

How we teach English vocabulary inside the classroom:  
Teacher perspectives and vocabulary from the outside

Master's Thesis

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<p>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</p> <p>Kielen opiskelussa sanaston oppiminen on yksi kivijalka, jolle kielitaitoa lähdetään rakentamaan. Sanaston opiskeluun vaikuttavat tavoitteiden ja oppijan lisäksi myös se tapa, millä sanastoa opetetaan. Sanastoa ei opi pelkästään luokasta vaan varsinkin nykyaikana sanastoa tulee luokkaan paljon myös luokan ulkopuolelta monista eri lähteistä.</p> <p>Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli saada selville miten suomalaiset englannin opettajat näkevät sanaston opettamisen suhteessa luokan ulkopuolelta tulevaan sanastoon. Tutkimus kuvaa millaisena kyseiset opettajat näkevät sanaston opettamisen yleisellä tasolla ja antaa näille opettajille mahdollisuuden reflektoida omaa sanaston opetustaan. Tutkimukseen osallistui yhdeksän englannin opettajaa eri koulutusasteilta. Tutkimusmenetelmänä käytettiin haastattelua, jonka jälkeen aineisto litteroitiin ja analysoitiin kategorisoiden. Kategoriat nousivat pääasiassa haastattelukysymysten pohjalta, mutta tuloksia tulkittaessa pyrittiin ottamaan huomioon myös muiden haastattelukysymysten yhteydessä tulleet vastaukset.</p> <p>Tutkimustulosten perusteella suomalaiset englannin opettajat opettavat sanastoa pääosin eksplisiittisesti ja sanan määrittelyn yhteydessä painottavat sanan merkitystä, mikä näkyy myös opetuksessa. Sanaston oppiminen tapahtuu heidän mielestään parhaiten luokassa vaikkakin luokan ulkopuolelta voi myös sanastoa oppia. Luokan ulkopuolelta tulevaa sanastoa ei välttämättä osata tai haluta hyödyntää luokassa.</p> <p>Sanaston oppimisen sosiaalinen puoli jäi suomalaisilta englannin opettajilta hieman pimentoon vaikka he painottivat kommunikatiivisuutta sanaston opetuksessaan muuten. Merkittäviä eroja eri asteilta tulevien opettajien tai vaihtelevan opetuskokemuksen määrän kanssa ei löytynyt. Tulevaisuudessa voisi olla hyödyllistä ottaa sosiaalisen ympäristön tuomat mahdollisuudet ja luokan ulkopuolinen sanasto huomioon sanaston opetuksessa. Olisi mielenkiintoista nähdä, millaisia vaikutuksia sosiaalisen ympäristön huomioon ottamisella on sanaston oppimisen ja opettamisen kannalta niin oppilaiden kuin opettajien näkökulmasta. Lisäksi jatkotutkimukset uuden opetussuunnitelman vaikutuksista sanaston opettamiseen toisivat uutta näkökulmaa sanaston opettamisen tutkimukselle.</p>	
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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Some believe that certain words, especially names, have some kind of magical powers. For example, in Borneo the name of sick child is changed due to belief that it scares away the spirits making the child sick. In some other cultures it is regarded an offence to use a particular name. (Beauer 1998). Undoubtedly, words do possess power although the magicality of those powers can be questioned. The power of words comes from the message they convey and when one wants to learn a language, learning vocabulary of that particular language is essential. However, every language learner knows that learning such a large entity as a vocabulary of language, or at least a part of it, requires a lot of effort and time. A great help in this enormous task are the teachers of those learners. As language experts, teachers can provide their students various opportunities to learn words both explicitly and incidentally. Moreover, as the teachers know, successful vocabulary learning requires continuous actions from the learner in and outside of the classroom and the teachers should be able to inspire their students to continue learning outside of the classroom. While learners themselves are the main actors in their own vocabulary learning, the teachers play a central role in it too.

The exact functions of the human brain remain a mystery also from the part of vocabulary acquisition. However, they can be studied through following linguistic behaviour and language development (McCarthy 1990:34) together with observing deviation in usual language development. Learning a language and its vocabulary depends on various learner characteristics, such as the actual learning environment, learner's L1 and use of vocabulary learning strategies. A teacher familiarises oneself with these different constraints while designing vocabulary section of one's course. Like learners, different teachers have different preferences while teaching vocabulary. With continuously changing classroom circumstances, the teacher may easily resort to the same teaching method or technique and forget the numerous alternatives. One goal of the present study was to provide an opportunity for Finnish teachers of English to reflect on what they actually do while teaching vocabulary. Interesting to see is also how Finnish teachers of English use vocabulary teaching strategies. Vocabulary learning strategies (VTSs) have been the interest of many studies lately while VTSs have been left in the dark. Therefore, small part of the present study is dedicated towards investigating them.



What is more, because of the incremental nature of vocabulary learning, namely it may or may not happen when encountering the word for the first time and that it may shift backwards (Gass et al. 2013:212), it has to continue outside the classroom walls too. Moreover, due to the immense size of vocabulary, the vocabulary learned initially outside the classroom, is bound to find one's way inside. The question is how teachers react to this new vocabulary with which they might be completely unfamiliar. König (2013) emphasises the significance of such connection in asserting the learners' motivation to study vocabulary both in and outside the classroom. The present study's main aim is to shed some light upon how Finnish teachers of English tackle this issue in their classrooms.

The data the present study used consisted of 9 interviews of Finnish teachers of English. As the views of these teachers were at the centre of the present study and as interviews are often used to study opinions in more detail, interviewing was chosen as the data collection method. The participating teachers had varying amount of teaching experience and were teaching at different levels of education. All teachers were formally competent to teach English in Finland. After the collection of data, the interviews were transcribed and analysed using content analysis.

The present study begins with introducing the basics of word definition and word knowledge. Next, it discusses the learning of vocabulary in regards to memory and mental lexicon, nature of learning new vocabulary, vocabulary learning strategies and general learner characteristics affecting vocabulary learning. Finally, the background section explores the goals of vocabulary teaching and what teachers might rely on while teaching vocabulary. Following the background chapters, in chapter 5, the research questions and methods together with data analysis are described in detail. The results are both presented and discussed in chapter 7 after which the present study concludes with a brief summary of results and suggestions for further research in chapter 8.

## 2 DEFINING WORDS AND WORD KNOWLEDGE

The concept of a word is in some sense familiar to everyone and as Carter (1998: 20) puts it, “Everyone knows what a *word* is.” Over the years, the definition of a word has proven to be a difficult task. Researchers have not been able to agree on one single definition and have offered multiple ways to define it. However, one certainly can say that without words there is no communication and without communication it is questionable whether there is language. With Singleton’s (2000:2) words: “- - words are vital to linguistic communication, and without them not much can be conveyed.” Even more complex a concept is the knowing a word as one can as there are endless amount of learner characteristics to be considered together with different word definitions and so on. This chapter and its subsections attempt to shed some light upon these issues before delving into the intriguing subject of acquiring lexical knowledge.

### 2.1 Definition of a word

There are various ways to defining a word. One could say that it has to carry meaning and some other would argue that a word is just a sequence of letters. It is true that words consist of letter sequences and carry meaning but these rules do not necessarily apply to every word or every language in the world. So, the definition of the word ‘word’ is not as simple as it may seem at first. The present study is examining the teaching of vocabulary and knowing how to define a word and what is meant by knowing one, is useful for teachers’ planning purposes (Thornbury 2007). The next section introduces some of the principles based on which one can define a word.

When asked to define a word, one may intuitively say that it is something written and bounded by spaces. According to Carter (1998:4), a word indeed is a sequence of letters that is bound by spaces or punctuation marks on either side. What is more, word has a limited amount of hyphens or other similar characteristics (Carter 1998:4). However, this definition does not apply to all languages but works well with the Roman and Cyrillic alphabetical systems (Singleton 2000:6). There are writing systems in the world that “do not consistently mark word-boundaries” (e.g. Chinese and Japanese) and moreover, languages that have not ever been written down (e.g. indigenous languages of the Americas) (Singleton 2000:7). Singleton (2000:7) argues also that spoken language has been around far longer than written, so it is not even relevant to restrict the definition of words orthographically. Furthermore, the orthographic definition of letter sequences and spaces neglects to the issue of polysemy – that is to say that

a single word form, such as *fair*, has multiple meanings (Carter 1998:5) or explain why some words have different grammatical functions (Pavičić Takač 2008:5). The focus of orthographic definition is on the formal aspects of a word and does not take different meanings and functions of the word into account and thus, additional means to defining a word are needed.

While the orthographic definition of a word is concerned with letters and written language, the phonetic one describes the way words sound (Singleton 2000:7). Singleton (2000:7) continues that phonologically “words are separated from each other in speech by pauses”. This definition is, however, quite limited in value as in speech, pauses are rarely clearly marked and we do not normally pause our speech. Or if we do, we tend to fuse two or more word into one (e.g. *I do not know* → *I dunno*). Carter (1998:5) supports this view by stating that spaces in speech can also occur in the middle of an orthographic word, which makes it even harder to separate one word from another.

However, sounds can provide a way of defining words. Phonologically a word in English has only one single stressed syllable (Carter 1998, Singleton 2000) and this syllable may occur in various positions (e.g. *renew*, *renewable*, *renewability*) (Singleton 2000:7). One problem with this definition is that some words do not receive stress in normal circumstances (e.g. *by*, *if*, *them*) (Carter 1998). By this definition, compound words such as *bus conductor* would be regarded one word. Phonological definition is also problematic because of its tendency to be specific to a certain language or language-type (Singleton 2000:8). For example, the above given definition of one stressed syllable per word concerns only the English language and does not necessarily apply to other languages. Another example, presented by Singleton (2000), is the vowel-harmony in Finnish, Turkish, Hungarian, Estonian, which is unusual in other languages. Similarly to orthography, the phonetic or phonological way of defining a word provides a rather one-sided definition of a word.

One important aspect to defining a word is its meaning. Meaning or meanings of a word are studied by semantics and by this definition, a word is a freestanding meaningful unit of language that has to have at least one free morpheme. (McCarthy 1994). This view is supported by Carter (1998:5) as he describes word as “the minimum meaningful unit of language.” Meaning is regarded as “the relationship between the linguistic sign and what it denotes outside the language” (Pavičić Takač 2008:5). We have to remember that while words are used to signal meanings, people are the actual source of these meanings (Singleton 2000:6). A word is built of smaller units of meaning, morphemes, and furthermore, can be classified as either free

or bound depending on whether or not they can stand on their own (Carter 1998). For example, the word *unclear* has two morphemes: bound morpheme *un-* and free morpheme *clear*. *Un-* is not a word that has meaning standing on its own while *clear* does. These different types of morphemes are called roots and non-roots (Carter 1998). However, the semantic approach is not flawless and few of the issues raised from it are discussed in the next paragraph.

The semantic definition of a word makes it possible for one to separate words that have identical orthographic structure but have different meaning. This is called polysemy. (Carter 1998). Polysemy might prove a problem for language learners and other users since it requires quite a lot of effort to be able to determine which meaning is the correct one in a specific context. For example, if one checks the word *line* on Oxford Dictionary (2015), one will find over ten different definitions for it (e.g. long thin mark, division, row of people/things) for it. Some people think first “a long thin mark” when they think of *line* and some a *line* of people. What can also be problematic about the semantic approach, is that there are words that have two roots and appear together form one meaning (e.g. *bus conductor*, *school teacher*), namely compound words (Singleton 2000). It is debatable whether or not compound words illustrate one or multiple words. Appearing together they form one meaning (e.g. *bus conductor* → the person that drives a bus) but *bus* and *conductor* are also words or roots, according to Carter (1998), with meaning also on their own.

In addition, the fact that not all words carry meaning and “the relationship between single words and particular meanings is not always quite so straightforward.” (Singleton 2000:8) might prove problematic. For example, determining the meaning of *but* and *if* is quite difficult without knowing context and their different functions. *But* and *if* have grammatical function and are so called ‘grammatical’ words, whereas for example, *fair* and *line* are regarded as ‘lexical’ words, that have meaning on their own (Pavičić Takač 2008; Carter 1998). Grammatical words can also be called ‘functional’ or ‘form’ words whereas lexical words can be referred to as ‘content’ or ‘full’ words (Carter 1998, Singleton 2000). In the present study the terms grammatical and lexical words will be used. Grammatical words include words such as pronouns, articles, prepositions and conjunctions (e.g. *me*, *a*, *above*, *while*) whereas lexical words are comprised of verbs, adjectives, adverbs and nouns (e.g. *jump*, *pretty*, *truly*, *book*) (Carter 1998). Grammatical words can be described as a finite group of words because their meaning does not tend to change over time and furthermore, new grammatical words are a rarity. On the contrary, lexical words have been known to change their meaning over a period of time. (Carter 1998). Due to the possible changes in grammatical and lexical words’ meanings, Carter (1998) regards

grammatical words as closed and lexical words as open class. Regarding the issue of meaning, it might be harder to determine grammatical words' meaning without their immediate context whereas lexical words' meaning might be easier to follow. Singleton (2000) reminds us that the division between grammatical and lexical words is not unproblematic as it may be hard to distinguish what is "semantic content" – words such as *above* or *while* certainly are not empty in meaning.

What might solve some of the problems discussed above, is to refer to words as lexemes. Lexemes are abstract units of language that often are represented with uppercase letters and includes all different grammatical variants (i.e. word forms) of a word (Carter 1998). Lexeme as a term includes multiple aspects of word definition: orthographical, phonological, grammatical and semantic, and "Thus, - - covers inflections, polysemy, as well as multi-word items with different degrees of fixedness, such as compounds, phrasal verbs, and idioms." (Pavičić Takač 2008:6). For example, the lexeme BRING covers all the word forms from 'bring', 'brought', 'bringing' to 'brings'. Besides, defining a word as a lexeme gives one an opportunity to regard multi-word items as one entity (Carter 1998). That way idioms such as *to bite the dust* are regarded as one single lexeme and not four different words as it would orthographically be interpreted. Singleton (2000) differentiates between a lexeme, that is "the notion of the word as a family of forms or as an abstract unit" and word forms that are "lexeme's concrete representatives or realizations". When the present study talks about words, it is referring to lexemes.

As one can see from above, semantic way of defining a word is not very straightforward but defining words in grammatical terms is probably the most straightforward one of all the options listed in this section. The term 'positional mobility' is used to illustrate the fact that words do not have "specific places in a sentence". (Singleton 2000). As an example, Singleton (2000) uses the sentence "*The cat drowsily stretched her elegant forelegs*". One can modify the word order quite many times without losing anything essential to meaning:

*The cat stretched her elegant forelegs drowsily.*  
*Drowsily the cat stretched her elegant forelegs.*  
*Her elegant forelegs the cat drowsily stretched.*

Singleton (2000) also describes the grammatical definition of a word with the term 'internal stability'. It means that, unlike words within a sentence, morphemes do have specific places within a word. The word *subtitles* has three morphemes, *sub-*, *title* and the plural *-s*. However, *titlessub*, *titlesubs*, *subsubtitle* or *ssubtitle* are not acceptable forms of the word *subtitles*.

Singleton (2000) states that defining words as both positionally mobile and internally stable works fine across languages. Of course there are exceptions (e.g. the definite article *the* in English) of which many are grammatical words that are internally stable but quite restricted in positional mobility (Singleton 2000). So according to the grammatical way of thinking, a word is a relatively mobile item within a sentence but the order of morphemes within the word itself is not.

Words can also belong in the same word family or a lemma. Word family comprises the headword, its inflected forms and closely related derived forms (Nation 2001:8) whereas a lemma consists only of the headword or root and its most frequent regular inflections (Daller et al. 2007). A lemma includes words that can be used in the same part of speech (Nation 2001:8). For example, the lemma of *write* includes *writing*, *wrote*, *writes* but not *writer* (noun) or *written* (adjective) but the last two are included in the same word family. A problem with both of these terms is deciding which forms are included in a lemma or word family. For example, when comprising lists of words (e.g. the General Service List), one has to decide whether or not to include, for example, irregular word forms. These concepts provide one a way of making the learning burden of learners easier by reducing the number of words to be learned.

Defining a word might seem as an easy task at first but in reality it is not that straightforward. When learning new words one forms some kind of idea of words in one's mind and might shift one's mind from one definition to another depending on the context. In the context of the present study, which is exploring the ways of teaching words, it is practical to regard words as lexemes described by Pavičić Takač (2008), Carter (1998) and Singleton (2000). Meaning (or meanings) is often taught and learned simultaneously with the words orthographic and phonological form with most of its different inflections. Lexeme as a term includes not only lexical but also grammatical words. Learning also to inflect words and so, also getting to know the word's word family, is of importance but most of the time proves to be too broad of an issue in a language classroom. So, when using the term 'word', the present study is referring to lexemes, as it covers a significant part of different principles to defining a word presented in this chapter.

## 2.1 Knowing a word

Previous chapter showed that defining a word is a challenging task but maybe even more challenging, is defining when one *knows* a word. As with defining a word, there is not common consensus on what word knowledge is exactly as we cannot be sure, what the mind exactly does do when acquiring new words. Thanks to researchers like Nation (1990), Richards (1976) and Meara (1996), ‘knowing a word’ not only includes being familiar with word’s multiple meanings but is not regarded as either or situation anymore (Wolter 2009).

In his paper, Meara (1996) reviews eight assumptions made by Richards (1976) in his own paper. The eight assumptions by Richards (1976) stated that word knowledge includes knowing in which contexts to use a word, knowing what syntactic constraints and derivatives of the word are and also knowing how frequent the word is. The assumptions also included knowing the semantic value of the word together with its multiple meanings in word knowledge. Furthermore, knowing what kind association networks are attached to a particular word and knowing that native speaker’s vocabulary can grow during adulthood whereas syntax does not, are also parts of word knowledge. (Richards 1976). Richards’ (1976) assumptions represent the time of his writing and current themes of vocabulary research at that time and many gaps can be found (Meara 1996). Meara (1996) argues that Richards (1976) did not try to provide a comprehensive picture of word knowledge but it still was used to develop a model for “word knowledge framework”. (Meara 1996:3). It has major flaws and gaps (e.g. the distinction of receptive and productive knowledge is not mentioned) (Meara 1999) but provides a basis for modern vocabulary research.

Continuing from Richards (1976), Nation (1990) presents a more recent view on vocabulary knowledge which is also quite widely accepted nowadays. According to him, there are two types of word knowledge: *receptive* and *productive* that can also be called *passive* and *active* vocabulary knowledge (Nation 1990, Milton 2009). Next, the very basics of receptive and productive knowledge are presented but for further discussion about the subject, one might want to consult, for example, Melka (1997). Receptive knowledge includes listening and reading skills and it requires a learner to be able to tell what the word sounds like and to recognise it from how it looks. Furthermore, the learner is able to distinguish the word from other similar sounding/looking words. The learner can also recall the word’s meaning when meeting it and “the company it keeps”, i.e. its collocations, words that usually occur together. The learner can also explain the grammatical patterns the specific word can occur in. For

example, one knows that some words, such as *art* has no plural and that some verbs need an object (e.g. *need*). In addition, the word's frequency of occurrence in specific contexts is familiar to the learner. (Nation 1990:31-32). In McCarthy's (1990:45) words receptive knowledge is "matching spoken or written input to stored sound and orthographic patterns and their associated meanings".

Productive knowledge goes the opposite route: it transforms meanings to forms (McCarthy 1990:45). Productive knowledge consists not only of speaking and writing skills but also covers the receptive skills, listening and reading. The learner has productive knowledge of the word if he/she can pronounce, write, spell and use the word correctly and appropriately in grammatical patterns and collocations. Knowing the difference between several meanings of the word and being able to choose the right one for a specific context is also part of the productive knowledge. For example, the learner knows the difference between *line* (fishing) and *line* (agree with someone) and is able to use them correctly. (Nation 1990:32-33). The following table (Table 1) from Nation (1990) is the base for many studies on vocabulary acquisition (e.g. Oxford & Scarcella 1994; Thornbury 2007). The questions in it represent the questions the learner must be able to answer in order to be able to say he/she knows the word. Thornbury (2007:2) summarises Nation's view by listing that knowing a word is knowing the "semantic, syntactic, phonological, orthographic, morphological, cognitive, cultural and autobiographical" constraints of the word.



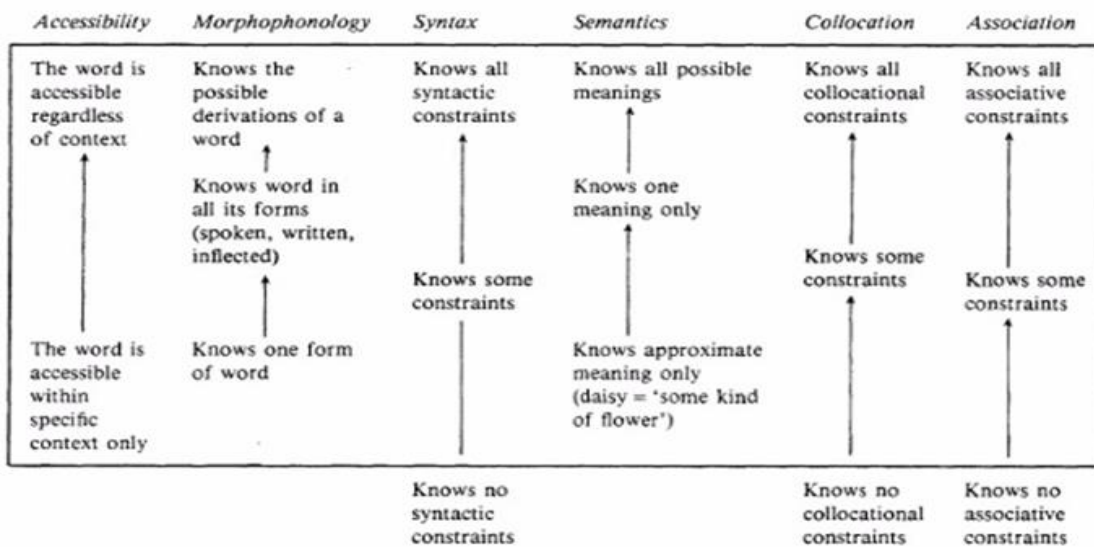
TABLE 1: Knowing a word, Nation (1990:31)

<b>Form</b>		
Spoken form	R	What does the word sound like?
	P	How is the word pronounced?
Written form	R	What does the word look like?
	P	How is the word written and spelled?
<b>Position</b>		
Grammatical patterns	R	In what patterns does the word occur?
	P	In what patterns must we use the word?
Collocations	R	What words or types of words can be expected before or after the word?
	P	What words or types of words must we use with this word?
<b>Function</b>		
Frequency	R	How common is the word?
	P	How often should the word be used?
Appropriateness	R	Where would we expect to meet this word?
	P	Where can this word be used?
<b>Meaning</b>		
Concept	R	What does the word mean?
	P	What word should be used to express this meaning?
Associations	R	What other words does this word make us think of?
	P	What other words could we use instead of this one?

McCarthy (1990) follows Nation's (1990) views. He adds to Nation's views that there are limits on how much input, i.e. new words, the mind can handle. The input providing new words for the learner (McCarthy 1990) is translated into receptive knowledge in Nation's terms and storage where new words are after meeting them and where origin, causes, co-ordinates etc. are stored is more or less the same as productive knowledge (McCarthy 1990). Storing words in the memory of a learner is discussed in more detail later on in chapter 2.2.1.

However, the distinction between passive receptive skills and active production skills is not as definitive as it might seem because one is likely expected to be able to recognise the word itself and its probable context upon hearing or reading it (Milton 2009). An interesting alternative approach to word knowledge is presented by Ringbom (1991). He agrees that lexical knowledge can be partial (Table 2) but does not make such a distinction on receptive and productive skills.

TABLE 2: Lexical knowledge, Ringbom (1991:174)

Figure 1  
Lexical knowledge

Ringbom's (1991) model represents lexical knowledge as a system that has multiple dimensions as does Nation's model. Upon meeting a new word, a learner is familiar with no syntactic constraints, collocations or associative meanings. Then the learner tries connect the word with already existing knowledge from his/her first language (L1) or previously encountered target language (L2) word. If the first encounter happens in class, it is most likely a case of forming a relationship with the word's L1 counterpart. Now the learner knows one form of the word and is able to tell the approximate meaning and one specific for it. For example, the learner is able to tell that *book* is a thing with pages that have writing on them, but does not know its inflections or other possible meanings (e.g. *to book something*). The highest level of the learning progress is achieved by acquiring partial knowledge of different aspect of the word until the word is accessible in all contexts, all possible derivations have been, syntactic constraints are familiar and the word's possibly multiple semantic meanings and collocational and associative constraints are clear to the learner. Ringbom (1987) points out that for a L2 learner this final stage of lexical knowledge is rarely achieved and that every aspect of word knowledge neither is nor has to be on the highest level. It is possible to use a word in different contexts not knowing every aspect of the word in the highest level.

What is interesting about Nation's (1990) and Ringbom's (1991, 1987) views, is that traditionally, knowing a word has been regarded as an either-or –situation and these models for word knowledge provide basis for a different view. In Pavičić Takač (2008) "knowledge of a lexical item is not an 'all-or-nothing' proposition; it is rather to be conceived of as a continuum

of knowledge at whose ends - - the receptive and productive knowledge is placed.” The idea of a continuum between receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge where new words entering it, are first receptive and gradually move on to the being part of the productive vocabulary knowledge (Meara 2009:30). For a language teacher it is useful to be familiar with Nation’s viewpoint in order to be able to offer opportunities for practice and also keep in mind that world knowledge might be partial. It is also beneficial for the teacher to be able to recognise on what stage his/her students are, so that they can plan future lessons accordingly (i.e. do they need revision of particular vocabulary items or something else). Moreover, as the students’ need of vocabulary is at the centre of teaching and learning vocabulary, it is useful to know a rough estimate of how many words one needs when using English as a second/foreign language. For the purpose of the present study, both Nation’s and Ringbom’s viewpoints are used as a base on how English teachers in Finland see word knowledge and how they use it in their daily work.

### 3 VOCABULARY LEARNING

The ways in which vocabulary is taught in Finland today is one question the present study tries to answer but one cannot see the ways in which learners actually learn new vocabulary. Without those who learn there is no need for those who teach. This chapter observes factors affecting the process of vocabulary acquisition in general and in classroom environment from the learners' perspective. Firstly, the organisation of mental lexicon and what remembering and learning of vocabulary items mean are discussed in section 3.1. The following 3.2 section explores vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs). Finally, other variables, such as L1's influence and age, are being covered in section 3.3 very briefly.

#### 3.1 Mental lexicon and memory

The previous chapter discussed the basics of defining a word and what it means to know a word. These facts form a basis for vocabulary learning but the question of how learning of words actually happens, remains. It is despite all of today's technology impossible to be exactly sure what happens in the learner's brain while learning in general and while learning new words. We can, however, peek into the mind of the learner by observing "language development and general linguistic behaviour" (McCarthy 1990: 34). Often difficulties in, for example, reading can provide some insight to how a mind works through vocabulary learning (Jitendra et al. 2004). In order to acquire information about how mind handles such an enormous entity as vocabulary of a language, it is assumed that it has to be organised in the brain in some way (McCarthy 1990, Aitchison 1999). After making mental remarks and adding new words or adjusting old information, the learner strengthens the routes of memory takes by various ways and thus, learns. Thornbury (2007:23) says that "learning is remembering" and by knowing how the mind works when learning vocabulary, the teacher is able to provide his students opportunities to boost the vocabulary learning process.

A human mind is capable of retrieving new words and using them in a very timely manner. An average adult native speaker (L1) is estimated to have a vocabulary of 50,000 words, all of which he can potentially use. These words are retrieved in mere split seconds. (Aitchison 1999). In order to be able to do that, the "mind must *organise* words in some way" (McCarthy 1990:34). The way of organising vocabulary in the mind is commonly referred to as the *mental lexicon*. There is no consensus on the exact definition of mental lexicon since many researchers feel that defining mental lexicon somehow limits the possibilities of what it could be (Jarema

& Libben 2007). Aitchison's book *Words in the mind: An introduction to mental lexicon* (1994) provides a solid overview on all aspects of mental lexicon, if one wants to read more. At this point one must also mention that the present study is concerned with non-native (L2) learners and their teachers, not L1 learners and teachers. There are studies on whether or not the mental lexicon of L2 differs from L1 mental lexicon and if it does, to what degree and how (see e.g. Paivio 1991, Meara 1980, Singleton 2000, Wolter 2001, Singleton 2007). The present study is in agreement with Cook's (2003) and Singleton's (2007) perspective that L1 and L2 mental lexicons are not one single mental lexicon but two separate entities with "high levels of interaction" (Singleton 2007:4).

Traditionally, mental lexicon has been described as a mental dictionary that is similar to a traditional book dictionary. Navracscics (2007:17) describes mental lexicon in following words:

*The mental lexicon is a kind of internal dictionary that contains not only the 'entries' for each word a speaker knows but also all the linguistic information about the word: its semantic content, syntactic properties, phonological shape, and so on.*

When a learner first meets a new word, he makes a mental note of the word's "general shape", that is to say information about the word's syllable structure and stress pattern (McCarthy 1990). The word enters networks within a module through signposts that are semantic fields in semantic-syntactic module and acoustic sounds in phonetic-phonological module (Aitchison 1999). Thus, the learner tries to match the new information to already existing patterns in his mental lexicon (McCarthy 1990). For example, the learner tries to recall the meaning of the word *taxi driver*. He may first see or think of a person driving a car and then think of someone who does it for a living. Mental lexicon makes use of parallel processing, i.e. multiple similar functions happen at the same time. After entering a network, the word also activates meanings closely located to the semantic field in question. This activation works both ways. Then the mind narrows down words that do not fulfil the requirements and does this simultaneously through every unit until finally arriving at the desired word, in this case *taxi driver*. The possible routes are endless and by adjusting information when needed, it is able to store possibly infinite number of words. (Aitchison 1999).

As stated in the beginning of this chapter, the mind has to organise words in some way but the way it does them, is not necessarily similar to a traditional dictionary. Aitchison (1999) outlines that mental lexicon consists of units: words that are to be viewed as coins with meaning and sound on opposite sides and these sides are analysed and linked to other words according to their meaning, word class, sound or phonological structure. Words are then set up in modules

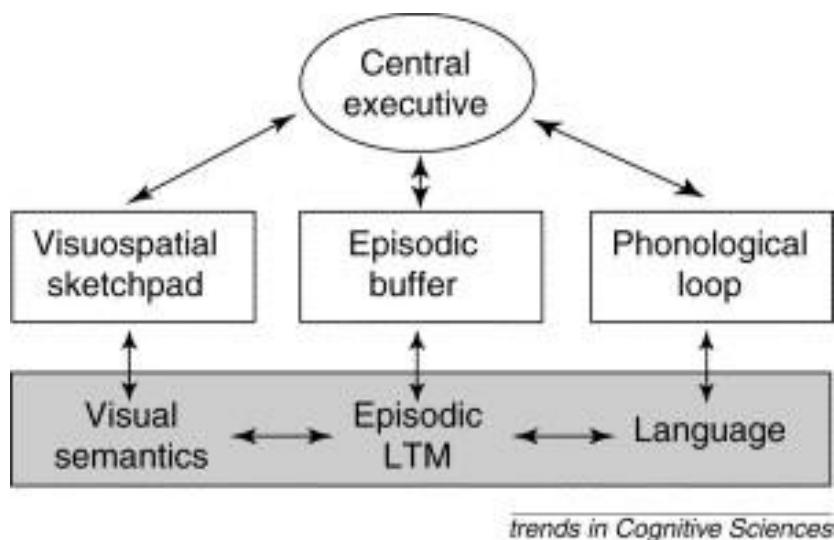
with own modules for semantic-syntactic relations (e.g. word family) and phonetic-phonological relations (e.g. word forms). This view is called the modular approach (Randall 2007). These modules can overlap, but words within a module form relatively durable links between one another which form a network/networks inside the module. Modules are also organised slightly differently: semantic-syntactic is used for effective production of language and so, semantically close words are near one another. For example, words *write* and *paper* would be stored closely. Phonetic-phonological module is used “for fast identification of sounds from speech comprehension, with words which sound similar tightly bonded together.” (Aitchison 1999: 229-230). In this case, pairs such as *brought* and *drought* and *dice* and *mice* might be stored close to one another.

A traditional dictionary and mental lexicon do have things in common as they both include a list of words that are stored and retrieved on demand. One aspect differentiating mental lexicon from a dictionary is its nature as a system, something that has different functions. Jarema & Libben (2007:2) state that “mental lexicon is the cognitive system that constitutes the capacity for conscious and unconscious lexical activity”. They further comment on the functional nature of mental lexicon, unlike a traditional dictionary, makes it an ongoing process or an activity rather than a static entity. By referring to Aitchison (1994), Haastrup and Henriksen (2000:223) state that the main three processes of lexical processing are labelling, packaging and network building. This adds to the view that word knowledge can be partial (Ringbom 1987, 1991). When vocabulary knowledge can be partial and is a process by nature, it might need assistance from outside of the learner’s mind to be successful. Thus, teaching is needed. The mental lexicon can be regarded as a dynamic operating system that handles the enormous amount of knowledge included in a vocabulary of language. In order to function, the mental lexicon needs a place from where it can retrieve items in a timely manner. More accurately, it needs a place where it can store words. That place is memory.

The structure of memory has been studied by many and one of the most influential models for it has been developed by Baddeley and Hitch (1974), as one can see from Table 3. The model consists of three parts: the central executive, which controls the what, when and where the attention of a learner is directed, and which is accompanied by the phonological loop and visuospatial sketchpad (Baddeley 2000). Phonological loop is an active store that combines speech based information from sensory input and central executive while the visuospatial sketchpad does the same for visual information (Baddeley 2000). Based on the model by Baddeley and Hitch (1974), Thornbury (2007) outlines the structure of memory consisting of

short-term store (STS), working memory and long-term memory. The STS is for storing something in one's mind for just a few seconds in order to use it (Thornbury 2007). For example, a learner might try to remember what word a friend uses often to refer to his apartment (e.g. *flat* or *place* or *home*) and then using the word in a conversation with a mutual friend. For learning vocabulary, STS is hardly enough, since being able to use and recognise the word is one aspect of knowing a word (Chapter 2.1.2) and therefore, something more is needed for successful vocabulary learning. Randall (2007:14) does not recognise the STS as it is but instead uses term sensory register which is “where essential information is extracted from the mass of stimuli coming into the brain”. Randall (2007) continues to further describe the sensory register as a tool that inhibits our minds from experiencing the burden of too much information.

TABLE 3: The structure of memory. (Baddeley 2000, based on Baddeley and Hitch 1974).



Working memory (WM) and its possible implications for L2 learning have been the subject of many studies lately (see e.g. Swanson 2015, Jin 2012, Juffs & Harrington 2011, Alptekin & Erçetin 2010). What differentiates WM from STS and long-term memory (LTM), is that in contrast to STS, WM is able to hold larger amount of information at once and for a longer time. Instead of forgetting the received input after a few seconds, the WM holds the information “long enough to perform operations on them” which is about 20 seconds (Thornbury 2007:23) and can hold up to 7+/- 2 pieces of information (Randall 2007: 15-16). WM is the place where linguistic symbols become meaningful as the new information is compared to already existing information in the mind (Randall 2007). This information can come from external source, such as a teacher or a class mate or a book, or it is retrieved from the LTM, or both (Thornbury

2007:23, Pavičić Takač 2008: 27). As an example, one can hear the word *spam* and retrieve the word *span* from one's LTM and then compare them in one's working memory. Thus, the WM requires conscious work from the learner (Pavičić Takač 2008, Randall 2007, Thornbury 2007). In comparison to STS, WM also has a larger capacity for information it can handle at once, which still is a rather limited amount, but with no permanent information. Therefore, it might prove to be an issue for L2 learners (Pavičić Takac 2008, Randall 2007).

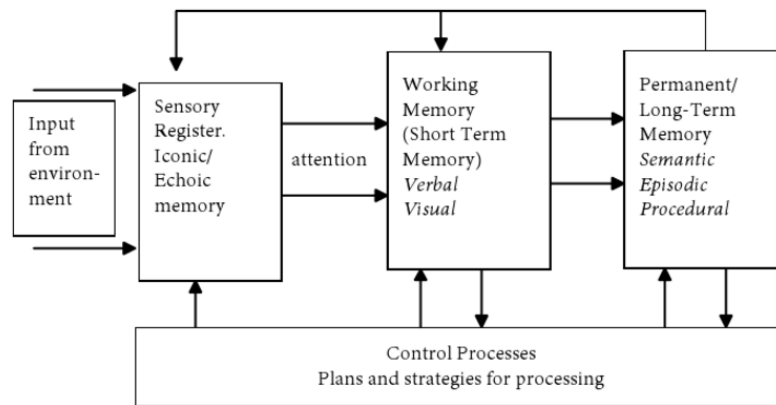
In order for the information to stay in the WM for a sufficient amount of time, it needs some tools of its own: articulatory loop and mnemonics (Thornbury 2007:23). When learner repeats a word in his mind long enough to examine its form and meaning, and possibly use it afterwards, he makes use of the articulatory loop. What also characterises the loop, is that normally it is able to hold more L1 words than L2 words meaning restrictions on the length of the item in the loop (Thornbury 2007:23). Thornbury (2007) notes that the length of the articulatory loop may predict whether or not a learner is 'a good language learner' which in turn relates to the learners concentrating skills and so on. Mnemonics are so called memory prompts – e.g. some image brings a certain word from the LTM (Thornbury 2007). For example, an image of stickman running reminds the learner of the word *run*. Mnemonics are part of language learning strategies which will be discussed later on in section 3.2.2. With the help of these tools, the information is transferred to LTM.

As its name hints, the LTM stores information for a longer period of time than the WM and it is able to store significantly larger amount of information (Thonbury 2007, Randall 2007, Pavičić Takač 2008). However, as Thornbury (2007:24) points out, the LTM may not be as permanent as it may seem at first but rather a continuum "from 'the quickly forgotten' to 'the never forgotten'." He illustrates the continuum by mentioning students who remember a word for a lesson but who forget it by the next and further, comments that 'a good language learner' is characterised by being quick in moving information from "the quickly forgotten to never forgotten." (Thornbury 2007:24). The information in the LTM can be divided into three types: semantic, episodic and procedural. Semantic memory stores our perceptions of the world in general and furthermore, our experiences about language and shapes. Our cumulative experiences in life are stored in episodic memory and "the automatic procedures involved in skilled behaviour" are stored in procedural memory. (Randall 2007:15). In contrast to the WM, LTM is unconscious in function (Randall 2007).



The cognitive theory of learning (Pavičić Takač 2008:26-30) sees memory consisting of only the two latter ones, namely WM and LTM. In contrast to linguistic L2 learning theories, the cognitive theory assumes that language learning happens the same way as other kinds of learning (Ellis 1994). Acquiring new information, which is then processed and stored in memory, is an encoding process with four stages: selection, acquisition, construction and integration (Weinstein and Mayer 1986, cited in O'Malley and Chamot 1990:17). In the first stage, selection, a learner notices a piece of information and moves it to working memory. The information is then transferred to “long-term memory for permanent storage” (O'Malley and Chamot 1990:18) during the acquisition. The third stage, construction, reinforces the connections between the new information in the working memory and the old ones in long-term memory. In the final stage, the information is integrated in the long-term memory. The learner first searches this information and moves it to working memory for further processing. (O'Malley and Chamot 1990:17-18).

TABLE 4: Processing new information in the memory system. (Randall 2007:14, adapted from Atkinson and Shiffrin 1968).



Memory works together with mental lexicon and together they facilitate learning of any new information and thus, also new vocabulary. As mentioned before, there are a few different opinions on how language is learned (e.g. communicative approaches) but the focus here is on those with most influence on memory and language learning. According to the cognitive theory of language learning, learning happens the same way as learning of other information (e.g. learning of math) whereas linguistic theories profess that language learning has its own functions in the mind of the learner (Pavičić Takač 2008). The present study embraces the cognitive theory of language learning because it allows the assumption that one could become

a better language learner with proper instruction (Pavičić Takač 2008). Thus, teachers can be the ones facilitating such progress.

### **3.2 What makes a student learn new words and factors affecting it**

Mental lexicon and memory represent elements that are more or less universal for all language learners. Learning is remembering (Thornbury 2007) and therefore, learning vocabulary is all about memory. Yet, significant differences can be found between different learners. One possible reason for this could be in the way they use learning strategies. Language learning strategies are “series of actions a learner takes to help complete a learning task.” (Nation and Gu 2007:82). There are also other factors, such as age, motivation and L1 that facilitate differences in language learner’s vocabulary learning (Gass et al. 2013). Vocabulary learning strategies and general learner characteristics are briefly discussed after describing the basics of learning new vocabulary.

#### **3.2.1 Nature of learning new words**

Learning new words is an action that requires many components of the human mind and the environment to work together. A young child first learns to label things (e.g. a small, hairy four-legged thing that meows is *a cat.*), i.e. map the words onto concepts. In other words, the sound and letter combination, the linguistic sign, is referring to the physical entity of *a cat*, i.e. the referent of *a cat*. Continuing to develop, one notices that *a cat* can be also owned by other people and pictures can be taken of a cat. In other words, one has learned to generalise the use of the word *cat*. One has learned to categorise all small, meowing, four-legged animals and/or things as cats but may falsely overgeneralise it too and say *a dog* is *a cat*. Finally, one learns to build networks around the words. Using *cat* as an example again, one can now say that *a cat* is an animal and there are other animals too. (Thornbury 2007, McCarthy 1990). As discussed in chapter 2.1.2. of the present study, vocabulary knowledge is not an either-or –situation. In Ringbom’s (1991, Table 2) model, vocabulary knowledge is seen as a process that has many stages. Likewise, vocabulary learning should be seen as a process that is time consuming and may move backwards from time to time as one’s LTM is not limitless. In other words, language learning in its nature is incremental. By incremental one means that “learning words is a recursive process and does not occur instantaneously” (Gass et al. 2013:212). As one can see from Ringbom’s model (1991, Table 2) from Nation’s aspects of word knowledge (1990, Table

1), it requires several kinds of information about the word and its use to be able to use that word properly.

The exposure to the target language input is a key factor in second language learning and especially in vocabulary learning. In order for learning to happen, one has to meet the word several times (Schmitt 2010b:33). The amount of exposure to the language is why a L2 learner usually never attains the same level in his L2 compared to his L1. One can be exposed to vocabulary by explicitly studying new words or incidentally from various different sources. Especially in the second language classroom, the teacher may make the decision on how to present new vocabulary items to the learners. Whichever way – explicitly, incidentally or a mixture of these two – the teacher chooses to present vocabulary one should make students meet the new vocabulary sufficient amount of times.

When a teacher tells learners to focus on especially on learning new vocabulary, the teacher is explicitly teaching vocabulary. He may draw attention to the words form or its meaning (e.g. making learners to come up with collocations) and/or make use of vocabulary learning strategies. Explicit teaching makes the learning of vocabulary items faster and more focused on a few particular items. Moreover, the teacher can select these vocabulary items himself based on the goals of teaching and learning. (Schmitt 2010a). For example, one teaches cooking students baking vocabulary. Usually explicit learning requires a deeper engagement from the learner and generally items that have been explicitly taught and learned, are remembered better than those incidentally learned (Schmitt 2010a). There has been some research indicating that explicit teaching of vocabulary indeed yields better results than incidental (Sökmen 1997, Laufer 2005 cited in Schmitt 2008, Schmitt 2008, File & Adams 2010, Schmitt 2010a). Madrigal-Hopes et al. (2014) findings show that this is the case with adult learners too as explicit work-specific vocabulary instruction increased the proficiency of adult English language learners. Supporting this view, Laufer (2005, cited in Schmitt 2008) points out that the relatively often used learning strategy of guessing from context is often unreliable. Furthermore, if learners do understand the message, the precise meanings of single words may not be acquired. Additionally, as the learning of a word requires several encounters in a relatively quick pace which might prove too much of a burden for the learner (Laufer 2005, cited in Schmitt 2008) and thus, explicit teaching of vocabulary is needed.

However, explicit vocabulary teaching is rather time consuming and this is an issue because there is rarely a chance for a teacher or materials to devote such much time or room for it

(Schmitt 2008). Incidental learning and teaching offers one solution for this. When one meets new words unconsciously through, for example, reading a novel or listening to music, and notices the words, learning is incidental (Gass et al. 2013, Bissón et al. 2014). In other words, during the exposure to L2 vocabulary, one is not explicitly asked to learn (Bissón et al. 2014: 856). Nation (2001:232) further distinguishes that learners' attention is not specifically on learning new words but on understanding the meaning and message of the text. Of course, one must note that one does not necessarily acquire or learn words this way but that it may or may not happen. For successful incidental learning to happen, one needs to encounter the words multiple times before they are retained successfully (Elgort & Warren 2014, Brown et al. 2008). In addition, one needs the right kind of feedback and the tasks to be interactive (Schmitt 2008). Incidental vocabulary learning offers the learner an opportunity to develop one's vocabulary skills while learning other language skills, such as listening or reading. Additionally, the learner can fill in some contextual gaps that cannot be explicitly taught or learn words that have not been taught explicitly due to time constraints. However, learning words incidentally may take quite a lot of time due to the lack of target words. (Schmitt 2010a).

Taking the time constraints and the significant amount of information to be learned into account, one can decipher that opportunities for both explicit and incidental learning are needed. On one hand, by explicitly teaching vocabulary, the teacher can more easily control the sequencing of meeting the words again and provide opportunities for deeper engagement. Explicit learning and teaching of vocabulary is also faster and more focused but at the same time, is often more limited in how many and which kind of word knowledge it can address. (Schmitt 2010). On the other hand, incidental learning offers learners opportunities for developing multiple skills simultaneously and furthermore, "fill in the 'contextual' types of word knowledge, and provide recycling for words already partially learned." (Schmitt 2010b: 40) The teacher neither is nor should be the main participant in the process of learning vocabulary. His job is to provide learners various kinds of opportunities to build networks in their mental lexicon by making learners actively make decisions about the word and its characteristics (e.g. meaning, collocations, syntactical constraints) and furthermore, to do this at a relatively quick pace. (Thornbury 2007:30-31). Nation (2001:232) summarises that a well-balanced vocabulary part of a language learning course makes use of both ways of learning vocabulary. How the results of the same learning environment and conditions provides different learning results with different learners, is a question of learner characteristics.

Differences might be found in their use of vocabulary learning strategies and other factors, such as L1 and affective depth.

### 3.2.2 Vocabulary learning strategies

While general learning strategies describe the conscious measures learners take in order to learn a language, vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs) focus on the measures learners take in order to learn words. Strategies can be defined as conscious or unconscious mental actions a learner takes during a task and can be divided to learning, communication and production strategies (Ellis 1996, Oxford 1990). It is important to note the difference between these types especially in language acquisition: production strategies are concerned with efficient use of the language system and communicative strategies are mainly concerned with failure in production while learning strategies deal with acquiring knowledge about the target language (O'Malley and Chamot 1990). Learning strategies, according to Weinstein and Mayer (1986:315, cited in O'Malley and Chamot 1990:43), aim at changing the learner's motivation and "affective state" for the better and furthermore, adjust "the way in which the learner selects, acquires, organises, or integrates new knowledge." More specifically, language learning strategies (LLS) are used to expand one's linguistic and sociolinguistic knowledge about the target language (Ellis 1996, O'Malley and Chamot 1990). The degree or type of mental processing provides a basis for dividing LLS into three categories: metacognitive, cognitive and social/affective strategies. When a learner is planning for or monitoring or evaluating one's success in a task, he makes use of metacognitive strategies (Brown et al. 1983, cited in O'Malley and Chamot 1990). Cognitive strategies involve working with the input directly in order to enhance one's learning. Finally, social/affective strategies make use of interaction and "ideational control over affect." (O'Malley and Chamot 1990:45). There is some dispute over the definition of learning strategies and LLS and where the line between them goes (see e.g. Ellis 1994:530-533, Schmitt 1997:199-227) but as the focus of the present study lies elsewhere, the above definitions are sufficient.

In regards of the presents study's focus being on vocabulary, vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs) will be discussed in greater detail. As stated in the beginning of this chapter, the goal of using VLSs is to learn new words and the use of strategies is particularly common for vocabulary learning. Many of the more general learning strategies are applicable in tasks focusing on vocabulary learning. (Nation 1990, Schmitt 1997, Pavičić Takač 2008). Vocabulary in itself is a multidimensional concept that requires multiple different types of learning strategies and choosing the right strategy for a specific task depends on learner characteristics, task demands, the learning environment and context (Nation and Gu 2007). From the teacher's perspective, it is necessary to recognise that one has to be trained to use

VLSs in order to profit from their usage (Moir and Nation 2008). If one's students are to be 'good language learners', one quality they more often than not possess is their use of a wide variety of learning strategies (Thornbury 2007). This is not, however, a definitive mark of 'a good language learner' (Gass et al. 2013), but that one knows few essential VLSs, like for example, guessing from context, using word cards and parts, and uses few different mnemonic devices, such as the keyword method, and using dictionaries (Nation 2001, Moir and Nation 2008) successfully.

Indeed, choosing the right VLSs for a task is not as easy as it might seem. For example, one has to take into account is the stage in which one is with particular vocabulary. To illustrate this, Brown and Payne (1994, cited in Nation and Gu 2007), presented list of stages in vocabulary learning: (1) encountering new word, (2) getting the word form, (3) getting the word meaning, (4) consolidating word form and meaning in memory, and (5) using the word. Schmitt (1997) divides the strategies according to the principles presented in O'Malley and Chamot (1990): metacognitive, cognitive and social/affective, and furthermore, according to which are used to initial discovery of the word and those that are used to remember those words. Nation and Gu (2007) agree with him that there are different strategies for initial stage of vocabulary learning and consolidation. For further discussion, see e.g. Schmitt (1997). Another example of things one has to consider when choosing a VLSs is, whether or not one aims to expanding one's vocabulary in regards of the number of words in it, namely developing the breadth of vocabulary, or increasing and strengthening the connections between words in one's mental lexicon, namely developing the depth of one's vocabulary. In addition, one has to take into account the nature of the words in question and choose the right VLSs for high frequency, low frequency, technical and academic words. (Nation and Gu 2007). Of course, one can sometimes choose a strategy for cultural reasons (O'Malley and Chamot 1990) or according to their proficiency level or target language. In the context of the present study, it is not necessary to provide a comprehensive list on the reasons based on which one can choose a VLS and therefore, the discussion continues with presentation of Oxford's (1990) taxonomy of VLSs.

There have been several attempts to creating a taxonomy for VLS. Nation (2001) presents them in three phases: planning, picking the source for word and establishing word knowledge. These three phases include various strategies from picking the focus of vocabulary learning to picking the reference source and actively strengthening the connections between words in one's mental lexicon (Nation 2001). Schmitt (1997) suggests another taxonomy which is based on Oxford's (1990) taxonomy of general language learning strategies but includes the distinction between

discovery and consolidation strategies (Nation 1990). Oxford's taxonomy acknowledges four types: social (SOC), memory (MEM), cognitive (COG) and metacognitive (MET). Social strategies are used in interaction with other people while memory strategies "relate new material to existing knowledge" (Schmitt 1997:205). Cognitive strategies are used when a learner makes conscious changes to one's L2 mental lexicon whereas metacognitive strategies are consciously "planning, monitoring, or evaluating" the learning process itself. (Schmitt 1997). Schmitt (1997) added determination (DEM) strategies, which are used when meeting a new word and using one's existing knowledge of the target language, other additional cues and reference materials to determine the meaning of a new word. The most used VLSs are quite mechanical in nature, e.g. rote memorisation and copying, while VLSs requiring more conscious effort are not that popular. Yet, those are not necessarily strategies that produce the most efficient and successful learning outcomes. The most successful strategies are those requiring conscious effort (e.g. the Keyword method and making associations). (Pavičić Takač 2008, Moir and Nation 2008). Nevertheless, this does not mean more shallow strategies would not work at all but rather that the strategies demanding deeper processing are simply more likely to produce successful learning results in the long run (Schmitt 1997). As one of the aims of the present study is to investigate the teaching of vocabulary and more specifically, what vocabulary teaching strategies English teachers use, it is essential to be familiar with vocabulary learning strategies too.

On a global scale VLSs and their use has been of major interest lately. For example, as a part of her Master's thesis, Fomicheva (2015) investigated what kind of VLSs are present in vocabulary textbooks in Austria and how well these VLSs are tied up with background research on the subject. Her findings show that the vocabulary textbooks clearly focus on MEM strategies with few additions from other VLSs categories and neglected SOC strategies altogether. Zhi-liang (2010) explored the patterns in which Chinese university students (N=390) with non-English majors use VLSs. He used a survey to ask students which VLSs they use and which are the most helpful and the most unhelpful ones. Bilingual dictionaries, written and oral repetition were the most used VLSs and also perceived the most helpful ones. However, there were some VLSs that were perceived as helpful but were not used that much and Zhi-liang (2010) speculates it as a sign that these strategies should be taught more often. Schmitt (2010) published a book on researching vocabulary. In Finland, studies have been made on how upper secondary school learners use VLSs (Kovanen 2014, Marttinen 2008). Upper secondary school learners in Marttinen's (2008) study used a small group of VLSs if



they used any. The results from Kovanen's (2014) study suggested that this small group of VLSs used by upper secondary school learners tends to consist of VLSs not requiring very deep processing.

### 3.2.3 Other factors affecting vocabulary learning

The use of learning strategies and VLSs is only one aspect that has an effect on vocabulary learning. Other factors include the learner's L1, age, the cognitive and affective depth of vocabulary learning tasks, motivation and the learning environment among other things. It is virtually impossible to provide all the factors affecting vocabulary learning, especially in a small scale study like the present study, so this section will focus on those factors important in the context of the present study.

Perhaps the most obvious influence on L2 vocabulary learning is the learner's L1. It is different because "L2 learner has already developed conceptual and semantic systems linked to the L1" (Pavičić Takač 2008:8). What makes L2 learning even more difficult, is the fact that it compels the learner to devise a whole new conceptual system and vocabulary network, if the two languages are very different (Thornbury 2007:18). Nevertheless, L1 and L2 vocabulary are connected with one another inside the learner's mind and basing L2 learning on L1 might prove to be counterproductive. For example, learning words which pronounceability is very different from the sound schema of one's L1, is often quite difficult (Laufer 1997). For example, learning word stress in English might prove difficult for Finnish learners, since Finnish language word stress appears always on the first syllable of the word. Often L2 vocabulary learning starts with translating L2 items into L1 although they might not be direct equivalents (Ringbom 1987:173, Thornbury 2007: 18-19). Additionally, L1 might provide opportunity to make false friends, namely cross-language errors, which are words that do not mean the same in both L1 and L2. For example, in Finnish the word *novelli* means a short story whereas in English *a novel* means a book written by someone. However, languages that have words with similar form in both of them, do generally have the same meaning for both of these words, namely cognates. (Thornbury 2007:18-19). Gass et al. (2013) conclude that cognates are often more easily learned in L2. For example, the meaning and spelling of *vanilla* is easy to remember for Finnish English learners because in Finnish it is nearly the same, *vanilja*. There is a vast entity of research on the behalf of L1 influence in L2 vocabulary acquisition (e.g. Swan 1997, McBride

et al. 2006, Liu 2008) but due to the scale of the present study being a small one, they are not discussed further.

In addition to L1, learning tasks have a major impact on how well vocabulary is retained. By making conscious decisions about the word, (e.g. about its meaning, use, collocations) a learner is more likely to remember the word afterwards. Cognitive depth of the task can be more shallow, such as simple memorising tasks, or deeper, such as using words in sentences tasks. It is a question of how deep level of processing the task demands the learner. One can retain words through simple repetition but it is much more likely after cognitively more challenging tasks. (Sökmen 1997, Thornbury 2007). Whereas cognitive depth is concerned with processing information, affective depth “refers to feelings or emotional reactions about the language, about the people who speak that language, about the culture where that language is spoken, or about the language-learning environment” (Gass et al. 2013:459). Affectivity can affect vocabulary learning through, for example, attitude towards vocabulary learning and whether or not a word or words sound ‘good’ in the learner’s opinion. If the word has some personal value to the learner, one probably also remembers it better. (Thornbury 2007).

If one is naturally a good language learner, one has language aptitude. Aptitude can be outlined as having good auditory, linguistic and memory ability (Ellis 2008:652). Regarding vocabulary learning, having aptitude for vocabulary learning means it being easy to engage in cognitively demanding tasks and furthermore, have a good memory and be a good listener (Ellis 2008:652). Skehan (1989:26) defines four basic components of language aptitude: phonemic coding ability, grammatical sensitivity, inductive learning ability and memory and learning. In other words, one has an ability to listen and encode L2 sounds and words, make sense of syntactic constraints concerning the word in question, extract rules and regularities from target language samples himself and furthermore, “make and recall associations between words and phrases in - - second language.” (Gass et al. 2013:445).

Motivation can be defined as the desire or need to learn L2 and the efforts one makes in result of it (Ellis 2008:972). Regarding the learning of vocabulary, motivation does not have that big of an impact on its own but it rather encourages the learner to process the word more deeply and retain it through cognitively more challenging tasks. Motivation may however, produce better learning results through increased amount of practice and rehearsal. (Thornbury 2007).

The effect the learner’s age has on vocabulary learning is debatable. Some researchers argue that the earlier L2 learning starts, the more likely one is to achieve native-like proficiency (Long

1990, Gass et al. 2013:440). This is based on the critical period of learning hypothesis (CPH). CPH means that “there is a fixed span of years during which language learning can take place naturally and effortlessly” (Ellis 2008:24). However, this does not mean that older learners could not learn but that they generally reach lower levels of proficiency in the target language as they have already passed the critical period for language learning. Ellis (2008) continues that even though young learners are more likely to achieve, for example, native like accent, it is possible also for some adult learners too and in this way, contrasts Gass et al.’s (2013) views that younger learners are generally more successful learners. Ellis (2008:24) continues that if there actually is a critical period in language learning, its timing varies according to the area of language being learned. He illustrates this by stating that the end point comes “earlier for pronunciation than for grammar.” (Ellis 2008:24). It is, however, been studied that the nature of learning changes according to one’s age (Ellis 2008:24). These assumptions made by Long (1990), Gass et al. (2013) and Ellis (2008) are made in regards of general language learning but can be generalised to concern vocabulary learning too. As one can see, there are many different opinions about the existence of the Critical Period of language learning and one may want to become acquainted with a larger amount of research before deciding one’s view.

## **4 VOCABULARY TEACHING**

Vocabulary learning is a multidimensional process that requires effort from both inside and outside of a language learner. The functions of the mental lexicon and memory together with the use of vocabulary learning strategies and other affecting factors form a complex process which needs some guidance. Although in Finland, the course book is still in defining position when choosing the words to teach, the teacher can also affect greatly on what words the learner encounters in class. The teacher is in especially influential position on how their students encounter the words inside the classroom. Nowadays, learners across the world immerse themselves in English vocabulary also outside the classroom as English language can be met everywhere in the Western world. The present study explores the relationship of vocabulary learning outside the class and in it and more specifically, how English teachers in Finland see their role in this developing combination. In addition, the present study delves into vocabulary teaching strategies employed by Finnish English teachers. These themes are discussed in more detail under the following sections of the present study.

### **4.1 Development of vocabulary teaching**

Before the 1980s, learning of vocabulary was a somewhat neglected part of studies in the field of linguistics (Meara 1980) and therefore, its teaching was not seen as important. Since then there has been abundance of research on both topics (e.g. Nation 2011, Chacon-Beltrán et al. 2010, Coady & Huckin 1997). The present chapter briefly describes how vocabulary teaching has changed over time from grammar translation to communicative language teaching. It discusses the pendulum swings from the point of view of vocabulary teaching and learning but recognises that these swings impacted the whole field of language teaching and learning. As Zimmerman (1997) writes, understanding the developments of lexical pedagogy in the future, it is useful to be familiar with its past.

Traditionally, learning grammar has been valued over learning vocabulary. During the Grammar Translation (GT) period, the only value vocabulary had, was how well it could be used to portray grammatical rules. During the GT period, only the definition of a word and its etymological roots were studied and the focus was on reading and mechanical repetitive writing. The GT period saw the coming of bilingual word lists language teaching and thus, vocabulary learning was just reading these bilingual lists, memorizing the words in them and dictionary study. In addition, accuracy was of high importance. The GT method was

extensively used throughout the world from 1840s to 1940s. (Zimmerman 1997, Richards & Rodgers 2013).

Moving on from GT, towards the end of the 1800s, vocabulary teaching saw the pendulum swinging from writing and written texts to oral skills and behaviouristic language learning with focus still being on form rather than what one could actually do with vocabulary. Zimmerman (1997:7) refers to this period as “the Reform Movement” (RM). The movement prioritised pronunciation over writing and ability to identify and produce phonetically correct sentences, because “the sentence is the unit of language, not the word.” (Sweet 1964:97 cited in Zimmerman 1997). Thus, the lessons consisted of practising carefully monitored spoken language which shunned the practice of isolated words and sentences and favoured associations between words and sentences (Zimmerman 1997).

The audio-lingual method (AL) continued to favour the spoken language and saw language learning as forming behavioural patterns. The AL method was born out of the United States’ need for translators and interpreters in European languages (e.g. German, Italian) when it entered the World War II. It focused on teaching certain sentence patterns and avoiding errors in spoken language leaving writing aside altogether. In more detail, it put the patterns native speakers use into the spotlight. Vocabulary was the by-product taught through these patterns and through repetition and drill tasks. (Richards & Rodgers 2014)

The pendulum swung again. This time it was turn for the direct method, or more commonly, the Natural Method (NM), which based itself on miming L1 learning (Richards & Rodgers 2014). The NM believed that the L2 could be learned without L1 through extensive input of L2 and always demonstrating what is said through movement. Contrastively to GT, the NM introduced new grammar items inductively. While RM was very much focused on spoken language and correct pronunciation, the NM emphasised accuracy in both correctness of pronunciation and in grammar. The NM was widely popular inside the European borders but did not spread much farther (Richards & Rodgers 2014).

After the NM, the M, namely the method, began to disappear from the names of vocabulary, as well as other teaching, procedures. In its place came the word approach and for further discussion about the distinction of these two terms, see Richards & Rodgers (2014:20-43). The pendulum swung again in 1957 when Noam Chomsky published his *Syntactic Structures*. Compared to previous understanding of language, that is to say, it is a closed system and behaviouristic view of it, Chomsky proposed that individuals construct language. He

introduced the terms *competence*, which means “the internalised (unconscious) mental grammar”, and *performance*, which means “the actual use” of language. (Zimmerman 1997:12). Hymes (1972, cited in Zimmerman 1997:12) developed Chomsky’s model and came up with the term *communicative competence* which highlighted the sociolinguistic and pragmatic side of language use. As Zimmerman (1997) states, Chomsky’s views changed the way vocabulary was being taught and is taught nowadays since it put much greater emphasis on communicational aspect of language rather than focusing on its structures.

Entering the 1970s, the role of communicational needs in language teaching grew stronger and after Chomsky’s book, language was no longer seen as “a means of getting things accomplished in an appropriate manner” (Richards & Rodgers 2014:86). In contrast to previous methods and approaches to teaching languages, communicative language teaching (CLT) does not have one specific thing it focuses on aside from being able to convey meaning(s) in the target language. The core idea is about being able to communicate but unlike in GT, RM or NM, there is not one single thought or idea that all scholars, teachers and others widely agree as being CLT. Consequently, there is both a ‘strong’ and a ‘weak’ way in CLT. Strong CLT focuses solely on communication and everything else can be learned to authentic communication whereas the weaker form of CLT tries to incorporate opportunities for this kind of practice into teaching and learning as much as possible but still teaches syntactical constraints. The role of the teacher changed during the spread of CLT as the teaching became more and more student-centred. Teacher is the provider of communicational situations and the one who helps students achieve such language competence they need for their communicational needs. (Richards & Rodgers 2014)

Although CLT has its roots in the 1970s, it still has quite a lot of influence in today’s language teaching. It shifted the focus of language learning from grammar to learning the meaning language can convey and vocabulary carries that meaning. As has been mentioned in the present study and can be seen from the number of studies carried out in the field of linguistics since 1970s, vocabulary has risen to be the focus point of language learning and teaching research. There have been new influential approaches to language teaching since CLT gained ground (See Richards & Rodgers 2014 for further discussion) but ever since CLT, the focus has been on conveying meaning and communicative needs of learners. The language teachers are in charge of implementing these needs into their teaching but as with word knowledge and other knowledge too, some principles may be forgotten over time and not used at all and maybe even neglected as a result. Hence, studying how teachers teach vocabulary and reminding them

to consciously think of what they are doing while teaching vocabulary, is essential for being able to provide the best learning opportunities for language learners.

## **4.2 Goals of vocabulary teaching**

In order to determine the goals of the vocabulary part of a course, the teachers evaluate the needs of one's students based on the level they are on now.' One chooses the type and how much vocabulary is needed together with choosing which vocabulary learning strategies one focuses on. If there is some need for specialised vocabulary, it is also taken into consideration. The teachers assess also the environmental factors that might affect vocabulary teaching. For example, one may think how aware one is about different ways one learns and can teach vocabulary. Time constraints are also part of environment analysis. Needs and environment analysis together with different principles one has about teaching and learning vocabulary, forms the major lines of one's vocabulary teaching. (Nation 2001:380-391). The present study is particularly interested in the views of Finnish teachers of English and how they see the relationship between the vocabulary coming from inside and the vocabulary coming from outside of the class. In Milton's (2009:250) words: "A combination of good classroom practice and well-directed effort outside class can begin to explain how learners acquire very large vocabularies of thousands of words, so they can achieve functional fluency." The next section tries to provide an overview on what characterises vocabulary teaching and what kind of choices it requires a teacher to make.

### **4.2.1 Choosing words: how many and which ones**

The needs of learners are in the centre of all kinds of teaching, including vocabulary teaching. Beginning to plan one's vocabulary teaching, a language teacher evaluates how many words learners need in order to be able to use the target language in situations that they are likely to encounter while taking the time reserved for learning them in class into account. That is the ideal situation but in reality, the teachers in Finland at least tend to rely on course books quite heavily (Luukka et al. 2008, Elomaa 2009). The situations most L2 learners are likely to encounter are hardly as diverse as those of a native speaker (Schmitt 2010b:7), so it is not a necessity to learn as many words as a native speaker (Laufer & Nation 2012). Most learners do not necessarily need as large a vocabulary as, for example, university level students, who usually have a vocabulary of around 15,000-20,000 words (Goulden et al. 1990, cited in

Schmitt 2010b:29), either. Of course, the more complex the subjects of conversations, texts and situations are, the more vocabulary the learner needs. As a teacher, one should select the words quite carefully due to the fact that teaching all aspects of word knowledge is not possible within the time constraints of L2 vocabulary learning (Nation 2008).

One of the first things for a teacher to evaluate is how big of a vocabulary one needs to use a second language. Many second language learners aim at being able to communicate in the target language and to read some authentic texts. In second language learning, it has been estimated that the so called core vocabulary or threshold level for being able to operate in daily conversations is about 2,000-3,000 words (Thornbury 2007, Milton 2009, Schmitt 2010b). Many studies suggest that learning the 2,000 or so most frequent words should be the centre of vocabulary teaching because they accumulate the learning of other words (Nation 2008:5). The threshold level of words includes so called 'high-frequency' words, namely words that appear often in the target language (Nation and Waring 1997) which cover about 95% of texts (Schmitt 2010b). If 98% coverage is needed, the number of words needed rises up to 6,000-7,000 words (Schmitt 2010b:7). However, the numbers are not definite since learners may be good users of vocabulary learning strategies and thus, be able to guess the meaning of words from context (Milton 2009, Nation 2008) and therefore be in need of more words than the threshold level of 2000 words. There are also differences in how many words one needs to understand a language and how many words one needs in order to being able to read in that language (Schmitt 2008). Reviewing studies by other researchers (e.g. Laufer 1989, Bonk 2000, Nation 2006), Schmitt (2008) concludes that anywhere between 2,000 and 9,000 word or word families are needed to understand spoken English but being able to read text within a wide variety of text requires 8,000-9,000. Smaller variety of texts requires only 4,000-5,000 words (Schmitt 2008). It has also been studied that in order to being able to read wider variety of texts, the number of words known is even higher and about 8,000-9,000 words (Schmitt 2011). What is more, one has to take into account the level in which one teaches – the higher the level, the more complex the setting and/or the more specific the need, the wider and larger vocabulary is needed.

Now the teacher has set a goal for how many words his students are to learn in his classroom but one has to decide what words one teaches. One fairly well argued reason is that the word is included in the General Service List of the 2,000 most frequent words in English. These words cover about 80% of words occurring in various every day contexts and so, are very useful also for L2 learners. However, one must be careful when choosing words based on a list of words as the requirements for being included on the list may vary for various reasons (e.g.



inclusion of multi-word items). (Nation 2001). Another reason for choosing to teach a word is its usefulness in a specified context (Laufer and Nation 2012). For example, in a school environment it is useful to teach words found in the classroom, such as *blackboard*. Adding to the list, especially on a more advanced level and academic context, one may also need to teach academic words. They are common in different academic texts covering about 9% of the words in the texts. What is more, technical words, i.e. words that are common in texts about a very specific topic but not elsewhere, are sometimes needed. They cover up to 5% of texts under the topic in question. (Nation 2001). Location and culture are also variables while choosing vocabulary to teach as it is beneficial for Finnish learners to learn words, for example, about Finnish nature.

The time dedicated to vocabulary learning and teaching is limited under classroom circumstances as have been stated before. In addition to picking words based on their frequency, one should also consider how difficult the words are for the learner. Difficult words may require more time while often easily acquired vocabulary does not. As has been established in chapter 2 of the present study, knowing a word involves multiple aspects from orthographic presentation to different collocations and for learning L2 vocabulary it might prove even more difficult. The next few paragraphs delve into why some words might be more difficult than others and how it affects vocabulary teaching.

Laufer (1997) lists some things that affect the learnability of L2 words: pronounceability, orthographic presentation, morphological characteristics, synformy (i.e. when lexical items sound and/or look alike), grammatical function of words, and various semantic features of a word. These conditions may even vary according to whether or not words are taught through incidentally or explicitly (Lin 2012). Nouns are usually the easiest due to their highly imaginable nature, verbs and adjectives coming the second easiest while adverbs are often relatively hard for L2 learners to learn (Laufer 1997, Ellis and Beaton 1993). If a word is different in pronunciation from learner's L1, it might prove a problem. In more detail, sounds that do not appear in L1 are often more difficult to remember in L2. (Laufer 1997, Ellis and Beaton 1993). Also, Finnish learners of English might have problem recognising the stressed syllable in words because in Finnish the stress is always on the first syllable. Furthermore, the acoustical familiarity of a word may pose as a factor in word learnability. When the sounds are similar in one's L1 or one has repeatedly met the L2 word before and practised it out loud, one is more likely to remember that word and other similar sounding words. (Ellis and Beaton 1993). What might also prove particularly difficult for, for example, Finnish L2 learners of

English, is that in English the spelling and pronunciation of words do not necessarily resemble one another. It has been studied by Ellis and Beaton (1993) and Laufer (1997) that if the word's orthographic presentation is far from how it is pronounced, it is more difficult for the learner.

Laufer (1997) continues that inflexional complexity adds to the difficulty of words: irregular plurals, gender of inanimate nouns and noun cases are more difficult to remember. Using Finnish learners as an example again, one might imagine that –s ending of a verb in third person singular would be easy to learn because Finnish uses a lot of endings. What is more, “the lack of regularity with which morphemes can or cannot combine to create meanings or the multiplicity of the meanings can be a source of difficulty” (Laufer 1997:146). For example, prefixes *in-* and *un-* are used for similar functions but *unanimate* or *inbearable* are not correct words in English. Similarly, a problem might rise if one thinks that the meaning of the whole word is equal to “the sum of meanings of its components” (Laufer 1997:147). The similarity of lexical items might also pose as an issue. When two words sound or look similar, they are more easily confused with one another. (Laufer 1997). For example, words *price* and *prize* have similar phonemic pattern except one consonant and can be easily confused. What is more, abstract nouns (e.g. progress), idiomatic expressions, words with very specific register/context and words with multiple meanings, are also harder to learn as they add to the learning burden of a learner (Lin 2012, Laufer 1997).

The difficulty of vocabulary to be learned has a few implications for teachers. If the words are difficult, one must dedicate more time for each word and furthermore, present fewer words per lesson in comparison to presenting the relatively easier words (Laufer 1997). Laufer (1997) presents that it might be good to avoid presenting synformic words at the same time. For example, words *loose* and *lose* sound similar and can easily be confused. Too many difficult words in one lesson might add to the learning burden to an extent that the learner can no longer learn these items. Conclusively, a teacher should take into account the learnability of words while planning one's vocabulary teaching.

#### **4.2.3 Sources for new vocabulary**

While choosing the words to teach, one can find it from various different sources. There are the more traditional ones, text books, word lists and dictionaries, but there are also new ones, the internet and various applications (e.g. Quizlet). In CLT, which is highly popular nowadays (Richards & Rodgers 2014), the main goal is providing the students ways to practice

communication in a foreign language. Choosing the word sources with the vast number of words and sources might be difficult for the teacher. However, in Finland and its comprehensive and upper secondary schools, there are guidelines set by the Finnish National Board of Education which all schools and teachers are obliged to follow. The guidelines, called the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education and the National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Education, define the topic areas one must teach at every grade level (Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelma 2014, Lukion opetussuunnitelma 2015) (POPS, LOPS). In other words, all books used in basic education and upper secondary school follow the topic areas dictated in these documents and although one does not have to use them in one's teaching, many teachers do. Regarding the present study, the impact of course books and their writers' views have on the actual vocabulary taught to Finnish school children is significant. It has a great impact because it has been studied that teachers in Finland are very book oriented (Luukka et al. 2008, Elomaa 2009). The present study aims at finding whether or not teachers still state a text or a course book as their main source for vocabulary and if they use other sources for vocabulary teaching, what those sources are. This is a more specific focus while the more general aim of exploring the perceptions the teachers have on vocabulary coming from outside the classroom. What is more, as the curricula are changing beginning from the autumn 2016 (POPS 2014, LOPS 2015), it is beneficial for the teachers to reflect upon their teaching as the curricula change the teachers' role from an actual teacher to a more of an instructor.

Finnish vocational schools, which offer second degree education together with upper secondary schools in Finland, do follow a curriculum which is a field specific one. The Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE) has defined the basic requirements for every study program in vocational schools by law which includes 35 ECTS of general studies (FNBE 2016). The basic principles on which the vocational studies are based on will be reformed in 2018 likewise the curricula dictating comprehensive and upper secondary schools (FNBE 2016). These general studies include mandatory 2 ECTS of foreign language studies which usually is English. English courses offer an opportunity to acquaint oneself with the field specific vocabulary in English. For example, car mechanics study car words while cooks study food related vocabulary. Based on this evidence, teaching languages in vocational schools differs quite significantly from upper secondary school and it would be beneficial to know if and how the views of teachers in there differ from those of primary and upper secondary schools in the matter of vocabulary teaching. In adult education, meaning free education such as Adult

Education Centres or Community colleges, there are no guidelines set by the authorities in Finland. In that sense the teacher may choose their source quite freely. One might choose to use books or device one's own material.

Course books or textbooks do have their advantages in vocabulary teaching. They are said to give the most core vocabulary, are easy to use immediately and can provide wide range of text types and registers in one book (Thornbury 2007). In addition, course books can provide a large set of ready-to-go exercises which practice that particular vocabulary. All in all, course books try to provide a very comprehensive picture of a set of vocabulary by giving multiple examples of use and different contexts (Lent 2012) complemented by exercises. However, one must note that course books outdate at a relatively fast pace as language is constantly changing. The books may include a very limited set of vocabulary. Matsuoka and Hirsh (2010) explored the vocabulary learning opportunities an ELT (English Language Teaching) book provided for intermediate learners. The results indicated the book does "provide opportunities to deepen knowledge of the second 1,000 most frequent words in English" but did not offer to expand one's vocabulary knowledge beyond those high-frequency words (Matsuoka and Hirsh 2010:56). In Finland and in Finnish comprehensive school, the course books are usually chosen by teachers themselves and as stated before, they follow the National Curriculum, but there are differences in how they present vocabulary. Often they have separate text chapters accompanied by word lists and a set of tasks. Usually words are presented in semantic clusters although lately there has been some debate about how useful this is in general (Kujala 2016, Erten and Tekin 2008). When the course book writers decide the vocabulary included in the books, it does not necessarily correspond the teacher's view on essential vocabulary of that particular subject or the specific needs of the learner (Lent 2012). There is also not necessarily any coherence in what vocabulary they present between different books (Thornbury 2007) or they simply provide too many words in too little time (Lent 2012).

Word lists, like the General Service List, or books are not the only sources for vocabulary one can use in a classroom environment. Other possible sources are, for example, the teacher, other students and digital tools. The teacher may device his own set of material from different sources, such as the internet or literature, while other students usually provide vocabulary closer to the learner's interests and level. Digital tools (e.g. laptops or smartphones) and the internet have become a major part of today's society and the language classroom is no exception. Lately, the field of linguistics has seen a vast number of research on the theme (e.g. Doering et al. 2007, Gilakjani and Leong 2012, Golshan and Tafazoli 2014). The internet

provides an endless number of sources for vocabulary with authentic examples of text use (e.g. online magazines and news sites) and other tools for vocabulary study (e.g. different corpora). For example, *Quizlet*, is an interactive learning site where a teacher can create his own study sets with vocabulary chosen by him and make students practice with those words online with different kinds of tasks (e.g. flash cards with sound, games) (Quizlet 2016). The internet provides the teacher tools to make his/her teaching more easily personalised to suit every learners' individual needs (Shin and Son 2007). The present study tries to shed some light on how English teachers in Finland and at different levels use these different vocabulary sources.

#### **4.2.2 Vocabulary learning and teaching outside the classroom**

Among things that affect the learning of vocabulary outside the classroom are not only the source for that vocabulary but also the social environment the students are facing. Different things a teacher needs to take into account while encouraging and guiding one's students through this maze, is the subject of the section at hand. While the sources outside the classroom are practically unlimited, nowadays internet and other mobile devices are gaining more and more ground as such sources. For example, social media and video games are two things many young learners use on a daily basis (Lenhart 2015). Social media provides an opportunity for learners to take some control for their own learning environment at the same time as meeting new people (Lenhart 2015, McBride 2009) and incidentally pick up vocabulary on the way as many social media sites (e.g. *Instagram*, *Snapchat*) and video games (e.g. *League of Legends*, *Hearthstone*, *Minecraft*) are in English. Some even postulate that learning this way is more effective (Palfreyman 2011). When learners spend so much of their time online playing or chatting with friends, they are bound to bring some of the vocabulary from these apps and games with them to class. Other important sources for vocabulary coming outside of classroom are learners' talking to a family member or a friend, watching TV, travelling and listening to music (Bailly 2011:124). Learning a language outside of class happens within the learner's social networks and the nature of these networks affects the learning results. For example, comparing learners with parents supporting language learning to those learners whose parents do not, reveals some differences. (Palfreyman 2011).

The effect of social environment has long been a point of discussion in language learning. As a teacher one cannot be sure how big of an impact one's encouragement for studying outside the classroom really has on one's students because outside the classroom, students form their

own social environment. Together with others they collaborate to construct their own personal vocabulary (Kalaja et al. 2011). The challenge for a teacher is incorporating this world outside of class into vocabulary learning and teaching in class. However difficult it might be to connect the learning in and outside the classroom together, it is nonetheless paramount for teachers to at least try to do so in order to ensure successful vocabulary learning and teaching outside the classroom (König 2013:78). The ways in which Finnish teachers of English do this and moreover, how do they view it in relation to their vocabulary teaching are explored in the present study.

#### **4.2.2 Planned and unplanned teaching**

Teaching in general involves several different phases and vocabulary teaching is no exception in this matter. Usually everyone starts with planning and continue on to practice and testing. However, not everything can or should be planned. Previous chapter discussed the vocabulary learning outside of the classroom and when this vocabulary finds its way inside, it surely requires different actions from the teacher. These two different situations of vocabulary teaching are referred to as planned and unplanned teaching. As the present study is interested in providing an opportunity for English teachers to reflect on their vocabulary teaching, it is important to be aware of the differences between these two and provide some insight on how to handle unplanned vocabulary teaching.

Nation (2001:385-391) lists some principles to deliberate when planning one's vocabulary teaching: content and sequencing, format and presentation, and monitoring and assessment. Relating to the previous section and selection of words to teach, one should change the technique one uses to choose the vocabulary from time to time. This way the vocabulary taught would be more versatile. Providing opportunities for VLS training and educating on different aspects of word knowledge is essential. What is more, one should try not to present words out of context but in their natural inhabitant with synonyms and collocations. Nation (2001:2-3) continues that practice should be on all four strands of a well-planned language course, namely meaning-focused input, language focused learning, meaning-focused output and fluency development, which are related to general language learning but discussed in the book from the point of view of vocabulary learning and teaching. The first one relates to offering learning situations where learners get to concentrate on the message of the activity in question while the second one is about explicit teaching and learning of vocabulary. Third one, meaning-focused

output relates means that learners have a chance to practice conveying information in the target language. The fourth strand is realising when “learners do not work with new language; instead, they become more fluent in using items they already know.” (Nation 2001:3). All of these strands should be taken into consideration in vocabulary teaching and in addition, offer “spaced, repeated, generative retrieval” together with opportunities to deeper cognitive processing (Nation 2001:390). According to Nation (2001), there is also a third component to teaching vocabulary: monitoring and assessment. In Nation’s view, the teacher should also test the vocabulary in order to know what vocabulary to focus on. Testing is seen as a motivating tool and it advocates self-reflection on vocabulary learning (Nation 2001).

Nation’s (2001) view is an example of planned teaching and while it is probably the most common way of teaching vocabulary, explicit or incidental, there are bound to be situations of unplanned teaching as well. For example, if a student has read about Australian animals and does not understand some words, he might ask about them from the teacher. In both ways one can use a various set of different teaching strategies to teach vocabulary, which are discussed in section 4.3 more closely. However, there are differences between planned and unplanned vocabulary teaching strategies (Seal 1991, cited in Pavičić Takač 2008:19). The success of spontaneous vocabulary teaching situations is strongly related to how the teacher is able to respond and how he uses spontaneous vocabulary teaching strategies. Seal (1991, cited in Pavičić Takač 2008:19) proposes a three step method to it called *The three C’s*, namely convey, check, and consolidate. Firstly, one conveys the meaning and secondly checks, if the meaning has been understood. Thirdly and finally, the teacher “consolidates the meaning in learner’s memory” (Pavičić Takač 2008:19) through, for example, personalisation or relating it to context. This offers the teacher an opportunity to motivate learners by relating the teaching to the learner’s world. (Seal 1991, cited in Pavičić Takač 2008:19). As discussed in the previous section (4.2.2), vocabulary coming from outside of the classroom, is a great source of motivation for the learners. So particularly interesting in the context of the present study, is how Finnish teachers of English do this and furthermore, how do they take the vocabulary into account and does it in their views make any difference.

### **4.2.3 Different teaching methods and aids in vocabulary teaching**

One aim of the present study is to provide new ideas for language teachers while they are teaching vocabulary. Like any other area in language teaching, the wide variety of learner

characteristics, constantly fluctuating classroom circumstances and the immense flow of new information through the internet and other sources require not only a vast variety of different techniques to teaching vocabulary but also a sense of what works for one as a teacher and for the groups one teaches without forgetting the individual learner. It should be noted that there has been some discussion on what constitutes as a method and what as a technique (See Richards & Rodgers 2014:20-43). For the purpose of the present study, terms ‘method’, ‘technique’ and ‘way’ are used interchangeably when referring to the actions teachers take while teaching vocabulary.

One of the goals of vocabulary teaching is to make students understand the words as wholes, namely connecting the word with its multiple meanings, syntactical constraints, etc. (See chapter 2.1 in the present study for further discussion). Moreover, the purpose of teaching is to make students able to use the words in diverse situations and include opportunities for practising all four strands of a successfully planned language course (Nation 2001:2-3, also discussed in the present study in section 4.2.2): meaning-focused input, language focused learning, meaning-focused output and fluency development. What is more, it is important to provide opportunities for practising the vocabulary through speech and writing not forgetting listening and reading. These goals can be reached using different methods which are discussed next. The methods are presented according to which of the four strands it represents and the distinctions are based on Nation (2001:390). To be clear, however, the present study neither does suggest the distinctions between methods to be definite nor the list of vocabulary teaching methods presented here to be exhaustive, but rather show some of the methods that can be used to teach vocabulary. The present study does not discuss the different methods any further due to being only a small scale study. After presenting the list of different methods, the role of various aids, such as tablets or smart phones, are discussed in relation to vocabulary teaching.

When meaning-focused input tasks are at hand, the focus is on understanding the meaning and message the vocabulary conveys. As a student, one is likely to notice some completely new vocabulary and there might also be some unfamiliar words what induce guessing the meaning from context as well as incidental learning of vocabulary. The teachers’ job is to provide opportunities for this kind of learning. (Nation 2001:390). Suitable activities for practicing this kind of vocabulary knowledge can be, for example, listening to music or TV and having conversations in the foreign language.



While meaning-focused input tasks focus on the message, language focused learning targets the language items themselves. In other words, the learners practice how to write, pronounce and rather restricted practice of use and furthermore, how to use vocabulary learning strategies. Usually, the teachers' role here is significant because language items are presented explicitly. (Nation 2001:390). The vocabulary teaching techniques used here include, for instance, different kind of tasks that require connecting the linguistic sign of a thing to its referent, (e.g. crosswords). An example of a very concrete connecting task is concretely naming different items. For example, while learning names of tools, one puts post-its on them. Language focused vocabulary learning can also consist of mechanical writing of the words on paper, answering student-introduced questions about the topic and translation. Students also learn how to pronounce the words as they may be made to repeat the words out loud in isolation or with context, or they may need to explain what the words mean.

Meaning-focused output is about making the students produce the language in writing. Teachers can provide some supportive input and are to encourage one's students to use vocabulary previously unknown to them. (Nation 2001:390). These kind of activities can include, for example, answering content-related questions, writing a blog individually or together with class and reading different kinds of texts.

Fluency development tasks aim at faster production of language. Therefore, these kinds of tasks usually do not include that many unfamiliar language items and mean to provide a chance for repetition. (Nation 2001:390). Naturally, as language is used for communication and vocabulary is the means for conveying the information used to communicate, when developing one's fluency in using vocabulary, it is a rather social event. So, activities including fluency development can be, for example, group work on a specific theme or drama in different contexts. It can also include different games requiring fast production, like Alias or Scrabble.

Teaching materials and aids help teachers in choosing the right methods for one's students. As has been discussed earlier in the present study, the course book is an important, if not the most important, source for material but the teachers can also use additional sources inside the classroom. However, as has been stated multiple times in the present study, time spent vocabulary learning inside the classroom is simply not enough for successful vocabulary retention (Schmitt 2010). Therefore, the teachers' job is to ensure that his students know about the different sources/ways of acquiring vocabulary outside the classroom. In incidental vocabulary learning, which is more likely to happen outside of the classroom, technology may

play a significant role (Richards & Rodgers 2014:329). The next few paragraphs delve into the use of dictionaries, tablets, smart phones and computers inside the classroom. The use of additional sources for vocabulary outside the classroom are discussed in section 4.2.2 in the present study.

The use of dictionaries in language learning might seem an easy task at first but truthfully, one has to be trained to use a dictionary. The use of a dictionary has been deemed as detrimental to developing other skills important in vocabulary learning, such as guessing from context. Furthermore, while using a bilingual dictionary (e.g. English-Finnish-English), a L2 learner might choose the first alternative in the dictionary although it includes other, more suitable options for the context in question. (Thornbury 2007:60). While traditional book dictionaries have been quite a regular sight inside the language classroom and outside of it in the past, nowadays there are also multiple alternatives for them online. There are both monolingual and bilingual dictionaries out there, such as Oxford English Dictionary (OED 2016) and Google Translator. In addition, there are specialised dictionaries, like thesauri (Thesaurus 2016), or more field specific ones, like a dictionary about accounting (AccountingCoach 2016). However, similarly to traditional book dictionaries, learners have to be trained to use the online versions. It is maybe even more important with the online dictionaries, because there are so many of them and one has to learn which ones provide the most reliable information.

Online dictionaries are a part of the technology that may be in pivotal position while learning vocabulary (Richards & Rodgers 2014) but there are also other electronic aids in vocabulary teaching. Computers, laptops, tablets and smart phones have certainly come to stay inside any classroom and language classroom makes no exception. In Finland the National Curricula obligate the teachers to use electronic devices in teaching (POPS 2014, LOPS 2015) but the teacher can choose how often. Nonetheless, the importance of electronic devices in vocabulary teaching is rising and more and more different kinds of applications (e.g. *Duolingo*) and websites (*Quizlet*) are developed every day. The advantages of such vocabulary work, especially with mobile devices like smart phones and tablets, is that it is significantly faster to look a word up. For more information about the influence of mobile devices in language learning, see e.g. Wu et al. (2012). However, using the electronic sources might induce lack of focus from the learners' part as they might be distracted with other more irrelevant material. In the context of the present study in which teachers of English come from various school levels from elementary to AECs, the age of learners might prove to be a factor to be considered while teaching.

#### 4.2.4 Vocabulary teaching strategies

One can define vocabulary teaching strategies (VTSs) as following:

*“ways in which teachers introduce and present the meaning and the form of new lexical items, encourage learners to review and practice, i.e. recycle what is known, and monitor and evaluate the level of acquisition of various components of lexical knowledge.”*

(Pavičić Takač 2008:19)

Based on research literature, Pavičić Takač (2008:19), has developed two VTS categories, namely “presentation of meaning and form of new lexical items and - - review and consolidation (recycling and practising) of presented lexical items”. He bases his categories on the works of Sökmen (1997), Thornbury (2007), Nation (2001) and Hatch & Brown (2000, cited in Pavičić Takač 2008).

Using a VTS from the first category, presenting meaning and form of new lexical items, the teacher introduces the form and meaning of words in either or order verbally or in non-verbal manner. During these VTSs learners are more or less passive participants. (Pavičić Takač 2008:19-18). These strategies include strategies such as defining meaning which is a broad strategy with many different variants: the meaning definition can be connected to the word’s synonyms or antonym, or it can be given a superordinate term (e.g. *dandelion, hyacinth, and rose are all flowers*). It can also be characterised through example, e.g. *household chores include things like laundering and sweeping* or through grammatical function (e.g. *“Writing is a verb”*). Another strategy is “directly connecting the meaning to real objects or phenomena” (Pavičić Takač 2008:20). For example, a teacher can show *a pen*, write with it and say *a pen*. In addition, one should train learners to pronounce the word and recognise the word from its phonetic transcription and graphic form. (Pavičić Takač 2008).

The second category has to do with consolidation of previously learned lexical items, i.e. the VTS that aim to make learners work on and move previously learned words into long-term memory. According to Schmitt (2000, cited in Pavičić Takač 2008), in order to attain successful learning results, the teacher’s task is to create opportunities for “expanded rehearsal” (Pavičić Takač 2008:21). That is rehearsing the vocabulary again only 5-10 minutes after the first learning situation and then continuing “at gradually increasing intervals” (Pavičić Takač 2008:21). These learning situations aim at reinforce the connections and possibly make new ones in the learner’s mental lexicon. (Pavičić Takač 2008). Some examples of these kinds of VTS are simple repetition, personalisation and semantic elaboration. Simple repetition is as its name already suggests, repeating the words out loud. Tasks requiring deeper cognitive

processing usually yield better learning results are such tasks as simple repetition, nonetheless, also of some benefit in learning new vocabulary. Another useful tool for teachers is to attach some form of personal remark on the word. For example, the word *converse* is also a shoe brand many use nowadays and by looking at your feet, if one is wearing Converse-shoes, one remembers the word *converse* (=to make a conversation). The remark can be anything the learner wants to. (Pavičić Takač 2008). Semantic elaboration in turn refers to semantic mapping, e.g. making a map of *education* (see example in Sökmen 1997:250), or semantic analysis, or ordering (e.g. from general to specific: *plant, dandelion, flower* → *plant* -> *flower* -> *dandelion*), or pictorial schemata. The different ways of semantic elaboration in tasks require relatively deep cognitive processing while also help the learner concretise and incorporate new information into the old. (Sökmen 1997).

While language learning strategies and vocabulary learning strategies have been under scrutiny lately, there is not much research on VTS use and impact on vocabulary learning although it has been recognised as an important variable. The teacher is the one who sets the task for the learners inside the classroom and so makes use of certain VTS, although not necessarily conscious of it, which in turn may impact the use vocabulary learning strategies. The present study addresses this issue by asking Finnish teachers of English about their VTS use. What kind of strategies are the most common ones and what is in the background when choosing these particular strategies are questions asked from teachers. The aim is to find out if there is a difference between different levels of education and teachers with different amount of teaching experience, and furthermore, on what grounds they choose the strategy they use.

#### **4.2.5 Assessing vocabulary knowledge**

While the teacher chooses the method, one often plans also how one assesses the vocabulary knowledge of one's students. Testing vocabulary knowledge is not a piece of cake as the first problem has already been discussed, i.e. what is involved when knowing a word. Another problem is what is counted as words, e.g. do multiword items, such as idioms, count as one or multiple words. Moreover, designing a test that encompasses all or most of Nation's (2001) and Ringbom's (1991) aspects of knowing a word is rather a difficult task and may not even be sensible. The present study asked what kind of role testing has in vocabulary teaching of Finnish teachers of English. Furthermore, it was asked if and how they relate the vocabulary coming outside of the classroom into testing. The following section will briefly discuss the

what and why of vocabulary assessment and furthermore, what kind of test types there are used in class. It does not touch upon test taken for additional purposes, such as Cambridge First Certificate or TOEFL, since they are not relevant for the present study and as it is, beyond the magnitude of the present study.

As has many times been noted in the present study and other studies, vocabulary is an extremely large entity to be learnt from the learner's perspective and an important one too. Learners tend to dedicate a significant amount of time to learning vocabulary as they see learning vocabulary as primary way of learning a language. Thus, in order for students to be able to measure their own progress and for teachers to be able to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching, learners need to be tested. (Read 2000:1, Milton 2009:248). Successful vocabulary learning requires feedback and testing is one way of giving it (Thornbury 2007:129). In addition, it provides an opportunity to encounter the word again, i.e. recycling vocabulary, which has been recognised a fundamental requirement of learning (Thornbury 2007:129).

Read (2000) presents three dimensions to vocabulary assessment: discrete-embedded, selective-comprehensive and context-independent and context-dependent. The first one, discrete-embedded, considers what "mental attribute or ability that a test is designed to measure" (Read 2000:8). While discrete tests are used to assess word knowledge in isolation of its context, embedded tests are used as a part of a larger construct (Read 2000). For example, a traditional test asking to translate words from a language to another is a discrete test while a test, where one is asked to write a correct word with the help of context. Secondly, when a test tests certain words that are selected by the test writer, usually the teacher, it is called selective whereas when it tests a broader and considers all vocabulary used in a task, it is comprehensive. For example, tests about a vocabulary list of a specific chapter in a course book is selective but the essay one writes in matriculation examination, where all vocabulary is taken into account, is comprehensive. The third and final dimension of Read's (2000), is about the role of context. A traditional test of translating from one language to another without any context is naturally context-independent since it requires the learner to produce the word without referring to any context. On the contrary, when the test requires the learner to interpret context in order to being able to choose the correct alternative, the test is context-dependent. (Read 2000:8-13). However, as nearly everything in the field of linguistic, the model presented by Read (2000) is not applicable in every situation and may need some adjustment (Milton 2009:9).

Defining a word is an intricate subject not to mention the complexity of knowing of a word. Vocabulary tests should include as many as possible of the different aspects of vocabulary knowledge and also the depth and breadth of it (Thornbury 2007). Thornbury (2007) lists a few possible vocabulary test types: multiple choice test and gap-filling tests both of which assess vocabulary qualitatively, i.e. how well vocabulary is learned. In addition, vocabulary can be assessed quantitatively. Multiple choice tests include a set of alternatives for the correct answer and can be used with context or isolated words or as words within a whole text. They are easy to score and organise but at the same time offer students an opportunity to get the right answer through eliminating the wrong alternatives or just guessing. In addition, they only test the recognition of a word leaving production untouched. In comparison, gap-filling tests are used to assess production instead of mere recognition. More specifically, they test the learners' ability to recall the word from memory. Cloze tests are perhaps the most well-known example of these: in them, every fifth or sixth etc. word is deleted and one has to fill in the correct one with the help of context. Cloze tests test both lexical and grammatical words but it does not take into account, for example, the frequency of a word. In quantitative test, the teacher assesses the lexical density (i.e. how many content words within a text), lexical variety (i.e. how many different words within a text) and lexical sophistication (i.e. how many infrequent words within a text). (Thornbury 2007:129-143). A good example of this kind of test is the essay one writes in matriculation examination here in Finland. For more discussion about these test types and others, see Thornbury (2007:129-143).

## **5 PREVIOUS STUDIES ON VOCABULARY TEACHING AND LEARNING**

As the interest on vocabulary has risen over the last few decades, has teaching of vocabulary received its share of the interest. Nation and Schmitt together with many others have produced many studies on what are the best ways to teach vocabulary. Of course, the views of different researchers do not always match and as the participants in the present study, they have different opinions on, for example, which words to teach. Chapter 5 presents few of the latest studies on vocabulary teaching from the global perspective and later on, what has been of interest in Finland. The main focus is on the opinions and perceptions of teachers and how they say they

teach vocabulary. What is more, some studies on learning vocabulary outside the classroom are included under these headings.

In his study, Macalister (2012) investigated what kind of beliefs Malaysian teacher students had about vocabulary teaching and what indications these beliefs have in the participants' descriptions of imagined teaching. In addition, the beliefs were then compared to those of teacher educators and it was anticipated that the beliefs of teacher students are at least partially in line with those of teacher educators. There were three groups of participants: 60 teacher students from Malaysia, 16 teacher educators from Malaysia and 6 from New Zealand. All teacher students took part in a survey with 11 Malaysian teacher educators and furthermore, 12 teacher students and every teacher educator took part in an interview. The results from Macalister's (2012) study shows, among other things, that although nearly every teacher student mentioned vocabulary learning as a fundamental aspect to language learning in the interview, they did not explicitly mention it in their descriptions of imagined teaching. Macalister (2012) discussed that the teacher students had no means to execute the theoretical knowledge they possessed. Additionally, the results suggested that professional training had an impact on teacher students' cognition about language teaching (Macalister 2012:107). The present study tries to establish how Finnish teachers of English do this and also, see if and how they apply the theoretical knowledge about vocabulary teaching they received from their formal training into the classroom.

While the interviewees in Macalister's (2012) did not explicitly notify the importance of vocabulary in the imagined teaching sessions, Zhang (2008) wanted to know how well aware Chinese EFL university teachers were about different ways of teaching vocabulary. In more detail, Zhang (2008) studied the opinions of seven teachers about vocabulary learning, how they understand vocabulary teaching and the source of this information as well as how the knowledge of different ways to teach vocabulary are realised. The data came from interviews of the teachers, classroom observations and stimulated recall. The findings show that the teachers have a wide and diverse knowledge base on how to teach and learn vocabulary gathered from various sources. Sources with most influence were formal EFL education and teaching practices. Moreover, these ways are realised in their actual teaching practices.

In her study, Shen (2003) investigated the VTSSs and VLSs currently being used to teach vocabulary. The study began by reviewing the status of vocabulary in English language teaching pedagogy in general and continued with an analysis of the pros and cons of accessing

and retaining vocabulary in either contextualised or de-contextualised way based on the research literature. VTSs were discussed in greater detail and she postulated that many Asian teachers of English use rather limited number of VTSs which often present words out of context. In contrast, Ameri & Suhail (2013) observed in their thesis study that Emirati teachers are well aware of different VTSs and use a wide variety of them. The data for the study was collected using both interviews (N=7) and questionnaires (N=197). It is interesting to see if this also the case in Finnish classrooms too. This section of previous research concentrated on studies around the major focus points of the present study. However, after searching various sources and to my knowledge, there could not be found studies on teachers' opinions about vocabulary coming into the classroom and do they see it as an asset or a distraction. Thus, these questions will be covered as a part of the present study.

Again one could not find studies with the exact same focus, done in the Finnish context as the present study but the studies made have concentrated more on general language learning or teachers' role in EFL classroom. One Finnish study has been made about how well university students notice different learning opportunities in their environment including both English and Swedish students (Kalaja et al. 2011). Kalaja et al. (2011) were particularly interested in where students said to have learned languages and which resources they took advantage of while doing so. Things learned about languages in school were unsurprisingly vocabulary and grammar and course books were the most often mentioned sources for language learning. When asked about learning beyond the classroom, students reported having learned especially vocabulary outside the classroom walls and that their listening skills had improved there too. It will be interesting to see how well Finnish teachers of English are aware of this phenomena and whether or not it affects their teaching.

Alanen et al. (2013) investigated nearly graduated teacher students' opinions about learning environment, artefacts and interaction and their relation to EFL teaching through visual narratives. Teacher students generally regarded their role to be more of an instructor and/or supporter of language learning rather than being the one in control. Differences could be found how actively they took part during their imagined classes: others had more teacher-centred views while others wanted to take part in the action. When Alanen et al. (2013) compared their results to a previous study by Kalaja et al. (2008), which studied younger university students' opinions, were results very different. It can be interpreted as development of teacher identity during the students' studies. Of course this development will continue during one's career as a



teacher which is why the present study wanted to provide an opportunity for self-improvement as teachers and more specifically, as teachers of vocabulary.

## **6 DATA AND METHODS**

The present study set out to uncover how some Finnish teachers of English teach vocabulary in their classrooms and more specifically, how they relate it to the vocabulary their students learn outside the classroom. In addition, the use of vocabulary teaching strategies was investigated. The main aim was to understand how Finnish teachers of English see vocabulary teaching as a whole and in addition, be a self-reflection tool for these teachers. Secondary goal was to provide the participating teachers an opportunity to reflect on their vocabulary teaching. To attain more in-depth knowledge on the opinions of a few particular teachers, an interview was selected as the research method instead of a questionnaire and thus, the present study is qualitative in nature. This decision is discussed later on in the chapter. In the following chapter, I will first describe the research questions and aims of the present study followed by detailed description of the data collection method and the participants. Finally, section 6.4 distinguishes the methods used to analyze the data of the present study.

### **6.1 Research questions and aims**

Learning a vocabulary of a language is an enormous task for the learner and often it has proven to be too much of a burden to tackle on one's own. At this point, the teacher comes into the picture. The learning and teaching of vocabulary has been of high interest during the last decades in research (see e.g. Pavičić Takač 2008, Chacon-Beltran et al. 2010) but, especially in the Finnish context, at least to my knowledge, no studies have asked teachers to self-reflect on their own vocabulary teaching. With learners becoming more and more active language learners also outside the classroom and English spreading everywhere, it is also essential for the teacher to try to connect this outside world to the classroom. What the situation is now in the classrooms of few Finnish teachers of English and how they view it are the central themes in the present study. What is more, the present study aimed to find out what kind of vocabulary teaching strategies Finnish teachers use as they have not been of major interest in research in general although some studies have suggested their importance in, for example, learners' choice of VTSs (O'Malley and Chamot 1990). Hence, the research questions of the present study were the following:

1. How do Finnish teachers of English describe their classroom vocabulary teaching and how do they view it in relation to vocabulary coming outside of the classroom?
2. What kind of vocabulary teaching strategies do the teachers say they employ and why?

It is presumed based on the evidence presented by Luukka (2008) and Elomaa (2009) that a course book is still an essential part in teaching of English in Finland. Therefore, in the wake of new National Core Curricula (POPS 2014, LOPS 2015) beginning to come into effect in 2016 and changing the guidelines of teaching to include more diverse teaching environments and demand more generally applicable skills from the learner, it might be beneficial for teachers to reflect on their teaching practices. To be able to delve into the issue of vocabulary coming outside of the classroom, one must be aware of how the participants view teaching of vocabulary in general.

## **6.2 Data collection**

One important decision in the making of the present study was the choice of data collection method. It came down to two options: a questionnaire or an interview. With a questionnaire, the research design is much more restricted while an interview allows a more fluent approach to asking questions (Dörnyei 2007). Moreover, an interview makes it possible to achieve a deeper understanding of the issue from the interviewee's perspective (Peräkylä & Ruusuvaori 2011:529, Hirsjärvi et al. 2009:200), whereas in questionnaires the knowledge might be left to a more superficial level as there might not be a chance for additional questions. For example, the teachers were asked if they utilise vocabulary coming from outside of the classroom and if they did not, then why. The subject might be hard for the interviewees to grasp so asking elaborative questions was needed. To further illustrate this, Dörnyei (2007:37) names this kind of flexibility in research design, namely "its emergent nature", as one of the most often mentioned features of qualitative research. Interviews are also often used to investigate the opinions, perceptions, observations, attitudes, values and/or experiences (Lähdesmäki et al. 2016, Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2008). During interviews it is easier to ask additional questions and interview as a data collection is often used to explore opinions and views, it was chosen as the data collection method for the present study.

In more detail, the interview method of the present study was a semi-structured interview. The questions and order of them were more or less the same for the interviewees but as some questions were answered within answering another question, some questions were left out

altogether. Although the interviews concentrated around a specific theme, i.e. vocabulary teaching, but included specific questions in more or less the same order and wording, they do not fully claim the title of ‘themed interview’ (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2008:47-48). Before conducting the interviews, the interview was piloted with a two fellow teacher students. The study and interviews were advertised through an email-list for Finnish teachers of English and the participants were selected on the basis of chronological order of responses and towards the end, by how many participants there already were from that school level (e.g. upper secondary school). The interviews were mainly conducted through Skype, which enabled a geographically wider range of participants. One of the ten interviews was conducted on a face-to-face encounter, one through phone and the eight other interviews were conducted through Skype. After initial contact, I sent every interviewee the interview questions (Appendix 1) and a list of VTSs (Appendix 2). The language of the interviews was Finnish since it was the first language of both the interviewer and the interviewees. All interviews were recorded by either the interviewer’s computer or phone and later on transcribed (more in section 6.4). The data was collected in the final weeks of March 2016 and the beginning of April 2016.

As mentioned above, the goal of the present study was to find common nominators in Finnish teachers’ of English responses to interview questions about vocabulary teaching and learning. The interview was structured in the way that the interviewees were first asked questions about their teaching experience and background. Next, the interviewees were asked to define a word and the learning of a word was discussed through a few questions about consciousness’ effect in learning and furthermore, vocabulary learning strategies. Finally, the third part of the interview delved into teaching of vocabulary. Source for words, the teaching methods, testing and use of VTS were among things asked about but most questions concentrated on vocabulary coming outside of the classroom and how different teachers saw it. In other words, the interview concentrated around one theme and the data was analysed thematically. The interview questions can be found in Appendix 1.

### **6.3 Participants**

The requirements for being able to participate in the present study were that the participants were teachers of English and that they had had formal training to do that. Formal training was seen as one of the most influential sources for information that affects the actual teaching of vocabulary in Zhang’s (2008) study. Otherwise the choice was not too strict because I wanted to ensure the diversity of data. Furthermore, I wanted to gain a wholesome understanding of

the phenomenon of English vocabulary teaching in Finland. The tertiary level of education, namely universities and polytechnics, were excluded from the study as the present study is only a small scale study and data is already large enough for this particular scale of study.

In the present study, originally there were ten (10) participants from around Finland. One of the ten interviews had to be omitted from the data due to poor quality of recording, so the final data came from nine (9) interviews. Both genders were represented and to maintain the anonymity of the participants, the names of the schools and other possible indications of identity were faded out during the analysis process. One of the teachers taught in elementary school and one in lower secondary school. Three teachers were teaching in upper secondary school and one at vocational school. There were also three teachers from adult education centres (AEC). The amount of teaching experience varied from roughly one year to 32 years and most of them had some experience from outside of the current level they taught at. The participants are more closely discussed in the beginning of chapter 7.

#### **6.4 Methods of analysis**

Firstly, the data was transcribed. As the present study is not concerned with the language use or interaction but rather is interested in the content of the answers, the transcription was made with word to word accuracy. In the transcription phase, I noticed that in one of the recordings, the quality of sound was so poor that it had to be omitted from the data. After transcription was done, the data was analysed through steps described by Hirsjärvi & Hurme (2008): description, classification, and combining. Usually interviews are analysed qualitatively. When trying to find common nominators, such as themes, categories or types, the term ‘content analysis’ is often used. (Dufva 2011:139). Taking the main aims and research questions into account, content analysis was chosen as the method of analysis. The data was analysed in a way that the anonymity of the research subjects remained intact.

After the transcription and in the description phase, the analysis began by reading and marking the questions and answers. The purpose of this phase is to answer questions who, what, when, how much and how often in relation to the research questions and to describe the attributes of the research subject (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2008:145). Next, I classified the answers into categories risen from the data. The categories were based on “selected aspects of meaning, namely those aspects that relate to the overall research question” and are called coding frames (Schreier 2014). According to Schreier (2014), qualitative content analysis can mix concept-

and data-driven categories, namely categories based on presumptions made before the analyse and categories rising from the data, and it may adjust the coding frame while doing the analysis. In the present study, coding frames, i.e. categories, were based mostly on the interview questions. Following the description of data, it was combined. That is to say, I tried to find some similarities and regularities among the answers. Finally, the results were interpreted in relation to previous research presented in chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the present study and research questions of the present study. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2008). During the final stages of the analysis process, I noticed a that part of VTSs in the original list had been left out of the list distributed to teachers participating in the present study. Therefore, the validity of the answers by teachers was compromised and thus, VTSs and their use will be discussed only briefly and not interpreted at all.

## **7 ENGLISH TEACHERS' VIEW ON THEIR VOCABULARY TEACHING**

This chapter both presents and discusses the results under the themes of teachers' perceptions about word and its learning in section 7.1. Section 7.2 continues on the practices teachers had for vocabulary teaching and finally, section 7.3 discusses how vocabulary coming from outside the classroom relates to the general teaching practices. The first questions of the interview concentrated on the teachers' professional background. They were asked where they taught at the moment and whether or not they had taught English anywhere else. In Table 5 (page 63), the participants are introduced based on their answers on the background questions (Appendix 1). From here on the participants are referred to as H1-H9.

As one can see, the amount of experience varied from an impressive 32 years to 1 year. Most teachers had taught English the same amount of time they had any teaching experience which was expected given the educational demands Finland has for its teachers (see Finlex 14.12.1998/1998). The assumption in the context of the present study was that the amount of experience affects the teaching practices different teachers have. Moreover, the school level might have an effect on the practices as their students come from different age groups. For example, do the VTSs teachers use vary according to the level they teach at or do they have different views on definition of a word according to amount of teaching experience they have. Five teachers, H1, H2, H4, and H6, had 20+ years of experience and apart from H2, everyone had taught English the same number of years. H8 and H9 both had 9 years of teaching experience. H9 had been teaching before she became a formally qualified English teacher but only the experience as formally qualified teacher was taken into account. Two teachers, H3 and H5, both taught in upper secondary school and had 2 years and 1 year of experience. The idea behind English L1 friends or relatives was that these friends may affect how the teachers see language and its learning and thus, affect their definitions of a word and teaching of vocabulary.

Table 5: Answers to background questions

	<b>H1</b>	<b>H2</b>	<b>H3</b>	<b>H4</b>	<b>H5</b>	<b>H6</b>	<b>H7</b>	<b>H8</b>	<b>H9</b>
<b>Teaching experience</b>	28 years	32 years	2 years	25 years	1 year	27 years	24 years	9 years	9 years
<b>Teaching experience in English</b>	28 years	31 years	2 years	25 years	1 year	27 years	24 years	9 years	9 years
<b>Teaching level now</b>	Lower secondary school	Adult education centre	Upper secondary school	Adult education centre	Upper secondary school	Adult education centre	Elementary school	Upper secondary school	Vocational school
<b>Teaching experience somewhere else</b>	Upper secondary school	Elementary, lower secondary, upper secondary school	Lower secondary school	Vocational school, polytechnic, revision class (10 <sup>th</sup> grade)	None	None	None	Elementary, lower secondary school	Adult vocational school
<b>English L1 friends</b>	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No

## 7.1 Teachers' understanding of a word as a concept and how it is learned

When asked to define a word, most of the participating teachers defined it as a unit of language. More precisely, a unit that expresses meaning in language (Examples 1 and 2). Some teachers, like H1, went even further and distinguished that the meaning of word is an expression to which other words can relate to and together they form a new meaning (Example 3).

(e1) H4: mä määrittelen sanan sillä lailla että se on kielen yksittäinen merkitystä kantava yksikkö. / *I define a word as a single unit of language that carries meaning.*

(e2) H7: No mä sen ajattelin näin että se on semmonen niinkun pienin ymmärrettävä yksikkö mikä kielestä löytyy jotenkin tällä tavalla - - Et sillä on niinku merkitys myös. Kielen merkityksellinen ja ymmärrettävä yksikkö. / *Well I think it is like the smallest, somehow understandable unit of language which carries meaning. A meaningful and understandable unit of language.*

(e3) H1: No niinku ku lause voidaan niinku jaetaan muodostuu sanoista niin näin mä niinku yksinkertaisesti ajattelen että sanat jotka on siinä ne yksiköt on ne jotka on sanoja. / *Well, in a simplified way, a sentence can be divided and it is made of words and words are the units in there are words.*

So, most of the teachers (8 out of 9 teachers, henceforth presented as following 8/9) support the views of McCarthy (1994) and Carter (1998), namely a word being the smallest unit of language that has meaning. However, while some teachers defined a word only by its meaning, some teachers leaned onto a more orthographic (Carter 1998) point of view of a word (Example 4):

(e4) H8: Mä ehkä sit vaan aattelen et se sana on siis tämmönen kokonaisuus. Yksittäinen tai voi olla pitempiäkin kokonaisuuksia. - - Siis kyl mä aattelin ku lukiossa varsinkin lasketaan sanoja niin sana on kaikki muut paitsi ne välimerkit. Ja sitten että artikkelikin on sana. Siis näin. / *I maybe just think that a word is an entity. It can form of a single word or be longer. - - Especially in upper secondary school where one counts words, a word is everything but the punctuation marks.*

Many teachers included both the semantic and orthographic way in their definitions, but only few (3/9), like H8 in Example 4, mentioned that a word can consist of multiple units. What is more, H5 was the only teacher who incorporated the concept of a word family (Nation 2001), namely the derivatives and inflections of a word, in one's definition. In addition, H7 mentioned that a word can be either spoken or written while H2 talked about the use and word class of a word.

Conclusively, the most prominent feature of defining a word is the meaning it carries according to teachers taking part in this study. Another often mentioned characteristic was the idea of it being some kind of a unit in a language. While none mentioned the possible issue of polysemy



(Carter 1998), some talked about multiple meanings later on in the interview. One possible reason for this is that often the initial response is to think of words as single entities which have one meaning and which are just letters bound by spaces. While any major differences between teachers teaching at different levels could be detected, upper secondary school teachers (H3, H5, H9) were slightly more tied up to the orthographic definition than others as they all mentioned it in one way or another. This may be due to the fact that they often have to voice this definition to their students, as matriculation exams require the students to count words (see Example 4). Moreover, words are often presented in isolation in vocabulary lists which adds to the de-contextualised view of words. Because teachers often define a word based on meaning and it being 'a unit', it is bound to have some impact on the way they teach. As one can see from the results presented in chapter 7.2, many teachers make use of communicative language teaching in which the meaning words convey plays an enormous role since the words are the means through which communication is done.

The communicative aspect can also be seen from the answers to question seven, namely what the teachers require from their students so that they can say they *know* a word. Nation (2001, Table 1) and Ringbom (1991, Table 2) illustrated the different constraints while acknowledging the fact that it is impossible for the learner to be familiar with all constraints of every word. They rather agreed with Nation (1990) and Ringbom (1991) that there are different levels to knowing a word. Most of the teachers participating in the present study were well aware of these different levels and some distinguished between them by referring to receptive and productive knowing of a word (Melka 1997, McCarthy 1998, Nation 1990). As one can see from Examples 5 and 6, the level of learners affects the way teachers H1 and H6 define knowing a word.

(e5) H1: No se vaatii kyllä aika paljon että. Ääntäminen, sitten ekaks ehkä tunnistaminen et tunnistaa sanan sitten osaa ääntää sen suhtkoht oikein, ja suomentaa kääntää molemminpäin esimerkiksi englannissa, ja sitten osaa käyttää sitä lauseessa - - No kyllä useammassakin, kyl mä ysiluokallaisten kanssa katotaan myös tätä kun sanalla voi olla monia käyttö vaikka niinku sana paper että sitä voi olla monessa paikassa et kyl me puhutaan ihan tämmösistäkin joskus. / *Well, that requires quite a lot. Pronunciation, then maybe first the recognition, namely that one recognises the word and can pronounce it more or less correctly and can translate it both ways in English and can use it in a sentence. - - Well in more than one. We occasionally discuss multiple meanings of a word with 9th graders. As an example the word 'paper'.*

(e6) H6: No ainakin yksi merkitys pitää tietää sille sanalle. Ja öömm sitten pitää tunnistaa se kirjoitusasu, jos nyt ajatellaan englantia, ja pitäs tietää myöskin miten se äännetään. - - Tietysti sitten ylemmällä tasolla voi tietää niitä useampiakin merkityksiä mutta ainakin se yksi merkitys. / *Well, one has to know at least one meaning for the word. One must also be able to recognise how it is spelled, if we think about English*

*now, and also, how it is pronounced. - - Of course in the more advanced levels one can know multiple meanings.*

H7 and H8 also supported the distinction of receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge:

(e7) H7: *no ehkä mä tarjoon ehkä mä tarkotan sillä tunnistamisella sitä että sä tiität sen sanan merkityksen et sä kuulet tai näät sen kirjoitettuna niin sä tiedät mistä sanasta on kysymys. - - Et lähetään sillä tunnistamisella. - - Tietää merkityksen sille sanalle. Välttämättä se ei tarkota sitä että sun pitää muistaa se aktiivisesti, niinku että sä pystyt sen itse tuottamaan. / Well with recognition I mean that one knows a meaning for that word when one hears or sees it and you know what is being talked about. - - One begins with recognition. - - One knows a meaning for that word. It does not necessarily mean that one has to remember it actively, that is to say, one has to be able to use it.*

(e8) H3: *No tuota jos puhutaan vieraskielisestä sanasta niin pitää osata kirjoitusasu, pitää tietää mitä se on suomeksi tai sillä opetuskielellä mikä se nyt sitten onkaan ja sitten myös pitää osata käyttää sitä oikein - - Tietysti siinä on sitten eri kielellisiä tasoja mutta varmaan jos sen yleisimmän siis kaikista yleisimmän merkityksen tietää nii voi jo sanoa että tietää sitten sen sanan. / Well, if one talks about a word in a foreign language, one has to know how to spell it, what it is in Finnish or the language of instruction whatever it is, and one has to know how to use it correctly. - - Of course there are the different levels of language competence but if one knows the most generic meaning of the word, one can say one knows the word.*

There were not any clear differences between teachers from different levels as can be seen from the examples above: H1 teaches in lower secondary school, H6 teaches in an AEC, H7 in elementary school and H3 in upper secondary school. There were also no clear distinctions between teachers with different amount of teaching experience. So, according to the present study, Finnish teachers of English do know the different elements involved in word definition and knowing it. However, based on the answers in this study, the participants did not require associative knowledge (Nation 1990, Ringbom 1991) from their students as no one mentioned this type of vocabulary knowledge in their answers. This may be due to lack of time in class but also due to lack of preparation for the interview. Regardless of the reason, in my opinion it might be beneficial for students if they were required to think of associations as they would leave a personalised mark on the words in question and so, be more easily retained.

How teachers saw the retention of vocabulary happening was the topic of the next question. All teachers felt that vocabulary can be learned incidentally through, for instance, music or reading. Yet many teachers (6/9) supported the findings of, for example, Schmitt (2008, 2010), Laufer (2005, cited in Schmitt 2008) and Madrigal-Hopes et al. (2014), that vocabulary is retained better by explicit teaching and learning. Especially upper secondary school teachers thought that the burden of vocabulary learning is so large that one has to consciously and explicitly put effort into learning it.

(e9) H5: Noo kyllä sitä tapahtuu tiedostamattakin, mutta hirveen paljon vähemmän. Eli esimerkiksi että lukiotasolla oppii sitä sanastoa kurssista toiselle ja kappaleesta toiselle niin kyllä se vaatii ihan tietoista ponnistelua. Ihan jo senkin takia että lukiotasolla ne sanastot on niin laajoja ja niitä sanastoja on paljon mitä pitää o opetella suhteellisen lyhyessä ajassa niin siihen pitää ihan panostaa - - ja opetella ihan omallakin ajalla. / *It can happen unconsciously too, but not as much. In upper secondary school where you hop from one course and chapter to another, it does require conscious effort. Just because the vocabularies in upper secondary school are so broad and much has to be learned in a short amount of time that one has to put effort in it - - and study on one's free time.*

The breadth and difficulty of vocabulary were the main reasons for teachers to view explicit learning as very important aspect. Incidental learning was seen as somewhat an additional way of learning and by no means the main way of learning new vocabulary. In addition, many teachers thought that incidental learning was a bit problematic in a school setting since it requires quite a lot of input to be successful. A lot of input is needed to achieve the needed amount of encounters with the specific words in order for them to be retained. This supports the findings of Elgort & Warren (2014) and Brown, Waring & Donkaewbua (2008). However, as H9 put it, an advantage of incidental learning is that it can offer a student to experience an epiphany while discovering the word – an opportunity that rises from within their own minds together with the word source rather than from the situation a teacher has constructed.

The next few questions were about the teaching of VLSs. Firstly, the teachers were asked a general question of whether they teach VLSs. Every teacher responded that they do teach them, but there were some differences in how necessary they viewed VLSs to be. H1 was strongly against of using a lot of time and effort to teaching different kind of VLSs as he did not see the benefits of them. He used VLSs which did not require a lot of user training and were relatively simple. For instance, he mentioned a rather simple one of marking the difficult words in a word list and then studying them. In Oxford's (1990) taxonomy, this strategy is a combination of MEM (memory) strategy of grouping words together and COG (cognitive) strategy of simple repetitive reading.

(e10) H1: No joitain, semmosia mitkä mä oon ite jotka on omasta mielestä tarpeeks yksinkertasia eikä aiheuta liikaa vaivaa. Ihan tosi simppeleitä juttuja. Mun mielestä ei oo mitään syytä olla kertomatta niistä. - - jos sä luet sanakokeeseen nii mitä alkeellisimpia versioita on että sä peität ne sanat ja sitten sä merkkat rastilla sanat jotka ei millään tahdo jäädä merkille kirjotat ne sitten erikseen johonkin ja opettelet vain niitä. / *Some. The ones that I have or those I think are simple enough and do not require too much effort. Very simple stuff. There is no reason for me to not to tell about them. - - If one is studying for a word quiz, the simplest things one can do is to mark the words unfamiliar or difficult and then write them down somewhere and study only them.*

Generally speaking, memory strategies were the most commonly taught VLSs. Three teachers, H3, H4, and H5 mentioned grouping of words under different categories. For example, H3 told (Example 11) that she has asked her students to group words according to their supposed usefulness, difficulty and also, what was only mentioned by H3, how nice the words are in the students' opinion. Also often mentioned memory VLSs were different word games and reading out loud. In addition, analyzing word parts, which is a determination VLS, was mentioned by H4, H5, H6, H8, and H9. Generally, one can see that this strategy was common with older students as H1 who is a lower secondary school teacher and H7 who is an elementary school teacher did not mention this one. What is more, guessing from context was mentioned relatively often as a VLS as it was mentioned by three teachers, H6, H8, and H9.

(e11) H3: mä yleensä kyllä kotona pyydän merkkaillemaan sanoja elikkä tavallaan sellasta että ei vaan lukis niitä läpi vaan että myös vähän ryhmittelis niitä esimerkiks että mitkä on näistä uusia sanoja mitkä on vaikeimpia tai mitkä on sun mielestä hyödyllisimpiä ja joskus oon pyytäny myös merkkaillemaan mitkä on kivoimpia sanoja. / *I usually ask them to mark words home so that they do not just read the words but they would group them according to how new the words are to them, what are the most difficult ones and also words that are the most useful or the nicest ones in their own opinion.*

Interestingly, not many teachers said they took advantage of the social environment in the classroom. Only H4 and H6 mentioned some social VLSs (Example 12). H4, who teaches at an AEC, told that she organises an event every few years where students come and exchange useful learning techniques VLSs included. These findings support the findings of Fomicheva (2015). The low usage of social VLSs could be explained by the fact that the teachers did not regard, for example, asking a teacher or a partner, as VLSs. It may be such a self-evident strategy that they simply did not regard asking for the definition or other social strategies as VLSs. It might have been more beneficial if they had received a list of VLSs beforehand, as they did with VTSs. Nonetheless, here might lie a point for improvement as teachers because the social environment provides various different kinds of opportunities for vocabulary learning. Similarly, to social strategies, meta-cognitive strategies, such as using music or continuing to study the words over time, were only briefly mentioned. Only H9 told her students to look for words outside the classroom (Example 13).

(e12) H4: Ja toisaalta myöskin sitten mä oon pitänyt meidän oppilaitoksessa semmosia niinkun oppi- mä en kutsu niitä oppimisstrategiapäiviksi vaan oppimisniisien semmonen vaihto semmonen tilaisuus jossa tulee kielten opiskelijat paikalle ja keskustellaan milläläilla mitkä ois hyviä oppimisniksejä ja toisaalta sitten annan itse itse tuota sen oman työni pohjalta yleisiksi ja yleisimpiä mitkä olen hyväksi havainnut. / *And I also organise these not learning strategy event but an event where language students can exchange and we discuss good learning techniques and I also share useful techniques myself.*

(e13) H9: ja sitten aina yritän kehottaa siihen et pitävät silmät auki ku liikkuvat koska englantia on kielenä semmonen että sitä on niinku joka puolella niin tota siihenkin pyrin aktivoimaan et ymmärtäisivät kattoo sitä englantia mikä löytyy sieltä luokkahuoneen ulkopuoleltakin. / *And I always try to tell them to keep their eyes open when they move around because English as a language can be met everywhere and that way I try to activate them that they would notice English also outside the classroom.*

Regarding the teaching of VLSs, the teachers were asked about how much time they dedicated towards it. Most of the teachers (7/9) said that they did not dedicate a lot of time for teaching VLSs and many said that they were taught only when a need for them was obvious. For example, H2 and H5 said they taught them when a course started and when needed. H9 taught a few lessons of student counseling where VLSs were recapped and this happened once during upper secondary school. H4 and H7 stood out because they said they used quite a lot of time for teaching VLSs. In the case of H4, who teaches at an AEC, this can partly be explained by the fact that she had written her own Master's thesis on VLSs and thus, was familiar with the effect they might have on learning. H7 on the other hand teaches in an elementary school where students are young and only beginning to learn English and where they are supposed to at least familiarise themselves with VLSs. Maybe this is why those who teach older students or in higher levels of education do not use a lot of time or effort to teach VLSs; they assume that their students are already familiar with VLSs. However, as the research, for example, Nation and Moir (2008) suggests, students are generally not very efficient users of VLSs and should, therefore, be trained to use them efficiently. What is more, Schmitt (1997) shows that the type of VLSs might change according to the learners' age which supports the need to continue teaching of VLSs on higher levels and with older students as well.

As a whole, teachers do teach VLSs to their students but do so quite rarely. As can be seen from the examples, the teaching of VLSs is very much related to students' age and level and so, concentrates on lower levels of education and language proficiency. It seems though that teachers participating in the present study have at least partly forgotten how important strategies can be in vocabulary learning especially from the learners' perspective and that learners actually need to be trained to use them on a regular basis (Moir and Nation 2008). The results of the present study also indicate that the findings by Fomicheva (2015) are a reality inside the actual classrooms in Finland too, since most of the VLSs the teachers taught were indeed memory strategies whereas social VLSs received practically no mentions. One can only speculate the reasons behind but it may be due to the fact that generally, using social teaching methods often requires quite a lot of effort in the planning phase from the teacher. Nonetheless,

the socialness of learning environment has been somewhat neglected resource and may need to be reconsidered as an asset in vocabulary learning.

## **7.2 How teachers describe their vocabulary teaching**

One of the key interests in the present study was to get an overview of English vocabulary teaching in today's Finland from the perspective of teachers. At this point it must be mentioned that as the research method of the present study was interview, the answers presented here might illustrate the ideals every teacher has about teaching vocabulary and might not reflect their actual teaching methods inside the classroom. Firstly, the teachers answered questions about the choice of words and what they regard as the most important points in vocabulary teaching. Next, they were asked what kind of vocabulary teaching methods they used and how explicit or incidental they saw their own teaching. Finally, they were asked about testing vocabulary. The first section (7.2.1) revolves around these issues while the second one (7.2.2) discusses the use of vocabulary teaching strategies (VTSs).

### **7.2.1 Finnish teachers' view on their English vocabulary teaching**

There was one source for words that every teacher mentioned – a course book. Every teacher mentioned it as their main source for words. Some used other series of course books and recycling of familiar vocabulary as additional sources. However important the course books were to the teachers, there could be detected a slight distinction between teachers who taught at an elementary, lower secondary and upper secondary school and between those who taught at an AEC and a vocational school. The first group was very closely tight up with the course book (Example 14) whereas the second group was more free in their choice although also mentioning course books (Example 15). An exception to this division was H2, who teaches at an AEC and cited the course book as her source. H7 was the only one noting that the more proficient language users her students become, the more she moves outside the book looking for new vocabulary to teach (Example 15).

(e14) H7: varmaan aika paljon sen oppikirjan mukaan myöskin et mitä sanastoja otetaan ja ne menee sit aikalailla kyllä opetussuunnitelman mukaan että siellä on niitä aihepiirisanastoja. - - Tottakai se kirja on se mistä lähdetään liikkelle ja sit ylipäätään aihepiiri ja välillä sit jos ei jostakin kirjasarjasta löydy jotakin tiettyä sanastoo, aihepiiriä eli... nii sit sen niinku vaan tekee. / *I assume the course book is the main source for the vocabularies and the books are made on the basis of the National Curriculum which includes those theme vocabularies. - - Of course, the course book is the initial source but then the theme*

*affects it (teaching) and if there is some theme vocabulary missing from the course book then I just make one myself.*

(e15) H4: No meillä on tietysti oppikirjat, jotka aika pitkälti johdattelee siihen sanastoon - - muunmuassa juteltiin small talkin lailla vähän niinkun tämmösestä kevään tulemisesta ja ootteko te nähneet vielä mitään kevät kukkia tai onko tullu lintuja ja sit käydään niitten nimiä ja mä teen sen säännöllisesti oikeestaan joka kevät. / *Well, of course we have the course books which are the main source for vocabulary. - - Among other things we talked in the fashion of small talk about the coming spring and have they already seen any spring flowers or birds and then we go through the names of them and I do this on a regular basis every spring.*

The close tie with the course books can be explained by the fact that the books are written to match the National Curricula which the teachers in Finland are obliged to follow. However, teachers are not obliged to follow the course book to the letter but can produce and/or search for material outside the course book. Or they can even choose to not use the book at all. It has, however, been shown before that teaching in Finland is strongly affected by the course books (Luukka et al. 2008). Furthermore, as there is hardly ever enough time to dedicate for everything in class and/or while planning the lessons, teachers in Finland tend to rely on the course book quite heavily (Elomaa 2009:31) which is understandable. The teachers who cited additional means to choosing words in the present study, like H4 and H7, were those who taught at AECs and so, were not bound by curricula. It would be interesting to see how the new curricula (POPS 2014, LOPS 2015) affect the answers of those in the first group, as the curricula promote students being more and more in charge of their learning and so, are bound to have an effect on vocabulary teaching in class too. Moreover, when the books are the main or maybe the only source of words, the range of vocabulary taught may be left quite small depending on the book and its writers. Nonetheless, the present study supports the previous findings of Luukka et al. (2008) and Elomaa (2009) that teachers rely heavily on books in their teaching and that books are the main source for vocabulary taught in class.

There are multiple ways to teach vocabulary and there have been several studies or attempts to describe how to teach vocabulary the best way possible (e.g. Nation 2001, Thornbury 2007). The present study wanted to follow that route and asked the teachers to identify the main principles they have when teaching vocabulary. In other words, what is important for them in teaching vocabulary. Of course, the difference from Nation's (2001) and Thornbury's (2007) descriptions was that the participants were not asked to describe everything important but just few most important ones. One thing some teachers (3/9) mentioned as important was that words do not appear in isolation and that they are connected to their authentic context. Illustrating this is Example 16 from H6.

(e16) H6: *Musta sen pitää tapahtua kontekstissa ja vuorovaikutuksessa. / I think it should happen in context and interactively.*

A second thing that stood up on a more general level was the usefulness of vocabulary teaching. Teachers aim is to teach vocabulary that is useful and benefits students in their personal life as well. Students are active participants in this combination. What is more, it was important that all the different skills involved in language learning – reading, listening, writing, speaking – were pursued. H3 said that these skills form the basis of language proficiency and should therefore be practiced also during vocabulary learning. In addition, general diversity of teaching and adjusting it according to the situation were seen as important tools for providing practice opportunities for the different skills. This was demonstrated well by H1:

(e17) H1: *No ei no kyllähän se niinku lähtee siitä asiasta siis että mitkä asiat mitkä sisällöt on oppilaan tiedettävä. - - niin sillon mietit että okei sillon sieltä valikoiden otetaan eihän sieltä oppikirjaa vedetä noin vaan nollasta sataan. / Well it begins with deciding the contents which are so important students must know them. - - Then I choose the most important things from the book and not go through the book page by page.*

What was also named by H8 was the importance of dictionary use. In her opinion students were not necessarily very efficient in their use of dictionaries as they did not take the context into account. H8 was an upper secondary school teacher and by this account, also has to consider what her students need in their future studies in more detail, as the places of study may vary more than those of after lower secondary school, not to mention elementary school. Dictionaries were in H8's opinion the number one tool her students used in their future studies and so they had to be trained to use it. This topic completely mixed teachers with different teaching backgrounds as there could not be seen any clear differences between different teacher groups. Also, the amount of teaching experience did not offer possibility for distinctions.

Connecting vocabulary with its authentic context, followed by teaching and activating students on how to use that vocabulary were among the most often mentioned important principles. Also rehearsing the different skills was mentioned relatively often. Creating opportunities for practicing the use of words in an authentic context is an indication that students' communicational needs are behind many of the teachers' solutions. Thus, the CLT has a very strong impact in English teachers' vocabulary teaching in Finland. What was particularly interesting, was the activation of students as vocabulary learners and users. In a previous question it was predictably found out that teachers rely on course books quite much in their



vocabulary choice. Of course, the curricula set the themes for vocabulary but I wonder if here lies a chance to activate the students as well. That is to say, allowing students even more freedom in finding vocabulary that is interesting and useful for them in their daily life would maybe motivate the students as learners and thus, provide better learning results. For example, students could construe a vocabulary about social media which can be an unfamiliar subject to teachers. It would also follow the lines of the new curricula (POPS 2014, LOPS 2015). Certainly some teachers do this already but it might provide a good opportunity for other teachers to enforce the active participation of students and furthermore, to diversify the vocabulary they teach.

Next teachers were asked whether they favour explicit or incidental teaching of vocabulary. The most common way of teaching vocabulary was mixing explicit and incidental which has been cited as the most efficient way of learning and teaching vocabulary (Schmitt 2010). However, contrasting with the quite unanimous answers in the previous questions, here one could find differences between teachers of different school levels. Those who taught in AECs favoured the incidental way of teaching while those who taught at third level of education, namely upper secondary and vocational school, quite clearly preferred explicitly telling their students when the students should focus on vocabulary consciously. Illustrating the difference are Examples 18 and 19. H6 taught at AEC and H3 in upper secondary school.

(e18) H6: Varmaan enimmäkseen en. - - Kuin niinku mä sanoin nii se liittyy tohon kommunikaatioon ja vuorovaikutukseen, nii sitä ei välttämättä sanota. - - en välttämättä sitä niinkun raamita että nyt ruetaan opiskelemaan sanastoo. / *Probably not for the most part. - - Just as I said, it is connected to the communicational and interactional aspect of teaching and learning and so, it is not necessarily said and emphasised. - - I do not say "Now we are going study vocabulary."*

(e19) H3: No kyllä se on aika eksplisiittistä että tuota heitä pitää aika paljon ohjata lukiossa mun mielestä että tuota opiskelee sitä sanastoo eli tunneilla mä yleensä sanon että nyt me keskitytään tähän sanastoon ja nyt on paljon vaikeita uusia sanoja ja tavallaan koitan kiinnittää heidän huomion et sillon kun on tarkoitus sitä sanastoo opetella ja myös aina heille siitä pauhaan että se sanaston opetteleminen pitäis olla myös semmosta jatkuvaa kotona tapahtuvaa. / *Well it is quite explicit. Students in upper secondary school still need quite much guiding in their studies. When we are studying vocabulary in class I usually say that we are supposed to focus on vocabulary now and the vocabulary includes many unfamiliar and difficult words. This way I try to guide their attention to vocabulary and emphasise that vocabulary is an important aspect of learning a language and it should continue at home too.*

The difference in vocabulary teaching within these groups of teachers can be connected to the same reason why course books were cited the most prominent sources for vocabulary: the content in them is written to match the National Curricula and the curricula are quite full in content. Especially from the answers of the third level teachers: there is so much to teach that

they felt that incidental way of learning words was simply not enough and there simply was not enough time for it to work in class. In AECs where there are no such documents dictating exactly what must be taught and no goals set by anyone else than just the learners themselves, the teachers feel more liberated and see the benefits of incidental vocabulary learning more clearly. In addition to explicitly telling their students to focus on vocabulary, some teachers also tried to explicitly justify teaching it. For example, H7 and H9 told their students why they are studying the vocabulary the specific vocabulary at the moment. It in their opinion helps some learners that need this kind of elaboration, namely those with low motivation or with special needs. Deciphering from the answers, this may have been left for smaller attention by other teachers of the present study. I would imagine learners across all levels would benefit from justifying the need for vocabulary from time to time.

Closely connected to the explicit and incidental aspect is the integration of vocabulary teaching into the other material, like teaching grammar. Of course, when in a language class it might be difficult to set a strict line to when one teaches vocabulary and when grammar as they both are essentially needed. In the present study, all teachers mainly integrated vocabulary teaching into other material but some of them used also separate teaching sessions focusing solely on vocabulary. For example, H5 (Example 20) says she does integrate for the most part, but uses separate teaching sessions that focus solely on vocabulary. Other teachers agreeing with H5 were H1, H3 and H9.

(e20) H5: mm kyl mä veikkaan et enemmän tommonen integroitu en mä keskity millään tunnilla siihen... hetkinen... Eiku kyllä ku sit jos me tehään joku sanotaan vaikka Alias eli sillonhan se keskittyy nimenomaan siihen sanastoon. - - Joo on siis tuotuokiota. / *I assume that it is more integrated into teaching and learning other material, so that I do not use whole lessons to just vocabulary. No but when we, for example, play Alias, it does focus on just vocabulary...* - - Yes, I do have separate teaching sessions.

All of these teachers apart from H1 teach at upper secondary school and as discussed in the previous question, they do tend to use explicit teaching and also not integrate as much as other teachers in the present study. Usually these two things are connected as when one integrates, there are also other matters to focus on in an exercise while not integrated moments tend to focus on just the one thing.

Next, the teachers evaluated the amount of time they use for teaching vocabulary. As with the integration question, it is sometimes hard to distinguish when one is actually teaching vocabulary as it may happen incidentally or explicitly. The answers in this question varied from

impossible to answer by H1 to one third of the time in class by H7 while others said it to be in between these. H4's answer (Example 21) illustrated the difficulty in both answering and analysing the answers: it embodies so many parts that it is actually impossible to answer.

(e21) H4: No kyl siihen menee aika paljon sit loppujen lopuks että kyllä et jos tulee tämmösiä extempore small talk tilanteita joissa sitä ja se tietysti riippuu siitä että mihin se juttu niinku lähtee. Ja sitten toisaalta meidän kirjan kappaleissa on sitä sanastoa ja me jatkuvasti sitä tutkitaan ja tuota käsitellään niin kyllä siihen varmasti menee sitten - - et kyl mun mielestä se on aika aikuisten maailmassa aika tai siis tämmösessä oppimistilanteessa aika merkittävä osuus nimenomaan se sanaston oppiminen. / *It takes quite a lot of time. On one hand, there are these extempore situations during which we have a little small talk and see where it goes. On the other hand, we do discuss the vocabulary in our course books, so all in all, we do use a lot of time to learning and teaching vocabulary. - - I think learning vocabulary is quite significant part in language learning.*

This question was a part of the interview because I wanted to make teachers reflect on how they use their time in class. That is to say, do they focus on grammar for the most part or is vocabulary at the centre of teaching inside the classroom. Some teachers were able to reflect upon it while some may have possibly thought it in a simpler way.

While other parts of vocabulary teaching differ among teachers, the phases they all go through while teaching are more or less the same. I was interested in this because I wanted to know if the teachers follow the three C's (Seal 1991, cited in Pavičić Takač 2008:19) and do they take all the four strands Nation (2001:2-3) presented into account when teaching. In Nation's words, these strands are important points to consider if the vocabulary part of a course is to be successful. As expected, it was somewhat difficult for some teachers to distinguish between learning vocabulary and teaching it but the after clarification, they understood the question. The teachers began with warm-up exercises that concentrated on recognition of the target words. After that it was time for practicing the pronunciation and listening skills after which the words were repeated in multiple different task types both orally and in writing. The tasks were meant to exercise both receptive (listening, reading) and productive language skills (speaking, writing). In Example 22, H7 describes the process of teaching. When it comes to planning of teaching vocabulary, the more teaching experience one had, the less one had to plan teaching vocabulary.

(e22) tsekataan yhteisesti mikä se aihepiiri on ja saatetaan puhua siitä myös suomen kielellä sitten. Ja sen jälkeen kuunnellaan ja toistetaan ne sanat - - he keskenään niitä ääntää ja toistaa ja alkaa käyttää nitniitä... Et siinä vaiheessa siirtyy mun mielestä oppilaille se sanaston opiskelu kun ollaan niihin tutustuttu ja ollaan niitä äännetty ja käännetty ja väännetty sit ku siinä aletaan tekemään niillä sanoilla. / *We will check the theme together and then talk about it in Finnish. Afterwards we will listen and repeat the words - - they will pronounce and repeat the words with each other and start using them. When the words are*

*familiar to the students and the vocabulary has been pronounced and studied together many times, it becomes the students' responsibility to actually learn and use them.*

Curiously, only H5 included testing and giving feedback as part of teaching vocabulary although others mentioned it later on in the interviews. It is curious because in the later parts of the interview all teachers regarded testing as vastly important of vocabulary teaching. Indeed, the answers indicate that testing is seen as a separate part of teaching vocabulary and these issues are further discussed when presenting results of the questions relating to testing. Another thing missing were the unplanned teaching sessions, namely teachers did not mention them at all. Some talked about it while answering some other questions. As an example, H4 had received some positive feedback from her students because of the unplanned teaching sessions.

As mentioned earlier in the present study, diversity of teaching has proven to be important for many teachers. The next question wanted to map out different teaching methods and/or tasks one uses while teaching vocabulary. When reading the present study, the teachers may find new ways to develop one's vocabulary teaching and consequently, enhance oneself as teachers of vocabulary. I will discuss the various methods based on how often they were mentioned in general moving from the most common one to the ones that are rare or missing altogether.

The most common method was to put the students to work with connection tasks. The connections can be made between e.g. translations, opposites, synonyms, explanations (Pavičić Takač 2008). Also fairly ordinary ones were conversational tasks and different kind of games (e.g. *Alias*, *Scrabble*) which were mentioned by 7/9 teachers. In addition, online devices such as *Quizlet* and *Kahoot*, were mentioned. Example 23 exhibits the most common methods. Teachers also mentioned grouping of words into word families, mind mapping and flashcards. Two teachers, H1 and H2, also mentioned some more detailed methods. H1 uses elaboration which is, explained by him, giving the students a set of words which the students use in a story. H2 was inspired by suggestopaedia, namely reading out loud in different voices.

(e23) H8: Esimerkiks se quizletti? - - No se on aika semmosessa kovassa huudossa. Ja muutkin tämmöset sovellukset. Kahoot ja Quizzes ja tämmösiä mitkä on sit toisaalta ne vähän elävöittääkin sitä sen - - on ne tietyt sanat ja sit niitä ruetaan vaan niinku käyttää. Ja jos sä et niitä osaa nii se on sit hankalampaa se - - kirjassahan on ihan omat omat sisältötehtävät että ne tietysti käydään sitten. Siellä on fraasitehtävät. Sitten on ihan tosi perinteisiä, niitä myöskin. Nyt on jo vähän sillai, paljon puhutaan siitä että kun tulee uudet opsit ja uudet kirjat niinkun tietysti on vähän pettyneitä siihen että siellä on edelleen niitä aukkotäydennystehtäviä. - - opetellaan ihan ihan sitä oikeaa käyttöä, mitä tässä elämässä saattaa tarvita. Sun pitää esimerkiks kertoa jotakin, neuvoa tietä tai tai ohjata ittes hotelliin - - puhetehtäviä on ne mitä tulee sitten ekstrana mulla sitten. / *Quizlet, for example?* - - *That is fairly popular as are other possible*

*applications at the moment. Kahoot and Quizzes and others that refresh it (leaning/teaching vocabulary) - - there are those certain words and then the students start to use them and if one does not know them, it is just harder. - - The book includes exercises concentrating on content and phrases used (in the text). It includes also very traditional gap-filling exercises which is rather disappointing as the new curricula and books still include them. - - We study the real use of words; what one might need in this life. For example, one has to tell something, like the road somewhere or guide oneself to one's hotel. - - Speaking exercises come are the extra-exercises in my class.*

The more traditional methods, like straightforward translations and note making, were notably absent from the answers. Here again the explanation might be found from the communicative focus of vocabulary teaching and teaching a language in general. What is more, as H8 implies in Example 23, the new curricula are taking a step towards an even more communicative language teaching. Vocabulary and its teaching are not insignificant. The focus of translation is seen to be on the receptive rather than the productive vocabulary skills, as they have specific set of words to be translated whereas more communicative activities allow maybe broader use of vocabulary. In this respect, the absence of social VLSs (see Oxford 1990) is peculiar. H8 mentions it in Example 23, but is the only one to do so in this question. Pair- and group work are two VTSs which usage is evaluated in other questions but not mentioned here. One can only guess the reasons, as they are not explicitly asked or stated in the data, but I would imagine it can be due to discrepancies between the actual teaching methods and the ideals teachers have.

One possible tool for diversifying teaching vocabulary is opting for some other source than book for material. The teachers were asked which other sources or devices they use to aid their vocabulary teaching. Particularly interesting in the context of the present study was the use of dictionaries and electronic devices. The new National Curricula in comprehensive school and upper secondary schools begin to come into effect in autumn 2016 (POPS 2014, LOPS 2015). POPS and LOPS include basics for organising basic and upper secondary education in Finland and set the aims for it. They include a set of broader learning goals present in every subject taught one of which is learning to use and understand technology (POPS 2014:23, LOPS 2015:15). Thus, asking the teachers to think about their use of technology and other teaching aids is justified.

The teachers used different teaching aids to varying degrees. Many (9/9) used them for checking the meaning of words but also strengthening the connections in students' mental lexicons through different games. The most obvious tool was the course book but additional dictionaries, both online and traditional, were the next most used ones. With the online versions, the search for a reliable option was a key thing as some mentioned their students

mainly use Google Translator. Online dictionaries were the most used ones as it was, in H1's words, the fastest way to find out the words meaning as almost everyone has a smart phone at hand. Some also used online devices with a laptop or tablets (e.g. iPad). The use of these devices was clearly more common in upper secondary schools than AECs or lower secondary schools. Also teachers from elementary and vocational schools mentioned the use of these but as only one teacher from each level participated in the present study, it cannot be said to be general on those levels. Examples 24 and 25 demonstrate the use of teaching aids by H6 and H8.

(e24) H6: No sanakirjat tietysti - - Tabletteja ja älypuhelimia ei kaikilla vielä ole. Osa on... Osa on tuota aika iäkkäitä mun opiskelijoista, ei niitä voi ajatella semmosia välineitä mitä kaikilla kaikilla ei ole. - - Käykö tähän että mä viittaatan johonkin mikä on netissä? - - Esimerkiks harjotukset eli tuota mä laitan vaikka meidän facebookkiin, kielikoulutuksen facebookkiin tuota linkkejä. / *Dictionaries of course. - - Everyone does not own a tablet or a smart phone yet. Part of my students are a bit older, so they do not have those kind of devices and I cannot use them that much because of it. - - Does it count if I share something that is online? - - For example, there are exercises on some Internet site and I link it to our Facebook site.*

(e25) H8: kaikilla niillä on läppärit. Tai iPadit on jollakin, nii niitä on siellä. Niillä me työskennellään. Tosi paljon. - - On meillä ihan kirjakirjanakin siellä luokassa mutta kyl ne melkein on... tuntuu et mä oon se joka käyttää niitä kirjoja. - - Oppilaat käyttää nettisanakirjoja ja sit ihan googletamalla joskus et voiks näin sanoo nii mä sanon et googletappas että löydätkö sä sitä mistään joku ois jossain niin sanonu. Vähän sellaseen niinkun itseopiskeluun mä ohjaan - - Joo ja jopa et miten sä englanniks selität sen sanan että et sitäkin harjotellaan jonkun verran. Se quizlet nyt on monesti mainittu - - Ihan joka tunti. / *Everyone has laptops. Or an iPad with which we work all the time. - - We do have like actual book dictionaries in class too but... in my opinion, it is usually me who uses them. - - Students use online dictionaries and then google stuff, for example, could you say that and I urge them to do so. It is guiding them to independent study. - - Yes and we even rehearse explaining the word in English and then practice it some more. Quizlet has been mentioned many times. - - Every lesson.*

Interestingly however, there was some discrepancies among the teachers and the level they taught on regarding this question. While both H2 and H6 reported that they do focus on offline devices, such as a traditional dictionary and the course book, H4 said that she uses an online version of a dictionary nearly always. Moreover, while H3 and H8 were quite clearly pro using electronic and online devices, H5 said she does not use them that often. In the case of H5, it might be due to it being her first year as a teacher and so, in her words, use of these devices is seen as something extra. H4 however is more interesting. While other teachers with about the same amount of experience and same school type, it is fascinating how much her views differ in this matter. It would be interesting to find out more about the views on the use of electronic devices of English teachers who teach in an AEC. The age of students was clearly the determining factor in how often the electronic and online devices were used: nearly every day

in lower, upper secondary and vocational schools while AECs and elementary focused more on non-electronic sources.

Finally, before moving on to the use of VTS in chapter 7.2.2, the teachers were asked to describe the role of testing in relation to their vocabulary teaching. The results were again quite unsurprising: those who have goals set by the authorities, test vocabulary more than others and regard it as more important. In this case, vocabulary was not formally tested at all in AECs, but of course testing can also happen in a more informal setting. That is to say, a teacher can see if the words are known by making his students write an essay or any form of exercises both written and oral. Cloze tests (Thornbury 2007) or conversation tasks are a good example of informal testing. Those teachers that tested vocabulary regarded the role of testing a significant but somewhat controversial one. Naturally, testing is used for assessing purposes and validating it, but 4 out of 6 teachers (excluding those who teach in AECs altogether) said that their students want to be tested or that it is good tool for motivating students.

The teachers also reflected upon how they take the vocabulary that students have learned outside the classroom into consideration in testing circumstances. The results showed that while the teachers thought it is hard to take into account in formal testing, the vocabulary learned outside the classroom walls is nothing but beneficial during tasks that require production of language. Some, like H7 and H9 regarded ‘testing’ in its wider sense, namely including the informal ways of testing. The first mentioned took it into consideration while giving grades at the end of a course while the latter payed attention to it during conversation exercises or in essays (Example 26). Some did not find it necessary to test this kind of vocabulary, because not all should or can be tested as H1 told. There were no major differences between teachers from different schools or with different amount of teaching experience.

(e26) H9: Esimerkiks joo kirjotelmassa tai sitten kun tehdään suullisia suullisia harjotuksia tai suullista osaamista vain siinä testaillaan niin tottakai huomioidaan. / *For instance, in essays or while doing conversation exercises or when one is testing oral skills, then I take it (vocabulary from outside the classroom) into consideration.*

### **7.2.2 VTS use among Finnish teachers of English**

The means by which a teacher presents new lexical items to his students, promotes self-reflection among one’s students while they are learning vocabulary, and how one assesses the learning and acquisition of the diverse features of vocabulary knowledge are by Pavičić Takač’s (2008:19) definition what are called vocabulary teaching strategies (VTS). They can

affect learners' choice of vocabulary learning strategy (O'Malley and Chamot 1990). Since there is not, at least to my knowledge too many studies on VTSs use neither on a global scale nor in Finland, I wanted to dedicate one piece of the interview for them. The teachers were given a list of VTSs (Appendix B) taken from Pavičić Takač (2008) and the list was translated to Finnish. During the interview, the teachers were asked to name the strategies they use most often or did not use at all. As many of the VTSs listed received mentions from every teacher, it is not practical to list those VTSs but instead the top 5 of most unused or rarely mentioned VTSs are listed in Table 6. The list is in no particular order because there were strategies with same amount of mentions (e.g. hyponyms and superordinates).

Table 6: Top 5 of the most unused VTSs

<b>Top 5 of the most unused VTSs</b>
Brainstorming
Anagrams
Association of picture and word (word not given in writing)
Hyponyms
Superordinates

Some teachers had difficulties in grasping the idea of brainstorming as a VTS but after an explanation they thought it a good idea. Association with picture and word fell into the same category and was somewhat unclear as a concept to teachers. Anagrams, however, were familiar to most teachers but still rarely used. Connecting words with their hyponyms or superordinate was fairly often used but not so much among AEC English teachers. Each teacher used between 51 to 34 different VTSs from the list of 51 VTSs. Thus, the teachers were relatively well acquainted with the different VTSs and furthermore, used a wide variety of VTSs as was expected.

As a result of the broad use of different VTSs, the present study was particularly interested in the reasons behind the decisions on what VTS to use when. The choice was mainly based on the task at hand and other situational constraints like how active or passive the students were as a group. Moreover, H6 and H8 referred to the power of experience and intuition in the choice of VTSs illustrated in Example 28. H3 also mentioned the difficulty of the vocabulary at hand.



An important point was raised by H5 and H9 (Example 29) who talked about the need for different VTSs for students with special needs.

(e28) H6: Jaa-a kyllä se on taas taas se intuitio sitten. - - Pitkä kokemus ja tietää tietää mikä toimii - - Kyllä joo koska kaikki ei tietenkään toimi kaikilla tasoilla. - - Ja sitten jonkin verran vaikuttaa vaikuttaa ihmisten ikäkin nimittäin nämä keski-ikäiset tädit ja sedät nii nehan lähtee mukaan ihan mihin vaan - - Mutta sitten jos on nuorempia on paljon ja ryhmä on pieni niin heidän kanssaan pitää lähteä pikkusen varovaisemmin liikkeelle. / *It is based on intuition once again. - - Long experience and one just knows what works. - - Yes, not everything works at every level. - - The age of people also affects a little bit because, you see, these middle aged women and men do everything. - - If there are a lot of younger students and the group is small, one just has to start a bit slower.*

(e29) H9: No tota se vähän riippuu siitä siitä et onks kyseessä sellanen sellanen sanaluettelo jossa vois in olettaa että on todella paljon vieraita sanoja opiskelijoille, et ehkä sen perusteella sitten. Tai ömm... et saan tavallaan vaihtelua siihen siihen tuntiin ja siihen mitä mitä minkälaisii strategioita käytetään niin ehkä sen perusteella. Sit on myöskin että on erityisen tuen tarpeessa olevia opiskelijoita niin on on noissa noissa tota ryhmissä mukana niinniin myöskin tuota heille pitää miettiä asioita vähän eri tavalla. / *Well, it depends on how familiar the students are with the vocabulary in the particular list in my books. Or I want to shake things up in the class or what kind of strategies we use. Or if the group includes students with special needs – then we have to think things differently.*

Naturally, when talking about teaching vocabulary and VTSs, one must think about the other side of the coin. Namely, vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs). Usually those two are in close connection with one another and complete one another. Thus, the next question asked the teachers to reflect on how well the VTSs they use are in connection with the VLSs they teach their students. Many recognised the connection but did not necessarily act on it. On one hand H1, for example, expressed that because he is not too logical in what VLSs he teaches, the VTSs he uses are not logically connected with the VLSs either. On the other hand, H4 considered it of high importance that they are connected.

### **7.3 Utilising of vocabulary coming from outside of the classroom**

The present study was particularly interested in how teachers saw vocabulary coming from the outside in relation to their vocabulary teaching inside the classroom. There is vast amount of research on how vocabulary should be taught but as the teachers are the ones actually implementing the knowledge, their opinions and beliefs are of great importance. Do they believe the vocabulary coming from outside of classroom could be used in classroom and if they already make use of it, how they do it, are important questions that were asked of the teachers participating in the present study. It was assumed that at least some of the teachers consciously had not thought about utilising this source of vocabulary. Thus, discussing it would

provide a way for teachers to bring it into the consciousness and so, maybe take notes to better one's vocabulary teaching.

Firstly, the teachers were asked if they thought their students study vocabulary outside the classroom. Some of the teachers pondered the difference between *learning*, *acquiring* and *studying*. Ellis (2008) bases his views on Krashen and defines acquiring and learning as following: "The former refers to the subconscious process of 'picking up' a language through exposure and the latter to the conscious process of studying it". Thus, studying can be defined as the conscious actions one takes in order to learn. The distinction was made clear through referring to the students' participation and or explicitly questioning the difference between the terms. Henceforth, when referring to studying, it entails studying as well as learning and acquisition.

All teachers thought that their students study vocabulary outside the classroom to some degree but how actively, was not so clear. Some of the teachers hoped that their students study vocabulary outside the classroom walls but were unsure whether or not it happens and if it does, to what degree. The Examples 30 and 31 illustrate the opinion of few teachers.

(e30) H2: No toivotaan toivotaan näin että he opiskelevat myös luokkahuoneen ulkopuolella. Koska onhan kuitenkin englannin kieltä jokapuolella sitä on musiikissa, sitä on mainoksissa, sitä on televisiossa, sitä on tietokoneella, eihän siltä oikeastaan voi välttyä. / *I do hope that they study vocabulary outside the classroom too. Because English language can be found everywhere, it is in music, ads, TV and on the computer, one cannot really avoid it anymore.*

(e31) H7: Öö no sehän on tietysti olennaista, varsinkin siellä perustasolla niin opiskelijoitten täytyy opiskella tosi, musta tuntuu etteivät opiskele tarpeeksi, mutta ihan selvästi tekevät kyllä. / *It is essential of course, especially in lower levels of language proficiency where students have to study quite much but I feel that they do not study enough. They do do it to some degree but not enough.*

Mainly the difference between those who study vocabulary outside of class and those who do not was realised through fluency of language and furthermore, through courage to use language in general. Differentiating herself from the rest of the teachers was H3. She saw vocabulary learning outside of the classroom as essential but deemed that they do not do it enough for vocabulary to be actually retained. H3 thought that vocabulary learning could indeed be something that could be done outside of the classroom but as it is dependable on students' active participation, it might not happen at all.

Interestingly, despite regarding continuous vocabulary learning as an integral part of vocabulary learning in general, the teachers did not necessarily explicitly encourage their

students to study vocabulary outside the classroom. For example, H2 reported (Example 31) that she regards it as self-evident, that one can and should continue to study beyond the lessons. Thus, she did not explicitly tell her students to study vocabulary outside the classroom. Many teachers (7/9), however, did promote the benefits of studying outside of the classroom. For instance, H4 regards it as very important tool for motivating students to learn whereas H9 referred to the scanty opportunities to use the field specific vocabulary without conscious efforts to do so outside of the classroom. Both these views are illustrated in Examples 32 and 33. The teachers were also asked to explain how they encourage the studying of vocabulary outside of the classroom. They mentioned ways was to discuss with family members and friends, watching TV or movies with subtitles in English or off, listening to music, following the news and using different VLSs. Some teachers emphasised the individual effect – what works for one, might not work for another.

(e32) H2: No en kyllä en ihan sillä tavalla kyllä erikseen siitä oo niinku maininnu mutta se on jollakin tavalla - - itsestäänselvyys että aina jos tulee jotain uutta tai joku näkee uuden sanan tuolla sen voi ottaa puheeksi ja kommentoida. / *I have not explicitly mentioned it. In my opinion it is kind of - - self-evident that when one sees or hears something new or some new word one can comment on it in class.*

(e33) H4: mä pyydän tai teen heti yleensä kun opiskelu alkaa sanon että käyttäkää korviaanne. Esimerkiks televisiota katsellessanne ei automaattisesti lue tekstitystä vaan että ainakin ottaisi korvat siihen mukaan ja kuuntelee - - Mut sit samaten musiikkiakin kuunnellessa et kiinnittäkää huomiota siihen mitä siellä sanotaan ja tuota ihan siis ihan kaikessa missä he pystyy hyödyntämään sitä tuota kuulemaansa tai näkemäänsä. Et avais sit heillee et se ei jäis vaan sinne luokkahuoneeseen. / *Beginning to study again, I tell them to use their ears. For example, when they watch TV, do not automatically read the subtitles but listen to what they are saying there. - - And when you listen to music, pay attention to what they are saying and utilise that vocabulary one has heard or seen. So they would realise the language is actually used not only inside the classroom but outside of it too.*

Some of the teachers already mentioned sources their students possibly use in the previous question but the next the teachers were asked to elaborate on their views. Of course, as H1 pointed out, the teachers cannot be sure of the sources as they have most likely not asked about them. Nevertheless, the most popular sources were, as expected, found in popular culture. In addition to music, TV and movies mentioned already in Example 33, the teachers mentioned games, comic books and online dictionaries. Furthermore, as a result of Google Translator being often mentioned as a source for vocabulary, the teachers also highlighted training the students' ability to choose reliable sources. Reading books in English was also mentioned. Again, perhaps surprisingly, social media and social relations in general, were mentioned by only H2 and H9.

Next, the teachers were asked to elaborate on their view of the relationship between the vocabulary coming outside of the classroom and the teaching of vocabulary. Generally, the relationship was seen as a positive one, but there were some differences in what vocabulary they viewed as important to teach inside the classroom. On the one hand, it is important to assure that students are familiarised with the core vocabulary in class so they may expand their knowledge outside of it. On the other hand, the students are able to pick up the core vocabulary outside of the classroom because of its frequency and so, the teaching of vocabulary should focus on the more infrequent words. This juxtaposition is highlighted in Examples 34 and 35.

(e34) H2: No tietysti luokassahan se on systemaattista opettamista että siihen keskitytään - - Ja kohdennetaan ja harjoitellaan monella eri tavalla mutta tietysti jos ajatellaan luokkahuoneen ulkopuolella nii sit tällöinen joku eläkeläinen ehkä sitten opettelee englantia arjen eri tilanteissa. / *In class the teaching is systematic and focused - - and the vocabulary is allocated and practiced carefully in various ways but outside of the classroom, a pensioner learns vocabulary in their everyday life.*

(e35) H7: Mä varmaan ajattelen sillee et koulussa opiskeltava sanasto niin se on vähän semmosta perus basicci sanastoa, joka on lähellä niitten oppilaitten joka päivästä elämää, mut et sitten sieltä luokkahuoneen ulkopuolelta sieltä sitten eriytyy sen mukaan että mikä niitä lapsia ittee kiinnostaa. Et ne imee itteensä just sitä sanastoo. / *I suppose that the vocabulary learned in school is the core vocabulary which is closely connected to the vocabulary they meet in their daily lives but the vocabulary they meet outside of the classroom is differentiated according to their (students') personal interests. They acquire vocabulary that way.*

Common for both these sides is the nature of how the teachers take advantage of students bringing 'new' vocabulary into the classroom. Essential vocabulary for the daily lives of students is seen not only as an important motivational tool but also an opportunity to accentuate the strengths of one's students. At the same time, the teaching is closely tied with the student's own world which again is tied to their motivation. H1 exemplifies this quite well in Example 35. For the most part, taking advantage is realised through different conversational activities in class, as postulated by H2 and H3. H6 also claimed to take advantage of the vocabulary as much as possible. On the contrary, H7 had not consciously thought about utilising the vocabulary coming outside of the classroom inside of it.

It is indeed a bit surprising to notice that teachers do not think their students use social relations online or in person as a source for vocabulary. As Palfreyman (2011) has stated, social networks play a vital role in language learning outside of the classroom. Bailly (2011) also cites social relations as one of the main sources for language learning outside the classroom. In addition, it is somewhat peculiar for the reason that many teachers have accentuated the communicational nature of language in their teaching. If students are learning vocabulary from

video games or any other sources outside the classroom, it is something they actually need in order to communicate in their daily lives. In that light, it certainly is a bit questionable that some of them do not acknowledge its importance inside the classroom. In conclusion, the teachers participating in the present study regarded vocabulary coming from outside the classroom as an asset but did not necessarily take advantage of it.

## **8 CONCLUSION**

The teaching of vocabulary definitely is needed but there are as many opinions on how to do it as there are teachers. While explicit teaching of vocabulary is more likely to conclude in successful vocabulary retention than incidental way of teaching, it is highly time-consuming and can cover only a scratch of the vocabulary in the English language (Schmitt 2010). Teachers in general in Finland have great autonomy compared to their counterparts in other parts of the world and thus, are in a key position when it comes to deciding what and how vocabulary is presented to students inside the Finnish classroom. The aim of the present study was to provide an opportunity to focus on their actual teaching practice, namely whether or not there was something to improve from the point of view of the teachers themselves. The first research question delved into how the teachers describe their own vocabulary teaching in general and then how they view it in relation to vocabulary coming from outside the classroom walls. The second research question explored what kind of VTSs the teachers use and why.

The description of vocabulary teaching began by defining words. The teachers participating in the present study defined a word according to its semantic features, namely what the words mean. In addition, they saw a word as a unit of language which is mainly represented in writing. Thus, the word is represented orthographically. Knowing a word includes both receptive and productive skills (Melka 1997, McCarthy 1998) in their opinions. The teachers also mentioned several of the different constraints presented by Nation (1990) and Ringbom (1991) but did not include the associative constraints in it. However, the demands may vary according to the language proficiency of the learners. Teachers also saw the retention of vocabulary happening best by explicitly learning it which is similar to the results of, for example, Schmitt (2008, 2010). Especially in upper secondary school where time is scarce but the amount of content is not, it was seen that conscious effort from the learners is needed in order to successfully acquire vocabulary. Incidental learning of vocabulary was seen as something ‘additional’ and maybe not so useful in a school setting. Before moving on to actual vocabulary teaching practices, the teachers answered few questions about vocabulary learning strategies. The most common

VLSs belonged to the memory category in Oxford's (1990) taxonomy and included strategies such as grouping of words and games. Also common ones were guessing from context and analysing word parts. Quite rarely used VLSs were the social ones (Oxford 1990). Relating to not teaching incidentally, the teachers did not teach mention teaching meta-cognitive VLSs, such as using music.

The main source for new vocabulary was the course book. The most important principles of vocabulary teaching identified by the teachers were teaching useful vocabulary which students can use in an authentic context. Mixing explicit and incidental way of teaching vocabulary has often been implied to result in more successful learning results (Schmitt 2010) than focusing on one or the other and Finnish teachers of English follow along this view in their teaching of vocabulary. However, teachers at AECs favoured the incidental way of teaching while others tended to lean on the direction of explicit teaching of vocabulary. The teachers also favoured integrating the teaching of vocabulary into teaching grammar and other material (e.g. culture) rather than having separate teaching sessions, although few used them too. All teachers followed more or less the same route when it came to question of different phases in vocabulary teaching, namely the Three C's presented in Pavivic Takac (2008) were present. Curiously, only H5 mentioned testing and giving feedback in her answer to this question.

The most common method for teaching was making students do different kind of connection tasks. The different tasks could be anything from conversations about a certain theme to different kinds of games. Clearly missing from the methods were the traditional fill-in-the-gap exercises and straightforward translation, although the games and connection tasks do require translating words but not in the traditional sense. The teachers elaborated also on their use of different teaching aids while teaching vocabulary. Apart from the course book, popular aids were both online and traditional dictionaries. Teachers from lower secondary, upper secondary and vocational school generally favoured the online versions while others concentrated on the more traditional ones. However, the division was not definite and there were indications of simple personal preference. Finally, before moving on to discussing VTSs, the teachers were asked to discuss the role of testing in their vocabulary teaching. Naturally, those who had National Curricula dictating that they are to test their students, tested them and those who did not have those curricula, did not test. Also affecting the matter was the age of their learners: students of AEC teachers are generally older and have done tests, while in comprehensive school and possible further education, and prefer not to do it anymore. Contrastingly, teachers

at other levels reported that their students want to be tested and feel more motivated to learn when they know their knowledge is going to be tested.

To summarise, all the answers the teachers gave about learning vocabulary highlighted the communicative nature of language. The teachers' understanding of a word was highly impacted by what the word or words in question could convey and it was seen as the most important thing for their students to learn. Vocabulary learning was seen as something that happens differently between each individual student and the ways in which it happens may vary over age or time or proficiency level. As a result, this was hardly surprising: being able to communicate is at the centre of language learning. Interestingly though, while communication is usually between two or more persons, the teachers did highlight the individuality of students in learning vocabulary. For example, most of the VLSs the teachers taught were ones usually done alone. Here might be a point of reflection from the teachers' perspective: if they saw vocabulary learning as more of a social event, it might contribute to more communication in class.

In general, one could say that Finnish teachers of English tend to lean onto a more explicit way of teaching while formally educating but moving on to voluntary education, like AECs, incidental way of learning is more valued. The changing curricula (POPS 2014:20, LOPS 2015:34) will challenge this view because both curricula stress working together with larger projects to broaden students' view of the surrounding world. As the learning environment changes from strictly staying put in the classroom to a more mobile one, the teaching of vocabulary can hardly stay inside the class so strictly. It challenges the teacher to think of new ways and maybe forces one to teach vocabulary in a more incidental way. Furthermore, the advantages of vocabulary learning outside the classroom should be investigated more by the teachers in addition to acknowledging it inside the classroom.

Finally, the present study delved into the utilising of vocabulary coming from outside the classroom. The teachers generally thought their students do study/acquire vocabulary outside the classroom too but were unsure how useful it was. The main sources for vocabulary outside of the classroom were thought to be those from popular culture, namely movies, games and TV. Curiously, social media was not deemed as important at this point although many young learners spend a lot of time on social media on a daily basis (Lenhart 2015). Moreover, the results portrayed that VLSs they taught did not exactly take advantage of the social environment in person or online inside the classroom either. So here lies one possible point of

improvement for teachers across all levels. Although practically every teacher recognised the importance of vocabulary coming from outside the classroom in broadening students' vocabulary, not everyone thought it even should be taken into account inside the classroom. Paraphrasing H1, not everything can or even should be considered in teaching. The lack of attention to social media adds to the fact that even though teachers say they encourage their students to communicate and learn vocabulary everywhere, they do not necessarily make use of the social environment inside the classroom or outside of it. It would be interesting to study the effect of the social environment in vocabulary learning and teaching more. To answer the main research question, the teachers recognise the advantages vocabulary learned outside the classroom has outside the classroom walls but do not necessarily feel it fitting in their own teaching of vocabulary.

The second research question concentrated on VTSs and their use. The teachers used the 52 listed VTSs quite broadly and therefore, the results section presented the most unused strategies (Table 6). The main focus was however on what grounds teachers chose the VTSs they used. The group characteristics, such as the activity level of the group, was together with the task at hand, the most cited reason for choosing a particular VTS. Also mentioned was intuition and the amount of teaching experience. The question of how well connected the VTSs teachers use are with the VLSs they teach received some mixed answers. Although some recognised the importance of this connection, many said they did not actively seek to establish one. As there were mistakes made while implementing the list of VTSs in the present study, the results were not discussed further.

In conclusion, the findings of the present study were not too surprising but provided sufficient answers to the research question of how Finnish teachers of English describe their classroom vocabulary teaching and how they view it in relation to vocabulary coming outside of the classroom. As can be seen from the results, the teachers participating in the present study were well aware of the different aspects of teaching vocabulary but had not considered the vocabulary from outside the classroom as significantly affecting their teaching. However, the situation changed at least partly after participating in the present study because the questions made teachers actually think what they do while teaching vocabulary. Some teachers told that they actually wanted to take part in the present study just to reflect upon their own teaching of vocabulary (Example 36).

(e36) H6: No musta on niinku kiva tehdä nostaa niinku tietosuuden tasolle tätä mitä tekee. Sen takia sen takia halusin tulla tähän mukaan. - - Tästä mä uskon, mä säästän nämä, ja katson näitä katson näitä mitä



mä en tee. Et olisko sieltä vielä ideoita, ideoita käytäntöön lisää kun puhuin tosta ideoimisesta esimerkiksi ja sä selitit sitä mulle. / *It was nice to become more aware of what one is actually doing. That is why I wanted to take part in this (study). - - I believe I will keep these and see what I am not using in order to try out some new ideas. Like, for example, brainstorming as you explained it to me.*

Thus, it can be said that at least one goal of the present study was fulfilled. All in all, the present study discovered what it set out to discover. Namely it provided insights into Finnish teachers of English minds while teaching vocabulary, but provided rather predictable results. It might have been beneficial if the interviewer had been more experienced and so, had understood to ask more follow-up questions. What is also always problematic with content analysis, is ensuring the validity and reliability of the results, as when interpreting something another person has said it is always slightly questionable. In addition, some interview questions overlapped with one another and were too broad which resulted in somewhat vague answers. Moreover, the carelessness in implementation of the VTSs list should not have happened and resulted in invalid findings. Further research could concentrate on the effect of social environment on vocabulary learning and teaching. It would also be interesting to do a follow-up study on how the new curricula affect the views of these teachers and their vocabulary and/or language teaching.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Haastattelukysymykset / *Interview questions*

#### Haastattelukysymykset / *Interview questions*

##### **Tausta / *Background***

1. Kuinka paljon aiempaa opetuskokemusta sinulla on? / *How much previous teaching experience do you have?*
2. Kuinka kauan olet opettanut englantia? / *For how long have you taught English?*
3. Millä asteella opetat englantia? / *On what level do you teach English at the moment?*
4. Oletko opettanut englantia muilla asteilla? / *Have you taught English on any other levels?*
5. Onko sinulla lähipiirissäsi (vähintään viikoittain yhteydessä) englantia äidinkielenään puhuvia henkilöitä? / *Do you have anyone who has English as their mother tongue in your close circle (you are in contact weekly basis)?*

##### **Sanan määrittelyä ja oppimiseen liittyviä kysymyksiä / *Questions about definition of a word and its learning***

6. Miten määrittelet sanan? / *How do you define a word?*
7. Mitä oppilaan täytyy osata, jotta voi sanoa ”tietävänsä sanan”? / *What does the learner need to know in order to be able to say he ”knows” the word?*
8. Vaatiiko sanaston oppiminen mielestäsi tietoista halua oppia vai voiko se tapahtua myös tiedostamatta? Miksi/miksi ei? / *Does learning vocabulary require conscious effort or can it also happen unconsciously in your opinion? Why/Why not?*
9. Opetatko oppilaille sanaston oppimisen strategioita? Jos et, miksi et? / *Do you teach your students vocabulary learning strategies?*
10. Millaisia strategioita opetat? / *What kind of strategies do you teach?*

11. Kuinka paljon käytät aikaa strategioiden opettamiseen? / *How much time do you spend in teaching these strategies?*

**Sanaston opetukseen liittyvät kysymykset / *Questions about vocabulary teaching***

12. Millä perusteella valitset sanaston, jota opetat? / *On what grounds do you choose the vocabulary you teach?*
13. Mitkä ovat mielestäsi sanaston opettamisen tärkeimmät piirteet? / *What are the basic principles in vocabulary teaching from your perspective?*
14. Onko sanaston opetuksesi eksplisiittistä eli kerrotko oppilaillesi selkeästi milloin sanastoa olisi tarkoitus opetella? Miksi/Miksi et? / *Is your vocabulary teaching explicit, namely do you tell your students clearly when one is supposed to learn vocabulary? Why/Why not?*
15. Kuinka paljon käytät aikaa sanaston opettamiseen? / *How much time do you use to teaching vocabulary?*
16. Mitä vaiheita sanaston opettamiseen liittyy? / *What kind of stages does teaching of vocabulary involve?*
- a. Ovatko nämä kaikki vaiheet tasa-arvossa ajallisesti? / *Do you spend equal amount of time with every stage?*
17. Integroitko sanaston opetuksen ja oppimisen muun oppimateriaalin sekaan vai onko sinulla erilliset siihen keskittyvät tunnit/tuokit? / *Do you integrate teaching and learning of vocabulary within other teaching material or do you have separate lessons/moments dedicated to it?*
18. Millaisia keinoja tai opetusmenetelmiä käytät sanaston opettamiseen? / *What kind of teaching methods do you use to teach vocabulary?*
19. Millaisia apuvälineitä (esim. tabletti, sanakirja) käytät sanaston opetuksessa? / *What kind of teaching aids (e.g. tablet, dictionary) do you use in teaching vocabulary?*
- b. Mitä, miksi? / *What and why?*
- c. Kuinka usein käytät näitä? / *How often do you use them?*

20. Opiskelevatko oppilaasi sanastoa luokkahuoneen ulkopuolella sinun mielestäsi? / *Do your students study vocabulary outside of the classroom in your opinion?*
21. Kannustatko oppilaita sanaston opiskeluun luokkahuoneen ulkopuolella? / *Do you encourage your students to study vocabulary outside of the classroom?*
- d. Pyritkö ohjaamaan sitä? Jos ohjaat, miten? / *Do you try to guide it? If you do, how?*
22. Mitä sanaston lähteitä arvelet oppilaitesi käyttävän luokkahuoneen ulkopuolella? / *What kind of sources do you think your students use outside of the classroom?*
23. Millaisena näet sanaston opettamisen suhteessa luokkahuoneen ulkopuolelta opittuun sanastoon? / *How do you see teaching vocabulary in relation to the vocabulary coming outside of classroom?*
24. Hyödynnätkö luokkahuoneen ulkopuolella opittua sanastoa luokassa? Miten? / *Do you take advantage of the vocabulary coming outside of the classroom inside of it? How?*
25. Millainen rooli testaamisella on sinun sanaston opetuksessasi? / *What kind of role does testing have in your vocabulary teaching?*
- a. Hyväksytkö synonyymejä koealueen ulkopuolelta? / *Do you accept synonyms outside of the test's area?*
26. Miten huomioit luokan ulkopuolella opitun sanaston testaamisessa? / *How do you take the vocabulary coming from outside of the classroom into account in testing?*
27. Käytätkö sanaston opetusstrategioita? (lista) / *Do you use vocabulary teaching strategies?*
28. Mitä sanaston opetusstrategioita käytät? / *What kind of vocabulary teaching strategies do you use?*
29. Millä perusteella valitset kyseiset strategiat? / *On what grounds do you choose those strategies?*
30. Onko sanaston opetuksen strategiasi yhteydessä opettamiisi sanaston oppimisen strategioihin? / *Are your vocabulary teaching strategies interconnected to the vocabulary learning strategies you teach?*
31. Sana on vapaa. / *You are free to comment.*

## **Appendix B: Lista sanaston opetusstrategioista / *List of vocabulary teaching strategies***

### **Sanaston opetusstrategia / *Vocabulary teaching strategy***

1. Lisäinformaatiota sanasta: samankaltaisuuksista tai eroista / *Additional information about the word: similarities/differences*
2. Lisäinformaatiota sanasta: johtuminen / *Additional information about the word: derivatives*
3. Lisäinformaatiota muista merkityksistä / *Additional information about the multiple meanings*
4. Pelit / *Games*
5. Henkilökohtaisen tunnisteiden liittäminen sanaan / *Personalisation*
6. Assosiaatio kokemukseen tai tietoon / *Association to experience or knowledge*

### **Merkityksen kertominen: / *Telling meaning***

7. Määritelmä vieraalla kielellä / *Definition in foreign language*
8. Kääntäminen äidinkielelle / *Translating to L1*
9. Kuvien käyttäminen / *Using pictures*

### **Vinkkejä oppimisstrategioiden käyttöön: / *Tips for using learning strategies***

10. Huomio sanamuotoon /-ihin / *Attention to word form(s)*
11. Rohkaisu kysyä selvennystä / *Encouraging to ask for explanation*
12. Sanaston oppimisen strategiat / *Vocabulary learning strategies*
13. Sanakirjojen käyttö / *Using dictionaries*

### **Tehtävät: / *Exercises***

14. Ideoiminen (eng.brainstorming) / *Brainstorming*
15. Sanakortit / *Word cards*
16. Sanojen kirjoittaminen vihkoon / *Writing the words down*
17. Vastakohtien antaminen / *Giving antonyms*
18. Alakäsitteiden (hyponymien) antaminen / *Giving hyponyms*
19. Kollokaatioiden kertominen / *Giving collocations*
20. Synonyymien tai vaihtoehdon kertominen vieraalla kielellä / *Giving synonyms and/or alternatives in foreign language*

21. Kattotermin (eng.superordinate) kertominen / *Giving superordinates*
22. Sanaluokan kertominen / *Giving word class*
23. Tee lauseita kyseisistä sanoista / *Use in sentences*
24. Tee lauseita opeteltavasta sanasta / *Make sentences of the given word*
25. Ryhmittele sanoja / *Grouping words*

**Tehtävät: Sanojen tunnistaminen / Exercises: Recognition**

26. Etsi samannäköisiä sanoja / *Look for similar looking words*
27. Etsi kollokaatioita / *Look for collocations*
28. Anagrammit / *Anagrams*
29. Sana-arvoitukset (ristikot tms.) / *Puzzles (crosswords etc.)*
30. Määritelmien mukaan / *According to definition*

**Tehtävät: Sanojen ääntäminen tai ääneenluku / Exercises: Pronunciation and reading out loud**

31. Opettele ulkoa sanalistoja / *Memorise lists of words*
32. Selitä kontekstissa / *Explain in context*
33. Anna määritelmä vieraalla kielellä / *Give definition in foreign language*
34. Arvaa sana assosiaatioiden avulla / *Guess the word from associations*
35. Arvaa sana kontekstin avulla / *Guess the word from a context*
36. Kuvan ja sanan assosiointi (ei anneta sanaa kirjoitettuna) / *Associate pictures with word (words not given)*
37. Käännä äidinkielelle / *Translate into LI*
38. Käännä vieraalle kielelle / *Translate into foreign language*
39. Katso sana kurssikirjasta, vihkosta, jne. / *Look up word in course book, notebook, etc.*
40. Katso sana sanakirjasta / *Look up word in a dictionary*

**Tehtävät: sanojen yhdistäminen / Matching words**

41. Merkitykseen / *With definition*
42. Kollokaatioihin / *With collocations*
43. Kuviin / *With pictures*
44. Tilanteeseen tai kontekstiin / *With situation or context*



45. Samassa yhteydessä esiintyviin sanoihin / sanan derivatiiveihin / *With related words/derivatives*
46. Synonyymeihin / *With synonyms*
47. Antonyymeihin / *With antonyms*
48. Käännöksiin / *With translations*
49. Tee sanoista yhdyssanoja / *Make compounds*
50. Tehtävät: käytä sanoja lauseissa / *Setting a task: Use words in sentences*

**Sosiaaliset strategiat / *Social strategies***

51. Ryhmätyö / *Group work*
52. Parityö / *Pair work*

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