JYU DISSERTATIONS 21

Miia Konttinen

Students at the Core of English-Medium Instruction

Research on the Study Paths of International Master's Degree Students and the Role of Academic English and Literacies

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND
SOCIAL SCIENCES

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ABSTRACT

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The present study focuses on the International Master's Degree Programs (IMDP) of the University of Jyväskylä and issues related to English-medium instruction (EMI). At the core of the present study are the IMDP students' conceptualizations of, and reflections on, academic English. Furthermore, the study examines the IMDP students' reported language gains in academic English as well as the internal and external factors to which the students' attribute these gains, or the lack of them. In order to map out these aspects, 15 IMDP students were interviewed at the end of their two-year program. These interviews were then analyzed inductively with the help of Atlas.ti software and by adhering to the guidelines of qualitative content analysis (QCA). As a result, five main themes, with various subthemes, emerged, and they were reflected on through the lens of the participants' overall academic performance (e.g. graduation time and master's thesis grade) in order to gain further insights into the students' study paths. Consequently, as a result it was discovered that the students have rather narrow and even slightly decontextualized, conceptualizations of academic English. Moreover, the importance of students' entry level of academic English, as well as their own role and effort, were deemed crucial. The students, however, also highlighted the importance of adequate language support, which the majority of them found was not, in practice, realized in their IMDPs. Based on these results, a far more close-knit and systematic integration of content and language is proposed as a means to better support the students' IMDP studies, which are inherently a combination of both content and language. The present study also proposes academic literacy/ies as an approach for bringing content and language closer together along the IMDP students' study path. Namely, integrating all these aspects would enable students to become even more profoundly members of their academic community and discourse, and thus contribute to their overall expertise in their field and their mastery of academic literacies.

Keywords: English-medium instruction, academic English, academic literacies, students' perspective, qualitative content analysis

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Jyväskylä, August 2018
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Internationalization and Englishization of higher education

Higher education (HE) is continuously and increasingly internationalizing, with the highest ever participation rates and greatest ever diversity of students (Biggs and Tang, 2011: 3). The internationalization of higher education (IoHE) is a process which involves intentionality with regards to integrating international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions to higher education's purposes and functions with the aim of improving the quality of HE, as well as research (e.g. Knight, 2004; de Wit and Hunter, 2015: 3). In addition, IoHE is also striving to make societal contributions (de Wit and Hunter, 2015: 3). In practice, IoHE manifests itself in higher education's massification by bringing not only multicultural but also multilingual people together (e.g. Boughey, 2000: 281). According to Fabricius, Mortensen and Haberland (2017: 578), this results globally in a flow of HE students and personnel who typically come together by using English as their shared language (e.g. Smit, 2010; Hynninen, Smit and Dafouz, 2012; Dafouz and Smit, 2016).

At HE institutions, this flow is thought to result in ideals such as bringing together cultural practices and diverse backgrounds, nourishing knowledge, and developing new ways to study as well as creating life experiences for all stakeholders (e.g. Altbach and Knight, 2007; Fabricius, Mortensen and Haberland, 2017: 592). However, the more prevalent motives for attracting international students often relate to finding and educating students with talent, and gaining tuition revenue in the process (Choudaha, Orosz and Chang, 2012: 5). In relation to this, Altbach and Knight (2007: 291) highlight the commercialization of HE.

At the other end of the flow – that is, at the students' end – motivations also vary, but there appears to be one particular reason for students' interest in striving for degrees abroad. Namely, it has been suggested that students mostly join international programs due to their desire to develop their English skills (Kym and Kym, 2014: 53-54; Meneghetti, 2016: 29). This desire is thought to de-

rive from the fact that students widely accept and recognize the strong status of English in the international context regardless of their field (e.g. Meneghetti, 2016: 29). According to Seidlhofer (2012: 393-394), English is often seen the default language in science and academia, and Jenkins (2014), along with Dafouz and Smit (2016), concur by noting that English does not face a great deal of competition from other languages globally, but rather holds a seemingly sovereign position in HE. It is therefore not surprising that, in a study by Kym and Kym (2014: 53-54), the majority of students mentioned learning English as their primary motive, whereas only 17% had broader job-related motives in mind when joining the program. Such findings have led Menghetti (2016: 29) to conclude that students' desire to develop their English skills rather clearly outweighs students' interest in learning about the field and subject they are studying.

Nonetheless, regardless of students' motives of students for attending HE degree programs abroad, one could say that all kinds of students, with various levels of academic preparedness or financial resources, are on the move, resulting in internationalization of higher education globally. In the context of the United States, Choudaha, Orosz and Chang (2012: 7) segmented the incoming international students according to academic preparedness and financial resources. They then categorized the incoming student population into four rather descriptive segments: explorers, highfliers, strugglers, and strivers. As the category names indicate, various student groups are on the move. It has even been suggested that by 2025 as many as 15 million students will be going to study abroad (Altbach and Knight, 2007: 303). Even though Altbach and Knight (2007) go on to declare that this estimation is likely too optimistic, they suggest there is no denying that the amount of mobile students has been, and will continue to be, steady.

As discussed above, the language of internationalization is often, not surprisingly, English (Dafouz and Smit, 2016). Coleman (2006:1) even names this the Englishization of higher education, since it applies to not only English-speaking countries, such as the United States (e.g. Cho and Bridgeman, 2012) and Australia (e.g. Murray, 2010, Arkoudis, 2013). In these countries, educating students who are non-native speakers of English can already be described as an industry in itself. Interestingly though, as discussed by Mathies and Weimer (2018), among others, the current situations with President Trump in the US and Brexit in the UK might have an effect on the global flow of students. Mathies and Weimer (2018) suggest that these political events and the prevailing populist discourse may result in changes in the US and UK legislation regarding incoming international students, and thus they may have an impact on the attractiveness of the US and UK as destinations for international students. It remains to be seen whether these students will find the HE degrees they are seeking from institutions in, for instance, other European countries.

However, even prior to Trump's victory in the 2016 election and Brexit becoming reality, the United States had been facing growing competition from different continents (Bok, 2006: 5, 358), Europe included (e.g. Coleman, 2006;

Fortanet-Gómez and Räisänen, 2008; Wächter, 2008; Jensen and Thøgersen, 2011; Costa and Coleman, 2013; Goodman 2014; de Wit and Hunter; 2015). As a result of the Bologna process, the number of English-medium instruction (EMI) or English-taught programs (ETP) in Europe has continued to increase, causing growing competition within European HE. However, according to for instance de Wit and Hunter (2015: 2), there are clear differences in how successfully various European countries have coped with internationalization. Laine (2016: 20) provides concrete numbers related to this, suggesting that the number of such programs in non-English speaking European countries has increased from approximately 700 to over 8,000 programs in only 14 years (2001–2014). As Table 1 shows (Laine, 2016: 19), the flow of students in Europe has been rather lively and varied in terms of the countries of origin of the incoming students.

Table 1 Top 5 destination countries of mobile tertiary students in Europe and their top 5 countries of origin in 2013 (Laine, 2016: 19)

	Destination country / percent of all international students									
	UK (416,693)	%	France (228,639)	%	Germany (196,619)	%	Italy (82,450)	%	Austria (70,852)	%
1	China	20	China	11	China	10	Albania	14	Germany	40
2	India	5	Morocco	10	Russia	5	China	12	Italy	11
3	Nigeria	4	Algeria	8	Austria	4	Romania	8	Turkey	4
4	USA	4	Tunisia	4	Bulgaria	3	Iran	4	Bosnia & H.	3
5	Germany	3	Senegal	3	Poland	3	Greece	4	Serbia	3

As Table 1 indicates (Laine, 2016: 19), a current trend is that international students come from outside Europe, mostly from China, but also from African countries and neighboring countries. However, Hultgren, Jensen and Dimova (2015: 3) emphasize a striking north–south divide prevailing in Europe in the destination countries of international students, as the Nordic and Baltic countries have far more English-medium master's programs per 100,000 inhabitants compared to countries in southern parts of Europe. This is demonstrated in Table 2 by Hultgren, Jensen, Dimova (2015: 4) and highlighted also by, for instance, Lam and Wächter (2014: 17), and more recently by Soler-Carbonell, Saarinen and Kibberman (2017: 302).

Table 2 Master's programs taught entirely or partly in English (Hultgren, Jensen and Dimova, 2015: 4)

Country	MA programmes in English	Population	MA programmes in English per 100,000 inhabitants
Iceland	29	321,857	9
Sweden	764	9,644,864	7.9
Denmark	363	5,627,235	6.5
Finland	296	5,454,444	5.4
Norway	206	5,136,700	4.0
Estonia	49	1,311,870	3.7
Germany	763	80,585,700	0.9
Spain	378	46,704,314	0.8
Italy	335	59,943,933	0.6
Turkey[3]	164	76,667,864	0.2
Croatia	5	4,284,889	0.1

According to Airey et al. (2017), in the Nordic context, internationalization, and with that mobile students, translate very much into essential economic gains, since the Nordic governments are urging their countries' HE institutions to adopt English as the medium of instruction by offering funding in return. For instance, in Denmark, as described by Mortenson and Haberland (2012: 190-191), the HE context is strongly guided by the idea of either internationalizing or perishing, and according to Saarinen and Taalas (2016) as well as Airey et al. (2017), Denmark is by no means alone in this sense. This leads the discussion closer to the context of the present study, namely, Finland.

Interestingly, Finland, with its large number of English-taught programs, is one of the forerunners in Europe (Coleman, 2006, Fortanet-Gómez and Räisänen, 2008, Wächter, 2008, Saarinen, 2012a). Lehikoinen (2004: 46) even declared Finland to be a so-called Little England due to its popularity among international students. In its evaluation of international degree programs in Finland, the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (Välimaa et al., 2013: 20) estimated that there were around 400 programs in the spring of 2012, with over 250 of them being run by universities and the rest by universities of applied sciences. The majority of the programs offered by the universities were, similarly to the present study's context, master's programs (251) and only six of them were BA level programs (Välimaa et al., 2013: 21). Laine (2016: 22) provides slightly more recent statistics, as according to her observations regarding CIMO's databases, in 2015 there were 455 ETPs offered in Finnish HE, with again the majority of them, 333, being offered by the universities.

Garam (2015: 2) provides a more concrete idea of the numbers of international students partaking in Finnish higher education by drawing on figures from Statistics Finland (*Tilastokeskus*). As Figure 1 shows, the overall numbers (in the figure referred to as *Yhteensä*) have been continuously increasing when considering both universities (in the figure referred to as *YO*), and universities of applied sciences (in the figure referred to as *AMK*). Only a rather small stagnation can be detected in the most recent years regarding the numbers in universities of applied sciences, but according to Airey et al. (2017), the overall trend in Finland has for years been on the rise.

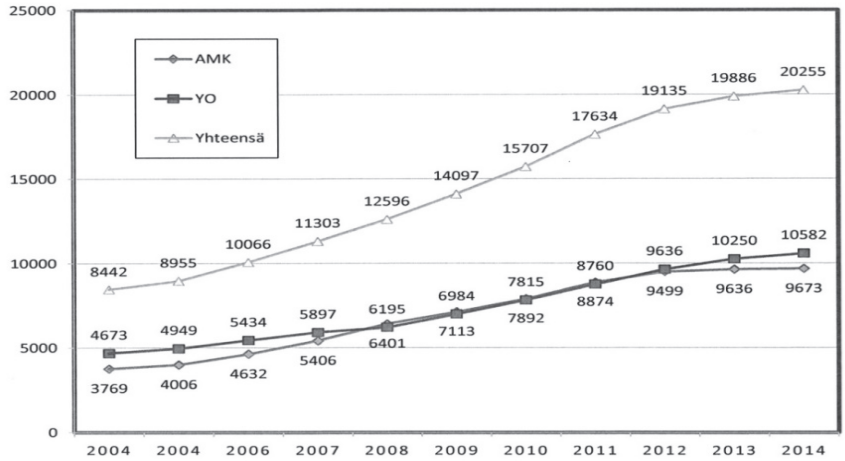

Figure 1 International degree students in Finnish universities and universities of applied sciences 2004-2014 (Garam, 2015: 2)

However, Garam's (2015: 2) study does not consider the new set of laws concerning tuition fees for students coming from outside of the European Union (EU) and the European Economic area (EEA). These laws were only accepted by the Finnish government in December 2015 (Finlex 1600/2015; Finlex 1601/2015), and the changes came into effect at the start of 2016, meaning they were first applied to those students starting their studies in Finland from August 2017. The effect of the tuition fees is, therefore, not yet visible in Garam's findings.

In Finland the fees have set to be, at minimum, €1,500 per academic year, but each institution has a chance to autonomously set price levels for the programs they offer. Though tuition fees have previously been a rather remote concept in Finland, institutions all over the world have already been reacting to higher participation rates with student fees (Biggs and Tang, 2011: 4), and this has also been the case in the Nordic countries. A law similar to the one established for Finnish HE came into force in Denmark in 2006 and in Sweden in 2011. In both of these countries, the law resulted in a collapse of the numbers of international degree applicants, and ever since Denmark and Sweden have struggled to reach the level they were at prior to the new law (Karttunen, 2015). According to Karttunen's article (2015), in 2013 the absolute majority, (77%), of international degree students came from outside the EU/EEA to study in Finland, and the number was still on the same level (76%) in 2014 (Garam, 2015: 3). Interestingly the number of new students outside the EU/EEA applying primarily to Finnish higher education institutions seemed to be on the rise in 2015, as 84% of all applicants were not from the EU/EEA (Garam, 2015: 3). The top 15 list of international degree students' countries of origin was in 2015 clearly dominated by non-EU and non-EEA countries (Garam, 2015: 5). Namely, the only two EU/EEA countries on this list were Estonia (6) and Sweden (12). The remaining 13 countries, all non-EU or non-EEA countries, were as follows, in order from top to bottom: Russia (1), Nepal (2), Nigeria (3), Vietnam (4), Ghana (5), Kenya (7), Pakistan (8), Cameroon (9), China (10), Bangladesh (11), the Unit-

ed States (13), Kazakhstan (14) and India (15). This list becomes even more thought-provoking when considering that according to an unpublished international student barometer questionnaire it seems that especially the students coming from outside the EU/EEA considered the low financial costs of studying in Finland to be a crucial factor in choosing to apply to Finnish HE (Garam, 2015: 7). The same exact motive was also discovered by Shumilova, Yuzhuo and Pekkola (2012), as in their survey over 70% of international students mentioned the low costs as a reason for coming to obtain a degree in Finland.

Therefore, as a result of the new law regarding tuition fees, stagnation, even a collapse, was detected in many Finnish universities in the fall of 2017, with the University of Tampere being the only exception (Hakkarainen, 2017). For instance, the University of Helsinki suffered a 30% decline in the number of applicants, and the lost applicants were from countries outside the EU/EEA. Formerly, over 70% of the university's applicants have been from outside the EU/EEA, such as from Russia, China and Nigeria, but in 2017 the equivalent percentage was merely around 57% (Mokkila, 2017).

1.2 International Master's Degree Programs at the University of Jyväskylä

The present study, however, does not focus on IoHe in a broader scale, nor does it discuss the European or Finnish HE context. Instead, it focuses on one particular Finnish HE institution, the University of Jyväskylä, and the EMI programs it offers. At the University of Jyväskylä these programs are called International Master's Degree Programs (IMDP), but the core idea of the IMDPs is ultimately the same as in EMI or English-taught programs (ETP), with all teaching in the program offered in English. McCambridge and Pitkänen-Huhta (2012: 169) point out that perhaps this choice of term, on behalf of most Finnish universities, including the University of Jyväskylä, is based on a certain logic. According to them, this term emphasizes the fact that the programs offered are targeted for an indeterminate global audience, instead of highlighting the use of English, because such a reference might be too strongly directed at the Anglophone countries (McCambridge and Pitkänen-Huhta, 2012: 169).

The University of Jyväskylä has typically been offering annually around 20 IMDPs, although the most recent cohort (2017–2019), consists of 17 programs, and the cohort of 2018–2020 will consist of only 14 different programs. However, what is important to take into account is that for years the IMDPs of the University of Jyväskylä have been a mutual endeavor of all the faculties, since all the faculties of the University of Jyväskylä have continuously been offering at least a few programs every year. In respect to the IMDPs at the University of Jyväskylä, it has also been noted that they are strongly characterized by often being built around only one or two individuals, often senior academics, and their networks and personal motives for starting and running an IMDP

(Internal Evaluation of the International Master's Degree Programmes at the University of Jyväskylä, 2014: 7). Additionally, the programs have typically been set up to contribute to the overall internationalization of the university, and perhaps more importantly in order to acquire extra funding from the Ministry of Education as a result of foreign graduates (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 7). These two-year programs, all consisting of 120 ECTs, are targeted at both Finnish as well as international degree students and many IMDPs have reported that they are recruiting students who are research-oriented and thus likely to continue on to doctoral studies after completing the IMDP (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 13).

The figures related to the IMDPs of the University of Jyväskylä closely resemble the statistics presented on the European (see Table 1 and 2), and national level (see Figure 1). First of all, the overall number of international students in Jyväskylä has been clearly increasing if one compares 2004 (391) to 2012 (1,087). Second, the University of Jyväskylä seems to be following European and national trends in terms of where the students are coming from. In 2013, the percentage of non-EU and non-EEA students in the IMDPs was also rather high, as 54% of registered students came from outside Europe (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 27-29). This number at the University of Jyväskylä is comparatively lower than in Finland as a whole, but nevertheless over half of the IMDP students have typically come from outside Europe.

When considering the new law regarding tuition fees (Finlex 1600/2015) from the viewpoint of the IMDPs in the University of Jyväskylä, the Internal Evaluation (2014: 20) points out that tuition-free education was one of the most influential reasons for the students to come and study in their program in Jyväskylä, with 43% of students mentioning it in the online survey in 2013. It becomes essential, therefore, to consult the application and admission data of the 2017 round because this application round was the first to introduce the tuition fees to the Finnish HE system. According to a January 2017 news bulletin on the website of the University of Jyväskylä, the application round for the two-year IMDPs of 2017–2019, 17 programs were offered, with an opportunity for 291 students to attend the University of Jyväskylä. The IMDPs received 562 applications, which is notably less than in the spring of 2016 when nearly 1,000 students applied to the IMDPs. A likely reason for this decrease was the introduction of tuition fees, which at the University of Jyväskylä range from 8,000 euros to 12,000 euros. These fees are in line with the average costs for programs in Finland, which is around 10,000 euros (Hakkarainen, 2017). As a probable consequence, in the spring of 2017, the number of non-EU and non-EEA applicants dropped significantly when compared to the application round of 2016. In 2016, the IMDPs received applications from 768 non-EU/EEA applicants, and in 2017 from only 343 applicants. For those applicants who were accepted and then enrolled in the fall of 2017, one can also detect a decrease, since only 147 entered the programs, whereas the equivalent number of students was 225 in 2016. In respect to the first application round with tuition fees, the numbers of students were indeed trending downward at the University of Jyväskylä, just as

they were in the majority of other Finnish universities (e.g. Hakkarainen, 2017; Mokkila, 2017), and as they did in other Nordic countries, such as Sweden and Demark when the similar law came into effect (Karttunen, 2015).

Interestingly though, a January 2018 news bulletin on the website of the University of Jyväskylä brought to the fore a slightly more positive trend, since the numbers for the 2018 application round were clearly on the rise. The IMDPs on offer for the 2018-2020 cohort received all in all 862 applications, out of which 620 applications were from outside the EU/EEA. However, it remains to be seen how the landscape of the IMDPs and their pool of applicants will evolve in the future, and it should be emphasized that the University of Jyväskylä and its IMDPs have undisputedly entered a different, and above all more competitive, market of mobile students.

According to Kallio's (2017) article regarding the first non-EU/EEA students paying for their HE degree in Finland, the students in fact do not mind paying for their education as long as they are paying for education with good quality. Although, in relation to this, Baltzar's (2018) article sheds light on a slightly different quality issue, as a non EU/EEA student openly questions the quality of the education being 'sold' to her, as she is the only student in her program paying for the education. What is more, she criticizes the tuition fee system in the sense that she does not really know what is being done with the 10,000 euros, which she is required to pay per one academic year in her IMDP at the University of Jyväskylä. Therefore, if considering all these viewpoints, the University of Jyväskylä, and the individual programs need to focus on and invest in the quality of the programs if they are interested in attracting IMDP students in the future, and providing these students with quality HE.

1.3 The present study: research questions and motives

1.3.1 Research questions

In light of the growing competition that the IMDPs of the University of Jyväskylä are now encountering, one must consider that the programs need to be at the level that they can be marketed to potential students worldwide with positive student experiences and, above all, good graduation rates in order to keep attracting mobile students. However, as will be demonstrated and discussed in the following subchapters, the IMDPs are not necessarily at a stage where they could use aspects such as graduation rates as an asset in marketing. Moreover, Räsänen (2007: 62) especially calls for more attention to be paid to the IMDP students' overall communication skills, including academic writing in English. This is particularly the case when considering that, for instance, the students' master's theses are nowadays published online for wider international audiences to read. Thus, potential new IMDP applicants, as well as possible future employers, may use the theses as references when judging the programs or even individual students. Consequently, the students' communication skills play a

pivotal role in respect to the overall image of the individual programs, but also the University of Jyväskylä as a HE institution (Räsänen, 2007: 62). Yet, according to the Internal Evaluation (2014), there appears to exist a mismatch between what is offered and what could be offered to the students of the IMDPs from the viewpoint of academic English, and overall communication skills, in order to best support the IMDP students' study paths. Kember and McNaught (2007: 18, 61, 63, 66) remark that the students and their needs ought to always be at the core of any kind of good teaching, and its planning, and Evans and Morrison (2011: 206) claim that this quality lies at the heart of English for academic purposes (EAP).

As a teacher of academic English, and as someone who is working with the IMDPs, I am keen on learning more about these students in a way that would take my understanding of them beyond what I witness daily in the course of work. However, what has proven to be rather challenging is an issue also discussed by Lankshear and Knobel (2004: 44-49): forming my research questions. The form of the present study – teacher research – has manifested itself very clearly as a double-edged sword particularly in respect to forming my research questions. On the one hand, I am so familiar with the context of this present study that I already possess extensive knowledge and understanding in relation to this topic and its themes (though perhaps even more questions remain unanswered). All this has allowed me to benefit from my connection, and with that my position (e.g. Ward-Schofield, 1993; Pyett, 2003: 1172), to the present study. On the other hand, I have been challenged to take a step back so that the subject remains close enough for me to see what is relevant, but still far enough to not allow all my background to have too strong of an effect on my research questions. According to Borg (2015:10), the ways in which teachers think and act are guided by their often unconscious beliefs, and therefore, I have been challenged to phrase questions for the present study which do not entail my conscious or unconscious presuppositions, but leave more room for the study participants.

Lankshear and Knobel (2004: 47) state that researchers should approach their research by identifying an authentic problem to which they want to find an answer. As a way of incorporating this viewpoint, the research questions of the present study have been divided into three separate, but interrelated, categories, which are summarized below. These categories – the first relating to academic English, the second focusing on external factors of the IMDP students' study paths, and the third centering around the ideal language support – entail six research questions that the present study seeks to answer. The ultimate objective, however, is to enable change in the IMDPs and, above all, in the Language Center's and the IMDPs joint efforts to support the IMDP students in their studies.

RQ 1 How do the IMDP students conceptualize academic English?

RQ 1a In which ways do the IMDP students use different frames of reference when reflecting on their own academic English skills?

RQ 1b What type of academic English language gains do the students report achieving during their IMDP studies?

RQ 1c How do the IMDP students construct their own role and effort in respect to their academic English language gains during their IMDP studies?

RQ 2 What external factors do the IMDP students attribute their study success and/or failure to in terms of their IMDP studies?

RQ 3 How should students' academic English learning be supported during their IMDP studies?

The first category, encompassing RQ 1 with its three subquestions (RQ 1a–1c), deals with academic English, and particularly the students' relation to it. As RQ 1 indicates, one of the main aims of the present study is to, first of all, learn more about the IMDP students' ways of conceptualizing what academic English is. Second, with the help of this first category the present study aims to map out the ways in which the IMDP students use different frames of reference when reflecting on their own academic English skills (RQ 1a). In research question 1b, the present study is interested in the academic English language gains, which the IMDP students self-report on in relation to their two-year IMDP. Fourth, RQ 1c examines the IMDP students' own role and effort as a core element in the discussion the students' academic English language gains. The second category, containing only one research question (RQ 2), focuses on external, and not solely language-related, factors, which have played a role along the participants' study paths. In the third category, RQ 3 addresses the possible ideal structure of supporting and instructing the IMDP students' academic English development during their studies. Consequently, the last research question widens the scope of the first five questions in order to build a bridge between the students' perceptions and the possible practical implications of the present study.

At the base of these six research questions are the students' thoughts and perceptions on their study path in the IMDP. All the questions aim to contribute to a better understanding of the IMDP students' study paths, especially from the viewpoint of academic English and all issues related to its learning and teaching. Yet, at the same, the questions attempt to provide insight into how the IMDPs, and the language support offered by the Language Center, could be improved so that the overall quality of, for instance, the students' academic performance and graduation rates, could also be improved. The following section provides a more detailed discussion of the present study's motives.

1.3.2 IMDP students' academic performance and graduation rates

In a general sense, academic performance is often viewed in rather numeric terms in much of the literature on HE and EMI. For example, Klaassen (2001) discusses general academic performance by referring to it as academic intelli-

gence on a general level and measuring it with the help of students' final grades. In a similar vein, Ying (2003: 473) refers to it only as students' GPA across their study path. Stoynoff (1997) defined academic performance as a combination of GPA, the number of earned credits and the number of withdrawals. An almost identical approach was taken in a study of college freshmen conducted by Zajacova, Lynch and Espenshade (2005: 678), in which they reviewed academic success from the viewpoint of the students' freshman year's grades and credits, but by also considering the second year's retention. To sum up, academic performance and success are clearly thought to be aspects which are rather easily reduced to averages and other numbers and figures.

When taking these definitions of academic performance and success into account in respect to the present study, it is essential to note that similar issues are also incorporated to some extent when discussing the present study's themes. The present study in fact originates from a project called *Language Proficiency and Academic Performance: Insights into International Master's Degree Programmes.* The project brought together scholars, including myself, from three units from the University of Jyväskylä: the Language Center, the Center for Applied Language Studies, and the Division of Strategic Planning and Development. Due to my personal involvement in this project since the fall of 2013, the present study has been benefited from the project, because it has enabled access to the study records of all the present study's participants. Furthermore, the present study has made use of the background information on these students provided in the Education Council's Internal Evaluation as well as all of statistical information available from University Admissions Finland (UAF) as well as the JORE and Korppi study data systems. Hence, all this information has functioned as background knowledge to the present study at various stages.

Regarding the graduation rate of the IMDP students, Mathies (2016) presents a snapshot of the rate for the 2013–2015 cohort, which is the cohort on which the present study is based. As can be seen in Figure 2, 2% of the students had graduated prior to the two-year mark, but only 15% of the students graduated within the given two-year timeframe of the IMDPs. As becomes apparent, the graduation rate exceeds 50% only after three years of study, which is one academic year more than the target graduation time. Moreover, this percentage is not satisfactory for any stakeholders – that is, the programs or the students – if it means that merely every other IMDP student graduates within three years. In this light, one of the core goals of the IMDPs, the extra funding from the Ministry (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 7), is not adequately achieved with such graduation rates.

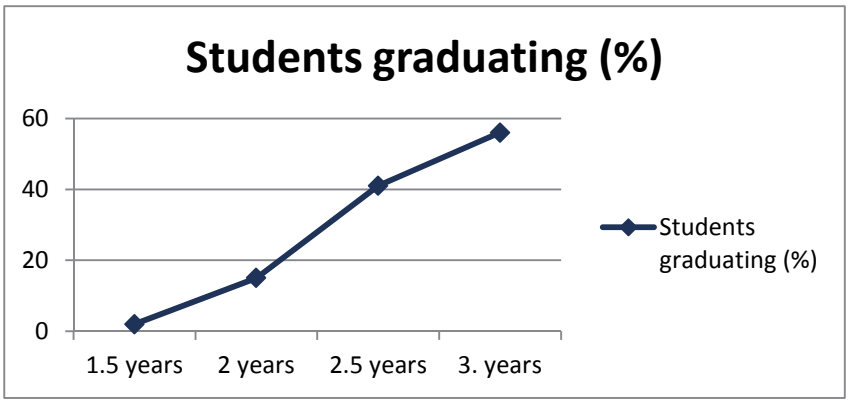

Figure 2 Graduation rate of the entire IMDP cohort 2013-2015 (adopted from Mathies, 2016)

Furthermore, when consulting the statistics concerning the IMDP graduation rates on a program level by Mathies (2016), one can detect that at the end of two years of study (i.e. the target point of graduation) six programs of the 17 programs had a rate of 0% graduation rate. In the 11 programs with students graduating, the graduation rate varied from 8% to 60%. Looking at the next checkpoint of graduation, 2.5 years, the equivalent percentages look slightly more reassuring, as there remains only one program with a graduation rate of 0%. Nonetheless, the graduation rate does not reach 100% in any of the programs, but rather varies between 8% and 75%. At the three-year mark, four programs reach 100%, but for other programs the rate still lingers between 8% and 80% (Mathies, 2016.) As becomes apparent, the graduation rate of the IMDPs is far from praiseworthy.

1.3.3 IMDP designs and curricula: A brief overview

These percentages cause one to revisit the concerns regarding the quality issues of using English as a medium of instruction presented by various scholars, such as Fortanet-Gómez and Räisänen (2008), Knapp (2011), Choudaha and De Wit (2014), Hultgren, Jensen and Dimova (2015), Fabricius, Mortensen and Haberland (2017) and Weinberg and Symon (2017). A question emerges of whether the low graduation rates of the IMDPs are in any way linked to the complex nature of EMI and all its consequences. As has been noted by Choudaha and De Wit (2014: 29) and Fabricius, Mortensen and Haberland (2017: 590), programs such as the IMDPs and their curricula require a great deal of planning and work in practice. For instance, in her dissertation, Klaassen (2001) made use of Brisk's (1999) Framework for Defining Success (see Table 3 below) when discussing the different factors contributing to the success or failure of the programs she studied. Klaassen's (2001) topic was English-medium engineering education at a Dutch university, and she used this given framework to evaluate the education provided in that university.

Table 3 Framework for Defining Success (Brisk, 1999 in Klaassen, 2001: 18

DEPENDS	ONMEASURED BY	INFLUENCED BY
Programme characteristics	**Students' performance**	**Contextual factors**
• Teacher preparation	• Language and Literacy development	• Students' characteristics
• Curriculum		• Peer pressures
• Materials	• Academic Achievement	• Family role
• Instruction	• Socio-cultural Integration	• *School characteristics*
• Assessment		• *Situational factors (historical perspective)*
INPUT	OUTCOME	SUPPORT
QUALITY	SUCCESS	CHALLENGE

If taking into account all three columns in Table 3, where the program characteristics are on the left and the contextual factors are on the right, one becomes aware of the complex reality of students' performance, which is portrayed rather aptly in the middle. When considering this middle section, one notices that a student's performance is a complex mixture of academic achievement, sociocultural integration and the core components of the present study – language and literacy development (Brisk, 1999: 3; Klaassen, 2001: 18). Brisk (1999: 3) summarized this all by stating that success is something which is measured with the help of outcomes and something that is dependent on the quality of inputs, but also constantly affected by various contextual factors. Furthermore, a successful program should always have a positive effect on its students' language and literacy development and consequently lead the students towards academic achievement while also taking into account the importance of integrating the students socioculturally into their academic community (Brisk, 1999: 3).

Frameworks such as this cast in a new light the findings of the Internal Evaluation (2014: 14). This evaluation says that the majority of the students interviewed for the internal report stated they were not fully pleased with their program's design. They described, for instance, their program curriculum as far too scattered and even overly flexible, meaning the students perceived their programs as inadequately rigorous. This may be partly due to the fairly flexible concept of Finnish academic freedom, and the international students interviewed for the evaluation not being familiar with such ways of teaching and learning (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 14). However, according to the same internal report merely half of the IMDPs embed clearly designed and thoroughly considered structures and curricula (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 13). Usually the more organized IMDPs have degree structures, which combine core courses and elective courses, and include a thesis accompanied by a seminar course. Typically, these programs also require their students to complete a set of language and communication studies and at times possibly also an internship (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 13–14).

However, at the other extreme, there are nevertheless programs, which clearly lack their own specified curricula (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 13), which raises the question of how, if there is not even a general curriculum in place, academic English has been incorporated into the teaching and learning. This is especially alarming when considering how Brisk (1999: 3) called for more attention to be given to catering for students' language and literacy needs. A further concern related to this was also voiced in the Internal Evaluation (2014: 14), which stated that instruction and support of students' academic language and communication skills are pivotal for their overall academic performance and experience.

1.3.4 The role of the Language Center in the IMDPs

In Finland, along with Germany and a few other countries, language centers are traditionally responsible for teaching English for Specific purposes (ESP) and EAP (Fortanet-Gómez and Räisänen, 2008: 26). This is also the case at the University of Jyväskylä, where the Language Center is a separate institute within the university (Räsänen, 2007: 46). The Language Center of the University of Jyväskylä, along with other Finnish language centers, was established about 40 years ago in 1977 (Pekkala, 2007: 10). Ever since, the ultimate purpose of the Finnish language centers has been the same: providing language teaching and support to BA, MA and doctoral students of various fields in different foreign languages, such as English and German among many others, as well as courses in the two official languages of Finland – Finnish and Swedish (Räsänen, 2007: 46). Roughly 700 different courses in 18 languages are offered annually by the Language Center of the University of Jyväskylä, and every year these courses add up to over 30,000 ECTs completed by the university's students. At the core of these courses has always been the idea to help students cope with their university studies and future careers (Räsänen, 2007: 48), but the faculties and individual programs, such as the IMDPs, have decided on the concrete number of courses and credits required from their students (Pekkala, 2007: 12, Räsänen, 2007:48). Both more field-specific compulsory courses as well as more general elective courses are on offer at the Language Center, but what is essential is that language and communication studies have been a compulsory part of all the university's students ever since the Language Center was first established, and the frames of these studies have always been languages for specific or academic purposes (Räsänen, 2007: 44).

When it comes to the IMDPs and the Language Center's courses, there appears to be a divide among the IMDPs in relation to how they make use of the Language Center's academic English courses. According to the Internal Evaluatio (2014: 14), there are only a handful of IMDPs in the University of Jyväskylä which adequately take advantage of the language and literacy expertise available at the Language Center. One can speculate whether this relates to the unwritten assumption presented by Fortanet-Gómez and Räisänen (2008:12, 43) that, in various countries, it is assumed that students already have the English skills needed to study in these programs, and hence are not in need of any type

of special language training. However, they point out that there can be great variation in students' speaking and writing skills (Fortanet-Gómez and Räisänen, 2008: 12) and that there is not enough attention paid to teaching these skills at the master's level. Räsänen (2007: 60–61) has made a similar observation in relation to the IMDPs of the University of Jyväskylä, stating that the IMDP students skills vary greatly, and not only in the students' proficiency in formal English, but also in their readiness to use academic English for learning the content of their program. Van Leeuwen (2007: 8) has provided concrete outcomes of programs that ignore the teaching and learning of academic language skills. He proposes that it may result in students dropping out prior to graduation, or alternatively graduating but with inadequate value in the job market (Van Leeuwen, 2007: 8). Even if, Van Leeuwen was not discussing the IMDPs of the University of Jyväskylä, many of the issues he brings up can, nonetheless, be traced in the Internal Evaluation (2014) on the IMDPs.

However, when discussing those IMDPs which have included the Language Center's courses in their curricula, one must note that such programs have typically embedded EAP courses, which are compulsory and more or less integrated writing and presentation courses (Pekkala, 2007: 27; Räsänen, 2007: 45, 60). Very often, the IMDPs have opted for a course, which is in one way or another linked to the MA thesis seminar and process, and usually the link is visible in the form of the course's themes, schedules, and/or assignments (Pekkala, 2007: 27). It is, nevertheless, important to note that the extent of integration may vary from program to program, and according to Räsänen (2007: 62) this has proven to be rather burdensome, since the language support should be, as fluently as possible, connected to a program's subject studies as well as its practices and assessment criteria. Based on my own and my colleagues' experiences, this aforementioned integration has in reality manifested itself in successful as well as less successful combinations throughout the years.

The role of the Language Center in the IMDPs can overall be seen as challenging in two different, though related, senses. First, all of the programs must be convinced of the relevance of consciously and thoroughly incorporating academic language and literacy support and instruction into their curricula in order to best assist and encourage their students on their academic study paths. Second, further discussion is required in order to reach a more seamless, and thus shared understanding of how, in practice, language and literacy should be tied in the content of a program. These issues are, therefore, in many ways interrelated, and in them lie some of the core motives which initially motivated the present study. What is more, these aforementioned aspects are also very likely prevalent not only in the context of the University of Jyväskylä, but also in other similar contexts all across the globe where academic programs offered for instance in English are contemplating with these same challenges and dilemmas. Thus, in addition to serving the needs of the present study's context, this research can surely also provide a fruitful sounding board for many other HE contexts.

1.3.5 Teacher research as part of the present study

In order to contribute to the further development of the academic English teaching in these IMDPs, as well as to join the broader global discussion on similar programs, I have personally adopted a double role as a teacher conducting research that closely relates to my own line of work. As part of my current position as a university teacher, I have been teaching in six different IMDPs since I started working at the Language Center of the University of Jyväskylä in the spring of 2011. In fact, the first session I ever taught at the Language Center was targeted for a particular IMDP, and since then I have consistently had one or two IMDPs in my work plan as an academic English teacher. Throughout these nearly eight years of teaching IMDP students, I have been contemplating issues related to students' varying (entry) levels of English and their understanding of academic literacies, including the overwhelming challenges as well as the fruitful learning experiences which have occurred during these years. It has occurred to me that, after I have stood in front of a class while the students looked on blankly after I have rephrased the instructions for an activity multiple times, that some of the students do not, in fact, understand English well enough to act according to those instructions. Yet I have also witnessed students embarking on wonderful journeys with their MA thesis topics, and seen them excel by mastering both the academic language as well as the literacies related to their topic and field-specific content. Furthermore, in between these two extremes there have always been a range of stories and paths of students who have, with varying degrees of success, aimed to complete their studies in English within the given two-year timeframe.

According to Lankshear and Knobel (2004: 4-5), who are both strong advocates of teachers researching their own work, one of the major benefits of teacher research is that it can lead to better teaching and improved learning. After all, teachers' thoughts, knowledge and beliefs create the basis for their practices in the classroom (Borg, 2015: 1), and hence, teachers who are also working as researchers can have improved perspectives on both their own teaching as well as the learning of their students (Brew, 2006: 37). Moreover, Brew (2006: 126-138) also suggests that their role as a teacher can enrich the research. As a language center teacher, and as a researcher interested first and foremost in language, and academic English in particular, I have adopted those aspects as the core of the present research.

Furthermore, in addition to teaching in the IMDPs, I have also been part of projects with a focus on these programs and their students. For instance, since the fall of 2013 I have been part of a project called *Insights into IMDP students' language proficiency and academic performance*, and via this project I have learned a great deal about the programs and the students in them. Above all, I have learned what happens to the students' after they leave my course, which has typically been held during the first year of their studies, and the fact remains that many of the IMDP students fail to graduate within the given two-year timeframe. The graduation rate at the two-year mark, as noted earlier, was only

15% of in the 2013–2015 cohort (Mathies, 2016), and as an English teacher working with the IMDPs, the language barrier which might be contributing to this poor graduation rate is impossible to ignore (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 30). The internal report itself proposes that students' lack of language skills is one possible reason for delays in students' graduation (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 18) and similar findings have been reported globally by Ying (2003: 478) and Poyrazli and Kavanaugh (2006: 774), among others. Also, as proposed by Dafouz and Smit (2016), students' language skills in English ought to be considered as a core criterion upon graduation, and this merely reinforces the link between language proficiency and academic performance which has been of interest in this joint project.

While taking part in the *Insights into IMDP students' language proficiency and academic performance* project, I have simultaneously been working on another joint project since the fall of 2015. The Language Center, alongside the Division of Strategic Planning and Development and two IMDPs from two different faculties, have joined forces to develop a new, more tailored screening process for IMDP applicants (see e.g. Lahtela and Konttinen, 2016a; Lahtela and Konttinen, 2016b; Konttinen and Lahtela, 2017). This project has been focused on discussing and implementing a screening process that would more thoroughly incorporate academic language and literacy skills into the application process. This need has been emerged primarily from our project groups' real-life experiences, but also studies conducted (e.g. Ying, 2003, Poyrazli and Kavanaugh, 2006) on the relation between students' academic performance and their English skills show that there seems to be a strong correlation between these two aspects. Therefore, this correlation should not be ignored in the screening of IMDP applicants. Considering this need from the viewpoint of Murray (2010: 344), it is vital that to remember that once a student, even one with inadequate language skills, is accepted to a program, that student is entitled to be in the program and, above all, has a right to graduate. All this means that the program that accepted this student is ethically and educationally responsible for helping this student to graduate. Consequently, the discussion of quality regarding the programs shifts from what happens once the students begin studying in the IMDPs to considering as equally valuable what quality might mean in respect to accepting the most suitable students to enter the programs in the first place.

As a teacher and researcher, I am keenly aware that content and, along with it, students' performance and success, play pivotal roles in the IMDPs and their teaching. However, for the purposes of this study, it should be emphasized that academic English and literacy teaching and learning, especially on a curriculum, syllabus and daily practices level, are aspects that the Language Center, myself included, can influence. Consequently, I am aiming that this study will have practical implications for the future so that what and how the Language Center teaches correspond with the current status in the field of HE, and above all that the Language Center's teaching is in sync with the needs of the IMDP students'. The purpose of my research, therefore, is not only to im-

prove my own teaching, but also to enhance the level of teaching of the Language Center. Furthermore, this research also has the potential to provide one type of micro-level description of academic English and literacy teaching and learning in HE, and hence contribute to the ongoing macro-level discussion of HE, and especially of EMI, in Finland and in Europe in general.

To begin answering this study's research questions, I first outline how this dissertation is organized. Chapter 2 addresses the ways in which English, and academic English in particular, are manifested in the Englishization of higher education. This is done to provide a broader picture of the present study's context, which has academic English at its core. The concepts and ideas of Englishization, particularly with respect to English for academic purposes and English-medium instruction, are broadened to provide a more holistic and up-to-date perspective on these issues. Chapter 3 moves the present study from the traditional conceptualization of language to a new level by discussing various wider concepts, such as disciplinary discourse and academic literacies as approaches to higher education teaching and learning. Chapter 4 discusses having the self of individuals, such as the IMDP students, as the main object of study. Certain core components related to the self – self-concept, self-efficacy and social-cognitive theory as well as attribution theory – will be elaborated on in order to set the stage for the present study itself.

The present study and its various components, such as reflexivity and research ethics, alongside the more practical considerations such as data collection and approaches to data analysis, are presented in Chapter 5. This chapter also contains more detailed descriptions of the present study's participants.

Chapters 6–8 present the results and data analysis of the present study, and they have been organized in a manner that allows the present study's five research questions to be answered. Chapter 9 presents the discussion related to this study's research questions, and this is followed in Chapter 10 by the study's conclusion. Furthermore, Chapter 10 also contains the researcher's own reflections on assessing the present qualitative study, and a set of six criteria (e.g. Lincoln and Guba, 1985, 1994; Elo et al., 2014) is utilized to conduct this assessment. Lastly, a summary (*Yhteenveto*) in Finnish is included, and the present study's interview script is provided as an Appendix at the very end of this dissertation.

2 ENGLISHIZATION IN PRACTICE: FROM EAP TO EMI

Soler-Carbonell, Saarinen and Kibbermann (2017) have recently studied EU-level policies related to European higher education, and they found that in the internationalization of European HE, language does not seem to play a pivotal role in policy-making. However, what should be noted is that English is, nonetheless, explicitly recognized and promoted in the policy documents which, according to Soler-Carbonell, Saarinen and Kibbermann (2017: 309-312), is quite surprising. This finding is in line with Coleman's (2006) idea of Europe's strong Englishization, but one must also bear in mind that this key role of English is often thought to automatically be equivalent to Anglophone discourse and conventions (Seidlhofer, 2012: 401). This, according to Lillis, Hewings, Vladimirou and Curry (2010: 112) and Seidlhofer (2012: 401) as well as Dafouz and Smit (2016), is problematic in the sense that it paradoxically turns English as the global lingua franca into something that is actually dictated by local Anglophone norms, which are set by Anglophone authorities (Seidlhofer, 2012: 401). In a similar vein, Dafouz and Smit (2016) call for critical awareness regarding the potential of the use of English to homogenize various disciplines, thus making them Anglo-centric. In other words, in this discourse "international" comes to mean merely "English," and moreover English to be equated with Anglo-American traditions and practices (Seidlhofer, 2012: 393–394).

In Europe, as a result of the Bologna process, there have been many structural changes and policies concerning the internationalization of higher education, including the unifying of HE degree structures. Here it is essential to note that many of these changes have been initiated by governments, meaning that guidelines have been imposed in a top-down manner (Fortanet-Gómez and Räisänen, 2008: 22). Ljosland (2015: 612), however, adds that often these policies are a result of various agents and interests and at times their motives are very much in sync, whereas it may also be that their motives are pulling in completely opposite directions. In the Nordic countries, the key guideline, according to Airey et al. (2017: 567), has simply been that more English equals better HE. According to Garam (2009: 26), this has also to a great extent been the case in Fin-

land. Unfortunately, this has led to insufficient attention to more complex aspects of these issues (Fortanet-Gómez and Räisänen, 2008: 22) and Wilkinson and Zegers (2008: 12) express a special concern in regards to how language is incorporated in this process.

This leads one to ask how the logic of more English being somehow automatically better has been put into practice in global higher education. According to Hellekjaer (2010) and Dafouz and Smit (2016), English manifests itself in various ways, as it can either be a subject in English for academic purposes courses, or it can alternatively be at the heart of learning and teaching in English-Medium Instruction (EMI). First, the present study will go to the roots of Englishization of HE, i.e. the field and practices of EAP, as EAP is thought to have been the sort of kick-off to this phenomenon. Secondly, a very current movement in respect to Englishization will be discussed, as the present study dives into the field of EMI, which as a field of research is relatively new, as its roots can be traced back to the early 2000s (Airey, 2015: 158). EMI is thought to be a prevalent outcome of the Bologna process, and thus an integral component of modern, international higher education, and above all a key characteristic of the present study's context.

2.1 English for academic purposes (EAP)

English for academic purposes (EAP) is a subfield of English for specific purposes (ESP), as Figure 3 shows (Clapham, 2000: 513). ESP has its origins in the 1970s and 1980s when the teaching of English as a second language took a turn towards a more communicative approach, and became even more strongly driven by global learners' varying and more clearly defined needs in terms of English (Clapham, 2000: 511). As a reaction to the academic needs of a growing number of learners, EAP was established.

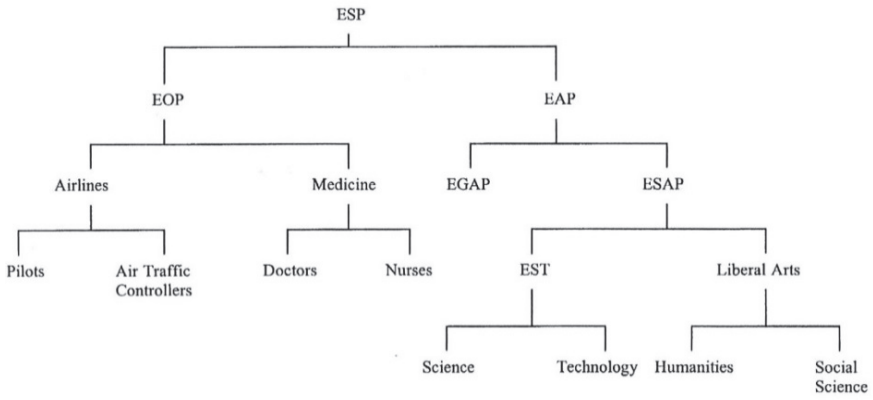

Figure 3 The ESP hierarchy with examples of courses (Clapham, 2000: 513)

Turner (2004: 97) emphasizes that EAP resulted from a need to have as many students as possible attain a certain minimum language level as fast as possible. In other words, EAP was initially about maximizing throughput and the use of time by focusing on certain exact issues which students should at least master. According to Turner (2004: 97), this initial approach to EAP unfortunately conveyed, perhaps unintentionally, a short-cut mentality to academic language learning, and this could have partly contributed to students' undervaluing of language, and to their not seeing it as an equal component in the so-called real thing, that is, the actual content, when it comes to academic performance. In EAP, one is forced to consider the core of language in academia and whether, for instance, teachers and students merely view it as a prerequisite or as something one needs to learn prior to moving on to the actual content of the studies in question (Russell, 1991; Turner, 2004: 104). In relation to this, institutions, and even individual teachers, need to be aware of not decontextualizing language as a completely alienated skill that can be taught and learned separately (Zamel, 1998: 253; Turner, 2004: 104)

In regards to defining EAP, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998: 34) refer to it as any English teaching with a study purpose at its core, but they specify that it particularly relates to language needed for academic disciplines and study skills. This aspect has been shown to be central to students' needs by, for instance, Evans and Green (2007: 5), as they found that students require language support that goes beyond general English and focuses instead on academic English. Moreover, Turner (2004: 102-103) emphasizes that teaching students to become self-directed, and simply teaching them how to learn are also integral in EAP, meaning that study skills, whether dealt with separately or embedded in the teaching of genre, are typically included in EAP curricula. In practice, this is manifested in activities and assignments such as listening and note-taking, essays, and seminar discussions and presentations (Turner, 2004: 102–103).

As becomes apparent in Figure 3 above, EAP has two subfields: English for general academic purposes (EGAP) and English for specific academic purposes (ESAP) (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998: 41; Clapham, 2000: 513). The former contains skills and language that are prevalent and common for various disciplines, whereas the latter involves teaching discipline-specific aspects (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998: 41). Perhaps the most pivotal distinction is that EGAP covers all types of crucial academic skills and study activities (e.g. Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998: 41), but ESAP takes them a step further by integrating these skills and activities into students' actual study tasks and assignments (e.g. Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998: 41-42). With this connection to students' subject studies, ESAP often requires some level of cooperation with the students' home department (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998: 41–42). This line of thought and action is also promoted by Turner (2004: 105), since it allows the focus on language to be better tailored to the content.

However, this can result in issues, even conflicts, regarding teachers' ownership and their so-called territory if, for instance, an EAP teacher participates in lectures and feedback sessions of the subject studies, and thus Spack (1998),

as well as Turner (2004: 105) have voiced a concern of how far EAP professionals can go when bringing language closer to the students' studies. Obviously, the ideal would be that the students would perceive language as an integral and equal component of their academic performance, and that they would not consider it to be secondary to the content. Nonetheless, this would require seamless cooperation between the EAP and subject teacher, which is likely easier said than done, although such cooperation has been carried out, to varying degrees, at the University of Jyväskylä and in the IMDPs (Räsänen, 2007: 62).

The dilemma of language versus content is not the only hierarchical question surrounding EAP, however. For instance, Turner (2004: 108) and Terraschke and Wahid (2011: 174) have considered the emphasis of what is being taught when one teaches language in an EAP setting. First of all, EAP has been a sort of battlefield of communicability and accuracy, even though, as Turner (2004: 108) states, they do not in reality rule each other out, but rather the opposite – they co-create academic discourse. Since EAP has its roots in communicative language teaching, it has been nonetheless proposed that accuracy, which is viewed as a more superficial and thus unimportant language feature, has been slightly downgraded in EAP teaching (Turner, 2004: 107). However, Turner (2004: 107), alongside with Terraschke and Wahid (2011: 174), call for EAP which includes developing language proficiency such as accuracy alongside linguistic conventions and ways of communicating in their particular field.

Nonetheless, as the title of this chapter already indicates, the trend in Englishization has shifted during the early part of the 21st century from short-term exchange periods – which have been, and remain so, at the heart of EAP – to full-time programs (Wilkinson, 2004: 9). This shift has led the discussion to gradually, but rather clearly, drift from merely focusing on EAP, to scholars and teachers increasingly becoming interested and involved in English-medium instruction. EMI is especially intriguing in the sense that there seem to be varied assumptions made in relation to using English as the language of instruction (Wilkinson and Zegers, 2006: 65–66). The present study, therefore, also needs to consider these assumptions, since it discusses full-time programs taught in English.

2.2 English-medium instruction (EMI)

In EMI, it is essential to consider that adopting English as the language of instruction is far more complex than it might seem at first glance. EMI often brings together multilingual and multicultural teachers and students, and therefore, to consider EMI as a static code of language is typically an illusion. In other words, merely using English as the language of instruction does not exclude the various discourse and social practices, or the diverse language resources of its stakeholders (e.g. Creese and Blackledge, 2010; Dafouz and Smit, 2016). Nonetheless, Hultgren, Jensen and Dimova (2015: 6) point out that the motives for adopting EMI are not necessarily explicit, and hence not that easily recog-

nized. Garam (2009: 27) even proposes that the programs have often simply developed on their own instead of being consciously developed, and Airey et al. (2017: 567) concur by describing the Nordic EMI context to be driven by a laissez-faire attitude. Moreover, Smit and Dafouz (2012: 13) remark that these programs are not merely a constantly growing educational practice, but additionally a field of research which should pay attention to a range of viewpoints.

There are very likely institutions that have made a conscious and well-planned strategic decision to offer EMI. Yet it has been simultaneously suggested that some institutions may have not considered, nor prepared for, the complex language issues EMI always entails in one way or another (e.g. Hultgren, Jensen and Dimova, 2015: 6). Therefore, one may wonder whether this is perhaps partly a reason for EMI becoming a severe quality concern for HE institutions globally (Choudaha and De Wit, 2014: 28). Institutions need to be thoroughly aware that simply teaching in English is by no means a synonym for internationalization (ibid. 28).

Hellekjær (2010: 11) defines EMI as instruction provided in English in content courses (i.e. non-language courses) to students whose first language is not English. This definition entails a core component of EMI, as also Knapp (2011: 53), among many others, brings up the idea of EMI being a solution of two for the price of one in higher education because it integrates content and language learning. EMI is often adopted particularly for this reason, with the integration side of it thought to be a win-win solution financially and practically. However, there are multiple other reasons for adopting English as the medium of instruction, whether explicitly recognized or not, as institutions can also have educational and idealistic approaches to it (Wilkinson and Zegres, 2008: 11). Airey (2003: 47) and Hellekjær (2010: 11) provide various reasons why institutions are so eagerly providing more and more teaching in English. They mention, for instance, the need to cater teaching to international students, to attract foreign lecturers and to prepare all students and staff for publishing in English. EMI is additionally considered to encourage movement of ideas across borders. Moreover, Airey emphasizes studying in English as providing a competitive edge in the job market (2003: 4) for EMI students. In Table 4 below, Hultgren, Jensen and Dimova (2015: 6) provide a list of reasons that lead HE institutions to adopt EMI. The table rather effectively summarizes the motives from the global level all the way to the classroom.

Table 4 Drivers of EMI at different levels (Hultgren, Jensen and Dimova, 2015: 6)

Level	Example
Global	General Agreement on Trade in Services
European	Bologna Declaration
National	Internationalization strategies
Institutional	Targets to recruit international staff and students
Classroom	Presence of non-local language speakers

Although EMI can be successful in many ways, it also comes with a number of challenges and shortcomings. Weinberg and Symon (2017: 135) have even described EMI as a train which cannot be stopped, remarking that it is of the essence that this train stay on track and thereby allow its passengers (i.e. EMI students) to safely reach their destination, which could be interpreted to be timely graduation and success in the job market. This metaphor underlines just how complex this field and its issues are. In a similar vein, Gunn et al. (2011: 1) emphasize that EMI is troublesome in various ways. A worst-case scenario is that if EMI's complex nature is ignored it may end up in providing teaching and learning of poor quality and diminishing multisited and intellectual academic content into overly simplified lessons (Pulcini and Campagna, 2015: 73). Therefore, even if Knapp (2011: 53–54) suggests the idea of getting two for the price of one, this reasoning is also simultaneously disputed for being, in Knapp's own words, overly simplistic, and therefore also far too optimistic. "Two for the price of one" can also be interpreted in the sense of two types of challenges coming together. For instance, a student's lack of knowledge about a subject (i.e. its content) combined with linguistic challenges (i.e. language) can result in poorer comprehension and decreased level of learning (Knapp, 2011: 57).

There is also the issue of limitations of language skills among EMI teachers themselves, who are often not L1 users of English (Hellekjær, 2010: 11). These, too, can result in unmet learning outcomes. Obviously, in such cases EMI is likely not meeting its educational goals. EMI teachers often fail to acknowledge that adopting EMI is never a question of merely changing the so-called vehicle to be used in communication, but EMI is rather a comprehensive teaching methodology in itself, which also requires the input of language experts (e.g. Cots, 2013; Weinberg and Symon, 2017: 140). However, when considering EMI's financial goals, Haberland and Preisler (2015: 26), and Fabricius, Mortensen and Haberland (2017: 589) note that EMI only makes sense from the economic viewpoint if it does not require HE institutions and/or programs to separately invest in the language proficiency of students and staff. However, as becomes apparent in the literature globally, this is rarely the case, and thus the economic gains often attached to adopting EMI are somewhat less self-evident in reality.

As previously noted, for the past few decades EMI has more often than not been visible in the form of full-time programs (Wilkinson, 2004: 9). However, there is not yet full agreement on how to refer to these programs, as according to Smit and Dafouz (2012: 7) literature entails various ways of discussing such programs and often scholars use program names either interchangeably or by making clear distinctions. It seems that the chosen ways of referring to these programs (most often used as abbreviations) vary from institution to institution, as institutions also vary in terms of their perspectives and core ideas on the programs (Smit and Dafouz, 2012: 7). As Smit and Dazouz (2012: 7-9) explain, programs that are, at least to some extent, similar, can be named any of the following: English-medium instruction (EMI), Integrating Content and Language (ICL), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), Integrating Content

and Language in Higher Education (ICLHE). Additionally, Wächter (2008) and Costa and Coleman (2013) bring to the fore English-taught programs (ETP), and Garam (2009) discusses the foreign language degree programs in Finnish higher education institutions. And because the present study takes the University of Jyväskylä as its context, yet another term, international master's degree programs (IMDP), is adopted, as all the EMI programs of the University of Jyväskylä are referred to with this abbreviation.

Without getting overly entwined in the complex discussion on how to refer to these programs, some findings by Garam (2009) and Saarinen (2012b) regarding the Finnish HE context are important to bring to the fore. In her report regarding foreign language degree programs in Finnish higher education institutions, Garam (2009: 17) noticed that the term *foreign language* refers in practice only to English, as all the 275 programs involved in the report were in English. Along the same lines, when examining eight HE institutes in Finland from the viewpoint of their online introductions, Saarinen (2012b: 9) discovered that of the 73 programs in the data, 40 of them made no reference to language. Thus, it was concluded that English is such a self-evident choice for the language of the programs that there is no need for specific remarks on it (ibid. 10). A similar finding was made by Soler-Carbonell, Saarinen and Kibbermann (2017: 306) regarding Finnish university language policies, and they found English to be a self-evident first language of internationalization. Saarinen (2012b: 10) questions whether this is also an issue of language being only a technical tool in the programs and hence it is not addressed in detail in the introductions. This ties in with the ideas of English as a default language (Fabricius, Mortensen and Haberland, 2017: 583) and ad hoc use of EMI (Fortanet-Gómez and Räisänen, 2008:20). There appears to be only scant attention paid to the practices and consequences (e.g. the language learning objectives and outcomes) related to adopting English as the medium of instruction. Moreover, according to Hultgren, Jensen and Dimova (2015: 7), choosing English as the language of instruction is often thought to camouflage ideals related to being perceived as excellent or even world-class. Obviously, as Fabricius, Mortensen and Haberland (2017: 590), among many others, have observed, mere use of English and attracting international students do not automatically equal quality.

As a solution to this, Hughes (2008: 12) advises institutions to produce a language policy that is explicit rather than too implicit, and Smit and Dafouz (2012: 11) share the same logic as they propose that language policy considerations ought to always be in line with actual educational practices. According to Weinberg and Symon (2017: 136), among others, the problem in Europe is in fact not the lack of policies, but rather the lack of proper planning of policies and communicating them to teachers. Ljosland (2015: 624) claims, rather directly and perhaps quite aptly, that too often policies merely emerge while relevant stakeholders are occupied with something else.

A further prevalent challenge of EMI is that content teachers do not necessarily share the language teachers' pedagogical concerns regarding the language aspects of EMI (e.g. Dafouz and Smit, 2016). Such concerns are of ex-

treme importance (e.g. Ying, 2003; Poyrazli and Kavanaugh, 2006; Dafouz and Smit, 2016), since in order for the education in these programs to reach its full potential it should consist of a solid combination of both content and language (Smit and Dafouz, 2012: 16). In a similar vein Turner (2004: 14) refers to the problematic hierarchy of academic language and subject content, and emphasizes that language should not be seen as a mere by-product accompanying the so-called real content in, for example, EMI programs. According to Zambrano and Habte-Gabr (2008: 117), this can be achieved when language and mainstream course departments (in this case the programs) are co-operating, and as Choudaha and De Wit (2014: 28-29) note, by thoroughly considering the quality issues related to adopting EMI. Moreover, for instance Choudaha and De Wit (2014: 29) advise programs to ask and answer the why and how questions of starting up programs in English, advice which is clearly in line with Fabricius, Mortensen and Haberland's (2017: 590) warning about programs underestimating the workload inherent to this process of EMI.

2.3 Putting students' needs at the core of EMI

Even though Dafouz and Smit (2016) acknowledge that students are important agents in HE language policies, the EMI literature seems to be in strong agreement regarding the need to consult the students even more when it comes to issues of EMI teaching and learning. Fortanet-Gómez and Räisänen (2008: 22) point out that the voices of students have been ignored in the process of both internationalization and Englishization. Smit and Dafouz (2012: 16), as well as Brew (2006: 160), agree on this by stating that the students' perspective is vital for further development. It has also been a particular concern of some scholars, for instance Evans and Morrison (2011: 199-200), that there is a lack of research regarding contexts, where English is a second or foreign language, since the majority of literature derives from English-dominant societies, such as the United States. Countries such as Finland, along with other Nordic countries, where there is a mismatch between in-class and out-of-class language of communication (i.e. English versus the local language) have been less represented in research despite the significant role they play in educating mobile students. Braine (2002: 65) concurs by stating that what is missing from the study of non-native speakers are students' authentic voices. Therefore, in order to, in Ljosland's (2015: 612) words, pull in the direction of the students and their needs, the present research places the students at the core of the study. Ljosland (2015: 624) also proposes that the voices from below and the daily practices related to them require attention, instead of merely focusing on changes and policies constantly being imposed from above (Fortanet-Gómez and Räisänen, 2008: 22).

In the light of this, the present study will revisit the previous literature in respect to how EMI students' language needs, as well as their successes and challenges in terms of studying in English, have been discussed by other scholars. Even if English proficiency is a core entry requirement, or even a gatekeep-

er, for many EMI programs (Shohamy et al., 2013; Dafouz and Smit, 2016) – including the IMDPs – literature from various countries indicates that there is a strong representation of scholars who propose that challenges indeed seem to be linked to students' academic English skills. Arkin and Osam (2015: 179) summarize this by noting that EMI is far from friction-free in this sense. In Europe, this has been studied in, for instance, Norway (Hellekjær, 2008) and Sweden (Airey and Linder, 2007) as well as in the Netherlands (Wilkinson and Zegers, 2006), Hungary (Kurtán, 2004), North Cyprus (Arkin and Osam, 2015), and, rather recently, in Italy (Meneghetti, 2016). Multiple examples of similar studies can also be found from other parts of the world: Australia (Bretag, 2007; Murray, 2010; Murray, 2013; Murray and Nallaya, 2014), New Zealand (Gunn, Hearne and Sibthorpe, 2011) and Colombia (Zambrano and Habte-Gabr, 2008), to name but a few. An undisputable common denominator for all these studies is that multiple challenges and side-effects have been identified as a result of students' inadequate academic English skills.

When first briefly elaborating on these challenges from the viewpoint of EMI teachers, it has been suggested that, at worst, if students are not equipped with adequate language skills, EMI teachers need to simplify their materials (Murray, 2010: 344) or teach down (Fox, 2009: 33), as well as spend time on addressing students' problems with English (Van Leeuwen, 2008: 8; Fox, 2009: 33; Murray, 2010: 344). In their study of German HE teachers' experiences and perceptions of teaching in a foreign language (mainly in English), Gürtler and Kronewald (2015: 103) researched the experienced and perceived challenges of teaching in a foreign language. What is most alarming is that over half of the respondents had deemed students' insufficient competency in a foreign language as a prevalent challenge when teaching, and over 60% had perceived this to be a challenge when thinking about their own teaching in a foreign language. Other significant results include the lowered knowledge transfer, which was experienced by nearly 50% of teachers, and the lower quality of course content, which over 40% of the teachers had experienced. (Gürtler and Kronewald, 2015: 103). In light of Gürtler and Kronewald's findings (2015), one is faced with the quality concern of EMI expressed, for instance, by Wilkinson and Zegers (2006: 74).

These issues have been suggested to result in added pressure for teachers in terms of assessing students' language skills if language ends up being the sole obstacle to passing (Wilkinson and Zegers, 2006: 74). Yet, according to Dafouz and Smit (2016), English ought to, in fact, be viewed as a prevalent criterion, especially as EMI students approach graduation. In EAP teaching relating to EMI, the problems are similar, as teachers report facing challenges related to assessing the very weak students in comparison to the more proficient ones, since they are afraid of creating a domino effect in their group of students (Fox, 2009: 33). Teachers are particularly challenged by the dilemma of assessing students' effort, since they fear de-motivating the students (Fox, 2009: 33). Moreover, in a study by Bretag (2007), in which staff interviews in ten Australian universities were conducted, it was also discovered that teachers feared for their

own careers when it came to openly and publicly talking about the poor level of students' English and its effect on learning as well as academic integrity (Bretag, 2007: 18).

In respect to the research reported above, an intriguing contrast was highlighted by Airey et al. (2017: 569) in their summary of EMI research on how students are coping with studying in English. They came to the conclusion that in the Nordic context students do not seem to be struggling with English as a language of instruction and learning, but rather that they just may require more time for the process. However, Airey et al. (2017: 569) also note that, at this juncture, students of two-year master's programs, such as the ones offered by the University of Jyväskylä, do not necessarily have enough time for processing the program content in English. Taking this account, it would thus, nevertheless, seem that English as a language of instruction does indeed pose some challenges in the Nordic countries as well.

As noted by Boughey (2000: 282-283) and Evans and Morrison (2011: 203-204), students are rarely only dealing with content and language, but also a new culture and new academic community. EMI students, similarly to all first-year students or beginning academics, need to be able to cope with all the new responsibilities, ways of learning and teaching, as well as of assessing and grading (Evans and Morrison, 2011: 204). Moreover, a first-year student is typically also exposed to a new disciplinary community and the requirements and expectations, such as methodologies and referencing conventions, which come with the discipline (Evans and Morrison, 2011:204). Boughey (2000: 283) summarizes this by noting that students need to feel at home in this new environment and its discourse. And all of this is to be learned and managed in English.

Therefore, the reality and challenges of EMI students require more profound discussion. In a study by Airey and Linder (2007), in which 22 students were interviewed about studying physics in English at a Swedish university, the majority of students claimed that language has a rather minuscule role. What makes this finding fascinating, however, is that the same students mentioned multiple challenges related to the use of a second language (Airey and Linder, 2007: 5). This latter viewpoint is in line with most literature on the topic, as perhaps the most unsurprising practical implication of students' inadequate academic English skills is the fact that it affects their performance in their program or, as Turner (2004: 99) describes in terms of EAP that students end up hiding in the dark when they are linguistically unable to meet their potential in the program. Similarly, according to Arkin and Osam (2015: 179), inadequate language skills lead the students to simply memorize and learn the academic content on a mere surface level, which often then translates into limited test performance and overall course achievement.

In the next section, the linguistic challenges are discussed on a more general level by consulting EMI literature from various parts of the world. This is followed by a more detailed overview of the skill areas of academic English (i.e. listening, reading, writing and speaking in an academic context) and the challenges students face in terms of these. After these, Chapter 3, however, adopts a

more holistic approach to academic language, as the present study aims to take a step away from the traditional, and rather narrow, view on language, and therefore, newer, and perhaps more relevant perspectives to academic language are brought to the fore.

2.3.1 Students' challenges in EMI

When approaching the challenges of EMI, which refer to students' difficulties of coping with their disciplinary content due to language issues (Arkin and Osam, 2015), it should be kept in mind that switching to English may also aggravate the challenges students already have in their L1 (Hellekjær, 2010: 25). This ties in with the idea that no matter what the language of instruction and studying in higher education is, academic language is still not anyone's native language (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990: 66; Sebolai, 2016: 47). However, Lauridsen (2017: 29) remarks that when students are dealing with their academic studies in their L2 or even their L3, they are also dealing with an additional cognitive load, and Taylor and Geranpayeh (2011: 91) concur, and Arkin and Osam (2015: 179) observed this increased study load in practice among the EMI students of their study.

Many scholars also view EMI, as well as EAP, challenges from the viewpoint of psychological outcomes, and they mention issues such as students' lack of confidence (Evans and Green, 2007: 15), anxiety, frustration and demotivation (Murray, 2013: 300), as well as fear of failing (Bretag, 2007: 17) and lowered self-esteem due to being treated as so-called problem cases (Murray 2010: 344). At the other extreme, according to Wilkinson and Zegers (2006: 74), students may also simply have unrealistic expectations of their own study success. In practice, all these feelings can even result in students withdrawing from the programs (e.g. Murray, 2013: 300; Van Leeuwen, 2008: 8) as well as students studying internationally losing their visas if they fail their courses due to limited English skills (Bretag, 2007: 17). We are thus discussing severe and far-reaching consequences if students do not possess the needed academic English skills. The main goal of EMI is by no means to have students simply memorize and repeat terminology or set phrases without being able to elaborate on that content with language that is adequately complex and rich (Pulcini and Campagna, 2015: 73). Hence, the language barrier needs to be addressed in addition to learning the subject content, so that it does not affect the students' learning negatively.

According to a study by Dooey (2010: 187), students' challenges can be categorized into three areas: challenges related to the English language itself, academic English, and intercultural communication. Scholars seem to concur that students globally struggle with coping with the academic assignments they have been given because of their linguistic limitations (e.g. Evans and Green, 2007: 11; Dooey, 2010: 187-188). For instance, the data in a study by Meneghetti (2016: 31) shows that poor linguistic skills were a concern of nearly 74% of all students studying in an EMI program. In a study by Fox (2009: 33), it was reported, on behalf of an EAP teacher, that when students struggled with the lan-

guage they often ended up in a catch-22 – the more they struggled, the worse their effort was in areas such as class participation and homework. Not surprisingly, the outcome was even poorer progress with their studies, and the frustration of all stakeholders. In the following sections, these linguistic limitations and struggles are revisited one area at a time. First, EMI students' receptive language skills (listening and reading) are briefly addressed. This follows a discussion related to the two productive areas of language (writing and speaking), which are often thought to be the most challenging to students (e.g. Kurtán, 2004: 133; Hellekjær, 2008: 69).

2.3.1.1 Listening in an academic context

The first of the four skill areas of academic English to be overviewed is students' challenges related to listening in an academic context. However, prior to discussing the challenges, it should be remarked that academic listening in the narrow sense refers to listening in university lectures, which is seemingly a viewpoint adopted across multiple studies, as will soon become apparent. Yet Taylor and Geranpayeh (2011: 92) point out that students also need other types of listening skills in academia, such as listening in slightly less formal seminar discussions and other interaction on campus.

Earlier studies suggest that listening in academic contexts is the least challenging language skill area for students. For instance, Evans and Green (2007: 13), in their extensive study of nearly 5000 students in Hong Kong studying in English, found that students viewed academic listening rather neutrally, and only as a minor concern in relation to their studies. However, various studies from all over the world report on students' challenges related to academic listening. According to, for instance, Deygers et al. (2017: 20) and their findings in the Belgium context, listening is the most immediate threat to students, as it is so strongly required in its many forms in the university context. Moreover, it has been noted that students' academic listening skills are often overestimated by their teachers, and that students do not in fact understand as much as they are expected or thought to understand during lectures (e.g. Deygers et al., 2017: 20). In order to provide concrete figures related to this, Meneghetti (2016: 31) discovered that nearly 57% of the students were able to understand the majority of the lessons they took part in, and approximately 16% admitted that they only understood a small part of the lesson.

The actual academic listening challenges present in the literature could be categorized into three separate but interrelated sub-areas. First, Dooey (2010: 190), Hellekjær (2010: 24) as well as Evans and Morrison (2011: 203) address the issue such as understanding lecturers' accents and unclear pronunciation, as it was discovered to be a major concern, and something that students were required to become accustomed to. This can also be viewed from the viewpoint of the lecturers' language and speaking skills, but obviously being accustomed to different accents is also part of students' language skills, and their listening skills in particular. Second, studies report on students struggling with unfamil-

iar vocabulary (Hellekjær, 2010: 24), technical terms and vocabulary overload when listening to lectures (Evans and Morrison, 2011: 203), and in this case such lectures are basically without any value to students who cannot keep up with the terminology or vocabulary (ibid. 203). Third, Arkin and Osama (2015: 191) found that students failed to grasp their EMI lecturers' core content due to their inadequate listening skills, and in a similar vein, students were discovered to struggle with following the lecturers' line of thought (Hellekjær, 2010: 24). Zambrano and Habte-Gabr (2008: 111) observed that language caused content loss, as students were unable to, for example, keep up with lectures and participate in them. In Hellekjær's words (2008: 75), this can be seen in reduced interaction, and according to Meneghetti (2016: 43) interaction is the key to learning both the content and language. These findings indicate that there is evidence of students' inadequate listening skills and how they may affect students' studies and motivation in an EMI context.

Moreover, Taylor and Geranpayeh (2011: 92) emphasize that listening is not only a linguistic phenomenon, but it always includes a social dimension as well. Hellekjær (2010) researched students' comprehension of lectures in Norway and Germany by comparing it between students' L1 and English and it was interestingly discovered that in fact no major differences were taking place between these two languages. As Hellekjær (2010: 24) notes, EMI resulted in many similar challenges when compared to the students' L1. This finding likely reflects how HE studies always prominently include the component of socialization of students in relation to academic genres and registers, not to mention specialized vocabularies. Socialization, it should be noted, is not only a question of language (Hellekjær, 2010: 24). One therefore needs to be careful when labelling students' listening problems as mere language problems.

2.3.1.2 Reading in an academic context

The second skill area to be discussed here is reading in an academic context. Similarly to listening, academic reading also goes beyond just language. Hellekjær (2009: 22) defines reading proficiency as not merely being able to decode words, but rather as actively creating meaning in interaction with the text and one's own knowledge. Hellekjær (2009: 22) continues that being a fluent reader in one's L2 is, on the one hand, dependent on one's general language proficiency, and on the other hand, it hinges upon one's vocabulary knowledge.

Hellekjær (2009: 211) studied academic the English reading proficiency of Norwegian HE students, and he discovered that comparable difficulties were faced by approximately every third student, and out of the 578 respondents less severe difficulties were encountered by 44%. Hellekjær (2009: 211) found that the most noteworthy problems were the students' slow reading speed as well as unfamiliar vocabulary. Interestingly, many of the respondents, who were deemed fluent readers in their L1, ended up below the linguistic threshold in their reading skills in English, thus highlighting the role of language as a core problem. Various other researchers have come to similar conclusions regarding

students' reading challenges in EMI. Terraschke and Wahid (2011: 178) found that students need to master effective academic reading because they are required to do so much of it, while Evans and Morrison (2011: 203) identified understanding technical vocabulary as a particular challenge. Moreover, Deygers et al. (2017: 20) studied the reading skills of B2 level students in Flemish, which is the same minimum level required in English for the IMDPs. They discovered that, for students of this level, reading required twice the amount of time when compared to the participants' L1 reading, and the students also had to resort to translating when trying to complete coursework (Deygers et al., 2017: 20).

Kuzborska (2015) took a slightly different approach to studying students' academic reading skills, as perspective taking in academic reading was at the core of the study. According to Kuzborska (2015: 151), in addition to the aforementioned reading challenges, especially international students have difficulties with the often implicit requirements related to academic discourse, and which the students are, despite their implicit nature, expected to master. Kuzborska (2015: 151) further notes that students bring with them their various educational backgrounds, and with that also differing ideas and perceptions of what reading is. It should be highlighted that reading, and academic reading in particular, are embedded with the values and norms of the society in which the students have learned it, as students are always in one way or another acculturated to their societies (e.g. Flower et al., 1990; Kaplan, 2005; Connor et al., 2008; Kuzborska, 2015: 151). For instance, for one student reading can mean learning by heart if that has been deemed relevant, and thus a key to success in that student's previous educational setting. For another student, reading, and academic reading in particular, can inherently entail a right and even responsibility as a beginning academic to have a perspective on whatever that student is reading and studying. Clapham (2000: 516) also notes that a student's background knowledge of the topic has an effect on how well the student is able to cope with academic reading. According to Clapham (2000: 516), lower level students focus perhaps too heavily on the decoding side of reading and often end up neglecting the background knowledge they might have on the topic. Conversely, the students with high proficiency did not need their background knowledge, as their strong linguistic skills carried them during the reading process. Notably, it has been reported that especially the medium proficiency students are the only ones who are actually benefiting from their background knowledge on the topic in question (e.g. in Clapham, 2000: 516).

Academic reading, like academic listening, is by no means a clear-cut area based merely on linguistic aspects of students' proficiency, but rather a multifaceted academic skill in which language plays a pivotal role.

2.3.1.3 Writing in an academic context

Moving from receptive language skills to productive language skills, students' challenges related to academic writing are addressed in this section. In a study by Terraschke and Wahid (2011: 179), academic writing was ranked by students

as the most challenging skill area to master, and various studies, such as Lea and Street (2006: 370), have come to similar conclusions. Seidlhofer (2012: 394) discusses the various daunting challenges of non-Anglo scholars, but it is important to remember that native speakers and non-native-speakers are equally novices when it comes to academic writing in English (Wingate, 2012a: 27). Furthermore, academic writing and its challenges are crucial in the sense that writing is often an integral part of HE studies and degrees, and Ying (2003: 478), for instance, found that written skills in English were a prerequisite for academic success. Moreover, when one considers that, in certain fields of study, publications in English can account for over 90% of periodicals (Seidlhofer, 2012: 393-394), the importance of academic writing in English becomes unavoidable, as this percentage portrays a rather English-centered image about modern academia.

Students have been reported to be challenged with writing skills in exams and other tasks during their academic studies in English (e.g. Terraschke and Wahid, 2011: 179-180). Murray (2010: 344) adds that students with especially low academic English skills were perhaps able to handle multiple choice-based tasks and exams, but were challenged in courses which were more language rich. Murray and Nallaya (2014: 3) had a similar finding of higher level written work being an obstacle for some students. Studies report that students are particularly concerned about meeting their teachers' expectations in terms of academic writing (Terraschke and Wahid, 2011:180). According to Wingate (2012a: 30) students at the early stages of their academic paths are intimidated by the high standards of writing they see, for instance, in journal articles, and they simply want to accommodate to the requirements of writing. Moreover, McCambridge and Pitkänen-Huhta (2012: 177-178) found that students viewed their own teachers and professors as crucial gatekeepers of deciding what is deemed as proficient and good academic writing. However, what makes this challenging is that students found the teachers' norms to be variable, and hence also challenging to master, and one participant even pointed out that the norms seemed to be dependent on each individual teacher's thoughts and preferences (McCambridge and Pitkänen-Huhta, 2012: 178). In order to expand on these high standards or norms of academic writing, one could divide the students' challenges into two areas: linguistic correctness and usage conventions (Seidlhofer, 2012: 394).

First of all, the difficulties students experience center around linguistic aspects such as grammar, style and cohesion (Evans and Green, 2007: 3, 11). Appropriate writing style was also highlighted as a challenge in a study by Evans and Morrison (2011: 203), and lack of vocabulary negatively affected the ways students were able to convey their ideas in writing (ibid. 206). Moreover, Turner (2004: 102) calls for students to have a high level of proficiency in order to know how to manipulate phrases, and even individual words. In addition, students need to be able to convey their message not only with general academic vocabulary, but also with the help of highly specialist vocabulary (Turner, 2004: 102). In a contrast to communicability as the common and valued focus on

language skills, Turner (2004: 104), nevertheless, emphasizes the importance of linguistic expression, that is, the *how* of expressing academic content. As becomes apparent in the literature, this is not necessarily mastered by students in reality.

Secondly, in addition to mere linguistic aspects of academic writing, students have also been found to struggle with various other issues, which is rather understandable if one takes into account, for example, Wingate's (2012b: 153) framework for essay writing (Figure 4). One can immediately detect that language, or even academic language, does not even begin to cover the whole process of essay writing, which can easily be applied to various other types of academic writing.

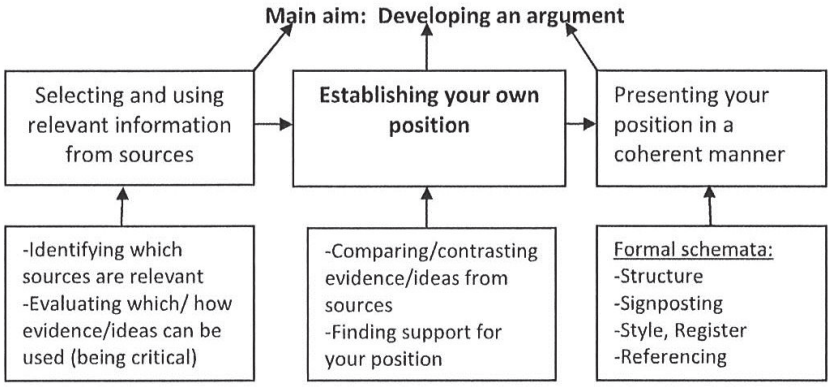

Figure 4 Essay writing framework Wingate (2012b: 153)

If one revisits the linguistic challenges of grammar, style and cohesion that students face in terms of academic writing, one realizes that those aspects barely cover the "Formal schemata" area of Wingate's (2012b: 153) framework. As can be expected, the literature also confirms that students' writing challenges derive from the other areas described by this framework. For instance, Dooey (2010: 194) has voiced a concern regarding students' ability to incorporate critical reviews and thinking into their writing, because these two areas are such high-level and complex aspects of writing, including the various subskills such as knowing how to summarize and analyze and critiquing articles on their relevant study topics. According to Boughey (2000: 285), challenges also derive from students' misconception of academic writing as merely consisting of repeating someone else's old learning, instead of producing something new. Moreover, Abasi and Graves (2008: 225) found that students' writing showed signs of plagiarism, while Boughey (2000: 283-288), Abasi and Graves (2008: 226) and Bacha (2010), alongside Wingate (2012a, 2012b), report on students' challenges with respect to argumentation, or developing their own position, in academic writing. Students apparently find it hard to balance between using their own voice and opinions while simultaneously using the authority of sources in their own writing (Wingate, 2012a: 32). These challenges may greatly derive from the fact that according to research, students do not really understand the concepts of argumentation, which may at times be slightly fuzzy

(Wingate, 2012b: 146). Naturally, students may find argumentation challenging to master if they already face difficulties with comprehending the concept of it in the first place.

Moreover, it has been proposed that argumentation challenges may also derive from students' linguistic (e.g. Bacha, 2010: 229) and cultural (e.g. Bacha, 2010: 239) backgrounds. This is clearly in line with the idea of students becoming acculturated to certain values and norms of their education system (Flower et al., 1990; Kaplan, 2005; Connor et al., 2008; Kuzborska, 2015: 151). Kaufhold (2015: 126) refers to this as students' literacy histories, which are defined as their past experiences related to writing. Usually students acquire the experiences as they take part in various academic practices along their study path (Kaufhold, 2015: 126). Consequently, if a student moves into another academic culture, that student is undisputedly faced with learning the new values and norms embedded in academic writing, and these values and norms may differ from those of the student's literacy histories. Here Kaufhold (2015: 126) highlights the fact that academic writing is always situated in a certain institutional and social context, and Abasi and Graves (2008: 226) concur by noting that students need to familiarize themselves with the ways of thinking as well as of writing that are specific to their specific subject area or major.

To conclude this discussion of academic writing challenges on a positive note, Terraschke and Wahid (2011: 174) report on studies conducted by, for instance, Shaw and Liu (1998) and Storch and Tapper (2009) by pointing out that they have found supporting evidence for using EAP instruction as a means to achieve language gains in respect to writing. However, what should be emphasized is that the language gains merely related to structure and idea development, whereas no linguistic accuracy or complexity gains were detected (Storch and Tapper, 2009; Terraschke and Wahid, 2011: 174). This, along with the framework presented earlier by Wingate (2012b: 153), shows how multisided and complex the field of academic writing is and, additionally, how many aspects students are required to master in order to succeed.

2.3.1.4 Speaking in an academic context

When consulting the literature presented in the previous sections, it becomes clear that students' challenges related to listening, reading and writing are varied and, above all, real. Speaking and its challenges in the academic context are no exception. Interestingly, these challenges are often accompanied by strong expressions such as embarrassment (Terraschke and Wahid, 2011: 177), fear (Skyrme, 2010: 212), being ignored and judged (Dooey, 2010: 190), and failing to integrate (Dooey, 2010: 191). Skyrme (2010: 211–212) describes speaking in an academic context to be a risk-taking venture for some students, since their speaking skills are subjected to public evaluation. Thus, it makes sense that such strong expressions are often attached to speaking challenges.

In practice, these challenges are often manifested, for instance, in students not participating actively in classroom or group discussions (Evans and Green,

2007: 13; Dooey, 2010: 189; Arkin and Osam, 2015: 179) and not asking questions from their teachers out of fear of revealing their inadequate English proficiency in speaking (Skyrme, 2010: 211). Similar signs were also detected by Terraschke and Wahid (2011: 177), as students in their study voiced concerns about their own abilities of being quick and accurate enough when phrasing questions, and this resulted in them not proposing questions in class even if they had needed or wanted to. What is even more alarming is that this resulted in students having even weaker confidence in their speaking skills over the course of their studies (Terraschke and Wahid (2011: 177). Evans and Green (2007: 12) went into more detail to determine what aspects of speaking were especially challenging to the students in their study. Accuracy was deemed difficult by 60% of their respondents, and respectively 40% of the subjects mentioned fluency as a prevalent concern. Moreover, almost one in three of their students face challenges when it comes to presenting information orally (Evans and Green, 2007: 12).

Dooey (2010: 188) and Evans and Green (2007: 3) discuss pronunciation, and especially accent, with respect to speaking challenges in an academic context. The ability to imitate the local accent was perceived by students as a key to integrating into the local context, and thus a challenge if one fails to achieve that (Dooey, 2010: 191). In relation to these challenges, both Evans and Green (2007: 12) and Skyrme (2010: 211) found that the challenges perceived by the students themselves were also confirmed by the teaching staff. For instance, as noted earlier, students feared revealing their low level of speaking skills to their teachers, because they were afraid the teachers would consider them inadequate. However, according to Skyrme (2010: 211), the teachers' reactions often justified the students' fears. In a similar vein, the departmental program leaders interviewed by Evans and Green (2007: 12) also confirmed that their students' speaking skills are unsatisfactory and inadequate.

To sum up, students themselves, as well as their teachers and program staff, are in an agreement that the students struggle with speaking skills during their studies. However, a further troubling sign is that Terraschke and Wahid (2011: 177) found that students were only able to boost their speaking confidence and improve their skills if they actively seized opportunities outside their studies to do so. For instance, students who had a job, even if unrelated to their academic field, in addition to merely studying achieved better language and confidence gains compared to peers who only studied. The latter group of students reported continuing to suffer from a lack of confidence and general challenges related to speaking even about daily issues (Terraschke and Wahid (2011: 177).

Before continuing with the present study, one must nevertheless take into account a factor which was seemingly prevalent in the four areas of listening, reading, writing, and speaking. As discussed regarding these four areas, the students' so-called language challenges often went beyond the scope of mere language problems. One likely reason for this is that these language challenges were discussed specifically in the context of academia, and thus one could con-

clude that academic language challenges are related to something other than simply language shortcomings in general. Therefore, in order to take the present study a step further, and above all a step further away from the traditional and slightly outdated understanding of language (e.g. Dufva and Nikula, 2010; Pennycook, 2010), Chapter 3 expands on these four skill areas in order to reflect more accurately on the issues encompassed in academic language.

3 GOING BEYOND MERE LANGUAGE: EXPANDING THE FOUR SKILL AREAS OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

As one moves away from the micro-level of language proficiency, which has traditionally had only grammar and vocabulary at its core (e.g. Dufva and Nikula, 2010; Pennycook, 2010), one is faced with a jungle of concepts and terms, all aiming to achieve some type of more profound understanding of what we are talking about if we are not able to adhere to language proficiency in its narrow sense, and instead link it to academic language and discourses. This leads the discussion in new directions, which is exactly what Dufva and Nikula (2010), among others, have aimed to promote, as these new directions would not only change people's thoughts on language, but also hopefully have an effect on language teaching and learning.

Already in the early 1990s, the notion of combining language in a broader sense to academia as a context, was addressed by the likes of Lemke (1990), who proposed the idea of talking science, which in his own words means making sense of the surrounding world by using specialized language of science and using language as the medium when doing science (Lemke, 1990: ix). In practice, this happens in the form of a range of academic and scientific actions, such as observing, comparing, analyzing, hypothesizing, theorizing, challenging, arguing, designing experiments, judging, and evaluating, to name but a few (Lemke, 1990: ix). What Lemke (1990: ix) emphasizes, and what the given actions illustrate, is that language is more than just vocabulary and grammar, and hence it allows us to make meanings. Due to this, Lemke approaches the idea of talking science from the viewpoint of semantics, i.e. the study of meanings. According to him, scientific content consists exactly of the relationships of meanings. Lemke (1990: 176) also emphasizes that students need to be made aware that science is in its own way and in its own right also a language, as it provides a means to talk about the world. What is more, science as a language, similarly to every other language, also utilizes semantics and logical relations (Lemke, 1990: 176).

Further efforts to define the complex interplay of academic language proficiency and academic content have been made, for instance, by Cummins (2009) and Hellekjær (2006), who both discuss the concept of cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). CALP is thought to be based on the idea that vocabulary, grammar and discourse knowledge need to expand beyond the requirements of social communication (Cummins, 2009: 22; Sebolai, 2016: 48). According to Hellekjær (2006: 43), CALP is particularly something EMI students need to be equipped with, but that even students with excellent conversational proficiency of English do not automatically achieve. Cummins (2000: 54) concurs with this by proposing that it usually takes a minimum of five years for individuals to achieve an academic language level in their L2. Airey and Linder (2008: 145) conversely use the concept "bilingual scientific literacy," which refers to skills centered on science but that are also language-specific. Murray (2010: 352) introduces yet another concept, professional communication skills, which refer to both skills and strategies, and links it to academic contexts from the viewpoint of discipline-specific demands and students' possible upcoming professions.

When taking yet another step away from talking merely about language, Lea and Street (2006: 368), among others, mention the study skills model, which views writing and literacy primarily as individual and cognitive skills. According to them, the surface features of language are at the core of this approach because the study skills model includes the assumption that once students master these features they can easily make use of them in writing and literacy and other varied contexts (Lea and Street, 2006: 368). However, the reason why this approach is often perhaps deemed insufficient is that it fails to properly acknowledge the role of context. Lea and Street (2006: 369) also critically highlight that this approach relies heavily on behaviorism, and thus to an extent reduces learning to mere knowledge transmission. These viewpoints have, therefore, led to another model being developed, as the next step is academic socialization. This approach emphasizes the importance of students' acculturation in terms of their discipline and the discourses and genres of their subject (Lea and Street, 2006: 369). In other words, it all comes down to students adopting their discipline's ways of talking and writing, but also their discipline's approaches to thinking and using literacy (Lea and Street, 2006: 369).

Thus far, in respect to these different concepts, there are two individual words, which seem to both indirectly and directly color many of the given definitions: discipline and discourse. However, there exists a specific concept that has been created to even more clearly combine these two. *Disciplinary discourse*, which has been used by scholars such as Becher (1987) and more recently by Airey and Linder (2009), is discussed in the following section.

3.1 Disciplinary discourse

Becher brought disciplinary discourse to the fore in the late 1980s. His 1987 article had a rather practical and hands-on approach to viewing disciplinary discourse, because he studied three particular fields – history, sociology and physics – by researching the fields' concrete forms of using language. What must be emphasized here is that Becher (1987: 261) is by no means claiming that language is the only or most important aspect of disciplinary discourse, but rather that linguistic differences may shed light on the differences in the ways of knowing within these disciplines in question. Becher's (1987: 262-272) main themes in regards to disciplinary discourse were tacit knowledge, praising and blaming, formal scholarly communication and structure of argument.

First, Becher (1987: 262) presents the idea of tacit knowledge, which he defines as understanding which those who possess take for granted, but that has never been explicitly taught to them. Tacit knowledge is, rather, something that one acquires in the process of being involved in a discipline (Becher, 1987: 262). Second, Becher (1987: 263–264) brings up the issue of praising and blaming, and by this he refers to qualities within the discipline that are to be strived for and those that are to be avoided. As an example of this, he discusses the ways of evaluating research within the three fields he was researching. In history, for example, the words "rigorous" and "stimulating" are deemed positive words in contrast to the words "trivializing" and "thin" having negative evaluations (ibid: 264). In sociology, a good evaluation entails ideas of research being, for instance, "well-argued," "powerful," and "persuasive" and a negative evaluation might include words such as "biased," "anecdotal" or "contentious" (ibid: 264). In physics, Becher (1987: 264) describes that valuable research is "economical" or "productive," whereas negative words for physics research include "sloppy" and, surprisingly, even "scholarly" because it conflicts with the fast pace of many subfields of physics.

One might think that this vocabulary-level approach to disciplinary discourse might be limited, but these three fields showed varied ideas of what is viewed as positive and negative in the field, indicating that these words speak volumes about the ways of thinking and knowing that these fields entail. If this observation is transferred to the context of the present study, one needs to consider its implications for the students of the IMDPs. For example, as previously noted, an integral part of studying in these programs is the master's thesis and therefore it is crucial for the students to be aware of what is valued in a thesis in their field instead of merely mastering academic writing on a more general level.

As a third approach to the linguistic side of disciplinary discourse, Becher (1987: 266-269) addresses the issue of formal scholarly communication. He also presents some tangible differences between these fields. He first points out that in physics there was a strong trend of academic papers being produced by multiple authors, as many as 18 in one of the articles he researched, whereas in his-

tory as well as in sociology it was the opposite, meaning that most articles were written by single authors (ibid: 267). Moreover, Becher (1987: 267) remarks that articles in physics (approx. 3–18 pages) were often a great deal shorter than those in the other two fields (both around 20–30 pages). He further points out that the epistemology of these fields, not surprisingly, varies quite a bit. Physics articles understandably include rather little plain text and they are strongly characterized by mostly being written in code, i.e. including mathematical symbolism, which may be impermeable to readers outside the field (ibid: 267-268). In contrast, according to Becher (1987: 268), history is at least on the surface level more approachable to a wider audience and sociology falls again somewhere in between these two with its' technical and semi-technical terms.

Becher (1987: 268) additionally noticed differences in regards to references and citations. The amount of references, as noted by Becher, varied from extensive use by historians to modest use of them by physicists. He explains this difference by stating that among historians it is important in a professional sense to show awareness of important scholars and also to engage in discussion with them. Within sociology it is valuable to be attached to the right intellectual company (Becher, 1987: 268) by referring to relevant work in the field. In physics, scholars share to some extent these same lines of thinking, but also particularly that by referencing they give context to their own work as well as provide support for the chosen research technique or procedure by showing it has worked in research conducted in the past (ibid. 268). Lastly, as a component of formal scholarly communication, Becher (1987: 269) mentions the use of different voices, that is, the passive voice in comparison to active *we* or *I*, in an academic text.

The structures of argumentation is the last linguistic component Becher (1987: 269-272) discusses. He categorizes physics as consisting of so-called jigsaw/atomistic argumentation, where all pieces of the jigsaw need to fit in order for it to be complete, meaning that the accretion of knowledge is essential to physics as a discipline (Becher, 1987: 269). Conversely, Becher (1987: 269) finds that history and sociology do not fit this category, because they place more value on aspects such as being critical and having the ability to reinterpret, thus making these two disciplines more complex and holistic in nature (Becher, 1987: 269). It could be said that even though all three of these fields share the idea of arguing for one's case, the ways and logic of doing that vary and are something that students of each field need to be aware of and learn how to master.

Becher (1987: 273-274) concludes by emphasizing that all the aforementioned aspects and features shed light on each field's underlying knowledge structure, and he proposes that language, for instance the language of physics, sociology or history, has the particular ability to make these structures visible as well as accessible for learning. However, Airey and Linder provide a more recent approach to the concept of disciplinary discourse with their 2009 article published, and in contrast to Becher's (1987) strong interest in the languages of disciplines, Airey and Linder (2009: 28) warn not to interpret the term discourse in too limiting of a way by only thinking that it is just another word for special-

ized language. They want to define disciplinary discourse in a broader sense and propose it to be a complex combination of different representations, tools and activities which are characteristic to the discipline in question (Airey and Linder, 2009: 29).

Moreover, one must also consider the distinct meaning of Discourse, with a capital letter, which is often used by Gee (Airey and Linder, 2009: 29). According to Airey and Linder (2009: 30), the difference lies in the idea that Discourse is a far broader concept, whereas discourse, without the capital letter, carries a meaning with much more focus, and is perhaps thus used more by Airey and Linder (2009) themselves. In order to start making more sense of the concept, Figure 5 (Airey and Linder, 2009), provides a visual portrayal of what is embedded in disciplinary discourse and how the different components and levels are linked to each other.

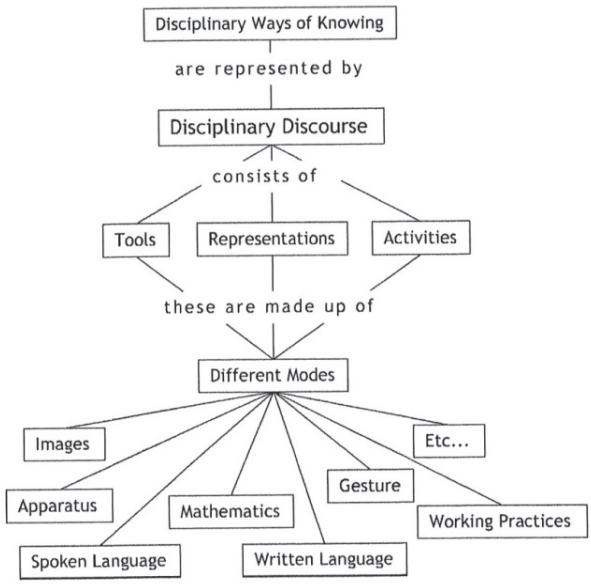

Figure 5 Diagram of the relationship between disciplinary ways of knowing and the modes of disciplinary discourse (Airey and Linder, 2009: 29)

Prior to examining Figure 5 in more detail it should be stated that Airey and Linder (2009: 29) use this figure and all its related definitions to focus on science, especially the so-called hard sciences, such as natural sciences. This does not automatically rule out other disciplines, but it is something one should bear in mind while considering the figure and its implications.

However, starting from the top, disciplinary ways of knowing, according to them, refer to semiotic resources as a system, which are at the core of representing disciplinary knowledge (Airey and Linder, 2009: 27). They point out that every discipline entails its own, unique order of discourse, and this creates the variation between different fields of study (Airey and Linder, 2009: 28). Airey and Linder (2009: 28) propose that prior to students being ready to profoundly master their discipline's ways of knowing, they must first become pro-

ficient in using the modes of their disciplinary discourse. According to them, this step is essential on students' path towards the top of the figure, since only by taking ownership of the resources and modes can the students' access knowing in their discipline (Airey and Linder, 2009: 28). This undisputedly ties into the ideas presented by Postman and Weingarten (1971: 103), Halliday and Martin (1993: 8) and Airey and Linder (2007: 162) about language being at the core of knowledge and knowing, and how students can reach those in their field of study.

In Figure 5, one finds three aspects which create the disciplinary discourse discussed above. The first are representations, which are defined semiotic resources and, in particular, resources intended for communicating the ways of knowing, especially in science (Airey and Linder, 2009:2 9). In their line of thinking representations encompass not only certain modes of oral and written language but also images (e.g. graphs and diagrams) as well as more field-specific components, such as mathematics, which is a key to, for example, natural sciences (Airey and Linder, 2009: 30). The second aspect contains the specialized physical tools or apparatus used for conducting science. The third are the activities completed in the name of scientific activity and which students come to know via participation and observation (ibid. 30).

At the bottom of Figure 5 are modes, and Airey and Linder (2009: 40) emphasize that there is no single mode which could on its own fully represent a disciplinary way of knowing, and hence it is not possible to reach a disciplinary way of knowing if one masters only a single mode. Moreover, it is not enough if one is merely exposed to disciplinary discourse, but one must also practice it. For instance, students need to actively engage in meaning making themselves (Airey and Linder, 2009: 41). In the interviews conducted by Airey and Linder (2009), students repeatedly talked about discoursing, which they interpreted as making use of a range of modes related to their disciplinary discourse (ibid. 41). According to them, this discoursing too often unfortunately happens merely among peers and Airey and Linder (2009: 41) call for more interaction in this sense between students and the lecturers, who in fact are likely already fluent in their own disciplinary discourse. However, they remark that it appears that lecturers may often take the representations, tools and activities for granted, although according to Airey and Linder (2009: 41) there are science lecturers who do aim to reconstruct them in their teaching. The ideal would be teaching that highlights the critical constellation of modes of disciplinary discourse far more strongly and directly. Airey and Linder (2009: 44) suggest this would be necessary for students' holistic learning because it would enable them to gain access to their discipline's knowing.

However, at this stage of the present study it needs to be stated that none of these aforementioned concepts or definitions, even if they contribute to a slightly better understanding of this complex topic of going beyond the narrow conception of language, have really become that popular or commonly used in, for instance, EMI literature or teaching. Over the past two decades, however, various scholars, have increasingly turned to yet another concept, academic lit-

eracy/ies, which is thought to be better suited with its practices for the fast-paced modern world filled with various literacy requirements and literacies, which all strongly challenge the narrow conception of language (Brumfit, 2010: 23).

According to Lea and Street (2006: 370), the academic literacy model and concept is built upon both study skills and academic socialization, but it extends itself even further by also incorporating aspects, such as power, authority, meaning making and identity, and above all also the relationships between these aspects. This model also takes into consideration the aforementioned aspects in respect to the literacy practices prevailing in a specific context (Lea and Street, 2006: 370). One example of such specific context could for instance be an IMDP, since McCambridge and Pitkänen-Huhta (2012: 165) remark that when it comes to programs such as the IMDPs, literacy is very much at the heart of teaching and learning, and for this reason, McCambridge and Pitkänen-Huhta (2012) adopted an academic literacies approach approach (ibid. 166) when studying the IMDPs of the University of Jyväskylä. They emphasize that this allowed the programs to be better studied and understood, as the academic literacies approach views the programs as discourse communities in their own right rather than merely focusing on more superficial aspects, such as looking at how the language skills of students are being improved or how academic writing norms are acquired (McCambridge and Pitkänen-Huhta, 2012: 166).

Therefore, in the following section the concept of academic literacy will be elaborated on with more detailed discussion. The goal is to present a clearer theoretical picture of what is meant by the idea of going beyond language when it comes to fields such as EMI.

3.2 Academic literacy/ies

First of all, Lillis and Scott (2007: 6) remark that this concept is used in both singular and plural, and they point out that there is a strong sense of fluidity in relation to the concept itself about whether it should be thought of as plural or singular. Lillis and Scott (2007) use both plural and singular forms simultaneously throughout their article by referring to it as "academic literacy/ies." According to Murray (2010: 351), the use of plural derives from the fact that literacy is always slightly different in different fields, and thus one needs to view this concept also in the plural. However, according to Van De Poel (2004: 242), among others, the difference between academic literacies and academic literacy lies in that the former refers to genre, whereas the latter entails the varied skills students are required to master when they deal with texts with the help of their genre conventions. In the present study, the form used by Lillis and Scott (2007) – academic literacy/ies – is adopted from now on, since neither of the meanings discussed above are ruled out.

As an area in itself, academic literacy/ies has been researched over the past 30 years (Lillis and Scott, 2007: 6), so it is still a fairly young field. Interest

in studying academic literacies, for instance in the UK, has mainly been sparked by the increasing participation of both local and international students (Lillis and Scott, 2007: 7), which obviously has resulted in not only linguistic and cultural, but also the social diversity of the student body (ibid. 8). For similar reasons, Evans and Green (2007: 15) also note that academic literacy is at the very core of higher education in the deeply international context of Hong Kong. As noted by Murray (2010: 351), all students, regardless of their background, most likely enter university with inadequate skills when it comes to academic literacy. This applies to both domestic and international students, as well as to students with English-speaking as well as non-English speaking backgrounds (Murray, 2010: 351).

A student's success in language subjects on a school-level, however, does not have a direct link to that student's academic literacy level (Van Dyk and Weideman, 2004: 140; Sebolai, 2016: 49), and nor are a student's English language proficiency and literacy level directly correlated (Sebolai, 2016: 48-49). In light of these findings, it is logical that Sebolai (2016: 45) should define academic literacy as language ability with a unique nature, and Blue (2010: 2) places it at a high level of proficiency. Moreover, Dafouz and Smit (2016) consider it to be one of the first, as well as most challenging, endeavors HE students face when they enter their academic context, such as the IMDPs. Therefore, when taking into account that students are on the move globally, it is no wonder that academic literacy, as a framework for combining language and literacy, is taking over research, and especially teacher research, within international higher education (Lillis and Scott, 2007: 7-8). It is, nonetheless, necessary to define the concept more profoundly, instead of merely stating that it is a combination of language and literacy. Literature provides multiple different, but interrelated, definitions, and in the following the core components of academic literacy/ies are presented, and their meaning and possible implications are also briefly touched upon.

First of all, an aspect which appears to color the majority of the definitions is that scholars emphasize academic discourse's uniqueness (e.g. Patterson and Weideman, 2013a; Patterson and Weideman, 2013b; Sebolai 2016: 48), and the particularity of academia as a context (e.g. Sebolai, 2016: 46) and as a community (Lemke, 1990: x; Neeley, 2005: 6; Hughes, 2008: 6). Lea and Street (2006: 370) also make a note on smaller academic entities, such as communities of both disciplines and subjects, and McCambridge and Pitkänen-Huhta (2012: 167) take this perhaps even further by suggesting that students and teachers with their various backgrounds coming together in class create an academic discourse in its own right. Moreover, it is remarked that this applies to the IMDPs, as students studying in them are often only temporarily migrating to Finland, and therefore practices are continuously in flux and on the move, as well as frequently merging and transforming (McCambridge and Pitkänen-Huhta, 2012: 169). Moreover, Hughes (2008: 6) remarks that these different academic communities may have very different expectations, and thus especially mobile stu-

dents may need to be able to adapt to various academic literacies along their academic paths.

Furthermore, what becomes apparent in respect to the definitions is that they could be viewed as operating on two specific levels. On the one hand, most of the definitions focus on what the students' need to be able to do or what type of skills they need to possess in their studies. Many definitions of academic literacy/ies revolve strongly around ideas, such as coping (Sebolai, 2016: 46) and performing (Murray, 2010: 352), and possessing the abilities to undertake (Murray, 2010: 350-351) the literacy challenges of academia. In simple terms, Lillis and Scott (2007: 7) define it as writing and reading texts in academic contexts, and Neeley (2005: 7) similarly defines it as proficiency related to reading and writing academic texts. Furthermore, Neeley (2005: 7) also adds that it all centers on the idea of students being able and willing to contribute to the discussions of their academic fields. According to Boughey (2000: 281), literacy as a concept incorporates mastering both speaking and acting in the target discourse, and hence academic literacy refers to academic discourses. In another illustration of the topic (Figure 6) by Bhatia (2004: 70), one can see an example of academic discourse in the field of law. As can be seen, the discipline itself, law, is at the center and it is surrounded by all the multidisciplinary circles which relate to law. This effectively elaborates on the idea of academic discourse, since cutting across all those disciplines are the core elements a law student encounters during law studies, such as different types of assignments and materials, which then require the mastery of the content (e.g. law and/or public administration), but also very prominently the academic discourse of them all.

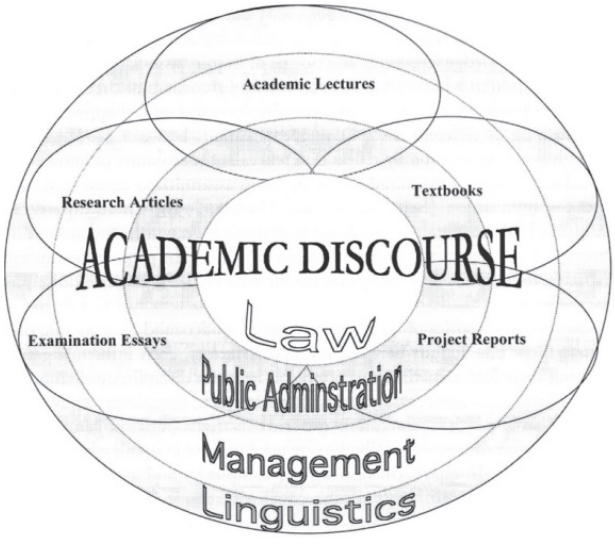

Figure 6 Genres and Disciplines in Academic Discourse (Bhatia, 2004: 70)

In addition to these, Jacobs (2004: 162), Van De Poel (2004: 242), Neeley (2005: 8) and Murray (2010: 350–351) emphasize that the outcomes, or so-called products, of these academic actions or skills, such as new findings and knowledge, are at the core of the definitions. This line of thought clearly ties back into the afore-

mentioned contexts, communities and discourses, as they directly or indirectly dictate the expectations (Van De Poel, 2004: 242) and norms, values and conventions (Jacobs, 2004: 162) guiding the students' literacy actions or, in other words, what is appropriate and what meets the standards of that setting (Murray, 2010: 350-351).

At this juncture, it should be noted that the definitions also incorporate another, more abstract, and thus perhaps less tangible, level of the concept, which likely creates the basis for all the actions and skills, as well as the expectations and standards, discussed above. In addition to merely referring to concrete actions, such as writing and reading, Gee (1996: 127) as well as Sebolai (2016: 47) describe academic literacy/ies as combinations of novel ways of being, valuing and believing, and Neeley (2005: 9) sort of bundles these together as the habits of mind, which are integral for functioning in the academic setting in question. For instance, meaning making, identity, power, and authority are noted to be at the heart of academic literacy/ies by, for instance, Lea and Street (2006: 369). Therefore, it is rather safe to concur with Braine (2002: 60) in the sense that academic literacy does indeed go far beyond the reading and writing abilities of students.

A question that is immediately evoked by the definitions presented above relates to teaching and, thus to learning of academic literacy/ies as well. If considering that this concept includes far more than just teaching students how to study and communicate according to the standards of the communities and discourses, then one is forced to consider how teaching should react to the more abstract level of academic literacy/ies, in other words, how to convey to students the right habits of mind, as emphasized by Neeley (2005: 9). It is not surprising in this light that teacher researchers have been drawn to study this concept and familiarize themselves with its implications for higher education, and Lea and Street (2006: 369) promote incorporating academic literacy/ies as a model for curriculum development as well as daily teaching practices. Therefore, in the following discussion, some literature regarding the teaching and pedagogy of academic literacy/ies is briefly consulted. Yet when getting acquainted with literature concerning the teaching of academic literacy/ies, one is faced by a thought-provoking contrast to the overall tone of scholars when they discuss the definitions of the concept.

Chiefly, the definitions portray an image of academic literacy/ies as being the answer to many of the EMI and general HE questions left unanswered, and issues not addressed, by other concepts, such as EAP (Ivanic, 1998; Lea and Street, 1998; Wingate, 2012a: 28). Academic literacy is rather convincingly presented as the overarching concept that simultaneously and conveniently brings not only language but also literacy together in academia. However, when it comes to taking the concept to the concrete level of teaching and learning, it becomes more complicated. For instance, Wingate (2012a: 27) states that academic literacies have not been turned into an actual pedagogy, for example in respect to writing, and this has resulted in academic literacies having in reality a rather limited impact on HE policies. This might come from the logic present-

ed by, for instance, Gee (1990) and Lave and Wenger (1991), as well as Dafouz and Smit (2016), since they have all emphasized that students operate unconsciously on their academic literacy knowledge, and consequently teaching literacy does not transform well into mere introductory lecture series (Boughey, 2000: 281). According to Boughey (2000: 281), it is rather that students, in reality, need to observe and interact with the members of their discourse in order to become literate. In other words, they should adopt the discourse's ways of speaking and acting as well as the ways in which to think, feel and value within that discourse. The ultimate aim is that all these aforementioned aspects would become natural to the students (Boughey, 2000: 281). Wenger (1998) and Dazouz and Smit (2016) discuss this same exact phenomenon by calling it socialization of students in respect to their academic communities. In a similar vein, and by linking all of this to practice, Neeley (2005: 9) has remarked that even if a student is able to read an academic book and write research papers, this does not automatically translate into academic literacy, since it requires a great deal of practice and, above all, the student profoundly processing all this on their own. Therefore, one might claim that teachers can assign a range of reading and writing tasks and activities to their students, but until the students not only complete them, but also process them, they will not gain academic literacy/ies.

All this clearly relates to the students, and the distinction Neeley (2005: 9-10) makes about students receiving their HE degrees versus them claiming their degrees. Students who merely receive their education attend the classes required of them and only passively learn and then demonstrate in exams the things they have learned. Once they graduate, they enter working life expecting to be trained again by someone else, similarly to the way they received their education (Neeley, 2005: 9-10). At the other extreme are the students who actively take ownership of their learning, thinking, researching and writing, which also adds up to them viewing working life as a community which they can contribute to (Neeley, 2005: 9-10). Nonetheless, as argued by Wingate (2012a: 27) and others, all students need to master their discipline's conventions and discourses, and students are expected to become full participants of their academic community by being proficient in practices related to academic literacy (Abasi and Graves, 2008: 224). Hence, teaching and learning of academic literacy/ies cannot be ignored if the ultimate goal is quality HE resulting in students graduating as participants of academia.

As has been noted, students' study challenges or problems should not merely be diagnosed as language problems, but rather perhaps as issues with academic literacy/ies. Therefore, Dooey (2010: 197) recommends starting by naming courses and other forms of support to reflect the idea of academic literacy/ies rather than simply English language proficiency. In practice, this is often thought to be manifested in courses and support aiding students to cope with especially, but not exclusively, reading and writing (Blue, 2010: 1). Reading instruction is thought to focus on reading in an extensive sense by embedding discussions and reflection on the texts, and the idea is that this would not

only take place in class but students would also actively engage in these activities outside the classroom (Abasi and Graves, 2008: 224). Writing instruction in practice would include, for instance, having students thoroughly organize their texts and embedding their references (Lillis and Scott 2007: 6). Moreover, specific texts, such as dissertations, could be at the heart of writing instruction (Lillis and Scott 2007: 6). Lea and Street (2006: 376) studied the teaching of academic literacy/ies and discovered that, in practice, the concept was visible in a variety of genres, modes, shifts, transformations and representations, but also in a range of meaning-making processes and identities inherent to academic contexts. The bottom line for all academic literacy/ies instruction thus becomes the logic of knowledge production being based on the use of various semiotic resources and, above all, on interactions with others (Abasi and Graves, 2008: 224). Consequently, academic literacy/ies is thought to emerge in its instruction (Abasi and Graves, 2008: 224) rather than being merely something that can be taught.

Next, Van De Poel (2004: 242–243) call for viewing academic literacy as a process instead of as some final phase. Therefore, the teaching of it should also evolve around processes instead of any so-called fixed recipes or rules of thumb, as they do not necessarily work in all contexts and communities the students will need to deal with (Van De Poel, 2004: 243). Furthermore, according to Blue (2010: 2), it is of the essence that academic literacy/ies teaching would aim at educating students to become thinkers with the capability to be both autonomous and critical. This additionally reinforces the less normative idea, also promoted by Lillis and Scott (2007: 13) and Wingate (2012a: 28), of not merely giving the students the right answers or strict guidelines, but rather providing them the means and tools for understanding the literacy and communication of their field and becoming proficient in participating in their field as well. The desired outcome, in Blue's (2010: 2) view, is that students will become able and willing to question what goes on in their field.

On a final note in respect to all the concepts discussed in this chapter, it must be pointed out that no matter which concept or framework one consults, one is forced to face the fact that EMI, such as the IMDPs, is by no means just instruction and learning conducted in English, but rather that we are discussing issues that go well beyond language while having language at the core of everything. Airey and Linder (2009: 41) make an intriguing comparison between science (or disciplinary learning in general) and foreign language learning. According to them, it is often easy to learn a language if one travels to a country where it is used and one uses it there with native speakers. Similarly to this, one can only learn science by "doing science together with the scientists" (Airey and Linder, 2009: 41).

This simple, although intriguing, line of thinking is connected to Wingate's (2012a: 27) criticism concerning a one-size-fits-all model which would work for various HE programs across different fields. According to Wingate (2012a: 27), there is such a diversity of institutions and programs that there is simply not any one model or framework for academic literacy/ies or discipli-

nary discourse teaching. Rather, it has been proposed that each academic community needs their very own mixture of a range of approaches, as well as methods, which would best suit that community, and its characteristics and needs (Wingate, 2012a: 27). This would enable the community to achieve the learning outcomes of that context and thus provide quality HE education to the students partaking in that context.

Consequently, in order to learn more about the present study's context, the IMDPs of the University of Jyväskylä, the IMDP students are brought to the fore. Bearing in mind how various EMI scholars have advised researchers to particularly focus on consulting the students' and their experiences, the present study next moves on to discussing how students can actually be studied. Due to the fact that one is dealing with people, one is also faced with a complex yet fascinating area of research. Therefore, in order to be able to use the IMDP students as windows to their programs, the various concepts related to self as a subject of research are presented and examined in the following section prior to moving to the present study in practice.

4 'SELF' AS A WINDOW TO RESEARCHING STUDENTS

As discussed earlier, and as the research questions of the present study indicate, the present study focuses on the IMDP students' ways of, for instance, conceptualizing, reflecting, reporting, as well as constructing the themes of the present study, i.e. issues and viewpoints related to academic English and literacy/ies. Therefore, since the present study does not revolve around, for instance, testing the students' academic English skills, it requires a slightly different type of approach to the students. Consequently, as the core verbs of the present study's research questions imply, this dissertation is keen on finding out about the students' self in respect to its themes.

In order to achieve something like this, Evans and Morrison (2011) studied EMI students and created student portraits as an outcome of their research in order to gain a deeper understanding of their participants (ibid. 2011). They call for qualitative research conducted with case studies, interviews and focus groups, and, in a similar vein, Braine (2002: 66) also proposes that these have the potential to provide insights into learners and their communication and learning strategies, as well as into their personalities, attitudes and goals. Braine (202: 66) also remarks that rich information on how all these things relate to each other and how they interact can also be discovered with the help of qualitative research. The present study aims to do exactly this, especially when considering that according to Isabelli-Garcıa (2006), Fox (2009: 37), Dooey (2010: 188), and Dewey et al. (2014: 38), students' study paths vary greatly, and particularly the factors affecting the paths come in all shapes and sizes. Therefore, the IMDP students, and their study paths, are put at the core of the present research.

Furthermore, if one revisits the issue of student fees for HE, which have become relevant as of the fall semester 2017 in Finland as well, one should not overlook the demands that the new law imposes on teaching. The line of thinking of students as customers and education as a commodity or product, mentioned for instance by Fabricius, Mortensen and Haberland (2017: 589) and Ljosland (2015: 615), is in many ways new to Finnish education. As Biggs and Tang (2011: 12) remark, and students in Kallio's (2017) and Baltzar's (2018) articles

reinforce, students paying for their education may indeed have higher expectations of it, and hence universities have to cater even more efficiently for these students, and thus this new law brings quality issues to the fore more acutely than ever. The University of Jyväskylä and its Language Center make no exception to this and this interestingly ties into a previously discussed distinction regarding students receiving versus claiming their HE degrees (Neeley, 2005: 9-10). It is of the essence to learn more about the IMDP students in this sense as well, as one cannot help but ask whether the students primarily come to Finland and the University of Jyväskylä to buy their education, or are they alternatively enrolling in the IMDPs with the mentality of really claiming their degree. It goes without saying that these two approaches may have varying implications in terms of the students' learning and academic performance and success in the IMDPs.

Since the students contribute the main perspective on the academic English teaching and learning in the IMDPs, the present study requires a theoretical approach to their feelings, thoughts, perceptions and experiences. Zimmerman (2000: 89) notes that there is in fact truth in the so-called historic wisdom of educators regarding students' self and its role in respect to students' motivation, and thus achievements. Nevertheless, as Mercer (2011: 2, 13) points out, the theoretical area related to self, such as the self of a language learner, is indeed rather vast and varied. Bandura (e.g. 1977, 1978a, 1978b, 1982, 1983, 2000), and Pajares (1996), among others, have addressed the idea of a self-system, and defined it as something which enables individuals to take control over their own thoughts and feelings, as well as their actions. Furthermore, a self-system also provides people the capability to modify the environments in which they live, and also to have impact their own actions (e.g. Bandura, 1977; 1978a; 1978b; 1982; 1983; 2000; Pajares 1996: 543). Mercer (2011: 2) mentions interrelated concepts such as self-esteem, self-concept, self-worth, self-efficacy and identity, but also remarks that even in the field of psychology there is constant confusion and overlapping as well as inconsistent use of these concepts. Figure 7 (Mercer, 2011: 19) portrays the connections and hierarchies of the concepts related to self.

Figure 7 Visual model of the interrelation between key self-constructs (Mercer, 2011: 19)

In order to create a framework around the IMDP students' viewpoints, the present study has taken various concepts into consideration as a means to describe and discuss the present study's data, the IMDP student interviews. One only

needs a brief glance at the literature to realize that there is a great abundance of concepts available. For the purposes of the present study, self-concept as well as self-efficacy have been chosen for more detailed discussion. Attribution theory, due to its suitable nature in respect to some of the present study's research questions, is also discussed more thoroughly, and later on it is linked to the data analysis and discussion. The reason behind adopting various concepts for the present study lies in a suggestion made by Pajares (1996: 550-551), who suggested that it is better to have multiple constructs because they are more likely to provide varying insights into the same topic. Therefore, prior to presenting the present study with all its stages and outcomes, the concepts and theory mentioned here are discussed in more detail in sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3.

4.1 Self-concept

When contemplating the idea of self, one first observes that self-concept plays a pivotal role, as in Figure 7 (Mercer, 2011: 19), as it is thought to entail various other concepts and aspects related to self, and it covers a rather extensive area of the more mainstream concept of self-esteem. Moreover, a closer look reveals that, for instance, competence beliefs of linguistic L2 self-confidence are embedded in self-concept, which is obviously appealing in terms of the present study. Scholars such as Schunk (1991), Zimmerman (2000: 84), Bong (2001: 554), and Bong and Skaalvik (2003: 6) bring self-concept to the academic context by specifying that there is also an additional, interrelated subcategory called academic self-concept, which has been derived from increased understanding of the multi-sited umbrella term itself (Zimmerman, 2000: 84). By using academic self-concept, scholars refer to individuals' beliefs and perceptions of their own capabilities in terms of their performances and achievements, particularly in academic settings and situations (Schunk, 1991; Bong, 2001: 554; Bong and Skaalvik, 2003: 6).

Yet even if self-concept is always used in relation to a certain domain (Pajares, 1996: 561; Mercer, 2011: 14), for example academic English, as in the present study, it is still rather free from context, thus quite global (Pajares, 1996: 561), and general (Zimmerman, 2000: 84), and hence it includes the least amount of limitations. In other words, it effectively combines a range of viewpoints to learner motivations and behaviors (Mercer, 2011: 3). For these reasons, self-concept corresponds with the needs of the present study, and it allows the topics of academic English to be explored in various aspects from the viewpoint of the IMDP students. Therefore, this concept is discussed and defined in more detail below.

According to Mercer (2011: 2), self-concept does not merely encompass one's beliefs about oneself and one's abilities, but it additionally entails one's evaluations of these beliefs. Self-concept is thus quite evaluative and affective by nature (Mercer, 2011: 2), but it is of the essence to emphasize that self-concept does not necessarily reflect the facts about oneself, but first and fore-

most one's beliefs (Mercer, 2011: 14). Schunk and Pajares (2001: 3) concur in their definition, proposing that self-concept encompasses one's feelings of self-worth because these supplement one's competence beliefs. Bong and Skaalvik (2003) draw similar conclusions from reviews of various researchers. They list five key antecedents of self-concept, and these are provided in the following (Bong and Skaalvik, 2003: 3-4);

1. Frames of reference, i.e. the standards people use when judging their own accomplishments or traits.
2. Causal attributions, i.e. the factors individuals deem as attributes with respect to their success and failures. These are also thought to have an effect on people's descriptive and affective aspects of self-concept.
3. Reflected appraisals from significant others, i.e. individuals' ways of viewing themselves as they think that others view them.
4. Mastery experiences, i.e. self-schemas people have created for themselves based on their past experiences of a certain domain.
5. Psychological centrality, i.e. qualities thought to be either psychologically central or otherwise important to individuals.

Both Mercer's (2011) and Schunk and Pajares' (2001: 3) definitions, as well as Bong and Skaalvik's (2003) list, entail integral components of self-concept that are of interest when examining academic English and literacy/ies in the IMDPs. However, similarly to all other concepts, self-concept does not come without limitations or shortcomings. First, Zimmerman (2000: 82) notes that the self-concept in respect to students' academic performance is challenging to measure empirically and, above all, in a valid way. At this juncture, it should be said that the present study does not aim to measure the students' self-concepts, but rather to merely describe them. Nonetheless, Zimmerman (2000: 82) draws attention to the vague nature of the concept because of the difficultly of measuring it in practice. This vagueness and the slightly blurred lines of the concept itself are also considered by Bong and Skaalvik (2003: 7), as they emphasize that self-concept and one of its core sub-concepts, self-efficacy, are not clearly distinct.

As Figure 7, which depicts the relationships of different self-constructs, shows (Mercer, 2011: 19), these two concepts are linked and overlapping, but they do not necessarily need to relate to each other (Pajares, 1996: 561). Pajares (1996: 551) observes that researchers in general have often been challenged in determining which concepts to use and how to describe them in such a way that the results can be later evaluated and used for further implications. In order to distinguish them, Pajares (1996: 561) states that self-concept has a broader level in terms of specificity, whereas self-efficacy is more context-specific. Moreover, self-concept incorporates one's evaluations of one's own competences, and therefore it also has self-worth feelings at its core (Pajares, 1996: 561). As suggested by Pajares (1996: 551), when it comes to finding the most appropriate self-construct for one's research, it is essential to determine each concept's decisive characteristics. In light of this, to reach a better and more accurate under-

standing of self-concept, self-efficacy also needs to be dealt with in the present study, so it is discussed in the following section.

4.2 Self-efficacy and social-cognitive theory

General self-efficacy has been of interest to researchers for decades, but higher education research has focused on academic self-efficacy only since the early 1990s (van Dinther, Dochy and Severs, 2011: 104). In its early stages in the mid-1990s, self-efficacy research focused on students' efficacy beliefs in relation to choosing college majors and making career choices as well as on academic motivation and achievement (Pajares, 1996: 552). During the first years of this century, according to Gore (2006: 93-94), the focus of self-efficacy research has varied from a specific level of measurement, such as a specific course or course content, to research focusing on a certain content domain or class, such as self-efficacy in relation to different fields of study (Gore, 2006: 93). Moreover, Gore (2006: 94) notes that research has also been conducted on more generalized academic behavior, such as abilities related to mastering course materials and course tasks. Furthermore, research has mainly looked at students' abilities to complete college tasks in a successful manner (Gore, 2006: 94). Lastly, research has viewed self-efficacy as being the individual's confidence in his or her abilities to perform self-regulatory behaviors successfully (Gore, 2006: 94).

The scope of the research discussed above already alludes to the core of the self-efficacy concept. Yet instead of merely insinuating how it could be defined, Pajares (1996: 544) provides a definition of self-efficacy by stating it to consist of the beliefs individuals have regarding their capabilities to organize as well as execute the courses of action required from them in order to cope with prospective situations. Bandura (1977) and Bong (2001: 554) have also specified that it refers to an individual's own convictions regarding their success in executing actions which are required to reach a desired outcome. Moreover, these beliefs and convictions have an effect on individuals' behavior and course of actions as well as on the choices they make (e.g. Schunk and Pajares, 2001: 2). Pajares (1996: 544) further emphasizes that people tend to embark on tasks which allow them to feel confident and competent, whereas by the same logic they have the habit of avoiding tasks which cause them to feel the opposite. This is clearly connected to Zimmerman's (2000: 89) perspective on the so-called gut feeling of various teachers reporting that how students view themselves plays an integral role in the students' motivation and achievements. It is in fact quite thought-provoking that this gut feeling is strongly supported in the literature. According to Zajacova, Lynch and Espenshade (2005: 679), self-efficacy is positively reflected in students' grades and credits. Furthermore, various other scholars rather unanimously support this finding and claim that self-efficacy has strong predictive utility when considering students' academic achievement and learning (see Zimmerman, 2000; Bong, 2001; Zajacova, Lynch and Espenshade, 2005; Gore, 2006; and Dinther, Dochy and Severs, 2011).

Yet there remains the question of where these beliefs and convictions come from, and how they are formed in students' self-systems. Van Dinther, Dochy and Severs (2011: 97) list four aspects which create students' self-efficacy. First, they discuss students' enactive experiences of mastery (e.g. Dinther, Dochy and Severs, 2011: 97), which are the most prevalent source for strong efficacy because they function as authentic evidence of students' abilities to cope with the tasks in question (van Dinther, Dochy and Severs, 2011: 97). Second, they identify observational experiences, which refer to situations where students get to observe their peers and compare their own capabilities to those of their peers (van Dinther, Dochy and Severs, 2011: 97). Third, students often get information, such as feedback, from others regarding their abilities, a process labelled as social persuasion (van Dinther, Dochy and Severs, 2011: 98). Its effect is at its strongest when the source of that persuasion is especially knowledgeable and reliable in the eyes of the student (e.g. Bong and Skaalvik, 2003; van Dinther, Dochy and Severs, 2011: 98). Fourth, students' efficacy derives from their physiological, emotional and mood states, as stress reactions, tension and excitement, among other factors, can cause students to view these states as signs of failure (van Dinther, Dochy and Severs, 2011: 98). At this stage, it is integral to point out that these four sources of information do not directly have an effect on self-efficacy, but rather that any information must first be cognitively processed by the individual (e.g. Bandura, 1977, 1978a, 1978b, 1982, 1983; van Dinther, Dochy and Severs, 2011: 98). It all depends on how students interpret the information they receive, and how they interpret their own activities and performance (e.g. van Dinther, Dochy and Severs, 2011: 98).

In order to further elaborate and visualize this complex interplay of students and their actions, as well what goes on in their environment, one is forced to take into account that the concept of self-efficacy is strongly linked to the wider theoretical framework of social cognitive theory (Schunk and Pajares, 2001: 2). Social cognitive theory views students' achievement as an interplay of behavior, personal factors, and environmental conditions (e.g. Bandura, 1986; Schunk and Pajares, 2001: 2). This interaction is visible in, for instance, Bandura's (1986, as cited in Pajares, 1996: 544) conception of triadic reciprocality, as presented in Figure 8 below.

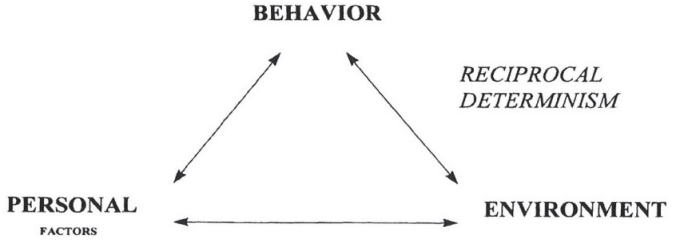

Figure 8 Model of the relations between the three classes of determinants in Bandura's conception of triadic reciprocality (Bandura, 1986, as cited in Pajares, 1996: 544)

As the name of the model indicates, and as the arrows in the visualization show, this model is based on reciprocity: if something occurs, for instance, or changes

in terms of any of the three determinants (i.e. personal factors, behavior, or the environment), it is bound to in some way affect the remaining two (Pajares, 1996: 546).

Having now discussed some of the decisive characteristics of self-efficacy as a concept, as advised by Pajares (1996: 551), it is crucial to view the concept in the light of the present study and assess its appropriateness for the purposes of this research. As noted already by various scholars, and as emphasized by Zimmerman (2000), self-efficacy has proven to be a strong predictor of students' learning and academic achievement. This is obviously appealing in terms of the present study, which aims to discover why the IMDP students are succeeding and not succeeding in their studies, and which factors, be they personal or external, affect their study performance and learning. Moreover, Gore (2006: 110) particularly promotes using self-efficacy as a concept when researching slightly more experienced HE students, instead of so-called college-naïve students, such as first-year students starting their bachelor's level studies. This is due to the idea that, according to Gore (2006: 110), students' academic efficacy beliefs become more accurate once they have more experience of academia. Therefore, this logic would support the use of self-efficacy in the context of the present study as well, because the participants have already completed their bachelor's level studies and, by the time of the interviews, also the majority of their master's level studies, with the interviewing taking place at the end of their two-year-program.

However, there are also certain features of self-efficacy which do not directly suit the aims or the research setting of the present study. First, it has some limitations related to fitting chronologically with the present study, since judgements related to self-efficacy are particularly linked to the future, and thus they ought to be assessed prior to activities which have been chosen to be at the core of the research. In other words, the concept's emphasis is future-oriented, whereas the main idea of the present study is reflective, where the IMDP students look back on their studies in the program. However, due to the fact that some of the present study's themes also link to the participants' future, e.g. their future careers, self-efficacy can be at certain intervals adopted for the present study. Another contradiction, as becomes apparent in the work of Pajares (1996) among others, is that self-efficacy research is primarily centered on measuring the phenomenon and transforming results into concrete numbers with the help of questionnaires and scales. Thus, this is not in line with the present study's aims of profoundly, and above all qualitatively, examining the students' ways of conceptualizing, reflecting and constructing the themes of the present study. Lastly, the crux of the matter is that self-efficacy, with its focus on tasks and specific situations (Pajares, 1996: 546), may be to some extent too narrow as a scope. After all, the present study particularly aims to look at the students' viewpoints regarding the whole time they spent in the program, instead of merely being interested in some specific task or event.

To conclude, the self-efficacy approach to IMDP students may be chronologically slightly inappropriate for the present study, and it may entail a minor

mismatch in its quantitative and micro-analytic nature. Nonetheless, as promoted by Pajares (1996: 551), in order to best equip one's research with varied self-constructs, one should make use of multiple concepts' defining features. Also, when bearing in mind that self-efficacy is so closely connected to self-concept (e.g. Bong and Skaalvik, 2003:7), I shall make use of them both in the present study. What is more, in order to keep finding additional ways to map the self of the IMDP students, attribution theory is discussed in more detail in the following section as yet another commonly used window to researching students.

4.3 Attributions for students' success and failure

When considering IMDP students and their programs, it must be remembered that one is dealing with individuals as well as a range of programs. Multilingual and multicultural programs such as IMDPs are characterized by the fact that they are fascinating combinations of multiple contextual factors (e.g. Brisk, 1999: 3-4) as well as mixtures of varied dimensions (e.g. Lauridsen, 2017: 31) and, above all, platforms for multiple student variables (e.g. Klaassen, 2001: 90). In other words, the factors that contribute to successful student performance (Brisk, 1999: 3-4) and student learning (Klaassen, 2001: 90) are therefore multiple and varied. In order to map out what these factors might be for IMDPs, attribution theory is utilized as a framework in the present study.

Attribution theory is in many ways inherently linked to self-concept and self-efficacy, because many of the same themes are at work in this theory as well. Aspects of self-efficacy, such as effort, persistence and achievement (Bandura, 1977,1978a, 1978b, 1982, 1983, 1986; Schunk and Pajares, 2001: 2), as well as social comparisons and attributions, (Schunk and Pajares, 2001: 4) create in many ways the backbone of attribution theory. However, in contrast to the future-orientation of self-efficacy, attribution theory connects students' past experiences with their future achievement efforts, and this is done by adopting causal attributions as the mediating link (Dörnyei, 2003: 8-9). Because the present study aims to reflect on the students' experiences of their studies in the program, attribution theory is more in tune with the present study than is self-efficacy.

Moreover, a crucial distinction also derives from the research approach of these concepts in comparison to attribution theory. As noted, self-efficacy is often studied with a strongly quantitative approach, whereas attribution theory requires something more complex and varied in order to map out the large scope of students' attributional processes and their effects on the students' learning (Dörnyei, 2001: 57). Self-efficacy research has been called "micro-analytic" by Pajares (1996: 546), but for research to do justice to attribution theory, more qualitative approaches are needed. Weiner (2004: 23) emphasizes that when it comes to this theory, constructs always have, without exception, a subjective definition, as well as meaning, which suits the purposes of the present

study well, as the aim is to paint a picture of the paths for each individual student, instead of generalizing or quantifying too much. At this stage, one might conclude that the decisive characteristics (Pajares 1996: 551) of attribution theory also correspond rather well with the aims and research setting of the present study, perhaps even more seamlessly than those of self-efficacy.

During the early stages of the theory at the start of 1950s, attribution theorists were already interested in the perception of causality, and on individuals' judgements of why something has happened (Pastore, 1952, as cited in Weiner, 1972: 203). However, in the late 1980s attribution theory started to gain a foothold among motivation theories, and then gradually started to dominate achievement motivation theories related to students and their motivation (Dörnyei, 2003: 8-9). This, despite the fact that Weiner (1972: 213-214) had already been promoting attribution theory in the early 1970s as being significant for education and its processes. Weiner noted back then that causal attributions were convincingly demonstrated to have an effect on students' achievement activities as well as on their intensity of work in respect to those activities (Weiner, 1972: 213-214; Dörnyei, 2003: 8-9). Moreover, students' persistency level upon failure was also of interest at the theory's early stages, but research was, above all, interested in all of these aspects coming together and playing a role in students' learning (Weiner, 1972: 213-214; Dörnyei, 2003: 8-9), which explains the theory's appeal in the eyes of educators.

In simple terms, attribution theory is an analysis relating to individuals' ways of processing their past experiences – failures as well as successes – and it also focuses on the consequences of these experiences in terms of individuals' future achievement strivings (Dörnyei, 2001: 57). Alternatively, it can also be defined as a theoretical perspective, which holds the view that individuals attribute a range of causes to areas in which they have either succeeded or failed based on their own perceptions (Williams, Boulder, Poulet and Maun, 2004: 19). According to Weiner (2004: 22), the theory succeeds in integrating not only thinking and feeling, but also doing. Initially, Weiner (1985), and later on also McClure et al. (2011: 72), have highlighted a clear and rather widely used categorization of the four attributions of ability, effort, task difficulty and, luck. In addition to these, McClure et al. (2011) introduced an additional three attributes, namely teachers, peers and family. The core logic behind attributions is that they guide a person's behavior and actions (Pastore, 1952, as cited in Weiner, 1972: 203), as well as contribute to various emotional reactions, and at the end of this chain also the motivation that results from this all (e.g. Dörnyei, 2003: 8-9; Williams, Boulder, Poulet and Maun, 2004: 19).

Later on, it has also been specified that attributions are not only relevant in their own right, but it is also of the essence to research, and thus become aware of, whether individuals view those attributes as internal or external, as changeable or unchangeable, or as being controllable or uncontrollable (Williams et al, 2004: 19–20). For instance, an individual can view an attribution as external, unchangeable and outside of their control, and according to Williams et al. (2004: 19-20), such an attribute is likely to have a consistent effect on this per-

son's future achievement strivings. However, if an individual views an attribute as internal, changeable and controllable, the attribute is more likely to be less consistent in the mind of that individual (Williams et al, 2004: 19–20). What is noteworthy at this stage is that when Weiner (2004) reviewed the theory decades later, he began discussing it in the plural, rather than as merely a single, monolithic theory. This is because he has actually developed two attribution theories. One of them puts an emphasis on self-directed thoughts and feelings, such as subjective expectancy of future success and emotions related to one's self-esteem, guilt and shame (Weiner, 2004: 14-15). He labels this theory intrapersonal theory of motivation (Weiner, 2004: 15). The second theory, which he calls the interpersonal theory of motivation, focuses on other-directed thoughts and feelings (Weiner, 2004: 15), which include thoughts and emotions resulting from other people's assessment and judgements of an individual's success or failure.

Whether one is discussing one attribution theory or two, this framework includes certain aspects which need to be dealt with caution when conducting research. First, according to Weiner (2004: 28), in attribution theory research it is vital that researchers not jump to conclusions when viewing the constructs visible in the data as actual attributes, since they may entail a range of meanings dependent on the individual's personal as well as cultural background. For instance, as noted by Weiner (2004: 28), what one student considers as success may in fact be failure to another. Williams et al. (2004: 27-28) echo this concern when they note that individuals may have very different ideas of what even constitutes effort or ability.

At all times, researchers need to be aware of the underlying issue that attributions are not necessarily real or true in the sense that they are always merely interpretations of individuals, and their perceptions of what caused or did not cause something (Williams et al, 2004: 20). The attributions do not necessarily equal the real reasons for someone's success or failure. In fact, according to McClure et al. (2011: 72), only a few studies have shown that attributions relate to real-life achievement. However, Williams et al. (2004: 20) remark that various attribution theorists support the idea that attributions (i.e. the perceived or interpreted explanations) are nevertheless often far more dominant than the so-called real reasons. Even more interestingly, because one is, after all, dealing with people, it is important to bear in mind that individuals often have various factors, or attributes, in mind, which they see as integral in terms of certain outcomes, whether positive or negative. Thus, there is rarely just a single cause resulting in only one outcome (McClure et al., 2011: 79).

Furthermore, McClure et al. (2011: 71) state that attributions are not the only path to success or failure, and they bring up the idea of self-serving bias, which they suggest means that individuals often tend to have internal causes linked to their success, and alternatively external causes are typically tied into failure. Such a pattern helps protect individuals' self-esteem and diminishes failure's demoralizing effect (McClure et al., 2011: 71). What is more, the aforementioned pattern appears to be universal, as it has been detected among vari-

ous cultures, age-groups and genders (e.g. Mezulis et al., 2004; McClure et al., 2011: 71). According to Williams et al. (2004: 27-28), the clear paradox within attribution theory is that it is, on the one hand, interpreted in the spirit of everyone constructing their own, very personal attributions of failures and successes, and, on the other, in a more normative sense, according to which attributions should be grouped based on their commonality so that they would be convenient for broader discussion. Weiner (2004: 23) aims to synthesize all this by proposing that attributions as a process, and the theory itself, are general, but they result in specific determinants, and thus this would be a mixture of the viewpoints mentioned above. Williams et al. (2004: 27–28) concur with Weiner (2004) in this sense when they note that their approach to attribution theory is also located, along the continuum presented above, somewhere in the middle.

Moreover, it has also been suggested that this theory ought to do more than only aim to reflect on the transmission of knowledge (Williams et al, 2004: 20). Rather, attributions should be viewed as a helpful window to students' own explanations for their failures and successes, and with that, as an opportunity for educators to retrain their students to think and act in more fruitful ways, thus having an effect on their learning (Williams et al, 2004: 20, 28). In a similar vein, McClure et al. (2011: 80) state that teachers can always aim to have an effect on students' motivation as well as attributions. Here also lies the appeal of attribution theory in respect to the present study, which is very much teacher research. In relation to attribution theory and its connection to the present study, it could be stated that this theory is a useful window into the students' line of thinking of what has helped them to succeed in their IMDP studies, or of what has affected their possible challenges, or even failure, in terms of their studies. At this juncture, now that the context of the present study as well as the so-called windows onto this context have been discussed, the next step involves presenting the study itself in more detail and in practice.

5 THE STUDY

As noted earlier, I work as a university teacher of English at the Language Center of University of Jyväskylä. In order to gain further insights to accompany my everyday understanding as a teacher in respect to these programs, I have been adopting a sort of double role as a researcher of these programs since the fall of 2014 when I officially started working on my dissertation and the present study. Ever since then, I have identified as a teacher researcher, which according to Lankshear and Knobel (2004: 9), refers to all classroom practitioners, regardless of the school level in which they are teaching, who are either collaboratively or merely by themselves engaging in research. At the core of Lankshear and Knobel's (2004: 9) definition is also the idea that teacher research has to be in one way or another self-motivated and self-generated, as well as systematic and informed, with the aim of enhancing one's vocation as a professional educator. For the present study, I find this definition to describe effectively the past few years of my career. In relation to this definition, as well as my own approach to teacher research, what is meant by enhancing one's vocation as a professional educator refers to more than internal enhancement, such as personal satisfaction and a heightened sense of worth, purpose, direction and fulfillment (Lankshear and Knobel, 2004:9). Rather, it also has external levels to it, namely, improving the effectiveness of one's teaching practice (Lankshear and Knobel, 2004: 9). I am also aiming to have perhaps even more far-reaching external gains from this study, as I am hoping that the outcomes and implications of the present study will not only help me as a teacher, but also be helpful to my colleagues at the Language Center as well as to my fellow teachers in other Finnish and European universities. Furthermore, one aim of the present study is to also provide teachers working in the IMDPs, or similar EMI programs, insights into their students' study paths from the viewpoint of academic English and literacy/ies.

Another integral viewpoint deriving from the definition by Lankshear and Knobel (2004: 9) is the use of self in relation to teacher research, as they discuss it from the angle of both self-motivation and self-generation. To me this indicates that the teacher researcher is at the very core of deciding what one needs

and wants to study, i.e. teacher researchers see and hear things and phenomena on a daily basis in their line of work and realize that something needs to be understood further, and this creates the basis for the self-motivation of the research. Moreover, I view self-generation to mean that a teacher is one way or another actively involved in the research and the topic itself, which also means that a teacher researcher can consciously try to take a step back to look at the research from a distance. However, the reality remains that (s)he is still a teacher researcher, who can never truly shake off what (s)he knows and feels about the topic. Byrd Clark and Dervin (2014: 17) claim that a researcher always immediately starts to interpret and construct the field (s)he enters, and this surely applies to the teacher research as well when considering that the topics for teacher research, similarly to the present study, often derive from the teacher's own environment and experiences.

The centrality of the teacher researcher's self relates to a great extent to Etherington's (2004: 19) claim that the self, be it of a teacher researcher or of any other researcher, has become a legitimate component in conducting research. In a similar vein, Lankshear and Knobel (2004) emphasize the importance of teacher researchers being aware of their dual role, both in a positive and negative sense, and this ties into what Byrd Clark and Dervin (2014: 17) view as the general challenge of researchers being and becoming both an insider as well as an outsider when conducting research. Berger (2015 221-222) also calls for all researchers to be self-reflective in all their actions, from formulating research questions to conducting data collection and analysis. Byrd Clark and Dervin (2014: 21) concur by promoting the idea of researchers not only being interested, but also invested in their research, which is in contrast to the usual expectation that researchers should be puppet-masters trying to somehow hide in the dark.

This line of thinking, whether referred to as critical reflection, reflectivity or reflexivity, has become prevalent in many fields of research (e.g. Berger, 2015: 220). Mauthner and Doucet (2003: 416) even call it the reflexive turn, which relates to demystifying knowledge construction processes and reaching a better understanding of the theoretical and empirical levels of those processes. In other words, in the view of Altheide and Johnson (1994: 486), Mauthner and Doucet (2003: 416) and Etherington (2004: 37), the *how* of acquiring, organizing and interpreting knowledge holds value in respect to the claims that result from all the actions. For instance, in respect to teacher research, one might say that the teacher's role in all the stages of the research is equally relevant to the actual results or outcomes of the study. Hence, there should be no reason to even try to mystify that role, because it is an integral part of the whole process, and Mauthner and Doucet (2003: 416) point out that it all results in situated knowledges. This is exactly what the present study aims at as well – finding out more information about the IMDP students' situations, and turning that into knowledge which can benefit various stakeholders of this context by situating it in the context of the IMDPs of the University of Jyväskylä. Therefore, I find it essential to discuss in more detail what the concept of reflexivity means prior to elaborating on the study itself, especially when there seems to be a strong

agreement among scholars that reflexivity is integral to qualitative research (Berger, 2015: 219) such as the present study.

5.1 Reflexivity as part of the present study

Various scholars have contributed to defining reflexivity as a concept, and to a great extent scholars seem to be in sync with their definitions. For instance, Alvesson and Skoldberg (2000), Etherington (2004: 32), Byrd Clark and Dervin (2014: 17), as well as Berger (2015: 220) discuss reflexivity in the light of turning one's researcher lens back on to oneself to critically study one's own authority as an interpreter and author. Fundamentally, all this turning to oneself is thought to aid the researcher to become aware of their own situatedness, and its effects on the research as a whole, and consequently help the researcher take responsibility for it (Berger, 2015: 220). In practice this situatedness can, and likely will, have an effect on the research setting, and the participants involved in it. Furthermore, the research questions, alongside the data collection and analysis, are bound to be in one way or another affected by the researcher's situatedness. (Berger, 2015: 220). When engaging in reflexivity, a researcher needs to consider for instance their insider/outsiderness, gender and ethnicity. In addition, the researcher's knowledge, feelings, and values, and how they relate to the study and its topic are relevant, and thus important to take into account (Attia and Edge, 2017: 35). In a similar vein, it is of the essence to self-monitor one's biases, beliefs, and personal experiences (Berger, 2015: 220). At the core of this all is that reflexivity sheds light on and thus makes explicit the often hidden moral dilemmas of doing research which without reflexivity would likely be ignored (Etherington, 2004: 32).

However, the question remains, as posed by the likes of Byrd Clark and Dervin (2014: 20) as well as Berger (2015: 225), that how much self-disclosure is needed on behalf of the researcher in order to provide enough reflexivity without crossing the line and becoming overbearing or even self-indulgent. As an example of the extent of disclosure, Mauthner and Doucet (2003: 420) described their own doctoral research by including their academic and personal biographies, and Etherington (2004: 11) provides a type of checklist of questions which researchers should deliberate on when considering their own stance in relation to their topic and research. The list includes questions related to elaborating on how one's personal history has contributed to one's interest in respect to the topic in question (Etherington, 2004: 11). Researchers are also advised to reflect on the presuppositions they have on the topic, and how this affects their position (Etherington, 2004: 11). Lastly, according to Etherington (2004: 11), researchers' gender/social class/ethnicity/culture ought to be considered in how they relate to the study topic and even to the informants. However, regardless of the level or amount of disclosure, it is important to bear in mind that researchers are always socially located individuals (e.g. Byrd Clark and Dervin, 2014: 24), and thus whatever seems necessary or logical to disclose in relation to

the topic in question could be deemed as sufficient. However, many scholars have understandably been reported to be reluctant to make their own positions visible because they are afraid of other scholars judging their research as less real or not academic enough (Byrd Clark and Dervin, 2014: 20-21).

Therefore, at this juncture, it is crucial to note that none of the above mentioned influences, factors or positions of researchers are seen as contaminating the research (Attia and Edge, 2017: 35). In fact, rather the opposite, as they are viewed as aspects which inform the readers about the researcher's position (e.g. Berger, 2015: 221), instead of mystifying it, and with that contribute to the rigor and validity of the research (e.g. Berger, 2015: 221; Etherington, 2004: 32, 37) as well as make it more ethical (Berger, 2015: 221). A researcher's attributes or positions are not always only a negative aspect of the study. Ward-Schofield (1993) and Pyett, (2003: 1172) even advise researchers to celebrate their perspectives related to the study in question. After all, research is always tied to the biases, assumptions, and personalities of the people conducting them (e.g. Berger, 2015: 220), so there is no point in trying to act or pretend this is not the case. Furthermore, as noted by Berger (2015: 226) and many others, the findings of any research are always merely the researcher's interpretations of what the participants have developed or conveyed during the research.

Etherington (2004: 36) states that reflexivity is a dynamic process of interaction that evolves between the researcher and the participants, and Etherington even describes this as circulating energy. In other words, whatever the researcher feeds into the circle for the participants is somehow processed by the participants, and as a result mirrored back to the circle, which is then interpreted by the researcher. Moreover, Pyett (2003: 1173) emphasizes that the data and the researcher's interpretation of it are equally valid and invalid and merely just two perspectives and understandings of the situation. In respect to this, Etherington (2004: 36) observes that both the researcher and the participants have agency in the process.

This view challenges the common logic of knowledge production being something separate from the person producing it, and hence knowledge being a mere objective (Berger, 2015: 220). One can question whether there is in fact a need for an alternative approach to knowledge production, such as reflexivity. There are countless examples of research, in which reflexivity has not been explicitly used, even though they have been conducted by researchers who are nevertheless clearly socially located people, as already remarked by Byrd Clark and Dervin (2014: 24). However, according to Byrd Clark and Dervin (2014: 21), there appears to be a strong obsession among scholars regarding the success of studies, whereas, according to them, research is without an exception a process which always encompasses both successes and failures. They find that there is a need for leniency in this sense, and that reflexivity would allow more room for failure when it comes to conducting and reporting on research (Byrd Clark and Dervin, 2014: 21). Being reflexive is by no means perfect in the sense that it also always derives from human beings who likely have their own blind spots and challenges related to their own position and self (Byrd Clark and Dervin, 2014:

15). However, reflexivity is at least a step towards taking these aspects into account.

Having established what is meant by reflexivity, and why it is particularly relevant for studies such as the present one, which is very much representing teacher research by having the self of the researcher at the core of things, I shall now describe the study in more detail. In the following sections, I will present the methodology, reasoning, and research strategy of the present study. Second, I provide information on the study's data and methods, and I then portray a profile of the participant group of the present study. Last, in respect to discussing the present study in practice, I explain the data analysis process with all its various steps. As pointed out by Byrd Clark and Dervin (2014: 15) and Berger (2015: 221-222), reflexivity should be part of every single stage of the research process, from when the research questions are formed and data collection and analysis, to the final conclusions made by the researcher. For this reason, reflexivity is also embedded in these stages of the present study, and I aim to incorporate it as clearly as possible to all the following section. According to Berger (2015: 231), every single reflexive study, regardless of its contexts and positions, has the potential to contribute to a better understanding of reflexivity as a concept. This end also motivates the present study, especially as an example of teacher research, as it attempts to shed light on its reflexive processes.

5.2 Methodology, reasoning and research strategy

The two cores of the present study are the complex area of self in terms of the students (discussed in Chapter 4), and reflexivity, and with that the idea of self as part of my role as a teacher researcher (see sections 1.3.5 and 5.1). When the present study is considered from the perspective of positivism versus post-positivism, one immediately detects that all the core ideas of teacher research, and reflexivity, posit the present study clearly at the post-positivist camp. At the heart of post-positivism are the ideas that no one can see the world perfectly as it really is, since everyone is biased and thus our observations cannot help but be affected by various factors (Trochim, 2006). In contrast to positivism, which sees the world, as well as people, as measurable targets (e.g. Trochim, 2006), post-positivism conversely views these as a far more complex phenomena which cannot be simplified to numbers and figures, or to all-encompassing laws (Tuomivaara, 2005: 29). These very similar lines of thinking were already touched upon in relation to reflexivity and conducting teacher research (e.g. Pyett, 2003: 1173; Byrd Clark and Dervin, 2014; Berger, 2015: 220, 226).

These differences between viewing the world and human beings, consequently add up to various implications regarding research, and perhaps, as noted by Tuomivaara (2005: 29), the most prevalent implication is that positivism leans on quantitative methods, whereas the more post-positivist approach to research, such as the present study, inherently needs to resort to qualitative methods. The latter is thought to aid researchers in shedding light on human

beings' actions and behavior as well as the outcomes of those, especially by considering that human beings cannot help but bring in their varied thoughts, emotions and values. Qualitative research is therefore elaborated on more broadly, which is followed by addressing how qualitative research becomes apparent in the present study.

It is of the essence to bear in mind that both quantitative and qualitative approaches to research are merely approaches, which are both equally qualified, or disqualified, for mapping out what goes on in the world, since according to Töttö (2004) and Saaranen-Kauppinen and Puusniekka (2006) all research realistically merely scratches the surface. Nonetheless, it is crucial whether one chooses to make use of qualitative or quantitative methods, or even a mixture of them, as this decision always relates back to what one is trying to discover or which surface one wants to scratch with one's research (Töttö, 2000, Saaranen-Kauppinen and Puusniekka, 2006). The present study, with its effort to learn more about the likely complex self of the students in relation to academic English and literacy/ies, benefits more from a qualitative approach, which is specifically thought to suit a study that addresses complex and varied meanings (Varto, 1992: 24; Saaranen-Kauppinen and Puusniekka, 2006). Moreover, qualitative research is promoted, for instance, by Shuttleworth (2008) when one's research specifically deals with research questions which go far beyond simple *yes* or *no* answers, and this is the case of the present study, which asks questions prompted more by issues of *how* or *what*.

In relation to having the students and their self at the core of the study, it is integral to also address the issue of inductive versus deductive reasoning, which are often seen as opposites, when in fact they should rather be viewed as complementary (Saaranen-Kauppinen and Puusniekka, 2006). Nonetheless, various scholars seem to deem inductive reasoning being more suitable, and thus more common to qualitative research (e.g. Tuomivaara, 2005: 33; Saaranen-Kauppinen and Puusniekka, 2006; Trochim, 2006). The core difference between inductive reasoning and deductive reasoning is that the first allows aspects and themes to derive from the data (e.g. Tuomivaara, 2005: 30; Trochim, 2006), whereas the latter uses a certain theory or framework as a lens for the data (Trochim, 2006). This distinction has often been described as inductive being the more open-ended and exploratory approach, and thus bottom-up, and the deductive approach is conversely narrower and top-down. (Trochim, 2006) Having the students' voices and their selves at the heart of the present study, the more open-ended and exploratory nature of the inductive reasoning is, therefore, needed, and the present study's data will be approached from this viewpoint, similarly to, among others, Mayring (2000), Hsieh and Shannon (2005), Elo and Kyngäs (2008) and Moretti et al. (2011).

Nonetheless, at this stage, when faced with the question of what type of research strategy would best serve all the viewpoints discussed here, and after having studied and tried out various options, the present study resorts to phenomenology as the basis for the present study. This research strategy, or movement, has its roots in the ideas presented at the beginning of the 20th cen-

tury by Hussler (e.g. Embree, 1997; Rouhiainen, n.d.). According to Embree (1997), phenomenology aims to create an option for the more positivist ideas of science and research, and, as noted by Rouhiainen (n.d.), it has its very focus on describing and portraying things as they are, instead of artificially trying to do that with theoretical concepts. Hussler originally summarized this in German rather accurately with the phrase *zu den Sachen selbst* (Rouhiainen, n.d.), which could basically be translated to mean "to the things themselves," as that is exactly what this strategy aims at.

As the name of this approach already also implies, phenomena are at the heart of what this research strategy is designed to study, and by this Smith (2009) precisely refers to literal appearances of things and aspects, rather than their reality. In other words, phenomenology studies the way people experience, for instance, the objects and events surrounding them as well as other people and, above all, themselves (Smith, 2009). In relation to this, Smith (2009) emphasizes that phenomena include people's perceptions and thoughts, as well as their imagination and volition, as they are given to individuals' consciousness. Phenomenology, furthermore, is interested in the meanings all these entail in relation to people's experiences or life worlds (Smith, 2009). The idea of one's life-world is quite fascinating and in tune with the self-system discussed earlier, and consequently phenomenology is particularly suitable for the needs of the present study. As with the notion of self, the same key themes, such as "perception, thought, memory, imagination, emotion, desire, and volition to bodily awareness, embodied action, and social activity, including linguistic activity" (Smith, 2009) play integral roles within phenomenology.

Thus far it has been established that the present study, being teacher research, clearly requires reflexivity, which relates strongly to post-positivism as a research philosophy and is often best manifested when doing qualitative research. The topic and my research questions require the students to be put at the center of the present study, and consequently inductive reasoning has been chosen to be a guiding principle of this dissertation, with phenomenology acting as the core research strategy. Next, the data and methods are discussed in more detail, followed by a description of the data analysis prior to moving on to the results.

5.3 Data collection

Contrary to the general notion of teacher research as being merely classroom empirical research, the present study has adopted an approach promoted by Lankshear and Knobel (2004, 7-8), who point out that teacher research can go beyond classrooms. At the crux of this has been a motive to gain further insights about the students which I would not necessarily gain when I am in class with them. Therefore, in order to answer my research questions and be able to provide an analysis of my topic, a five-stage data collection was conducted during the academic years of 2013–2014 and 2014–2015, with a fifth stage in the fall

of 2017. All the data collection was targeted at the IMDP students of the 2013–2015 cohort, with the exception of the stage 5 being merely targeted for follow-up with the interviewees of the individual interviews conducted in stage 4 (see Table 5 below).

Table 5 Stages of data collection (2014–2017

Stage of data collection	Date	Data collection
1	March–April 2014	PILOT Student survey 1: 50 students
2	October 2014	PILOT Focus group interviews: 5 students
3	April–May 2015	PILOT Student survey 2: 35 students
4	**April-June 2015**	**Individual interviews: 15 students**
5	**October–November 2017**	**E-mail follow-up: 5 students**

Stages 1–3, in which student surveys 1 and 2 were utilized along with the focus group interviews, were pilot data collection rounds completed as part of the joint Language Campus project *Language Proficiency and Academic Performance: Insights into International Master's Degree Programmes*. These are briefly discussed in the following section, as they have informed the actual data collection rounds in various ways. The data collection of stages 4 and 5 (the individual interviews and the e-mail follow-up, respectively) are, however, used as actual data in the present study, and hence a more detailed description of the interview process, as well as information on the participants, are offered in sections 5.3.3 and 5.4. First, however, I briefly elaborate on the ethical standards and guidelines adhered to in the present study.

5.3.1 Research ethics

All the steps of the present study have been conducted in conformity with the University of Jyväskylä's prescribed and recommended ethical standards. It should also be mentioned here that prior to embarking on any data collection of the present study, issues related to research ethics were taken into consideration, for instance, by making use of Kuula's (2006) guidelines of collecting, utilizing and storing data. Furthermore, the ethical principles provided by the Finnish Advisory Board of Research Integrity (2009) were respected throughout the present study.

All participants of the present study were informed about what the study concerns and means for them in practice as well as what the overall duration of the study would be (Finnish Advisory Board of Research Integrity, 2009: 7). In addition to this, the researcher's contact information was provided to them, and they were encouraged to pose any questions at any stage of the research if something was unclear to them and they needed clarification regarding the research (Finnish Advisory Board of Research Integrity, 2009: 7). The research

subjects' autonomy was also respected by informing the participants that their participation was voluntary, and based on their own consent (Finnish Advisory Board of Research Integrity, 2009: 5). They were also given the option to withdraw from the present study at any stage, but also by noting that any input on their behalf prior to their withdrawal would, nevertheless, be possibly used in the present study (Finnish Advisory Board of Research Integrity, 2009: 6).

Research ethics in general also take into account issues related to avoiding any kind of harm, be it mental, financial, or social, and therefore, the present study was also conducted by treating its participants with respect, and also by reporting on its results in a respectful manner (Finnish Advisory Board of Research Integrity, 2009: 8).This clearly ties into the issues of privacy and data protection, which is additionally brought to the fore by the Finnish Advisory Board of Research Integrity (2009: 10). For the present study, it is of the essence to emphasize that all stages of data collection, along with the storage and disposal of the data, were done by honoring the confidentiality and anonymity of the study's participants. Furthermore, prior to publishing or presenting any samples or quotations from the data, they have been carefully evaluated by considering the risk of identification, and when needed, all possibly harmful identifiers or details have been either masked or omitted (Finnish Advisory Board of Research Integrity, 2009: 13).

Lastly, at various stages of the present study, the ideas and guidelines of reflexivity have been thoroughly considered by the researcher in relation to her positioning in respect to the research. These considerations have, at all possible intervals, been incorporated in this dissertation, and thus also contribute to the study ethically, as advised for instance by Berger (2015: 221).

5.3.2 Pilot rounds: two surveys and one focus group interview round

As part of the aforementioned project group's work, the data collection for the present study began in March–April 2014 by conducting an online survey of the 2013–2015 cohort. All 174 students of this cohort received an individualized survey link by e-mail. Via this link, they were able to access the survey, which comprised five separate, but nonetheless intertwined, sections, and consisted of both multiple choice and open-ended questions. The questions dealt with their academic English skills and the courses targeted to develop these skills. Questions related to their career prospects were also included in this survey.

The response rate of this survey was unfortunately rather low (28.9%), as only 50 responses were received. However, this sample of students represented the overall research population, the 2013–2015 IMDP cohort, rather well in terms of gender, citizenship, language verification, faculty and program. Nonetheless, I, alongside with our project group were faced with the dilemma that this survey did not really provide any in-depth information or understanding about the participants in light of the research questions of the present study. In other words, the rather limited amount of survey answers added no real value, when compared, for example, to the online course feedback surveys collected for the Language Center courses.

In order to react to this slightly limited value of the first online survey, a new attempt was made to learn more about these students by interviewing them face-to-face. Thus, based on the survey round, and the open-ended questions in particular, themes for another pilot round were identified, and used in semi-structured (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2002: 77; Lankshear and Knobel 2004: 35) focus group interviews, which took place in October 2014. As noted, the themes for this interview were sort of follow-up topics of the online survey. The interview participants, who were also invited to the interview via a joint e-mail to the whole cohort of 2013–2015, were asked, for instance, to reflect on their entry level in terms of academic English, and how that level was either adequate or inadequate for their actual studies in the program. Moreover, they were posed questions in respect to their own success or challenges in their studies in terms of academic English as well as how, if at all, their courses, teachers and peers have affected their learning in the program. The drawback of this interview round was similar to that of the first online survey, since the two interview groups consisted of only five IMDP students. It proved to be challenging to find students who were willing and able to partake in these focus group interviews. Attracting students' attention to this in the first place was difficult, and it also proved to be a challenge to organize schedules for the interviews where a group of students could come for an interview at the same time.

It should be noted at this stage that the first interview attracted four students, and that the interview managed to meet the criteria for a focus group interview. However, what became apparent during this interview was that I and the other interviewer (a colleague from our project) noticed something interesting about the group dynamics. For example, when asked about challenges related to academic English, and studying in the program, it appeared that certain interview participants, in this case two native speakers of English, seemed to set the tone for the discussion. They stated, for example, that they had not experienced any major challenges, and the two non-native speakers answered after them along the same lines. However, when the non-native speakers had a chance to start the response round in relation to a similar question they seemed to have many challenges in mind. This made us interviewers question the format of a focus group interview, and above all its suitability for the present study, as it seemed to perhaps hinder the honest and open sharing of the students when forced to discuss for example their personal weaknesses and challenges among peers, and even complete strangers. One can contemplate whether this ties into the idea that, for instance interview, participants may be more inclined to share their thoughts and feelings with someone who is sympathetic to their situation (e.g. Berger, 2015: 220). This was originally thought to refer to the researcher being sympathetic, but it is also rather well linked to the experience I had of the relationship between my interviewees. They rather clearly did not share the same experiences of the challenges of academic English, so it makes sense why the two non-native speakers seemed apprehensive about sharing their challenges with their native-speaker peers.

This notion regarding the group interviews as less appropriate for the present study was further reinforced during the second interview, as it unintentionally actually turned out to be an individual interview, as only one out of the four students who had signed up for this interview timeslot showed up. Unlike during the focus group interview, we as interviewers felt that we were getting our questions properly and profoundly answered, and this caused us to view the individual interview as a more suitable option for the purposes of the present study. As a result, the actual interview rounds used in the present study and presented in more detail later on in section 5.3.3, were in fact individual interviews.

As the third pilot round of data collection, yet another online survey for students of the same cohort was conducted at the very end of this cohort's studies, during the months of April and May in 2015. However, the response rate for the second online survey was yet again rather low, in fact even lower than during the first online survey round, since only 35 (20.1% of the 174 students, replied to this second survey. As in the other two data collection rounds, students were invited via e-mail with an individualized link to reply to this survey, which focused on IMDP students' language skills and the possible connection of those skills to the students' academic performance. The four sections of the survey circled around the same themes as the previous survey and interview, but the focus of this survey was to have the students view these themes from the perspective of the whole two-year program, as they were supposedly approaching graduation. Nevertheless, similarly to the first survey round neither the multiple choice questions, nor open-ended questions of this survey provided any new insights into the students. We aimed to have questions, and with that also students' answers, which would have gone beyond the information and understanding we could gain either from course feedback or the rather recently conducted Internal Evaluation (2014) regarding the IMDPs, but this survey did not in fact aid us in this sense, especially when considering the low response rate.

It could be observed that I, or the project group, were being rather selective in terms of the survey and interview responses, since qualitative research methods, such as the survey's open-ended questions and the interviews are not dependent on small sample sizes (Shuttleworth, 2008). After all, we did get survey responses from a range of students, and we did have five IMDP students share their views face-to-face in an interview. However, by drawing on the literature regarding reflexivity, one could claim that having some prior insider information and understanding of the IMDP students as a teacher would cause me to filter all the information gained from the surveys and interviews (e.g. Berger, 2015: 220) as, for instance, not new or relevant enough for the purposes of the present study. As noted, the surveys, alongside the interviews, were to a great extent merely repeating the ideas of students which I had already read in course feedback questionnaires and heard multiple times in class when working as a teacher, and hence my lens now as a researcher detected a need for

something which would go beyond the everyday understanding that had already been gained throughout the years.

In addition, one could conclude that the participation rate for both surveys, as well as the focus group interviews, was still disappointingly low, and it appears that none of the compensation offered (lunch and movie vouchers) was enough to get more students to partake. There might be several reasons for this. For instance, the team working on the report for the Internal Evaluation (2014) had just finished their share of interviews in the fall of 2014 when we started to invite IMDP students to participate in our online surveys and interviews. Therefore, students might have been reluctant to discuss their programs so soon after the Internal Evaluation's interview round.

As noted earlier, all three data collection rounds have not been used in the present study, but they did function as a valuable learning experience for me as a researcher. Shuttleworth (2010), for example, suggests that pilot rounds can function as a valuable tool prior to one's actual data collection and analysis, though the pilot studies often tend to be smaller in scale when compared to the actual study, which obviously is the opposite situation of the present study. Regardless of this, it has also been pointed out that especially researchers with less experience can benefit from pilot studies and rounds, as they allow the making of mistakes before embarking on the actual study (Shuttleworth, 2010). Shuttleworth specifically encourages these pilots to be, at least to some extent, reported on, since this provides evidence of the possible mistakes or problems which occurred during the pilot and which, according to Shuttleworth (2010) may lead to the researcher being able to avoid them during the actual study. Therefore, even though pilot studies and pilot rounds are only rarely published, researchers should not be penalized for doing so, because it merely indicates that their approach is a methodological one (Shuttleworth, 2010). This use of pilot studies very much ties into the discussion by Byrd Clark and Dervin (2014: 21) in terms of the seeming obsession of researchers with success, or at least with avoiding failure. As they note, "research cannot but be a process during which certain things succeed, while others do not work" (Byrd Clark and Dervin, 2014: 21), and therefore, in the spirit of reflexivity I also wanted to embed the pilot data collection rounds in the present dissertation as a way of indicating what I was able to learn from them.

According to Shuttleworth (2010), it is, nonetheless, not compulsory to include the results of the pilots in the analysis of the actual study, so I have decided to exclude the results of these pilots from the present dissertation. This decision derives foremost from the fact that the individual interviews, which will be discussed in the following, already provided such a vast pool of data and material for analysis, that including the pilots would have made the present study far too extensive, and perhaps even scattered if talking about the amount of data and data analysis.

5.3.3 Individual interviews

The interview round, which will be used as data in the present study, was conducted in May–June 2015, and the target group of this round was also the cohort of 2013–2015. All 174 students of this cohort were sent an e-mail invitation to join these interviews, and they were asked to contact me directly to schedule their own timeslot for the interview. It is essential to note here that the only aspect affecting the recruitment process of these interviewees was that they had to be part of the cohort mentioned above. Therefore, other than that, I as a researcher did not make any selection in terms of who could take part in the interviews (Berger, 2015: 229), and hence we ended up interviewing everyone who signed up, which added up to 15 individual interviews. Having learned from the previous interview round how difficult it was to organize focus group interviews, individual interviews were conducted this time around. At the beginning of the interviews, all 15 participants were made aware of the details of the study, and informed of their right to leave certain questions unanswered, or alternatively make any amendments after the interview via, for instance, e-mail. After this, each student was able to take their time to read through the consent form attesting the willingness in providing permission to use the gathered data, and then sign the form. All 15 participants signed the form, and thus all their interview data are used in the present study. It should be emphasized again that, as noted and promised, in the permission form, all ethical rules, guidelines and regulations of the University of Jyväskylä were followed in the present study, not only in storing the data, but also in using the data for any presentations and publications, such as this dissertation.

It should also be noted here that in order to keep track of each participant throughout the various stages of the present study, and also in order to ensure the participants' anonymity, I assigned all the participants an identification code that is not based on any specific order and does not reveal anything about the participant's true identity. These identification codes were constructed by using the word "student," and then assigning each participant a number at the end of the code (e.g. Student1, Student2, Student3 and so on). Each participant is referred to with the same exact code throughout the present study.

In general, interviews are particularly useful for gaining desired information from participants (Lankshear and Knobel, 2004: 35). As a means for collecting data, they can be categorized into three main types: structured, semi-structured and unstructured (Lankshear and Knobel, 2004: 35; Trochim, 2006). The structured interview is the most formal and is guided by a strict instrument or protocol (Trochim, 2006), whereas the unstructured is the exact opposite, as it is closer to a conversation due to the fact that no preset questions exist (Lankshear & Knobel 2004: 35). The semi-structured interview is a mixture of these two. Both extremes have their pros and cons, since the structured interview can at times be too limiting due to its rigid nature, whereas the unstructured interviews can be very challenging to analyze if they are too loosely constructed and conducted. It has proven to be especially challenging if the analysis aims to link

and synthesize across the interviews of different participants. (Trochim, 2006). Due to these limitations of the structured and unstructured interviews, I resorted to semi-structured interviews as a format, in order to have enough freedom to be able to move beyond the preset questions (Lankshear & Knobel 2004: 35), but still have the safety of some structure during the interviews, especially when considering the analysis stage of the present study.

To this end, an interview script was developed in cooperation with a colleague and consulted on by my two supervisors and the aforementioned project group. Such an approach has been promoted by Berger (2015: 220), and this collaboration was used to gain fresh insights into the script as well as to avoid falling into a trap of my own blind spots as a teacher researcher. This type of reflexivity, even already prior to the interviews, can prove to be helpful, because the script can help a researcher to balance the things (s)he might without the script overemphasize or shy away from (e.g. Berger, 221–222).

After I had processed and revised it a couple of times, the actual script ended up consisting of 22 questions organized into five sections, and the script used in the interviews is included as an appendix to this dissertation. The script entails an opening and a closing section, alongside with three slightly differently themed main sections focused on the academic English skills of the students and their link to the students' academic performance as well as their career prospects. Also, one of these sections focuses on Finnish as a second language and the students' adaptation to Finland. This is due to the fact that one of my fellow doctoral students wanted to pilot some of her interview questions with my participants.

The present study's script very much models the typical, less structured, interview script presented by, for instance, Trochim (2006). However, as also noted by Trochim (2006), each interview, especially when following a less rigid script, is bound to be unique, with its own content and flow, and this was also clearly the case in the present study. For instance, the interview duration varied between 17 and 38 minutes, and on average the interviews lasted approximately 25 minutes. As noted, all the interviews followed the same core script, but as they were semi-structured interviews, I as an interviewer allowed room for the participants to elaborate as much, or as little, as they wanted on the questions I posed to them, which likely accounts for the noticeable variation in durations. Moreover, as becomes apparent in the following section, it must be remembered that all 15 students were their own individuals, with varying personalities, backgrounds and study paths, and thus there was thought-provoking and fruitful variation in all their answers and stories during the interviews. This is a further reason that the semi-structured interview suited the present study particularly well.

For the interview situation itself, I tried to keep it as uniform as possible for all 15 interviews in those aspects I could have an effect on. First, all the interviews were conducted in similar surroundings, meaning that all the interviews were organized in classrooms available at the University of Jyväskylä. Second, all the interviews took place during the last weeks of the students'

fourth semester, which was at the end of the second academic year of their IMDP. All the interviews were completed either during the latter half of May, or alternatively during the first weeks of June, as teaching in Finnish HE institutions usually ends by mid-June. The main motive for selecting this stage of their studies derives from the fact that, according to Braine (2002: 63), the acquisition of academic literacy/ies takes place over a longer period of time in a very complex manner. For this reason I wanted to interview the students as late as possible in the process, so that they would be better equipped to talk about it. Additionally, in my teaching I usually interact with first-year IMDP students, and so I wanted to gain a slightly new window to the students' experiences. During the interviews they were approaching the end of their studies, rather than only getting started, which is often what I witness in my own teaching.

Third, all the interviews were conducted by me as the main interviewer, but in all the interviews I also had a colleague taking care of the recording of the interviews, both with the help of an audio-recorder as well as with a laptop making initial notes on the discussion. What is worthy of pointing out is that my colleague did not verbally participate in the actual interview, but it was rather always a one-on-one discussion between me and the student in question. As noted, these three aspects were aspects that I tried to make as similar as possible across all the interviews. However, there were aspects which could have affected the interviews in practice, and which I briefly speculate on below.

Even though we aimed to interview students who were at the end of their studies, it in fact turned out that there was a significant variation in the actual stage of the students' studies. For instance, one of the students had just handed in his/her thesis, and was expecting his/her degree to be official within a matter of weeks. In contrast, there were students who were planning on spending the whole upcoming summer working on their remaining studies, mostly their MA thesis, and there were also some students who already knew at that stage that for various reasons they would not be graduating any time in the near future. All this will be discussed in more detail when elaborating on the participants in the following section and also in relation to the results. Nevertheless, this variation clearly illustrates the real life factors which come into play when conducting research, even when one has decided on a certain type of research design or population.

It is important to consider the roles played by myself and my colleague during the interviews because various researchers, such as Berger (2015), bring this up as a reflexive aspect in conducting interviews. At this juncture, it is important to remark that both of us were at the time of the interviews language center teachers working with the IMDP students at the University of Jyväskylä, and therefore it was likely that we would end up interviewing some of our former students. In my case, it happened that only one of the 15 participants was a former student of mine, whereas my colleague had taught Finnish as a Second Language to many of the interviewees. This is crucial in the sense that our positions as the participants' teachers could have had various effects on the interaction as well as on the researcher–researched relationship (Berger, 2015:

220). On the one hand, the participants might have found us interviewers more approachable as they knew us in advance. On the other hand, it could have affected the interaction in the opposite manner, namely, the participants might have found us alternatively too distant due to the very same teacher–student relationship. This would tie in with the idea that participants are thought to be less willing to share their experiences with someone who is not in the same position as they are (Berger, 2015: 220), in this case a teacher versus a learner of academic English. The possibilities of these effects are endless, and thus one can merely speculate how they manifested in all 15 interviews.

In a similar vein to the discussion above, Berger's (2015: 225) experiences as an interviewer caused me to reflect further on my own role as an interviewer. Rather interestingly, Berger (2015: 225) found that, as an interviewer, sharing more about one's own experiences and aspects without becoming too imposing seemingly prompted more in-depth responses among the interviewees. Berger (2015: 225) suggested that this more personal disclosure worked better than a professional, distanced approach. In the light of this, I started to reflect on my own level of disclosure, as during the interviews I specifically tried to distance myself from the topic, and pretend that I did not know much about, for instance, the academic English courses the students were talking about. Obviously, the participants were made aware of the fact that we are from the Language Center at various intervals, for instance in the invitation e-mails, research participation consent forms and when introducing ourselves when they entered the interview. I, however, felt that I still needed to give space and time for what the participants wanted to say, instead of showing too much during the interview that I had my own ideas, experiences and feelings about the topics.

At this stage, I can again only speculate whether a different type of approach would have been more suitable. Yet during one of the interviews an interesting occurrence came up which, to some extent, reinforces that the approach I adopted was appropriate for the present study. Namely, only at the end of one of the interviews did the participant fully register that we were from the Language Center, as the participant became seemingly embarrassed by all the things the participant had very openly, and rather critically, shared in terms of the Language Center courses and staff. The participant started to apologize for all the negative things that had been brought up, but we both said that we merely wanted to hear the participant's thoughts and were thankful for the input. Taking into account that we by no means tried to hide the fact that we were from the Language Center, but neither did we emphasize it during the interviews by embedding our own disclosure on the topic, one can ask whether this student would have said the same things otherwise.

As for audio/video recording, Trochim (2006) takes a very critical approach to the practice, so I wanted to acknowledge the possibility that interview participants can become uncomfortable when faced with the thought of being recorded word-for-word (Trochim, 2006). This is understandable, but I decided to take the risk in order to alternatively have a more accurate written account of the interviews. As noted earlier, my colleague typed notes during the interview,

but after comparing these notes to the actual transcriptions of the interviews, the difference was apparent. It is understandably very challenging, if not impossible, to keep up with everything an interviewer and participants say during such a loosely structured and, at times, fast-paced, interview. For this reason I was pleased to have chosen to audio-record all the interviews, especially when the use of the transcription program SoundScriber made it convenient and time-saving to transcribe them into a written format. There are surely multiple other factors which could be addressed at this stage of the present study, but I will now move on to briefly outline the fifth stage of data collection of the present study, the e-mail follow-up with some of the interviewees.

5.3.4 E-mail follow-up with interviewees

In order to learn more about the participants' study path, the fifth, and final, data collection round was conducted in late October and early November of 2017, approximately 2.5 years after the individual interviews, and similarly almost 2.5 years after these participants' two-year mark in terms of their cohort's graduation. Six of the present study's participants were contacted in the form of a rather informal follow-up. These six participants were selected for the follow-up round due to the fact that they represent the two extremes of the IMDP students' study paths, i.e. the ones who graduated on time with noteworthy grades for their MA theses, and the ones who had not according to their study records graduated even after 2.5 years since the interviews. By contacting these particular students I wanted to learn whether the so-called successful participants had continued to succeed after graduation. Moreover, I also wanted to gain more in-depth insights into the paths of the participants, who based on their study records had seemingly not graduated at all. I especially wanted to learn more about the reasons for their delayed graduation, so that I would not merely have to resort to superficial information deriving from their study records. In other words, the follow-up's main purpose was to provide a sounding board for the analysis of the present study's interviews.

All six participants received the same set of open-ended questions, which focused on finding out the status of their studies and careers after taking part in the interview in late spring 2015. In addition, these participants were asked to elaborate on the factors, both internal and external, which had in their opinion affected their study and career paths after their two years in the program. They were also given an opportunity to share any additional comments and thoughts related to these as well as to the core theme of the interviews, academic English. As a result of sending these follow-up questions via e-mail, and two rounds of weekly reminders, responses were received from five out of these six participants, since all but one participant responded to the e-mail follow-up and elaborated briefly on their paths. These interview responses and the main viewpoints they entail will be discussed in more detail in relation to the present study's Discussion (Chapter 9), as the issues raised in the follow-up will be used to accompany, i.e. to either support or contest, the present study's data analysis regarding these five participants.

5.4 Profile of the participants of the present study

This section provides a description of the participants of the present study. In other words, the profile of these students is discussed, as done by Laine (2016: 30-33) when she provided information on the respondents of her study. As noted earlier, these descriptions utilize the background information of the Education Council's Internal Evaluation on these students as well as all statistical information from University Admissions Finland (UAF), and the JORE and Korppi study data systems are used. Information on the participants' gender and age is disclosed, and this section will also address certain language issues related to the participants, such as their language verification when applying to their IMDPs, and some aspects related to the Language Center's academic English courses they have completed. Moreover, their overall academic performance is discussed, by including the thesis grade for their master's thesis as well as their time of graduation. Whenever possible all this will be linked to their cohort as a whole in order to elaborate on how these participants compare to the rest of their peers in this particular 2013–2015 IMDP cohort.

At this juncture, it should also be emphasized that throughout the reporting of the participants' profiles, all information on them has been thoroughly processed by constantly considering which information might threaten their anonymity, as advised by Finnish Advisory Board of Research Integrity (2009: 13). Therefore, certain potentially valuable details, such as the participants' mother tongues and home countries, have been completely omitted. This is because the overall population of their 2013–2015 cohort is rather small (171 students), and hence no risks were taken in respect to revealing too much about the participants.

First, as Figure 9 shows, of the 15 IMDP students, nine were male (60%) and six were female (40%). When it comes to this particular cohort as a whole, the participants of the present study do not accurately reflect the overall gender division, since out of all the enrolled students in the fall of 2013, 55.6% were female (Mathies, 2013). Thus, the present study provides a slightly distorted and more male-focused representation of the cohort as a whole.

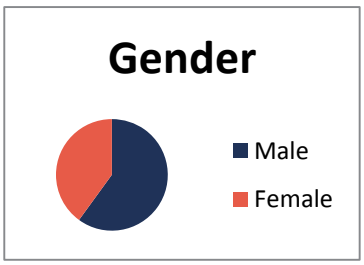

Figure 9 Participants (n=15) by gender

Second, these participants represent different age groups, and with that also likely different study and career paths. Figure 10 shows the participants' age

when starting their studies in their IMDPs in 2013, and as is evident there is notable variation, as the oldest of the participants was in fact 35 years old when starting their studies, whereas the youngest participant was only 21 years old. On average, the participants were approximately 27 years old when they started their studies, but a more detailed age distribution is provided below.

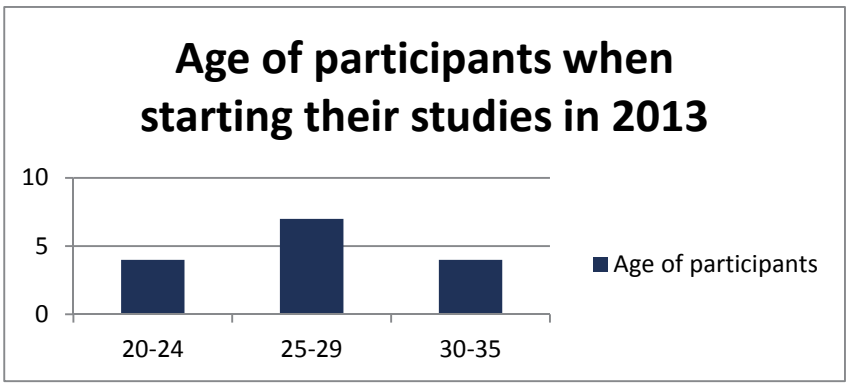

Figure 10 Age of participants (n = 15) when starting their studies in the IMDP

Third, even though the participants' exact home countries have been left out of the present study for reasons of anonymity, their home countries are considered by providing information on if the participants come from non-EU/EEA or EU/EEA countries. The main motive for choosing to incorporate this piece of information relates to the aforementioned discussion of the newly introduced tuition fees for the students outside the EU or EEA. Consequently, as one looks at Figure 11 below, one notices that the present study has a slightly more even distribution of students' home countries when considering the distinction between EU/EEA and non-EU/EEA countries. In the present study, 33% of the students were from EU/EEA countries, while the equivalent percentage for the whole cohort was 40.9% (Mathies, 2013). The non-EU/EEA students' proportion in the present study (67%) was a bit higher than in the cohort as a whole (59%) (Mathies, 2013).

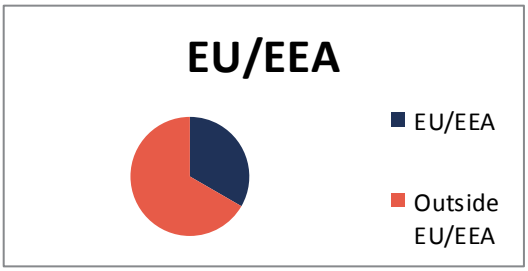

Figure 11 Participants' (n = 15) home countries: EU/EEA vs. non-EU/EEA

Continuing with the profiles of the present study, certain language-related viewpoints are presented next. However, it should be pointed out that the par-

ticipants' native languages have been excluded from their profiles, since including them might have threatened their complete anonymity. Therefore, the fourth viewpoint on the participants is how they provided verification of their English skills when entering their program. The different means for providing verification are illustrated below in Figure 12.

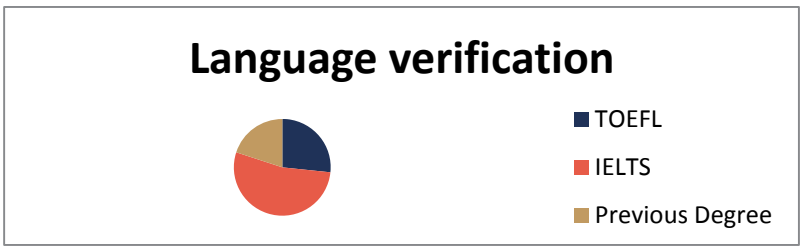

Figure 12 Participants' (n = 15) language verification for applying to the IMDP at the University of Jyväskylä

What is worthy of attention in relation to Figure 12 is that the participants of the present study (n = 15) had verified their language skills in a slightly different manner when compared to the cohort as a whole (N = 171). In regards to the cohort as a whole, a previous degree was the most popular means of verification (36.3%) (Mathies, 2013). However, it was only the third most popular among the participants of the present study (20%). IELTS, however, was the second most popular means among the whole cohort, at 29.8%, but over 50% of the participants of the present study had taken it to verify their English skills for studying in an IMDP. TOEFL was used by 15.2% of the enrolled students in general (Mathies, 2013) and by 27% of the participants of the present study. However, when it comes to the 2013–2015 cohort as a whole, only 94.2% were deemed sufficient in terms of the language requirements for the IMDPS. This means that out of the 171 students who enrolled in the fall of 2013, 10 students did not have the language skills needed for the program, or at least they were not officially verified. More alarmingly, out of the 171 students, 15 students actually had verified their language skills, but they had not passed the verification (Mathies, 2013). Interestingly, and perhaps even a bit unfortunately, none of these special cases were interviewed for the present study. Yet it is understandable they showed no interest in participating in the interviews, particularly if they were asked to join an interview which specifically focused on the students' academic English skills and their link to their studies.

In relation to the present study's participants' English skills, as demonstrated by the standardized language tests (IELTS or TOEFL) they took in order to be accepted to their IMDPs, their test scores for the different text sections were also briefly revisited in order to see how the different skill areas came together and which areas were the students' strongest and weakest areas. It was also interesting to see whether there were any sorts of trends visible across different participants. Figure 13 below illustrates these facets, even though it only consists of test data of 12 interviewees. This is due to the fact that three of the

participants had verified their language skills with a previous degree rather than a standardized test.

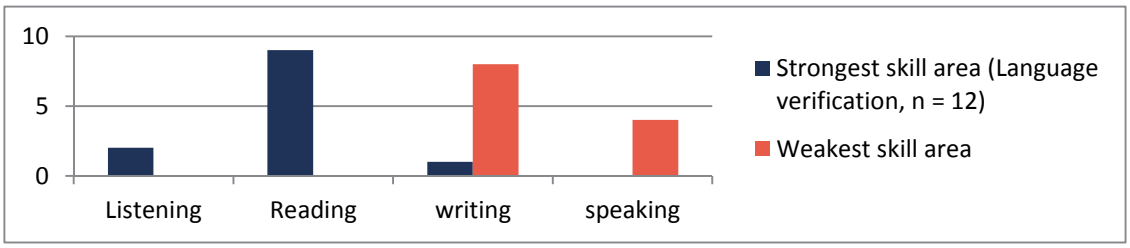

Figure 13 Participants' (n = 12) strongest and weakest skill areas of language as demonstrated in the standardized language tests (IELTS or TOEFL) prior to entering their IMDPs

As Figure 13 shows, there seems to be a divide between the participants' receptive (listening and reading) and productive skills (writing and speaking), as these differences were discovered by comparing the participants' lowest and highest scores on the different sections of the tests. As becomes apparent, there seems to be a rather strong trend among these 12 participants in respect to what areas they struggled with and which areas they achieved higher scores on, and this to some extent is in line with the EMI literature concerning students' challenges with the language.

As the sixth viewpoint, and continuing with the language theme, the academic English courses the participants took with the Language Center are discussed next, that is, the courses these 15 participants took during their two-year program. Figure 14 below presents this information.

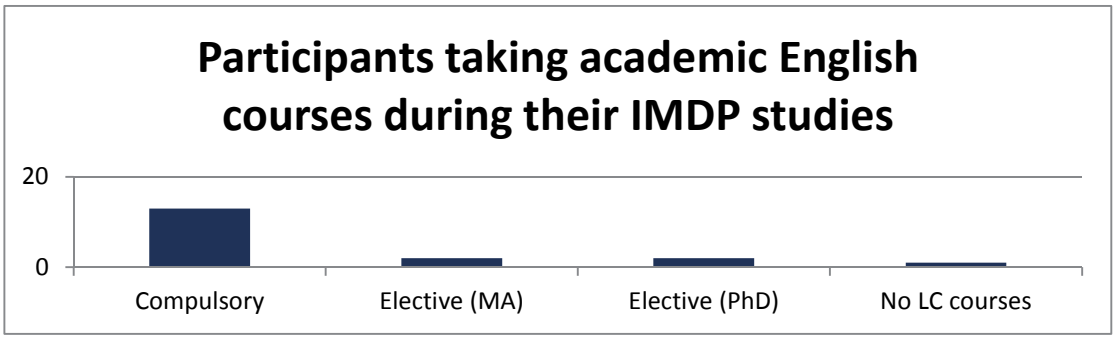

Figure 14 Number of participants (*n* = 15), who completed Language Center English courses during their IMDP studies

As becomes apparent when looking at the category of compulsory courses on the left, 13 out of the 15 participants took part in at least one compulsory academic English course organized by the Language Center, and five of these completed more than one. As the two elective categories in the middle show, four participants completed elective academic English courses and what is worthy of attention is that two of these took a head start by attending academic

English courses targeted for doctoral students. Of the 15 participants of the present study, only one completed no academic English courses during her studies. However, in order to provide a brief snapshot of how the 14 students taking the academic English courses did in these courses, their grades have been summarized in Figure 15 below. This was done by first counting the average grades for each individual participant, in case they had completed more than one academic English course, and then compiling these into the chart.

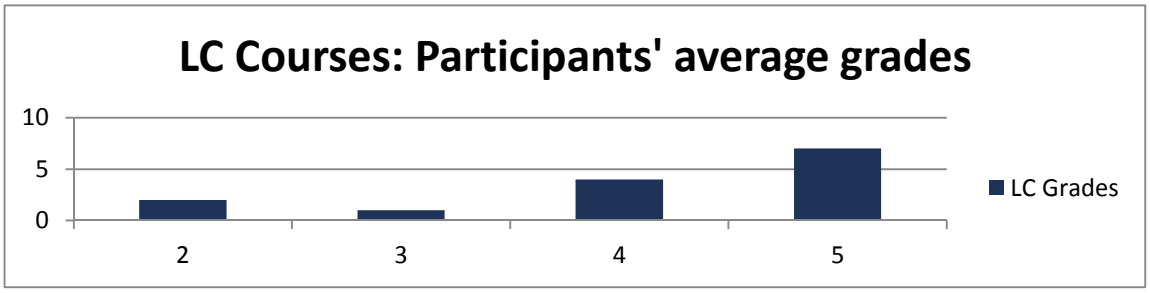

Figure 15 Participants' (n = 14) Language Center English course grades during their IMDP studies

Nonetheless, Figure 15 shows, the participants did well in terms of their academic English courses, as there appears to be a clear emphasis on the higher grades (i.e. grades 4 and 5). Four out of the 14 participants who took academic English courses achieved an average of 4, and as many as seven achieved an average of 5. One participant had an average of 3 and, moreover, there are no grades below 2, which at the University of Jyväskylä translated into being "satisfactory," and only two participants had their average, in this sense, at 2. At this point it is useful to revisit Figure 12, which presented the participants' Language verification for applying to the IMDP at the University of Jyväskylä. As already became apparent, all 15 participants of the present study were able to provide the required evidence of their English skills prior to enrolling in their programs at our university, and thus one can deliberate whether this, at least to some extent, explains that the participants did indeed do relatively well in their academic English courses.

In addition to the participants' academic English course grades, another grade from their study records, their master's thesis grade, is embedded as well. This grade was included because writing a master's thesis plays a crucial role in completing the programs. All the IMDPs consist of 120 ECTs and the share of the master's thesis varies in programs from around 24 ECTs to 55 ECTs. In other words, a student's master's thesis can account for as much as 45% of all their studies in the program. In a similar vein to the academic English course grades, the participants' grades on their MA thesis reflect the good academic success of these participants. As Figure 16 shows, 27% of them achieved a grade of 3 (i.e. "good") with their thesis, 33% achieved a 4, which translates to "very good" and alternatively 20% of the participants received a 5, meaning "excellent," for their MA thesis.

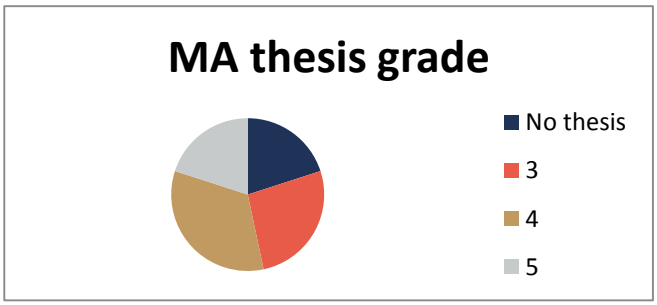

Figure 16 Participants' (n = 15) grades of the Master's thesis

Yet this chart also reveals that even after clearly exceeding the four-year mark, which is two years after these students should have graduated, three of the participants had yet to complete their MA thesis. The last checkpoint completed for the purposes of the present study was in November 2017, and it was found that all these three students had yet to complete their MA thesis, with all three registering for their fifth academic year in their two-year programs. The fact that not even at the four-year mark of their studies had all of these participants graduated motivated the present study to shed light on the overall graduation times of these participants, but also on the graduation rate of the cohort 2013–2015 as a whole.

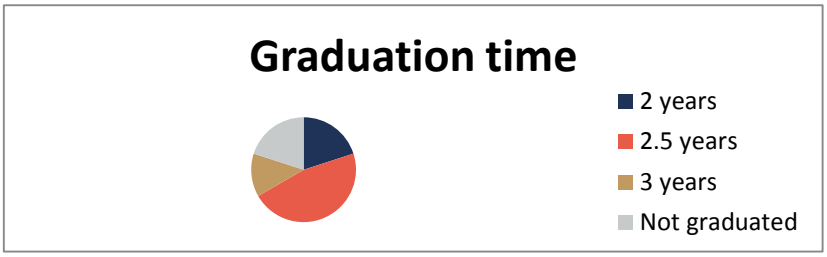

Figure 17 Graduation time of the participants (n = 15) of the present study

First, Figure 17 shows that the majority of the participants, (i.e. 12 students) were not able to meet the graduation time of two years. Only 20% of these participants met the set two-year timeframe of these programs, and at the next interval, at the 2.5-year mark, an additional 47% of the participants joined them, as seven students seemingly needed an extra semester to graduate. Furthermore, two students (13%) needed yet another additional semester, as they graduated at the three-year mark, and thus leaving the aforementioned three participants who had yet graduate as of November 2017.

The rather disappointing graduation rates of these participants at the targeted two-year mark (20%), and even at the three-year mark (80%) motivate a comparison to those of the whole cohort. It actually turns out that the participants of the present study had a notably better graduation rate than their cohort as a whole did. In order to elaborate on this comparison, the graduation rates of

both the participants of the present study and their whole cohort are included in Figure 18 below. For the latter, data have been drawn from Mathies (2016).

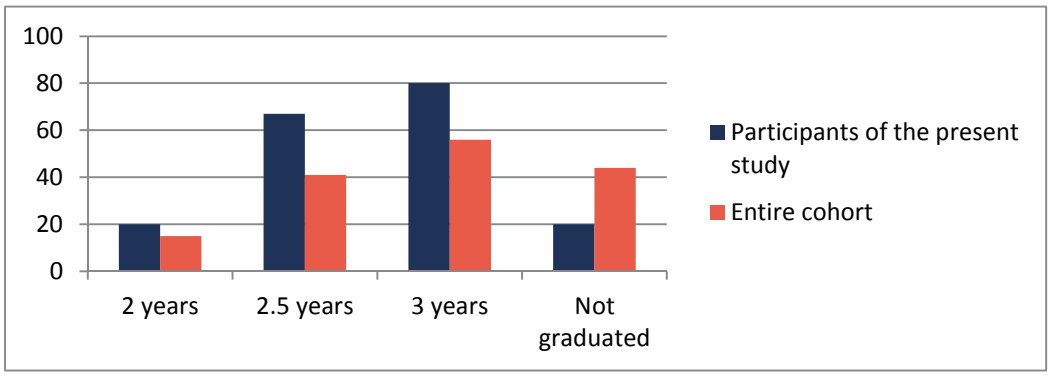

Figure 18 Graduation rate of the participants of the present study (n = 15) versus the entire cohort of 2013–2015 (N = 171) (adapted from Mathies, 2016)

As noted, the participants of the present study completed their studies in their two-year programs far more effectively than did their cohort as a whole. This aspect should be considered when analyzing their interview responses, and when using their thoughts and experiences in examining any possible implications of the present study. These 15 students do not represent the low graduation rates of the whole cohort at any intervals, and perhaps the most relevant differences can be found in terms of the students who have not graduated at all, as the whole cohort's Not graduated percentage (44%) is over twice as high as that among the participants of the present study (20%).

These background aspects of the 15 participants are revisited later on in this dissertation when discussing the data in more detail, and also in the discussion and conclusion. However, at this stage one should pay attention to the fact that the 15 participants of the present study differ in many ways from the 2013–2015 cohort as a whole. For instance, as outlined previously, these 15 students provide a slightly more male-focused viewpoint on the topic in comparison to the cohort, which consists of more females than males. The participants also represent the non-EU/EEA countries more than their cohort as a whole did. Furthermore, these 15 participants portray a slightly more positive image of the IMDPs in two respects. First, they all provided the required language verification when entering their program, which was seemingly not the case in terms of the cohort as a whole. Second, these 15 students demonstrated a far better graduation rate at all intervals than did their cohort in general. Having established the profile of those interviewed for the present study, it is now time to move on to elaborating on the data analysis process.

5.5 Qualitative content analysis: the method of the present study

It was previously outlined and discussed that as a result of data collection and the data analysis that follows, the present study produces answers to the following six research questions:

RQ 1 How do the IMDP students conceptualize academic English?
RQ 1a In which ways do the IMDP students use different frames of reference when reflecting on their own academic English skills?
RQ 1b What type of academic English language gains do the students report achieving during their IMDP studies?
RQ 1c How do the IMDP students construct their own role and effort in respect to their academic English language gains during their IMDP studies?
RQ 2 What external factors do the IMDP students attribute their study success and/or failure to in terms of their IMDP studies?
RQ 3 How should students' academic English learning be supported during their IMDP studies?

However, prior to elaborating on the actual data analysis process, it should be noted that for the sake of reflexivity it has been emphasized that a researcher almost automatically starts to interpret or construct the field the minute they enter it (e.g. Byrd Clark and Dervin, 2014: 17). This is relevant for the present study, because I recognize exactly what is referred to with this line of thinking, since I immediately started to interpret and analyze for example the interviewees' and their ideas as they started talking in the interview. I was automatically linking their thoughts and feelings back to my own teaching and courses, and vice versa reflecting those aspects in my research, and thus a loop was instantly created. According to Byrd Clark and Dervin (2014: 18), the fact that I, as a teacher researcher, acknowledge this myself is a positive and enriching aspect, and according to them, once researchers are aware of this type of aspect, they can engage more deeply in the research at hand. This engagement derives from the fact that researchers do not need to hide their own attachments to the topic (Byrd Clark and Dervin, 2014: 18). I account for this loop as effectively as possible when discussing the data analysis process in the following section.

The data analysis of the present study was conducted by adhering to the principles of qualitative content analysis (Mercer, 2011; Graneheim and Lundman, 2004; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005: Elo and Kyngäs, 2008; Moretti et.al, 2011; Schreirer, 2012; Cho and Lee, 2014; Elo et al., 2014; Soler-Carbonell et al., 2017). Content analysis in general focuses on categorizing materials, whether oral or written, in order to represent meanings in communication (e.g. Cho and Lee, 2014: 3). Qualitative content analysis (QCA), has its roots in quantitative content analysis, which is an objective, systematic and quantitative research

technique with the aim of describing manifest content of communication (Berelson, 1952: 18, as cited in Cho and Lee, 2014: 3). However, this technique started to receive criticism when researchers noticed that it in fact tended to simplify or even distort meanings as a result of trying to overly quantify texts (Cho and Lee, 2014: 3), instead of viewing them more holistically (Kracauer, 1952, as cited in Cho and Lee, 2014: 3). This then led to the creation of QCA, which is defined as "a research method for subjective interpretation of the content of text data through systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005: 1278). Nowadays, QCA is often used in the field of nursing research, as well as in education, which is the context of the present study (Graneheim and Lundman, 2004: 105).

The main motives for choosing QCA for the present study are the following. First, this method of data analysis appealed to me immediately, as Schreirer (2012: 5) pointed out that it resembles a daily understanding when considering its concern with meaning. However, QCA simultaneously is very much invested in going beyond everyday activities and understandings (Schreirer, 2012: 5). Considering that as a teacher of academic English in the IMDPs, I do have a certain everyday understanding of what goes on in the programs and the students' studies, since I talk to my students and program staff on a regular basis, as well as collect feedback on the courses that I teach. However, what I am not able to gain in this way is a more profound understanding of the issues that go beyond my courses. Consequently, the particular strength of QCA also relates clearly to Lankshear and Knobel's idea (2004, 7–8) about encouraging teachers to go beyond their classrooms. Second, and rather conveniently, according to Mercer (2011: 4), an approach such as QCA is especially suitable for studying the leading concept of the present study, self-concept, because it allows the boundless complexity of the concept to be explored properly.

Furthermore, QCA has various other strengths, as outlined by, for instance, Cho and Lee (2014: 17). They argue that QCA sheds light on social realities and phenomena via enabling interpretation of a range of both written, and verbal, materials. In addition to this, it also seems to suit the present study as Schreirer (2012: 5) notes that it is systematic and flexible, as well as good in respect to reducing data for analysis purposes. As an outcome of the data analysis, the present study contains a large amount of transcribed qualitative data, and consequently, all the characteristics discussed here are in favor of QCA being adopted for the present study. QCA also inherently resembles the two cores of the present study, teacher research and reflexivity, as QCA, similarly to these two, particularly requires the researcher to have self-criticism accompanied by good analysis skills (Elo et al., 2014: 8). Nonetheless, as Mauthner and Doucet (2003: 414) critically point out, no data analysis practice, not even QCA, has managed to bring reflexivity into practice, therefore the difficulties related to practicalities and methods remain. Mauthner and Doucet (2003: 414) warn researchers not to assume that the researcher and the data and methods are separate, but rather to always bear in mind that all three are interdependent and interconnected. This undisputedly relates to the previously discussed circulat-

ing energy of the researcher and the data, as discussed by, for instance, Etherington (2004: 36).

Consequently, in order to react to this challenge during the data analysis process, in the present study I have resorted to the practical measures proposed by Berger (2015: 230). To balance these aspects, Berger (2015: 230) suggests that one should maintain a log during the analysis process, and additionally review one's data at repeated intervals and occasionally with the help of a peer as a data analysis consultant. For the present study I used all three of these methods as I, first of all, constantly made notes, in the spirit of Etherington's (2004: 36) circulating energy. I took notes deriving from my teacher role when, for instance, reading background literature and when conducting, transcribing and analyzing the interviews. Second, I made a conscious decision to carry out multiple data analysis rounds throughout the process of this dissertation, which Berger (2015: 230) says is essential for a more accurate understanding of one's data. As promoted by Elo et al. (2014: 5), the first rounds of data analysis should start as early as possible, which is also what happened in terms of the present study, as I made my first analysis rounds immediately after receiving the first notes typed by my colleague during the interviews. Third, as advised by multiple scholars, such as Byrd Clark and Dervin (2014: 18), Berger (2015: 229), and Attia and Edge (2017: 36), I actively sought to consult with my colleagues, and above all my supervisors, in order to reflect with them throughout this process. They were able to draw my attention to any possible cases where I might have ignored some relevant content, and to any possible projections which may have gone unnoticed had I only worked on my own (Berger, 2015: 230). Such issues are often things one is too close to or too blind to see without assistance.

Narrowing this discussion to the data analysis of the present study, QCA as a process consists of three stages. The first stage is preparation, the second is organization, and the last stage is when one reports on the results (Elo et al. 2014: 1). In QCA, researchers make use of a coding frame in order to detect relevant categories in their qualitative data (Schreirer, 2012: 1), or as Moretti et al. (2011: 420) point out, the categories and their names are derived from the data. In practice, this stage of the research was conducted with the help of Atlas.ti (see e.g. Friese, 2014), which is computer software used to systematically analyze qualitative data. In the case of the present study, as well as in Kaufhold (2015: 128), among others, the student interviews were coded thematically using Atlas.ti software.

According to Elo et al. (2014: 7), a monograph research report, such as the present thesis, allows more detailed descriptions of the analysis process to be presented. Hence, in order to elaborate on the process of the data analysis, Cho and Lee's (2014: 11) visualization of the process of inductive QCA is used as a guiding framework. As can be seen in Figure 19 below, the analysis process naturally starts when the researcher has the texts to be analyzed in a suitable format. For the present study, this means interview transcripts, which were prepared with transcription software called SoundScriber, and then exported to Atlas.ti.

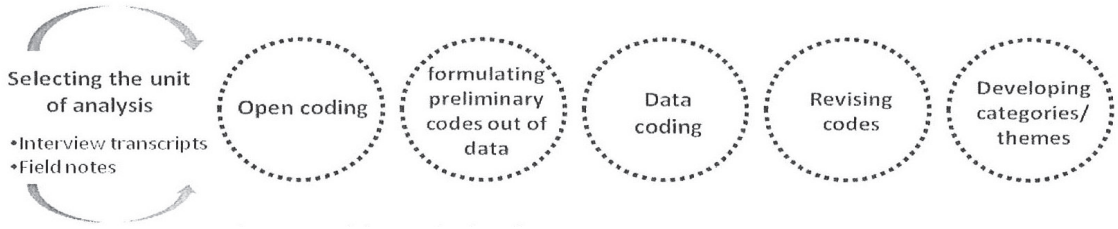

Figure 19 Procedure used in an inductive approach to qualitative content analysis (Cho and Lee, 2014: 11)

Prior to doing any type of coding, Mayring (2000), Mayring (2003) as well as Cho and Lee (2014: 10) advise to first determine the levels of abstraction, or the units of analysis. This relates to the discussion of whether a study focuses on manifest content or latent content or simultaneously on both (e.g. Graneheim and Lundman, 2004: 106). In brief, manifest content refers to the apparent meanings of the text, whereas the latent content is more underlying (ibid. 106), but still equally relevant, as many experiences or phenomena may be conveyed in data with high implicitness (Smith, 2009). Nonetheless, as Graneheim and Lundman (2004: 106) observe, both types of content require the researcher to interpret the meanings, but just on slightly different levels of abstraction. The present study aimed at gaining insights on both the manifest and latent levels and it focused on full utterances made by the interview participants. This meant that the present data analysis happened not on the individual word level, but rather on the level of actual full responses, which hold either visible or obvious content related to the research questions or less explicit links (Graneheim and Lundman, 2004: 106). However, Schilling (2015) also adds that these units ought to be pieces of text that can stand on their own, as well as contain relevant content.

Nevertheless, returning to Figure 19 above, as the second step I went through all the 15 interviews, approximately 375 minutes of transcribed interview data, with an open coding technique. This means that basically everything in the data, both manifest and latent content, was included in one, or even many preliminary codes, as at this stage I did not want to exclude anything, nor make any premature decisions concerning the things which might or might not prove to be relevant for the present study. A similar logic applies in phenomenology, where the first round is thought to be a type of pure review, which then creates the basis for all the rounds that follow (Routio, n.d.). Obviously, this was rather time-consuming and laborious, which is often identified as one of the drawbacks of QCA (Kondracki, Wellmand and Amundson, 2002; Cho and Lee, 2014: 17). Nonetheless, the use of Atlas.ti enabled me to keep track of the codes I had already created, and it allowed me to keep count of all the codes that were already attached to certain interview responses, or even parts of the responses. Therefore, Atlas.ti helped me cope with the complex coding schemes, which are usually a challenge when conducting QCA (Kondracki, Wellmand and Amundson, 2002; Cho and Lee, 2014: 17). As can be detected, all this thus resulted in me having the preliminary codes of my data readily available via

Atlas.ti, which is the third step of the process according to Cho and Lee (2014: 11).

Moving on with Figure 19 to the fourth step, I continued going through the data with the software, and allowed myself to see it with fresh eyes every time I opened Atlas.ti. The software makes it possible to keep adding more codes, and revising them into smaller and/or larger chunks of data without forcing the researcher to get rid of anything, since all the codes from various data analysis rounds can be stored simultaneously, and above all viewed at a single glance if needed. Therefore, it was surprisingly easy for me to have so many preliminary codes, although Mauthner and Doucet, (2003: 419) warn researchers to not falsely regard this as a simple process. Nonetheless, I attempted to represent the voices of my participants as effectively as I could at this stage by including nearly everything in the data in my codes. This, in my opinion, reinforces the fact that I was not censoring the data too much too early on, which is integral to this type of research (Berger, 2015: 221-222).

As the fifth step according to Figure 19, one needs to revise or refine the codes or categories one has gathered so far (Mayring, 2000; Mayring, 2003; Cho and Lee, 2014: 11), a line of thinking that is also prevalent in phenomenology (Routio, n.d.). In practice, this can mean that researchers start to look for relevant data with the help of their research questions, as was the case in terms of the study by Soler-Carbonell et al. (2017: 305). The so-called relevant data can either directly, or indirectly, be linked to the research questions, but the core criteria at this stage, rather logically, is that there needs to be a connection to what the research originally set out to examine. To this end, the present study followed the procedure mentioned above, and I managed to narrow down the vast number of my original categories.

As a result of these five steps, I reached the sixth and final stage of Figure 19, and ended up with the final results of the present study. At this juncture, according to Mayring (2000), Mayring (2003), and Cho and Lee (2014: 9-10), a researcher yet again needs to keep working through one's data and material in order to be better prepared for interpreting one's results and above all for presenting them in a suitable order and format. Graneheim and Lundman (2004) remark that it is important to present the results in a format that allows the readers to make their own, and possibly alternative, judgements on the results' trustworthiness. What is more, Graneheim and Lundman (2004) and Elo et al. (2014:7) also advise researchers to use quotations from as many participants as possible so that it supports the link between the results and the data, and also reveals the richness of the data for the readers to see it as well (Elo et al., 2014: 7).

The results of the data analysis process described above are presented by taking into account the remarks made by Graneheim and Lundman (2004), and Elo et al. (2014: 7). In order to provide insights into my analysis regarding the present study's results, in Chapters 6-8 I discuss the themes which derived from the participants' interview responses as answers to the present study's research questions. I have also attached relevant theoretical frameworks, or windows, to

these themes as a means of bring these themes closer to the research questions of the present study. At this stage, it is worthy of emphasizing that the upcoming chapters follow the structure of the set of research questions, rather than the interview script.

6 ACADEMIC ENGLISH IN THE INTERNATIONAL MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMS: STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES

In order to begin discussing the results of the present study, it is important to begin by processing how these 15 participants describe and seem to conceptualize what exactly is meant by academic English and what it consists of. This answers the first research question (RQ 1), and what makes this first viewpoint especially fascinating is the fact that the interviews were conducted at the end of these participants' studies. Thus, this theme reflects the thoughts of students who have basically completed their master's level studies at the University of Jyväskylä, with 14 of them completing at least one academic English course offered by the Language Center. Furthermore, at this stage, I also want to highlight that the interview script, which was used as a frame in all of these semi-structured interviews of the present study, only consisted of questions which particularly addressed academic English, not general English proficiency. Also, I, as an interviewer, only talked about academic English throughout the interviews. These details are integral to bear in mind when reading the direct quotes embedded in the following chapters, and when viewing my thoughts and ideas on the analysis, and when reflecting on this analysis in light of the research questions.

6.1 Students' conceptualizations of academic English

6.1.1 Academic English versus general English proficiency

It became apparent in the participants' responses that they are able to see the distinction between general English proficiency and academic English skills. This is reflected in many responses by various participants, and many of the participants explain what academic English is by particularly comparing it to more general uses of the language, as the following interview extracts show:

Student2: Uh, um, well because, I, though I have had all my, education in English
Interviewer: Yeah
Student2: Ah, the English has also been the official language of my country
I: Yeah, yeah
Student2: But then, there is a big distinction between speaking normal English and then writing
I: Yeah
Student2: In academic so…

Interviewer: Yeah. How about if you think about then reading, speaking, writing, listening…?
Student4: Right. Speaking is definitely, like, I'm not an academic speaker,
I: Um-hum
Student4: It's more like leisure time stuff.

Student9: I mean knowing English and knowing how to write English for your academic essays is different.

Student9: I would say that initially you know coming from my background, I was this creative writing person. I used to write a lot of blogs
Interviewer: Yeah
Student9: And even books and those kind of short stories and coming to a program where you have to write factual information and these kind of stuff I initially did really bad at writing the assignments because I wasn't used to this kind of stuff. But it didn't really matter to published research which academic writing is all about.

Interviewer: But how would you describe your own skills?
Student11: Hmm…strong skills I think.
I: Um-hum
Student11: I think communication is my strong point
I: Yeah
Student11: In English, English ability.
I: Yeah
Student11: I think I'm still little weak in reading academic English, especially in a past a few months I was doing my master's thesis
I: Yeah
Student11: I had difficulty reading some academic publications.

Student12: I think, before I came I, I have high proficiency in English, aa, but, when I enter, after my, two years studying I, I learn to have more, skills that is for, paper, writing
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student12: And also more formal, in academic English

All these remarks are in line with multiple researchers, including Boughey (2000: 282), Turner (2004:97), Hulstijn (2011: 240), Ingvarsdóttir and Arn-

björnsdóttir (2015: 150), Sebolai (2016: 48-49) and Deygers et al. (2017: 3), who all propose that especially in academic contexts, such as EMI programs, the ideas of language and proficiency should be taken a step further. According to Sebolai (2016: 48), language proficiency refers to one's abilities to use the language in a more general sense, and this general sense does not entail for instance some of the core features of academic language, such as classifying, comparing, contrasting, inferencing, cohesion and coherence (Sebolai, 2016: 48). In other words, reading and writing, or listening and speaking, in a certain language indeed require language proficiency, but that on its own does not automatically add up to successfully reading and writing, nor listening and speaking, in an academic context. Boughey (2000: 288) has rather aptly described academic language as being a dress code for students and scholars as they are communicating their thoughts and academic knowledge.

In the interview extracts above some of the participants drew lines between general proficiency and academic language proficiency, and between less formal and creative versus formal and factual language use. However, they also provided insights into (academic) language differences between various levels of higher education and different fields, and even differences within a certain field. For instance, in the extract below Student2 makes a mark on the continuum from the student's bachelor's level studies at a university of applied sciences to the master's level studies in the university IMDP.

> *Student2: I think, uh, in* (mentions the name of the university of applied sciences) *I learned a little bit of academic English and then here, too, am, the course, academic writing whatever*
> *Interviewer: Um-hum*
> *Student2: When I took it it's enlightened me in that area*

In addition to this sort of continuum of academic English, some of the participants, such as Student8, Student11 and Student12 below, also specifically indicate that there is not just one version of academic English, but rather various academic Englishes. These remarks below provide an attention-grabbing contrast to the findings of McCambridge and Pitkänen-Huhta (2012), since the students they interviewed seemed to have an idea of a typical global norm and that for instance academic writing being in fact rather universal by nature (Ibid: 174).

> *Student8: Eh, English and sometimes, also and I talk to my friends or realize that each field has different language*
> *I: Um-hum*
> *Student8: Languages or specific language or way of saying things as so, so*
> *I: Yeah*

> *Student11: When I first arrived here I had difficulty in doing some course assignments*
> *Interviewer: Um-hum*

Student11: And sometimes it was difficult for me to understand the course material,
I: Yeah
Student11: Especially like we had some courses related to (mentions a minor subject)*, even we are (*mentions the major subject) *students,*
I: Yeah
Student11: So it was really difficult for me.

Student12: I think it's like the precision of words and also, uh special terms
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student12: And academic, uh knowledges, that really affect, because uh, in, in some of the seminars we have, in, our department, we have to use specific terms
I: Um-hum
Student12: And the, the terms have to be very well defined, so, the, the, skills of, of the academic oral, like speaking, is very important to carry out like, making sure that we're on the same, page
I: Um-hum
Student12: Of the terms

As Student8 and Student11 both point out, they have observed different academic fields in fact having their own academic language and ways of using that language. Moreover, as noted by Student12, his/her field, likely among many others, has its own particular terminology, and with that also knowledge. Thus, the mastery of the terminology is seen as a prerequisite for being able to communicate and take part in one's field. In relation to all this, Wilkinson (2004:9) has claimed that it can, in fact, be easier for two academics of the same discipline but different language communities to communicate than it might be for two individuals of the same language community if they do not share the same discipline. This idea might hold true when taking into account for instance Becher's (1987), as well as Airey and Linder's (2009) thoughts on disciplinary discourse, which was discussed earlier. Also, Wilkinson (2004: 9) points out that each discipline has its own traditions, conventions and epistemology, as well as its unique ways of understanding what knowledge is and how it can be constructed and processed.

However, Student8 also brings up the issue of one field containing different subfields, and hence career paths, which may yet again call for different types and levels of academic English. Below, Student8 contemplates two rather different career paths which can start from his/her program:

Student8: In the second case, it, maybe your academic English is not that much weight
Interviewer: Yeah
Student8: But in the first case of course if you
I: Yeah
Student8: Want to go on to academic stuff then you really you really have to, to, work on it

All these interview extracts indicate that when conceptualizing academic English, the IMDP students of the present study, or at least the majority of them, are able to see a distinction between academic language and general language. Furthermore, some of the participants also highlight that academic English even varies between different fields and levels of academia, which indicates that they conceptualize it as a rather field-specific phenomenon in contrast to something general. Nonetheless, when taking a closer look to the participants' conceptualization of academic English, the picture becomes more complex.

6.1.2 Academic language as a simplified combination of fluent pronunciation and specialized vocabulary

If one digs deeper into the participants' responses, a profoundly thought-provoking contrast emerges with the earlier literature regarding academic language. In contrast to many scholars, the participants of the present study, regardless of the viewpoints presented above, view academic English in rather simplistic terms, or in other words, in a very traditional sense of language proficiency. According to Dufva and Nikula (2010), this traditional understanding of language is very much linked to aspects such as grammar and vocabulary, and Pennycook (2010: 2) remarks that language is thus often viewed as a system, as opposed to doing, which leads people to conceptualize language exactly with the help of these aspects (Dufva and Nikula, 2010). Consequently, it is not surprising that this occurred in the present study as well. During the interviews, such common words as *pronunciation*, *accent*, and *vocabulary* were brought up at various intervals, and the line of thought of academic language as being something more than just general proficiency seemed to be rather invisible in the participants' responses. For instance, when asked to reflect on their own academic English skills as well as those of their peers and teachers, some of the participants turned the discussion specifically to pronunciation and accent, as in the following interview extracts:

> *Student1: For example with uh because I studied in* (mentions an English-speaking country) *for me to imitate* (mentions a group of native-speakers of English) *it was really difficult like…I couldn't understand them sometimes*
>
> *Student5: But like I would like for example like I would have sometimes difficulty understanding their accent*
> *Interviewer: Um-hum, yeah*
>
> *Student10: Well I have some problems with the pronunciation maybe*
>
> *Student11: Yeah, definitely. If someone's pronunciation is poor and also he even doesn't know what he wanted to say*

Moreover, some participants also had a very strong word-centered and vocabulary-oriented approach to discussing academic English:

Student1: Because sometimes I didn't know some good words to use but when it comes to research papers I still like wonder did I write it well and something like that.

Student2: Using words, vocabularies, synonyms and all those kind of things I'm really
Interviewer: Yeah
Student2: Particular about it, I always look for a synonym that really, explain, um what I'm saying so that people will understand, my communication

Student4: Right well…Writing my thesis here um… I used a lot of phrase bank like I think I'm good at looking stuff up. I can recognize when something isn't like correct academically
Interviewer: Yeah
Student4: And then I can like replace it, if I have like a source for that
I: Yeah
Student4: But it's not like I come up with the phrases by myself
I: Okay
Student4: But I'm good at looking and recognizing replacements

Student5: Well for me I think it would be good to have some vocabulary, vocabulary, related, like documents or studies
Interviewer: Um-hum, yeah
Student5: At, at, at this course you know what, what kind of words we should use when we're talking about statistics or
I: Okay
Student5: Yeah
I: You mean field specific or then
Student5: Uh
I: Related to the methodology?
Student5: Methodology

Student12: Because, writings you can always have um, imitations or
I: Um-hum
Student12: Uh, like, translations or
I: Um-hum
Student12: Googling through many, like previous paper and
I: Um-hum
Student12: Publications so

Student15: And my vocabulary I would say is not that vast but I try to learn new words but I am really bad at learning languages.
Interviewer: Okay yeah
Student15: So written-wise I am really good and I would say that's kind of help from these word processing documents because it's like search a synonym

To some extent, these participants make a valid point, since there is no avoiding the fact that field-specific vocabulary and terminology, with appropriate formality level of one's words, are all integral to academic language. As emphasized by Turner (2004: 108) and Terraschke and Wahid (2011: 174), accuracy is indeed a core component of academic language and discourse, and hence it should not by any means be ignored in terms of academic English. Nonetheless, these quotations are in slight contrast to academic discourse being far more than merely specialized language (Airey and Linder, 2009: 28). In light of this, the remarks made by, for instance, Student2 and Student15 about simply finding the right words or synonyms, or Student12 imitating and translating things from other scholars' papers, do indicate that these students have done something to make their texts more academic, but that does not take away the fact that such viewpoints have a rather narrow scope of what academic language or discourse includes. The interview extracts above also embed some links to the traditional, and rather narrow, understanding of language discussed by Dufva and Nikula (2010), since the responses have traces of the participants aiming for the good or right language, and above all the participants seem to have a rather mechanical approach to language, and language being an object, which can be learned or even copied and imitated.

However, returning to academic language, Leung and Street (2012: 9) as well as Dafouz and Smit (2016) propose the idea that process is at the core of academic language and discourse, rather than simply a product, such as the aforementioned papers or texts with the appropriate phrases and words. They emphasize that it all comes down to ways of doing and ways of thinking, as well as the combinations of these, and hence one could say that aspects such as vocabulary only play a rather minor but important role in academic language and discourse. In a similar vein, Airey and Linder (2009: 29), among various others, emphasize that disciplinary discourses always consist of representations, tools and activities as complex combinations of the discipline in question, such as these participants' fields of study. Considering these viewpoints, basically only one participant provided some indication of such complexities, by stating the following;

> *Student10: It's, you're doing something on your own so you're producing something*
> *Interviewer: Um-hum*
> *Student10: So it's kind of, it's productive and you're learning a lot, especially academically*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student10: Using your English*
> *I: Um-hum*
> *Student10: I mean, I think I've learned the most from, for academic English from my thesis because you, you have to write, like you're a, researcher so…*

This quotation above by Student10 provides some indication, however implicit, of the student viewing the thesis process as a complex combination of produc-

ing something related to his/her field by using the language. However, other than this rather vague reference, the interview responses did not seem to incorporate many traces of the social purposes of texts, or the roles of writers and readers (Turner, 2004: 98), academic discourse practices (Clapham, 2000: 519), or critical review and thinking (Dooey, 2010: 194), which are examples of the core components when one conceptualizes academic language and discourses in a broader sense. As noted, all these students were at the time of the interviews at the very end of their two-year programs, and all but one of them had been a student in the Language Center's academic English courses. Such aspects raise the question of why these students seem rather unaware of all the aspects of academic language and discourse, which so many scholars have promoted throughout the years. It also forces one to ask where the students have adopted this rather narrow scope of academic language. The interviews contained a few noteworthy comments made in this sense. For instance, Student9, talked about the high language requirements for entering his/her program:

> *Student9: I would say that since the requirement for getting into the program was anyway pretty high, you needed to fill score of 100, I guess so, I mean the people who come here are really good in English and it's more about polishing it for academic level, which the courses helped a lot.*
> *Interviewer: Yeah, yeah*

At this juncture, it seems relevant to revisit the thoughts presented earlier by Turner (2004) in terms of the short-cut mentality to academic language learning, since the phrase "polishing it for academic level" resonates with the previous EAP discussion and academic language merely being a box to be ticked prior to moving on to the real thing – the program content. Some of the interview responses also provided intriguing insights into this, as Student9 noted the following about his/her teachers in the program:

> *Student9: They say that they are more concerned about the information you provide in your assignments or in exams, test papers even if your English is not grammatically correct like "This is not a master's thesis so don't worry about it"*

It is understandable that content, or the so-called real thing, is at the heart of the programs, and an integral reason for the students to join the programs in the first place. However, positioning academic language exactly in this narrow box of something the students are only required to think about or pay attention to at some stage of their studies, be that in terms of their master's thesis or something else, is particularly decontextualizing it, thus isolating it from the content (Zamel, 1998: 253; Turner, 2004: 104). Although one of the interview responses made by Student4 forces the Language Center to also look in the mirror, considering that the following comment relates to one of our courses:

> *Student4: We got feedback from the presentation and like overall feedback from the like pronunciation but like nothing like very specific. So it was hard to like even*

like learn from the feedback
Interviewer: Okay
Student4: Cos it was kind of like…general in a way

This illustrates that the rather limited scope of academic language the students have may also derive from the Language Center's courses and feedback if also the teachers of academic English resort to focusing merely on pronunciation.

Therefore, as an answer to RQ 1, *How do the IMDP students conceptualize academic English*?, one could claim that based on these interviews, the IMDP students seem to have a rather good understanding of the difference between general language proficiency and academic language proficiency. However, as one looks more closely and considers the more detailed conceptualizations of academic English, one is faced with issues such as pronunciation and vocabulary whereas EAP, and especially EMI, literature have for years been trying to paint a far broader picture of what students, alongside teachers, should be considering as academic language.

According to a strong representation of scholars, EMI is seemingly going, or at least it should be going, beyond the narrow scope of language and perhaps even further than academic language. According to Dufva and Nikula (2010), language, be that in a general or an academic sense, should always be viewed as shared activity and agency which are constructed in communication with others. This logic assigns language the role of being a resource, which is always in flux (Dufva and Nikula, 2010). This means that ideas and concepts such as students' literacy histories (Kaufhold, 2015: 126), the social purposes of texts and the roles of writers and readers (Turner, 2004: 98), academic discourse practices (Clapham, 2000: 519), the socialization of students (Lea and Street, 2006: 369), domain-specific academic genres and registers (Hellekjær, 2010: 24), critical review and thinking (Dooey, 2010: 194), as well as argumentation, position and voice (Bacha, 2010; Wingate, 2012a, 2012b) shed far more light on academic language than generic grammar and vocabulary. Lea and Street (2006: 369) have gathered all these together, as they note that students need to master the ways of talking, writing, thinking and using literacy, and in this vein one could even suggest that all these viewpoints and skills would likely add up to Boughey's (2000: 283) ideal about students' feeling at home in their particular academic discourse, rather than merely being fixed on far more narrow areas, such as vocabulary or pronunciation.

Inevitably, language is at the core of all these concepts presented above. This is especially true when taking into account Postman and Wiengartner's (1971: 103) idea, which has also more recently been revisited by Airey and Linder (2007: 162), that almost all we view as knowledge is, in fact, language and thus understanding a subject's language is a key to understanding the subject itself. Halliday and Martin (1993: 8), alongside Airey and Linder (2007: 162), follow a similar line of thought that language is not passive but actually very active in reflecting on conceptual structures, and consequently bringing those structures to life, because without language they do not exist.

This perspective means that one must dig deeper into the students' thoughts and perceptions related to academic English. In the following section, the ways in which the IMDP students use different frames of reference when reflecting on their own academic English skills are elaborated on, thereby answering RQ 1a in the process.

6.2 Students' frames of reference in terms of their (academic) English skills

As discussed already in Chapter 2.3.1, EMI students' challenges have been studied rather extensively globally as well as in Europe. However, what also became rather apparent is that students seem to struggle, and as noted by Arkin and Osam (2015: 179), EMI is by no means simple or without any friction in this respect. Hence, the present study will also take a look at how these 15 participants reflect on their own skills in terms of academic English. This will be done by analyzing how these participants reflect on their own skills, and in order to gain insights into the self-concept judgements of the participants' skills, the frames of references the participants used in the interviews are central. This is because individuals always make use of social and self-comparisons when determining their self-worth or their own performance (e.g. Pajares, 1996: 561). People in general, including the participants of the present study, either compare themselves to the performance of others, or alternatively to their own performance, when trying to map out if they are good at something, or if they are not proficient in terms of something.

However, when talking about these frames of references which, as noted above, are part of one's self-concept, one always has to bear in mind that they do not necessarily mirror the true level of a person's skills. In light of this, the responses of the interview participants need to be studied with caution, and by bearing in mind that the present study is not aiming to map out the participants' actual language gains, but rather to gain insights into the students' self-reported language gains. However, according to Bong and Skaalvik (2003: 7), if these self-concept components, such as the frames of reference, are in fact positive then they are likely to have a positive effect on the individual's "academic engagement, goal-setting, task choice, persistence and effort, intrinsic motivation, strategy use, performance and achievement and even career selection." Therefore, it can be assumed that the frames of reference the participants have chosen to use – and whether they are positive or negative – reveal something about their study paths in terms of academic English as well.

6.2.1 Using oneself as the measure

One essential window to students' frames of references is themselves, that is, how they assess and describe their skills and abilities in comparison to themselves. This frame was used in the present study by some participants, although

it will soon become rather evident that the external frames outweighed these internal ones. The reason why this is especially intriguing lies in the fact that the interview script specifically included a range of questions asking the participants to reflect on their own skills, but as noted, regardless of this the external frames of reference manifested themselves rather prominently even in respect to these questions. Despite this, in the following some examples of the internal frames will be included prior to moving on to the external frames brought up by the participants.

In the present study, the students mainly used themselves as a frame of reference by comparing the skills they had in the past, for instance during their BA level studies or in respect to their previous career stages, to the current level of their academic English skills, such as in the following examples:

> *Student1: I can answer this definitely…I think I have improved my English pronunciation and maybe my speaking skills. But sometimes in terms of my reading skills I have lost it. I was better in the past.*
> *Interviewer: Uh-hum yeah*
> *Student1: I am of course…I can write academically but before I also when I was* (mentions the profession*) I was more aware of the grammar I knew the rules really clearly in my head. But now, I think I've lost this so sometimes I need to go back to my grammar books and remember, but I think my speaking skills have improved a lot.*

> *Student4: Right, I think uh well obviously it's a lot stronger than it was since I did my BA in* (mentions the L1)
> *I: Um-hum*
> *Student4: And didn't have any experience of the academic side. But um…I mean I get by well*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student4: But it's not like still not my strong side*

> *Student15: Well I would say that now I am a little more confident when I talk in English*
> *Interviewer: Um-hum*
> *Student15: But I won't say that I am…I won't grade myself 5/5 but 2 or 3 out of 5. Because*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student15: I still feel a little shy and when I am about to talk and make up sentences*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student15: But that feeling has reduced very significant amount ever since I came to Finland*

Here the thoughts and questions raised by Dufva and Nikula (2010) are important, since the rather modest assessments of these students reflect critical reflections related to knowing and mastering a language. For instance, Student1

notes that (s)he used to be a lot better in respect to grammar when (s)he was working before starting the IMDP studies, but that now as an IMDP student (s)he is able to write academically. Dufva and Nikula (2010) emphasize that at the core of mastering a language is particularly the fact that the mastery may change over time and that language users need to be able to adapt to different situations. Hence, in the light of this one might ask whether Student1 needs to be so hard on herself about losing her skills, and having inferior skills when compared to her past experiences, which took place in a slightly different context. What is more, in the case of Student4, one can ponder whether (s)he in fact has too high standards for him/herself, considering that according to him/her (s)he only "gets by" in respect to the IMDP studies in English, but the reality is that for both of the academic English courses and the master's thesis (s)he received the highest grades. This echoes Dufva and Nikula's (2010) criticism concerning the perhaps outdated perception of language being something that can be mastered entirely or fully, since Student4's perhaps unnecessary modesty in respect to her academic English skills provides some evidence of him/her holding on to such ideals of entirely or fully knowing a language. Dufva and Nikula (2010), nonetheless, point out that it is not by any means a question of completely neglecting the ideas of vocabulary and grammar, and according to them one should not adopt an anything-goes attitude towards language use. Therefore, if Student15 did face even severe problems with forming sentences in English, one might conclude that his/her evaluation of his/her own skills, the grade 2 or 3, is presumably rather realistic.

Alternatively, some participants used their entry level to the programs as a mirror to the stage where they were at the time of the interviews, at the end of their two-year program. Examples of these are the following:

> *Student4: I haven't been like actively trying to develop it. But I remember when I was applying and we had to do a research proposal and I had a US friend who looked over and helped me make it more academic and I definitely needed a lot help and now I don't. Like I am able to write on my own so I can definitely see improvement.*
> *Interviewer: So that gives you a perspective on that.*
>
> *Student4: But I don't know if…because for me I mean I struggled at first because I hadn't written in English a lot before then you get used to it really fast*
> *Interviewer: Yeah, yeah*
>
> *Student6: Well my weakness has always been writing.*
> *Interviewer: Um-hum*
> *Student6: It's still my weakness but I would say I have developed a lot.*
> *I: Okay, yeah*
> *Student6: It's basically not comparable to the stage that I came in to now*
>
> *Student9: I initially did really bad at writing the assignments because I wasn't used to this kind of stuff. But it didn't really matter to published research which*

academic writing is all about. But now I'm pretty good.
Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. So that has developed?
Student9: It has developed

Student9: But then still you get a lot more confidence from the very beginning because initially I was for a better part of the first three months thinking I am not cut out for this stuff

Student10: Yes, they have they have, they have definitely developed, big time
Interviewer: Yeah, yeah
Student10: Big time development on my, my language skills
I: Yeah
Student10: They were much more weaker
I: Yeah?
Student10: Even when I started my master's degree program
I: Yeah
Student10: So, even though I was already two years here those two years, they became more official academic

Student11: So it was really difficult for me. I remember in the first semester it was difficult. I think after these two years, I especially I think this semester I suddenly felt my reading speed
Interviewer: Yeah
Student11: Become really fast compared to, the criteria is me,
I: Yeah, yeah
Student11: When I was reading in 2013. And now.

Student15: Okay but I think for the positive now that I am like really much comfortable talking in English. It's because like all like in my degree program I have to talk in English and it's not like I always keep my mouth shut if I have to ask a question.
Interviewer: Yeah
Student15: But sometimes I just find the courage to ask a question. But the confidence I have gained is like…a lot, I am much more comfortable with speaking English.

As these interview extracts above illustrate, the participants seem to view their development in terms of academic English in a rather positive light, as all the seven students cited above report on some type of development or positive change. However, what is also rather intriguing is that quite many of the quotes above reveal a low entry level of academic English, at least if viewing how the participants themselves describe the initial steps they took in their program. These questions related to students' entry level, and means of verifying it, will be discussed in more detail at later stages of the present study.

Interestingly, only two students in the present study made comments related to one's self as a frame of reference, which could be interpreted as them comparing different subfields of their own skills:

> *Student7: I think of course after two years it has developed since English is the main medium for communicating with everyone.*
> *Interviewer: Yeah, yeah*
> *Student7: So it has helped overall communication skills but not so much writing skills I didn't use that much. Right now I'm using it for the thesis but I would say that spoken has a lot improved*
> *I: Yeah, yeah*
> *Student7: As compared to writing.*

> *Student15: Yeah oral skills…Well I think written English…I think I am the strongest during my in my writing when I write. And as compared to my other…like oral and listening skills.*
> *Interviewer: Yeah*
> *Student15: And my vocabulary I would say is not that vast but I try to learn new words but I am really bad at learning languages.*
> *I: Okay, yeah*
> *Student15: So written-wise I am really good and I would say that's kind of help from these word processing documents because it's like search a synonym and find out your grammar mistake.*
> *I: Yeah, yeah*
> *Student15: So in that aspect I would say that I am much stronger written as compared to oral speaking*

These particular quotes, where one participant says that his/her oral communication skills have especially improved as a result of taking part in the program, and the other saying basically the exact opposite, are thought-provoking in the sense that in fact these two students are both from the same program, and they have to a great extent taken the same courses, including the Language Center's academic English course. Nonetheless, as becomes apparent they self-report on opposite academic language gains and language challenges, although what unifies them as well is the fact that neither of them had graduated by the fall semester of 2017, over two years after the two-year mark of their cohort's graduation. One can thus speculate whether the fact that the academic writing skills of Student7 have had an effect on his/her postponed graduation, as (s)he also specifically emphasized that issue:

> *Student7: And maybe now I am writing my thesis so not so good in research like research writing and like technical writing.*

What is more, one is also forced to consider if Student15's challenges related to oral skills did affect his/her thesis writing process, as (s)he revealed during the interview:

Student15: I have to make notes of what I say, how I say it. I structure my sentences
Interviewer: Yeah
Student15: And that's not a good thing. I should be able to like make sentences at the right time and explain myself clearly. Similarly when I have like my thesis meetings is like um…It's like after the meeting is done I think like "Oh, these are the all that I had to say but I couldn't figure out the sentence"
I: Okay
Student15: So I just write them and send an email to my supervisor after the meeting.
I: Yeah, okay
Student15: So I think that's where somewhere where I lack negatively.

Although both Student7 and Student15 report on ways they have used to compensate for these academic language shortcomings, one questions whether these strategies have in fact been adequate, since neither of them have managed to submit their master's thesis, even if they have had two additional years to work on it. After all, academic language in respect to EMI, and programs such as the IMDPs, is far more than just finding the right synonyms or phrases, as it requires one's linguistic richness and complexity to be on an adequate level, as emphasized for instance by Pulcini and Campagna (2015: 73).

In order to gain further insights into the participants' ways of using different frames of reference when reflecting on their own skills, and to have an opportunity to elaborate on the students' study paths, the external frames of references which occurred in the present study's interviews are presented and considered in the next section.

6.2.2 The complex role of one's peers: Fellow-students as a frame of reference

In contrast to the internal frames of references, the external frames of references were perhaps even more strongly present in the present study in their various forms. What makes this in fact quite remarkable is that the interview script itself did not include any questions requiring the participants to compare their own skills to anyone else's academic English skills. Rather, the participants decided themselves to resort to the following social comparisons and external frames of references, and as illustrated in the following sections, these comparisons and frames of references clearly outnumbered the previous more self-related viewpoints.

First of all, the participants used their peers in various ways when reflecting on their own academic English skills. This is not surprising, since according to Neeley (2005: 14) once students, such as these IMDP students, are properly acquainted with each other and share not only their study successes but also their frustrations during their study paths, it becomes easy for them to form informal peer review relationships. The word *informal* in this case refers to Neeley's (2005: 14) idea of a peer not necessarily having anything to do with

that peer's expertise, but rather merely indicating that there is some type of collaboration, be that sharing all the highs and lows of studying in the same program or some other aspect of their studies. Consequently, it makes sense that the participants used their peers as a sort frame at various intervals during the interviews, and in simple terms, one could divide these into four types of frames. Peers were used as a measure, for instance, when a participant felt that they were on a similar level, such as in the following cases:

Student3: There was no, uh, there was nobody that had, a lower level that we couldn't communicate and
Interviewer: Um-hum, yeah
Student3: Kind of, pull us down that didn't happen
I: Okay, yeah
Student3: Everybody's kind of, the same level

Student7: Well I think my peers are from the same background as I am so theirs is the same level as my English

Student8: No, we are from different nationalities it is an international master but
Interviewer: Yeah
Student8: We always envy our peers, so same age or same somehow attitudes so
I: Mm
Student8: We always make ourselves understood
I: Okay
Student8: So it's, it's good

Student14: Uh, uh, before I came, uh, I came here, uh, I feel very worried about the academic communication skills
Interviewer: Yeah
Student14: Especially speaking
I: Yeah
Student14: But, uh, after I came here, I communicate with other international students in English, I, mm so now, I don't feel so much worry about it

Student15: Well yeah, I think I would have like if I come to think of it now…I would have like tried to, like I said, I feel a little held back when I talk in English.
Interviewer: Yeah
Student15: A bit shy because I worry that I am going to mess up my sentences stuff like that…But ever since I came here it was like everybody speaks like me.

Student15: Well I think that has helped me a lot…cos I've been working in these group assignments with people from different backgrounds and we all communicate in English
Interviewer: Yeah
Student15: And some of them are really good and some of them are like me.

In this sense, that the participants viewed their peers to be rather equal in terms of their academic English skills was deemed as a positive factor in their program. It apparently enabled better communication when no one was pulling the group down, as noted by Student3, and moreover, the overall level of peers seemed to function as an encouraging factor, when considering the responses by Student14 and Student15. In contrast to the issues discussed earlier, these participants had a rather communicative approach to assessing their peers' academic English skills. For instance, Student3, Student8 and Student15 specifically bring up communication as a sort of measure of how successful they and their peers were in terms of academic English in their IMDP, and as noted by Turner (2004: 108), and Terraschke and Wahid (2011: 174), communicability contributes strongly to the co-creation of an academic discourse. Interestingly, in respect to the IMDPs, McCambridge and Pitkänen-Huhta (2012: 166) have pointed out that the programs form their own discourse communities, and one might advocate that the communicative approach the participants illustrate in these responses reflects this aspect rather well.

However, some participants discussed their peers as being superior in terms of academic English, as in the following examples:

> *Student6: Well there is this one* (mentions nationality) *friend I have and his English is really good! I've learned a lot from him*
> *Interviewer: Yeah*
> *Student6: And when he writes I totally enjoy just reading him I learn just by reading…We did a couple of assignments together and I learned a lot of structures, you know, grammatical funny things and fancy stuff to write…You know this sort of idea. But about others I am not really sure.*

> *Student12: It has affected a lot because my, peers have already publish paper before*
> *Interviewer: Um-hum*
> *Student12: So, they, they are more skilled in presenting in writings*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student12: Than, speaking*
> *I: Okay*
> *Student12: So, the, the, uh, the practicing of writings with them on reports or seminars really, uh helped me with academic*
> *I: Okay*
> *Student12: Specific for, like paper writing*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student12: Or publishing*

> *Student14: And also, uh, I think, my classmates' English is, better than mine, so yeah talking with them is always*
> *Interviewer: Yeah*
> *Student14: Improvement for me yeah*

In line with the earlier excerpts, these included rather positive insights into how the participants viewed their peers, even if the peers reportedly had more solid academic English skills than the participants themselves. Student6 and Student12 were evidently able to benefit from the writing skills of their peers and use those as a source for their own learning, and in a similar vein, Student14 reported that this happened in respect to oral communication. Correspondingly, similar findings have been presented in previous studies, and according to some studies peers are thought to be an integral source of support when it comes to coping with the challenges of studying in an L2 (e.g. Fox, 2009: 33; Evans and Morrison, 2011: 204). This peer support has for instance been manifested in students consulting each other in class when they are not able to keep up with teaching in English, as well as when working on assignments (Evans and Morrison, 2011: 204). Furthermore, in a study by Fox (2009) it was discovered that grouping weaker students with students who already have a better command of English proved to be a useful strategy because the weaker students were able to benefit and keep up with the studies. In this sense, the present study is in line with previous studies, if these excerpts are used as a mirror.

Moreover, the participants of the present study also mentioned their peers when discussing how they themselves were perhaps superior in comparison to their peers. Such comments were made by the following four participants:

> *Student9: But uh there's a lots of group-based assignments so you tend to be with people that are from different levels and I teamed up with one of my constant companions in assignments and group activities who was from* (mentions a country) *and she was really elementary with her English and she says being with me helped her a lot*
> *Interviewer: Yeah*
> *Student9: And it helped me a lot because I was telling her these words which she didn't know about, she'd never heard, which were natural in my vocabulary and then I tend to realize how there are some words that I take for granted when I'm writing them but probably even in Finland I should refrain from using them because they are not so natural to other people's vocabulary so in a way it was positive as well.*
> *I: Yeah, yeah*
> *Student9: So in a way it was interesting to learn in this way*

> *Student10: So, I would say that the Finnish people in our class, well with the few exceptions they were, a bit weaker than the, us, the international*
> *Interviewer: Yeah*
> *Student10: guys*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student10: In English terms*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student10: Because they have, they have had their studies already in Finnish for a long- a lot of years*
> *I: Mm*

Student10: So for us, we have, well I had already studied two years
I: Yeah
Student10: in Finland, in English
I: Yeah
Student10: And, well another guy that we have a (mentions a nationality) *guy he finished in English school so*
I: Um-hum
Student10: So, in the beginning it was quite a, because we were trying to, you know to make as simple as it goes to
I: Um-hum
Student10: So everyone can understand everyone
I: Yeah
Student10: But, then I think right now when we gather all together it's, you can see that, um well they have also developed and we have also
I: Um-hum
Student10: Developed and so right now it's I, I think it was, it was mutually beneficial, what happened so
I: Yeah
Student10: I, I don't think it has affected negatively
I: Yeah
Student10: It just has, made me think twice before saying something

These two participants, Student9 and Student10, even though they were now apparently the more proficient ones in terms of academic English, viewed the differences of students' skills as a positive aspect, because it forced them to develop and reflect on their writing and oral communication skills.

However, the aforementioned positive aspects have also been discussed in a rather negative light in literature. First of all, Dooey (2010: 188) discovered that the students did consult each other during class, but this interaction took place mostly in the students' L1, in this case Chinese, and thus the students teamed up as their own L1 group within the L2 context. Naturally, this did not result in a functioning classroom, as students who did not know Chinese were left out of joint projects and other tasks. Second, not all scholars have reached the conclusion that mixing students with varied levels of language skills equals fruitful learning for everyone. Instead, they have reached the opposite conclusion. For instance, according to Dooey (2010: 96), mixing resulted in frustration and even resentment among those students who were already on a higher level because they reported that the weaker students were slowing down their progress. Similar findings were presented in Fox (2009: 33), as the teachers of the study stated that particularly the variety of students' skill levels negatively affected not only the effectiveness of their teaching but consequently also their students' learning.

Some interview responses of the present study seem to mirror the negative implications of varied levels of students' academic English skills, as becomes apparent below:

Student2: Well, I would say that, when it comes to a language level we are, almost all of us are the same level
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student2: Maybe just few of them are like, the, the level is a bit lower
I: Yeah, has that affected your learning as a group or your learning or…
Student2: For instance sometimes the effect is seen in assignment when, maybe, you do a group work
I: Um-hum
Student2: And it's like, you share, um, responsibilities and like, and then at the end when the work is put together
I: Um-hum
Student2: And you read the whole text, you see there's a, a variation, in the English level
I: Um-hum
Student2: So if I get like, if we the group get a lower level for our work, I sometimes I, is it, I'm kind of like, is it the English?
I: Yeah
Student2: That we don't have, our idea wasn't good or is it
I: Yeah
Student2: The English level
I: Yeah, yeah
Student2: So in that aspect, sometimes it has it, it's, it does affect
I: Yeah
Student2: Yeah, in a negative way, where why all of us doesn't have the same level of English
I: Yeah
Student2: In definitely so, it does
I: In group work?
Student2: Yeah during group work yeah

Student5: Understanding is very strong I can, like understand it very well without like some people, um, some even my, some of my, friends at my own program they translated inside before they
Interviewer: Yeah, yeah
Student5: Talk like, when they hear something
I: Yeah
Student5: But that doesn't happen to me
I: Yeah so you sort of directly go into English
Student5: Yeah, yeah

Student5: Uh, what else, uh, well not in terms of English studies but in other courses, like one my friend would write report in hi- in her own language first and then translate it to English
I: Yeah
Student5: And it would of course delay, the work itself

As both Student2 and Student5 indicate, students' varying levels of academic English become particularly problematic when conducting group work, especially in writing. Student2 notes that it can be clearly seen in the overall coherence of the group work, and (s)he speculates that it might at times also affect the grading of their work. What is more, according to Student5, the fact that a peer first writes her assignments in her first language, and only then translates the text into English, understandably delays the work itself. Student5's thoughts are very much in line with the findings of Dooey (2010: 196), since the fact that students need to resort to their L1 was brought up as an aspect which resulted in peers viewing such students as unable to adequately contribute to shared activities and discussions. Similarly to the experiences of Student5, also in Dooey's (2010: 196) research such students stood out, and they were being perceived as something different from the rest of the group.

It could be claimed here that even the slightly more negative viewpoints presented by Student2 and Student5 may have very well resulted in resentment and frustration among these students, and even slowed down their progress, as remarked by Dooey (2010: 96) or even undermined their learning, as proposed by Fox (2009: 33). However, the overall tone of using peers as a frame of reference and its effects on the students' learning is rather positive. Fox (2009: 33) noted that students' varying levels often result in changing group dynamics, which seems valid also in respect to the responses of all these participants. Nonetheless, as already noted, these changing group dynamics also need to be viewed in a positive light, and from the viewpoint of enabling students' learning in many ways, as was the case of many participants of the present study. Yet, as emphasized by Dooey (2010: 196), this requires that the teachers and lecturers are also particularly mindful of this issue and know how to monitor and instruct students with varying language backgrounds. This leads to an examination of how, or even if, the participants reflect on themselves with teachers as their frames of references.

6.2.3 The minor role of teacher feedback in academic English

For external frames of reference, only two references were made to teachers in the sense of teachers giving grades, and those were made by Student2 and Student4, as they both used grades given by their teachers as sort of measures of their communication and academic writing.

> *Student2: So in that aspect yeah it has really helped me and I think that to be, to get a good grade is to communicate very clearly*
> *Interviewer: Yeah*
> *Student2: You may have a very good idea, but then if the language doesn't go through*
> *I: Um-hum*
> *Student2: Your teacher might not be able to understand what you're trying to communicate*
> *I: Yeah*

Student2: And it might result in, a ---, a lower grade
I: Yeah
Student2: So, I think in that aspect yeah, it has impacted my
I: Yeah
Student2: My performance

Student4: Right, well I think it's really important that you are able to write like academically
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student4: Like I have really good grades and I think it's like a reflecting thing
I: Yeah
Student4: Cos I've also known also in (mentions L1) *how to write in a way that teachers like…Like all the way from like high school and I know how to write well. So I think it's important I mean I think it affects*
I: Yeah
Student4: The grades in a positive way

Other than these two examples, grades as such were not prevalent in the interviews, but taking into consideration Weiner's (2004: 15) second attribution theory, interpersonal theory of motivation, which, as already noted earlier, has its focus on thoughts and feelings that are directed by others. However, interestingly, only one participant made a clear reference to this, as Student10 remarked the following:

Student10: Well, from what the teachers, say as a feedback I guess because this is how you can judge yourself

Nonetheless, the participants did not that extensively discuss their teachers' assessment and judgements regarding their success or failure in respect to their academic English. Teachers' feedback as a basis for judging oneself is only visible in comments made by three other participants, yet many of these comments include a thought-provoking viewpoint. As the following examples imply, teacher feedback is also in some ways viewed as a type of dead end, since it only gives the students an idea of what they should improve, but leaves them wondering how they should improve themselves in practice or how this all relates to their overall academic performance.

Student4: Uh when speaking like when presenting we got feedback from the presentation and like overall feedback from the like pronunciation but like nothing like very specific. So it was hard to like even like learn from the feedback
Interviewer: Okay
Student4: Because it was kind of like…general in a way

Student9: Because you get the feedback from your professors and you think you've done a really great job
Interviewer: Yeah

Student9: But he faxes that you should probably do your literature review again and write in this way and really you don't have a clue where you are going wrong

Student14: Yeah, because I did there one presentation
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student14: And the teachers said, the only problem I had is pronunciation
I: Um-hum
Student14: But, there is no pronunciation course
I: Yeah
Student14: Yeah, in languages
I: Okay
Student14: For student, so maybe yeah

As these participants report, the teacher feedback did not help their learning, nor did it in fact profoundly aid in figuring out where one was going wrong, or alternatively where one could get help or support if there are no courses targeted, for instance, at students struggling with specific challenges. It could be stated that these three students did use the teacher feedback as an important frame of reference, but it appears that they did not benefit from it in other ways. In a similar vein, Dooey (2010: 196) found that content lecturers (i.e. teachers who are experts in their subject areas rather than English teachers) often failed to properly take into consideration the language-related difficulties which their students from varied language backgrounds were facing during their studies. This likely relates to the content teachers not being language experts, an issue highlighted by various scholars, such as Jacobs (2006: 148-149) and Marshal et al. (2011). According to Evans and Green (2007: 15) and Fox (2009: 27), content teachers are often oblivious in terms of the language support, or the lack thereof, for their own students. Therefore, not knowing what is on offer for their students may actually impede the content teachers in assisting their students once they detect some language challenges the students are encountering on their study path. In this context, it is understandable that the participants did not find the teacher feedback adequately helpful.

6.2.4 Long live the native-speaker ideal

When considering the issue of pronunciation brought up by Student4 and Student14 at the end of the section 6.2.3, it is worth noting that this issue has been brought up in various previous studies as well. As noted, scholars such as Evans and Green (2007), Dooey (2010) and Skyrme (2010) have also discovered that teachers consider students' pronunciation, and particularly their accents, to be problematic. In an extensive study on the role of the English language in Finland, Leppänen et al. (2009: 58) discovered that among Finns there is a rather strong preference for the accents and usage of so-called native speakers. According to their study, Finns prefer British and American English, and Finns tend to think that a person's ethnicity should not be clear based on that person's use of English (e.g. one's accent) (Leppänen et al., 2009: 74-75). Such preferences

are critiqued by Dufva and Nikula (2010). In their view, the modern, and less rigid, understanding of language proficiency should not have at its core so-called ideal standards that would turn linguistic and cultural backgrounds into aspects of one's identity that ought to be hidden (Dufva and Nikula, 2010).

The interview extracts provided earlier do not reveal whether the teachers giving feedback on the students' pronunciation were Finns, but it is important to note that neither of the students were native speakers of English, and thus their ethnicity might have been detectable in their pronunciation. In light of Leppänen et al.'s findings (2009), one must consider what was meant by the teacher feedback, since it is one thing to give feedback on pronunciation if students fail to get their message across, but it is quite another to assess students' pronunciation against some native-speaker ideal. As an interviewer who has interacted with both participants, Student4 and Student14, I can observe that both showed rather obvious traces of their ethnicity in their pronunciation, but nothing which would have affected their communication nor our interaction. In respect to this, and in contrast to Dufva and Nikula's (2010) suggestions, Seidlhofer (2012: 399) points out that when it comes to non-native speakers of English, most learners will never get rid of the mark of being a non-member despite their efforts to communicate successfully.

Similar veins of thought can be linked to the example presented previously by Student9 regarding the feedback (s)he received on his/her literature review. As (s)he noted, (s)he had no clue where (s)he had gone wrong when his/her supervisor asked him/her to rewrite the review. Similarly to the somewhat hidden ideals of pronunciation, there are also underlying academic discourse practices (e.g. Clapham, 2000: 519) which are embedded in written assignments such as the literature review. Various scholars, such as Wilkinson and Zegers (2006: 75), Taylor and Geranpayeh (2011: 94), McNamara (2012: 199), Seidlhofer (2012: 402) and McCambridge and Saarinen (2015: 304-305), all consider issues related to which English, or whose academic discourse, are we dealing with in, for example, written assignments. McCambridge and Saarinen (2015: 304-305) found that the IMDP students they interviewed back in 2015 discussed the significance of Western thinking, and with that also the so-called correct Western English, which was clearly thought to center on the UK and the US, but also somehow other Western countries such as Finland. Consequently, Clapham (2000: 519) questions whether students who are not familiar with Western academic discourse practices can be punished for their lack of experience with these practices. The participants in McCambridge and Saarinen's (2015: 304-305) study clearly drew a line between Western and non-Western preferences, with the Finnish HE system adhering to the preferences of the former. This also led to making a distinction between "our" Western and non-native English being superior to "their" non-native and non-Western English (McCambridge and Saarinen, 2015: 304-305).

When this observation is applied to the previous excerpt, one begins to question whether the student in question, Student9, who could be categorized as a non-Western student, was simply failing adhering to the underlying aca-

demic discourse practices the teacher required from him/her, which very likely were exactly Western preferences, since we are dealing with a Finnish university. The reason they are referred to as being "underlying" relates to the fact that the student in question seemingly did not fully comprehend his/her teacher's preferences, since even after the feedback (s)he had no clue where (s)he had gone wrong. According to Seidlhofer (2012: 394), it is always a question of combining an encoded semantic resource, in this case English, with the appropriate usage conventions of the target register or genre. In the case of Student9, the first appeared to be in place, whereas (s)he had no prior experience of the latter, especially not from this particular Western HE context.

> Student9: *I would say before coming here my English skills were pretty good any-ways but I've never written academic text.*

Whether it is a question of oral or written communication, Seidlhofer (2012: 404-405) nonetheless remarks that some type of erosion may be occurring in respect to the strongly Anglophone attitudes. Seidlhofer (2012: 404-405) argues for this based on the changing attitudes of younger generations. To a great extent this was also apparent in the participants' interview responses in the present study, but ideas of nativeness and non-nativeness remain strongly present. In other words, the participants did not necessarily talk directly about nativeness as an ideal, but rather it was at various intervals something that they still had a need to mention, as becomes clear in the following excerpts from seven participants:

> *Student1: From the university here I made the conclusion that everyone can teach using English language but they need to be clear to not to speak like native speakers but clear.*

> *Student2: Because, I always say language, um, is, language is just like a journey*
> *Interviewer: Um-hum*
> *Student2: A long journey which you never finish, even if you are a native speaker*
> *I: Um-hum*
> *Student2: You will still need to improve certain thing*

> *Student3: It was a very, my supervisor was, excellent and it was very, we did it together*
> *I: Um-hum, yeah*
> *Student3: And um, we are both not, non-native speakers so*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student3: We're trying to correct each other*

> *Student3: There is the understanding that we are not native speakers*
> *Interviewer: Yeah*
> *Student3: So there is the, some flexibility, in those demands*

> *Student11: …to hire the teachers from abroad, especially like the native speaker,*

because they are generally considered experts of the English language but sometimes that's not true.
Interviewer: Are you now thinking about this from the viewpoint of your program, so people teaching the content or then like these language courses you mentioned?
Student11: Um I mean…English language course.
I: Yeah okay yeah. So you're saying that being a native speaker doesn't…?
Student11: …doesn't mean they are experts
I: Yes
Student11: As a teacher

Student13: So my, uh classmates, speaks English very well and also, they are not, uh, kind of native speaker
Interviewer: Yeah, yeah
Student13: So, we are talking with others in the, second language English and it's very easy to understand

Student14: Uh it's usually Finnish teacher and, they have good English, speaking skills and but they're not natives so
Interviewer: Yeah
Student14: It's really easy to understand they use it easy English and speak not uh fastly
I: Yeah, yeah
Student14: So I think it's yeah really understandable

Student15: Well…hmm…I guess well my teachers, they are also not native speakers,
Interviewer: Yeah
Student15: But they do speak clearly so…but they also like…one of my teachers he speaks a little slow
I: Yeah
Student15: And he takes time to like before he speaks and I think that's a good thing but when he speaks he makes perfect sense and it's totally clear
I: Yeah, yeah, yeah
Student15: So like looking at him…his example…it shouldn't matter if you take your time before you structure your sentences but it's okay to take time and have long pauses
I: Uh-hum
Student15: But as long as the final sentences have meanings…

It should be noted that the interview script included no reference to nativeness or non-nativeness, but it was something that the participants wanted to use as an additional way of describing someone or someone's level of English. Although the interview extracts above do in fact support Seidlhofer's (2012: 404–405) views that the native-speaker ideal is eroding, the present interviews did nevertheless include slightly opposing views as well, since, as the following responses show, native speakers, particularly peers, but also other scholars,

were seen as an integral resource in the program for these non-native participants.

Student3: Uh, but also the, the communication between, me and my colleagues
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student3: Because we have some native speakers
I: Yeah
Student3: That helped
I: Yeah
Student3: A lot

Student6: Let me think… Not really but I've also learned a lot from reading research papers
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student6: And their structures
Interviewer: Yeah
Student6: And how the good, the native writers form their sentences and everything

Student11: Uh…of course for the native speakers,
Interviewer: Uh-hum
Student11: They are perfect. We have around four students in our class, who use English as their mother tongue
I: Yeah
Student11: And I think these students had quite impact on me.
I: Okay
Student11: Usually I would ask questions from them
I: Yeah
Student11: Cos I would say, I think, I can get a perfect answer from native speakers.

Student13: Yeah, actually we have uh native speaker from (mentions an English-speaking country)
Interviewer: Yeah
Student13: So uh they helps us big much in that kind of aspect I think we have
I: So native speakers being involved?
Student13: Yeah native speakers
I: Do you mean as peers or staff or as both?
Student13: Uh...peers

Student14: Mm, because there is two native speakers
I: Yeah
Student14: English so, sometimes it's really, helpful, that, I learn some kind of, um, how to say, expression
I: Yeah
Student14: How to use English from them

All the interview extracts of the present study relating to nativeness and non-nativeness echo the findings of a recent study conducted at the University of Jyväskylä. McCambridge and Saarinen (2015) studied students' and staff members' perceptions of nativeness, and they were able to detect two core categories, "non-nativeness as *not*" and "non-nativeness as *but*" (ibid. 301). The key ideas of both of these categories are illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6 Characteristics of non-nativeness as *not* and non-nativeness as *but* (McCambridge and Saarinen, 2015: 311)

	non-nativeness as *not*	non-nativeness as *but*
Language	"Ideal" English out of reach, demanding	Adequate knowledge of English for successful communication
Natives	... as superior gatekeepers	... as equal colleagues
Authority	... based on native-like language knowledge	... based on subject expertise
Language and internationalization	Relatively homogeneous view of English	Relatively heterogeneous view of English

According to McCambridge and Saarinen (2015: 301) the category of non-nativeness as *not* continues to reinforce the native speaker ideal, or nativeness being something, which is in fact challenging to achieve, and something that is guarded by the natives, who are superior gatekeepers. These lines of thinking are clearly illustrated in the present study's interview responses as well, and according to Dufva and Nikula (2010), such perceptions of the perfect or right language are still commonly held by many people, since the native-speaker ideal has dominated language teaching for so long.

However, as illustrated in the interview extracts, there were also various responses associated more with the non-nativeness as *but* category, since some of the participants of the present study also, in McCambridge and Saarinen's (2015: 301) words, challenge the ideal when they acknowledge that nativeness is something separate, and not by any means inferior but rather equal. Yet as McCambridge and Saarinen (2015: 301) also note, these two categories are not merely overlapping each other, but they are also closely intertwined. They discovered that the majority of their participants constructed nativeness, on the one hand, as being basically a synonym for correctness, and on the other hand, in respect to its negation (McCambridge and Saarinen, 2015: 301). In practice this meant that their participants often needed to clarify that they were not natives, and by this they indicated that they did not possess the native authority for viewing which practices were in fact correct Englishes. By doing this, they were thus nevertheless reproducing the ideal of nativeness (McCambridge and Saarinen, 2015: 301). A similar phenomenon can be detected in the responses of the present study's participants, as they indeed had an apparent need to use the idea of nativeness or non-nativeness in their responses despite never being asked specifically to do that. In this indirect way, the present study also included references to nativeness continuing to be a challenge, or at least a source of

pressure for non-native students. This phenomenon is also described by McCambridge and Saarinen (2015: 302) despite the fact that many scholars, such as Dufva and Nikula (2010), Hulstijn (2011: 244), and Seidlhofer (2012: 404-405), call for critical discussion of nativeness.

According to Dufva and Nikula (2010) and Hulstijn (2011:244), one must bear in mind that there is no such thing as a specific or ultimate native speaker level because the language skills of native speakers themselves vary widely due to background factors such as education and occupation. Dufva and Nikula (2010), therefore, suggest that the native-speaker myth should no longer guide language teaching. Despite calls such as this, Seidlhofer (2012: 397) finds that language assessment in Europe is still occasionally fixed on scales which use, for example, ranges that go from non-fluent to native-like. If these students have been exposed to such assessment themselves, it is not surprising that they resort to the native-speaker ideal. Especially when considering that they are talking about their native-speakers peers or teachers who are ostensibly studying or teaching at the same level as they themselves are, it is more understandable that being a native-speaker is considered an additional asset.

The participants of the present study do not seem to completely disregard their own (academic) English skills, even if they acknowledge that they are not native speakers. According to Seidlhofer (2012: 405-404), this is, to some extent, a general trend, especially among younger people, and even though the native-speaker ideal has dominated the language proficiency scales in past decades, this seems to be changing as well (McNamara, 2012: 201). However, the participants of the present study returned to the theme of nativeness when they were asked about their future career plans, which will be discussed in the next section.

6.2.5 Career prospects: Reflecting on one's academic English skills to future

As the following interview extracts show, some participants returned to the theme of nativeness by attaching it rather strongly to their future career prospects:

> *Student1: If I think about the PhD I only need language skills to write and present and if I think from the aspect of* (mentions a profession) *one big obstacle for me is that I am not a native speaker and they require native speakers a lot*
> *Interviewer: Uh-hum*
> *Student1: And that will be a problem, I guess.*
> *I: Uh-hum*
> *Student1: I didn't try to get a job as* (mentions the same profession)
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student1: So I don't know what's going to happen*

> *Student3: But I don't know how, the demands that I had here, are comparable to the demands that I will have in different places*
> *Interviewer: Um-hum*

Student3: Because I know that, if I'm applying for, international (mentions a context and a profession)
I: Uh-hum
Student3: I know that if- it's different that I, if I'm a native speaker or if I'm not
I: Uh-hum
Student3: Or if I'm applying for (mentions another context) *in native speaking, English native speaking countries*
I: Yeah, yeah
Student3: If I, if, what's the importance they give to, to this type of experiences

Student5: And other types of positions they usually require, English as a first language
Interviewer: Uh-hum
Student5: Because, I don't know they want to go abroad the company and then
I: Yeah
Student5: They prefer native speakers
I: Yeah
Student5: To, provide (mentions job-related duties)

It should be noted that in prior to these excerpts, Student1, Student3, Student5, had at no point in the interviews referred to any kind of direct inferiority related to being a non-native speaker. Yet now they suddenly started to question their future career prospects after completing their studies specifically due to their non-nativeness. Thus, one could say that even though they viewed themselves in the light of the less native-speaker centered category of McCambridge and Saarinen's (2015: 311) two-fold categorization, it seems that they are afraid that their possible future employers will not view them as leniently in this respect. Student1 and Student5 directly suspect that they will face some challenges when applying for jobs in the future, and Student3 is yet not sure if his/her non-nativeness will play a role in the recruitment process, as (s)he had already been applying for jobs at the time of the interview, but (s)he does question how the native-speaking countries will value his/her studies in the IMDP. Even though he does not directly specify what he means by "this type of experience," some kind of comparison is, nevertheless, visible in terms of the "English native speaking countries," and "this type of experience," which could be interpreted as his studies in an English-medium program (i.e. the IMDP) completed in a non-English speaking country (i.e. Finland).

Obviously, all three interview extracts above are the participants' own views and perceptions, which may or may not correspond with the reality of their future careers. Nonetheless, they were still these participants' frames of references when they were asked to reflect on their own academic English skills in respect to their future careers. In that sense, these views and perceptions are valid, especially when considering that these thoughts have an effect on the actions of these students. For instance, as became apparent, Student1, after noting that being a non-native speaker is a hurdle for him/her, also said that (s)he had not been applying for jobs related to his/her field. In revisiting Bong

and Skaalvik's (2003: 7) logic regarding positive self-concept constructs affecting students' goal-setting, and even career issues, one cannot help but consider the effect of these rather negative aspects, or even obstacles and problems, in the light of the these participants' future careers. In keeping with Bong and Skaalvik, these negative aspects would also have a negative affect on the participants' career prospects.

Researching how employers view this issue of nativeness versus non-nativeness would be an intriguing endeavour in itself, but which is unfortunately beyond the scope of the present dissertation. However, Lehtonen and Karjalainen (2008) have studied Finnish employers' perceptions on the language skill requirements for university graduates entering working life, and in their study nativeness per se was not a clear factor in the employers' responses. However, when it came to foreign languages such as English, the employers called for a particularly high level of English skills, and above all fluency in respect to communicating about professional matters (Lehtonen and Karjalainen, 2008: 496-497). Nonetheless, nativeness as such was not prevalent Lehtonen and Karjalainen's study (2008), which is in contrast to the concerns and fears of the participants in the present study regarding their future-employers' thoughts on nativeness. It must be remembered, however, that Lehtonen and Karjalainen were studying Finnish employers' perceptions, whereas especially Student3 and Student5 seem to be contemplating non-Finnish employers' preferences related to nativeness.

Furthermore, in relation to this discussion above, Seidlhofer (2012) has examined how non-native authors are perceived in academia, and her findings are not far from the concerns voiced by the afrorementioned three participants regarding their future career prospects. Seidlhofer (2012: 394) found that non-native authors were often not taken seriously or that they were devalued unless they were able to meet the approved standard, which usually specifically requires that they have their texts corrected by a native speaker. According to Seidlhofer (2012: 394), this caused the non-natives to feel increasingly insecure about their language proficiency as well as to become more resentful about not being fully recognized for their scholarship. Though Seidlhofer (2012) primarily studied non-natives in terms of academic publishing, her findings are not far removed from how Student1, Student3 and Student5 reflected on their future career prospects as non-native speakers of English.

However, some of the participants had attention-grabbing insights unrelated to nativeness in respect to their future careers. For instance, Student14 and Student15 both contemplated how their career prospects relate to their English skills from the viewpoint of the country where the will end up working;

Student14: Okay, well it's, depends on where
Interviewer: Yeah
Student14: We want to work
I: Yeah
Student14: If we want to work in (mentions the home country), *English skill doesn't, value so much*

I: Yeah, yeah
Student14: But if you have English skill, it's more like, it's seen as really good thing
I: Yeah
Student14: Yeah, so it's going to be the, strong point of mine
I: Okay, yeah
Student14: Yeah, but if I want to work, for example in Finland or abroad
I: Uh-hum
Student14: Maybe my English skill is not, enough

Student15: Okay interesting…well…I only have like work experience back home and in my field, since I am (mentions a profession) *I didn't have lot of* (mentions a job-related duty)
I: Uh-hum
Student15: And even if I did there was not that much talking…There was like we had to give a demonstration, so even if I couldn't explain anything with words they could just follow my demonstrating and be "oh like that's what you meant".
I: Yeah
Student15: So…And oh I haven't had like internships anything related to my field, since I came in Finland so I can't compare
I: Yeah
Student15: And I can't…So what I would say that I am working-wise like pretty OK, I am kind of confident, or I was confident back home and I haven't like worked here so I can't say anything…

Both Student14 and Student15 have rather positive thoughts about working in their home countries, since Student14 notes that her English skills would be a valuable asset for him/her in his/her home country, whereas Student15 already has work experience from his/her home country and as a result (s)he feels somewhat confident. However, both express doubts about having adequate English skills for working in their field in, for example, Finland. Furthermore, Student11 also brought another viewpoint to the IMDP students' career prospects, as is demonstrated below:

Student11: Hmm…I think for me maybe because I seldom during the past two years think of career
Interviewer: Uh-hum
Student11: I just enjoy the life here and concentrate on my studies.
I: Yeah, yeah
Student11: And also from my own perspective I don't think it's completely the university's role
I: Yeah
Student11: To prepare for career.
I: Yeah
Student11: I think this place is where we learn knowledge
I: Uh-hum

Student11: And where we develop our personality
I: Yeah
Student11: And to enjoy the real college life is not about the university prepares
I: Uh-hum
Student11: In that way it would be JAMK

Student11 directly states that (s)he had not really thought about career issues during his/her IMDP studies, as (s)he perceives the role of the university, and presumably the role of the IMDPs, to be related more to students' growth in terms of their personalities and knowledge, rather than preparing the IMDP students for their future careers. In this sense, (s)he makes a comparison to JAMK, the university of applied sciences in Jyväskylä, and (s)he insinuates that if one wanted to have a more career-centered approach to one's studies, one should choose to study at JAMK rather than at a university. Student11's viewpoint differs in fact rather clearly from what literature, such as Penttinen et al. (2014), states about university students' career planning and employment. Namely, according to Penttinen et al. (2014: 6), university students ought to be supported and encouraged to actively reflect on their upcoming careers from the viewpoint of the students' own skills and abilities. Based on Student11's comments on this issue, one can wonder whether Penttinen et al.'s (2014) ideas have been properly taken into account by Student11's program.

Nonetheless, in contrast to these three examples, and more in tune with Penttinen et al.'s (2014) suggestions, there were other participants who already had solid plans for their future careers as well as confidence in their language skills. What is of the essence in respect to these three students, whose interview responses are quoted below, is that both Student4 and Student8 gained the best possible grades for their master's thesis, and Student12 also received the grade "good" for his/her thesis. However, perhaps even more importantly all three of these students graduated from their program within the allotted two-year schedule. This is notable because they were the only participants of the present study who managed to meet the target graduation time. The case of Student4 below is discussed first.

Student4: Uh it's like I'm currently working in (mentions L1) *and I don't have the…voca…how do you pronounce that?*
Interviewer: Vocabulary
Student4: Vocabulary in (mentions L1) *in my field so it's like really challenging to like finding like the correct terms in* (mentions L1) *so in English I think I'll actually do better. I think it will probably change over time because I'm planning to work in* (mentions L1)

Student4: Uh…yes. But I think I should have put more effort in like…uh… thinking in (mentions L1) *as well. Because you're always thinking in English*
Interviewer: Yeah

> *Student4: When you are studying and then like I said it's hard to explain terms and concepts in* (mentions L1) *it's hard for me. So I could have paid more attention to that.*

First of all, Student4 is apparently on a rather high level in terms of his/her English skills if (s)he was thinking in English during the studies in the program, and although it is obviously a positive thing that (s)he has mastered the right terms for his/her field in English, these interview extracts also reveal a less English-focused challenge of EMI. If EMI students, such as Student4, complete their higher education in a different language than what their future career will be in, they may face various challenges with their future jobs (Wächter and Maiworm, 2014; Meneghetti, 2016: 34), which is exactly what Student4 is anticipating. As (s)he also notes, this is something that students like him/her should perhaps aim to take into account already during their studies.

This viewpoint may become increasingly relevant for the IMDPs and their students, since the number of Finnish students wanting to get their master's degree in English but in Finland seems to be on the rise. This is manifested in the increase of Finnish students enrolling in the IMDPs, as all in all 72 students (49%) of enrolled students in 2017 were Finns, whereas the same percentage was only 14% back in 2016, as merely 31 students of that cohort were Finns. Consequently, the IMDPs, along with the Language Center, may need to take this more actively into account when teaching and supporting the IMDP students, as it may well be that in the future there are more and more IMDP students receiving their education in English, but aiming to work in another language, such as Finnish, and as discussed by Student4, this needs to be considered already during one's IMDP studies.

Secondly, returning to (academic) English, (s)he also demonstrates a good understanding of how English is going to be part of his/her future career path.

> *Student4: Right…well I'm applying for* (mentions a field of study) *and I would like to be a* (mentions a profession)
> *Interviewer: Okay, yeah*
> *Student4: And there's a job that I already have but I want to keep doing that and,*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student4: That would be in* (mentions L1*) like I've lived in another country and now my like personal family situation is like I want to live in* (mentions home country)
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student4: So I am planning to live in* (mentions home country) *but our field is like really international*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student4: And there's not like lot of professionals in* (mentions home country)
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student4: So it's important to like stay in touch and network and go to conferences and stuff like that.*

Student4: Right, like I said our field is very international and I feel like, I have like kind of a colleague, and he is not educated but he is doing like (mentions a field) *stuff and he doesn't have any English skills and it definitely like limits his ability like, you know, teach and be a speaker in a conference or like educating…And I had to like…it wasn't really my job but I had to jump in last summer and do this there was this like international* (mentions an event) *and I had to like present there cos he didn't like have the language skills*
I: Yeah
Students4: So I think even in (mentions home country) *it's important that you can do it in English as well*

As is visible, Student4 has many assets, and moreover if his/her thesis grade of 5 and his/her graduation time are taken into account, one is not surprised that (s)he did so well in her program, considering that (s)he already has a job and further study plans in mind. Furthermore, (s)he seemingly has real-life experience from working life, for instance the anecdote regarding his/her colleague, which has apparently reinforced his/her motivation to master English in his/her field even if living in his/her non-English speaking home country. Therefore, considering Bong and Skaalvik's (2003: 7) logic of positive self-concept fostering further positive outcomes, one cannot help but deliberate how all these aspects have, likely positively, affected his/her study path in the program. Slightly similar positive remarks were also part of Student8's interview, as can be seen in the following:

Student8: I would like to, do a PhD, and
Interviewer: Yeah
Student8: Yes, that's my, plan already made some applications, well I, I first of course – to your previous question I first of course asked to my professor if
I: Yeah
Student8: There was a, at least a line of, projects with me to study
I: Yeah
Student8: Here, so I was considering this university before going to other places
I: Um-hum, yeah
Student8: Above for the quality of the university and for the life
I: Yeah, yeah
Student8: Here, I'm the PhD I sent some application (mentions two non-English speaking countries)
I: Yeah, yeah
Student8: So, hopefully they go well and

Student8: So, there are more question marks
I: Yeah
Student8: But, I feel, I feel confident that, I like this feel so
I: Yeah, okay
Student8: I feel very confident

Student8: In that, in, in that case English would be very important
Interviewer: Uh-hum
Student8: Because some requires some teaching and
I: Uh-hum
Student8: Teaching, teaching in, in English speaking countries
I: Uh-hum
Student8: So, it is important want people to understand you

Student8 also demonstrates clear career plans, as (s)he has already sent out applications to doctoral programs in different countries, and regardless of some concerns, (s)he still has a seemingly positive attitude towards these plans. What also caught my attention in terms of these responses by Student8 was that, instead of bringing up that (s)he is a non-native speaker of English, (s)he alternatively emphasized that the most important thing is that one is understood by other people, even if (s)he was particularly talking about teaching in English-speaking countries. The third student who graduated within two years (Student12) was feeling rather positive about his/her English skills meeting the requirements of working in his/her field:

Student12: Yes, I think I have the English skills for, for working in my field
Interviewer: Uh-hum, yeah
Student12: But I think because I'm now in the, academic research field, and it's more (mentions a field) *related and more, in the* (mentions another field) *but I'm shifting to more* (mentions a profession) *so then the terms that and the*
I: Uh-hum
Student12: Purpose will also be different, yeah

Student12: And, after, after two years I recognize I'm not, going to do academic researches
Interviewer: Uh-hum
Student12: But I'll focus more on (mentions a profession)
I: Yeah
Student12: Research and (mentions a profession) *so I'm looking for jobs but it's, at the moment it's kind of difficult to*
I: Okay, yeah
Student12: To find jobs in Finland
I: But you would like to stay here?
Student12: Yeah I would like to stay here

However, the facts that (s)he was shifting to a slightly different field than that of the IMDP, and above all that (s)he was looking for jobs in Finland, where the language of his/her daily working life would likely be Finnish, caused him/her to be slightly cautious about her future career prospects. The latter viewpoint obviously reflects to some extent the same challenges brought up earlier by Student4 and discussed by Wächter and Maiworm (2014) and Meneghetti (2016: 34), among others. What is notable in his/her response is that it shows that dur-

ing the program (s)he has thought about her career. Student12's responses, regardless of some hesitation, still show at least some kind of future-orientation, which is in contrast to the more relaxed mentality alluded to be, for instance Student11, when discussing the differences between a university and a university of applied sciences.

By bringing up these examples of so-called success stories among the IMDP students, I am not suggesting that all other IMDP students should be exactly like these three students, especially when considering that all three students already represent slightly different paths. Yet given that all of them did graduate with an excellent or good thesis grade, and within the given timeframe, there must have been something that they managed to do right during their studies. One could conclude that they share a positive future-oriented approach in the way they talk about their future career paths as well as about their (academic) English skills. A similar future-orientation is strongly brought to the fore by Penttinen et al. (2014: 7) when they promote it as a highly positive approach to university students' studies. In addition to this, Bong and Skaalvik (2003: 7) observe that positive self-concept actually contributes to various aspects, such as "students' academic engagement, goal-setting, task choice, persistence and effort, intrinsic motivation, strategy use, performance and achievement and even career selection." Hence, it makes sense that students who talk about their studies and careers in the way that these three participants did would in fact also succeed in reality. According to Bong (2001: 554,) many researchers rather unanimously agree that students' confidence has a strong link to their superior academic performance. As a contrast, the interviews with the three participants who had not graduated even after two years past the target graduation time will now be revisited.

6.2.6 Standardized language tests as a filter for the IMDPs

Of the 15 participants, Student7, Student9 and Student15 are the ones who had not yet graduated when their situation was last checked in late fall of 2017 for the purposes of the present study. As explained earlier, this date is over two years after their cohort was supposed to graduate. Their interviews shared a fascinating denominator, one which was basically not visible in the remaining 13 participants' interviews. Namely, all these three students used the standardized language tests, in their cases either TOEFL or IELTS, as a frame of references at different intervals when they were asked about their academic English and study success in the program.

The reality is that all the IMDP students are asked to provide some type of verification of their English skills when they apply to these programs. This verification can either be a previous degree completed in English, or as noted previously, 13 out of these 15 participants had taken either TOEFL or IELTS in order to be accepted to their program. According to, for example Pulcini and Campagna (2015: 74), the standardized tests play a clear role in many education systems, and according to McNamara (2012: 199), programs such as the IMDPs find it understandably convenient to use the standardized language tests as a

means to check the students' language skills, because the overall test scores can be easily included in the checklist of registration requirements and conveniently ticked off without much hassle for the programs (Turner, 2004: 97).

However, Green (2017: 12), among others, advises institutions not to use test scores or Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) scales as overly dominant criteria in decision making which can be classified as high-stakes. Furthermore, at the University of Jyväskylä, according to the Internal Evaluation (2014: 30), the demonstration of students' English language proficiency when applying to an IMDP is likely inadequate. The problem, the report suggests, is that there seems to be a language hurdle which affects some students' studies and graduation negatively. Therefore, the present study took a closer look to see how the aforementioned three participants, who were the only ones to use the standardized tests as a frame of reference, were actually describing and discussing their own academic English skills. These interview extracts are presented and discussed below.

> *Student7: I think the program has initially they have a requirement that for in order to get admission you should give some language test in English and that's already like a filter so if you are good in language then you can join this program.*

This interview response, given by Student7, very clearly sheds light on his/her thinking of the standardized test being a good measure of one's English skills, and with that also an adequate means for screening students' admission to the program. However, as his/her response also reveals, (s)he and above all the standardized tests often deal with general, instead of academic, English. McNamara (2012: 202) points out that it is of the utmost essence to make a distinction between more general language proficiency, for instance being able to deal with everyday communication, and seeing how that differs from discussions and situations which occur on a higher level. Deygers et al. (2017: 3) concur by pointing out that standardized tests should always be linked to the target context and its tasks and requirements, and they should force the test-takers to demonstrate the characteristics of academic language of that specific context.

Taylor and Geranpayeh (2011: 97) also criticize the standardized tests for their artificial nature in terms of testing different academic language skills separately, whereas the areas are in fact never separate in reality, but rather always in one way or another intertwined. For example, academic listening rarely exists in real-life in a vacuum, but rather together with for instance academic speaking. Additionally, academic writing is seldom merely writing per se, but more like an intertwined process of all skill areas. Consequently, Taylor and Geranpayeh (2011: 97) bring to the fore the lack of adequately encompassing marking criteria in respect to the standardized tests.

According to Turner (2004: 98), in addition to the failure to include context, these tests often fail to incorporate the social purposes of texts as well as the roles of writers and readers. What is more, they are not successful in addressing the varied vocabularies across different disciplines (Turner, 2004: 98). Fox (2009) compared students' test scores of standardized tests (e.g. TOEFL and IELTS) to

the test scores of in-house placement test, and discovered a mismatch, which may indicate that the general tests do indeed fail to test students for the requirements of specific institutions and programs. Deygers et al. (2017: 20) detected a similar gap between passing a test and coping with the linguistic demands of real-life. This is understandable and not surprising, but Fox (2009: 38) holds the view that test users, such as IMDP admission staff, should avoid interpreting the test scores in a manner that is too simplistic or reductive. Green (2017: 3) concurs with this view, observing that overall test scores should never be overinterpreted, especially if program staff is not provided with clear guidance in respect to interpreting the test scores of applicants or students.

Furthermore, standardized tests are often merely the first step when accepting students to a study program, which means that students can only be expected to be ready to start their studies, not to complete them right away (e.g. Taylor and Geranpayeh, 2011: 94; Deygers et al., 2017: 3). The challenge with using and interpreting test scores of standardized tests is also that they do not provide evidence of students' possible future development, but rather only a snapshot of their language skills at that particular moment (e.g. Fox, 2009: 38). Turner (2004: 99) concurs with this by pointing out that a certain finality is, therefore, built into these tests when language proficiency is set as a bureaucratic prerequisite, with the result that language use's developmental nature is lost in the process (Turner, 2004: 99).

Returning to the comments made previously by Student7, perhaps all the viewpoints mentioned above are also something that the students themselves, who have taken these tests, should take into account and bear in mind, since one could propose that neither the students should hold on too strongly to mere test scores. Fundamentally, anyone who has ever taught or studied a foreign language, not to mention on an academic level, understands that it requires a great deal of work and effort. Therefore, it was attention-grabbing to discover that soon after the comment related to standardized test as a type of filter for the students to join his program, Student7 also made the following comment when asked about his/her own role in terms of developing his academic English skills;

> *Student7: My own input is like maybe it's like more natural…With time it gets better*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student7: And I wouldn't put some special effort into it. But I think with time it gets better*

Consequently, if one combines Student7's line of thinking regarding the standardized language tests to his/her claim that academic language skills do not require any additional effort, one possible reason for the delayed graduation emerges. It has been emphasized that a student's entry level of language skills contributes significantly to that student's further language gains and development during the studies in a program or exchange period (e.g. Terraschke and Wahid, 2011: 174; Dewey et al, 2014: 40, 56). Mainly this is thought to be be-

cause that once a student has a good, or at least adequate, proficiency level when entering, for instance, an EMI program, the student is more motivated and thus likely to grasp meaningful opportunities to use the L2, both in class and out of class (Dewey et al., 2014: 40, 56). Student9 also commented on the standardized tests in the following way during his/her interview;

> *Student9: I would say that since the requirement for getting into the program was anyway pretty high, you needed to fill score of 100 I guess so, I mean the people who come here are really good in English and it's more about polishing it for academic level, which the courses helped a lot.*

In relation to this comment by Student9, it must be noted that the standardized tests have also been criticized for narrowing down the scope of what is considered to be academic language proficiency or literacy. As Deygers et al. (2017: 3) observe, academic language proficiency in English and other languages does not only consist of repeating and using academic idioms, but rather goes way beyond that. Due to this, Taylor and Geranpayeh (2011: 100), among others, have called for critical discussion concerning the use of the standardized tests as a requirement for entering academic study programs. Moreover, Turner (2004: 97) argues that these tests even distort students' understanding of academic language's role in the overall academic performance. Consequently, one is forced to again question whether the standardized tests are in fact adequate, even if for instance Student9 seems to advocate their usefulness rather strongly. Student9 made an attention-grabbing further note on his/her early experiences in the program:

> *Student9: Initially I was for a better part of the first three months thinking I am not cut out for this*

Again, by combining Student9's observation that academic English is something one can merely add on top of one's general English proficiency by "polishing" with his/her own experience of not being "cut out for this," (i.e. studying his/her academic field in English), yet another dilemma related to standardized tests emerges. It has been suggested that the standardized tests falsely promote the idea of academic language proficiency being something that students can simply quickly gain, and that then they automatically possess the skills needed in their study program (Turner, 2004: 97).

The entry level of their English skills is by no means necessarily equivalent to the level which is then required for their assignments or master's thesis (e.g. Taylor and Geranpayeh, 2011: 94; Deygers et al., 2017: 3). Therefore, the support mechanisms, such as academic English courses, should be in place, and timed in a way that corresponds to the needs of the students. This to some extent was also an issue implied by the third participant (Student15) who talked about the standardized tests:

> *Student15: Uh…I don't know. I think because in the master's program, the level of academic English that was taught to us…this one course.*

Interviewer: Yeah
Student15: I think for master's level I think this is okay…but I would have liked to have like one more course something related to your…like…since..
I: You mean like academic English?
Student15: Yeah…but since…I get it…but since we are in the master's program we are expected "okay, these already know from the bachelor's" and we give this English proficiency…proficiency…and that's kind of like established…
I: Yeah, yeah
Student15: But I think I would have liked if there was one more…more related to your grammar and this oriented rather than technical…

Student15 is basically saying that (s)he would have personally wanted more support for his/her writing, and grammar in particular, yet (s)he wants to demonstrate that (s)he understands how (s)he, alongside his/her program peers, have already provided their tests scores and that as master's level students, they are expected to be on a certain level. Hence, (s)he directly communicates about his/her needs, but in a similar vein (s)he uses the standardized test as a basis for reasoning why (s)he and his/her peers should not be provided any additional support. A study conducted by Kling (2015: 213) in Denmark regarding EMI teachers' perceptions of students' skills concurs with Student15's thinking, as the study revealed that teachers often hold the assumption that students should already have the language skills required *prior* to taking those content classes. In a similar vein, Pulcini and Campagna (2011: 75) observe that many HE institutions indeed consider it the students' responsibility to make sure that their language skills are adequate for their programs, and that once the students are in the institution only adopts a minor role in respect to the students' language development. To an extent, this is what Student15 seems to be alluding to as well, although at the same time (s)he seems to wish that this was necessarily not the case.

If taking into consideration the challenges this same student shared in terms of his/her academic English skills, one cannot help but ask whether Student15's entry level, even if verified with IELTS, was in fact inadequate. (S)he mentioned, for instance, the following challenges:

Student15: I am like really nervous because I know it's going to be all in English
Interviewer: Yeah
Student15: And I'm going to screw up this and that.

Student15: I have to make notes of what I say, how I say it. I structure my sentences
Interviewer: Yeah
Student15: And that's not a good thing. I should be able to like make sentences at the right time and explain myself clearly.

Student15: I would have like tried to, like I said, I feel a little held back when I talk in English.

Interviewer: Yeah
Student15: A bit shy because I worry that I am going to mess up my sentences stuff like that

Student15: And I should have talked lot and ask if there is confusion
Interviewer: Yeah, yeah
Student15: And not worry about sentence structuring and stuff like that

Student15: And my current situation, my current immediate plan is to like find a job by the end of the summer and complete my thesis during the summer. That's my immediate plan.
Interviewer: Okay. How confident do you feel about these plans becoming reality?
Student15: Quite honestly, not that confident. It's like 50-50,
I: Yeah
Student15: Because writing thesis I knew it would be kind of challenging because I can't focus by myself sitting in the library

It becomes evident that Student15 has difficulties with structuring sentences in English, and consequently (s)he does not perform well in communication, and holds back in situations where (s)he needs to use English, even shying away from asking questions if (s)he is confused. Moreover, at the time of the interview (the spring of 2015) (s)he already anticipated that (s)he would face some difficulties with writing the master's thesis, and as noted (s)he had not submitted the thesis by the late fall of 2017. If one revisits Dewey et al.'s (2014: 40, 56) thoughts on the significance of students' adequate entry level in respect to the likelihood of that student actively engaging in situations to develop their language skills, one cannot help but consider Student15's remarks, which rather clearly imply that (s)he did shy away from certain situations which would have required him/her to use English, as (s)he did not talk as much as (s)he should have in order to develop his/her skills. This makes even more sense if one returns to the ideas about a student's confidence, or in this case the lack of it, having a strong effect on academic performance, since according to Bong (2001: 554) a student who lacks confidence is far more likely to also invest less effort and persistence during the study path. All these indicate that even if (s)he provided adequate scores in terms of IELTS, the standardized test scores set for his/her program were either not high enough for the program, or that the test failed to demonstrate that this individual struggles with producing sentences in English, which seems less probable, since IELTS entails a speaking section, and this particular student did pass that section with a score that was deemed sufficient for the IMDP in question.

However, Dooey (2010: 185) suggests that for standardized tests such as TOEFL and IELTS the minimum score is crucial because it helps to identify the students at risk of failing. For instance, Fox (2009: 36) discovered that lowering the threshold of IELTS scores resulted in a greater chance of students failing their courses. Moreover, Taylor and Geranpayeh (2011: 94) and Deygers et al. (2017: 3) also raise the issue of whether the minimum score for academic lan-

guage proficiency, which in Europe is often set at the B2 level of CEFR (e.g. Green, 2017), is in fact too low. This creates the dilemma of identifying the actual differences in criteria between the CEFR levels (Taylor and Geranpayeh, 2011: 94). If, for instance, B2 is considered to be a good threshold level, then how in practice does it differ from C1 and C2, not to mention the levels below it, as those are the students assumingly not proficient for programs such as the IM-DPs. Hulstijn (2011: 240) attempted to illustrate the CEFR scale (see Figure 20 below) by integrating the activities, as well as the competences, with the intellectual skills required for reaching the different levels from A1 all the way to C2. Figure 20 shows that mere language competence (on the right side of the figure) is not enough to succeed in the same level activities (on the left side), because both of these scales are intertwined with the intellectual skills, shown in the middle. In other words, one cannot reach the highest levels of either of these scales unless one also possesses the intellectual skills that accompany the mastery of both the activities and competences.

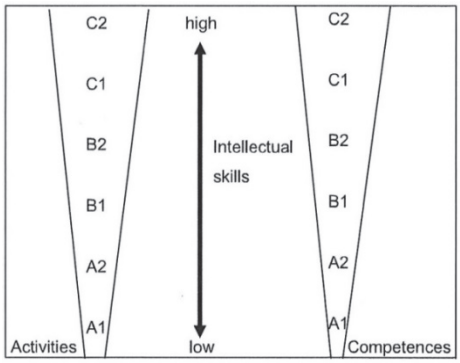

Figure 20 Interpretation of dimensions of the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (Hulstijn, 2011: 240)

Take, for example, an accounting student, who needs to possess the language competence, as well as the ability to cope with the language in actual activities related to accounting but who also requires the intellectual skills related to accounting as a field, in order to reach the higher levels of all the scales. Especially the higher levels of the scale, C1 and C2, cannot be reached without being at the top end of all the scales. For standardized tests challenge is to create tests that would fully address the complex relations between competence, activities and intellectual skills shown in Figure 20. As previously outlined, the standardized tests have been accused of being too general, and thus unable to simulate real-life activities and field-specific contexts. Therefore, a standardized test focusing only on determining a student's CEFR score language competence would fail to incorporate the other two aspects, i.e. activities and intellectual skills.

At this point, one should ask whether a student such as Student15 could be described as a student who was from the outset at the risk of failing regardless of the fact that (s)he passed the filter with his/her IELTS scores. One might even propose that putting him/her in this category is not too far-fetched if con-

sidering all the real-life challenges (s)he has described, all the way from being unable to form sentences during a discussion with his/her supervisor or asking questions in class if something is unclear to him/her to struggling with grammar and writing the master's thesis.

The concept of failing should be critically examined for instance in respect to Student15, as well as Student7 and Student9, whose cases were discussed previously in relation to the standardized tests. If one considers that it has already been over two years since these three students should have graduated, and that quite likely all the three students initially enrolled in a two-year IMDP, instead of a four-year IMDP, and moreover, that they were accepted by to a two-year program, a question emerges: are they merely still at the risk of failing, or have they already failed by not graduating? Of course, this conclusion should not be drawn just because they used the standardized tests as a sort of frame of reference of their academic English skills. Nonetheless, they were the only participants reflecting on their studies and English skills in the program through the lens of these standardized tests, and one might suggest that these particular comments they made merely reveal an important perspective on their academic English skills, and possible skills development, especially when in the light of previous literature and studies. Yet, as Bong and Skaalvik (2003: 7) suggest, one is also forced to consider the possible negative loop created by their negative perceptions of their skills and the resulting negative outcomes.

Although the minimum scores and their suitability can, of course, be debated, it should be acknowledged that all the participants of the present study had in fact met the language requirements set for their programs. In this respect, what is more concerning, or even alarming, is the situation of the 25 students of this particular cohort, i.e. the students who had either not provided any language verification at all, or alternatively who had not passed the standardized test they provided as language verification (Mathies, 2013). Deygers et al. (2017: 21) firmly state that accepting students to programs with inadequate language skills is far from beneficial for the student or the university. In relation to such students, one of the teachers in Fox's (2009: 36) study rather directly stated that students with inadequate language should simply not be accepted and allowed to enter their programs in the first place. However, once a student with language skills that are below the real-world expectations is accepted, the university becomes responsible for enabling the student to reach the real-world expectations in terms of the language (Deygers et al., 2017: 21). Moreover, as noted by Deygers et al. (2017: 21), admitting students who are not at the level required will likely result in additional workload for the student, the program teachers as well as administration. In a study by Kling (2015: 213), some EMI teachers voiced the idea that it is not their problem to adapt their teaching to students who cannot cope with the language.

This section has addressed the participants' frames of reference in respect to their own academic English skills, and the ways in which these students have used these frames. The participants seemed to hold their peers as a dominant frame of reference, as they were judging their own skills against those of their

peers (see section 6.2.2). In addition, the native-speaker ideal, discussed in 6.2.4, was to some extent also present in their answers, as the majority of the participants used it as a standard at least in some ways. The participants' answers also shed light on a noteworthy divide between the past and the future among some of the students (see sections 6.2.5 and 6.2.6). To demonstrate this, the students who were on the verge of graduation were already strongly judging their academic English skills against their future careers and opportunities, whereas students who had yet not graduated took a long step back in this respect, as they kept using the standardized language tests as their lens.

Perhaps among the most surprising findings was also the rather minimal role of teachers as a frame of reference. As considered in section 6.2.3, the IMDP teachers' feedback and grading received little attention in the present study's interviews. This is thought-provoking because it makes one deliberate whether this in any way relates to the fact that the students, or even the IMDP teachers, view language as something so separate from the content studies that this has led the students and teachers to segregate academic language from the content studies. Based on these interview responses, one might infer that the content teachers do not provide much feedback on the students' academic language, and furthermore, one might also gather from the students' responses that students neither perceive their content teachers as a prevalent frame of reference in terms of their own language skills.

Having touched on the issues related to RQ 1a, and in order to move on with the remaining research questions, a closer look is next taken at the participants' self-reported language gains. These gains are dealt with as a means to respond to RQ 1b: *What type of academic English language gains do the students report achieving during their IMDP studies?*

6.3 IMDP students' self-reported academic English skills at the end of their studies

An assumption often held by both EMI teachers and students is that as students study for a couple of years in English they will become considerably better (Wilkinson and Zegers, 2006: 65). However, according to Wilkinson and Zegers (2006: 65-66), this underlying assumption has not been tested to see if it holds true in reality. Scholars such as Turner (2004), Fox (2009), Dooey (2010), Terraschke and Wahid (2011), Dewey et al. (2014), Deygers et al. (2017) and Lauridsen (2017), among others, have studied and discussed this myth from various perspectives. There are indicators of students developing their skills during EMI (or other L2 instruction) and according to Turner (2004: 99) language simply grows with content. Nonetheless, what becomes apparent in literature is that the relationship between exposure to English and students' automatic skills development is by no means as simple or straightforward as is often falsely assumed. Therefore, in order to see if the participants' experiences are in line with

Turner's (2004: 99) observation, the present study now turns to what type of academic English language gains the 15 participants themselves reported achieving during their IMDP studies.

These issues related to RQ 1b are especially intriguing when taking into account that students' abilities, or the lack of them, are often viewed as a core attribute in their success or failure. Attribution theory, discussed in section 4.3, is applied here, because it aims to make sense of students' past experiences and how they link to their future achievement efforts (Dörnyei, 2001: 57; Dörnyei, 2003: 8-9). From its early stages onwards, attribution theory has evolved around individuals' own judgments of why a particular incident occurred (Pastore, 1952, as cited in Weiner, 1972: 203), and here it should be emphasized that these judgments, or constructs, are always subjective, and thus they may vary from one individual to another (Weiner, 2004: 23; Williams, Boulder, Poulet and Maun, 2004: 19). Researchers also constantly need to bear in mind that these attributes may not reflect the real reasons, but rather that they are always interpretations made by individuals (Williams et al, 2004: 20).

Regardless of these viewpoints, the appeal of this theory, especially in respect to education and studies such as the present one, lies in the fact that research has managed to demonstrate rather convincingly that causal attributions have an effect on individuals' ways of undertaking achievement activities as well as the intensity and persistence related to these activities (Weiner, 1972: 213-214). Moreover, as noted previously, it has been suggested that sometimes the interpretations of attributes, even if they are only loosely or not at all linked to real attributes, are far more influential than the real reasons (Williams et al., 2004: 20). By taking these two intriguing aspects into consideration, attribution theory is likely to provide insights into the paths of the15 participants in their IMDPs.

This chapter focuses on how the students' report on the possible language gains they have achieved during their IMDP studies. As discussed earlier, abilities, or at least individuals' perceived abilities, are integral attributes in students' study success or failure (e.g. Weiner, 1985; Weiner, 2004; McClure et al., 2011: 72), which is why in the following the participants' responses and thoughts on the issue are presented.

6.3.1 Language grows with content during the IMDP studies

First, many of the participants did provide support for Turner's (2004: 99) idea about language growing while students are engaging in their study contents, as becomes apparent in the following excerpts:

> *Student4: I haven't been like actively trying to develop it. But I remember when I was applying and we had to do a research proposal and I had* (mentions an English-speaking country) *friend who looked over and helped me make it more academic and I definitely needed a lot help and now I don't. Like I am able to write on my own so I can definitely see improvement*

Student6: Well my weakness has always been writing.
Interviewer: Uh-hum
Student6: It's still my weakness but I would say I have developed a lot.
I: Okay, yeah
Student6: It's basically not comparable to the stage that I came in to now.

Student10: Yes, they have they have, they have definitely developed, big time
Interviewer: Yeah, yeah
Student10: Big time development on my, my language skills
I: Yeah
Student10: They were much more weaker
I: Yeah?
Student10: Even when I started my master's degree program
I: Yeah
Student10: So, even though I was already two years here those two years, they became more official academic
I: Uh-hum
Student10: They developed in the academical way because of the communicate in English outside when you go, with friends for a coffee it's much more easier than
I: Yeah, yeah
Student10: Presenting or, talking or writing in
I: Yeah
Student10: Academic Engl- academic language

Student10: …also the writing of your thesis of course which is, well, it is a pain in the ass always but you know it's, you're doing something on your own so you're producing something
Interviewer: Uh-hum
Student10: So it's kind of, it's productive and you're learning a lot, especially academically
I: Yeah
Student10: Using your English -wise
I: Uh-hum
Student10: I mean, I think I've learned the most from, for academic English from my thesis because you, you have to write, like you're a, researcher so

Student15: Okay but I think for the positive now that I am like really much comfortable talking in English. It's because like all like in my degree program I have to talk in English and it's not like I always keep my mouth shut if I have to ask a question.
Interviewer: Yeah
Student15: But sometimes I just find the courage to ask a question. But the confidence I have gained is like…a lot. I am much more comfortable with speaking English

Student15: Well I would say that now I am a little more confident when I talk in English

Interviewer: Uh-hum
Student15: But I won't say that I am…I won't grade myself 5/5 but 2 or 3 out of 5. Because I still feel a little shy and when I am about to talk and make up sentences
I: Yeah
Student15: But that feeling has reduced very significant amount ever since I came to Finland

These participants, Student4, Student6, Student10, and Student15, all report on their development during the two years in their program with rather strong, and above all positive, terms. Though these interview extracts illustrate only these participants' beliefs or convictions, instead of necessarily showing any objective development of their academic English skills, these core concepts of self likely do shed light on their learning and performance (e.g. Zimmerman, 2000: 89; Bong, 2001: 553–554; Schunk and Pajares, 2001: 2; Bong and Skaalvik, 2003: 7; Zajacova, Lynch and Espenshade, 2005: 679). All this has the potential to support the idea that student taking part in an EMI will consequently develop their English skills simultaneously while learning about the content.

Moreover, eight other participants also provided some support for this, although with slightly more cautious comments, as demonstrated below:

Student1: Yes. Uh…positively in terms that I can perform better in public speech and presentation so I feel more comfortable speaking English in front of many people. Uh my writing…I don't think there was something negative it's just sometimes I need more time to think when I am writing. That's all. It's not something negative, definitely not

Student1: I can answer this definitely…I think I have improved my English pronunciation and maybe my speaking skills. But sometimes in terms of my reading skills I have lost it. I was better in the past.
Interviewer: Uh-hum, yeah
Student1: I am of course…I can write academically but before I also when I was (mentions her profession) *I was more aware of the grammar I knew the rules really clearly in my head. But now I think I've lost this so sometimes I need to go back to my grammar books and remember, but I think my speaking skills have improved a lot*

Student1: Because sometimes I didn't know some good words to use but when it comes to research papers I still like wonder did I write it well and something like that.

Student3: Yeah, so I would say that, one of my greatest strengths in, with academical English would be, in academical presentations
Interviewer: Uh-hum, yeah
Student3: Public speaking
I: Yeah

Student3: And weakness, would be, writing

Student4: Right, I think…uh…well obviously it's a lot stronger than it was since I did my BA in (mentions L1)
Interviewer: Uh-hum
Student4: And didn't have any experience of the academic side. But uh…I mean I get by well
I: Yeah
Student4: But it's not like still not my strong side

Student5: It's not excellent I wouldn't say excellent but it's
Interviewer: Uh-hum
Student5: Good enough at least to the my master thesis

Student7: Well academic English is quite good but I would say little bit like presentation skills not so good.
Interviewer: Yeah, yeah
Student7: And maybe now I am writing my thesis so not so good in research like research writing and like technical writing. Rest is like quite good.
I: Okay, yeah
Student7: Communication and understanding are good
Student8: In writing, especially, not in writing emails or, stuff like this but writing academic
I: Yeah
Student8: Papers
I: Uh-hum
Student8: It's is not always enough
I: Uh-hum
Student8: And sometimes you might complete your paper, but then realize when you read you didn't give that much fluency to your writing so
I: Yeah
Student8: Somehow writing fluently is the
I: Okay
Student8: Is the highest difficulty

Student11: I think after these two years, I especially I think this semester I suddenly felt my reading speed
Interviewer: Yeah
Student11: Become really fast compared to, the criteria is me,
I: Yeah, yeah
Student11: When I was reading in 2013. And now
I: It has really changed?
Student11: It has really changed and also this semester I still had two courses and I felt it became a little easier for me to follow the course assignments
I: Okay
Student11: And class discussion

Student13: And about the writing skills, for, my for me, as (mentions nationality) *people*
Interviewer: Uh-hum
Student13: Maybe we're good at, good at grammar skills
I: Yeah
Student13: So, I don't feel so much difficulty about it. And also, uh we have a lot of writing assignments so that improved, my writing spills, skills more

These interview extracts reveal that also these participants had noticed some development during their program, even though for instance Student1 still acknowledges that she requires more time with his/her writing assignments, and that participants, such as Student1, Student3, and Student7, have achieved language gains only in certain areas while they may still struggle in others. Nonetheless, participants such as Student4, Student5, Student7, Student11 and Student13 all reported some progress, however modest, at the time of the interviews.

6.3.2 Students hiding in the dark due to language problems

However, the present study also includes signs of the other extreme. Some of the interview responses do not necessarily support the assumption that merely taking part in an EMI program results in an improved level of a student's English skills. Turner (2004: 99) brought up the idea of students "hiding in the dark" and quite likely the following three students, who seemingly have been challenged by the use of English throughout their studies in the program, could be put in this category;

Student13: So, for me, uh, for example, uh, talking with, our, my, my, my classmates, in English, sometimes I feel somehow difficulty
Interviewer: Uh-hum
Student13: Because, I don't, I cannot, I cannot, uh make the quick questions
I: Yeah, yeah
Student13: So, after coming back to, our place
I: Uh-hum
Student13: Uh, I, thinking about it in (mentions L1)
I: Uh-hum
Student13: So, uh, I really, think, uh, I, uh I would have uh, I would have said something
I: Yeah
Student13: More
I: Yeah
Student13: So, sometimes it uh, it affects negatively

Student14: Okay, well, I feel, because, I don't have enough vocabulary, so I sometimes, feel difficulty, reading scientific articles
Interviewer: Yeah

Student14: But, uh, just attending the lecture it's ok
I: Uh-hum
Student14: I can understand everything and
I: Yeah
Student14: Yeah, so maybe my listening is okay
I: Yeah
Student14: Yeah, and also, I have a little, uh difficulties in writing
I: Uh-hum
Student14: Uh, I can write something, but it's not, it's like, a, essay, not the scientific article
I: Okay
Student14: So I need someone to check it

Student14: Uh because sometimes, uh because I didn't mention about speaking skill but I also feel it's really difficult to, explain, uh, my feelings, in English
Interviewer: Yeah
Student14: So sometimes, I really want to discuss, more deeply
I: Yeah
Student14: But it's really difficult
I: Yeah
Student14: Yeah, in the lecture, or the group or
I: Yeah
Student14: Yeah, so, that maybe, influenced negatively

Student15: I should be able to like make sentences at the right time and explain myself clearly. Similarly when I have like my thesis meetings is like uh…it's like after the meeting is done I think like "oh these are the all that I had to say but I couldn't figure out the sentence"
Interviewer: Okay
Student15: So I just write them and send an email to my supervisor after the meeting.
I: Yeah, okay
Student15: So I think that's where somewhere where I lack negatively.

These interview extracts clearly demonstrate the most common EMI challenges, since according to Kurtán (2004: 133) and Hellekjær (2008: 69) productive skills, such as writing and speaking are often the most notable language hurdles for EMI students. If taking into consideration that of the 15 participants, three clearly indicate that even after two years of study in their IMDP, they still struggle with basic language issues (i.e. taking part in discussions and posing questions, see Student13 and Student15) and academic writing to the extent that Student14 needs external support, one cannot help but question the language gains these students have achieved. Furthermore, according to Dooey (2010: 169), exactly these types of language challenges also negatively affect the students' integration into their new academic context, in these cases the participants' programs. A case in point is that Dooey (2010: 169) found that

not being able to contribute to class or group discussions in a meaningful way, or lacking the skills to articulate one's more sophisticated ideas, not to mention concepts of a more abstract nature, have added to students' feelings of frustration. A further negative outcome has also been that students have failed to properly adjust to their program (Dooey, 2010: 169).

These issues are concerning, especially because the main motive of many students for joining EMI programs is to develop their English skills (Kym and Kym, 2014: 53–54; Menghetti, 2016: 29). And when considering the motives of the programs for offering EMI, namely, sharing cultural practices and backgrounds, as well as nurturing knowledge (Fabricius, Mortensen and Haberland, 2017: 59), one is left to wonder if these ideals are met for these students if they cannot even take part in discussions in class or with their supervisors.

6.3.3 The importance of students having an adequate entry level of academic English

Interestingly, many of the participants also confirmed the viewpoint found in the literature (see Terraschke and Wahid, 2011: 174; Dewey et al., 2014: 40, 43, 56) regarding the relevance of students' entry-level for further language gains. Five participants specifically mentioned their solid entry-level of English skills when reflecting on their skills development in the program:

> *Student4: Yeah I don't know like I mean we didn't like have any writing stuff in the first…uh…fall semester and I think like if you're not a strong writer like myself I mean I guess the people who apply and get accepted are kind of good at writing*
> *Interviewer: Uh-hum*
> *Student4: But I don't know if…Because for me I mean I struggled at first because I hadn't written in English a lot before then you get used to it really fast*
> *I: Yeah, yeah*
> *Student4: So I don't know if for someone who isn't… like really…yeah I guessed it could be harder in the beginning*

> *Student5: Well, my level before coming here is it of course helped it you know it didn't, negatively affect*
> *Interviewer: Yeah*
> *Student5: It in any way*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student5: But it, I could say positively uh positively*

> *Student9: I would say before coming here my English skills were pretty good anyways but I've never written academic text*
> *Interviewer: Yeah*
> *Student9: As in essays and assignments and now the master's thesis and I had one of the courses which was one the courses research communication in English*
> *I: Uh-hum*

Student9: So based on that and obviously the experience of writing all the assignments in English for different courses. I've gotten pretty good at writing academic kind of texts, publishable research or that level.

Student9: I would say that initially you know coming from my background, I was this creative writing person. I used to write a lot of blogs.
Interviewer: Yeah
Student9: And even books and those kind of short stories and coming to a program where you have to write factual information and these kind of stuff I initially did really bad at writing the assignments because I wasn't used to this kind of stuff. But it didn't really matter to published research which academic writing is all about. But now I'm pretty good.
I: Yeah, yeah. So that has developed?
Student9: It has developed

Student10: Well, mostly positively of course
Interviewer: Uh-hum?
Student10: Because I already had, let's say good basis, so, it was, I didn't have, I didn't have struggles if that's your question
I: Yeah
Student10: I didn't have to struggle with the English
I: Uh-hum
Student10: I didn't have to cope with not understanding
I: Um-hum, yeah, yeah
Student10: This, I didn't have this kind of problems
I: Yeah, yeah
Student10: So I would think it was quite positive that I had already, quite a good knowledge of English right, right away, and, this, this knowledge developed through – years so
I: Yeah
Student10: I would say that posi- it was positive that I knew and positive that I also learn more

Student12: Uh I think, before I came I, I have high proficiency in English, uh, but, when I enter, after my, two years studying I, I learn to have more, uh, skills that is for, paper, writing
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student12: And also more formal, in academic English
I: Yeah
Student12: Yes and I think I proved more, not on the vocabularies but on the structuring of, the sentences and paragraphs
I: Okay
Student12: For, academic, uh writings

The phrases used in these interview extracts are in line with the view in the literature that emphasizes how an adequate entry level contributes to the students' opportunities for further development. Therefore, one is yet again faced

with the issue of screening students as effectively as possible prior to accepting them to the programs. In the participants' responses, there appears to be some signs of a loop, which is also visible in much of the literature (e.g. Terraschke and Wahid, 2011; Dewey et al, 2014). Many of this study's participants also advocate the importance of good entry-level English skills for possible future language gains. This also seems to function the other way around, in other words, if students have inadequate entry-level skills, the further language gains are also more difficult to achieve, meaning also that the core aims of various EMI stakeholders are not achieved either.

Here, as in the discussion related to the standardized tests in section 6.2.6., it could be suggested that an easy way out of this negative loop would be to simply not accept students with such poor skills. In other words, programs should set high enough entry requirements, (Bretag, 2007: 19), moving, for instance, from the B2 level to the C1 level. A similar idea is also presented by Hellekjær (2004: 159) and Turner (2004: 99). However, as Bretag (2007: 19) suggests, for instance Australian institutions are afraid of having fewer international students coming to their programs. There is obviously a financial dimension to this issue that is of concern to many other countries as well. If a higher entry level in terms of the language is not an option, then Hellekjær (2004: 159), along with Pulcini and Campagna (2015: 73), propose a further screening, or some type of diagnostic assessment, of students' English proficiency, which, for IMDPs, would mean assessing academic English.

Fox (2009) has, for instance, studied locally administered placement tests for EAP courses, which aimed at gaining information for students' individual learning profiles (ibid. 34), and thus assist EAP teachers to become more aware of their students' strengths and weaknesses already prior to starting a course. The majority of the teachers in Fox's study (2009: 35) reported that the pre-diagnostic enabled them to focus specifically on the EAP themes and skills that their group needed support with. One teacher described this as a successful micro-level approach to teaching, because with the help of all the information from the diagnostic test, the teacher was able to focus on individuals, instead of just a general EAP group. Yet not all of the teachers were fully convinced that this pre-testing of EAP worked. For one, some of them expressed their concerns about students becoming demotivated by their poor results in comparison to their peers (Fox, 2009: 34). Two, some teachers were slightly demotivated themselves to discover the very low level of some of their students.

However, it is worth asking if these demotivation issues would be the lesser of two evils, if it is so that severe psychological outcomes are nevertheless likely awaiting the students entering programs with inadequate language skills, and consequently receiving the status of being a problem case (Murray, 2010: 344). As noted by Bretag (2007: 17), Evans and Green (2007: 15), and Murray (2013: 300), these so-called problem cases may often suffer from decreased confidence and self-esteem, as well as anxiety or even fear of failing, and in the worst case scenario this leads to students dropping out from their program entirely (e.g. Van Leeuwen, 2008: 8; Murray, 2013: 300).

Overall, it seems that students' language gains do not magically appear in EMI, but rather require a certain type of favorable platform for the students' skills to develop. Consequently, in order to answer RQ 1b – *What type of academic English language gains do the students report achieving during their IMDP studies*? – one might suggest that language gains, either significant or more modest, are possible in EMI, but in order to achieve them, it is of great essence that students' entry level is already high enough for the further language gains to manifest themselves. It is, nevertheless, equally relevant to remember that, as the study participants' reports on their academic English skills show, EMI does not automatically result in academic language gains.

6.4 The role of IMDP students' effort in their academic English development

After having established how the participants viewed their abilities, their effort, which is also listed as a core attribute embedded in attribution theory by, for instance, Weiner (1985) and McClure et al. (2011: 72) is discussed next. In general, academic work, and studying at a university, is thought to require a certain degree of autonomy from the students (Blue, 2010: 2). According to Boughey (2000: 282–283), students' own role, and all in all their concept of learning, strongly affect the level of how comfortable the students end up feeling in their new academic discourse, such as their IMDP. Boughey (2000: 283) remarks that knowledge is, for many students, a commodity, one the university is selling to its students, and often this puts the students in a position where they feel that they just need to take in the information from their teachers. This is intriguing when considering academic English, and therefore it was particularly insightful to learn more about how these IMDP students construct their own role during their studies in the program, and especially in relation to their academic English language gains. As the headings of the following sections indicate, the students' own effort played a pivotal, but diverse, role in the interviews. In order to answer the present study's RQ 1c – *How do the IMDP students construct their own role and effort in respect to their academic English language gains during their IMDP studies*? – the issue of effort is more thoroughly addressed.

6.4.1 Students challenged by grasping the concepts of one's own role and effort

In two interviews of the present study, the question concerning students' own role in terms of developing their academic English was left completely unanswered. This was because those two participants, Student13 and Student14, did not comprehend the question at all, even after I had made an effort to rephrase the question and elaborate further on the ideas of one's own role and effort, as

is demonstrated in the two interview extracts taken from the interview with Student14;

Student14: Own role?
Interviewer: Your, your personal role in terms of developing your own skills, when it comes to academic English?
Student14: My own, role?
I: Yeah
Student14: Sorry, I cannot catch you

Interviewer: Meaning that is there something, again you can look back at the two years that you've been here, is there something that you think, you have done, to develop, in particular, your own skills something for example on your own time or, your own effort in a way how do you see, that relating to then, how your uh skills develop?
Student14: Uh, my time or?
I: For example outside the English courses that you've taken can you see something in there
Student14: Uh, outside?
I: Um-hum
Student14: Uh, You mean in this two years?
I: Yeah, yeah
Student14: Uh (long pause)
I: So for example something that you have done, independently, in order to work on your academic English skills not related to something that a course, requires from you or, sort of extra thing or
Student14: Concerning academic?
I: Academic English, yeah
Student14: Uh (long pause)

This question seemed to pose no challenge to the remaining 13 participants, and even after spending a while negotiating the meaning of the question regarding one's own role, neither Student13 nor Student14 managed to come up with an answer. Therefore, their thoughts on this section of the present study cannot be included, although it is tempting to read into the fact that they were unable to comprehend the question in the first place. However, as remarked by Weiner (2004: 28), one should not jump to conclusions when interpreting any attributes, or in this case the lack of internal attributes, since it always boils down to various cultural and personal factors which may not be evident to the researcher.

Yet it is interesting to consider that both Student13 and Student14 are originally from the same country, and consequently likely from a similar educational culture, which led me to consider whether this might have an effect on the fact that they were the only ones unable to respond to this question. Moreover, the interview extracts above show no evidence of the strong sense of self discussed by Bong (2001:554), one cannot help but question whether this might also provide insights into these students' lack of effort and persistence, and

with that also lower level of academic performance (Bong, 2001:554), since neither of these participants managed to graduate within the given two-year timeframe. Moreover, one is also forced to consider the fact that if one's own role seemed such a distant concept to these two students, it must have also affected their studies from the viewpoint of them not feeling comfortable in their program (Boughey, 2000:283). As noted above, however intriguing it would be to draw on these common factors of the two participants, the interview did not shed further light on this issue, so the present study will focus on the remaining 13 participants who did provide further insights into their own role.

6.4.2 Students' varied understanding of what qualifies as effort

Prior to moving on to the students who specifically emphasized their self-related attributes, or their lack of them, an aspect brought up in the interviews with two of the participants, Student3 and Student4, ought to be addressed first. These two participants are somehow lingering between making and not making an effort in terms of academic English, but what is particularly attention-grabbing is that both of them downplay the effort side, as the interview extracts below demonstrate:

Student3: I think that, it- I didn't have an intentional uh, aim
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student3: To do that exactly but, I- by reading in English all time
I: Um-hum
Student3: …difficult articles, books, or even novels
I: Um-hum
Student3: It helped me, to
I: Yeah, yeah
Student3: To establish that but no I didn't have a, particular plan
I: Yeah, yeah
Student3: To do that

Student4: Right well…Writing my thesis here uh… I used a lot of phrase bank like I think I'm good at looking stuff up. I can recognize when something isn't like correct academically
Interviewer: Yeah
Student4: And then I can like replace it, if I have like a source for that
I: Yeah
Student4: But it's not like I come up with the phrases by myself
I: Okay
Student4: But I'm good at looking and recognizing replacements

Interviewer: Okay, how about if you think about yourself, so your own role in terms of developing your academic English skills?
Student4: Right, pretty passive. I would think like for me…I'm good at picking up phrases and stuff so for me it's more like a natural process

I: Yeah
Student4: And I feel like I honestly haven't even been reading a lot during my studies because you don't have to like a lot of…we don't have exams or anything so you…

As becomes evident, both of these participants describe what they did in order to develop their academic English skills. At the same time, they both dismissed their own efforts. Williams et al. (2004: 27–28) have emphasized that individuals, such as in this case Student3 and Student4, may have widely varying definitions of ideas such as effort. Following this line of thought, one might suggest that because Student3 reported completely lacking a specific plan or all the things that Student4 did came rather naturally for him/her, meant to these participants themselves that they did not make enough of an effort, enough so that it would be worth emphasizing when asked about their own role. In other words, perhaps they would define effort as something which needs to be consciously planned, and that simply doing something, be that reading all the time or actively looking for words and phrases, does not qualify as effort if it is too natural or unplanned.

It is clear that individuals may have very different definitions and perceptions of effort. Even though a participant may have done a lot less or spent less time on academic English than other participants, that same participant may perceive this as effort in far stronger terms.

6.4.3 Students placing themselves at the heart of their study success

The remaining 11 participants had seemingly clear ideas of their own role, or the lack of one. The interview extracts including their thoughts and ideas related to themselves as a significant attribute to the participants' success in the program are first presented and discussed. These participants showed acknowledgement of the importance of autonomy (Blue, 2010: 2) in comments such as the following:

Student1: I have a main responsibility of my own improvement. It's mostly me and everything else can be like supplementary. But I think… it's really up to the student to spend some time at home to get better in their writing and speaking and everything. Yeah. So grammar books and everything

Student6: Well, yeah everything is about me…I mean if basically anyone gives you some idea you still have to study to do it.
Interviewer: Uh-hum yeah
Student6: That's a very nice real thing in life.
I: Yeah
Student6: It's not…you know the English academic studies is no exception

Student6: Yeah, I mean I have learned all that I could regarding that course already by myself and it was really difficult if the course came much earlier it would have really, really helped

Student8: You, well, the degree offers you the, the your English but then you're responsible for yourself, I, I mean that you can easily, get the work done but you have always to look for, subject - to look for
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student8: Something more, something, to improve
I: Yeah
Student8: Professor don't specifically ask

Student11: I think generally speaking at least it develops a lot
Interviewer: Yeah
Student11: If compared to two years ago and mainly I would I want to first it's for my own effort it's for my own effort

Student11: I don't have regrets of my own doings
Interviewer: Yeah, yeah
Student11: In the past two years. I think I made the maximum use of time
I: Um-hum
Student11: And did a lot of things.

These students report that they themselves have had a crucial role in their studies, and in academic English in particular. These interview extracts above speak volumes about the students' own effort, or their perceived effort, during the two-year program. It has been suggested that students contributing their success to their own effort, which is something that the students themselves can control, increases their motivation and diligence in their studies (McClure et al., 2011: 71). Furthermore, according to Fox (2009: 37), motivation has been seen as such an influential factor in respect to student's study success, that it has even outweighed the influences of students' language proficiency.

Such aspects can be detected among these four participants, since one of them, Student8, managed to graduate within the given timeframe and with an excellent thesis grade, and the remaining three, Student1, Student6 and Student11, all graduated within less than three years with either "very good" or "good" thesis grades. These cases also support a self-serving bias (Weiner, 1972: 204; Williams et al, 2004: 20; McClure et al., 2011: 71, 76), according to which students often view their success to be the result of their own high effort, whereas failure is thought to result from more external factors. These external factors are discussed later, but the self-serving bias in terms of the internal factors, here the participants' own effort, is reinforced in the present study, especially when considering the following, more detailed descriptions of students' own efforts:

Student1: But yes I think it helped me a lot, especially the courses I decided to choose
Interviewer: Yeah
Student1: This year, they helped me definitely

Student2: And it's like, uh, when I'm writing okay, I know what I'm writing what- I'm heading towards the, kind of English I'm using
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student2: So, I'm really particular about that, so that's maybe, the strength in the academic aspect that I'm always particular about
I: Yeah
Student2: Using words, vocabularies, synonyms and all those kind of things I'm really
I: Yeah
Student2: Particular about it, I always look for a synonym that really, explain, uh what I'm saying so that people will understand, my communication
I: Yeah, yeah
Student2: So in that aspect I think, I have the strength
I: Um-hum
Student2: When it comes to general improvement I always want to improve it, no matter where, uh, no matter the level
I: Yeah
Student2: I always want to improve

Student5: It's not excellent I wouldn't say excellent but it's
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student5: Good enough at least to the my master thesis
I: Okay
Student5: Referred to some manuals or, dictionaries when I, when I needed and sometimes get confused for example

Student6: Well I would say the strengths were helping pretty much uh because you basically have to read research papers
Interviewer: Yeah
Student6: And the writing was also important but it wasn't negative because I was constantly trying to improve myself,
I: Yeah
Student6: So even though at the beginning it was very hard then I got the idea of how to develop and work it out…

Student8: Well, I didn't mention so far, I did a course intermediate academic English
Interviewer: Yeah
Student8: From this university
I: Yeah
Student8: While studying a master so, yeah I, I, I felt that I had anyway to improve my English so
I: Um-hum
Student8: To know how to structure
I: Um-hum
Student8: Essays or something like that
I: Yeah

Student8: So, looking back, I've done enough but, then, of course there is always something you would like to but there is also the time
I: Yeah
Student8: You have to decide, either you, you complete your studies with a good grade and
I: Um-hum
Student8: In, in one year and half, two years or, you prolong the studies and
I: Um-hum
Student8: You cannot do everything
I: Yeah, yeah
Student8: It's a trade-off

Student8: Yeah, well, I, I had to read my thesis a lot of times
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student8: Not, not to point the all mistakes
I: Um-hum
Student8: But to, sometimes I had to change some things because I realize that, there are several step you write, well of course it's not, my or our, I guess it's language
I: Yeah
Student8: So, you write first and then you read and then you read again but you never, get, make the text very fluent
I: Okay
Student8: Or at least weren't enough, it's like
I: Yeah
Student8: It took a while
I: Yeah
Student8: But it's just a matter of time and of course there is always something to improve but

Student10: But on the other hand, you know as I already said the language level the teaching level everything and, also the writing of your thesis of course which is, well, it is a pain in the ass always but you know it's, you're doing something on your own so you're producing something
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student10: So it's kind of, it's productive and you're learning a lot, especially academically
I: Yeah
Student10: Using your English -wise
I: Um-hum
Student10: I mean, I think I've learned the most from, for academic English from my thesis because you, you have to write, like you're a, researcher so
I: Yeah, yeah
Student10: You must do it so

Student10: Well I guess it's about, well it's for sure it's first of all it's about reading academic books academic writers on your field
Interviewer: Um-hum

Student10: Is, no matter what is related to your thesis or, to exams or to
I: Yeah
Student10: Anything, so I think this is -- the number one, well, number two is try to use English, but in my case that was quite easy because I had to use English everywhere

Student10: I mean yeah, I think that your own role is try to read, as much as academic literature as you can
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student10: In English and, try to use it if you don't feel confident enough

Student11: I think that's the main reason
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student11: Why I developed
I: Yeah
Student11: In the past two years. Because we have some native speakers in our class
I: Yeah
Student11: So I always posed questions to them
I: Yeah
Student11: Like on Facebook, on class, on a regular meeting.
I: Um-hum
Student11: And I would also like to ask something about English
I: Yeah, yeah
Student11: And also I read a lot during the two years
I: Yeah
Student11: And listen to like BBC radio, BBC documentary a lot. Almost every day.
I: Okay, yeah. So you would say that it has been a big role in terms of...
Student11: Almost the main role

Student12: I think my role is that, uh, I need to constant, constantly, a, research on the, the same topics or the same areas using the
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student12: The right terms
I: Um-hum
Student12: Because I'm in academic and, like (mentions three specific fields related to the IMDP) *so it the terms are sometimes it's a bit different*
I: Um-hum
Student12: And, I think my role is to, making sure that in, specific, specific, area that I use the, same term

These interview extracts go slightly further in displaying the students' own effort, as they illustrate more concrete actions of these participants. All these examples above echo the literature on students' own effort in relation to their language gains. In a similar vein to these interview extracts, Fox (2009: 37) points out that it is important for students to actively make their own strategic deci-

sions regarding their learning, such as choosing certain courses (see Student1 and Student8) and joining study groups (Student11), in order to expose themselves to using the L2 (Student10). Furthermore, Dooey (2010: 188) puts particular emphasis on engaging in activities outside class to develop one's English skills in any way possible, which is basically something that all of these students have reportedly done in one way or another during their studies. One might even claim that, based on these interview extracts, these students, who have independently made an effort in their studies, did not in fact struggle with the Finnish academic freedom, which was identified as a visible challenge in the report conducted on the IMDP students of the University of Jyväskylä (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 14).

Thus far, in terms of the discussion regarding the participants' own role, and especially their own effort, the self-serving bias has been clearly visible in the present interviews, since all the participants presented thus far have been making an effort and, above all ,they have already graduated with grades varying from "good" to "excellent." However, in order to further examine the theme of effort, it is essential to look at interviews that provide a slightly different viewpoint to this theme. First, an interesting contrast is illustrated by an interview extract from Student9.

> *Student9: It's huge to be honest I mean I have had these courses where the professors are really articulate about you have to read 5 articles for next week's lecture and I was reading them not just for the informational context but also making sure how they are doing it so I was reading for the writing…It's sounds like copying a bit but then I was looking at the way the text is structured*
> *Interviewer: Yeah*
> *Student9: And the kind of things that they use and I tried to incorporate that to my style of writing and then in the fourth semester we had this course of academic writing*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student9: And exactly the phrases, that the kind of phrases, our teacher had asked us to use and I realized I had actually picked that up naturally based on reading all those research.*
> *I: Okay, yeah, yeah*
> *Student9: So in a way a huge, huge role*

What is attention-grabbing in respect to Student9 is that throughout his/her interview, in a similar vein to the example presented above, (s)he consistently talked about his/her own effort in actively developing his/her academic English skills. One could even argue that his/her own input in the process of developing the academic English skills played a key role, since by actively engaging in his/her reading and writing assignments, Student9 managed to cope with the studies until (s)he received more support in the form of the academic writing course. This effort seems to have had a positive effect, since (s)he earned only "excellent" grades for the two academic English courses, one com-

pulsory and one elective, which (s)he took part in. And yet, due to reasons that did not come up in the interview, (s)he has still not graduated from the IMDP.

6.4.4 Students (regretting) not making an effort

The other two participants, Student7 and Student15, who have not graduated yet may provide further insight into the theme of effort. Basically, in a sharp contrast to the nine participants, including Student9, whose thoughts on effort have already been discussed, these two participants brought up the lack of their own effort:

> *Student7: My own input is like maybe it's like more natural…With time it gets better*
> *Interviewer: Yeah*
> *Student7: And I wouldn't put some special effort into it. But I think with time it gets better*

This response diverges from comments made by the other participants, since (s)he has seemingly counted on his/her academic English skills improving over time. Though (s)he does not seem to blame his/her lack of effort, nor does (s)he give any indication of lacking motivation, which is something that according to Williams et al. (2004: 20), students who are not so successful often end up doing. At this juncture, one is thus forced to take into account that Student7 might not have perceived his/her rather low grade of 2 in his/her academic English course as a failure, or that (s)he was not concerned about his/her graduation in the spring of 2015. As noted by Weiner (2004: 28), success and failure can be interpreted and defined very differently by individuals, even if various studies, such as Stoynoff (1997), Klaassen (2001), Ying (2003: 473), Zajacova, Lynch and Espenshade (2005), and McClure et al. (2011) have particularly used grades, and graduation times, as measures of students' success. Nonetheless, following the logic of attributions as observed by Pastore (1952, as cited in Weiner, 1972: 203), if Student7 does not view his/her own effort as crucial to his/her study success, it is also unlikely that the lack of effort had an effect on his/her behavior or actions, which seems to be the case because (s)he assumed (s)he would develop over time.

Student15, a student with a similar track record as Student7, with a low grade for his/her academic English and his/her graduation still pending, nevertheless, expresses rather clearly his/her regrets in terms of his/her own effort:

> *Student15: But still I used to hold back and I think okay I shouldn't have done that because here nobody cares how you say so…I should have been more talkative*
> *Interviewer: hmm yeah*
> *Student15: And I think that would have helped me like gaining more confidence*
> *I: Okay*
> *Student15: And improve my oral skills. And similarly in academics, I should have not been like this…uh…lack of knowledge shouldn't hold me down.*

I: Yeah
Student15: And I should have talked lot and ask if there is confusion
I: Yeah, yeah
Student15: And not worry about sentence structuring and stuff like that
I: Yeah
Student15: And just go with it

Already within this rather short interview extract, (s)he is constantly referring to things (s)he should or should not have done. His/her responses have the potential to mirror, at least to some extent, the catch-22 situation discussed earlier. Fox (2009: 33) discovered in his study that students' difficulties with the language often led to decreasing effort, such as the reduced interaction described by Student15, and consequently in a lack of progress in the students' studies, which is also something that occurred with Student15. In this sense, Student15's thoughts are also in line with Weiner's (1972: 204) initial ideas regarding the link between lack of effort and failure, as well as with the findings of Bong (2001: 554) and Williams et al. (2004: 20), as according to them lack of effort was one of the core reasons students who did not feel successful used when explaining their situation.

To answer RQ 1c, it is clear that, even among these 15 participants, students' ways of constructing their own effort varied greatly. Even if a majority of the participants, all in all nine students, specifically promoted their own effort, the interview responses also contained the viewpoints of two participants seemingly not even comprehending the concept of their own role, and another two participants listing their efforts, but conversely not labelling them as effort per se. Furthermore, two participants openly expressed their own lack of effort. This variety in the students' ways of constructing their own effort was especially interesting considering the students' overall academic performance. An illustration of this, as came up earlier, is that the two students who constructed a rather passive role for themselves were among the three students who had yet to graduate from their IMDP.

Isabelli-Garcıa (2006) and Dewey et al. (2014: 38) specifically highlighted that individual students may have different experiences of studying abroad and developing their language skills, even when participating in the same program. Individual students naturally have their age and gender, but also their characteristics related to intercultural sensitivity and learning, not to mention their overall personality (Dewey et al., 2014: 38). All of these sides to individual students are bound to have an effect on their effort, and consequently on their learning experiences, and thus language gains. As previously noted, when one deals with real people, one is more often than not dealing simultaneously with a variety of factors and with multiple attributes (McClure et al., 2011: 79).

7 EXTERNAL ATTRIBUTES: TEACHERS (ACADEMIC) ENGLISH SKILLS AND EMI IN A NON-ENGLISH COUNTRY

Attributes also come in the form of external factors, which manifest themselves in all shapes and sizes for individual students (e.g. Weiner, 2004; Williams et al., 2004; McClure et al., 2011). Attributes can be either internal or external, but they can also be changeable or unchangeable, or respectively controllable or uncontrollable. According to Williams et al. (2004: 19-20), attributes that are seen as external but also as unchangeable and uncontrollable are likely to play an ever more visible role than the aforementioned internal attributes, such as abilities (see 6.3.), and effort (see 6.4). Therefore, in order to learn more about the 15 participants and their paths in their programs, the external attributes they brought up during the interviews are examined. Chapter 7 answers RQ 2 – *What external factors do the IMDP students attribute their study success and/or failure to in terms of their IMDP studies?*

7.1 The importance of teachers' (academic) English skills in EMI

Thus far the present study has mostly focused on the participants' own (in)adequate academic English skills or how these 15 participants seemed to view their peers' academic English skills. However, during the interviews a third dimension arose regarding academic English skills, since many of the participants had at least something to say regarding their teachers' (academic) English skills. Even though there is plenty of research on the importance of testing students' entry level of English, teachers are rarely asked to prove their English skills prior to embarking on teaching in English (Dafouz and Smit, 2016). This was also the case in 2015 at the time of the interviews regarding the teachers of the IMDPs, even if much of the literature, such as Wilkinson and Zegers (2006: 65-66), Hellekjær (2008: 72), and Gunn et al. (2011: 1) have emphasized that teachers' academic English skills, or the lack of them, also play an integral role

in the overall success or failure of EMI programs, such as the IMDPs. This is particularly thought-provoking, and of great importance when adopting Jacobs' (2006: 145-146) thoughts on teachers being important insider models for their students when inducting them into the academic discipline in question and to its ways of speaking and writing about the field. Jacobs (2006: 145-146) even claims this to be the best way to teach the students about their field and its discourses.

In contrast to much of the literature on EMI as well as to that on attribution theory, two participants noted that their teachers' English skills played no significant role in their own studies. Student3 noted directly that his/her teachers' academic English skills had no role in his/her studies, and Student7 remarked regarding the same theme that "I don't think that has affected in any way." The latter participant also noted in relation to his/her teachers that "I think most of them can speak quite good… and I can understand," which would indicate that (s)he interpreted the theme of the effect of teachers' English skills merely from the viewpoint of the effect translating into something negative, since (s)he commented on the teachers' skills in a positive sense, but simultaneously denied there being any effect on his/her own studies.

In contrast to this, seven participants did interpret this theme from the viewpoint of their teachers' language skills having a positive effect on their own learning and development of academic English skills. For instance, when asked about this effect Student8 simply stated that "it was good" and Student14 went into a bit more detail by noting that since his/her teachers were not native-speakers of English it was "really easy to understand."

However, most of the students who reported a positive effect of their teachers' English skills focused on a certain individual teacher who seemingly represented this positive effect to these participants. These positive effects are illustrated below:

Student2: I really, I really admire her level of English
Interviewer: Yeah
Student2: And her professionalism
I: Um-hum
Student2: And uh I took a course where she was teaching, now she's no more teaching, so, and I really enjoy it, I mean sitting on the, her, and listening, the listening the level of English and how she communicate so
I: Yeah
Student2: It's really, I think in that program, I had a very good grade because the level of English in her communication was a kind of like motivation
I: Yeah, yeah
Student2: So I always used to communicate with my friends like wow, I like listening

Student3: It was a very, my supervisor was, excellent and it was very, we did it together
Interviewer: Um-hum, yeah

Student3: And uh, we are both not, non-native speakers so
I: Yeah
Student3: We're trying to correct each other

Student10: Uh overly, very good, very good, especially our main coordinator
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student10: She, she's like, fluent she has
I: Um-hum
Student10: Studies in the (mentions an English-speaking country)

Student12: But uh my supervisor, most of the courses offered by him they was, quite precise on them on the words use
Interviewer: Okay, yeah
Student12: Better to understand

Very clearly, for Student2, the teacher (s)he refers to was creating a so-called wow-effect with her English skills, as Student2 points out, this motivated him/her to learn during the program and enjoy her classes, and even led him/her to achieve a "very good grade because the level of English in her communication was a kind of like motivation." In a similar vein Student3 and Student10 described certain individual teachers in terms of their language skills as "excellent", "very good," and "fluent," and Student12 gave credit to his/her supervisor with slightly more modest terms. In addition to these, Student15 provided an alternative approach to viewing teachers' skills in a positive light, since for him/her the fact that his/her teacher in fact had difficulties with English functioned as an encouraging role model:

Student15: Well I guess well my teachers, they are also not native speakers,
Interviewer: Yeah
Student15: But they do speak clearly so…but they also like…one of my teachers he speaks a little slow
I: Yeah
Student15: And he takes time to like before he speaks and I think that's a good thing but when he speaks he makes perfect sense and it's totally clear
I: Yeah, yeah
Student15: So like looking at him…his example…it shouldn't matter if you take your time before you structure your sentences but it's okay to take time and have long pauses
I: Um-hum
Student15: But as long as the final sentences have meanings…so for me I get this a lot that I talk too fast.
I: Um-hum
Student15: So I think it's kind of a good thing if I can learn myself teach myself like "okay slow your pace and think before you speak

This example, brought up by Student15, was the only one of its kind in the present data, and such viewpoints are not the focus in EMI literature either. However, when looking at Student15 as an individual whose various language challenges, especially related to oral skills, have been revisited at multiple intervals of the present study, one cannot help but put some weight on this viewpoint. Having a teacher with limited speaking skills as a role model enabled Student15 to also view his/her own skills more leniently. As noted previously, these were the aspects that Student15 apparently found challenging during the IMDP studies, even if we are only talking about one role model in his/her case, one can only speculate what his/her study path would have been like without this role model.

In line with the majority of EMI literature (see Klassen and De Graaff, 2001: 281; Wilkinson and Zegers, 2006: 65–66; Meneghetti, 2016: 32–33) the participants of the present study viewed their teachers' language skills, and the effect of those skills, in a negative light, particularly by approaching this effect from the viewpoint of the teachers' language shortcomings and problems. Student2, Student6, Student9, Student10, Student11, and Student13 all talked about their teachers' inadequate language skills affecting their learning during lectures and other contact teaching requiring oral communication skills:

> *Student2: Sometimes, you go for a lecture and you expect more, having had, quality from somewhere you expect that you get…*
> *Interviewer: Um-hum*
> *Student2: The same thing…when the level is also low, then it was… effect you because you don't really understand, you don't get the message very well*
> *I: Yeah, so it can go both ways?*
> *Student2: That is it goes both ways, yeah*

> *Student6: Actually honestly I would say that some of them it hasn't been that good.*
> *Interviewer: Okay, yeah. But do you feel that it has affected your learning? Again I am thinking this either negatively or positively…*
> *Student6: Uh we had this* (mentions a minor subject course) *and sometimes it was very boring and hard to follow the person because of the level of English speaking.*
> *I: Yeah, yeah*
> *Student6: For example this one course we had…the instructor was using "the fact that" a hundred times…I'm not using that phrase anymore in my life because of that. I mean like c'mon*
> *I: So those are the things that you remember?*
> *Student6: It was so disturbing that I can remember it*

> *Student9: And especially some of those courses we have had teachers teaching. I don't know if they are not confident in English but something like that but when they are giving instructions in class they are saying in English and then Finnish,*

so translate the whole thing and that breaks down your chain of thought you just don't get anything that has been taught in the course.

Student9: At the end of the course I realized I didn't learn anything by going to the compulsory lectures so I had to do a lot of on my own and based on friends…So it does affect you, the level of English of the instructor that is taking the course

Student10: And everything, so, we had only one teacher, one, well only one case I could say that the language was a barrier for learning
Interviewer: Okay
Student10: It was only one course and
I: Yeah
Student10: I think it's, it our class's opinion, we have given of this negative, un-fortune negative feedback but
I: Um-hum
Student10: It wasn't that we did, had anything personal it was that
I: Yeah
Student10: You come to the lecture and you don't understand anything
I: Yeah
Student10: And this is the worst thing that could happen
I: Yeah
Student10: Do you know so
I: So just to provide feedback
Student10: Yeah, yeah just to provide feedback so you got to let know, something is not, functioning properly so
I: Yeah
Student10: But, it was only single case I would say
I: Um-hum
Student10: Other than that, it was, more than satisfying

Student11: And for the rest of the teachers they are all Finns, uh…I would say most the teachers don't have a good level of English
Interviewer: Yeah
Student11: Sometimes they have problems expressing themselves and…this is…
I: Has that affected your learning?
Student11: Yeah, definitely. If someone's pronunciation is poor and also he even doesn't know what he wanted to say
I: Yeah
Student11: Definitely I am not interested in a class and sometimes I think…I just leave
I: Um-hum
Student11: Or I had to. I think this happens quite often to me. I skipped a lot of classes during the two years.
I: Okay
Student11: I think it's because I feel…it seems I cannot learn much on the class so I would prefer sleep at home

I: Okay
Student11: Or go for lunch early.

Student11: And I…I wish many Finnish teachers could improve their English ability to better teaching.
I: Yeah, yeah…In your program?
Student11: At least in my program.
I: Yes, yes
Student11: I don't know the situation in other programs.
I: But you can only talk about your own program
Student11: My own program
I: Yeah, yeah
Student11: We have lot of teachers but most are not on a very good level,
I: Yeah
Student11: Especially some older professors.
I: Yeah, yeah
Student11: But of course we can understand they just started English at a late stage

Student13: But sometimes I really think I would have we would have more deeper conversations about the topic. Yeah, so yeah, so that's something that the teachers' English has a role

Student2 summarizes the core ideas of these participants by noting that "you don't really understand, you don't get the message very well," and according to Student2, alongside many other participants, this had an effect on their studies. Many of these responses have unfortunately a rather negative tone in them, but they also mirror EMI challenges discussed by various other scholars as well. For instance, Meneghetti (2016: 32-33) has quite recently particularly brought up teachers' inefficiency related to delivering content as a negative factor in the students' learning process, and the present study provides support for this claim, since the participants report on not being able to take in the content due to their teachers' English skills.

In the cases of Student9 and Student11, this led them to skip the classes because they felt that the classes did not provide any value to them. Student9, for instance, noted that (s)he felt (s)he was learning more on his/her own and with his/her peers, than when (s)he attended the compulsory lectures. Student13's remark concerning the teachers' inability to go deeper into the course topics in English is also rather alarming when considering the quality of the courses, and with that also the overall quality of the programs. A similar concern has been voiced, for instance, by Klaassen and De Graff (2001: 282) and Meneghetti (2016: 32-33), as they drew attention to teachers' lack of flexibility regarding the lecture material, and this causing EMI lectures to merely become lengthy monologues without proper interaction or rapport between the students and their lecturer. Here one of the core drivers of internationalization and EMI strongly emerges: the sharing of knowledge, practices and experiences (e.g.

Fabricius, Mortensen and Haberland, 2017: 592). If teachers, such as the ones referred to by Student13, are unable to share in English the expertise they likely have in their L1, then they are also unable to attain the ideals outlined by Fabricius, Mortensen and Haberland (2017: 592).

In addition to these, some of the participants, such as Student4, Student5, and Student12, tried to elaborate more specifically on which aspects of their teachers' inadequate language skills were most disturbing or negative in terms of their own learning.

> *Student4: Right well…Okay the first thing that comes to mind is that some of them have like kind of weird accents and sometimes it's like even hard to understand what they are saying*
> *Interviewer: Yeah*
> *Student4: I mean like they have like really broad and good…uh vocabularies but they don't…like they have strong accents and it's hard…*
> *I: Yeah. Would you say that it even affects your own learning?*
> *Student4: Not in a big scale but…*
> *I: Um-hum*
> *Student4: Sometimes there's like phrases that like I don't understand*
> *I: Okay*
> *Student4: But they are just like details*
>
> *Student5: Most of the have good English sometimes*
> *Interviewer: Yeah*
> *Student5: It, it would be difficult to understand their accent not the Finnish ones but, Far East*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student5: People teachers from* (mentions two countries)
> *I: Yeah, yeah*
> *Student5: Their accent is quite difficult to understand*
>
> *Student12: Yes I think that really affect, in our seminars we have different teachers and, some teachers they are not so skilled, with, in some courses they're not so skilled with their English so it's, a bit difficult to, be, uh concise on the terms and use of some, specific vocabularies*

Accent was brought up as one prevalent issue, which is not that surprising, since the remarks of Student4 and Student5 are very much in line with the findings by Klaassen and De Graff (2001: 282), Dooey (2010: 190), Hellekjær (2010: 24), Evans and Morrison (2011: 203), as well as Meneghetti, 2016: 32–33). Conversely, the issue related to teachers' mastery of field-specific terminology, as noted by Student12, has interestingly not been so strongly visible in EMI literature, since none of the aforementioned scholars have addressed this aspect, and moreover, Student12 was the only participant to address it in the present study.

Taken as a whole, the participants' experiences are slightly puzzling, especially when one considers that the proficiency level required from staff teaching

in English at the University of Jyväskylä is as high as C1 of the CEFR scale (JYU Language Policy, 2012: 5, as cited in Westerholm and Räsänen, 2015: 134). What makes this perhaps even more concerning is the fact that the Internal Evaluation (2014), which encompassed interviews with a far larger group of IMDP students than the present study, came to the very same conclusion regarding this issue. According to the report, especially PhD students with only little teaching experience, as well as staff with a strong research focus, were criticized for their inadequate English skills when teaching and giving student guidance in the IMDPs (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 9). Meneghetti (2016: 32-33), among many others, has emphasized that lecturers, and with that also their language skills, are an integral component in students' learning process.

However, it should be noted that the examples provided by the participants regarding their teachers' inadequate language skills are mirroring interaction, which means that one is dealing with a two-way street. In other words, students' own language skills come into play in the situations and incidents described above. For this reason, one cannot completely ignore the EMI challenges discussed earlier, as Hellekjær (2010: 24) and Zambrano and Habte-Gabr (2008: 111) discussed exactly the same issues as the present study's participants, but rather from the viewpoint of students' inadequate language skills. They mention, for instance, content being lost in lectures due to gaps in students' own skills, rather than because of the teachers' linguistic shortcomings. Yet for the scope of the present study, this question remains unanswered because in the students' examples, one may only be dealing with the students' perceptions, rather than reality.

What remains an area of concern, however, in the students' responses is that all these students share experiences of the University of Jyväskylä's IMDP teaching staff, particularly in regards to several different IMDPs. These negative descriptions of teachers' English skills were revisited and it was discovered that the students who discussed them in the interviews came from seven different programs, roughly one third of the programs on offer for this cohort. Furthermore, all these students themselves had provided the required verification of their English skills, which leads to a reconsideration of the quality concerns brought up by various scholars, such as Knapp (2011: 53), Choudaha and De Wit (2014: 28), Haberland and Preissler (2015: 26), Fabricius, Mortensen and Haberland (2017: 589) and Weinberg and Symon (2017: 135). Based on the participants' responses, teachers' language challenges indeed seem to exist, and according to Hellekjær (2010: 11), these challenges are linked to students' learning outcomes.

Yet again, it seems that EMI is proving to not add up to two for the price of one, if in addition to questioning language gains, one also needs to suspect, at least to some extent, the transfer of content and knowledge. The University of Jyväskylä, alongside other Finnish universities, has attempted to react to this by offering supporting infrastructures to staff teaching in English. In 2005 a modular form of a program called Teaching Academic Content through English (TACE) was established, and since 2010 it has been provided to the university's

teaching staff, including the teachers of the IMDPs, as an annual program (Westerholm and Räsänen, 2015: 131). However, the TACE program is not compulsory, meaning that teachers can choose whether they want to take part in it, and thus earn 10/15 ECTs in the process of completing it. The thoughts and experiences made visible in this study's interviews, however, lead to the conclusion that perhaps TACE should be made compulsory for IMDP staff. It can be clearly detected that at least some of the IMDP teachers might benefit from such training, which would aid them in terms of teaching multilingual and multicultural HE groups in English (Westerholm and Räsänen, 2015: 153).

For this frame of reference, however, and regardless of the teachers' English skills, Student9 emphasized that the IMDP teachers should never talk negatively about their own English skills in front of their students:

> *Student9: But they are really good with their English but when they start to introduce themselves and they start to downplay themselves a lot like "my English is not so good, you might not understand quite a lot…" but they are not that bad. But it's just my perception that if in front of your students you downplay yourself so much the students may lose their confidence in you.*
> *Interviewer: Yeah*
> *Student9: Most of them, at least their instructional English, and if they are not then students are anyways very prompt in asking*
> *I: Um-hum*
> *Student9: But teachers should not downplay themselves so much. It's good if they aspire confidence rather than you know them to act "I'm not that good anyways".*
> *I: Yeah, yeah so not to give that as a model*

Student9 makes a valid point, but perhaps the most prevalent viewpoint in respect to the IMDP teachers' English skills is that their skills, both in positive and negative, seem to be a crucial attribute of the IMDP students' studies. At least this was reinforced in the participants' thoughts and experiences. However, in order to further map the external factors which may have attributed to the IMDP students' success or failure, I shall move on to slightly different theme. In the following section, I highlight the participants' thoughts on their experiences of studying in an English-medium program that takes places in a non-English speaking country.

7.2 English-medium program in a non-English speaking country: The challenges and opportunities of studying in 'Little England'

As an third external factor, or even attribute, some of the students also brought up the fact that they were taking part in an EMI program in a country which is not an English-speaking country. This issue was briefly touched upon in relation to students' career prospects, as Student3 was contemplating on how "this

type of experience," that is, the studies in an IMDP in Finland, would be perceived in English-speaking countries. However, as noted, (s)he was not the only one who had thought about this issue. Despite how Lehikoinen (2004: 46) has called Finland "Little England" due to its popularity among mobile international students, the dominant language outside the IMDPs remains Finnish. This is obviously in contrast to similar programs offered in countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia. This was brought up by Student2:

> *Student2: I'm thinking in terms of I, uh the environment where we are studying, where, we are not studying in native language of English*
> *Interviewer: Um-hum*
> *Student2: Therefore you only learn English in a in a classroom*
> *I: Um-hum*
> *Student2: You don't learn it in a social environment*

Student2 is right that all the IMDP studies are organized in English, and it is likely that much of the interaction between him/her and the IMDP peers, as well as the program staff, took place in English, but simultaneously many of the things outside the program likely took place in Finnish. This relates to the idea that EMI, especially in non-English speaking countries, is a far more complex phenomenon than merely including a fixed code of language use which functions as an all-encompassing tool (e.g. Creese and Blackledge 2010; Dafouz and Smit, 2016). In EMI, students and teachers construct knowledge via their diverse language resources, but it is unavoidable that, in the context of IMDPs, they are also surrounded by Finnish in a wider university context.

However, according to Boughey (2000: 283) alongside Jalkanen, Almonkari and Taalas (2016: 14), it is essential that students feel at home in their academic discourse, an argument with which Dewey et al. (2014: 40) concurs by noting that it is a question of the student's own motivation when it comes to integrating oneself into the social environment. According to Dewey, Bown and Eggett (2012), Dewey, Belnap and Hillstrom (2013), as well as Dewey et al., (2014: 40), this integration is an important path to greater language proficiency gains. Unfortunately, it appears that Student2, at least to some extent, might have missed out on these gains if (s)he genuinely did not seize the language learning opportunities his/her social environment offered. Furthermore, in line with the findings of Williams et al. (2004: 19–20), if one takes into account that this issue, which in the eyes of Student2 was likely external, unchangeable and beyond his/her own control, it may have had an essential impact on his/her studies.

As visible below, Student3's interview responses provide a fascinating contrast to those of Student2, since Student3 still seemingly actively found his way to make the most of studying in Finland, and above all create his/her own circles also outside the IMDP, in which (s)he used particularly English:

> *Student3: Well, the, the way, we have the opportunity to interact with Finnish people*
> *Interviewer: Um-hum*

Student3: Using English, and not uh, not Finnish
I: Um-hum
Student3: Because I'm (mentions a part-time job and a hobby) *but I'm mostly using English*
I: Yeah
Student3: So, this is an interesting point, because I am I'm talking with Finnish people and I'm in Finland and I'm using English
I: Um-hum
Student3: And I think that, in two years, doing a masters' with international people, international master's…
I: Um-hum
Student3: You would not, speak of English with Finnish, like that
I: Um-hum
Student3: So the opportunities we have to interact with Finnish people would be using English
I: Um-hum
Student3: Even, connected with your Masters' so if I'm doing some kind of program intervention in Finland
I: Um-hum
Student3: I would do it in English or if I've started to work, part-time in Finland
I: Um-hum
Student3: I would, use my English with that

Student3: So I, I, I, I, my friends, I speak English with them
I: Um-hum
Student3: My teachers my supervisors
I: Yeah
Student3: And, I, I, I travelled, because of the program, so I again I use English

It appears that the experiences of Student3 echo rather well the motivation emphasized by Dewey et al. (2014: 40) related to students' own effort to integrate to their environment and via this integration to achieve the language gains available, such as in Student3's words: "I'm in Finland and I'm using English." Considering that Student3 talks about activities, such as a part-time job, his/her hobbies and travelling, as well as having friendships in English, in addition to all the things (s)he did in English as part of the IMDP studies, one can say that (s)he followed Dooey's (2010: 188) advice concerning engaging in activities outside the classroom to improve one's English skills. Interestingly in relation to this, personal motivation and the environment have been reported to be at the heart of successful language learning when asked from the students themselves (e.g. Williams et al., 2004: 20), and clearly both of these are strongly present in the experiences of Student3. In a similar vein, Student15 did not seem to find it problematic that (s)he was studying in a non-English speaking country, as (s)he also felt that the environment surrounding him/her forced him/her to use his/her skills, and gave him/her "boost and confidence," as mentioned below;

Student15: So I think that…like this environment like where you have to speak English all the time to get your message across…
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student15: That's a really good help and give you a boost and confidence
I: Yeah, yeah
Student15: And I think practice makes you more confident and perfect so that's a good environment to practice English

In relation to the interview extracts above related to Student2, Student3, and Student15, it is rather evident that how individual students approach their social environment, or the things going on outside their IMDPs, seemingly has a great deal of potential for that individual's language gains. However, a few students also brought up the fact that they faced some more external challenges deriving from the fact that their English-medium program was organized in an environment which is mainly non-English.

Student7: About careers that most of the career fairs and everything that happening at the university mostly it's in Finnish.
Interviewer: Yeah
Student7: Maybe they can make more something like affairs in English
I: Yeah, yeah
Student7: And promoting something related to that.
I: A very practical thing as well, yeah.
Student7: That's I propose one thing

Student12: So, I, I feel that actually, because, I, I have known that a lot of, for example some research tools and methods, courses are offered to the Finnish students
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student12: But not offered to the international students
I: Um-hum, yeah
Student12: And that is kind of, upsetting, in the sense that, everything taught is in Finnish and, though the Finnish students have all the skills but we have to learn it like, by ourself
I: Yeah
Student12: So that was a bit annoying, at some point

Neither of these remarks above relate to the social environment discussed by Dewey et al. (2014: 40), but rather these participants' thoughts link more to the institutional level or the program design. In brief, both Student7 and Student12 found during their studies that certain things, such as career fairs and additional courses, were only organized in Finnish, and hence as EMI students who have inadequate Finnish skills, they were excluded from these events and support systems. One can obviously contemplate how direct the link between these fairs and courses is to the students' language gains, but it is unavoidable that these aspects likely affect the students' overall experience of their IMDP. This seems especially relevant when considering how Dooey (2010: 196) found that

teachers often falsely assume that students already master research methods when entering this type of programs. In addition, as discussed for instance by Dewey et al. (2014: 43) the language students use for course work plays an integral role in their language gains. It is clear that a student such as Student12, and most likely his/her international peers as well, were indirectly denied access to the courses focusing on research tools and methods, so one can only speculate on the possible language gains they could have made in English in terms of these key areas of academia.

Finally, in relation to the issues related to integrating the IMDP students to this HE institution as a community, or alternatively excluding them from it, another essential theme emerges. Both Student9 and Student12 discussed their IMDP experience from the viewpoint of somehow being in a sort of bubble of international students, or to an extent being left alone with one's studies.

> *Student9: But there are lots of us degree students, especially from outside Europe from* (mentions specific countries)*, who really don't know how to get to know more localites*
> *Interviewer: Um-hum*
> *Student9: And then at least in my program there are seven students and only one Finnish and I've never actually seen him or her.*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student9: So much of the courses when we do group assignments we are still all internationals*
> *I: Um-hum*
> *Student9: So there should be some way to encourage Finnish students to be part of these international programs cos it's not about just the international students coming here to learn but localites learning as well. There should be something done that these international students have more Finnish students on their road so that this getting to know the localites not just in an academic environment*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student9: You have the opportunity to, not just in group works and other projects with Finnish students,*
> *I: Yeah, yeah*
> *Student9: Which doesn't happen at least in my program, because we don't have…*

Student9 felt, at least to some extent, that (s)he and his/her fellow international peers were sort of left out from the bigger picture of this Finnish HE institution, as (s)he found it really difficult to get to know the local Finnish students. He remarked that during the IMDP studies (s)he often ended up working on group assignments with only international students. According to Student9, something ought to be done in order to create a better connection between the international students and the Finnish students, and his/her thoughts are in line with Brisk (1999: 3), who feels that a successful program nurtures students' sociocultural integration. With this logic, Student9's program could have done a better job in his/her opinion. Similar remarks were made by international students in a study conducted by Dooey (2010: 185) in the Australian HE context,

as Dooey (2010: 185) discovered that international students were quite far from pleased in terms of the opportunities they had to interact with local students.

Local students can help international students in becoming better acquainted with so-called local knowledge, which according to Dooey (2010: 195) can range from knowing something crucial about ongoing courses to incidental facts. At the heart of this all is that international students are more up to date on the things around them, thus resulting in them being more successful in completing their assignments, as well as being better equipped to participate in general discussions (Dooey, 2010: 195). In a rather similar vein, Leung and Street (2012: 9), along with Dafouz and Smit (2016), point out that exactly these ways of thinking and doing construct the specific reality that constitutes, for instance, the individual IMDPs. Although Student9 does not directly explain why (s)he specifically wants to get to know the local students, one could perhaps detect some similar motives, as discussed above by Dooey (2010: 195), Leung and Street (2012: 9) and Dafouz and Smit (2016).

At this point it is helpful to revisit the aforementioned Western and non-Western preferences related to academic discourse practices (e.g. McCambridge and Saarinen, 2015: 304-305), which obviously play an integral, and even underlying, role in the group assignments brought up previously by Student9. (S)he categorized him/herself and some of his/her peers as degree students who have their origins outside Europe. This puts them in somewhat contrast to the so-called Western preferences, which, according to McCambridge and Saarinen (2015: 304-305), are the rather evident preferences of the Finnish HE, so it makes sense that Student9 expressed his/her desire to become better acquainted with the local students, especially if they are perceived as a key gateway to local knowledge.

Student12 also expressed disappointment in respect to his/her study experience in his/her IMDP in Jyväskylä. (S)he was dissatisfied with the strong focus on the students' independent work during the IMDP studies, especially since (s)he had had rather high expectations regarding Finnish education:

Student12: For program is that, I don't feel that everyone is suitable for this, this kind of like a self-learning or
Interviewer: Yeah
Student12: More like a freedom, I don't know, like that
I: Yeah
Student12: freedom-learning
I: Yeah
Student12: That sense
I: Independent work?
Student12: Independent work yeah
I: Yeah
Student12: Because I think everyone needs like a different uh, amount of assistance
I: Um-hum
Student12: And, I feel like I get more assistance from my of course I have very, I have elder classmates so

I: Um-hum
Student12: I get assistance from those people
I: Um-hum
Student12: More than from the department itself

Student12: So, uh my thoughts changed, uh, because I think the expectation was a bit, high
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student12: And that, I have read many, articles about Finnish educations and I think it's mainly like, before, university
I: Um-hum
Student12: So, during the university there, there were like, mostly, lot of freedom, and
I: Um-hum
Student12: There's not so much teaching a lot of book readings and book exams and
I: Yeah
Student12: Not so many teachings and
I: Um-hum
Student12: The teachings are mostly about, also, it's more, like, requiring of self-reading
I: Um-hum
Student12: So, yeah, I was, I was expecting more to learn from the, professors
I: Okay
Student12: But in fact we have more like self-work
I: Um-hum
Student12: Group works and
I: Yeah
Student12: Than learning
I: Okay
Student12: Through, uh the right teacher
I: Yeah, so, you've mentioned these high expectations so, the experience itself didn't really meet these expectations, is that what you're saying?
Student12: Um-hum yes, yes

These thoughts directly link to the Finnish academic freedom which was also brought up in Internal Evaluation (2014: 14) in connection with the IMDP students' criticism concerning their program curricula. Similarly to Student12, the majority of the students interviewed for the evaluation perceived their programs to be too flexible and not rigorous enough (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 14).

According to Student12, the studies in his/her program contained perhaps too much freedom in the form of independent and group work, whereas (s)he would have expected and wanted more teacher-centered courses or in his/her words to learn from the professors and the right teachers, although the concept of "the right teacher" is slightly obscure in the response above. Nonetheless, as Boughey (2000: 282-283) suggests, one might link Student12's remarks to stu-

dents' common perception about knowledge being a commodity which they can buy from the university, as Student12 apparently yearned for more input from the teachers, which would tie into Boughey's (2000: 283) logic about students adopting the role of someone who simply takes in the information from their teachers and then repeats it in, for instance, an exam. One can wonder whether Student12's viewpoints on all this derive yet again from the Western and non-Western preferences of academia and higher education (e.g. McCambridge and Saarinen, 2015: 304-305), since his/her background is in fact more non-Western, and (s)he embarked on the IMDP studies, with seemingly high expectations, in a Western country. Dooey (2010: 196) also found that especially when dealing with students who are non-native speakers of English, such as Student12, it is essential to enable personal contact between these students and their teachers, since this has reportedly resulted in students feeling more at ease with communication, as well as decreased the amount of misunderstandings.

However, the fact that (s)he emphasized that (s)he did not get support from the department, and above all that (s)he made a remark on independent learning being unsuitable for some students, might indicate that the program, and its teachers, perhaps falsely assumed that (s)he was able to cope with the program contents. This is something that Dooey (2010: 195-196) found to occur especially in relation to international students. According to Williams, Burden and A1-Baharna (2001), as well as Williams et al. (2004: 20), inadequate teaching methods, as well as lack of support from teachers, were, as with Student12, seen by students as a reason for their challenges and even failure.

In order to wrap up this discussion related to the present study's RQ 2, there is a clear common denominator which has manifested itself in this chapter. Fundamentally, in one way or another all the viewpoints link to the idea of students' feeling at home in their program, or in the university community in general. This issue is discussed as a core component of students' study success by various scholars (see Boughey, 2000: 283; Dooey, 2010; Dewey, Bown and Eggett, 2012; Dewey, Belnap and Hillstrom, 2013; Dewey et al., 2014; Jalkanen, Almonkari and Taalas, 2016). All these scholars, both separately and collectively, seem to portray the image of a loop which has language at its core.

This loop can manifest in students not possessing the adequate skills when entering a program, which leads to them shying away from chances to become socially and academically integrated with the next context. Alternatively, students entering a program in a non-English speaking country may realize that they are automatically, although possibly unintentionally, left out of certain events or experiences due to their limited skills in the local language. These are only a few examples among many, but all this merely goes to show how far-reaching the consequences that language policies, or even simple everyday practices related to language, can have on the students' study paths. As argued at various intervals of the present study, and as promoted by various scholars, such as Fortanet-Gómez and Räisänen (2008: 22), Wilkinson and Zegers (2008: 12), Garam (2009: 27), Creese and Blackledge (2010), Choudaha and De Wit (2014: 28), Hultgren, Jensen and Dimova (2015: 6), Ljosland (2015: 612), Dafouz

and Smit (2016), and Airey et al. (2017: 567), adopting English as the language of instruction, especially in a non-English speaking country, requires an enormous amount of planning and a great deal of conscious effort when implementing EMI in practice. EMI is never truly actualized, at least not successfully, if it is only based on switching the language of the classrooms into English. Basically, as students enter an EMI program, they are also simultaneously adopting English as the language of their various daily practices and activities.

8 LANGUAGE SUPPORT: THOUGHTS ON ACADEMIC ENGLISH COURSES

In addressing this study's last research question (RQ 3) – *How should students' academic English learning be supported during their IMDP studies?* – the participants' thoughts and experiences on the academic English language support are discussed in Chapter 8. Because various scholars (e.g. Ying, 2003; Kurtán, 2004:134; Poyrazli and Kavanaugh, 2006; Fortanet-Gómez and Räisänen, 2008: 12, 43; Hughes, 2008: 6), including myself, find it essential to provide at least some kind of language support for students during their EMI studies, this issue was incorporated as one topic in the interviews. For instance, in Kurtán's (2004: 134) study it was discovered that when asked about the need for language support for students, a majority, 84%, deemed it important. This makes sense when considering that very often students embarking on their university studies may have limited experience of specialist academic genres, such as project and case reports, not to mention planning and conducting research (Evans and Greene, 2007: 10). It is also likely that programs, such as the IMDPs, vary notably in terms of the amount and quality of the formal instruction they provide their students regarding the genres (Evans and Greene, 2007: 10).

As in many other European countries and other Finnish universities the Language Center of the University of Jyväskylä provides support in academic English to the IMDP students, although as noted earlier, the expertise available in the Language Center is unfortunately not utilized by many IMDPs (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 14). According to Read (2008: 180), this language support is usually offered in the form of an EAP course, which is also the case in the language support which has been offered to IMDPs throughout the years. However, in contrast to Read (2008: 180), the Language Center has never required the IMDP students to take any type of in-house placement tests as a means to group them into appropriate EAP groups, but rather the programs have always been offered the courses upon request to the entire intake of a certain program if the program has included academic English courses in their curriculum. It ought to also be emphasized that contrary to a common EAP misconception (e.g. Pulcini and Campagna, 2015: 74-75), not only students with inadequate language skills

are assisted by the Language Center, but as remarked, the entire cohort of a program has access to support and instruction, if that is requested by the program.

The participants of the present study represent a slight contrast to this finding of the Internal Evaluation (2014), since 12 students had compulsory academic English courses as part of their program, and only Student8 and Student12 studied in an IMDP which did not require its students to take any academic English courses. Furthermore, participants Student2, Student3, Student4 and Student13 all studied in a program which had more than one compulsory academic English course as part of its curriculum. It seems that some of the present study's participants were also rather active in elective academic English courses, with four participants (Student8, Student9, Student13 and Student14) taking additional elective English courses during their studies. Therefore, if taking into account the finding of the Internal Evaluation (2014) about our IMDP students not making use of the support available, one needs to take into account that out of the 15 participants of the present study only one student (Student12) completed no academic English courses during her IMDP studies.

When looking at the themes which arose in the interviews, one is faced with students who were strongly involved in the academic English teaching of the Language Center, which is in contrast to IMDP cohorts in general, since not all IMDPs have included academic English courses in their curriculum. Consequently, this involvement of the present study's participants manifests itself in a variety of ways, as becomes apparent below. More importantly, it needs to be acknowledged that the voices of students who are not required to take any academic English courses are clearly underrepresented in the present study, as only two participants of the present study were examples of such cases. One of these two participants, however, did insinuate that he would have preferred a compulsory academic writing course as part of his studies;

Student8: But we have fifteen additional credits to, to attain
Interviewer: Yeah
Student8: So, maybe among these fifteen, there could be space
I: Okay
Student8: For a specific writing course

8.1 IMDP students' positive experiences of their academic English courses

To further elaborate on the themes and viewpoints the 13 participants who had completed at least one compulsory academic English course shared during their interviews, this section first looks at what they felt worked well in relation to language support. It became clear that at least in quantity, the negative view-

points outweighed the positive aspects. Examples of the latter are first provided below:

> *Student2: In academic so, I think, uh in* (mentions the name of the university of applied sciences) *I learned a little bit of academic English and then here, too, am, the course, academic writing whatever*
> *Interviewer: Um-hum*
> *Student2: When I took it it's enlightened me in that area*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student2: So I think that currently my academic English is, uh the level is I can say is, high*

> *Student4: I was really happy. We had like communication skills like overall cultural differences and then we had…a course that dealt with writing and we got feedback from our…uh text. And then we had a course where we were learning about like conference skills and like presenting*
> *Interviewer: Yeah*
> *Student4: And they were all really useful and I liked them*

> *Student4: Uh…I don't know like I mean I've been really happy with the program and the Language Center courses that we had like link really well to the program so it's like a…meaningful whole kind of…so it's not something that is separate or additional but it's like really well integrated so I think… you've done a good job with that.*

> *Student10: When I started working on my thesis so*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student10: I think, uh, the language modules, were, quite enough and, not too much not too less exactly was needed*

In these extracts, it is clear that the three participants were pleased with the language support they received for their academic English skills. Student2, for instance, says the course (s)he took really made a difference in his/her language gains and led this student to have high level of academic English at the end of the IMDP studies. Moreover, Student4 also reported on being very pleased with the language support (s)he received during his/her studies, which was mainly due to how the academic English courses were so effectively integrated into this IMDP's studies. Student10, however, did not provide much detail about what exactly worked well, but (s)he also concurs with Student2 and Student4 by remarking that the courses (s)he participated in were precisely what (s)he needed.

These interview extracts are discussed together because all three participants completed more than one compulsory English course. Student2 completed three academic English courses, and both Student4 and Student10 completed two compulsory courses. Furthermore, as noted earlier, Student4 was one of the rare students of the present study's participants, as well as the whole cohort, who in fact graduated within the given two-year timeframe. Both Student2 and

Student10 have also already graduated, though it took them approximately one additional year to complete their studies.

In addition to these three participants, Student15 also reported positive experiences from the one compulsory academic English course (s)he took, noted the following:

> *Student15: Uh…I don't feel like there was something missing but one thing that I liked was this English course that we had…It wasn't really like English grammar but it was there to help us with our report writing, thesis writing. And the teacher, yeah, she also focused on like structuring*
> *Interviewer: Yeah*
> *Student15: And how to write technical documents.*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student15: And I think that was a really good course, I enjoyed it that and she also like gave as home assignments and different assignments to work from online and the library.*
> *I: Okay*
> *Student15: That was a really big help and it's a really big help*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student15: A really big help for me for writing my thesis*

Student15 clearly explains that the course (s)he took helped him/her with the MA thesis. (S)he especially seemed to value the fact that the course provided support for structuring his/her text, and it activated this student to work also outside the contact teaching hours with a variety of home assignments. However, when again viewing the study path of Student15, the various challenges related to academic English (s)he shared during the interview are prominent, the issue of his/her delayed graduation, and the fact that by the late fall of 2017 (s)he had yet to submit his/her thesis. It was therefore no surprise that later during the interview (s)he also expressed a need for further language support:

> *Student15: Uh…I don't know. I think because in the master's program, the level of academic English that was taught to us…this one course.*
> *Interviewer: Yeah*
> *Student15: I think for master's level I think this is okay…but I would have liked to have like one more course something related to your…like…since..*
> *I: You mean like academic English?*
> *Student15: Yeah…but since…I get it…but since we are in the master's program we are expected "okay these already know from the bachelor's" and we give this English proficiency…proficiency…and that's kind of like established…*
> *I: Yeah, yeah*
> *Student15: But I think I would have liked if there was one more…more related to your grammar and this oriented rather than technical*

It seems that even though (s)he appreciated the support offered in the form of the course mentioned above, (s)he still seemed to experience that (s)he would

have needed support, stating "I would have liked if there was one more…more related to your grammar and this oriented rather than technical." It is not exactly clear what (s)he, in addition to grammar, refers to by saying "and this oriented rather than technical," but one can speculate that perhaps (s)he is trying to imply something related to English proficiency, such as grammar, in general, as (s)he seems to contrast this to something (s)he calls technical, which based on his/her previous comment might be linked to, for instance, structuring one's academic texts. However, as noted, all this is merely speculation, and consequently, in order to gain further insights into the aspects the participants were necessarily not so pleased with regarding the language support they received during their IMDP, I turn to additional participants.

8.2 IMDP students' thoughts on improving the academic English courses: more varied courses but with a clearer focus

Similarly to Student15, many of the participants expressed a need for further courses on academic English. Even though the students below both had at least one compulsory academic English course offered to them during their studies, their experiences of the programs clearly left them wanting, and needing something more:

> *Student13: Yeah, yeah but I think it needs more because in the PhD students program the uh the uh the university offer us more academic language courses when we see the courses we talk about it and uh if this kind of courses were in the master's degree program it would be more helpful for us*
>
> *Student14: Uh because this two years have really pass…we have a lot of assignments and literatures and so maybe if the program uh…provide more some English academic skill courses…then it will be nice.*
> *Interviewer: Yeah, okay*
> *Student14: Like a course…*

Student13 highlights the Language Center's course offerings targeted primarily for PhD students by remarking that such courses (short modules, in reality), are exactly what the master's level students would need as well. The modules the Language Center offers for doctoral students are typically short, intensive courses, which consist of contact teaching and independent work adding up to 2 ECTs. The themes of the writing modules have often varied from citation and referencing to cohesion and coherence, and we have additionally offered modules focusing on specific texts, such as conference abstracts, grants and more generally scientific articles. However, there are also modules focusing on academic oral skills, such as conference presentations. Other participants expressed similar wishes and needs as well:

Student1: So I think yes we do need a course that improves our skills, speaking and written both, and especially when it comes to research research…papers

Student1: We need maybe some courses to help us a little bit with scientific papers.
Interviewer: Yeah
Student1: Like a little bit some language, yes that can help us. That's all.

Student3: None of these, course covered, this public speaking part
I: Um-hum
Student3: The presentation skills, and well not only the English part of course, it's the language, formal language is important for also, nonverbal communication

Student11: I think still there could be a few more courses regarding reading and writing

Student12: But, I would say that maybe we need more like, oral presentation, skills

Student14: And also, maybe, for the pronunciation course
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student14: Yeah, because I did there one presentation
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student14: And the teachers said, the only problem I had is pronunciation
I: Um-hum
Student14: But, there is no pronunciation course
I: Yeah
Student14: Yeah, in languages
I: Okay
Student14: For student, so maybe yeah

There appears to be a strong need for additional support, especially in productive language skills (i.e. writing and speaking), which were also found to be the most significant language challenges among first-year students in a study by Evans and Greene (2007: 10). The needs for language support that arose from the interviews, such as writing research papers and articles speaking and academic presentations, as well as pronunciation, clearly indicate that many of the participants felt at the end of their studies that they would have needed more support in addition to the courses they were offered. In close relation to this, for instance Evans and Greene (2007: 10) have highlighted that students should first be offered a more general EAP course during their first year of studies, and this should then be followed by more specified module(s) focusing on the relevant academic genres and their linguistic and rhetorical features.

Secondly, in relation to the things described in a negative sense, five participants found the timing as well as the duration of the language support (i.e. mostly the compulsory academic English course) to be unsatisfactory:

Student2: So, people might come maybe, with uh a maybe, the level of English might be a bit lower
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student2: So, if this course is run through years then, it gives them the opportunity to
I: Yeah
Student2: Improve, yeah, very well so I think that a course like academic writing, I think should, begin the program throughout two years at least a year
I: Yeah, yeah, so it should be longer?
Student2: Yeah it should be longer

Student5: Uh in terms of that I would change, change the academic writing skills course
Interviewer: Yeah
Student5: So at least its time, timing

Student5: Uh it should be started at the beginning of the year, year or even in the first year
I: Yeah
Student5: So that we, we already know what we have to do, with the thesis
I: Um-hum
Student5: Before started, starting writing it
I: Okay
Student5: But it started too late for us

Student5: I say it would be better to have it like from the first year
Interviewer: Yeah
Student5: As a continuous study
I: Yeah
Student5: Not, something that is squeezed in the last year
I: Yeah
Student5: Especial last two months so more ongoing
I: Yeah
Student5: Support perhaps

Student6: Well we had this course research communication course or something similar to this uh…This came pretty late, I mean, I am still passing that course. Officially I've submitted everything and not gotten the grade
Interviewer: Yeah
Student6: But I am halfway through my thesis now I don't need this.
I: Okay
Student6: But the beginning I needed it. I think we students suggested the instructor of the course
I: Yeah
Student6: That you should contact the beginners and the newcomers now

Student9: But the course started in the fourth semester, so actually January this year
Interviewer: Okay
Student9: But I suggest it should actually start in the very beginning because like I mentioned I was this guy who had no idea about how academic writing is done. I mean knowing English and knowing how to write English for your academic essays is different. If I had had the course running in the beginning I would have probably done better in my courses. I mean I got the best grades anyway

Student9: So that course should probably start in the very beginning rather than the fourth semester

Student10: Well I would say that uh, the language, courses they were quite, orga-organized quite well I think
Interviewer: Um-hum
Student10: In the beginning it was a bit tricky when we had these language courses I didn't exactly understood, understand back then
I: Yeah
Student10: Their purpose
I: Yeah
Student10: Because they were right in the beginning, and, back in the beginning we didn't have yet a clear idea on our thesis or anything
I: Um-hum
Student10: So I kind of, didn't feel like, it's useful for me back then

Among these five participants there seems to be a clear congruence regarding the timing of the academic English course, since all of them are essentially stating that the course should be offered to them much sooner or later than it was actually offered during their IMDP studies. These three participants, it must be noted, all studied in the same program, and this reinforces the idea that the timing of the course did not work for their program. However, Student2 and Student10, who are from different programs, even different faculties, than each other and the previous three students, also brought up the issue of timing.

Rather understandably, the timing of the course was particularly criticized for not being coordinated with the students' thesis process, with for instance Student5 particularly emphasized that the support came too late to help with work on the MA thesis. However, Student10 reported on the opposite timing issue, because (s)he felt the support came too soon, and (s)he found it difficult to see the connection between the support and his/her upcoming thesis process. Here it is equally important to consider the students' need for language support for their studies in general, instead of merely concentrating on the master's thesis process. Many of the participants above state that they also had a need for more continuous support and a longer academic English course. Student2, Student6 and Student9 recommend providing academic language support for first-year students who are taking their initial steps in their program. These student needs are in line with much of the EMI literature discussed earli-

er, as students' entry level (i.e. the level they have demonstrated with the standardized tests) is indeed only a starting point. This means that the students can only be expected to start their studies, but the completion of them may require a lot of work on behalf of the students as well as language support from the institution. What is more, students' own role, including aspects such as motivation, hard work and effective learning strategies, were found to carry more weight in students' success when compared to EAP courses (Evans and Morrison, 2011: 202)

Third, the participants of the present study also provided interesting, and more detailed, insights into improving the existing courses. For instance, both Student5 and Student7 commented on the way their academic English course was taught:

Student5: Uh, its construct?
I: Yeah? You mean the contents of the course?
Student5: Uh, not the content but how we studied
I: Okay
Student5: Like, to be honest I find it quite useless to go to the lecture and I didn't attend most of the lectures
I: Yeah
Student5: It should be more to the point
I: Um-hum
Student5: It was more like blah blah "so what do you want to study" blah blah "Do you see this course useful"

Student7: Yeah we have like one course that was related to academic writing
Interviewer: Yeah, yeah
Student7: It's not so….you could say…doesn't improve that much.
I: Yeah
Student7: Yes, it's like you get lecture about few things and classes are really slow.
I: Yeah
Student7: It doesn't…maybe they need to improve something with that course.
I: Well if you could decide, how would you change that one course that you mentioned? The contents or the length?
Student7: Maybe make it more interactive…
I: Um-hum
Student7: Because right now it's just slides and you just read the lectures.
I: Yeah
Student7: So maybe more interactive because they have all these language courses that are more interactive and yes more like learning

Student7: Well I would say that…uh first…uh…I already mentioned the academic writing they can make it much more, the course is really not so interactive they can make something about that.

These two students, from two different programs, found that the academic English course offered to them should have been "more to the point" and "more interactive." First, if considering the remarks made by Student5 it seems that the course failed to motivate him/her, even to the extent that (s)he found it pointless to take part in the contact teaching sessions. According to Student5, this was due to the fact that the support offered was apparently not targeted concretely enough to what was going on in the students' studies (i.e. the master's thesis). Similar findings were made by Evans and Morrison (2011: 206), as they discovered that a general EAP course, or perhaps in Student5's words a course which is not to the point, did not meet the students' immediate or their long-term needs. To some extent, Student7 also seemed to share the same experience, even though (s)he took a different academic English course than Student5. (S)he also expressed his/her dissatisfaction with the classes being far too slow, not interactive enough, and according to him/her merely centered on reading slides. It seems that the aspect coloring both of these students' experiences is that they would have wanted more doing and action in respect to academic English, rather than only talking about doing. To some extent, Student4 had some similar lines of thought, as (s)he commented on the feedback procedures of her academic English course:

> *Student4: Because you know you just briefly touch on something and never come back to it so it's like easy to forget but uh…yeah and we like the academic language like…uh when speaking like when presenting we got feedback from the presentation and like overall feedback from the like pronunciation but like nothing like very specific. So it was hard to like even like learn from the feedback*
> *I: Okay*
> *Student4: Because it was kind of like…general in a way.*

Student4 also seems to call for more concrete support, because (s)he felt the feedback did not help the students learn something from it. In other words, it seems that (s)he did get feedback, but the feedback did not include any concrete ideas on how in practice (s)he could improve his/her academic English skills. Yet again, it can be detected that the course, or more specifically the feedback, aided this student to know about the things (s)he should work on, but it failed to concretely support the doing, or the improving of those skills, which sort of echoes the drawbacks of the academic English courses previously brought up by Student5 and Student7.

In answering RQ 3, it seems that even though some of the participants had really positive experiences related to language support (i.e. the academic English courses which were offered to them), it nevertheless appears that there are still many aspects, which the Language Center, alongside with the programs, need to reconsider and improve. Rather similarly to Evans and Morrison (2011: 206), the present study's participants shed light on the constant tug of war in the EAP support, as the questions of general versus field-specific language support, as well as the issue related to the timing and duration of the support, seemed to be at the core of these themes.

The most prevalent changes, as discussed by these participants, appear to be, one, the amount of courses offered to these students and, two, the timing of the courses, which seems to also be linked to the level of integration between the English course and the program in questions. Lastly, the participants also addressed the content of the course, with a wish for more focus on concretely doing things with academic English rather than only talking about those things. For instance, Jalkanen, Almonkari and Taalas (2016: 14) call for attention on the very same issues, and van Dinther, Dochy and Severs (2011: 105) clearly concur with the last viewpoint especially, as they also advise programs, and individual teachers, to require students to engage in authentic tasks, which force the students to apply what they know and what they can do to diverse situations and at frequent intervals. According to them, this type of emphasis on authentic doing particularly stimulates the students' self-efficacy (van Dinther, Dochy and Severs, 2011: 105), which would surely benefit for instance the IMDP students during their studies, and especially during the MA thesis process.

In light of the following comment made by Student11, all the improvements above start to make perfect sense:

> *Student11: I would say English ability is the key element*
> *Interviewer: Um-hum*
> *Student11: For studying in the program, because whatever you do is related to English, this is an English program,*
> *I: Yeah*
> *Student11: So if you cannot understand, if you have poor like writing skill, reading skill, it will affect your course assignments, like course performance*

As Student11 so clearly and directly states, English proficiency and academic English skills are at the very core of completing one's IMDP studies. It also becomes clear why the participants brought up the positive, but above all the negative, viewpoints to the Language Center's academic English courses. Consequently, one could conclude that language support, and particularly support related to academic English, has the potential to be a prevalent external factor contributing to IMDP students' study success, at least based on the participants in the present study. However, it also becomes apparent that the students' needs seem to come in all shapes and sizes, and in a similar vein, according to Evans and Morrison (2011: 206) students' diverse, and above all dynamic, needs would require a variety of carefully tailored courses in order for entities such as the Language Center to truly address every single individual student's needs. However, according to Jalkanen, Almonkari and Taalas (2016: 14), all the Language Center's teaching, regardless of its amount or timing, should be focused on developing our students' thinking, instead of merely their language skills, since this is more likely to have a more profound effect on their growth as an expert in their field.

9 DISCUSSION

Having analyzed the data and having answered the research questions, the present study now moves on to broader discussions related to its themes. In sections 9.1 and 9.2, the students' profiles are revisited by linking the background information available on the 15 participants and their programs, to the present study's interview data and research questions. As discussed at the early stages of this study, the IMDP students' graduation rates, for the present study's participants as well as on a general level, are less than satisfactory. Therefore, in the following discussion, the participants' graduation rates are linked to the issues and themes which the participants themselves highlighted in the interviews. This is done to shed light on the discussion related to the successful, and the less successful, study paths of these participants. Consequently, revisiting the participants' profiles, together with their interview responses, allows the present study to provide a more holistic approach to its research questions.

Second, the present study's results are related to the prevailing lines of thinking and literature from the perspective of how EMI teaching should be approached and organized in practice. This relates to the present study's motives, which were already highlighted at the outset of the present study, about mapping out what type of academic English and literacy/ies support should be offered to the IMDP students, so that it would best support their study paths and result in timely graduation. Third, issues related to integrating content and language are emphasized, as several studies have shown that isolating language from content is artificial, and hence even harmful for students' learning of academic content and language. In relation to this, some advantages and disadvantages in respect to integrating content and language are also discussed, and this chapter concludes by considering the different forms of integrating content and language, and how they might be realized in both content and language teachers' work in HE.

9.1 IMDP students' profiles revisited: the link between students' self-reports on their academic English skills and their time of graduation

Before a discussion on this study's core results and their possible implications for the IMDPs' curricula and the language support, which the Language Center ought to offer, the participants' profiles will be briefly revisited. The main purpose of this is to shed some light on the participants' profiles by supplementing the aforementioned background information, such as the academic English aspects related to them and their graduation time, with the results of the interviews. As a result, the present study is aiming to provide some further views on the possible link between the students' overall performance in the program (e.g. thesis grade and graduation time) and their study path, especially from the viewpoint of academic English. However, it is important to note that the thoughts, feelings, perceptions and attributes the participants discussed during the interviews are merely their own interpretations of the issues discussed (Williams et al, 2004: 20). Furthermore, these interpretations are also being interpreted by me as a teacher researcher, even if I have tried my best to not jump to conclusions (Weiner, 2004: 28), and I have strived for openness in terms of my interpretations by including as many direct quotes as possible, an approach suggested by Graneheim and Lundman (2004) and Elo et al. (2014: 7), among others.

Yet, as suggested by Williams et al. (2004: 20) and McClure et al.(2011: 80), along with other attribution theorists, students' own thoughts, motivations and attributions may carry even more value than the actual reasons behind their success or failure. According to Pajares (1996: 552), Bong (2001: 554), Gore (2006: 112), and Van Dinther, Dochy and Severs (2011: 104), students' self, and the various perceptions and feelings related to it play an important role in the individual's study path. It should also be emphasized here that the fifth data collection round, the e-mail follow-up with certain participants (n = 5), allowed some of the present study's analysis to be verified, because the follow-up allowed certain speculations of the interview analysis to be confirmed. These results are foregrounded in order to provide accurate and timely information on some of the students.

The profiles of the 15 participants have been placed into three groups based on their graduation time. First, the profiles of the three participants (Student4, Student8 and Student12) who graduated within the given two-year timeframe of the IMDPs are discussed. As noted above, the follow-up with these three students is also touched upon, as all these three participants received the follow-up e-mail in late 2017, and all three responded by elaborating on their study/career paths after the interviews. This is followed by a discussion related to the three participants (Student7, Student9, and Student15) who have not yet graduated as of the last checkpoint of the present study in late fall of 2017, when these three students were also contacted via e-mail. However,

only Student7 and Student9 returned their answers to the follow-up, and hence respect to Student15, only his/her study records are available to function as a mirror to his/her study path after the interview. Third, the discussion continues with profiles of the nine students who have graduated from their IMDP but who did not graduate within the given timeframe of two years. Throughout the discussion of all 15 participants' profiles, the graduation time of the participants, as well as how these individual students compare to their peers of the same program and cohort are embedded. In addition to this, the most prevalent results in relation to these individuals are outlined in order to map out whether there is anything that required attention regarding the students' academic performance and academic English skills.

9.1.1 Graduating within the given timeframe: the prevalent role of IMDP students' own effort and positive career-orientation

All the three students who graduated within the given timeframe were in programs offered by the same faculty. Yet apart from this, these three participants shared few commonalities, as they all come from different countries and language backgrounds.

Student4 graduated within two years and when comparing this to his/her program's general graduation rate (Mathies, 2016), one notices that 60% of his/her peers managed to graduate as fast as (s)he did. However, the same exact graduation rate remained all the way to the three-year point, indicating that the majority of the students graduated as planned, but the statistics used for the present study do not shed light on the situation of the remaining 40%. Student8 and Student12, who were from the same program, also graduated within the given timeframe, and in this they were actually slightly exceptional, as only 38% of their program's cohort graduated within two years. Moreover, the program achieved a graduation rate of only 75% at the three-year checkpoint (Mathies, 2016).

It seems that all three of the so-called successful students were taking part in programs that did not achieve a graduation rate of 100% even at the three-year mark. Even though they as individuals did well in terms of their studies, and graduation in particular, their programs did not belong to the top programs in respect to graduation rate, but rather fell somewhere in the middle: between the most successful programs and the programs with very few students managing to graduate. Perhaps, then, there are some further aspects beyond the program design which have played a more prevalent role in terms of their study success.

From the perspective of academic English, these three students represent very different study paths. One (Student4) completed two compulsory academic English courses, another (Student8) took part in an elective academic English course, and the third (Student12) took neither compulsory nor elective academic English courses. Hence, one cannot draw any conclusions about the Language Center's support having any direct shared effect on these students' success, as one of them managed to cope with his/her studies without any help

from us. Still, Student4 very clearly expressed his/her satisfaction in respect to the two courses (s)he took, and (s)he especially gave credit to these courses because they were so well integrated with his/her subject studies. Student8, after (s)he had completed an elective academic English course, remarked that a similar course should have been made compulsory in his/her program.

Nonetheless, if one cannot connect the program design or the academic English support directly to these students' apparent study success (using thesis grade and graduation as measures), there remains one theme which rather clearly unified these students. As discussed in section 6.2.5, these three students stood out among this group of participants' due to their strong future orientation when discussing their studies and future careers, and their academic English skills. In various ways throughout their interviews they demonstrated the features of positive and strong self-concept, since concepts such as "academic engagement, goal-setting, task choice, persistence and effort, intrinsic motivation, strategy use, performance and achievement and even career selection" (Bong and Skaalvik, 2003: 7) were all in one way or another visible in their interview responses. Similar aspects are also brought to the fore by Penttinen et al. (2014: 7), as according to them, students' studies should inherently embed these types of approaches (i.e. attitude, skills, knowledge and abilities) to the students' future careers, rather than distancing the career aspect from the students' study path. Therefore, one might conclude that Student4', Student8's and Student12's apparent confidence in their own skills, and the effect of those skills on their studies and future career paths led them to superior academic performance, as predicted by Bong (2001: 554) and Penttinen et al. (2014: 6-7).

The follow-up round revealed that Student4 and Student8, who had clear and far-reaching plans for their careers, were to a great extent executing those plans. For instance, Student4 had already taken all the career steps (s)he shared in the interview and (s)he was now in the process of applying for doctoral studies. Student8 was also on track regarding the plans and dreams (s)he discussed in the interview, as (s)he was already over halfway through his/her PhD studies in an English-speaking country. (S)he attributed a great deal of this success precisely to his/her IMDP studies. Student12 had, however, returned to his/her home country, although the plan at the time of the interview was to find a job in Finland. Yet already during the interview (s)he expressed some concerns about the difficulties of finding a job in Finland due to his/her likely inadequate Finnish skills, and perhaps this affected his/her change of plans, since the follow-up on his/her path revealed that a main reason for returning to his/her home country was the job opportunities on offer.

Even if, according to Williams et al. (2004: 20, 28), researchers and teachers should only use students' own reflections as a window to the students' success, here a question emerges of what can be learned from the stories and study paths of these three students. Perhaps the most valuable lesson might be found in the link between the students' academic success and their strong and positive sense of self in relation to their studies. This is especially supported by the findings of Van Dinther, Dochy and Severs (2011: 104), since according to them it is

important to reinforce HE students' self-efficacy. Moreover, in a similar vein, Williams et al. (2004: 20, 28) and McClure et al. (2011: 80) call for teachers and programs to invest time and effort on actively encouraging and inspiring students to invest in their own role during their studies. This clearly relates to the IMDPs as well, especially when considering that some of the IMDP students have criticized the programs for expecting them to be far more prepared for independent studying than the students have been in reality (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 14).

Hence, one is forced to consider whether the program staff, or Language Center teachers for that matter, have explicitly communicated to the IMDP students the importance of one's own role and effort, and moreover whether we have actively taught them what those things mean in practice. When one examines the success stories of Student4, Student8 and Student12, these aspects seem to play the leading roles in the IMDP studies, especially here in Finland.

9.1.2 Not graduating at all: living in the past with standardized tests and coping with uncertain career prospects

Moving on from the students who graduated within two years, the present study shall now take a look at the other extreme: the three students who have yet to graduate from their IMDP. Interestingly, in a similar way to the three students discussed above, these three students were, or in fact still are, students from one faculty. However, in contrast to the first group of participants, these three (Student7, Student9, and Student15) had many things in common. First, they are all originally from countries where English is strongly visible in society, and for instance both Student7 and Student15 had completed all their education, even kindergarten, completely in English, even though none of them have English as their L1. Second, in respect to academic English, all three of these students had completed one compulsory academic English course as part of their program, and Student9 had also taken one elective course.

Based on this information, it seems logical to conclude that these three students not only had at least some background in respect to English, but also support available in terms of their academic English. Although, it is worthy of attention, as already discussed in section 6.2.6, that in a sharp contrast to the previous group of students, and their future-orientation, these three students kept returning to the standardized tests which they had passed when applying to the program. However, a number of studies (see Turner, 2004: 98; Fox, 2009: 38; Taylor and Geranpayeh, 2011: 94; McNamara, 2012: 202; and Deygers et al., 2017: 3, 20) have pointed out that the standardized tests are, due to their general nature, not the most useful measure of students' academic language skills. In addition, the tests only provide a snapshot of the students' language skills at a particular moment (e.g. Fox, 2009: 38).

Therefore, one can question whether it says something about these participants' orientation towards their academic English skills, and especially the development of these skills, if even after two years in the program, they continue to reflect on a general language test which they took even before enrolling in

the program. For instance, when interviewing them and especially when looking at their interview responses, one could not help but think that the language test results they kept referring to were a sort psychological life preserver for them. This line of thinking derives from the fact that all of them, in one way or another, described even rather severe language hurdles they had faced during their studies, but then at certain points returned to the fact that they had, nevertheless, been filtered for their programs from the language perspective. According to Turner (2004: 98), Fox (2009: 38), and Deygers et al. (2017: 3), these tests should not by any means be used so simplistically as a reliable frame of reference. Furthermore, one ought to consider whether the tests were misleading for these students, if focusing on the tests actually distracted Student7 and Student15 from the time and effort they should have invested in their skills development.

In contrast to these two students, who described their study path more from the viewpoint of not making enough of an effort with their academic English skills, which was likely also reflected in the "satisfactory" grades they received for their academic English course, Student9 conversely emphasized that (s)he had independently worked hard on his/her academic English skills. This was likely reflected in this student's academic English grades, as (s)he received the highest grade ("excellent") for both of the two courses (s)he completed. Therefore, in respect to Student9 in particular, one needs to acknowledge that even if he made an effort, and invested time in his academic English, there may have been many other factors and challenges along his study path. According to Boughey (2000: 282-293) and Dooey (2010: 186), international students may often encounter a variety of challenges when it comes to their adjustment to a new academic community alongside adjusting to a new cultural environment. These problems may not be solely language problems, but they can equally have a negative effect on the students' studies, even delaying graduation. A similar observation has also been made in the internal report regarding these programs (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 15).

Lastly Student7, Student9 and Student15 share a certain external factor, and when comparing their situations to their program peers, one notices some intriguing aspects. First, within the program both Student7 and Student15 studied in, these two are not that exceptional. Their program, according to Mathies (2016), had a graduation rate of 0% at the two-year mark. When consulting the next checkpoints, it did not improve that much, as it reached 8% at the two-and-a-half-year mark, and then stayed the same at the three-year mark. As these numbers suggest, this program clearly contributed rather negatively to the overall graduation rate of all 18 programs, especially when it was the only program with a graduation rate below 20% even at the three-year mark.

Moreover, according to the graduation figures (Mathies, 2016) for Student9's program, it is clear that neither was his/her program a success, with graduation rates of 0%, 10% and 30% for the checkpoints of two years, two-and-a-half years and three years. Consequently, this program accompanied Student7 and Student15's program among the bottom three of all 18 programs in gradua-

tion rate. Such results indicate that there was potentially something wrong in the program design of these students' IMDPs, since they are very clearly not the only ones from their programs without a degree. In the follow-up on these students, Student7 criticized his/her IMDP for being unhelpful in terms of his/her professional growth, since the program's roadmap for its students' future was far too unclear and scattered. Interestingly, Student9 also remarked that his/her program had to an extent failed to motivate him to graduate as (s)he has noticed that it is very difficult to find work which would relate to his/her IMDP studies. In the light of this, one might note that perhaps the future-orientation to students' career, which Penttinen et al. (2014) strongly promote, was not realized in practice in these students' IMDPs. It is important to note here, however, that the follow-up also revealed that Student7 and Student9, who responded to my e-mail, had entered working life soon after the interviews, during the summer of 2015, and due to this neither of them had managed to complete their studies. However, Student9 emphasized that his/her current line of work was not related to the IMDP studies, but rather his/her previous degree.

As a conclusion to the discussion of these three students, the following viewpoints, which provide valuable insights to the study paths of IMDP students, are essential to mention. First, the role of students' own effort is yet again highlighted in these three students' experiences, as is the fact that students, as well as the programs, need to fully acknowledge that the standardized tests, even if they are passed with adequate or even high scores, are always merely a first step towards students actively developing their academic language skills. Moreover, as became apparent in the follow-up with Student7, (s)he noted that when looking back at the studies (s)he would have benefitted from more support in terms of academic English, and particularly his/her thesis writing process, which (s)he is now struggling to finish on his/her own.

However, taking into account that these students were, or in fact still are, students of the not-so-successful programs, the responsibility of the programs should not be forgotten or overlooked. Obviously, and as promoted by Penttinen et al. (2014), the programs need to be future-oriented in the sense that they encourage the IMDP students to graduate by having a clearer roadmap for the students' career possibilities, and above all by enabling students to complete their studies within the two-year timeframe. For instance, Student7 and Student9 started in their current jobs only after two years in the program, meaning that they should have managed to complete all their studies by then. However, the Internal Evaluation (2014) points out that especially in the faculty, in which for instance Student7, Student9 and Student15 studied, the IMDPs have struggled with students coming from developing countries, since these students have had the tendency to intentionally postpone their graduation, and thus extend their stay in Finland (Internal Evaluation, 2014:67). However, neither the interviews nor the follow-up answers provided any reference to such motives, and therefore this viewpoint cannot be discussed in more detail in the present study. Yet this view and the experiences of these students merely show how complex the stories behind students' delayed graduation can be.

9.1.3 Graduating after the given time-frame: IMDP students' varied study paths as complex combinations of a range of factors

The third group identified among the participants of the present study is the group of nine students who, by the fall of 2017, had already graduated, but who also had taken more than the allotted two years to complete their IMDP studies. If it was slightly challenging to present a shared profile of the three students who had graduated within the given timeframe, or of the three students who have not yet graduated at all, this last group is even more varied. This might simply be because one is dealing with nine individuals instead of three, but more importantly, as discussed in the Internal Evaluation (2014), the students entering these programs have extremely varied backgrounds, and when trying to find commonalities between any number of these students, one is faced with this variety. However, what makes this particular group interesting is that it actually represents the majority of all IMDP students in important sense: in general, not just in respect to these participants or even their entire cohort, it takes more than the required two years to graduate from these programs (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 15).

This latter viewpoint emerges further when comparing the individual graduation times to those of each program's overall graduation rate. First, participants Student1, Student11 and Student14 all took part in the same IMDP, and the graduation rates of these three students lingered around two-and-a-half years. When looking at their program's cohort as a whole, they represent the bigger picture as well, since according to Mathies (2016) the graduation rate reached 60% at the two-and-a-half-year mark, and 80% at the three-year mark. This last percentage, 80%, positioned their program among the top five programs, right after the four programs achieving 100% at the three-year mark. This perspective led to examining what these three students mentioned in their interviews, and it was discovered that two themes seemed to be shared by these participants.

First, Student11 and Student14 made comments related to their peers being superior in academic English skills, and the students felt this gave them good role models and peer support in their own program. It also indicates, although via second-hand knowledge, that the overall level of their peers' English was good, which could have contributed to the relatively good graduation rate. Second, they all made similar marks related to their own language gains, as they reported making some language gains, but also that further support in addition to the single compulsory academic English course would have been very beneficial. At this juncture, one can deliberate whether these factors contributed in any way to the delay of their graduation, since all of them needed one additional semester to complete their studies. Interestingly, Student1 even stated during the interview that in academic writing in English, (s)he simply needs more time.

Another example from the same faculty, but a different IMDP, is Student13. (S)he managed to graduate very close to the two-and-a-half-year mark as well, similarly to the three students above, but (s)he stood out more than his/her peers because the graduation rate in this particular program was only 13% at the two-and-a-half-year mark, and it managed to reach only 40% by the three-year mark

(Mathies, 2016). (S)he discussed to a great extent the same issues as Student1, Student11 and Student14 did, sharing their thoughts on struggling with some academic English issues, and (s)he particularly expressed his/her need for further support, even if the program already includes two compulsory academic English courses. However, as regards his/her peers and program, the interview responses shed no light on the slightly disappointing graduation rate of the three-year mark.

Nonetheless, an attention-grabbing observation was made about this program in the Internal Evaluation (2014), since according to this report, this program in particular has faced challenges related to intercultural communication, and this has been thought to be due to the strongly western orientation of the program (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 58). As noted earlier, similar remarks, and even concerns, have also been expressed by various scholars, such as Boughey (2000: 282-283), Clapham (2000: 519), Dooey (2010: 187), Seidlhofer (2012: 402), and McCambridge and Saarinen (2015: 304-305). In relation to Student9, and as already pointed out in the spirit of Dooey's (2010: 186) findings, international students' study challenges may also derive from adjustment problems due to a new cultural environment.

However, as Chapters 6–8 showed, intercultural communication and the challenges related to it did not appear as a distinct theme of its own in the present study. Yet to verify that there were no individual comments made related to it, the interview transcripts were once again reviewed. It was found that Student13 had made one comment on the communication challenges (s)he had faced during his/her studies, remarking that "because our culture is totally different so sometimes it leads to a misunderstanding." The reason why this was not brought up in relation to the results in the previous chapters was that it was the only instance in the 15 interviews which addressed intercultural communication, so it was not made into a theme of its own. Even though this participant also talked about challenges related to English, this example sheds light on the idea that students' problems are not always solely language problems per se (e.g. Boughey, 2000; Marshall et al., 2011). Nonetheless, when attaching his/her comment to the finding of the internal report about this issue likely being prevalent on a more general level in Student13's program, it becomes at least one potential reason for his/her delayed graduation and for the fact that even at the three-year mark 60% of Student13's peers had not graduated at all.

Continuing with participants who spent more than two years in graduating, Student5 and Student6 were also students who took part in the same program. They were both students of the same IMDP as Student9, who had not yet graduated. As discussed in the previous section, their program was not the most successful one, as nobody managed to graduate within the given timeframe, and only 10% graduated within two-and-a-half years (Mathies, 2016), which was very close to the graduation time of both Student5 and Student6. Considering that these two students, who managed to graduate from a program with such poor graduation rates, were interviewed for the present study led to yet another re-

view round of their entire interviews in order to map out if there was anything which would shed light on their or their peers' studies in this program.

It was found that Student5 had discussed the weak level of his/her peers' English skills, saying that some of the peers were always forced to translate their thoughts, and even their assignments, from their mother tongue, rather than having the ability to convey their thoughts directly in English. Obviously, this type of second-hand knowledge needs to be handled with caution, but at the same time it should be taken into account that this type of language challenge has been brought up in connection with a program with such poor graduation rates. Moreover, in terms of academic English, both Student5 and Student6, as well as also Student9, criticized the fact that the compulsory academic English course was offered to them at such a late stage of their studies, since the course was organized only during the last semester of their program. It should be emphasized that all of these students rather openly shared their concerns about their challenges with academic language and, in Student9's words, about "not being cut out for this" in regards to their studies, especially when no language support was available until it was too late.

Next the present study moves on to a different faculty, for which, unfortunately, there was only one participant. This faculty has had, and continues to have, a good selection of IMDPs, and thus it is especially a pity that their IMDP students are so clearly underrepresented in the present study. Nonetheless, when revisiting this one participant and his/her study path, it must be said that (s)he graduated halfway between the two-and-a-half- and three-year mark, which was sooner than the majority of his/her program peers, as the graduation rates for this program went from 13% at the two-year mark to 39% at the two-and-a-half-year mark, and by the three-year mark just barely half of the program students (52%) had reached graduation (Mathies, 2016). Similarly to the other IMDPs offered by this particular faculty, Student2's program features multiple academic English courses as compulsory courses in their curricula. For instance, Student2 completed three compulsory academic English courses during his/her IMDP, but (s)he still expressed his/her needs for further continuous support in academic English.

Moreover, Student2 also expressed his/her frustration over his/her peers' low level of academic English. Though again this is a question of second-hand information, such a view leads to a consideration of whether this is in anyway linked to the fact that only every other one of his peers managed to graduate within three years. If there is a link, even a vague one, between these two aspects, then it can be seen as worrying that the Language Center has offered these students support in the form of three academic English courses, and that the support has even been well-integrated with the subject studies (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 78). Such a situation leads one to question the outcomes of the Language Center's courses. However, prior to jumping to any conclusions on this issue, it should also be noted that according to the internal report, a clear bottleneck for the students of Student2's program has evidently been the likely inadequate selection of minor studies available for the students to study in English. Obviously, this is mostly speculation, but these issues also reveal the complexity of the phenome-

non and the IMDPs, though there is also no way of ignoring the fact that regardless of the reasons, the graduation rate of approximately 50% is rather low.

Lastly, in order to complete this circle regarding the participants' profiles, this section closes by discussing the remaining two students, who took part in IMDPs from the same faculty. Neither of these two students (Student10 and Student3), however, took part in the same programs as the aforementioned Student4, Student8 or Student12. The study path of Student10 in the IMDP ended when he graduated, as did many of his/her program peers, just before the two-and-a-half-year mark. According to Mathies (2016), at that point the graduation rate was at 43%, and by the three-year mark the graduation peaked at only 50%. However, in a fascinating contrast to Student10's program, actually in contrast to all of the programs of these participants, the program which Student3 completed was actually the only program which achieved a graduation rate of 100%, although not until the three-year mark. In the scale of all 18 programs of the 2013–2015 cohort, this particular IMDP made it to the top four programs, since only those four programs managed to achieve 100% during the three years analyzed and reported by Mathies (2016).

It is worth returning to Student3's study path, but also to consult the internal report to discover what was so special about his/her program, because it indeed stands out in a positive way from the programs of the other participants. Student3 himself graduated only just after the two-year mark, as (s)he apparently got his degree at the beginning of the third academic year, and consequently, (s)he was not that far from joining the three participants who graduated within the two-year timeframe. (S)he also received a grade of "excellent" for his/her thesis, while his/her studies included two compulsory academic English courses. In addition, there are three particular aspects which caught my attention in Student3's interview responses and which may have had an effect on his/her study success.

First, as discussed already earlier, (s)he had made an active, and seemingly self-directed, effort to develop his English skills during his studies, and not only in relation to his studies, but also in the form of hobbies and part-time work. The positive effects of such actions have been promoted by, among others, Dooey (2010: 188) and Terraschke and Wahid (2011: 177). Second, conversely to many other participants of the present study, (s)he specifically emphasized that all his/her peers' English skills were on a good level and that nobody was in this sense pulling their group down, which relates to the importance of peers' adequate level of English because it enables peer support (e.g. Fox, 2009: 33; Evans and Morrison, 2011: 204). Third, (s)he also highlighted that his/her program staff were not fixed on the native-speaker ideal, which was something that the rest of the participants did not particularly point out. However, such an attitude and approach to the use of English might have constructed a positive, and above all encouraging, atmosphere for the students of his/her program. According to Seidlhofer (2012: 394), if the native-speaker ideal is reinforced, which was not apparently the case in Student3's program, the insecurities of non-native speakers are also often reinforced (Seidlhofer, 2012: 394).

Combined with these positive factors is the observation in the Internal Evaluation on the IMDPs that the students of this particular program were very degree orientated, and above all determined to complete their degree within the two-year schedule (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 121). Although the program only reached the graduation rate of 100% at the three-year mark, it can still be considered to be an achievement, since as noted, only three other programs from this cohort attained the same rate. Hence, it seemed that the program's degree-orientated students reached their goals, as concretely demonstrated in the slightly exceptional graduation rate.

9.2 Participants' profiles put together: the core components required for timely graduation and academic success in the IMDPs

Before moving on to the further, and slightly broader themes of the present study's discussion, it should be concluded that the study paths of the IMDP students are indeed mixtures of internal and external factors. Consequently, it seems safe to claim that a one-size-fits-all approach to the IMDPs, not to mention the IMDP students as individuals, is in many ways far removed from the realities of these students. In fact, it seems that the present study represents rather accurately the complex and multisided framework by Brisk (1999), and discussed also by Klaassen (2001: 18), where the success of programs such as the IMDPs, and their students' success require a combination of beneficial program characteristics (e.g. curriculum and instruction) and students' own performance, including the students' language and literacy development and their socio-cultural integration to the program. A range of contextual factors are also at play (Brisk, 1999; Klaassen, 2001: 18).

Even though the interviews and the issues the students brought up during them are only windows to the students' own thinking and experiences, it is nevertheless valuable information to all teachers working with the IMDPs, or equivalent EMI programs. According to Williams et al. (2004: 20, 28), McClure et al. (2011: 80), and Van Dinther, Dochy and Severs (2011: 104) precisely these, even if very self-related, windows to the students' thinking are exactly the right, and potentially very fruitful, starting point for teachers looking to affect their students' learning. This carries even more weight in respect to the EMI context of the present study, since a strong representation of scholars, such as Braine (2002: 65), Brew (2006: 160), Fortanet-Gómez and Räisänen (2008: 22), Smit and Dafouz (2012: 16), and Ljosland (2015: 612, 624), have called for attention to the students' viewpoints in the teaching offered to them.

Therefore, without merely settling for Brisk's (1999) framework, and in order to conclude the discussion on the participants' profiles, an attempt was made to visualize the most prominent results deriving from the present study's interviews, with the goal of shedding light on the successful study paths of the

IMDP students. Figure 21 below briefly illustrates the core themes the participants brought up in the interviews, and which could, above all, be linked to the participants' study success – along with their timely graduation.

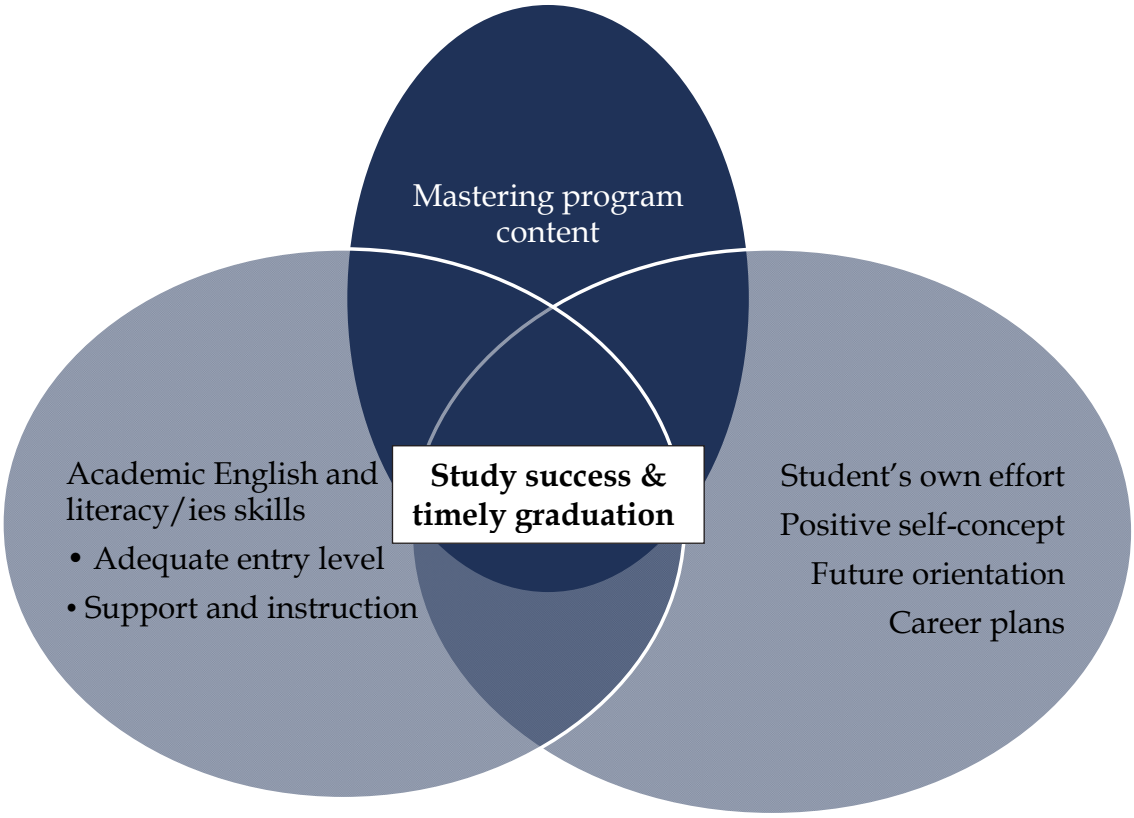

Figure 21 The core components required for study success and timely graduation in the IMDPs

As Figure 21 suggests, study success and graduation are at the core in the middle where the three components converge. This is because the present study's results indicate that these three components need to be in place along the IMDP students' study paths in order for the students to graduate within the given timeframe. First, this means that the component which highlights academic English and literacy/ies should coincide with the component incorporating relevant aspects related to the students' so-called self-systems (e.g. effort, positive self-concept and future orientation, as well as career plans). In addition to these two components, the IMPD students must also master their program's content. Despite this content area being beyond the scope of the present study, content mastery obviously plays an integral part in the IMDP students study success.

The present study has, however, demonstrated throughout its various stages, from elaborating on relevant background literature to revisiting the participants' profiles, that merely mastering the program content is not enough for IMDP study success and graduation. The present study's results also indicate that the line of thinking of, for instance, EMI programs being a combination of both content and language accompanied with literacy/ies does not seem ade-

quate either, as the students' self-related issues, such as effort, and positive self-concept, alongside an orientation towards the future with some type of career plans, also seem to play a crucial role when discussing IMDP students' success and graduation (see Figure 21 above).

Consequently, based on the present study it should be pointed out that instead of merely contemplating whether EMI should equally incorporate content and language, as well as literacy/ies, scholars conducting research, alongside with teachers teaching in practice, should aim to more profoundly consider the EMI students' self-systems. This means that in EMI, concepts such as student autonomy (see for instance van Lier, 1996; Benson and Voller, 1997) and agency (see e.g. Jääskelä et al., 2016) ought to be highlighted even more clearly if HE institutions are seeking to improve the EMI programs they offer.

Autonomy's core ingredients are choice and responsibility, and thus, an autonomous learner needs to make crucial decisions about his/her own learning in terms of what (s)he is learning and when and how this learning will occur (van Lier, 1996: 12-13). From the viewpoint of teaching, it is, nevertheless, important to bear in mind that autonomy as such cannot be taught or forced, but teachers can rather encourage and guide their students towards it (van Lier, 1996: 12). According to Benson and Voller (1997: 9), this changes the power dynamics of teaching and learning, as teachers become more like resources and facilitators for the learning processes, and the students take charge of their own learning (Benson and Voller, 1997: 1-2). If this line of thought is connected to Jääskelä et al.'s (2016: 2062) ideas on agency, the picture becomes clearer, as they emphasize that higher education should offer its students opportunities to fully participate in and have influence over their own learning. What is more, these learning situations need to bring to the fore the students' own strengths, interests and goals, and ideally all this will result in students developing not only their identity as learners, but also their identities as future experts in their field (Jääskelä et al., 2016: 2062). According to Penttinen et al. (2014: 17), it is essential that university students are guided towards a positive future-orientation in terms of their careers by supporting their own activeness and abilities to reflect, rather than merely imposing some ready-made answers or paths on them.

In relation to all this, it would seem extremely important that the IMDP students' study paths entail both content and language teaching, which particularly promotes, and concretely addresses the students' self-related issues of learning and becoming experts in their fields. In other words, assisting the students' own effort, supporting their self-concepts, and developing their own autonomy and agency, without ignoring the importance of career counselling and other relevant approaches to the future, should all be inherently built into the program designs. This requires that content and language teachers both do their share in this, and thus contribute collectively to the students' study paths. Therefore, it seems relevant here to address some of the larger themes which relate to the ways in which the programs, and especially the Language Center, need to perhaps review their planning and teaching in the IMDPs. As discussed above, this likely requires a far more joint effort compared to the current, often quite loosely connected teaching

of content and language. It should be emphasized here again that very likely the following viewpoints apply to various other EMI contexts, where content and language are inherently, but not necessarily fluently, linked together.

9.3 Bridging the artificial gap between content and language teaching

In the present study, and above all in the discussion related to the core components identified for timely graduation and academic success in programs such as the IMDPs (see Figure 21), one theme (or concern) which arose from the interviews and which was already to some extent addressed in section 6.1 in the discussion of the students' conceptualizations, i.e. views and perceptions, on what academic English encompasses. As noted, after two years of studying in an IMDP, the majority of the participants expressed a rather clear understanding of academic English as being something more formal and factual, or overall just beyond general language proficiency. However, as soon became apparent, these same participants very often narrowed this discussion in their further responses to simply vocabulary, or terminology, and pronunciation and grammar. According to Räsänen (2007: 44), such aspects are at the core of a rather micro-level of language, which according to Räsänen (2007: 44) is something that the Language Center's academic language teaching has tried to move away from. Moreover, on a broader scale, this micro-level approach has also been deemed as rather scarce, and even outdated, by various other scholars (see e.g. Dufva and Nikula; 2010; Pennycook, 2010).

Nonetheless, when comparing the participants' perceptions of academic language to Bhatia's (2004: 58) language-based view of literacy (see Figure 22 below), one notices that their interview extracts rather relate to the two most inner circles of Bhatia's (2004: 58) model: textual competence and generic competence. Perhaps some of their remarks touched upon the third circle, professional competence, but such comments centered mostly on field-specific terminology.

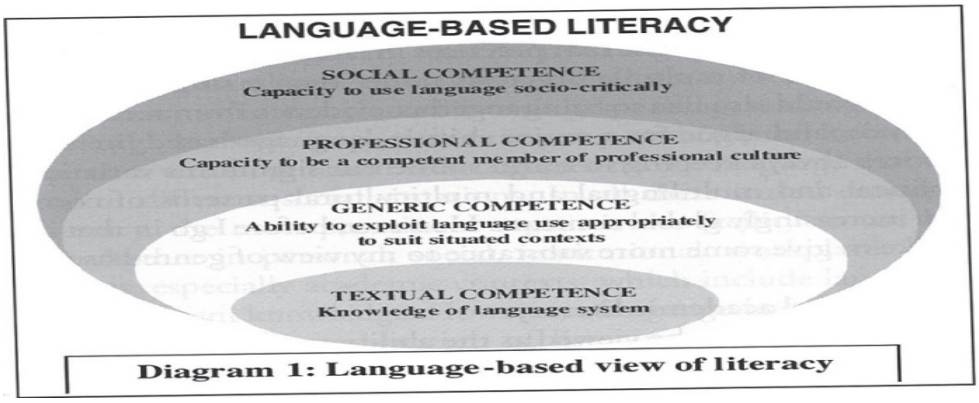

Figure 22 Language-based view of Literacy (Bhatia, 2004: 58)

Consequently, in relation to Bhatia's (2004: 58) model, the interviews of the present study did not provide much reference to language in relation to the most outer circles – professional competence or social competence – which according to Bhatia (2004: 58) refer to individuals' abilities to competently function in their professional culture and use the language socio-critically. These two outer circles link rather clearly to the more macro-level of academic language, which according to Räsänen (2007: 44, 57) has been closer to the approach of the Language Center's teaching. Aspects such as integrated language and learning skills and discipline-specific professional and intercultural skills are embedded in this macro-level approach (Räsänen, 2007: 44), but taking into consideration the participants' responses, the micro-level was evidently far more prevalent in the present study's interviews.

Therefore, I, as a researcher, but more importantly as a teacher of academic English, find this discovery concerning, or even alarming, since I would have hoped that our IMDP students would, after their studies, have a far broader understanding of academic English and its role in the larger context of academic discourses. After all, as emphasized by Räsänen (2007: 44), this has for years been the main goal of the Language Center's academic language teaching. In relation to this, as emphasized by Dewey et al. (2014: 43), program design is crucial for students' language gains and the overall success of EMI. However, as discussed by Garam (2009: 27), Hultgren, Jensen and Dimova (2015: 6), and Airey et al. (2017: 567), a prevalent concern of many EMI programs globally is that they are rarely consciously developed, and hence EMI rarely fulfills the ideal of two for the price of one in practice (Knapp, 2011: 53). Therefore, if EMI is defined as teaching courses related to the students' subject studies in English (Hellekjær, 2010: 11) I suggest taking this approach slightly further. If the current approach does not seem to produce the desired outcomes, this raises a question of how the teaching of academic language and literacy/ies ought to then be organized and executed. A possible solution to this is proposed in the following section.

9.3.1 Providing the IMDP students an all-encompassing study experience

As already discussed in relation to academic literacy/ies and disciplinary discourse, it has been claimed that in order for the students to become fluent in the language, literacies and disciplinary discourses of their field, they need to be exposed to the ways of doing and thinking of their field, and above all their community. In other words, they need to conduct their science together with other scientists in their own community, such as the IMDP, as already proposed by Airey and Linder (2009: 4), and promoted by Jacobs (2004: 163). Obviously, in the IMDPs, the students are likely being exposed to these considering that the students usually spend a minimum of two years with their program staff, who are experts in their field. Yet one cannot completely ignore the remarks made by some of the participants of the present study regarding their programs relying too heavily on the students studying by themselves.

Nonetheless, as already noted at various intervals, this way of practicing science happens in the IMDPs in academic English, which automatically calls for integrating the Language Center's academic English teaching and support. According to Räsänen (2007: 59-63), this has been at the heart of the cooperation between the programs and the Language Center for years, and in practice this integration has been manifested in the subject studies, and for instance our academic English courses sharing the same materials and assignments (Räsänen, 2007: 59-60). However, as far as my own experiences are concerned, as well as the findings of the Internal Evaluation (2014: 14), this integration described by Räsänen (2007) is by no means always part of all the programs, and the level, not to mention the functionality, of the integration may vary a great deal.

These exact same issues were also highlighted in the present study's interviews. Students explained that they were struggling, since they were receiving the academic English support either too soon or too late. This makes sense, if one considers that a discipline's language is never merely an object of learning, but always a tool in respect to learning about the discipline (Jalkanen, Almonkari and Taalas, 2016: 14). As already discussed in relation to the participants' interview responses, the positive feedback on our academic English courses derived mainly from the students' positive experiences of our courses being well-integrated to the subject studies. Conversely, and rather interestingly, the negative feedback focused rather strongly on the participants' experiences of our courses not being linked, either schedule- or content-wise, to what was going on in the students' programs.

As a teacher of academic English, I can relate to the participants' experiences, since from my point of view the best IMDP courses I have taught have been a result of functioning integration, whereas the less successful ones have been negatively affected by a lack of communication between me and the program, as well as a mismatch between what has been at the core of my course and at the heart of the students' studies. I am convinced that my colleagues' experiences are in line with mine, since at the Language Center the forms and extent of these integrations have varied significantly depending on the English lecturers as well as the IMDPs, but it seems that no unified procedure has been created to better combine academic English with the content of the IMDPs. However, especially an approach such as the academic literacy/ies approach, which goes beyond the language specialists' terrain, does require that the language experts really collaborate with the content specialists (Jacobs, 2007; Dafouz and Smit, 2016). This partnership is thought to enable both language and content teachers to assist their students' in developing their shared ways of doing and thinking (Jacobs, 2007; Dafouz and Smit 2016; Jalkanen, Almonkari and Taalas, 2016: 14).

Consequently, in order to improve this integration not only in terms of the IMDPs but perhaps also in relation to EMI in general, I make some suggestions in the following section. At the heart of the following suggestions are the ideals of the IMDP students, and EMI students on a broader scale, becoming properly acquainted with the practices of their academic discourses (Clapham, 2000: 519)

and being profoundly socialized to their domain-specific academic genres and registers (Hellekjær, 2010: 24). Furthermore, a tighter and smoother integration would also hopefully result in the students taking a stronger position in their own field, by supporting them in arguing for it and voicing it (e.g. Bacha, 2010; Wingate, 2012a, 2012b). All in all, this all would be done with English and in English. I find that this calls for more detailed discussion, and hence in the following I first outline what the literature says in relation to this type of integration's benefits and challenges. This will be followed by presenting various scholars' views on the different ways of conducting such integration in practice.

9.3.2 The benefits and challenges of bringing content teaching closer to language teaching

There are multiple factors which support adopting a more integrated or collaborative approach to teaching in EMI, although according to Jacobs (2004: 162) the reality is that the professional lifeworlds of language teachers are quite separate from those of the content teachers. Nonetheless, as noted by Ellison, Aráujo, Correira and Vieira (2017: 61), and as has been visible in the profiles of present study's participants, students come to EMI programs (e.g. the IMDPs) with such varied proficiencies that they need various kinds of support not only in respect to complex content, but also in terms of their language use. Hence, according to Ellison et al. (2017: 61) this requires an approach which integrates the complex combination of content and language, and interestingly, according to Marshal et al. (2011) such combined focus has motivated students, and made them more engaged in their studies. This might derive from the fact that students are more receptive to aspects, such as academic literacy, when they are not viewed only as something generic and when they are not artificially separated from the rest of their studies (Marshal et al., 2011; Jalkanen, Almonkari and Taalas, 2016: 14).

Second, Jacobs (2006: 148-149) along with Marshal et al. (2011), have also reported on a very likely scenario, since it is often the case that language lecturers are not experts on the content field they are working with, and conversely, the content lecturers are not necessarily equipped with the expertise to help their students develop their language and literacy proficiency. Jacobs (2004: 164) also remarks that very often content teachers, who are the specialists of their discipline, in fact enter the teaching job with little, if any, knowledge of or experience in issues related to teaching, or learning for that matter. Therefore, if content and language are brought closer together, this is thought to help the program staff to be more up to date on the academic English side of their students' studies (Evans and Green, 2007: 15), especially if content teachers, as pointed out by Fox (2009: 27), are oblivious of the language support in place for their students. All this may additionally assist them in incorporating English across their curriculum, so that it is not fossilized as a merely separate component of their programs (Evans and Green, 2007: 15). Jacobs (2007: 66) also made a fascinating discovery, as according to the content teachers it was helpful to be forced to elaborate on their discipline and its discourses to people who were not from

their discipline, namely, the language teachers. This enabled them to imagine which aspects of their disciplinary discourse might also be hindering students' access to the content of their discipline. A similar finding was also made by Marshal et al. (2011).

For language teachers, it should be taken into account that the language use in, for example, the IMDPs is always local and disciplinary specific (e.g. Airey, 2015: 172), rather than merely vaguely academic. With this logic, a more collaborative approach provides a sharper perspective for language teachers, such as myself, on the these local and specific ways of using the language in our IMDPs (e.g. Marshal et al., 2011), instead of reinforcing the often misleading one-size-fits all approach, which according to Airey (2015: 172) can lead to neglecting the students' needs related to their discipline's literacy/ies. What is more, Evans and Green (2007: 6) point out that such information on the students and their needs can be especially valuable if taking into account that many HE institutions are putting time and resource pressure on EAP instruction, and hence EAP teachers need to be able to effectively identify and prioritize what their courses should focus on.

According to Jalkanen, Almonkari and Taalas (2016: 14), as well as Lyster (2017: 12), it is actually difficult or even impossible to have academic language and academic content in their own separate boxes, since, as Evans and Green (2007: 14) argue, such separation is simply artificial. One might even go as far as pointing out that there is not one without the other. In reality, we are often teaching our students not to view them separately in their own studies, but then that is often how we package our own teaching. For instance, as has been noted earlier, the Language Center at the University of Jyväskylä has aimed at integrating academic English courses with the students' IMDP studies, but as was portrayed in the participants' responses, this has manifested itself in various versions and levels of integration. I find that many of the participants' responses, for instance the ones related to the academic English courses' timing and contents, were very much echoing the concerns voiced by Wingate (2012a: 27), among many others. Because, if content and language are separated in teaching, one is also basically separating thinking from the instruction of writing (e.g. Wingate, 2012a: 27; Jalkanen, Almonkari and Taalas, 2016: 14).

If one takes all these viewpoints into account, one is quite likely inclined to perceive the collaborative approach as a rather self-evident option. Lyster (2017: 10) has even remarked that this type of teacher collaboration translates into strengths and benefits of interdisciplinary collaboration, as according to him it should be an integral component in any program's design. Here it is natural to wonder why such an approach is not fostered with even more persistence and determination in, for instance, the IMDPs. To provide a response to this, I next discuss the aspects which have been found to impede this type of collaborative approach in reality.

As already noted by Jacobs (2004: 162), in programs such as the IMDPs language teachers' work has traditionally been separate from that of the content teachers, and when thinking about disrupting such dynamics, one needs to take

into account that educational changes, regardless of their scale, are always entwined with people's beliefs and values as well as their visions (e.g. Fox, 2009: 27). It has even been proposed that teachers in general are often particularly individualistic, and as a result they may even avoid collaboration with their fellow teachers (Fox, 2009: 27). According to Weinberg and Symon's (2017: 146) experiences, this seems to particularly apply to content teachers' reluctance to work with language teachers, although I do not personally fully agree with such generalization. In relation to this, Jacobs (2007: 69) found that it is in fact a question about the lecturers' professional background, since apparently teachers who themselves are relatively new to the academic context were far more open to the idea of integration, whereas the more experienced ones preferred staying in the comfort zones they had created throughout the years.

Trent (2010) found that language teacher' and content teachers actually had two very different teacher profiles, which are summarized in Table 7 (Trent, 2010; Lyster, 2017: 11).

Table 7 Content and language teachers' varied perceptions about being a teacher (Trent, 2010; Lyster, 2017: 11)

Content teachers	Language teachers
• defined the "real world" in terms of finite sets of skills and knowledge	• defined the "real world" as uncertain and beyond sets of skills and knowledge
• emphasized teacher control and strove to "transmit" sets of knowledge and skills to students	• emphasized negotiation, challenges to knowledge, and lack of predetermined answers
• aligned teaching practices with the syllabus and exams	• aligned teaching practices with the challenges of real communication

As Table 7 shows, content and language teachers have different viewpoints on teaching. According to Lyster (2017: 11), this can create challenges in the collaboration between these teachers. The profiles bring to the fore thought-provoking contrasts if considering the content teachers' focus on finite sets of skills and knowledge in comparison to the language teachers' understanding of the uncertainty of the real world. Moreover, content teachers' preference for teacher control and transmitting of knowledge and skills is contrasted with the language teachers' tendencies to teach more via negotiation and open answers. Interestingly, these issues were very much also the themes which the content and language teachers in Jacobs' research (2007: 69-70) were forced to take into account in order to keep the integration going. Returning to Trent (2010) and Lyster (2017: 11), syllabus and exams are also thought to be at the heart of content teaching, whereas the challenges of real communication are considered to lead the way in language teaching.

These interesting findings by Trent (2010), and discussed by Lyster (2017: 11), need to be absorbed with caution, since naturally also both content and language teachers have varied backgrounds and orientations in their teaching. For instance, Jacobs (2007: 66) discovered that the teachers' personalities and commitment also played integral roles in terms of the success and overall flow of the collaboration. However, I must admit that many of the aspects presented

by Trent (2010), and elaborated by Lyster (2017: 11) echo my own integration experiences with some content teachers, and even entire programs. Therefore, I do not find it completely irrelevant to remark that such aspects may have an effect on actual teacher collaboration (Lyster, 2017: 11). According to Trent (2010) and Lyster (2017: 11), the keys to successful collaboration would be a new, far more collaborative mindset of all teachers and the development of cross-curricular relationships. However, Jacobs (2007: 66) suggests achieving these may take time, because with this transdisciplinary collective one is dealing with a complex shared identity.

I fully concur with Trent (2010) and Lyster (2017: 11), but I have also experienced in practice that Jacob's (2007: 66) observation about the importance of time holding true in reality. To demonstrate this, I worked for five consecutive years with one particular IMDP, and I noticed that this shared identity needed to be negotiated together with the content teachers, and particularly with all the relevant members of the program's teaching staff. I learned that whenever a change in the program staff concerned the integrated courses related to my academic English courses, I needed to some extent restart the process from the beginning, since my role in respect to their courses always needed to be established and vice versa. Perhaps all this is connected to power dynamics, as discussed for instance by Jacobs (2007: 66-67), since it has been emphasized that questions and notions of expertise are at the heart of language and content teachers' partnerships. All this likely derives from the teachers' differing ideas, discussed above by Trent (2010) and Lyster (2017: 11), which consequently have an effect on the things that content and language teachers emphasize and prioritize in their own teaching, as well as in respect to their students' learning. Based on my own experiences, there is no way of going around the fact that finding common ground in this sense required both time and effort, and I will be the first to admit that there were times when the integration, or collaboration, did not work. Mostly this resulted from stakeholders not being in the loop of who does what, and perhaps even more often it was a question of when someone does something. Echoing the remarks of the present study's participants, the IMDP students I have worked with fortunately did not hesitate to express their thoughts on the things that worked or did not work in respect to our integration.

However, I also take credit for the bits and pieces which turned out to be successful during those years. I find it intriguing that the majority of the positive feedback I have received throughout the years in this IMDP has evolved around aspects, such as the timing of the language support and core assignments relating to their studies, which are exactly deriving from the integration and my collaboration with the program's staff. From the language teacher's point of view, according to Weinberg and Symon (2017: 145), this is precisely the beauty of this dual-focused approach to EMI, since it allows me and my colleagues to really address the right language and literacy issues at the right time with the students. In order to further illuminate this integration approach to EMI, in the following section I touch on some scholars' thoughts regarding how

to conduct it in practice, and I complement their thoughts with my own experiences as a teacher.

9.3.3 Concrete ways for merging content to language

When bringing the discussion related to integration closer to the level of practice, one is faced with issues of what should be taught, and by whom, and how all this would translate into actual courses or even classroom sessions. First of all, Lyster (2017:9-10) has highlighted prevalent themes or content which, according to the literature, should be addressed in integrated teaching of content and language. Perhaps the most pivotal guideline could be that whatever the integration deals with, it always adopts a counterbalanced approach, which means that both language and content have a similar complementary status (Lyster 2017: 9-10). When it comes to integrating content and language, Coyle, Hood and Marsh (2010) and Coyle (2015) bring to the fore the dilemma of combining 'content-obligatory', 'content-compatible' and 'content-enriching' language. In brief, this means that teaching must entail language *of* learning, language *for* learning, and language *through* learning (Coyle, Hood and Marsh, 2010; Coyle, 2015). First, language *of* learning refers to the core content specific language, i.e. for instance lexis, expressions and phrases, which the students will need when learning. Secondly, language *for* learning relates to the language, which the students need to master in order to be able to take in the in-class content of their studies, such as the task-specific language required for their classroom sessions. Lastly, the third viewpoint, i.e. learning *through* language, encompasses the idea of language, which deepens and thus enriches the students' understanding of what they are learning content-wise. (Coyle, Hood and Marsh, 2010; Coyle, 2015)

Dalton-Puffer (2007) has put an emphasis on supporting the students to become proficient in the core academic language functions, such as describing and explaining, which already sort of inherently embed both content and language, as neither of these functions exist without content or language. According to Lyster (2017: 9-10), the key is to keep drawing the students' attention in turns to content, and then to language and so on. In addition to this, Kong and Hoare (2011), alongside Lyster (2017: 9-10), call for a focus on deeper-level knowledge building, in contrast to a more common-sense approach. I assume that the latter option may often be what us language teachers are forced to resort to due to our lack of profound disciplinary knowledge. However, in a more integrated approach, the teaching would naturally include also detailed disciplinary knowledge from the content teachers, so this would create a basis for teaching which would encourage the students to elaborate their ideas more fully (Kong and Hoare, 2011; Lyster, 2017: 9-10).

A more concrete framework for integrating content and language can be created by using the typical texts and genres of the discipline in question (e.g. Lyster, 2017: 9-10), and have them be at the core of the integrated courses and even individual sessions. This has to a great extent been the approach, for instance, in the bachelor's level integration the Language Center has been doing

together with the departments (Jalkanen, Almonkari and Taalas, 2016), and as became apparent in the participants' responses, such an approach often has also been adopted in the IMDPs. Integrating content and language around the texts the students need to produce in their studies could mean using reports, essays, and even math problems and beyond (e.g. Lyster, 2017: 9-10). In the IMDPs, the text at the core of integration is usually the master's thesis.

However, according to Jacobs (2006: 153) this text and/or genre driven approach undisputedly requires that teachers share a vision of the texts' code of practice. This means that both content and language teachers need to share ideas and preferences in respect to issues, such as document formats, and citations and referencing, as well as what is considered to be plagiarism (Jacobs, 2006: 153). Based on my experiences, students are often rather sharp in relation to this, and especially if the instructions of their program differ, even slightly, from the instructions I have given them. Understandably, such scattered instructions often cause confusion, possibly particularly due to the fact that many students are putting together such texts and assignments for the first time during their path in academia. Jacobs (2006: 153) advises both content and language teachers to be very meticulous, especially when it comes to assessment, and it also been suggested that assessment should be done collaboratively (Jacobs, 2006: 147).

To an extent, I share Jacobs' (2006: 153) views, since assessment is also an issue I have been forced to deal with more than once. Characteristically, it is not unheard of that the feedback and assessment I provide to the IMDP students, is in one way or another, in contrast to the things their content teachers have paid attention to. Typically, students get confused if I as a language teacher give, for instance, praise to them on their fluent and well-organized writing, but then their teacher from the program criticizes their inadequate content. There are also cases where the student has only been getting "very good" and "excellent" grades for their content courses, but when I look into their academic writing in more detail they only achieve a "good" or "satisfactory" level, which obviously confuses them. The fact that the grading in these examples is separate rather understandably leads to students' confusion. These examples illustrate the exact artificial distinction between content and language (e.g. Evans and Green, 2007: 1; Lyster, 2017: 12), as language is very clearly decontextualized (e.g. Zamel, 1998: 253; Turner, 2004: 104; Jacobs, 2006: 147) from the rest of the students' studies. Assessment is merely one example of this, but I think it clearly indicates that content and language teachers should aim to share far more teaching practices than they typically do (Jacobs, 2007: 64).

However, underlying this is the question about who does what in content and language integration, and what kind of revised roles should content and language teachers adopt. Views on these questions vary to some extent. Jacobs (2004: 163-164) has contemplated the idea that, for instance, academic literacy/ies is best taught by the insiders of a specific discipline, e.g. teachers and professors of a certain IMDP. According to her, it is not only necessary to model appropriate disciplinary practices (ibid. 163) but to also teach those things. At this juncture, by teaching Gee (1990: 154) and Jacobs (2004: 164) refer to a pro-

cess of explanation and analysis, which breaks the given model into smaller bits, and thus creates meta knowledge of the discipline's ways of doing and thinking. However, according to Jacobs (2004: 164), even if content teachers are able to model and demonstrate disciplinary aspects to their students, they do not necessarily excel in terms of elaborating on the meta level, since it requires knowing exactly when it is fruitful to scaffold the students' growing abilities, and what are meaningful ways of addressing those abilities. In the light of this, Jacobs (2004: 172) suggests that content teachers are the ones who contribute by providing the insider knowledge of their discipline, and language teachers take part by finalizing that with their understanding of how literacies ought to be taught and learned. A result of this, in Jacobs' (2004: 172) view, would be a discursive space that would enable these teachers to collaborate.

This discursive space for the collaboration has, it should be noted, been interpreted in slightly differing ways. For instance, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998: 42) present three alternative levels of cooperation, and mere cooperation is the first level. According to them, cooperation evolves particularly around the language teachers' initiative. Cooperation refers to them being active in posing questions to content teachers, and by gathering information on the students' needs and the department's priorities, as well as how the subject courses link to the language viewpoint. An example of cooperation (Wingate, 2012a: 29) in terms of academic writing illustrates this well, as cooperation manifested itself precisely in the form of the content teachers providing the language teacher information on their subject-specific writing assignments, as well as texts, and with the help of this information the language teacher can then develop instructional materials (Wingate, 2012a: 29).

Secondly, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998: 44) introduce the concept of collaboration, which according to them is based on the two sides working more directly and closely together. An example of such was, for instance, at the core of the issues discussed in respect to Jacobs (2007). However, what is essential to bear in mind is that collaboration is still something that only takes place outside the classroom (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998: 44). This leads to the sort of final level of integrating content and language, team teaching, and as can be detected it means that both the content and the language teacher are simultaneously working side by side in the classroom (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998: 45). The literature on team teaching mostly features a rather negative tone, with Cots (2013) and Weinberg and Symon (2017: 137) suggesting that team teaching has proven to be expensive, and thus not sustainable enough. Moreover, Weinberg and Symom (2017: 137) declare it to also be time-consuming, inefficient and difficult to organize. It has also been suggested that it can potentially be confusing for students if two teachers are operating in one class (e.g. Weinberg and Symom, 2017: 137). When thinking about the Language Center's integration with the IMDPs, or departments in general, I must note that out of all these three levels discussed by Dudley-Evans and St John (1998), team teaching is without a doubt the least used form of integration. This may very well be due to the exact reasons discussed above, even if Weinberg and Symon (2017: 137)

point out that team teaching, nevertheless, enables excellent collaboration and integration.

I find that no matter which level of integration the Language Center and the IMDPs decide to embark on even more systematically than before, I am convinced that the benefits would outweigh the challenges. According to Jacobs (2007: 72), this type of integration has seemingly enriched both content and language teachers' careers and professional identities, since it has enabled them to expand on their roles and identities and explore the possibility of being discourse teachers, and by doing so it has extended their former, far more narrow, teacher identity. Consequently, this more integrated approach has also, likely due to the aforementioned reasons, created a better sense of belonging in teachers who have been part of it (Jacobs, 2007: 64). In a similar vein, a teacher in a study by Marshal et al. (2011) voiced thoughts on integration by remarking that all teachers involved shared the same course philosophy. One might conclude that it makes sense that teachers have an improved sense of belonging if they feel that they share a philosophy with the people they work with, and especially if they can rely on the fact that people also understand the philosophy, and its core ideas, in the same way.

This is further reinforced when considering the findings of Marshal et al. (2011). They found that the students have also given positive feedback on bringing content and language closer together in the form of an academic literacy approach. What is more, according to them students had even particularly expressed their wishes in respect to having even more teaching organized in this new manner (Marshal et al., 2011). Statements such as these cause me to even more determinedly promote content and language integration, since as discussed at the early stages of the present study, the students and their learning should be at the core of all the policy decisions and pedagogical actions of the Language Center, and the university as a whole. Moreover, it should be pointed out that all this undisputedly ties into various other HE contexts as well, since the aforementioned aspects surely do not only apply to this study's context.

10 CONCLUSION

According to Westerholm and Räsänen (2015: 133), when the language of instruction and learning is different from the stakeholders' L1, such as in the case of the majority of IMDP teachers and students, multiple expected and unexpected factors come into play. Therefore, the present study will be concluded by briefly revisiting the most pivotal factors which were brought up and discussed by the 15 participants of the present study, and which enabled the present study to answer its research questions, and thus function as the basis for the following four main lessons to be learned from this dissertation. It is worthy of noting that all the lessons discussed here do not only link to the University of Jyväskylä's IMDPs, but they can all be reflected on in connection to similar EMI programs across the globe.

First, as discussed in section 6.1, the participants of the present study offered a viewpoint into how the IMDP students might conceptualize academic English. As became apparent, at the end of their IMDP studies, they viewed academic English rather accurately as something more formal than merely general English proficiency, but one could rather quickly detect that this understanding was beneath the surface often only manifested in relation to a rather narrow concept of language and literacy/ies. I find this to be a valuable insight for the Language Center, as well as the IMDPs, since according to various scholars such a narrow view of academic language is likely far from adequate when it comes to the students becoming experts in their field and, above all, part of their academic community. Consequently, I highlighted an alternative – an academic literacy/ies approach – which might aid the Language Center and programs to take the students' academic English and academic literacy skills to the required next level. In a similar vein, this approach is worthy of discussion in terms of other EMI programs, which are keen on taking the micro-level understanding of academic language a step further.

In the academic literacy/ies approach, it is essential that in order to execute such a shift in the teaching in the IMDPs, and other similar programs, properly and in an organized manner it requires a far more integrated approach, as discussed in sections 9.3.1–9.3.3. Therefore, I suggest that this view of the

IMDPs is the second lesson learned of the present study. As discussed by Räsänen (2007), this is by no means anything new, but I find that the results deriving from the present study, along with my own experiences as a teacher of academic English, indicate that we have not necessarily yet reached the required level, nor the seamless functionality, of integration between content and language. Thus, I suggest that we need to systematically continue bridging the gap between the content (i.e. what goes on in the IMDPs), and language and academic literacy/ies (which are at the core of the Language Center's teaching). Consequently, as became apparent in the participants' responses, this is by no means necessarily the situation in our teaching in reality, since it is so strongly up to individual teachers, as well as individual programs, to decide on the level and format of integrating content and language.

In relation to this, and as discussed and highlighted throughout Chapter 3, the IMDPs represent various disciplines and with that also various disciplinary discourses. What is more, McCambridge and Pitkänen-Huhta (2012: 166) emphasize that each IMDP is a discourse community in its own right. Also, from the viewpoint of academic literacy/ies, it should be taken into account that each community or discourse dictates its own expectations related to its academic actions, skills and knowledge, and each community or discourse hosts its own norms, values and conventions (see e.g. Becher, 1987; Jacobs, 2004: 162; Van De Poel, 2004: 242; Airey and Linder, 2009; and Murray, 2010: 350-351). In this sense, and in the spirit of Neeley (2005: 9), each IMDP, or any equivalent EMI program, would seem to have its own habits of mind, and this is undisputedly something that the present study urges both program staff and language and literacy/ies teachers to take into profound consideration. Thus, it should be emphasized that the present study does not suggest a one-size-fits-all approach to the teaching of the IMDPs, or in fact any EMI programs.

As discussed by Wingate (2012a: 27), and as contemplated by the present study's participants at various intervals in the interviews; each IMDP has its own core characteristics, which should have an effect on the approaches and methods of teaching the IMDP students in question. Only one aspect remains constant; regardless of the cohort and program, all our IMDP students, and for that matter all EMI students, ultimately need to become experts in their own field, and this expertise inherently entails, or at least it should entail, also the mastery of *their* discipline's language and literacies (e.g. Jalkanen, Almonkari and Taalas, 2016: 14). They way in which this should be done in practice, is a prevalent question for future joint endeavors of the IMDPs' and Language Centre's staff, especially when considering the Internal Evaluation's (2014: 13-14) findings regarding the wide range of program designs and curricula. Also, quite likely more research is needed in order to gain insights into individual programs as discourse communities.

At this juncture, and continuing with the present' study's main lessons, I would like to revisit a theme I have identified as the third lesson to be learned from this dissertation. As has been discussed at various intervals of the present study (e.g. sections 6.2.6 and 6.3.3), students' entry level in (academic) English

plays a crucial role in terms of any possible future academic language gains, and also students' overall study experience. This view is not only prevalent in the EMI literature, but it was also visible in the present study's participants' interview responses regarding their own skills as well as their peers' language skills (e.g. 6.2.2). This is a crucial viewpoint especially when considering that the overall language teaching, as discussed above, should be going far beyond the narrow scope of language. In relation to this, it has been argued throughout this study that standardized language tests might not be an adequate filter, because they do not test the students' abilities in English in the specific academic discourses, which all the IMDPs are.

As a reaction to this dilemma and as was already briefly discussed earlier in this dissertation, my colleague and I have already piloted a new, more tailored screening of the IMDP students' academic English skills and academic readiness (see e.g. Lahtela and Konttinen, 2016a; Lahtela and Konttinen 2016b; Konttinen and Lahtela, 2017). Thus far, this pilot has been conducted three times as part of the IMDP application rounds of 2016, 2017 and 2018. In a similar vein to the discussion related to integrating content and language in the teaching of IMDP students, this pilot screening, and the testing it involves, has also been executed in close co-operation with the programs. This is because we have aimed for integrating content and language already at this stage, prior to students even enrolling in the programs, since we have discovered that this is the best way to map out which applicants would best succeed in the programs or who would have the aptitude (e.g. Clapham, 2000: 517) to study in the IMDPs. In Clapham's (2000: 517) words, this type of screening aims to find the applicants who have the abilities to fairly rapidly acquire the academic discourse skills relevant to that specific context, meaning the IMDPs in the case of our screening. As discussed by some of the participants of the present study, and as argued in much of EMI literature, relatively short programs, such as the two-year IMDPs, especially require the students to get on the right track in terms of academic language and literacies soon after the students are immersed (e.g. Clapham, 2000: 517) in the academic setting.

Throughout the entire process related to this screening, the representatives of the Language Center, alongside the program staff, have been forced to even more profoundly discuss and jointly unpack what exactly we mean by the aptitude referred to by Clapham (2000) or what an applicant's potential means in the eyes of the IMDP staff, or conversely from the viewpoint of the Language Center. The screening process has indeed taught us all that our views, and the things we emphasize in respect to potential or aptitude of the IMDP applicants are surprisingly different from each other, but simultaneously fortunately also in fact quite complementary. The more we interact and screen applicants in co-operation with the IMDPs, the more we are starting to realize that we are still in search of common ground and that in addition to merely ticking a box in respect to IMDP applicants' potential in terms of the content, and their completion of a standardized language test, we need to resort to broader and shared understanding. Perhaps Conley's (2007) discussion of applicants' college readi-

ness (i.e. a combination of their key cognitive strategies, academic knowledge and skills, academic behaviors and contextual skills and awareness) would function as a good basis for screening in the future.

It should, however, be emphasized that the three screening rounds have indeed brought to the fore a need for research regarding the IMDP staff's thoughts on what exactly academic language and literacy/ies mean and entail, and how the IMDP staff see these aspects linking to their students' study paths. Nonetheless, the present study already at this stage advocates in the spirit of Murray and Nallay (2014) that the academic literacies approach should be brought closer to both HE teaching and HE student admissions. These viewpoints and the experiences my colleagues and I have had with the pilot screening lead me to strongly support such an integrated approach to the screening of the IMDP applicants. In this way, the programs, with our help, can find the students who are realistically capable of completing their studies within the given two-year timeframe. Moreover, I strongly invite other teachers working in various EMI contexts to reflect on these same issues as well.

The programs, alongside the Language Center's academic English teachers, can benefit from the information the screening provides also in the sense that it may reveal the individual student needs in terms of academic English and literacies. According to Read (2008: 181), this type of diagnostic use of students' entry level screening results can be useful when planning and offering language support to students such as the IMDP participants. Furthermore, having more diagnostic information on our IMDP students would be a positive contrast to the typical situation. Since, as noted already earlier, the academic English courses offered to them are usually, due to time and resource constraints, based on varyingly accurate and inaccurate assumptions of the students' needs. Moreover, the assumptions are often based on quite homogenous perceptions of the IMDP students' needs, whereas the reality is often far more heterogeneous. Basically, individual students, or even entire cohorts of the same program, may vary a great deal in respect to their academic English strengths and challenges. I find that the heterogenic nature of the IMDP students and programs was illustrated clearly in the present study as well, since the participants' reported successes and failures, as well as their overall study experiences, came in all shapes and sizes.

With the help of more tailored screening, we could gain better insights into the IMDP students' academic English and literacy abilities already at the very beginning of their IMDP path, and we could thus perhaps provide even more learner-centered courses to these students. For instance, Ingvarsdóttir and Arnbjörnsdóttir (2015: 151) created an Academic English Program catering to students' varying academic language learning needs in areas such as academic reading, writing, debating, argumentation, and presentation. However, at the heart of the program was that students themselves were able to take part in the sort of modules they felt they needed. This led me to consider whether this might also work in the IMDPs and the Language Center's academic English teaching, since as became apparent in the participants' responses, and as I have

observed when teaching, students are very heterogeneous in their strengths and weaknesses. What is easy and effortless for one student may cause a lot of extra work for another, but in another type of assignment the tables may be completely turned. However, I must state that I am not fully convinced that the system Ingvarsdóttir and Arnbjörnsdóttir (2015: 151) used in their program, where the students themselves choose their own courses, could work in reality. I am, however, quite positive that using the screening's diagnostic information on our IMDP students could function as a prevalent way of determining which courses the incoming students should be guided to and when.

As the fourth and final lesson to be taken from the results and discussion of the present study, I propose the importance of students' own role and orientation in respect to their IMDP studies. As became apparent in section 6.4, already among these 15 IMDP students there were varied approaches to the students' own role, as the participants' responses varied from not apparently even grasping the concept of one's own role, all the way to deeming oneself as the most important actor in respect to one's learning. In between these extremes were students who had seemingly made an effort but who did not categorize it as making an effort, and also students who directly remarked that their own effort did not play a significant part in respect to their IMDP studies.

This variation is a good example of the differences between those students who come to receive their education and those who enter programs to claim their education (e.g. Neeley, 2005: 9–19). An illustration of this is that out of these 15 participants, the students who at least reportedly seemed to have claimed their own education (i.e. made a conscious effort and worked also independently on their academic English skills) were mostly the ones who managed to graduate within the given timeframe, or at least relatively soon after the two-year mark. In contrast to these students, the few students who openly stated that they had not made enough of an effort, and either regretted it or not, were the ones who have still not graduated. Obviously, reality is not always as black and white as portrayed here, and naturally a student's own effort, even though very crucial, is by no means the only factor affecting study paths.

Nonetheless, I find that the valuable lesson in this discussion on students' own effort relates especially to academic literacy/ies and to students' becoming active participants in their academic community. According to Neeley (2005: 9-10) and Abasi and Graves (2008: 224), this participation aspect is at the core of the students' academic and professional growth, especially when considering how Dufva and Nikula (2010) argue that language is always shared practice and action, and that it can only really be learned via participation and interaction. Jalkanen, Almonkari and Taalas (2016: 14) further emphasize that it all comes down to developing, first and foremost, students' thinking. Therefore, it goes without saying that none of this will be possible unless the students themselves actively take part in the process during their studies and assume true ownership of their own learning and study path. Consequently, this all boils down to a prevalent need to bring the viewpoints of autonomy (e.g. van Lier, 1996; Benson and Voller, 1997) and agency (e.g. Jääskelä et al., 2016) closer to

the daily lives of the IMDP students. I am also quite convinced that a similar need might be detectable in various other EMI programs where students with all sorts of linguistic, cultural and educational backgrounds come together to study.

Westerholm and Räsänen (2015: 133) insinuate that a complex phenomenon such as EMI requires a great deal of effort, shifts in thinking and attitudes, as well as various competences from all its stakeholders, including the institution, individual teachers and students. In the light of this, I find that in order for the IMDP students, and in fact all EMI students, to profoundly become part of their academic community and grow into experts who not only master their field's content but also the field's language and literacies, these programs require a genuine joint effort on behalf of both the programs and the language and literacies experts. If the aforementioned CLIL approach to the language *of/for/through* learning (Coyle, Hood and Marsh, 2010; Coyle, 2015) is brought to the fore at this juncture, I find it worthy of emphasizing that that this dilemma needs to be acknowledged and processed by all participants involved in the teaching of programs, such as the IMDPs. In other words, both program and Language Center teachers need to have, and ideally even share, an understanding of what exactly is meant by the 'content-obligatory', 'content-compatible' and 'content-enriching' language discussed by Coyle, Hood and Marsh (2010) and Coyle (2015). After all, in the spirit of Borg (2015: 1), both the IMDP and the Language Center teachers need to fulfill their roles as active decision-makers, who contribute to the IMDP students' classroom events and learning. This collaboration is supported by Jacobs (2007: 70), and Airey et al. (2017: 772) also advocate broader discussion (e.g. on a faculty level) related to disciplinary literacy goals and language-learning outcomes, since until these issues have been thoroughly established and shared among all relevant stakeholders, they cannot be properly realized on a curriculum or classroom level.

Having discussed what I as a researcher deem as the most prevalent lessons of the present study, it is of the essence to also briefly consider the path, that is, the research process, which has led to these lessons. Consequently, it is important to review the present qualitative study, although Cho and Lee (2014: 14) suggest that there are no specific criteria which could directly be applied to qualitative content analysis. However, they also note that the more general criteria for qualitative research can conveniently be applied to QCA, although it remains essential importance to remember that all qualitative study is unique by nature (Shuttleworth, 2008), as the researcher, as a human being, is always an instrument in the process (Pyett, 2003: 1170). Therefore, not surprisingly, reflexivity is considered to be a prime measure when it comes to qualitative research (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000; Berger, 2015: 229). From this viewpoint, the traditional criteria of research, validity and reliability, do not really fit in with studies such as the present one, because they are more suitable for positivistic and quantitative approaches to research (Lankshear and Knobel, 2004: 361-362). Hence, in a slight contrast to them, the present study is judged by using more post-positivist criteria. By incorporating reflexivity, I make use of a list of

six viewpoints to assessing qualitative research, which has been used earlier by Lincoln and Guba (1985; 1994) and Elo et al. (2014), among others. The six viewpoints are as follows; trustworthiness, credibility, dependability, transferability, conformability, and authenticity.

First, trustworthiness, used first by Lincoln and Guba in 1985, refers to the fact that a qualitative research's results are worth paying attention to (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Lankshear and Knobel, 2004: 366; Elo et al. 2014: 2). Elo et al. (2014:2) point out that this plays an even more crucial role when thinking about inductive content analysis, like in the case of the present study, since all categories derive from the data itself instead of any external categorization. However, when considering the viewpoint of being worth paying attention to, one could claim that during the QCA of the present study all crucial steps were taken, since I first allowed everything to be included in the preliminary codes, and only then, similarly to Soler-Carbonell et al. (2017: 305), did I let my research questions determine what is worthy of attention in this dissertation.

Second, credibility means it is essential that the researcher identifies as well as describes the participants as accurately as possible (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, as cited by Elo et al., 2014: 2). For this study, this issue was addressed by a rather extensive section (5.4), which described the participants' profiles regarding the core aspects of the present study. These profiles were then revisited in the discussion section of this dissertation. However, these profiles were presented in a manner which did not threaten the anonymity of the participants, and this was done by adhering to all ethical rules, guidelines and regulations of the University of Jyväskylä in storing the present data and reporting in the present study.

Third, dependability refers to the data's stability if considering them in respect to a longer time span, as well as various conditions (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Elo et al., 2014: 2). The present study has provided a great deal of information on its various context levels, internationalizing HE and English-medium instruction in the global context as well as in Europe and, more importantly, in Finland, and also all the various aspects in terms of the IMDPs of the University of Jyväskylä, so that all this would function as an adequate lens for the results of the present study. Moreover, there is a limit to how much researchers can even know and understand what has affected their research at the time of conducting it (e.g. Mauthner and Doucet, 2003: 415).

However, dependability relates strongly to the fourth criterion, transferability, which is based on the idea that one's findings need to have the potential to be generalized and transferred to other groups or settings. After presenting my preliminary results to international audiences during this research process, I have found that they have provoked lively discussions, as my results have encountered opposing views from researchers and teachers at other European HE institutions. However, after short discussions with these researchers and fellow teachers, it has become extremely apparent that already within just Europe the contexts related to these programs vary greatly. Thus, I to some extent question whether there is even a need for attaining stability of data which would stand

the test of time, but also transfer to different conditions (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Elo et al., 2014: 2). Transferring, for instance, the results of the present study to other contexts seems fundamentally rather unrealistic when considering that countries, HE institutions, and even individual programs differ in various ways, and above all, go through internal changes for multiple reasons at varying intervals. Nonetheless, if taking into account Schegloff's (1993: 101) reminder about 'one' also being a number in the sense that even if just one participant in the present study brought up an issue or viewpoint related to EMI, according to Schegloff (1993: 101), this indicates that the very same aspect can be present in the larger context, i.e. in EMI in other Finnish or European HE contexts. As advised by Etherington (2004: 37), among others, I have presented a comprehensive picture of *this* study's *current* conditions, and now it is ultimately up to the readers to decide whether, and to what extent, the results can in fact be transferred to their own contexts or future studies (Graneheim and Lundman, 2004). In the spirit of Schegloff (1993: 101), this is something that I strongly invite my readers to do in respect to their contexts and research interests.

Fifth, Lincoln and Guba (1985, as cited by Elo et al., 2014: 2) discuss the aspect of conformability, which they define as objectivity, or the potential for similarities when it comes to other people, in addition to the researchers, in looking at the study's data accuracy, relevance and meaning. However, as emphasized by Graneheim and Lundman (2004: 106), there is no escaping the fact that some degree of interpretation is always inherent to people approaching texts (in the case of the present study, the interview transcripts) which derive from the spoken text of the interview participants. Therefore, I am also slightly skeptical regarding the realistic feasibility of this criterion. Nevertheless, as discussed at various points, I have taken this criterion into account by actively and regularly immersing myself in discussions with my colleagues, supervisors, and co-researchers, as well as via my teacher role with my own IMDP students and various staff members working in these programs. This outsider auditing (Lankshear and Knobel, 2004: 366) has helped me to update my own position on my topic, a process highlighted by Berger (2015: 231).

As the sixth criterion, in 1994 Lincoln and Guba added authenticity, which can be defined as the extent to which a researcher, both fairly and faithfully, acknowledges the variety of realities (Lincoln and Guba, 1994; Elo et al. 2004: 2). This links rather directly to one of the major benefits of using QCA, as for example Moretti et al. (2011: 426) mention the possibility of allowing the empowerment of participants during the QCA process. During the present study, I have aimed to empower my participants by following the advice of Graneheim and Lundman (2004) and Elo et al. (2014: 6), where they emphasize that empowerment can be achieved by presenting one's results in a manner that enables one's readers to draw their own conclusions. In the present study, and particularly in the data analysis, this was done by incorporating a varied, and thus representative, selection of direct quotes deriving from all the participants' interview responses. With these direct quotes, and by linking them to my own interpretations, I was as open as possible about the thought process that led me

from the quote to the interpretation (Mauthner and Doucet, 2003: 419). This, in very concrete terms, is how I have addressed the concern voiced by, for example, Moretti et al. (2011: 426) of QCA entailing the risk of the researcher having a strong interference, as she interprets the data. Ultimately, one cannot escape the conclusion that all research findings are always some researcher's interpretations (e.g. Berger, 2015: 226).

Finally, in reviewing the present study, I draw on Byrd Clark and Dervin (2014: 21) and their proposal regarding research as a process: certain things are bound to succeed, whereas others are not, and in this chapter, alongside all the remarks on reflexivity throughout this dissertation, I have elaborated exactly on these things in respect to the present study. As emphasized by Attia and Edge (2017: 34), all qualitative research requires exactly this type of humility from the researchers conducting it, since the researcher's standpoint is embedded so strongly in it all. Therefore, qualitative researchers must prepare for being forced to change their standpoint (Attia and Edge, 2017: 34).

As a final conclusion, this line of thinking that researchers must be prepared to change their standpoint after completing qualitative research (Attia and Edge (2017: 34) connects directly to the core ideas of the present study as a whole. Underlying the results of this study, and its main lessons, are far broader aspects and issues which surely call for further research. However, they first require discussion and cooperation among the various stakeholders contributing and taking part in the IMDPs of the University of Jyväskylä. Consequently, as a result of the present study, any future research, and any discussions relating to increased knowledge and understanding of what teaching and learning in the IMDPs are, all stakeholders, not only the programs, but also the Language Center, may need to prepare to change their standpoints. This dissertation has the potential to function as a step towards this change in the future – not only at the University of Jyväskylä, but also at other HE institutions interested in attracting mobile students and offering them high-quality education.

YHTEENVETO (FINNISH SUMMARY)

Tämän väitöstutkimuksen keskiössä ovat Jyväskylän yliopiston kansainväliset maisteriohjelmat, joiden opetuskielenä on englanti. Tutkimuksessa tarkastellaan ohjelmien opiskelijoiden käsityksiä ja kokemuksia akateemisen englannin käytöstä opetuksen ja oppimisen kielenä: heidän akateemisten englannin taitojensa kehitystä ja niitä sisäisiä ja ulkoisia tekijöitä, jotka heidän mielestään ovat vaikuttaneet tähän kehitykseen joko positiivisesti tai negatiivisesti.

Tutkimuksen konteksti eli kansainväliset maisteriohjelmat nivoutuu laajemmin korkeakoulujen kansainvälistymiseen ja englanninkielisen opetuksen lisääntymiseen. Jyväskylän yliopiston kansainväliset maisteriohjelmat heijastavat hyvin vahvasti sekä kansainvälisiä, että kansallisia trendejä, jos huomioon otetaan yliopiston taloudelliset motiivit tarjota englanninkielisiä maisteriohjelmia (Altbach & Knight, 2007: 291; Choudaha, Orosz & Chang, 2012: 5; Internal Evaluation, 2014: 7; Airey ym., 2017). Opiskelijoiden motiivit, joista tärkein on aiemman tutkimuksen valossa usein englannin kielen taitojen kehittyminen (ks. Kym & Kym, 2014: 53-54; Meneghetti, 2016: 29), eroaa kuitenkin hieman Jyväskylän yliopiston kansainvälisten maisteriopiskelijoiden motiiveista, sillä vuonna 2014 julkaistun sisäisen raportin mukaan lähes puolet Jyväskylän yliopistoon hakeneista kv-maisteriohjelmien opiskelijoista piti lukukausimaksujen puuttumista yhtenä tärkeimpänä syynä Jyväskylän yliopistoon hakemiseen (Internal Evaluation, 2014: 20). Vuoden 2014 jälkeen Suomen korkeakoulujen kenttä on kuitenkin muuttunut siinä mielessä, että syksystä 2017 alkaen Euroopan unionin ja talousalueen ulkopuolelta tulleilta opiskelijoita on peritty lukukausimaksuja (Finlex 1600/2015), ja tämän myötä suomalaiset yliopistot, mukaan lukien Jyväskylän yliopisto, ottavat osaa entistä kovempaan kilpailuun kansainvälisistä opiskelijoista. Merkit koventuneesta kilpailusta olivat nähtävillä jo ensimmäisellä sisäänottokierroksella keväällä 2017, kun lukukausimaksut olivat osa prosessia, sillä hakijamäärät laskivat lähes poikkeuksetta kaikissa Suomen yliopistoissa ja niiden kv-maisteriohjelmissa (ks. Hakkarainen, 2017; Mokkila, 2017). Tämän tutkimuksen perimmäinen motiivi tutkia Jyväskylän yliopiston kv-maisteriohjelmia ja opiskelijoiden opintopolkuja pohjaa nimenomaan siihen, että kilpailun koventuessa myös ohjelmien laadun täytyy olla kilpailukykyinen ja markkinointikelpoinen.

Ottaen huomioon, että syystä tai toisesta kv-maisteriopiskelijat valmistuvat tilastojen valossa jokseenkin hitaasti ja heikosti, tutkimuksessa lähdettiin kartoittamaan, millaista roolia akateeminen englanti mahdollisesti näyttelee näiden tilastojen taustalla. Aiempi tutkimus onkin tuonut selvästi esille opiskelijoiden vaikeudet englannissa ja eritoten akateemisessa englannissa (esim. Murray & Nallaya, 2014; Arkin & Osam, 2015: 179; Meneghetti, 2016). Useat tutkimukset myös osoittavat, että akateemisen englannin haasteet liittyvät myös opiskelijoiden yleiseen opintomenestykseen ja kaiken kaikkiaan siihen, miten he kiinnittyvät akateemiseen yhteisöön (ks. Evans & Morrison, 2011; Taylor & Geranpayeh, 2011; Murray, 2013; Arkin & Osam, 2015; Pulcini & Campagna, 2015; Airey ym., 2017). Yhä useammin akateeminen kieli nähdäänkin laa-

jempana ja entistä moniulotteisempana ilmiönä, mistä johtuen pelkän kielen ja akateemisen kielen rinnalle, tai jopa tilalle, on noussut uusia käsitteitä, kuten akateemiset tekstitaidot (ks. Evans & Green, 2007; Lillis & Scott, 2007; Murray, 2010; Wingate, 2012a; Sebolai, 2016). Tässä tutkimuksessa englanninkieliseen opetukseen otetaan tämä uusi, laajempi näkökulma.

Englanninkieliset tutkinto-ohjelmat vaativat erityistä suunnittelua ja huolellista toteutusta siten, että englannin ja akateemisen kielen ja tekstitaitojen roolit otetaan huomioon suunnittelun ja itse opetuksen kaikissa vaiheissa ja useasta eri näkökulmasta (ks. Fortanet-Gómez & Räisänen, 2008; Knapp, 2011; Choudaha & De Wit, 2014; Hultgren, Jensen & Dimova, 2015; Fabricius, Mortensen & Haberland, 2017; Weinberg & Symon, 2017). Todellisuudessa on kuitenkin tyypillistä, että opiskelijoiden ajatukset ja kokemukset on sivuutettu englanninkielisen opetuksen suunnittelussa ja toteutuksessa (ks. Brew, 2006: 160; Fortanet-Gómez & Räisänen, 2008: 22; Smit & Dafouz, 2012: 16; Ljosland, 2015: 624). Tämän tutkimuksen keskiössä ovat kuitenkin nimenomaan kansainvälisten maisteriohjelmien opiskelijat. Opiskelijoiden ajatusten ja kokemusten tutkimisen viitekehyksinä on käytetty käsitteitä minäkäsitys (*self-concept*) (Schunk, 1991; Zimmerman, 2000; Bong, 2001; Bong & Skaalvik, 2003; Mercer, 2011), ja minäpystyvyys (*self-efficacy*) (Bandura, 1977; Pajares, 1996; Bong, 2001; Zajacova, Lynch & Espenshade, 2005: Gore, 2006; Dinther, Dochy & Severs, 2011), sekä attribuutioteoriaa (Weiner, 1972; Dörnyei, 2003; Weiner, 2004).

Tutkimuksen kuudesta tutkimuskysymyksestä ensimmäiset neljä koskivat opiskelijoiden ajatuksia ja kokemuksia akateemisesta englannista ja sen roolista heidän kv-maisteriohjelman opinnoissaan. Näiden tutkimuskysymysten ytimessä olivat opiskelijoiden tavat käsitteellistää akateemista englantia yleisellä tasolla ja heidän käsityksensä omista taidoistaan ja niiden kehityksestä ja myös heidän oma panoksensa ja roolinsa oppijoina. Tutkimuksen viidennessä kysymyksessä keskityttiin kartoittamaan niitä ulkoisia tekijöitä, joita opiskelijat liittävät opintomenestykseensä tai opintojen haasteisiin. Kuudennen tutkimuskysymyksen muodossa selvitettiin, miten opiskelijoiden mielestä heidän akateemisen englannin taitojen kehitystä tulisi tukea ja millaista opetusta heille tulisi tarjota.

Tutkimuksen aineisto muodostuu kansainvälisen maisteriohjelman viidentoista (n=15) opiskelijan puolistrukturoiduista yksilöhaastatteluista kevään 2015 lopussa, jolloin haastateltavat olivat juuri päättämässä toista lukuvuottaan kaksivuotisessa kv-maisteriohjelmassa. Tämän haastatteluaineiston tutkimiseen käytettiin laadullista sisällönanalyysia (ks. esimerkiksi Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Moretti ym., 2011; Mercer, 2011; Schreirer, 2012; Cho & Lee, 2014; Elo ym., 2014; Soler-Carbonell ym., 2017). Lisäksi syksyllä 2017, muutama vuosi haastattelujen jälkeen, osalle haastatelluista tehtiin pienimuotoinen informaali jatkohaastattelu sähköpostitse. Näin heidän opinto- ja urapolkujen jatkovaiheistaan saatiin lisää tietoa muutamalla avoimella kysymyksellä.

Tutkimuksessa nousi ensinnäkin esiin, että opiskelijoiden käsittivät akateemisen englannin suhteellisen kapeana, ja jopa pääaineopinnoista hyvinkin

irrallisena. Opiskelijoiden mukaan akateeminen kieli on formaalia ja asiakeskeistä, ja heidän käsityksensä heijastelivat hyvin perinteistä käsitystä kielestä, jossa kielioppi, sanasto ja ääntäminen ovat kaiken keskiössä. Opiskelijoiden käsitykset akateemisesta englannista poikkeavat siis jokseenkin merkittävästi akateemisten tekstitaitojen käsitteestä, sillä opiskelijat eivät juurikaan tuoneet esille akateemista diskurssia ja sen prosessimaisuutta eivätkä he myöskään nostaneet esille akateemisen kielen roolia ajattelun ja ylipäätään tiedon rakentamisessa.

Opiskelijat arvioivat omien akateemisen englannin taitojensa tasoa ja kehittymistä selvästi eniten suhteessa vertaisiinsa heidän omassa ohjelmassaan. Opiskelijat käyttivät toistuvasti opiskelutovereidensa taitotasoa peilinä, kun he kertoivat omista taidoistaan tai taitojen puuttumisesta. Vertaiset olivat selkeästi tavallisempi vertailukohta kuin esimerkiksi opiskelijoiden oma lähtötaso puhumattakaan siitä, miten vähän opiskelijat viittasivat opettajiltaan saamaansa palautteeseen tai arvosanoihin. Vertaisten lisäksi myös natiivi-ihanne toimi vertailupohjana, vaikka aiemman tutkimuksen valossa ns. natiivitasoinen kielenkäyttö ja akateeminen kieli eivät suoraan linkitykään toisiinsa (esim. Dufva & Nikula, 2010; Hulstijn, 2011; Seidlhofer, 2012). Tulevaisuuteen orientoitumisen ja menneisyyteen tarrautumisen suhteen kiinnostava ero löytyi kahden opiskelijatyypin väliltä: niiden, jotka valmistuivat annetussa aikataulussa, ja niiden, jotka eivät edes vielä syksyllä 2017 olleet saaneet tutkintoaan valmiiksi. Ne opiskelijat, jotka olivat haastatteluiden aikana lähellä valmistumista, puhuivat suoraan tulevan työelämän vaatimuksista kuvatessaan akateemisen englannin taitojaan. Kontrastin näihin muodostivat opiskelijat, jotka eivät olleet vielä jatkoseurannan aikaankaan valmistuneet ohjelmastaan. He palasivat haastatteluissa useaan otteeseen huomattavasti ajassa taaksepäin nostamalla esiin hakuvaiheensa kielitestien tulokset. Tämä valottaa mielenkiintoisella tavalla opiskelijoiden mahdollisia orientaatioeroja suhteessa menneeseen ja tulevaan ja niiden merkitystä ennusteina opiskelijoiden opintomenestyksestä.

Akateemisen englannin taitojen kehittymisen suhteen opiskelijat itse korostivat erityisesti lähtötasonsa merkitystä. Tutkimuksen valossa voikin todeta, että opiskelijoiden lähtötaso vaikutti sekä positiivisesti että negatiivisesti siihen, missä määrin opiskelijoiden akateemisen englannin taidot kehittyivät ohjelman aikana. Osalla opiskelijoista oli heidän oman arvionsa mukaan riittävä kielitaito ohjelman alussa, ja he myös kehittyivät enemmän ohjelman aikana. Puolestaan ne opiskelijat, joilla oli jo lähtökohtaisesti enemmän haasteita englannin ja akateemisen englannin kanssa, saavuttivat vähäisempiä edistysaskeleita tai jopa joutuivat vielä kahden vuoden jälkeenkin kamppailemaan englannin perusasioiden kanssa, puhumattakaan akateemisesta englannista. Tämä löydös saa vahvasti tukea myös aiemmasta tutkimuksesta ja kirjallisuudesta (ks. Hellekjær, 2004; Turner, 2004; Bretag, 2007; Terraschke & Wahid, 2011; Dewey ym., 2014). Näyttäisikin olevan erittäin tärkeää, että maisteriohjelmissa panostetaan ohjelmiin hakevien opiskelijoiden lähtötason perinpohjaiseen testaukseen ja seulontaan, sillä sen voi todella ennustaa vaikuttavan heidän opintomenestykseensä.

Opiskelijoiden akateemisen englannin kehityksessä heidän oma roolinsa oli suuri ja vaivannäkönsä suhteessa menestykseen merkittävä. Esille nousivat

yhtenä tyyppinä opiskelijat, jotka olivat itse nähneet paljon vaivaa oman kehityksensä eteen ja myös pärjännet hyvin opinnoissaan. Toisaalta esille nousi myös niiden opiskelijoiden opintopolkuja, jotka olivat syystä tai toisesta sivuuttaneet tai jopa laiminlyöneet itsenäisen akateemisen englantinsa kehittämisen.

Tutkimuksessa kartoitettiin opiskelijoiden sisäisten tekijöiden lisäksi niitä ulkoisia tekijöitä, joita haastateltavat pitivät opintomenestyksensä kannalta merkittävinä tai haastavina. Samalla tavalla kuin aiemmissa tutkimuksissa (esim. Wilkinson & Zegers, 2006; Hellekjær, 2008; Gunn ym., 2011), myös tämän tutkimuksen opiskelijat painottivat opettajiensa englannin kielen taitojen merkitystä oppimisessa. Tämän tutkimuksen opiskelijat suhtautuivat hyvin kriittisesti, jopa negatiivisesti, opettajiensa kielitaitoon eli osoittivat sen ainakin välillisesti merkitykselliseksi: joko yhdeksi menestyksensä esteeksi tai seikaksi, josta huolimatta he kehittyivät. Toinen ulkoinen tekijä, joka nousi monen haastateltavan puheissa esiin, oli se, että he osallistuivat englanninkieliseen maisteriohjelmaan, mutta maassa, jossa heidän ympärillään monet asiat tapahtuvat suomeksi. Ympäristön homogeeninen yksikielisyys näytti vaikuttavan siihen, miten he kiinnittyivät ohjelmaansa ja heitä ympäröivään yliopistoyhteisöön.

Tutkimuksen opiskelijoilla oli monia parannusehdotuksia akateemisen englannin opetuksen tueksi. Erityisen tärkeäksi nousi opetuksen määrä: suurin osa haastateltavista koki opintojensa loppuvaiheessa, että he olisivat toivoneet enemmän tukea ja kursseja. Lisäksi he toivoivat ennen kaikkea sellaisia kursseja, jotka olisivat olleet nykyistä paremmin sekä aikataulujen ja sisältöjen puolesta linkittyneet heidän ohjelmansa muuhun opetukseen.

Tutkimuksen tärkein, suoraan käytäntöön sovellettava tulos on tarve tuoda akateemisen englannin opetus entistä tiiviimmin ja systemaattisemmin osaksi ohjelmien sisältöopetusta. Tarve näkyy ennen kaikkea siinä, että opiskelijat käsitteellistivät akateemisen englannin hyvin suppeasti, ja näkivät akateemisen englannin tiettyä pintatasoa lukuun ottamatta hyvin erillisenä heidän omasta ohjelmastaan ja ohjelman tieteenalasta. Jotta opiskelijat siis ottaisivat itse ohjelman lisäksi aktiivisemman omistajuuden myös omiin akateemisiin kieli- ja tekstitaitoihinsa, sisältö ja kieli pitäisi integroida vahvemmin itse ohjelmien opintosuunnitelmiin mutta myös opiskelijoiden päivittäiseen tekemiseen. Myös aiemman tutkimuksen ja kirjallisuuden valossa tällainen sisällön ja kielen integroiminen mahdollistaisi nimenomaan opiskelijoiden paremman kiinnittymisen heidän akateemiseen yhteisöönsä ja tieteenalan diskurssiin, mikä puolestaan edistäisi opiskelijoiden kokonaisvaltaisempaa asiantuntijuutta.

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APPENDIX

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ **Insights into International Master's Degree Programmes: Language Proficiency and Academic Performance 2015**

Student Focus Group Script

STARTING QUESTIONS

Identify who is attending the focus group in terms of their program, nationality, education background in a nutshell, experience of Finland

THEME 1: Academic English skills and their link to your subject studies/overall academic performance

1 How would you describe your own academic English skills at this stage, i.e. after studying almost two years in your program?(e.g. strengths and weaknesses…)
2 Have these skills either negatively or positively affected your overall academic performance in your program? Please give practical examples.
3 Do you feel that your English skills meet the requirements of working in your field in the future? Why/Why not?
4 Is there something that should be added to your program when it comes to academic English? (e.g. courses, modules, other type of support, feedback procedures…)
5 How about what is your own role in developing your academic English skills?
6 *Has the level of your peers' academic English affected your own learning in the program in any way?*
7 How about the level of your teachers' academic English?
8 Any additional thoughts related to academic English (and its link to your studies)?

THEME 2: Finnish as a second language and adapting to Finland

9 What kind of thoughts and expectations did you have about living and studying in Finland when you first came to your program? Where do you think these ideas initially derived from?
10 Have these thoughts changed during your studies in your program? If yes, how and what do you think has caused this?
11 At this point of your studies what are your current thoughts and expectations about living and studying (and possibly working) in Finland?
12 Have you studied any (compulsory / elective) Finnish while you've been here? If yes, where and which type of courses?
** If not, see questions below*
13 How have these studies affected your everyday life?
14 How have these studies affected your career prospects?
15 How well have you adapted to living in Finland? Which aspects have affected your adaptation?
*16 Have you thought about staying in Finland after completing your studies in this program? Why? Why not***?**

** Has the fact that you haven't studied any Finnish affected your everyday life and your future prospects here in anyway? Please elaborate in as much detail as possible.*

THEME 3: Current career prospects and language skills

17 What sort of plans do you have at this stage regarding your career?
18 How confident are you about these plans becoming reality?
19 If you think about working in your field what is the role of your language skills (English, Finnish, possible other languages)?
*20 Have your studies in this program prepared you adequately for your field from this point of view***?**
21 When it comes to your language skills is there something you would have personally done differently during your studies or is there something you would have wanted from your program?

FINAL QUESTIONS

22 Any final thoughts on the issues and themes that have been addressed during this interview? (i.e. academic English, studying Finnish and adapting to Finland, future career prospects) Anything left unsaid or something you would like to add?