a little bit the french sometimes to make the spanish(catalan) understand a word, because we got very close languages.

The use of accommodation meant for many participants the same thing as *speaking simple language*. This easy vs. complex language is an intriguing categorisation, but it explains how ELF users take into account their interlocutors' possible comprehension problems and accommodate their speech, thus ensuring fluent communication. For example, one respondent explains their accommodation as *speaking slower or in a less complex manner or to explain with easier words*. In extract 3 one participant explains how s/he explained the meaning of emphasise:

(3) [...] when one friend didn't know the meaning of 'emphasize', I explained it 'make something storger [sic] or bigger' and 'make something look more important'.

All in all, the participants seem to have been active in their efforts in preventing comprehension problems. This kind of work, or as Mauranen (2006, 135) described it, *proactive work*, took place in the work camps especially in reactions to the interlocutors' potential problems in comprehension and production: the participants rephrased their sentences with easier words and avoided complex structures.

Item 20. Item 20 aimed at identifying the motivations for code-switching: *If you switched languages during conversations, can you identify reasons why you did so (e.g. topic/situation/other speaker/language skills)?* This open item was included in order to gather concrete examples of the situations in which code-switching was used in the work camps. This question was answered by 22 participants.

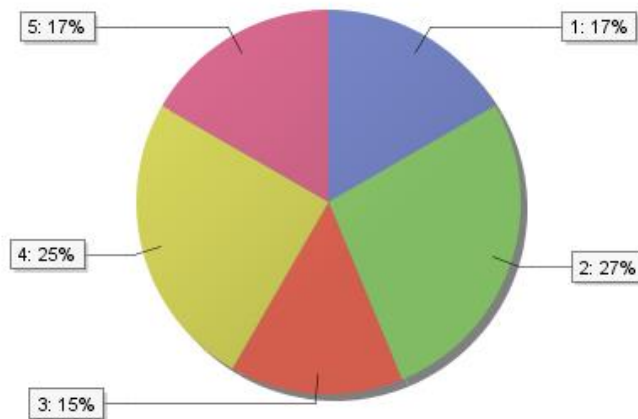


Figure 14. I switched languages during conversations. (Language switching = saying a word or a phrase in one language while talking in another language)

Some of the participants had already described in their answers to the previous questions the situations and reasons why and when they used different languages during the camp. Many of the comments here are in line with those answers, but I also received here new descriptions of why people wanted to switch languages. According to their comments, the participants switched languages when they wanted to facilitate the communication, could not find the right word in English, translated sentences for other participants, because of their lack of understanding English, and sometimes the reason was also to express emotions or to show empathy towards others.

For example, one respondent remembers having spoken French with a French participant not only in order to practice the language, but to form a closer friendship and *togetherness* with this person. According to extract 4 below, making use of other languages than English has also often been an easier and faster way to explain meanings, than trying to explain the word in English. L1 speakers of Romance languages, such as French and Spanish participants, also commented that they took advantage of the similarities in the languages.

(4) Sometimes you don't know a word, or the person you're talking to doesn't understand your word. Trying every language you have in common can be easier than making long sentences to explain.

Although code-switching is often done to fill in a linguistic gap, it also has many other functions. According to the comments, in the camps code-switching seems to have had similar functions to those discovered by Cogo (2009: 269-270): it was used to signal solidarity and membership in the same multilingual community or to provide nuances of expression that would be unavailable in English.

All in all, what seems to have motivated most often the participants to switch languages was the respect towards the other person, and the wish to help the interlocutor to understand, and not the speakers' own lack of words. This comes close to the motivation the respondents had in accommodation, that in order to have a fluent conversation the ELF speaker must take advantage of a variety of means, such as additional languages. It also seems that, as the survey has thus far indicated that the communication in the camps was quite problem free and fluent, the participants no doubt used also accommodation and code-switching successfully.

4.4 Different ways of communication

This section included two items: one set of statements and an open item. As the heading of this section already indicates, questions here are related to different aspects of communication, including the group dynamics in the camps.

Item 21 consisted of nine statements that addressed the effects of cultural differences and varying levels of language skills in the group's communication and group dynamics. In addition, the item included statements concerning other factors of communication, such as body language and whether technical support was used in order to help the communication.

According to the responses, there was a good and functional atmosphere in the work camps. 77% of the respondents agreed that they formed a close group during the camp and, in addition, 71% did not find the following statement true: *Due to differences in our English skills we did not form a close-knit group in the camp*. Although 35% of the participants agreed that language skills of the participants had an effect on the participants' social status in the camp, the amount of participant disagreeing with the

statement was higher, 42%. In addition, another statement addressed the same issue, and this one had an even higher percentage, 60% disagreeing that the people with better language skills had a higher status in the camp. For the group, it seems to have been more important that the characteristics of the participants suit together, 58% of the respondents felt that language skills had no role but ~~chemistry~~ did.

Cultural differences were not seen to cause difficulties in communication, as only 13% agreed with the statement. One of the factors explaining this is that the participants were aware of the possible differences and paid attention to them; 54% report to have taken notice the possible cultural differences. In addition, there were two items addressing factors helping communication, namely, body language and the use of technical aids. 67% of the participants answered that gestures and body language were important ways of communication in the camp. The use of smartphones or other technical support was somewhat less frequent than expected, only 15% tell to have used it. This figure can be explained by the locations of the camps; free Wi-Fi-connections are quite rare in the Finnish countryside, for example in the camp that I participated a Wi-Fi-connection with a limited capacity was available in the dormitory. Thus, rather than the use of an online translator, it was more fluent and natural for the participants to accommodate or rephrase their message, or to ask a fellow volunteer for help.

Table 7. Language skills and different ways of communication. 1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= neither agree nor disagree 4=disagree 5 = strongly disagree. Number of respondents: 48

	1	2	3	4	5
We formed a close group during the camp.	25	12	4	3	4
The language skills of the participants had an effect on their social status on the camp.	5	12	11	8	12
Cultural differences made communication difficult.	3	3	6	19	17
Language skills did not play a role in the communication during the camp, it was more about chemistry between people.	14	14	14	5	1
People who spoke fluent English had a higher status in the camp than the ones who did not speak fluent English.	6	6	7	14	15
Due to differences in our English skills we did not form a close-knit group in the camp.	3	5	6	12	22
I used technical support, e.g. smartphones in order to make communicating with my fellow participants easier.	2	5	8	9	24
I paid attention to cultural differences between participants while we were communicating with each other.	7	19	15	4	3
Gestures and body language were important ways of communicating in the camp.	15	18	10	4	1

The responses to the statements above create an image of the voluntary camps' participants as a close group during the approximately 2-week period. It seems that cultural differences did not cause major problems for communication; neither did their varying levels of English skills hinder the group from getting close. According to their responses, the majority paid attention to cultural differences and thus perhaps worked proactively and prevented those possible differences from constituting problems.

Language skills may have played a small part in what kind of a role the person had in the group, but that has not been a crucial factor in determining who was popular or who was an outsider. In the participants' interaction, the use of gestures and body language was important, whereas technical support seems not to have been important; only a small minority took advantage of online translators or other applications. As Meierkord

(2012: 193-194) points out, ELF speakers may take into account their interlocutors' potential production and comprehension problems: hence they may avoid too complex phrases and select only those forms they believe will be intelligible and appropriate to everybody else in the interaction.

Item 22. *Comments or examples on the use of technical support, cultural differences or body language and gestures* was an open item that received 14 comments that were related to cultural differences, difference in the participants' English skills, accommodation, the use of technical support and gestures. The comments that were not related to cultural differences, body language and technical support were discussed in connection to the items that concentrated on those themes, such as comments on accommodation were discussed already in item 19.

One of the commentators pointed out that, although one learns many things from different cultures, it is not the cultural background that determines what a person is like, and how s/he should be encountered, but it is his/her personality that one needs to get to know. It seems that the use of technical support in order to explain meaning of words was not common, but the methods mentioned were dictionaries, smartphones' and online translators. One commentator also recalls that sometimes the participants made use of computers and showed pictures of what they tried to describe with words.

In addition, sometimes gestures were used to make the communication easier, particularly if the participants could not find mutually understandable words. This was explicitly mentioned in one of the comments, and I recall from my own personal experience, that gestures originating from Italian body language were often used in the camp by an Italian participant. S/he used evocative gestures in communication with the others, and these later became part of several participants' repertoire and way of communicating. Mostly this did so for amusement purposes, but, in any case, these gestures became part of a shared repertoire and contributed to a sense of togetherness in the group.

4.5. Problems in communication

This section included three statements and three open items that addressed possible problems in interaction in the camps. I will first report the result of each item and finish this section by drawing a conclusion based on them.

Item 23 included one statement that addressed the possible effect of cultural differences on communication. According to the responses, there were few problems or misunderstandings caused by cultural differences: according to 69 % of the participants there were no such problems in the camps

Table 8. Cultural differences. 1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= neither agree nor disagree 4=disagree 5 = strongly disagree. Number of respondents: 48

	1	2	3	4	5
Cultural differences in communication caused problems or misunderstandings in the camp.	2	6	7	18	15

Item 24 was an open item accompanying the statement: *If cultural differences caused problems or misunderstandings, can you give examples*, which gathered eight (8) comments from the participants who reported in Item 23 that there were problems in the camp due to cultural differences.

The participants' comments were related to politics or differences in habits. Thus, there seem to have been only some minor conflicts in the camps. Misunderstandings based on language, difficult accent or communication error were mentioned by three participants, and one gave an example of an incident where s/he was not understood, and another mentioned that a person's low proficiency in English made him/her an outsider in the camp. For example, looking the interlocutor in the eye was a concrete example of cultural differences. Thus, it seems that although there were some problems, they were rather harmless. However, one person mentioned *Middle East conflicts* appearing briefly in the camp in which s/he participated.

Item 25 included one statement which asked whether, because of a poor proficiency in English, the participants had problems in becoming part of the group. A clear majority, 81% of the participants did not find it difficult to get to know new people and tell about themselves in English.

Table 9. Telling about oneself. 1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= neither agree nor disagree 4=disagree 5 = strongly disagree. Number of respondents: 48

	1	2	3	4	5
I found it difficult to get to know new people and tell them about myself if I needed to do it in English.	3	5	1	17	22

Item 26 was an open item following the statement. The question was, *If you found it difficult to get to know new people and tell them about yourself, what caused problems for you?* This item received three comments. The lack of adequate vocabulary seems to have limited sometimes the choice of topics that the participants could discuss. For instance, one participant recalls that s/he felt frustrated since s/he could not explain the history of his/her home country because s/he could not find the correct expressions to do so. The lexicon and problems in remembering English words and phrases caused uncomfortable situations for some participants. However, it seems that this has not been a common problem among the participants, as the low number of comments (3) shows.

Item 27 included a statement which inquired if the participants had problems in understanding what the others were saying in English. It seems that some problems in understanding did exist: 31% of the participants suggested that they had comprehension problems. However, over half, 52%, reported not having such problems in the camps.

Table 10. Problems in communication. 1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= neither agree nor disagree 4=disagree 5 = strongly disagree. Number of respondents: 48

	1	2	3	4	5
I had some problems in understanding what the others were saying in English.	0	15	8	16	9

Item 28 was an open item following the statement 27. The question was the following: *If you had problems in understanding what the others were saying in English, how did you manage these situations? (Asked/did nothing and figured out by yourself/something else)*. It triggered 18 comments on the basis of which it seems that, for the purpose of ensuring understandability, rephrasing and co-working was a common method for the camp participants. The respondents also pointed out that, when problems in communication occurred, they were caused by the poor language skills of the interlocutors, strong accents or poor lexicon. In addition, some participants mention that if they had difficulties in comprehension in spite of asking their interlocutors for clarification, they tried to guess or pretended that they had understood the message. This way the problems were in a way swept under the carpet.

All in all, there were some problems in the camp, mostly due to difficulties in understanding the language forms used. However, these seem to have been exceptions and did not constitute major problems. If the participants were occasionally unable to understand their interlocutor, they let the situation pass. In such situations the atmosphere seems to have been quite relaxed. Hence, if explanations or gestures did not help the participants to understand each other, it was easier to ignore it than to draw attention to the comprehension problem. This kind of ignoring of problems could be seen as one of the interlocutors' ways of making the communication 'smooth' and fluent. Just as the majority of participants reported that they were not bothered by their interlocutors' accent or grammar errors, it did not constitute a problem if some part of their fellow participant's speech remained unclear.

4.6 Accent

The survey also included a short section focusing on accents. Besides this section, this theme was present, in fact, throughout the survey, especially in the participant's answers to the open items. The section included two statements and an open item, and these will be summoned and analyzed in the end of this section.

Item 29 included two statements addressing the participants' attitudes towards accents.

According to the answers, 73% of the participants agreed that some of their fellow participants had accents which were difficult to understand. However, the same number, 73% did not find the strong accent to have affected as much as to have made them take their fellow participants' arguments seriously. 17% of the participants were affected by the strong accents so much that it altered how they responded to their interlocutor's comments: if a person spoke with a strong NNS accent they did not take their comments seriously.

Table 11. Accent. 1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= neither agree nor disagree 4=disagree 5 = strongly disagree. Number of respondents: 48

	1	2	3	4	5
Some people had accents which were difficult to understand.	8	27	7	5	1
When somebody spoke English with a strong non-native speaker accent, I couldn't take their arguments seriously.	1	7	5	12	23

Item 30. These two statements were followed by the question: *Did you find it easier to talk to people with a particular accent in English? If yes, which and why?* This question received 45 comments. 51% (N=23) of the participants answered that they did not find any accents easier than others, but the rest made interesting comments about which accents are easy and which are difficult for them. According to the participants, the accents that they were used to hearing were the easiest for them, no matter whether the accent was a native or non-native one. Some participants commented on native accents and named the American accent as the easiest one and the British as the most difficult one. For instance, one participant wrote that since s/he is learning English with the help of watching American and British films, s/he needs time to adjust to other accents, whereas another participant suggests that it is easiest to understand people with same L1, since they have learned to speak English in the same way as s/he has.

(5) Maybe it's easier to understand the ones from your own nation, because they learned it the same way as you.

In addition, it was suggested that, in general, non-native accents are easier than native ones: they have simpler sentence structure and easier accents. For example, one participant explains this with the *clarity of their pronunciation*.

(6) The Germans and Slovaks were the easiest to talk to in English not because they were native English speakers or they had the slightest accent but it had to do with the clarity of their pronunciation.

As easy non-native accents the respondents mentioned Scandinavian accents, German, Finnish, 'light accents' and Slovakian. Finnish and German were both mentioned in more than two answers. According to one participant, Scandinavians and German *“speak without öheavy” accent*. Another respondent made an observation of why the Finnish accent is easy to understand: in Finnish words are pronounced with clear pauses between them and Finnish people speak English in the same way.

Difficult none-native accents mentioned in the comments were Asian, French and Spanish accents. The participants explained that they found these accents difficult since they were not used to hearing them. For example, one participant put it in the following way:

(7) [...] The accents I had problems with were Korean and French, because I'm not used to them and they are quite different.

In addition, one of the Spanish participants recalls that people made fun of their accent and expressions, and that *others* acted like they were somehow *better* since they spoke better English. Hence, it seems that the general atmosphere and communication was positive and free of problems, but there was also some controversy that was perhaps caused by linguistic differences.

These findings showed some similarities with the observations in Jenkinsø(2007) ELF attitudes study. This was the case with the influence of standard language ideology seen in the attitudes and comments, for example, in the recall of the Spanish participant.

According to Jenkins' (2007: 188) survey, NS accent was most preferred and highly valued in all respects and the NNS accents that are closest to NS, such as Swedish-English, were the least non-preferred. Similarly, *light*, and *not heavy*, accents were preferred by the participants. However, I would argue that accent did not play as important role for the participant's as in Jenkins study which studied language teachers' attitudes, since approximately half of the participants did not find any accents easier than others.

4.7 Attitudes to native-speakers of English

This section included four statements and an open item. The items were addressed to participants who took part in work camp where there were also native speakers of English present. The section opened with item 31, *Were there native speakers of English in the camp?* According to the answers that are seen in Figure 15 40% of the participants had taken part in a camp where there was also native speakers.

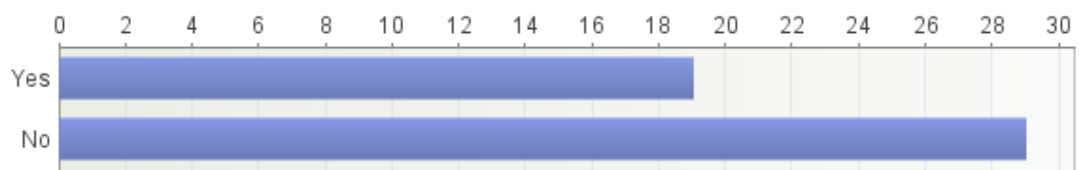


Figure 15. Were there native speakers of English in the camp?

Item 32 included one statement in which I inquired whether the participants found a difference in speaking English with a native or non-native speaker. 53% of the respondents answered that they felt different when talking to a NS.

Table 12. Interaction with native speakers. 1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= neither agree nor disagree 4=disagree 5 = strongly disagree. Number of respondents: 19

	1	2	3	4	5
I felt different when talking to a native speaker of English, compared to talking to a non-native speaker.	4	6	3	4	2

Item 33. The statement was followed by an open question: *In what way did you feel different when talking to a native speaker of English?* This open item gathered ten (10)

commentaries. According to the answers the participants made an effort and paid attention to the way they spoke when they were talking with a NS. In addition, there were mentions of feeling unsure and afraid of making mistakes.

(8) When you are talking with a non-native speaker, if you don't understand something, he explains it to you with other common words. But a native speaker is not used to do this explanation, so it's difficult to him sometimes to find simple or common words to describe what he's talking about.

The comment above is an intriguing example of what NNS consider to be different in the interaction with NS from interacting with NNS: according to the participants NS cannot rephrase their comments as well as NNS. On the basis of the comment, one could suggest that the *common words*, which seem to relate to vocabulary taught to L2 learners of English, are not perhaps actually that commonly used by NSs, and also that NS have not the same accommodation skills as ELF users. One participant also pointed out that NS and NNS have different accents and they are using different words and phrases. Thus, s/he summoned the differences of native English and ELF.

Interestingly, one participant recalled that the communication with the NS was easier, since that person had no problems with vocabulary and, as a result, there were no comprehension problems. The comment was, however, one of a kind and the majority of the commentators (70%) recalled that they wanted to make an extra effort while they were speaking to the NS or that they felt more insecure talking to a NS than a NNS. However, for example one participant commented that s/he realised quite quickly that it didn't matter if a person did not speak *correct* English to a NS. One respondent recalled that s/he regarded interactions with NS as lessons and paid attention to the NS speakers in order to learn new phrases and words.

Item 34. Besides the statement 32 and the open item 33, the same issue was addressed in three additional statements. This was done in order to get a complete picture of the NS-NNS communication. Similarly as in the items above, according to the participants' answers to these statements, NS-NNS interaction was different from NNS-NNS interaction.

The answers to these statements differ only slightly from those given to item 32. Although 42% of the participants recalled that they felt inferior when talking to a NS,

52% suggested that they actually felt comfortable when they were speaking with native speakers. The number of participants who felt a difference if they were speaking with a native speaker was smaller than in item 32, in which the statements was: *I felt different when talking to a native speaker of English, compared to talking to a non-native speaker*. According to the answers to the statement in this item, *it made no difference to me whether I was speaking English with native or non-native speakers*, only 37% of the participants reported that it made a difference whether they were speaking with a NS or NNS whereas in item 32. The figure was somewhat larger, 53%. This suggests that the wording used in the items had, in fact, affected their answers and the figure closest to the reality is somewhere in between these statements: that is the mean value 45%.

Table 13. Interaction with NS 1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= neither agree nor disagree 4=disagree 5 = strongly disagree. Number of respondents: 19

	1	2	3	4	5
With respect to my English language use, I saw myself as inferior to native speakers.	2	6	3	6	2
I felt comfortable speaking English with native speakers.	4	6	6	3	0
It made no difference to me whether I was speaking English with native or non-native speakers.	3	6	3	6	1

4.8. Experiences of ELF and intercultural communication

At the end of the survey the respondents were given an opportunity to comment on the issues discussed in the survey. This final part included six items that focused on the participants' experiences of the communication in the camp, and especially its intercultural aspects. Five of the items were open questions. In addition, there was one item in which, on a scale of five, the respondents were asked to evaluate the successfulness of the communication in the camp. I will discuss the items first one by one before summarizing my findings.

Item 35. The first of the items, 35 included the question, *Were the experiences positive*

or negative and in what ways? As an item this was a compulsory part of the questionnaire. Almost all (46) respondents, except two (2), found their experience positive. Many participants commented that the reason why their experience was so positive was that they had improved their language skills, had had a possibility to speak and practise speaking English and that the successfulness of the communication had surprised them. Increasing cultural awareness and open-mindedness were also pointed out by the respondents. According to these comments, the atmosphere in the camps was a positive one, and, as a result, there was a relaxed and laid-back atmosphere in which it was alright to make mistakes. For them, English was a means of encountering other cultures.

Nevertheless, there were two exceptions from the positive comments that need to be mentioned. One participant commented only that s/he had *expected better English. Not everybody spoke at least a little bit*. Another participant did not find the camp very positive, since s/he felt that, due to her/his less advanced English skills, s/he was put down and not taken as seriously as the participants with more fluent English skills. These two comments are related to the same topic, but these two comments are related to the same topic, but from the opposite perspectives; if a person cannot interact and express themselves or be understood, it causes frustration. Fortunately, these comments were exceptions, but there's no denying, that these kind of experiences were not completely absent.

However, the majority of the commentators have found joy in learning that there are different English languages and accents and that, despite them, people are still able to communicate fluently. One noticeable detail in the comments was that few of the descriptions included references to *good* and *correct English* - meaning, native English. The participants had noticed that communication can be successful although one is not speaking *proper English*. Thus, native English was the yardstick for them, but it is also a positive sign that the respondents noticed that fluency in communication does not have to do with the ability to speak like a native speaker. Below, comment 9 crystallizes what is needed in successful ELF interaction.

(9) [...] I realised that you can say whatever you want with few words (and good will)

Item 36. *How did it feel to communicate with people with various cultural backgrounds?* This was also a compulsory item. All the comments (48) included positive or neutral adjectives or phrases. The participants described the camp most often with the words *great*, *interesting*, *normal* or *enriching*. Although most answers were short, including only one short phrase or a single word, there were a few participants who elaborated a little more, such as in the example below. Difficulties were mentioned again by two (2) participants, but in these comments difficulties did not seem to constitute any real problems.

(10) Good experience, we learned a lot about different ways of life in foreign countries. I was surprised that the language was no barrier at all, we understood each other more or less and we had a great time.

My aim with this item was to gather perceptions of the camps communication from the perspective of intercultural communication, but, instead, the comments were connected to the English language. This was understandable, as the focus of this survey was on English as a lingua franca. For example, one participant pointed out that the English language was the means for them to learn about each other's cultures and home countries. A number of commentators had thought that, due to linguistic and cultural differences, their communication would have been difficult, but its easiness had actually surprised them. Furthermore, the camp was seen by one participant as a *comfortable* venue for speaking English, since almost everybody (all the NNSs) were in the same situation as they were not speaking their mother tongue. Below there is a comment which shows that this participant had become aware of ELF and Standard English, that one can state to speak fluent English when they are able to do so especially with people with various linguistic backgrounds, not only with NS.

(11) It was so great to talk with various people because it reminds me that English is not only for native speakers but for global people. I realized that I could say my English is good only if I could communicate with any people from all over the world without big problems. In that view, I learned many things from those experiences of the camp.

Item 37. In this item the participants could assess how they found the communication in the camp. The question they needed to answer was: *Which grade would you give to how successful the communication between the participants in the camp was on the whole?* The figure below shows the participants' answers. As we can see, a clear majority of the participants graded the communications very high: 92% as very successful or perfect. This high percentage could be foretold already from the positive ways in which the

majority of the participants had described the interactions in the camps.

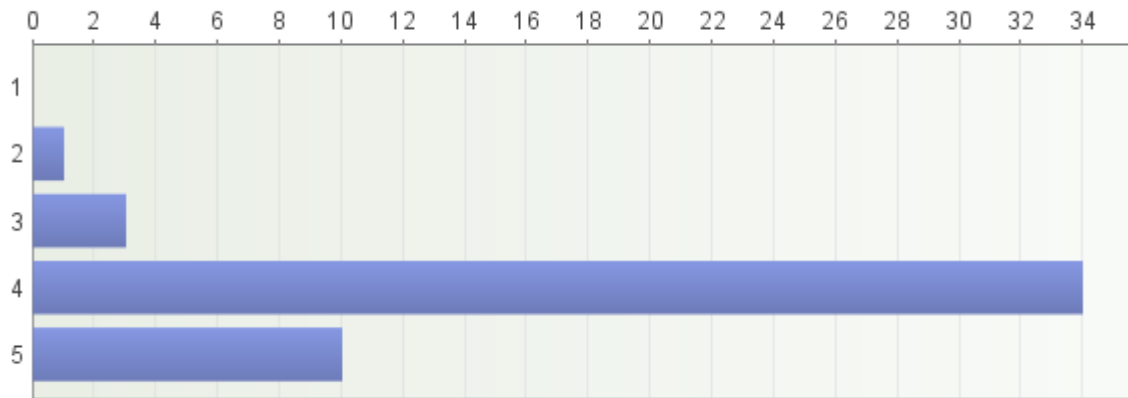


Figure 16. Which grade would you give to how successful the communication between the participants in the camp was on the whole? The scale: 1 unsuccessful - 5 perfect

Item 38. The question here was *Have you any examples you remember especially well from the camp concerning intercultural communication?* It was answered by 25 participants. On the basis of their answers it seems that the work camps had been a venue for cultural learning and also for debating. The participants recalled learning about each other's cultures, debating and discussing politics, history and cuisine. In addition, they taught and learned something of each other's languages, although also have come across situations in the camps where there had been no common language, but with the help of body language and gestures the participants were able to communicate successfully. One respondent summarized it the following way:

(11) Sometimes gestures make more sense than trying to say it in words

Item 39. The open item *Do you have any examples concerning the use of English?* was answered by 15 participants. The comments did not give any new insights, but were in line with comments and answers to the previous items. In their comments the participants described the use of English, accommodation, improvement of language skills, improved confidence, gestures, problems and help of other languages. In addition, some participant brought out again the fact that English was the only language they used in the camp.

Item 40. Finally, the survey included an open item in which the participants could comment on anything they wanted to, the question was: *Is there anything else you would like to comment on?* This final item triggered nine (9) comments, most of which included similar points that had already been made in previous items of the survey. There was also some criticism in two of the comments. One participant criticised the language teaching of his/her home country, since the vocabulary that is taught there had been unnecessary difficult in comparison with how people actually use English. Cultural differences were greater than the participant had expected, and there seems to have been some disputes about politics and the EU. For example, a Spanish participant commented that s/he found it rude that the Finns s/he met were constantly commenting to him/her on how the EU was giving money to Spain. In addition, one participant hoped that people would have better language skills, so that the communication could be *better and much more participative*. Moreover, two participants pointed out that communication skills, good will and some vocabulary were more important than refined language skills, although for a more fulfilling conversation and better comprehension grammar and pronunciation would be useful.

All in all, the comments in this final section of the survey summoned many themes that were present already in the first parts of the results. What was seen as important by the respondents was the capacity to take into account the fellow participants' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and to accommodate one's talk according to those, although the cultural differences were not as large as the participants had thought beforehand. Communicating was fluent for the majority and they regarded the work camp as a very positive experience. Although most of them still compared their English with native speaker English and strove for native-likeness and correctness, there were signs of change as some respondents pointed out the difference in the communication in the camp and the English they had learned at school. In other words, they had become aware of the difference between ELF and Standard English.

Yet, many of the participants saw their English use as language learning, instead of considering it as a means of communicating. In addition, they discussed their English in terms of standard language ideology, although their experience was very positive.

Perhaps after a few similar experiences and the possible insecurity, their dislike of their own accent and their unfavourable comparisons to native English could gradually diminish?

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

A typical situation in which English is used as a lingua franca takes "place among individuals who have never met before and who interact on an ad hoc basis for a limited period of time, usually for one specific purpose and typically they will not meet again after the interaction has come to an end" (Meierkord 2012: 153). An excellent example of this is the context of this study - voluntary work camps that are arranged also in Finland. Most volunteers in these camps are young adults who come from all around the world to work for a non-profit organisation, taking part in some short-term project. The camps are often arranged outside towns and accommodation is a dormitory-like arrangement. Therefore, during the two week-periods the participants are intensively in contact with each other. The language most commonly used for communicating in these camps is English.

I have my own experience of such international voluntary work camps, and the idea of conducting the present study came to my mind during one of the camps in 2012: I became interested in finding out how the users of ELF perceived their own and others' language use in the context of a camp. Interestingly, I could not find any previous studies on ELF made in the context of voluntary work, which made the present study even more intriguing. The explicit research questions in this study I formulated as follows: *What kind of attitudes the participants have on their own and others' communication in English? How do the camp members themselves experience the use of English as a lingua franca during their stay in the work camp?* Especially the following topics were addressed: accommodation, code-switching, accent, problems in communication and NS (native speaker) - NNS (non-native speaker) interaction.

The group of people who provided me with the data for my study consisted of 48 young adults who attended a work camp or a volunteer work project in Finland in 2012. This study of the participants' attitudes towards intercultural ELF interaction drew eclectically from a number of research paradigms, of which the most significant were previous ELF attitude studies. I also studied the status of the English language in Europa and Asia and familiarized myself with the volunteer work camp tradition. As the research done under the EFL paradigm is very broad, for the purposes of my study I decided to concentrate on looking at previous ELF pragmatics studies in order to find

out what are the typical features of ELF that research has found out. However, the most important research literature for me was provided by previous ELF attitudes studies. I viewed attitudes as the participants evaluative and affective reactions to the issues studied, focusing on the English language and its use as a lingua franca. In order to find out about the ELF attitudes of the work camp participants, I conducted a survey using a questionnaire as the tool for gathering my data.

According to the survey, the volunteers were a group of young adults, almost all under 27, with different cultural and national backgrounds and, according to their self-evaluations, with varying levels of language skills. Nevertheless, most of them reported on being exposed to English in their everyday life on a weekly basis, mainly through reading or listening. According to their answers, there were some dominant attitudes that were shared by a clear majority: English was not seen as weakening the status of the respondent's own first language and it was regarded as a very useful language. In addition, fluency was seen as more important than sounding native like, and grammatically correct language use was regarded very important in their own speech. In addition, over half of the participants also made an effort to speak like NS of English.

English was the most important language for the respondents, and one fifth of the participants recalled that they spoke only English during the camp. According to their answers, the use of some other language than English seems to have been marked: when that happened, it always had a special purpose. It is noteworthy that several participants pointed out that languages other than English were not used in the presence of people who did not speak that language. The use of other languages than English was somewhat less frequent than expected, although there were a few mentions of similar ways of making use of the multilingualism of the group as Kolocsai (2009: 41) reported on in her study. The participants also made an effort to improve their foreign languages with each other or learned something of a new foreign language from each other. However, the results indicate clearly that by far the most frequently used language in the camps was English, and that it was used all the time, in all situations.

As I mentioned above, for the participants their own language use, correctness and

grammar were important. However, their attitudes were different when the issues addressed were situated in the camp context. Their answers indicate that in the camp context correctness and grammar were not as important as in the general context. I see it as a positive sign that in actual ELF interaction correct grammar does not seem to play as an important role as fluent and successful communication which depends on other factors, such as accommodation. It seems that accommodation was, in fact, something that the participants used consciously. The majority of the participants recalled that they adjusted their communication, for instance, by repeating or rephrasing in order to help the others to understand them better. Code-switching was less frequent, but still almost half of the respondents pointed out that they had switched languages during conversation.

There was a difference in how the participants responded to their own language use and in how they assessed their interlocutors' speech and communication: they evaluated their own speech more strictly. In other words, the participants were committed to L1 English and standard language ideology when their own language use was concerned, but they were tolerant of other people's use of ELF. This was similar to findings of previous ELF studies, such as Zeiss (2010) and Toth (2010).

Interestingly, the statement concerning the participants' own accent divided the respondents into three groups: approximately one third disliked their own accent, one third did not take a stand, and one third liked their English accent. The participants' attitudes seem to include influences of standard language ideology, as for example the majority considered it very important to speak grammatically correct language and over half of them reported making an effort to use English like a native speaker. In addition, approximately half of the NNS participants regarded the interaction with NS in the camps as different from the ELF communication: they paid more attention to how they spoke and avoided making mistakes.

What is also noticeable is how the participants' descriptions of ELF are done in comparison to L1 English. They described their experiences of accommodation in terms of *simple* English or comment on the lack of *proper* English. However, their reactions towards NS English are mixed, for some it is the easiest to understand, for others it is

more difficult to understand, yet most of them would like to speak like a native speaker, as, for them, it is the *correct* English.

Interestingly, in many of the participants' answers the development of mutual understanding was either explicitly mentioned or presented implicitly. This development is most certainly due to a combination of different factors, such as the improvement of language skills via practice, accommodation and fixed errors in communication. Errors, mistakes and other possible problems in communication are forcing the interlocutors to make an effort that finally results in the course of time in a fluent and natural intercultural communication in English.

Overall, English proficiency seemed to be regarded as something important and highly valued. When I asked the participants for general opinions about their experience in the camp, there were many comments in which the improvement in English skills was mentioned as the reason that made the experience positive. The participants' communication in the camp was problem-free for the majority, their English skills improved during their camp and they were satisfied with the way they could communicate in ELF in the work camp. Interestingly, over half of the participants responded that they took part in the camp in order to improve their language skills. The participants' answers indicate a lack of problems and successfulness of ELF interaction in the camps. The respondents noticed that since the world is increasingly connected through the internet, humour and youth culture are also increasingly global and this has probably been one of the important factors in why the interaction in the camp has been so fluent.

A few words about the choice of method are also in order here, since I decided to produce a survey study which is perhaps not the ideal option for a language attitude study, for example Dörnyei (2007: 103) points out that even the small differences in wording can produce significant differences when assessing attitudes. However, in my study I was able to collect data from as many participants as possible (48 participants) and get a wide perspective to the issue, although the data were not as detailed as it could have been if I had collected them with the help of interviews. Nevertheless, this survey

offers a great deal of information on language attitudes and the way in which English is used as a lingua franca in voluntary work camps. At the same time, as the survey included a broad variety of topics, it has only scratched the surface of attitudes in ELF interaction. I may indeed have been too eager to include a variety of topics, but, on the other hand, in this way I was able to point out many topics that can perhaps be researched in a more focused way in the future.

That said, it was inspiring to study the volunteers' attitudes and experiences. The camp context was undoubtedly an example of a common type of English as a lingua franca interaction: people who have not met before spend a short period of time together in business or leisure and have no formal linguistic educational background. It is understandable that in previous studies the research focus has been on academia and business, but ELF research needs to be conducted also outside auditoriums and office buildings. In this study the research was taken to the Finnish countryside and answers gathered from participants from a range of contexts in the world, from South Korea to Serbia.

Finally, I wish to suggest that more research is needed to capture the sociolinguistic practices and the volunteers' use of languages that take place in highly intercultural projects that are similar to the camps that I studied. For example, an ethnographic study on the participants' ELF accommodation would be an interesting topic. Although my study has been a small scale project, my results have, however, confirmed the view that many ELF scholars have stood for: ELF interaction is not characterized by problems. On the contrary, according to the survey, the majority of the volunteers have been very excited and pleased after their experience, having fluently communicated in English in an intercultural atmosphere. To the volunteer work organisers this proves that the work camps are an excellent concept, a means for people from around the world to gather positive experiences of how well people from around get along and how they are able to form a tight group via ELF interaction.

Finally, it seems that volunteers' in general had quite traditional views on the English language: they were critical towards their own language use and especially accent and wanted to speak use correct grammar and strove for native-likeness. However, the way in which they describe their experiences in the camp were more relaxed and less strict

about their own and other's accents. Although there were some signs of strong favourable attitudes towards *proper* English, for the majority the work camp experience showed them that success in communication is possible without perfect language skills, or, as one respondent put it, *you don't need to speak a perfect english to have fun.*

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APPENDIX: THE SURVEY

The use of English as a lingua franca in intercultural communication

PART 1 - Background

Age: *

years

Nationality: *

Sex: *

- Male
 Female

Occupation: *

- Studying
 Working
 Other

What is/are your first language/s? *

First language refers to your mother tongue, or if you are bilingual/multilingual you have two or more mother tongues.

Do you speak any foreign languages?

L2 = second language/foreign language, L3 = third language/second foreign language and so on

L2

L3

L4

L5

L6

L7

To what degree you speak these languages? *

1= basic, 5= almost like a native speaker

	1	2	3	4	5
L2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
L3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
L4	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
L5	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
L6	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
L7	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How many times have you participated in volunteer camps besides the camp in Finland in 2012? *

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 or more

Have you got some other similar experiences of intercultural communication such as being an exchange student? *

No

Yes, what kind of experiences?

How often do you use English in your everyday life (including both freetime and work/studies)? *

More than 4 times per week 3-4 times per week 1-2 times per week Less than once per week

Writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Speaking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reading	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Listening	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PART 2

General opinions

Please indicate your agreement on the following statements *

1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= neither agree or disagree 4=disagree 5 = strongly disagree

	1	2	3	4	5
I make an effort to use English like a native speaker.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I consider myself a user of English rather than a learner of English.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
English is a very useful language.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is very important for me to speak grammatically correct English.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People should learn to speak English by using the British or American accents as closely as possible.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is more important to be able to speak fluently than to sound native-like.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like my own accent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The high status of English language devaluates my mother tongue.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important for me to use English idioms/sayings.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
For me the most important thing is that people understand what I say - correct grammar and pronunciation are secondary issues.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My teachers thought it was important to follow native speaker models as closely as possible and to try to speak like native speakers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

About the camp

How long did the work camp/volunteer project last? *

1-2 weeks

3-6 weeks

Accommodation: *

- At the project
- In a host family

Your experiences during the camp

Which languages you used (in addition to English) during the camp? *

- In which situations (freetime/work/with fellow native speakers/other)?
- Which language you used the most?

In which situations you spoke in English? *

Using English and other languages in the camp

Please indicate your agreement on the following statements: *

1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= neither agree or disagree 4=disagree 5 = strongly disagree

	1	2	3	4	5
Language caused no problems in the camp.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English was the most important language in the camp.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would have liked to use other languages more than English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
During the camp, I preferred using English over other languages.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I took part in the work camp because I wanted to improve my language skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It was hard to make jokes in English in the camp.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I was unsatisfied with my English skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

My English skills improved during the camp.

⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋

I understood what the others were saying without any difficulties.

⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋

Comments or examples?

e.g. about the use of humour or joking during the camp

	5
	6

Using English and other languages in the camp

Please indicate your agreement on the following statements: *

1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= neither agree or disagree 4=disagree 5 = strongly disagree

It was difficult for me to express politeness in English.

1 2 3 4 5

⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋

The way I talked in the camp was different from the English I learnt at school.

⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋

I paid a lot of attention to linguistic correctness and precision when I spoke English.

⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋

When speaking with fellow non-native speakers, I was bothered by their linguistic errors and the varying levels of their skills in English.

⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋

My first language influenced my English use and communication during the camp.

⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋

I adjusted my communication (e.g. repeated, rephrased) to help the others to understand me

⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋

I switched languages during conversations. (language switching = saying a word or a phrase in one language while talking in another language

⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋

Comments or examples of how you adjusted your communication?

a	5
	6

If you switched languages during conversations, can you identify the reasons why you did so?

(e.g. topic/situation/other speaker/language skills)

a

5

6

Language skills and different ways of communicating

Please indicate your agreement on the following statements *

1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= neither agree or disagree 4=disagree 5 = strongly disagree

	1	2	3	4	5
We formed a close group during the camp.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The language skills of the participants had an effect on their social status on the the camp.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cultural differences made communication difficult.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Language skills did not play a role in the communication during the camp, it was was more about "chemistry" between people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People who spoke fluent English had a higher status in the camp than the ones who did not speak fluent English.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Due to differences in our English skills we did not form a close-knit group in the the camp.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I used techinal suppor, e.g. smartphones in order to make communicating with my fellow participants easier.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I paid attention to cultural differences between participants while we were communicating with each other.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gestures and body language were important ways of communicating in the camp.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments or examples?

e.g. of the use of technical support, cultural differences or body language and gestures

5

6

Problems in communication

Please indicate your agreement on the following statements *

1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= neither agree or disagree 4=disagree 5 = strongly disagree

1 2 3 4 5

Cultural differences in communication caused problems or misunderstandings in the camp.

⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋

If yes, can you give examples?

	5
	6

* *

1 2 3 4 5

I found it difficult to get to know new people and tell them about myself if I needed to do it in English.

⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋

If yes, what caused problems for you?

	5
	6

* *

1 2 3 4 5

I had some problems in understanding what the others were saying in English.

⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋ ⌋

If yes, how did you try to manage these situations?
(asked/ did nothing and figured out by yourself/something else)

	5
	6

Accent

Please indicate your agreement on the following statements *

1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= neither agree or disagree 4=disagree 5 = strongly disagree

1 2 3 4 5

Some people had accents which were difficult to understand.

When somebody spoke English with a strong non-native speaker accent, I couldn't take their arguments seriously.

Did you find it easier to talk to people with a particular accent in English? If yes, who and why? *

Were there native speakers of English in the camp? *

- Yes
- No

Native speakers of English

Please indicate your agreement on the following statements *

1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= neither agree or disagree 4=disagree 5 = strongly disagree

1 2 3 4 5

I felt different when talking to a native speaker of English, compared to talking talking to a non-native speaker.

If yes, in what way did you feel different?

* *

1 2 3 4 5

With respect to my English language use, I saw myself as inferior to native speakers.

I felt comfortable speaking English with native speakers.

It made no difference to me whether I was speaking English with native or non-native speakers.

Your experiences of the communication on the camp

Were the experiences positive or negative and in what ways? *

	5
	6

How did it feel to communicate with people with various cultural backgrounds? *

	5
	6

Which grade would you give to how successful the communication between the participants in the camp was on the whole? The scale is 1 unsuccessful - 5 perfect *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Final questions

Have you any examples you remember especially well from the camp concerning intercultural communication? *

	5
	6

Do you have any examples concerning the use of English? *

Is there anything else you would like to comment on? *

If you are interested in participating in an e-mail or Skype interview which will possibly be arranged during December, please write your email address here. *

Yes

No

