

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

**BELIEFS ABOUT SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION HELD BY
DYSPHATIC STUDENTS**

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Oppimisvaikeuksista kärsivien oppilaiden määrän lisääntyessä on myös kieltenopetuksessa ilmennyt tarve kehittää ja suunnata opetusta jokaiselle oppilaalle sopivaksi. Tässä tutkimuksessa asiaa selvitetään oppilaiden itsensä näkökulmasta. Toisaalta aikuisten ja peruskoulun yläluokkien oppilaiden käsityksiä kielen oppimisesta on tutkittu, mutta ei peruskoulun alaluokkien oppilaiden, etenkin, joilla on kielellisiä vaikeuksia. Täten tutkielman tarkoituksena on kuvailla dysfaattisten oppilaiden käsityksiä englannin kielen opiskelusta ja itsestään englannin kielen oppijoina.

Tutkimusaineisto koostuu kahdesta haastatteluaineistosta. Haastattelulla pyrittiin ylittämään dysfasian aiheuttamat ongelmat kielen tuottamisessa ja ymmärtämisessä. Ensimmäisellä haastattelukierroksella haastateltavana oli kolme poikaa ja kolme tyttöä peruskoulun kuudennelta luokalta. Toisella kerralla reilu vuosi ensimmäisen haastattelun jälkeen haastateltiin neljää aiemmin tutkimuksessa ollutta oppilasta. Tutkimuksessa vastataan kysymyksiin: 1) Millaisia käsityksiä dysfaattisilla oppilailla on itsestään englannin oppijoina?, 2) Millaisia käsityksiä dysfaattisilla oppilailla on englannin oppimisesta?, 3) Millaisia käsityksiä dysfaattisilla oppilailla on kielen oppimisen tilannekontekstista?

Tulokset osoittivat, että myös dysfaattiset oppilaat voivat ilmaista käsityksiään toisen kielen oppimisesta. Käsitykset ovat osin yksilöllisiä, mutta toisaalta löydettävissä on myös jaettuja käsityksiä. Esimerkiksi harvat oppilaista pitivät luonnollista oppimista kunnollisena oppimisena. Kaikki oppilaista pitivät englannin oppimista tärkeänä ja he osasivat nimetä useita eri syitä oppimiselle. Oppimisen kokivat kuitenkin positiiviseksi vain ne oppilaat, jotka olivat havainneet jonkin omakohtaisen merkityksen oppimiselle, kuten keskustelun englanniksi sukulaisen kanssa tai lelujen kokoamisohjeiden ymmärtämisen. Dysfasian aiheuttamat ongelmat heijastuivat kunkin oppilaan kohdalla englannin oppimiseen, mutta yleisimpänä ongelmana olivat muistin ongelmat. Nämä ongelmat saivat oppilaat arvostamaan toistoa ja ahkeraa harjoittelua. Harjoittelu nähtiin kuitenkin useiden tuntien toistoina ja sanojen jankkaamisena, mitkä eivät ole ainoina keinoina tehokkaita eivätkä mielekkäitä.

Tutkimus osoitti, että oppimaan oppimisen ohjausta tulisi tehostaa kielten opetuksessa. Dysfaattisilla oppilailla on intoa oppia, mutta heidän keinonsa erityisiin vaikeuksiin nähden ovat riittämättömät. Jatkossa tarvittaisiin lisätutkimuksia oppimaan oppimisen ohjauksesta ja sen vaikutuksesta käsityksiin. Lisäksi tutkimus todensi, että aiemmat tutkimukset voivat toimia vain pohjana käsitysten luokittelulle ja lopulta jokainen tutkimus tuottaa omat luokittelunsa.

Avainsanat: learner characteristics, beliefs, metacognitive knowledge, dysphasia

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1 INTRODUCTION

All teaching and learning at schools in Finland is guided by the national curricula (Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteet, OPS 2004). The curricula create the frames within which all schools should work. Accordingly, teaching aims to develop students' active participation in the learning process, their social skills, and skills in learning, thinking, problem solving, and working. On the one hand, the working methods used should encourage students to learn, develop their abilities to take responsibility of their own learning and to evaluate it, and help them to acknowledge their own learning and their possibilities to influence it. On the other hand, teaching has to take into consideration students' learning styles, individual developmental differences, and backgrounds.

Teachers' everyday challenge to meet students' individual differences has become greater and statistics confirm that the percentage of the students moved to special education has increased from 2.9% in 1995 to 7.3% in 2005 (Tilastokeskus 2005a). In numbers, this means 25,765 more students with special education needs. The number includes all the different reasons for special education still the number of students with linguistic difficulties (dysphasia) has increased only within two years (2003 to 2005) by 1113 students (Tilastokeskus 2005b). Teachers of languages cannot avoid the challenges set by these students either since about 20,000 students receive part-time special education because of the difficulties in learning foreign languages, that is, 2.02% of all the students (Tilastokeskus 2005c). These numbers and the challenges met personally in classrooms made me realize the importance of the students' view about second language learning. That is the reason why I chose to study beliefs about second language acquisition (SLA) held by dysphatic students. By reviewing students' beliefs on language learning, I hope to develop as a future teacher and furthermore, bring into awareness students' beliefs about second language learning of whose learning requires additional support.

In the field of applied linguistics, beliefs about SLA are considered part of individual learner differences that cause and on the other hand, explain differences among individual students. Beliefs are regarded as relevant to acknowledge since they affect the language learning process together with learning strategies and language learning

outcomes (Ellis 1994:472-474). Furthermore, beliefs and bringing them to the awareness are seen influential in learning to learn and hence, becoming an autonomous learner (Benson and Lor 1998, Holec 1979, Häggblom 1994, Little 1991, Raappana 1994).

Beliefs about SLA have been studied since the 1980s and nowadays there are several approaches to beliefs. This study uses the metacognitive approach as its framework. In other words, beliefs are defined as metacognitive knowledge, that is, knowledge about learning and about oneself as a learner (Flavell 1977, Wenden 1998). Bringing this knowledge into awareness by having a dialogue about learners' beliefs about language learning is part of becoming autonomous. It is about "becoming autonomous in ways that makes sense to learners themselves" (Benson and Lor 1998:58).

In this study, beliefs held by dysphatic students are studied. The beliefs held by dysphatic students or students of 12 to 15 years old have not been studied before using the metacognitive approach to beliefs. As a result, these students were chosen as subjects for this study. In addition, I had a chance to teach the subjects before this study and thus, the interest in this subject group was great. The students are interviewed in two phases. The students are asked to describe their beliefs and experiences about themselves as English learners, learning English, and the situational context of language learning. These categories are adopted from the study by Benson and Lor (1998) but also studies by Wenden (1986,1987) and by Hokkanen (1996) have been used.

In chapter 2, the role of beliefs in SLA is discussed. There the importance of beliefs in learning and teaching a second language and learner autonomy and learning to learn are viewed. Moreover, the different approaches to beliefs about SLA are viewed as they are conceptualized by different scholars. The next chapter more closely defines beliefs as metacognitive knowledge and views its classification. The fourth chapter reviews the previous studies on learners' beliefs about SLA. These studies are chosen since they belong to the metacognitive approach to beliefs about SLA and/or they concentrate on the beliefs held by Finnish unsuccessful or dysphatic students. Chapter 5 describes the present study in more detail and the research

questions, subjects and dysphasia, interviews and data analysis are explained. In chapter 6, the results are viewed and first, beliefs about self, second, beliefs about learning English, and third, beliefs about the situational context are reported. In chapter 7, the results are discussed and comparisons to previous studies are made. In the final chapter, some conclusions are drawn and recommendations for the practice are suggested.

2 ROLE OF BELIEFS IN SLA

The role of beliefs in learning and in second language acquisition has been discussed since the 1970s and 1980s but there are still several views of them. In the following sections, I will first take a closer look at beliefs particularly in SLA, then I will clarify the concepts of learner autonomy and learning to learn, and the way they are related to beliefs, and finally I will review how two scholars, Kalaja and Barcelos, have conceptualised different research approaches to beliefs about SLA.

SLA is a complex and rather an unpredictable phenomenon, since there is no single way to learn a foreign language; every learner learns in his/her own ways in different situations (Ellis 1985:4). Nevertheless, SLA follows the same main principles as learning in general (Kristiansen 2001:10,12). Second language learning is a cognitive action where the learner constructs new information based on his/her previous knowledge (Kristiansen 2001:10, Rauste-von Wright 1997:19). The new information may be added to or it may change and modify old information structures. Everything is interpreted and selected based on what the learner previously knows and expects (Rauste-von Wright 1997:19). In this sense, the learner is seen as an active participant in the learning situation. The national curricula also support this view of learning (OPS 2004:18). Consequently, learning is dependent on students' prior knowledge and beliefs, motivation, and learning and working approaches, that is how the task of language learning is perceived and approached.

A student's active role in learning is strongly connected to his/her beliefs, since a belief is a construction based on which he/she analyses new information (Syrjälä et al. 1996:114). Learners' different experiences and backgrounds cause differences in beliefs. The learning experiences and feedback students receive in learning situations shape and affect their beliefs about themselves as learners (Kivi 2000:43). Thus, beliefs, learning, and teaching constitute a circle where they affect each other. The beliefs, attitudes, experiences, and objectives are crucial for learning and therefore they have to be acknowledged and brought in to awareness (Raappana 1994:78).

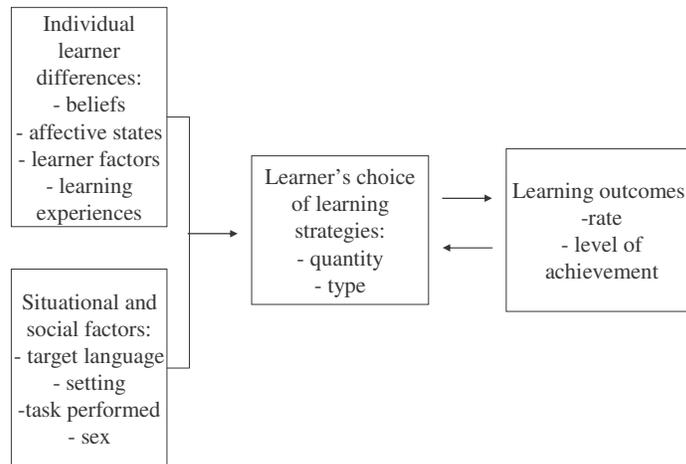
2.1 Importance of beliefs in learning and teaching a second language

SLA is affected by many different factors. These factors, Ellis (1985:10, 1994:469) defines as individual learner differences. Earlier it was suggested that there are five of these factors, including age, aptitude, cognitive style, motivation, and personality (Ellis 1985) but recently seven partly different factors have been recognized, including beliefs, affective states, age, aptitude, learning style, motivation, and personality (Ellis 1994:469-523). The factors have begun to include beliefs and affective states on the basis of research on SLA by Horwitz 1987 and Wenden 1987 (Ellis 1994:472). In addition cognitive styles have changed into learning styles.

The study of individual learner differences in SLA forms an important area of research and promotes the development of second language learning theory (Ellis 1994:469). The interest in individual learner differences arises from the desire to understand, for instance, why language learners differ from each other and how these differences affect learning outcomes. The impact of individual learner differences on learning outcomes has changed in addition to the factors included.

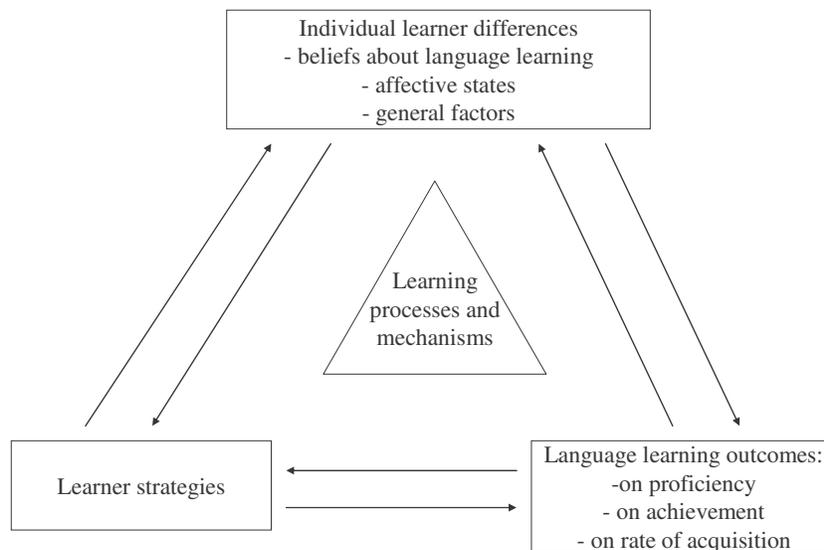
In Figure 1, Ellis (1994:530) claims individual learner differences to have an effect together with situational and social factors on a learner's choice of learning strategies and thus affecting learning outcomes in an indirect way. Learning outcomes also influence the choice of learning strategies. Language learning outcomes can be seen from two different points of view: first, the rate of acquisition that is the rate how quickly or slowly the learner learns and second, the achievement regarding the performance in the second language in certain tasks. In Figure 1, there is no interrelated connection between learning strategies and individual learner differences. This suggests that strategies do not affect, for instance, the specific task learners are asked to perform or their anxiety, since the choice of strategies does not have an effect on individual learner differences or situational and social factors.

Figure 1. Individual learner differences in SLA I (Ellis 1994:530).



In Figure 2, in contrast, Ellis (1994:472-474) creates a framework to guide the study of individual learner differences. Here the three sets of variables are interrelated in complex ways.

Figure 2. Individual learner differences in SLA II (Ellis 1994:473).



The first set includes individual learner differences, which are divided into three main types. First, learners have beliefs about language learning. They have formed ideas about language learning and the strategies that will be most efficient. Second, learners are affected by their affective states. Affective states refer to learners' emotions and feelings in the learning situation, such as feelings of security, freedom, and anxiety that has been studied the most (Ellis 1994). Affective states can vary on a day-to-day basis or moment-to-moment even. Ellis (1994:522) clarifies; "how anxiety affects learning will depend on its strength and the situational context". Third, individual learner differences are influenced by several general factors such as age, language aptitude, learning styles, motivation, and personality. These factors "constitute major areas of influence on learning" (Ellis 1994:472). The second set consists of learning strategies that learners use while learning the second language. The third set has to do with language learning outcomes. These can be seen from three different points of view in contrast to the previous Figure 1. In this figure Ellis has added the overall second language proficiency of the learner in addition to the achievement and the rate of acquisition. Inside the triangle, there are learning processes and mechanisms since they are hidden most of the time. Besides, the connections between the three sets of variables and learning processes are disputed and very little examined.

As mentioned earlier, in this figure the sets of variables are interrelated in many ways. The main difference compared to Figure 1 is that language learning outcomes do not only affect learning strategies but they can have a direct influence on individual learner differences as well. Ellis (1994:473) claims that the more unstable factors, such as motivation and anxiety, are "in a symbiotic relationship with achievement". This means that learning is affected by positive or negative motivation and anxiety, and in addition, success in learning influences motivation. Another difference is that learning strategies, too, may affect individual learner differences. For instance, successful use of a certain strategy can increase motivation or strengthen the belief that this strategy is suitable for a certain task. Learner strategies and language learning outcomes are related as in Figure 2. The strategies the learner chooses affect the learning outcome and only after achieving a certain level in learning might the learner be able to use some strategies (Ellis 1994:474).

The factors affecting SLA can also be identified as learner contributions, as does Larsen-Freeman (2001:13). Accordingly, learner contributions

include what learners bring (to the learning situation), that is, who they are (attributes: age, aptitude, personality, learning disabilities, social identities), how they conceptualize second language acquisition (conceptualization: motivation, attitude, cognitive style, beliefs) and what they do (actions: learning strategies).

This defines the concept in more detail, since it also comprises students' learning disabilities, and social identities. This is significant since, as Ellis (1994:473) states, learner contributions affect “the language learning processes and mechanisms” and therefore, it is relevant for the teacher to acknowledge and take into account all these different influential factors in the language teaching and learning process.

2.2 Learner autonomy and learning to learn – an objective in SLA

Helping learners to learn and to become more autonomous is one of the objectives in SLA (Dickinson 1987:33-34). An autonomous learner can focus on relevant issues, consider, and learn independently since s/he has acquired sufficient skills to search and handle the information (Raappana 1994:77-78). Moreover, beliefs are seen as one part of this process. Learner autonomy was first introduced to adult education and since then, it has been strongly connected to the study of second language learning (Little 1991:2, Häggblom 1994:24). The term has developed during the past twenty years and for about a decade ago it began to receive more attention in the school sector. As a result, it is nowadays seen as one of the main objectives of teaching and learning in all subjects, not just in second language learning (see OPS 2004).

Holec (1979:3) describes ‘learner autonomy’ as “the ability to take charge of one’s own learning”. Holec continues that this ability is not an innate in anyone but it has to be acquired, formally or informally. The ability also indicates that it is not behaviour but a potential capacity to learn. The definition includes an assumption that the learner is responsible for all the decisions concerning learning but with the help of the teacher if necessary.

Little (1991:3-4) defines 'learner autonomy' by listing characteristics that it is not. Firstly, it is not synonymous with self-instruction, in other words, learning without a teacher. Secondly, learner autonomy does not require the teacher to take all initiatives and control. Thirdly, learner autonomy is not a new methodology. The teacher does not do anything to learners. Learners are only guided how to be active. Fourthly, learner autonomy cannot be described easily since it is displayed in different ways. Last, learner autonomy is not a stable state that only some learners achieve. These characteristics are somewhat similar to Holec's definition but Little broadens it by pointing out that it exists in the learner, it manifests itself in various ways, and is an unstable state available for all. Little (1991:4) sums up his definition as follows: "autonomy is a capacity – for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action". In addition to these capacities, learner autonomy requires a skill to transfer what the learner has learned to different and wider contexts (Little 1991:36).

Hägglom (1994:25) and Raappana (1994:79) characterize learner autonomy as students' attitude towards learning and teaching, willingness and ability to act independently and to take responsibility of their own learning depending on their own learning needs. An autonomous learner knows how to study and direct his/her learning. The three definitions discussed are quite the same but Hägglom and Raappana (1994) add the concepts of attitude, willingness, and needs. Thus, learners' interest or motivation is seen as a major component of learner autonomy and learner's needs forming the basis for all this.

Benson (1997 as quoted by Benson and Lor 1998:3) claims that autonomy can be viewed on technical, psychological, and political levels. The first level involves the management, strategies, and techniques of learning. The second level is about "the inner capacity for self-direction or self-regulation of learning" (Benson and Lor 1998:3) and the third level is connected with control over situational contexts of learning. Fully autonomous learners possess capacities from all the levels. In other words, they would know the techniques and strategies of learning, themselves as learners, that is what suits for them and what does not, and they would be given possibilities to fulfil their autonomy.

Learner autonomy is often compared to individualised teaching and Holec (1979:7-8) argues that taking into consideration the individual nature of each learner (e.g. learning styles, capacities, and needs) is the only shared feature of the two concepts. Individualisation considers learner differences only to a certain extent and thus does not give the learner a chance of to take control of learning, Holec continues. The conditions for successful autonomous learning are first, that the learner knows how to act in the learning situation, second, the learner is given the possibility to take charge of his/her own learning, and third, the learner is willing to take the responsibility (Holec 1979:9).

Autonomy can be seen as a means or as an end in language learning (Benson and Voller 1997:2). That is, autonomy can help language learning (e.g. in the future) or language learning can help achieving autonomy (e.g. when learning how to learn). The main reason for pursuing learner autonomy in second language learning is that through autonomy the learners could use the language as a medium of communication outside the school as well (Little 1991:27). They would be able to read, write, listen, and talk using the target language as sufficiently as needed now and later in their lives. Therefore, language learning should be seen mainly as supporting autonomy. Another reason for seeking for learner autonomy is that it is “the logical outcome of any attempt to make curricula and classroom genuinely learner-centred” (Little 1991:11). This means that autonomy enhances language learning as well, since through it, it is possible to achieve a constructivist and learner-centred learning environment.

Several issues have an effect on how autonomous learners are (Raappana 1994:79-82). These consist of students’ beliefs of themselves as learners, motivation, meaningfulness of learning, study skills, and self-evaluation. Of these, students’ beliefs of themselves are the most important. These beliefs are often based on the external control such as exams and grades and thus, these beliefs may not have any personal basis. For instance, a learner has put a lot of effort in studying and then thinks that now he/she has learned perhaps more than usually. Yet he/she might still receive a grade 7 and thus, the learner might think that the effort was useless and he/she has not improved. In short, this external feedback does not necessarily indicate students’ real skills and effort in a certain school subject. Therefore, it is

essential to bring these beliefs into awareness and thus help students to become more autonomous. Students' beliefs are connected to motivation, the precondition of learning, and it can be intrinsic or extrinsic. The latter is often more common in schools, as Raappana (1994) claims, but extrinsic motivation can also prevent learner autonomy. Meaningfulness refers to students' personal goals, interests, and needs. These should be taken into consideration in teaching in order to make learning more effective. Besides this is one of the main ideas in the constructivist learning theory, too. Study skills mean students' abilities to control and organize their own learning, that is, knowledge about themselves as learners and how to use it to develop as learners and about the learning strategies. Last, a central part of autonomy is self-evaluation since the learners set the objectives; they are responsible for assessing success in achieving them.

A pre-requisite for autonomous learner is learning how to learn. As Holec (1979) mentioned earlier, the learner needs to know what to do in the learning situation and this is only accomplished with the help of teaching. This means *learning to learn* that refers not only to learning skills but also to the learner's self-concept and learning orientations (Jakku-Sihvonen 1999). In other words, learning to learn consists of an ability to gain, process and assimilate new information, learning motivation, initiative, self-confidence, and a learner's self-concept, which is strongly connected to beliefs. Learning to learn is a process that is connected to the development of both cognition and metacognitive strategies (Hägglom 1994:25). Learners' self-concept is composed of beliefs and images they have shaped, organized, evaluated, and saved during their development about themselves and the reality they live in (Scheinin 1999:157). Hence, to become autonomous learners students have to have a chance to get to know themselves as learners, their own development, and success. On the other hand, they need to try, practice, and choose the most suitable learning strategies.

2.3 Beliefs about SLA

In *Oxford advanced learner's dictionary* (2000:100-101), a belief is defined as “a strong feeling that something/somebody exists or is true; confidence that

something/somebody is good or right". In applied linguistics, there have been many different terms for beliefs, such as learner representations (Holec 1987), opinions (Horwitz 1987), and metacognitive knowledge (Wenden 1986, 1987, 1998, 1999). Next, I will discuss the different approaches to beliefs about SLA as reviewed in Kalaja (1994,1995,2003) and in Barcelos (2003).

Kalaja (1994,1995,2003) reviews the studies on student beliefs about SLA and recognizes two approaches to research on student beliefs: mainstream (earlier known as current) and discursive (earlier called as alternative). The two approaches differ in many ways even though the goals of research are almost the same in both: describe the beliefs held by second language learners. The mainstream approach tries to establish a relationship between beliefs and behaviour and the discursive approach describes beliefs and their functions in learners' talk or writing.

First, **the mainstream approach** defines beliefs as cognitive entities or metacognitive knowledge (e.g. Wenden 1986,1998,1999). Beliefs are seen "as preconceived ideas or notions about the aspects of SLA" and thus "the focus has been on what students think of SLA" (Kalaja 1995:192). According to the studies within the mainstream approach, beliefs are based on experience or on others' opinions (Wenden 1998:155, 2001:45). Beliefs are also described as stable, stable, and fallible and they divide into three categories: person, task, and strategic (Flavell 1979). Researchers within the mainstream approach claim that beliefs affect learners' behaviour, for example, through their choice of learning strategies (Kalaja 1994). The research methodology used in this approach consists of questionnaires and retrospective interviews since the cognitive entities are not visible for observation and the methods used include often either quantitative methods or content analysis.

Second, **the discursive approach** is based on work of some social scientists and it describes beliefs as non-cognitive and contextual. In this approach beliefs are seen as socially constructed (Kalaja 1994:56, 1995:195). In other words, language creates reality all the time and that is why beliefs get constructed while learners interact with each other. The discursive approach is not that interested in what the learners think but what they say about different aspects of SLA. In addition, beliefs are seen as variable within the learner as well as within the contexts. In contrast to the

mainstream approach, beliefs are not thought to have an effect on learning directly. Kalaja (1995:197) suggests that “naturalistic discourse data” should be used, that is written or spoken data not specifically produced for research purposes. The method of analysis should be discourse analysis since consequently the content and form of the data can be analysed. On the other hand, the data could be interviews but only if it would be analysed together with the interviewee as joint production (Kalaja 1994:58, 1995:197).

Barcelos (2003:11), unlike Kalaja (1994, 1995, 2003), recognizes three approaches to study beliefs about SLA. These are the normative approach, the metacognitive approach (that will be introduced in more detail in chapter 3), and the contextual approach. Compared to Kalaja, Barcelos has divided the mainstream approach into two and her third category includes several different approaches within the contextual approach.

The normative approach defines beliefs as “preconceived notions, myths, and misconceptions” (Barcelos 2003:11). Normative studies are characterized by the use of multiple-choice (Likert-type) questionnaires to study beliefs (Barcelos 2003:11, Bernat and Gvozdenko 2005:4). This approach has been criticized mainly for its methodology. Although Likert-type questionnaires are simple to use and provide a general picture of beliefs students have about SLA, their answers are restricted so that they cannot use their own words. Students are not allowed to express their own metacognitive knowledge when beliefs are studied by using questionnaires (Wenden 1987, Barcelos 2003:15).

As the name of the approach, **the metacognitive approach**, beliefs are defined as metacognitive knowledge (Barcelos 2003, Wenden 1986,1998,1999,2001). The researcher who has conducted most of the studies in this approach is Wenden (1986,1987) and she characterizes metacognitive knowledge as stable, statable, and sometimes incorrect. This knowledge is seen to be “knowledge about learning, which influences [learners’] approach to learning and the expectations they hold about the outcomes of their efforts” (Wenden 1998:515 as quoted by Barcelos 2003:16). Accordingly, metacognitive knowledge is considered to have a major role in helping learners to become autonomous. Barcelos (2003:16) reports that the metacognitive

approach to beliefs about SLA uses semi-structured interviews, self-reports, and questionnaires and the data collected has been analysed using content analysis. The advantage and difference of the approach compared to the normative approach is that “the use of interviews gives learners the opportunity to elaborate and reflect on their experiences” (Barcelos 2003:19).

The contextual approach is the most recent approach in studying beliefs about SLA. Within this approach, beliefs are characterized as “contextual, dynamic and social” (Barcelos 2003:11-22). In other words, beliefs are part of students’ experiences, they are connected to their environment, and they are “socially constructed” (Barcelos 2003:231). The main characteristic of this approach is that it varies in both theoretical frameworks, for instance, neo-Vygotskian socio-cultural (Alanen 2003) to Bakhtinian (Dufva 2003) and Deweyan (Barcelos 2003) and in methods of data collection that include case studies, discourse analysis, observation, interviews, written reports and diaries (Barcelos 2003:19-25, Bernat and Gvosdenko 2005:6). This approach does not try to generalize beliefs about SLA; in contrast, it aims to describe beliefs in specific contexts. The advantage of this approach is that it describes a positive view of learners’ beliefs by considering learners as social and interactive beings. This approach develops and changes, and new definitions and methodology arise constantly, as a result here is only portrayed a very narrow glimpse to it. In fact, it could be even addressed as contextual approaches due to variation in the studies (Barcelos and Kalaja 2003:231-237).

To sum up, learners’ beliefs about SLA can be studied from various viewpoints. Every definition of beliefs, framework chosen, and methods used provide slightly different view on beliefs. All of these approaches are still at use although the contextual approach has gained more interest in recent years.

3 BELIEFS AS METACOGNITIVE KNOWLEDGE

Metacognitive approach provides the framework for this study. In the following two sections, I will first clarify the definition of metacognitive knowledge and how Flavell (1977,1979), Wenden (1986,1998,2001), and Benson and Lor (1998,1999) have defined it and then the classification of metacognitive knowledge will be discussed.

3.1 Definition of metacognitive knowledge

The concepts of metacognition and metacognitive knowledge were first introduced in the 1970s. John Flavell, a developmental psychologist, has been one of the most influential researchers in this field. Flavell (1977:104) claims that metacognition refers to a person's own thinking and awareness of his/her cognitive processes. In short, it is "cognition about cognition" and that is the reason for the name *metacognition*. Metacognitive knowledge is defined as "a segment of your acquired world knowledge that has to do with cognitive matters" and it is not just the knowledge but also the beliefs that concern the human mind and the ways it works are included (Flavell 1977:105). This knowledge is gathered through experience and is stored in long-term memory.

Wenden (1986) was the first to apply Flavell's ideas into the field of SLA. Wenden (1998:155, 2001:45) suggests metacognitive knowledge is "knowledge about learning, which influences [learners'] approach to learning and the expectations they hold about the outcomes of their efforts", in other words, it contains all the aspects the learner knows about learning. Besides, this knowledge is described to be fairly stable even though it may change over time as the learner processes and adapts his/her learning experiences. Wenden (1998:155, 1999:436, 2001:45) also states that the learner's metacognitive knowledge is acquired either unconsciously by imitating and by observing or it may be acquired consciously. The learner might reflect on his/her own learning processes and make generalizations about it or he/she might remember what his/her teachers, parents, or friends have told him/her about the most useful ways to learn. Another characteristic feature of metacognitive knowledge is

that it is stable. Consequently, the learner can bring this knowledge to consciousness and talk about it.

Benson and Lor (1998, 1999) have developed Wenden's view of metacognitive knowledge slightly further by adding more emphasis on the social and contextual aspects of beliefs. They (1998, 1999:464) begin by making a distinction between beliefs and conceptions of learning. First, the difference between these terms is that beliefs are concerned with what learners hold to be true about language and its learning process, whereas conceptions of learning are concerned with what learners think these two are. Second, they view them as two different levels of representation in learners' thinking about their learning. Beliefs characterize learners' thinking at a lower level of abstraction than conceptions of learning. Third, "conceptions and beliefs are understood as relational and responsive to context" (1999:464). As a result, beliefs are seen in how learners approach the learning process and these approaches to learning depend on the context and the range of conceptions available to them. Benson and Lor (1998) assume that neither beliefs nor conceptions are within individuals or belong to anyone but they are available for everyone in the particular group collectively through interaction and collaboration.

In addition to the social and contextual aspects, Benson and Lor (1998) point out that beliefs are not as stable as Wenden (1986, 1987) claims them to be. Through research, it is possible only to view "a snapshot" of beliefs since beliefs are changing and developing together with the learners (Benson and Lor 1998:17). Benson and Lor (1998) assume that while learners are learning to become autonomous, their beliefs are reflected against experiences, and thus old beliefs may be changed and new ones can emerge. Therefore, studies are only able to view the beliefs learners hold in that particular stage of their learning process to become autonomous.

3.2 Classification of metacognitive knowledge

Metacognitive knowledge is subdivided into three different categories (Flavell 1977:105-105, 1979:906-907). **Person knowledge** includes everything a person believes and knows about him/herself and other people as cognitive processors. It

can be about the differences in one person. A learner can, for example, think that he/she learns better by listening than by reading. The differences can also exist between two or more persons, for instance, a learner's belief that he/she has more difficulties in understanding than other students of his/her age. In addition, the knowledge can be about similarities in all people, such as the saying that all people make mistakes. Wenden (1998:518, 2001:46) points out that person knowledge consists of the knowledge the learner has acquired about the different kinds of factors that influence learning. These factors include age, language aptitude, personality, and motivation. The learner's own experiences and conceptions of how these factors may influence learning are also part of person knowledge.

Task knowledge divides into two subcategories (Flavell 1977:105-105, 1979:906-907). The first subcategory deals with the nature of the information available in cognitive tasks. For example, the information can be familiar or unfamiliar, essential or inessential. The second subcategory has to do with the nature of task demands. Wenden (1998:518, 2001:46) points out that the task category consists of the knowledge concerning the purpose, type, and demands of the task. In other words, it includes the learner's knowledge of why, what, and how something is done. For example, the learner realises that the task is meant to improve his/her oral communication skills, and therefore it does not involve any writing but requires creative thinking as well as cooperation.

Strategic knowledge means the knowledge the learner has about learning strategies: what they are and why they are useful and also when and how to use them (Flavell 1977:105-105, 1979:906-907). Different strategies are successful in achieving different cognitive goals. For instance, the learner might know that there are many different ways to learn new words but the most useful strategy for him/her is to produce sentences by using new words. In addition, Flavell (1977:106) points out that there is a difference between cognitive strategies and metacognitive strategies. Cognitive strategies help the learner to achieve the learning goal. By contrast, metacognitive strategies provide information about the learning process and the learner's progress in it.

In short, together with all the three categories metacognitive knowledge includes the knowledge and beliefs that the learner has acquired about him/herself as a language learner, the language itself, and the language learning process. The learners' beliefs are not always easily defined and classified and sometimes they can be interrelated but they can be divided roughly into these three categories.

4 STUDIES ON LEARNERS' BELIEFS AND KNOWLEDGE ABOUT SLA

As discussed in the section 2.3, there are number of ways to approach learners' beliefs about SLA. The studies reviewed here are placed in the mainstream approach according to Kalaja (1995) and in the metacognitive approach according to Barcelos (2003). Although Bernat and Gvozdenko (2005:6) situated the third study by Benson and Lor (1998) in the contextual approach, it is here considered to belong to metacognitive approach since it appeared in the special issue of *System* (1999:27). This issue of *System* included eight articles by different authors. Wenden (1999:437) claims that these articles

do not only document the content of learners' metacognitive knowledge and beliefs, but also report on developments ... on research methodology and the development, nature, and influence of learners' knowledge and beliefs.

4.1 Studies by Wenden

In her original study, Wenden (1986) was interested in what second language learners know about their language learning. Wenden argued that the research at that time had mostly concentrated on learner strategies and learners' knowledge of them, but now she wanted to focus on "what aspects of their language learning are learners capable of talking about, other than their strategies" (p. 187). She was also interested in the insights that this knowledge could provide us with on the students' use of strategies and the significance of this knowledge.

The subjects of Wenden's study consisted of 25 adults who had lived in the United States for less than two years. She used a semi-structured interview to uncover the beliefs. Before the interviews the subjects were given a list of questions about the main themes covered in the interview and they were asked to fill in a grid of their daily activities. The list provided a retrospective account of the learners' beliefs and it was also expected "to reduce the possibility of faulty reporting due to memory lapses" (Wenden 1986:187). The grid on the other hand gave a glance at the students' typical social settings and the language they used in them. The data

collected was transcribed and analysed using content analysis based on grounded theory.

First phase of the analysis. In the first phase and in the initial analysis, Wenden identified five dimensions in the students' language learning: (1) the language, (2) their proficiency in the language, (3) the outcome of their learning endeavors, (4) their role in the language-learning process, and (5) how best to approach the task of language learning. The statements about students' language learning were categorized as follows (Table 1.).

Table 1. The preliminary classification used in Wenden's study (1986).

Designating	Diagnosing	Evaluating	Self-analysing	Theorizing
Language: - grammar - vocabulary - pronunciation - discourse	Language proficiency: - specifying - asserting - qualifying - comparing1/2	Outcome of learning: - quality of experience - achievement	Self as learner: - feelings - aptitude - physical state - age - style of learning - social role - character	How to approach language learning: - use the language - learn about the language - personal factors are important

The first dimension was named designating (Wenden 1986:188-190, 204). It included all the statements made about the language. The second was named diagnosing. This category included all the statements where students referred to their proficiency in the language. For instance, what the students found difficult or easy and what they thought they could or could not do. The third category was named evaluating. These statements referred to usefulness of a certain strategy. The fourth dimension was named self-analysing, since these statements referred to the feelings that the language-learning process evoked, language aptitude, learning style and personality. The fifth dimension was named theorizing. This category included statements that referred to the best ways to approach language learning.

Wenden (1986:197) points out that these categories may be seen as subcategories for the three categories presented by Flavell (1979) and which have been discussed earlier in this study (see section 3.2). Thus the person category includes diagnosing

and self-analysing, designating falls within the task category, and evaluating and theorizing belongs to the strategic category.

Wenden (1986) found that the learners were capable of articulating their beliefs and the future studies could refine, modify, and expand the categories found by her. The connection between a learner's knowledge and its outcome in practice should also be studied. In addition, Wenden (1986:199) suggests that teachers should be interested in their students' beliefs and provide exercises for students in which they could examine their beliefs and the impact of them on their learning approaches. In short, students should be made aware of their beliefs so that they could use all the skills they have acquired.

Second phase of the analysis. In the second phase of her study, Wenden (1986, 1987) concentrated only on the fifth of the dimensions, theorizing, also called as "explicit learner beliefs". Of the 25 students 14 who participated in the first phase "made explicit statements about how best to approach language learning" (Wenden 1987:103-104). The beliefs were categorised according to the importance given to them by the students. For example, nine students stated that practice is necessary for learning a language and only one made a reference to self-concept. Table 2 provides an overview of the learners' explicit beliefs and their frequency.

Table 2. Learners' explicit beliefs about language learning (1987).

Use the language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practise (9) - Learn the natural way (5) - Think in your second language (5) - Live and study in an environment where the target language is spoken (5) - Don't worry about the mistakes (2)
Learn about the language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn grammar and vocabulary (7) - Take a formal course (5) - Be mentally active (4) - Learn from mistakes (3)
Personal factors are important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The emotional aspect is important (4) - Aptitude for learning is necessary (2) - Self-concept can also facilitate or inhibit learning (1)

The category, use the language, was the most popular one, the next category was learn about the language, and the last was personal factors are important. Practice was the most frequently stated belief, followed by learning grammar and vocabulary. After this came learn the natural way, think in your second language, live and study in an environment where the target language is spoken, and take a formal course.

Of this second phase, Wenden (1987:108) noted that learners seemed to adopt a preferred set of beliefs. In other words, individual students' statements usually belonged only to one category. She also observed that there was a relationship between beliefs and the strategies chosen, learners' attention to the learning situation, criteria for evaluating the efficiency, and planning priorities (Wenden 1987:109-112). Wenden (1987:112) pointed out that the explicit beliefs indicate that these learners have begun to understand the principles behind their actions. In other words, they have begun developing their "theories-in-action" and thus becoming more autonomous learners. According to Wenden (1987:113), learners' beliefs about language learning

provide us with learners' views on these methodological questions [i.e. natural or holistic approach] and can be a source of insight into their learning difficulties and to the overt and hidden resistance to some of the activities we [teachers] organize to help them.

4.2 Study by Hokkanen

Hokkanen (1996) conducted a case study following Wenden (1986). The main difference compared to Wenden was that she studied unsuccessful learners. She was interested in what unsuccessful learners of English know and believe about their learning a second language. This had not been done before; in other words, the previous studies had concentrated on adults, average, and/or successful students. Hokkanen was also interested to find out whether there were any similarities or differences in the subjects' metacognitive knowledge. The subjects of her study were four Finnish 9th graders, and their (un-) success in learning was based on their grade and their teacher's interview.

Hokkanen used semi-structured interviews and analysed the data using content analysis. The entire data pool consisted of three interview schedules, diaries, and some school documents. The two first interview schedules were designed for students and the third was for the teacher. The students were interviewed three times: twice right after English lessons and then a longer interview about language learning in general. The longer interview was the main data that was supported by the diary that the students had kept. The teacher's interview provided background information about the students.

The data pool was transcribed and analysed using content analysis and the constant comparative method. Thus, the data was categorized first according to the themes that Wenden introduced in her study and then additional categories were allowed to appear. The final categories that Hokkanen found were the following and these were also categorized whether they referred to theorizing, that is, the knowledge about learning in general, or the subject him/herself as a learner (see Table 3).

Table 3. Categorization of beliefs in the study by Hokkanen (1996).

Person knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learner factors: sex & age, aptitude & intelligence, learning style, motivation & attitude, personality, feelings and physical states - Role as learner - Proficiency
Strategic knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effectiveness of strategies - General approaches to language learning
Task knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nature of language and communication: general tasks (significance, nature, and difficulty) and specific task - Task purpose - Task demands: knowledge required to do the task, necessary steps and strategies, need for deliberate effort, level of difficulty

Hokkanen reported her findings first case by case, then she counted the frequencies of beliefs in different categories, and finally she found out learners' common metacognitive knowledge. She discovered that there were, in fact, more common

beliefs than individual ones. She defined common beliefs as beliefs held by three or four learners and individual beliefs as beliefs held by one or two learners.

As for common person knowledge, the learners emphasized the factors they could have an effect on, such as emotional and physical states of learning, instead of factors that could not be controlled, such as age, sex, or intelligence. They all claimed absence of tension to help learning and self-confidence depended on the subject and the situation. For instance, if they were successful in arts they felt confident during those lessons. The learners also believed that they were responsible of their own learning. Thus, they should pay attention to teaching and concentrate in class. They all preferred to work with a partner instead of individual or group work. The subjects considered learning English as useful and were able to name a few reasons for studying it. However, Hokkanen noticed that the learners' motivation was mostly extrinsic and instrumental. They believed that social pressure from the teacher facilitated learning and in addition, they even thought that some tasks mainly benefited the teacher. They did not consider the tasks meaningful for themselves. Difficulties the learners mentioned were grammar, speaking, and vocabulary. They all were more successful in receptive skills than in productive skills.

As for strategic knowledge, Hokkanen concluded that the learners "had a many-sided picture of how English can be learned" (p.148). The subjects appreciated formal learning (guidance by the teacher) in addition to naturalistic learning as the best approaches to second language learning. They enjoyed formal practices and non-intensive learning in the formal context, and watching TV and listening to music as natural means of learning. All the students believed that taking risks was part of language learning and mistakes were opportunities to learn. The subjects' beliefs about specific language learning strategies included mostly translating, memorization of words and grammar rules, and reading aloud in class.

As for task knowledge, it included beliefs about learning English and all the subjects believed that it was quite significant to learn it since it is needed in many countries and occupations. English was also considered to be quite difficult language to learn compared to Swedish. Learners believed that most of the exercises done in the class were for testing purposes. In other words, to show the teacher what the students had

learned. They also held beliefs that Finnish grammar facilitated learning the grammar of English and grammar formed the basis for speaking and writing in English.

The main conclusion of this study was that students' beliefs about learning a second language do not have a significant role in their poor learning success. Nevertheless, the students would benefit of learner training in which they could be made aware of the different aspects of language learning, for instance, facilitating effects of motivation, attitude, and the active role of the learner. In addition, knowledge about additional learning routines and strategies, and communication strategies should be brought to students' awareness.

4.3 Study by Benson and Lor

In their study, Benson and Lor (1998) took the study of learner beliefs a step further and combined learner beliefs with autonomous language learning. They were interested in the relationship between learner beliefs and readiness for autonomy and thus their research questions were "what conceptions of language and language learning do learners hold and how are these conceptions related to their readiness for autonomy? (Benson and Lor 1998:1)". In other words, they hypothesised whether the beliefs reflect the learners' readiness for autonomy.

The data for this study was collected from 16 university students attending a course called Independent Learning Programme (ILP). During the course, the researchers made observations and interview notes of informal discussions with the students. Two students were also interviewed for case studies. The entire data pool consisted of observations, interview notes, transcripts of discussions and interviews, and almost 200 project reports written by the students.

The data was analysed using a computer programme *Nud.ist*. The documents were read systematically and first, the data were divided into three categories: conceptual, situational, and affective dimensions of knowledge. Then these categories were recoded to find more accurate and specific categories and thus the following coding was made based on the occurrence of instances in the data (see table 4). For the case

studies all data concerning these subjects was reread and analysed using “a procedure ‘meaning condensation’ in which a text is summarised and thematised to express the speakers’ viewpoint as the researchers understand it” (Kvale 1996:193 as quoted by Benson and Lor 1998:19). Benson and Lor’s findings are followed in Table 4 and it shows the categories as expressed by the subjects.

Table 4. Categories in the study by Benson and Lor (1998).

Beliefs about language learning	Beliefs about the situational context	Beliefs about self
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work - Method - Motivation - A pattern of beliefs - Conceptions of language learning and readiness for autonomy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social context - Institutional context - Prior learning experiences - Beliefs about situational context and readiness for autonomy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proficiency - Self-confidence - Capacity to learn English - Capacity for independent learning - Beliefs about self and readiness for autonomy

The first category, beliefs about language learning, described “what learners believe to be true independently of their knowledge of the situational context of learning and of themselves as learners”, such as effort, practice, and time, and a teacher, exposing yourself to the language, and self-motivation (Benson and Lor 1998:21, 22-24). The second category, beliefs about the situational context, was seen as a dimension of learner beliefs. These statements concerned with the relationship between self and others in particular social and institutional contexts. The social context meant the importance of English to the students themselves or in Hong Kong. The situational context included statements about the importance of English in secondary school and university. The prior learning experiences referred to independent learning situations outside the classroom. The final dimension, beliefs about self, concerned mostly students’ proficiency and role in the language learning process. Although Benson and Lor divided the beliefs into these three categories, they emphasized that they are closely connected to each other through the underlying conceptions of the language and language learning process.

The study concluded that the relationship between beliefs about language learning and readiness for autonomy was too complex and “cannot be simply defined in terms of the articulation of a particular set of beliefs” (Benson and Lor 1998:2). They,

however, concluded that qualitative conceptions are more suitable for autonomous learning than quantitative conceptions. The qualitative conceptions mean that language is seen as an 'environment' and learning a language as a means of doing something with it whereas quantitative conceptions view language as a set or collection of 'things' (Benson and Lor 1998:26, 38, 57). Learners with qualitative conceptions can more effectively take advantage of and will gain more of autonomous learning than those with quantitative conceptions. The two case studies suggested that students hold both qualitative and quantitative conceptions but the main issue is that they should be able to move from quantitative to qualitative conceptions in order to become learners that are more autonomous. The main implication for teachers is that one way of carrying out autonomy in teaching is maintaining a dialogue with students about their beliefs and conceptions of language and language learning.

The categorization used in Benson and Lor's study broadly corresponds to Wenden's (1986) categories. The first category, beliefs about language learning, refers to statements made about language and how to best approach the task, in other words, explicit beliefs. The second category, beliefs about the situational context, refers to statements about the outcomes of learning endeavours. The third category, beliefs about self, refers to statements about the learner's own proficiency and role in the language learning process (Benson and Lor 1998:16). Nevertheless, Benson and Lor (1998:25) concluded

although the beliefs expressed by learners ... are drawn from a set of beliefs that are no doubt universal, it appears that the range of beliefs available to them is rather narrowly delimited by the context of their learning.

They observed that different classification schemas and categorizations are characteristic of particular groups of learners. Thus, the categories found in the data depend on subjects.

4.4 Studies on beliefs held by dysphatic students

Salminen (2001) studied how to develop the school for dysphatic students. Ideas for development were asked from dysphatic students in a special education school. As a result, the students were seen as subjects of development. The purpose of this study was to find out how dysphatic students experience their school, how they experience themselves as learners and as objects of teaching, and as members of different communities. The main objective was to gather evaluative information and ideas for development from the students to develop the school.

The study used a phenomenographic approach, in other words, Salminen described how the subjects conceptualised their being and acting in the school. The subjects consisted of 20 dysphatic students between the ages of 12 to 14. The methods used in this study included student and teacher interviews, self-concept and school attitude indicator, projective completion tasks, and students' writings. Salminen (2001) considered the information provided by students as facts. He believed that the accuracy of the information is in relation to the informant and therefore it is not necessary to check the truthfulness of the information given.

The most interesting finding considering this study was the fact that all aspects related to language were seen difficult. In addition, the students felt that if they could drop one subject out of the curriculum it would be English. To learn well the students mentioned five issues; the teacher should be close by, the information should be explained repeatedly, one has to do many exercises, there should be homework, and the pace of learning and teaching should be slow enough.

Another interesting aspect that Salminen claimed was that dysphatic students can say very little of their own learning. Salminen considered it surprising that no student mentioned that dysphasia was the cause for the learning difficulties. The students were just able to say that they remember and learn only by repeating. There was a clear conflict in this. On the one hand, the students were eager to learn despite the difficulties but on the other hand, they did not know how they should do this effectively. Thus, Salminen suggests that learning strategies and styles should be taught and examined thoroughly at schools.

5 THE PRESENT STUDY

In the previous chapters the role of beliefs in SLA was discussed from the viewpoint of importance and as a part of the objective in helping students to become more autonomous. In addition, the research approaches as conceptualized by Kalaja and Barcelos were considered and studies concerning beliefs about SLA in metacognitive context were viewed more closely. In this chapter the present study is outlined. First, the starting points and the research questions of the study are considered. Second, the subjects and particularly their learning difficulty, dysphasia, are reviewed. Finally, data collection and data analysis are explained.

5.1 Research questions

The present study follows the guidelines of the metacognitive approach. It has combined the previous studies defining beliefs as metacognitive knowledge. The studies by Wenden (1986,1987) provide the foundation but the study by Benson and Lor (1998) is used as a supplement. In addition, the study by Hokkanen (1996) is used when the results are discussed. The reasons for combining these studies are several.

First of all, metacognitive knowledge as defined by Wenden (1986,1987) does not represent the current idea of how the contexts affect beliefs. She describes beliefs as stable although she admits that they can vary to some degree. In this study, beliefs are seen stable to only some extent. Benson and Lor (1998) widen the concept of stability a bit further. As discussed in section 3.1, they point out that an interview provides only a representation of learners' beliefs on the moment of the interview. It is not a fixed set of beliefs that the students talk about but "a snapshot" of their continuous process of development. To learn and develop learners have to change and enhance their beliefs and thus, they cannot be stable in the sense Wenden claims.

Second, the aspect of stability is compromised by Benson and Lor (1998) when they introduce an interesting idea of shared beliefs. They claim that beliefs are available

for all within a certain social context. In my opinion, this enriches the definition of beliefs and complements the explanation of how learners acquire specific beliefs.

Third, a combination of the previous studies is necessary since the beliefs held by dysphatic students have not been studied before. As Benson and Lor (1998:25) claimed, the classification schemes and categories depend on the particular group of learners. Thus, the previous studies can only provide some basic guidelines for categorizing but the final classification is shaped by beliefs held by the subjects.

Last, the metacognitive approach has been criticized for its methods of analysis, particularly of content analysis. Therefore, this study follows Benson and Lor's example of using meaning condensation. This will be explained in more detail in section 5.4. Because of the reasons discussed above, this study combines the ideas that are considered important in the previous studies and in addition, it will aim to create its own classification for beliefs based on the beliefs held by dysphatic students.

Learners of different age levels and nationalities were studied in the previous studies. Wenden (1986,1987) focused on adults who lived in the United States, Benson and Lor (1998) on university students in Hong Kong, and Hokkanen (1996) on Finnish 9th grade students. Hokkanen concentrated on unsuccessful learners but these students were chosen based on their poor success in English. They were not diagnosed with any learning disability. Only Salminen (2001) was interested in the thoughts and beliefs held by dysphatic students. However, the study by Salminen was not done in the field of SLA and thus it can be used only as a background support. The present study concentrates on the beliefs about SLA held by 12 to 15 year old dysphatic students. This particular subject group was chosen because the learning difficulties have increased rapidly in recent years. Even though dysphasia is in the far end of linguistic difficulties, the beliefs of dysphatic students can give an insight of the students' thoughts who suffer from these problems. In addition, the beliefs of this age group have not been studied before using the metacognitive approach so that was another reason for choosing these students. Furthermore, I was able to teach these students myself before this study and thus, they were familiar to me.

The previous studies had different kinds of objectives. Since Wenden (1986,1987) was the first to study learner beliefs by interviewing, she aimed to find out the aspects that language learners were capable of talking about and the importance of this knowledge. Hokkanen (1996) focused on unsuccessful learners of English because their beliefs had not studied before. Benson and Lor (1998) broadened the research on beliefs by connecting readiness for autonomy to beliefs. This study is interested in beliefs of dysphatic students and particularly their beliefs about themselves as English learners. The research questions of this study are:

1. What kind of beliefs do dysphatic students have about themselves as learners of English?
2. What kind of beliefs do dysphatic students have about learning English?
3. What kind of beliefs do dysphatic students have about the situational context of language learning?

This way I try to find out the metacognitive knowledge and beliefs held by dysphatic students.

5.2 Subjects and the definition of dysphasia

In the interviews, the subjects were first 12 to 13 year old 6th Grade students, and in the second phase of the study a year and a half later they were on the 7th grade being 14 to 15 year olds. All the subjects were diagnosed with dysphasia although the diagnosis of one student (B2) had (December 2003) changed into the Asperger syndrome with linguistic difficulties.

The subjects attended a special education classroom in which all the students had linguistic difficulties. They had their own curriculum that still followed the guidelines of the national core curricula. The special education classroom was located in an ordinary comprehensive school and the students did not need to change the school although they moved to upper grades of comprehensive school. Eastern Finnish school is located in a town of less than 100 000 habitants.

Marttinen et al. (2001:30) have discussed the different terms for dysphasia. The most common term in Finland is dysphasia (in Finnish *dysfasia*), although the official term is 'disorder of speech and language development'. The terms 'disorders of language', 'specific language impairment', and 'linguistic learning disabilities' are also used in Finland and they all refer to dysphasia. Furthermore, 'specific language impairment' (SLI) is the most commonly used term in other countries.

Dysphasia is an impairment of the linguistic development, which means that the child does not acquire the language as expected (Marttinen et al. 2001:19-21). The more severe dysphasia is the more it influences the child's development, communication, and learning. The cause of dysphasia is unknown at the moment but it is believed to be caused by a neurological damage or dysfunction during pregnancy, birth, or early infancy (Hyytiäinen-Ruokokoski 1996:5; Marttinen et al. 2001:21; Matikainen 1999:6-7). Hereditary tendency may also be connected to it.

Children with dysphasia have significant limitations in their language abilities (Marttinen et al. 2001: 21). Rapin and Allen (Rapin 1996 as quoted by Marttinen et al. 2001:19, 26-28) have categorized these limitations into three subcategories. These subcategories are expression disorders (verbal dyspraxia and dysfunction of phonological programming), reception and expression disorders (verbal-auditive agnosia and phonologic-syntactic dysfunction), and disorders in higher linguistic processing (lexical dysfunction and semantic-pragmatic dysfunction).

Dysphasia is usually diagnosed when the child is three to five years old (Rantala and Hällback 1996:13-22). It is diagnosed by excluding the following: hearing impairment, low non-verbal intelligence, psychological illness, non-stimulating environment, multilingualism, delayed language development, neurological disease that affects speech organs, and structural abnormality of the speech organs (Leonard 1998:3; Hyytiäinen-Ruokokoski 1996:15). However, if dysphasia is mild it might not be diagnosed until the child is at school. This is clearly visible when looking at statistics from 2005: the number of dysphatic children rose up with 2923 children from pre-school to primary school (Tilastokeskus 2005b). In addition to linguistic difficulties, dysphatic children may also have difficulties with perceiving, problems in their motor activity and attention or behaviour disorders. A serious dysphasia is

always a threat to the child's social and mental development since it complicates and makes his or her communication by speech difficult or even impossible.

In Finland, the number of dysphatic people is 1-3% per every year group (Aivohalvaus- ja dysfasialiitto 2006). According to the statistics in 2005 (Tilastokeskus 2005b), 0.82% of all the comprehensive school students and 11.3% of all the students attending special education were dysphatic. Finnish dysphatic students have several schools to choose from. Students are usually placed to a school based on their abilities (Siiskonen 1996:50-59). The school options include a special education school of the state or the parish, a special education classroom, or an ordinary classroom. Teaching in overall is adapted to the individual needs and abilities of each student.

The main objective of teaching dysphatic students is to help students to become as independent learners and self-reliant adults as possible (Salminen 2001). Salminen (2001) also points out that pedagogical rehabilitation should cover issues about learning attitudes, learners' beliefs about themselves as learners and as friends, knowledge and skills, learning approaches and studying routines, learners' information processing skills, and metacognitive skills, such as learning skills and strategies. In addition, the basis of teaching should be the knowledge about each student's learning and problem solving strategies. The suggested basic principles in teaching are that students should have enough time for learning, and they should experience the feeling of success (Siiskonen 1996:50-59). This is important in order to create and maintain students' positive image of themselves and strengthen their self-esteem, and moreover, succeeding improves motivation in learning. As with all students who have learning disabilities, the teacher should use various teaching methods that activate all kinds of learners, for instance, visual, auditive, and kinesthetic students. In addition, the teacher should favour, on the one hand, clear and structured and, on the other hand, concrete teaching methods, which connect new things to students' previous experiences and knowledge.

5.3 Interviews

The data collection methods have varied a great deal in research on beliefs about SLA. In the metacognitive approach, different kinds of interviews have usually been the research methods. Wenden (1986,1987) used semi-structured interview complemented with retrospective questions and a grid of daily activities. Hokkanen (1996), too, used semi-structured interviews in addition to diaries and some school documents. Benson and Lor (1998) used observations, interview notes, transcripts of discussions and interviews and project reports.

In this study, two different kinds of interviews, structured and semi-structured, were used to discover the beliefs of the dysphatic students. This study is interested in the dysphatic students' own beliefs and experiences about learning English expressed in their own words. The best way to achieve this goal was to ask the students directly and not to have any pre-structured questionnaire with predetermined topics, questions, and possible answer alternatives (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2000:35). Therefore, the data of this study consisted of student interviews. By interviewing, it was possible to overcome the difficulties caused by dysphasia such as reading and comprehension difficulties (see also Salminen 2001:28). Another reason to collect data by interviewing instead of, for instance, using a questionnaire was that the interview gives a chance to rephrase the questions to students and it also gives them a chance to ask clarifying questions (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2000:35). No written reports, diaries etc. were used since for some students dysphasia caused writing difficulties and thus, these students would have been in different position compared to the other subjects.

The subjects for this study were selected for the reason that they were already familiar to the researcher. This probably made the interviews a little easier for the students since they knew the researcher. Thus, the students were not that uncomfortable or nervous in the interview. In fact, this might be the reason for the first interviews lasting from 25 minutes to even 40 minutes. The second interviews lasted about 30 minutes on average.

The interviews were performed in two phases. Permission for the first interviews was handed out to all the students of the particular class in December 2003 and only three students refused to participate. Then three girls and three boys were interviewed. The first interviews were carried out in January 2004 and a structured interview was used in these interviews. The first interview consisted of 18 questions that dealt with the students' beliefs about their own learning, their conceptions of the role of the teacher and their future concerning uses of English (See Appendix 1: The first interview schedule). Pre-structured lists of different options such as different aspects of language learning, such as listening, reading, writing, and pronunciation, supported some of the questions. These lists were shown to the students only after the open question so that the list would influence the students' own thinking as little as possible. The first set of interviews provided the basis data for this study, however, it was not considered adequate since in some cases the interviewer had not asked for examples or clarifying questions such as why. Furthermore, the second interview would give a chance to compare the two interviews and thus give a developmental perspective of the students' metacognitive knowledge.

The second phase of the interviews took place in April 2005. Then four students agreed to participate in the study, all of which participated in the first interview as well. This time the interviews were semi-structured and an interview guide was used since it allowed more freedom for the subjects (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2000:47). In other words, they could express their beliefs more freely and also the interviewer was able to make the interview seem more like a natural conversation. The interview guide means that the researcher had a list of themes with related questions but the order and exact wording of the questions was not predetermined (Kvale 1996, Patton 2002). Kvale (1996:129) points out that "the guide can contain just some rough topics to be covered or it can be a detailed sequence of carefully worded questions". Using the interview guide enabled the interviewer to focus more on the topics that were essential to this study. In addition, the interviews were more systematic compared to each other although the order of the questions was not strict. In the first interviews, the questions were not classified according to any topic and there were more repetition. The second interview consisted of two topic divided to eight themes and about 40 questions (See Appendix 2: The second interview schedule). Clarifying questions also followed the planned questions. The themes were in two groups:

person, and task and strategic knowledge. The themes related to person knowledge included interest in the English language, that is, their motivation, and the students' conceptions of themselves as learners of English. The themes related to task and strategic knowledge included questions related to beliefs about the English language, learning of English, the tasks, independent study, the teacher's role, and thoughts about the teaching, and ways of action in the English classroom.

The themes and questions of both interviews were based on the characteristics of the metacognitive knowledge and roughly on Wenden's findings about what her students were capable of expressing about their metacognitive knowledge. In addition, some of the interview questions in the studies by Dufva et al. (1996) and by Rantala (2001) were used to help forming the first interview. Some new questions and topics were also added to provide as thorough an idea of the students' beliefs as possible.

All the interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed using the following guidelines. Transcription was done in word for word, but some words were added to clarify either the questions or answers just to make the samples easier to understand for the reader. These additional words were separated with brackets, for example [text]. Pauses were marked by using two dots, for example .. and unclear speech was marked with (...). These were considered important since they indicate students' hesitations and beliefs although unclear sometimes. The questions were marked with a ?-marks and a strong tone of voice with !-mark. A letter **I** marked the interviewer, and the letter **B** stood for a boy and **G** for a girl. The numbers after the letter referred to a certain boy or girl either in the first or second interview. For example, B2.1 indicates that the extract is from boy 2's first interview, and G1.2 meant girl 1's second interview. The **bold** text has been used to emphasize the main issue in the extract. Every extract is followed by a number that indicates the translation number found in Appendix 3: Translations of quotations into English.

5.4 Data analysis

The data were analysed using meaning condensation. Benson and Lor (1998) used also meaning condensation in their study. First, the transcripts, 61 pages as a whole,

were read through thoroughly several times to familiarize the researcher with the data. Second, a meaning condensation was produced. This meant that the meanings expressed by the students were abridged into shorter formulations (Kvale 1996:192). In other words, as Kvale (1996:192) exemplifies, the statements were compressed into briefer statements in which the main sense of what was said was rephrased in a few words. Meaning condensation was a pre-stage for the classification of the data.

Second, when the interviews were read through and the meaning condensation was complete, the abridgements were studied. This phase was called classification in which parts of the data were compared to others (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2001:147). The classification was guided by the research questions. On the basis of the classification, the data were re-organized and new combinations were made. Thus, the data were arranged again according to the themes and topics that arose from the meaning condensation.

Third, the classified data were analysed more closely within a particular theme and topic. Under every theme, there were differences and similarities and these were classified again according to their occurrence.

6 RESULTS

In this chapter, the results of this study are reported. First, the issues that were mentioned most frequently are discussed and after that others. The first and the second interview are viewed at the same time. The findings are reported in three sections. First, the students' *beliefs about themselves* are discussed. This includes motivation, feelings, and students' conceptions of themselves as learners of English, needs for further training and learning difficulties. Second, the students' *beliefs about learning English* are considered. This contains students' learning styles and strategies, experiences of exercises, notions about the language, and their changes in learning. Third, the students' *beliefs about the situational context* are viewed, including wishes and hopes for exercises, the teacher, and the environment, and their thoughts about help of others in language learning. The categorization of beliefs used in the present study is summarized in the following table (Table 5).

Table 5. Categorization of beliefs in the present study.

Beliefs about self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Motivation – importance and meaning of English to the students - Enjoying learning English - Students' conceptions of themselves as learners of English - Students' feelings about English - Needs for further training - Difficulties in learning English
Beliefs about learning English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ways to learn English – what should the students do? - Learning strategies – what are the students actually doing? - Exercises - Ideas about the language - Changes in learning
Beliefs about the situational context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning environment - Help of others

6.1 Beliefs about self

Beliefs about self consist of six aspects. First, motivation, that is, the importance and meaning of English to the students is viewed. Second, enjoying learning English is discussed from several points of views. Third, the students' conceptions of themselves as learners of English are conveyed. Fourth, their feelings about learning

and using English are discussed. Fifth, the students' needs for further training are viewed and last, their difficulties in language learning are discussed.

6.1.1 Motivation – Importance and meaning of English to the students

The students' motivation to learn English was conveyed by asking them why they studied English and whether they considered learning English useful and important. First, I discuss the reasons why the students studied English. Second, I describe the different ways the students considered English useful now and later in their lives. Finally, the importance of English is discussed.

Reasons for studying English

The students mentioned three different reasons to learn English. The first reason was that English was seen as a necessary and important language to learn. The students pointed out that one would need English especially while travelling. Girl 2 considered English as important as any other language, like Finnish, for example, and that she would need it if she travelled abroad:

G2.2: koska se on **tärkee kieli**, ihan samalla lailla ku suomikin on tärkee niin pitää sitä muitakin näitä esim just englantia oppia sit **jos lähtee ulkomaille** ja siellä **tarvii sitä** ja jos sitä ei ossais niin sitte siellä ois ihan avuton et sitä pitää opetella ku se on niin tärkeetä se englanninkieli (1)

Boy 3 stated that the reason why he learned English was for fun and also because he would need it when travelling:

B3.1: no ei sitä.. enemmän minä sitä **huvikseen opiskelen** ku se on niin hauskaa ja kyllä **sitä tarvitaan siellä matkoillakin**.. ja sitähan tarvitaan nyt siellä Egyptissä (2)

The second reason to learn English was that it was mandatory. Boy 1 thought that although English was needed it was also a school subject and therefore, they had to study it, as girl 1 also briefly stated:

B1.2: no että **sitä tarvitaan** tuota ja **kouluainehan** se on (3)

G1.2: **pakollista** (4)

The third reason was unclear. When asked this student was not sure why he studied English. He was unable to give any reasons for studying:

B2.2: en oo varma (5)

Usefulness of English

The students considered English useful in many different ways. Their answers divided into two main groups on the basis of whether they needed English now or later in their lives. First, the present purposes are discussed. At this point of their lives, English was needed for communication by most of the students. Boy 2 gave an example of how he might use English at home. He said that he could talk with his sister in English if he was playing a computer game in English:

I: joo. käytätkö sä englantia nyt johonkin?

B2.2: no sitääh n voi käyttää vaikka. vaikka joku valittaa sillee ja (...) minun siskokin ossaa vähän englantia että se, kun minä oon pellaamassa niin se sanoo on sanonu että I want to play now niin minä oon siihen sanonu että you jotenkin että you can't play now niinku että because I too play now

I: niiku **siskon kanssa voi puhua**

B2.2: joo ehkä (6)

Girl 2 gave another example how English could be used in everyday situations with relatives. This girl had an uncle who lived with an Australian and therefore, she had used English when talking to him. Girl 2 also mentioned that she had used English with a foreign friend while “talking” to her in the computer program *Messenger*. She had also noticed that writing in the *Messenger* had improved her writing skills:

I: käytätkö sää englannin kieltä johonkin? sää sanoit tossa aikasemmin että sää **puhut enon kanssa?**

G2.2: joo **ja enon miesystävän kanssa puhun**, se on ihan englantilainen et se ei puhu ollenkaan suomee, kyllä se jottain ossaa mutta se assuu tuolla australiassa niin sen kanssa aina puhun kyllä se kanssa aina jos saisin sen osoitteen niin voisin kirjoittaa sille englanniks ja sitte mulla **on englantilainen kaverikkii on mulla tuolla messengerissä** niin senkin kanssa aina, ja nyt se on ruvennu paranemmaan se kirjoituskin ku on opetellu niitä sanoja miten ne kirjoitetaan (7)

Girl 2 mentioned yet another example of how English could be used in the home environment. She said that she had played with her sister a make-belief game in which they had pretended to be in a restaurant and spoke in English. She also told that her sister sometimes read her in English and she was of the opinion that so she could learn English:

I: entäs englannin kielen käyttäminen niin usein kuin mahdollista? auttaako se oppimista?

G2.1: mmm.. esim mun sisko se tykkää englannista ni myö joskus sillee oltiin.. ennen ku se asu kotona ku se muutti isän luo.. nii aina myö oltiin niinku **niinku leikittiin että oltiin ravintolassa ni puhuttiin aina englantia**

I: miten se suju?

G2.1: aika hyvin.. ja sitte Tiina.. se **mun sisko** Tiina aina **joskus lukkee mulle englantia** ku se tykkää lukkee englantia

I: oppiiko siinä englantia?

G2.1: (pään nyökäytys) (8)

Other situations were also mentioned where the students might need English to communicate. Girl 1 imagined a situation where she might meet foreign acquaintances and would be expected to speak English with them:

I: entäs nyt voiko sitä tarvita?

G1.2: no ehkä vähän

I: minkälaisissa tilanteissa?

G1.2: no semmosissa että vaikka **tullee joitain tuttuja vastaan jotka puhuu englantia** niin sitte **pittää niitten kanssa puhua** (9)

Girl 2 suggested another kind of situation where tourists would visit her school. Then she would need to use English to speak to them:

I: voisko sellasia tilanteita tulla Suomessa jossa tarviisit englantia?

G2.1: no vois tulla esimerkiksi vaikka jottai suomalaisia.. **englantilaisia turisteja tulis täällä käymään mejän koululla** ni sitte pittää puhua englanniks niille (10)

Boy 3 had already had some experience of using English when travelling and he had also sometimes used it with his friends. He added yet another way of using English. He said that he needed English when listening to music. Boy 3 pointed out that as he knew English he was able to sing along:

I: oletko sä käyttänyt englantia muualla kuin tuolla luokassa?

B3.1: oon minä.. **matkoilla** oon käyttäny ja joskus **kavereitten kanssa.. ja musiikistakin** ja sitte jos kuuntelee jotain niin sitte siitäkin voi ite laulaa.. siinäki kyllä tarvii (11)

In addition to communicating and listening to music, there were also other ways of using English. Boy 1 mentioned that he needed English on the Internet and when he played computer games. It seemed that the games were often in English and the subtitles, too, were in English. Thus, the student needed listening and reading comprehension skills to play the games:

I: käytätkö sä englantia johonkin?

B1.2: kyllä sitä **netissä** tulee käytettyä ja sitte kun **peleissä** on englanninkieli niin sitä ossaa käyttää

I: onko se puhuttua vai kirjoitettua kieltä niissä peleissä?

B1.2: no niissä on kumpaakin monissa peleissä saapi sen tekstityksen päälle

I: onko se tekstitys suomeks vai englanniks?
 B1.2: englanniks sekkii on (12)

The same boy pointed out one quite specific way of using English. None of the other students mentioned this aspect even though it is not that uncommon a situation. Boy 1 said that he needed English when modelling something, for example, a toy. He pointed out that he needed to understand the instructions so that he would not build the toy in the wrong way:

I: no käytätkö sä tai tarviitko sä englantia johonkin?
 B1.1: kyllä sitä tulee tarvittua jos isona johonkin ruppee nii voi tarvita vaikka johonkin tohon vaikka ku on vaikka jonkun lelun saanu ja sitte ne **käyttöohjeet on englanniks** nii pittäähän sitä tietää että ei ihan tota rakenna väärin tai sillee jotenkin..
 (13)

Girl 3 was not as assured as the students above that she would need English outside the school. She thought that English was needed just a little at home but only when doing homework in English:

I: tarvitsetko sää englantia missään muualla kuin koulussa?
 G3.1: ehkä vähän **kotonakin**
 I: minkälaisissa tilanteissa?
 G3.1: ..jos tekee **englannin läksyjä** (14)

Although the students were able to think and imagine situations where they would need English at this point of their lives, there were students who thought that English was used only at school. Girl 1, for example, considered English just as a school subject:

I: entäs käytätkö sä tai tarvitsetko sä englantia johonkin?
 G1.1: **en**
 I: se on vaan täällä koulussa? oppiaineena?
 G1.1: ni (15)

Boy 2, on the other hand, firmly claimed in the first interview that he did not use English anywhere else than school even though the extract above (see excerpt 6) showed that he might use English when discussing computers with his sister:

I: entäs käytätkö sää englantia muualla kuin koulussa?
 B2.1: **no en käytä!** (16)

Moreover, the students also considered English useful in several ways later in their lives. Most of all they thought that they would need English when travelling. As boy 2 said if one travelled one needed English:

B2.2: vaikka jos **ulukomailla** käy niin siellä (17)

English was needed in communicating as well. Girl 3 anticipated that she might need English for speaking, for example, in England:

G3.1: **puhumiseen**
I: minkälaisissa tilanteissa?
G3.1: **vaikka Englannissa** (18)

Girl 2 pointed out that English might be needed with relatives. Her uncle lived abroad and with him, she could use English for communicating:

I: joo. Luuletko että sä tarviit englannin kieltä tulevaisuudessa?
G2.2: joo ku tuota minun **eno** on sillee puoliks englantilainen ni **sen kanssa pittää puhua aina enkkua** ja seku assuu tuolla ulkomailla niin ei ossaa aika hyvin tuota suomee (19)

Boy 3 mentioned that in addition to travelling, he might need English later in his studies, for instance, in vocational education. He also added that if he had an English friend he would need English language skills to talk with him or her:

I: mihin sä tarviit englannin kieltä tulevaisuudessa?
B3.1: no siihen **matkailuun** ja sitten vaikka johonkin.. **vaikka pääsee johonkin.. amiskaan** ni sitte siellä pittää osata sitä.. en mää oikeestaan muuhun ja paitsit jos on joku **englantilainen kaveri** ja se on tullu jostaki ni sen kanssa pittää puhua ni siihen tarvitaan sitä taitoo (20)

The communicative skills were not just needed for speaking with foreigners, tourists, friends, and relatives but also in future jobs. The students said that they might need English in their future jobs. Girl 2 mentioned that as a sales person she would need to speak with her clients:

G2.1: **jos on..** on sillee niinku **myyjänä** ja sitte tulee joku englantilainen että paljo maksaa nii siinä sitte saattaa tarvita (21)

Other jobs were also mentioned. Girl 1 thought that she would need English if she worked in a restaurant:

G1.1: kyllä ehkä tarvii.. (...) **toïssä..**
I: minkälaisissa toïssä?

G1.1: jos vaikka mennee johonki ravintolaan.. (22)

Boy 1 added a teacher's job on the list of possible jobs that would require using English. He also claimed that English would be needed in everyday life at some point:

B1.1: no siellä ulkomailla ja jos pittää.. tai **ruppee opettajaks tai työhön** voi tarvita sitä ainakin melkein.. välillä tota **melkein jokapäiväiseen elämään.. se joskus tullee** (23)

Importance of learning and knowing English

In addition to reasons why they studied English and whether they considered learning English useful, the students were asked about the importance of learning and knowing English. When asked all the students considered it important to know English. The reasons why it was thought important were quite the same as discussed earlier, that is, to communicate, travel abroad, and work with English speaking people. For example, boy 3 claimed that if he learned nothing of English now he would know nothing later. He, being such a traveller as he was, was worried about being confused and unable to do anything abroad. He concluded that if he learned more he would be able to do something with his knowledge, for example, to speak:

B3.1: on se tärkeä asia.. **jos vaikka ei opi mittään ni sitte isona ei ossaa mittään** (...) senhän takia minä osallistun **ku minä oon tämmönen matkailija** ni sen takia pitää paljon käyttää sielläki sitä.. et se ei oo mikään.. **jos sitte ei ossais mittään** ku joku kyssyy vaikka jotain ni et ymmärrä mitään siitä et **koko ajan menee ihan ymmälle** ja sit siitä ei tuu mitään.. **sitte ku oppii enemmän ni sit sillä voi vaikka puhua** (24)

Furthermore, other perhaps even more important reasons came up. It was thought that learning specific issues was important. Boy 2 pointed out that he learned all kinds of important issues in English classes, such as words by heart:

B2.1: koska siinä **oppii kaikkee tärkeitä**
I: minkälaisia tärkeitä juttuja siinä oppii?
B2.1: **sanoja ulukoo..** ja muutenkin (25)

Boy 3 thought that English was one of the basic skills that one should learn. He considered English more important than Swedish, for example, since it was not that necessary a language to know:

B3.1: on se kato ku isona.. se on aika paljon tarvii.. **se on yks normaali.. perusasia kieli..** että **se on kyllä aika tärkee oppia** ku ei ne muut niin hirveen ruotsit ja nämä oo hirveen tarpeellisia mut se englanti on minusta aika hyvä oppia (26)

Boy 1, in fact, thought that learning itself was the most important reason for learning English. He was of the opinion that all learning was important so that people would develop. Furthermore, he claimed that since English was widely used around the world it was important to know it:

B1.1: no siihen tulevaisuuteen.. että **oppii ja sitte se on sillee että se ihminen kehittyi..** nii että jos mennee jonnekin ulkomaillekin niin on se kieli.. **se on se englanti aika suosittu että sitä käytetään monessa maassa** sitä englantia.. on se aika tärkeä (27)

The same boy reasoned that learning English was something he did for the future. He thought that he would need it in order to know what happened around the world. Moreover, he gave an example from everyday life in which he believed he might need English and that was if he were repairing something and the instructions were in English:

B1.2: **tulevaisuutta vartenha se on tietää vähä maailman menosta**
I: eli tarviit tulevaisuudessa, missä sitä vois tarvita?
B1.2: no **melekein kaikkeen**
I: osaatko antaa jonkun esimerkin?
B1.2: no **jos vaikka korjaat jotain niin siinä oppaassa sitte tarviit** että melkein kaikkeen tarvii (28)

To sum up, the students' motivation to learn English was uncovered from three points of view. First, they were asked about their reasons for studying English. Second, they were asked to consider the need of English now and in the future, and third, they were asked about the importance of learning and knowing English. These points of views were sometimes closely related but nevertheless, they gave insights to the students' thoughts of how they used and how they might use and need English. The students had found several purposes to learn and use English even though it was sometimes regarded only as a mandatory school subject.

6.1.2 Enjoying learning English

When asked about whether they enjoyed or liked learning English the students' answers divided into those who enjoyed learning English and those who did not. The students who found learning satisfying mentioned three different reasons why they

enjoyed learning. The first reason was that all students enjoyed the active nature of language learning; in other words, they were allowed and expected to participate actively during lessons. Boy 3 liked doing exercises, reading, and even exams:

B3.1: no ku on niitä **tehtäviä** ja ku on **kiva lukkee** ja sit on näitä **kaikkee ymmärtämisiiä..** kaikkee.. ja niitä **kokkeitakin on ihan kiva tehä** (29)

Girl 2 pointed out that it was really nice that one was allowed to speak the language that sounded exciting and also it was fun to do exercises. In the second interview, she added that English was easy and that was why it was fun to speak and read it:

G2.1: no se ku se on sillee **jännän kuulosta** ja siinä **saa puhua** ja sitte **tehhä niitä enkun tehtäviä..** se on kivinta (30)

G2.2: joo se on niinku se on niinku sillee **helppoa kieltä** ja sitä on **kiva puhua ja lukkee** ja tällee näin, ihan mukavaa (31)

The second reason for enjoying English learning was that one learned new things, such as words, as boy 2 pointed out:

B2.1: no on työkirjassa hyviä tehtäviä ja **oppii uusia sanoja** (32)

Boy 1 also added that learning English, particularly, made learning fun and one would also need it:

B1.2: kyllä se on ihan kivvaa

I: minkä takia?

B1.2: siinä **oppii sitä englantia ja sitä tarvii ja ossaa uusia sanoja** (33)

The third reason was that knowing English was very satisfying since, as boy 1 claimed, one could understand, for example, words and spoken language in music television:

B1.1: no ku.. siinä saa sellasia jänskiä juttuja että ku vaikka jos jottain kattoo jostaki musiikkiteeveestä ja sitte kyssyy (...) mitä tuo kieli on ja sitte **ku on siinä englannissa nii tietää sitte se että mitä ne puhuu** (34)

There were also two students who did not enjoy learning English. Both of these students had their own reasons for this. Boy 2 had changed his view from the first interview. He mentioned that the reason why he did not like studying English particularly was that learning was boring and long-winded, but he admitted that he had not studied that much as perhaps he should have had:

I: tykkäätkö sää englannin kielen opiskelusta?

B2.2: no **en erityisemmin**

I: minkä takia?

B2.2: no se on sillee vähän **tylsää ja vähän pitkäveteistä**, en minä oo kyllä paljoo englantia opiskellu (35)

Girl 1, on the other hand, had the same opinion in both interviews. She did not like studying English that much because she found it difficult and she did not know how to speak it:

I: tykkäätkö sä englannin kielen opiskelusta?

G1.1: **en**

I: miks sä et tykkää?

G1.1: **vaikeeta**

I: mikä siinä on vaikeeta?

G1.1: **en minä ossaa puhua sitä** (36)

I: tykkäätkö sää englannin kielen opiskelusta?

G1.2: no **jotenkuten, en kovin paljoo**

I: minkä takia?

G1.2: en mä tykkää kun **en mä sitä ossaa** (37)

Overall, the students had quite a positive attitude towards learning English. The ones who enjoyed studying had found some personal significance for learning it. The students who did not like studying English either had not noticed any point in learning, or were affected by their poor success in learning English.

6.1.3 Students' conceptions of themselves as learners of English

The students were asked for their own views of themselves as learners of English. In other words, they were asked to assess themselves and their abilities to learn English. Thus, these were their subjective assessments of themselves as learners. The students divided into fairly good and poor learners. First, some students considered themselves average and quite good learners:

B1.1: hmm.. semmonen **kohtalainen** (38)

B2.1: ..aika hyvä.. **aika hyvä oppimaan** (39)

Boy 3 even mentioned that he had received grade 10 in all word quizzes:

B3.1: no oon minä **ihan hyvä** ku oon minä saanu **aina sanakokkeista kymppejä** ja (...) ihan kohtalainen (40)

The second group of students considered themselves poor learners. These students did not seem to compare themselves to others instead, they thought about themselves and their skills in English. They stated that English was difficult, they had to think what the words meant, and one of these students said that she had not learned it that much:

G2.1: on se vähä **vaikee**.. siis niinku **oppia sitä**.. minä **en oikein ymmärrä** mitä ne sanat tarkoittaa (41)

G3.1: joskus **joutuu vähä miettimään** että mitä se tarkoittaa mut joskus muut ehtii sen aina eka sanoo (42)

G1.1: en tiää.. en minä hyvin ossaa.. **en minä opi paljon** (43)

Moreover, there interestingly seemed to be a clear difference between boys and girls. All boys were fairly confident of themselves as learners and they all belonged to average or good learners. The girls instead were more modest and perhaps a little uncertain of their abilities compared to the boys and therefore, belonged to poor learners even though their grades were not necessarily any lower than the boys'. Girl 2, however, had changed her view of herself to a little more positive one in the second interview by stating that she had learned terribly quickly if the issues were not too difficult:

G2.2: minä **opin hirveen nopeesti kaikki**, joskus on jottain vaikeita asioita ja sitte niitä ei taho oikein millään oppia mutta **jotkut on sitte niin helppoja että ne ossaa heti ja sitte muistaa** ja tällee näin (44)

An interesting point that arose during the analysis was how the students defined themselves as learners. They did not define themselves just by one adjective; in contrast, their answers were more complex and supported by different evidence. The students' were divided into four types. First of all, students defined themselves through active participation and showing their knowledge in the classroom:

B1.2: no ihan hyvä, sitte huonoina päivinä **ei paljo tule osallistuttua** siellä tunneilla (45)

G3.1: joskus joutuu vähä miettimään että mitä se tarkoittaa mut **joskus muut ehtii sen aina eka sanoo** (46)

Second, they defined themselves through their skills and abilities in English:

G1.2: hah **en minä sitä ossaa kunnolla** (47)

Third, the students thought of learning and even more specifically understanding and remembering when they defined themselves. They also considered the speed of learning when assessing themselves:

G2.1: on se vähä **vaikee.. siis niinku oppia** sitä.. minä **en oikein ymmärrä** mitä ne sanat tarkoittaa (48)

G2.2: minä **opin hirveen nopeesti** kaikki, joskus on jottain vaikeita asioita ja sitte niitä **ei taho oikein millään oppia** mutta jotkut on sitte niin helppoja että ne **ossaa heti ja sitte muistaa** ja tälle näin (49)

Fourth, they defined themselves based on the grade they had received:

B3.1: no oon minä ihan hyvä ku **oon minä saanu aina sanakokkeista kymppejä** ja (...) ihan kohtalainen (50)

To sum up the students defined themselves as learners from various points of views. Nevertheless, their definitions were quite narrow and it seemed that it was fairly difficult for them to assess themselves as learners. This might have been the first time they had to think about it aloud. However, it was pleasing to see that only one student defined himself based on the grade. All the others relied on their own assessments and experiences.

6.1.4 Students' feelings about English

The students' feelings about English and learning it were conveyed from several points of views. They were asked to describe their feelings, first, in the English classroom and then, when they used English while speaking, writing, listening, and reading. It should be pointed out that although boy 2 answered all the questions he was unable to specify his feelings and usually he contented to say that the feeling varied without giving any reasons for it. His behaviour is convergent with his diagnosis of Asperger syndrome in which the person is unable to understand the messages and demands of social interaction and has difficulties in non-verbal communication and s/he may have difficulties in interpreting his/her own feelings (Autismi- ja Aspergerliitto 2006). Thus, in this section his answers are often missing.

In the classroom

The students' feelings in the English classroom did not differ much from other classes. For the most parts, the students' feelings varied. Boy 2 said that sometimes he had a good feeling in the classroom and sometimes he did not, and he was unable to specify it anymore than that:

B2.2: **joskus hyvä joskus ei**
 I: milloin on hyvä?
 B2.2: en minä sitäkään ossaa tarkemmin sanoa
 I: niin että se vaihtelee
 B2.2: ehkä (51)

Girl 1 pointed out that sometimes she enjoyed being in the English classroom but sometimes she did not like it. She mentioned that it was annoying when she had not done her homework or did not know how to do exercises:

G1.2: **ihan kivalta, joskus vähä ärsyttää** siellä tunneilla
 I: mikä se ärsyttävä juttu on?
 G1.2: kun **en oo tehny läksyjä ja niitä tehtäviä en ossaa** (52)

Boy 1, on the one hand, had not noticed any difference compared to other classes. He thought that he felt normal when being in the English classroom and there was nothing special or different about it:

B1.2: ihan **normaalille** se tuntuu **ei siinä mitään erityistä**
 I: ei eroa muista tunneista?
 B1.2: ei sillee hirveesti (53)

Girl 2, in contrast, had noticed some differences compared to other classes. She was of the opinion that she felt free during English classes, for instance, it would not matter if she did not know the right answer. In other words, mistakes were allowed and accepted. She also pointed out that she was allowed to speak in English classrooms. She thought it would be frustrating if she did not know English and thus, should keep quiet in classes. She also added that there was peace and quiet in English classes and there were no one to disturb her and therefore, she enjoyed being in English classes:

G2.2: **ihan hauskalta**
 I: minkä takia?
 G2.2: ne on **hauskoja ne sanat** ja sitte siellä on nii **kiva ku ossaa puhua** sitä englantia ni sitä on kiva aina puhua sitä enkkua ja **sitte jos ei ossaa nii sitte on inhottava ku pittää vaa olla hiljaa tunnilla** jos ei ossaa mittää ja sitte **siellä voi ihan**

vappaasti olla ja ei haittaa vaikka mennee väärin, siellä on ihan niinku sellane niinku **vappaan olonen ku saa tällee vastata ihan vappaasti** että saa **ihan rauhassa** vastata ja **kukkaan ei oo vieressä hälisemässä** ja tällee näin ni siellä on ihan kiva olla siellä tunnilla (54)

Speaking in English

Speaking in English raised a variety of feelings in the students. Boy 1 thought it was a bit odd and funny to speak in English since he had not used English like that before:

B1.1: no **vähän outoo puhua**

I: minkä takia se on outoo?

B1.1: noku **ei oo ikinä sillee puhunu se on vähän sellasta hassua** (55)

He also thought that he was required to think before speaking when using English:

B1.2: iha semmostahan se aina on **pittää sitä aina miettiä sitä mitä puhus** (56)

Girl 1 had mixed feelings about speaking in English. She thought that it was partially easy and difficult and sometimes it was fun and sometimes a little boring. She claimed that concentration had an effect on her feelings and therefore, when she concentrated it was easier. The person she was speaking with did not matter though:

G1.1: en tiää... **osittain helppoo ja vaikeeta**

I: millon se on helppoo? onko tilanteita jollon se on helpompaa?

G1.1: **jos vaikka keskittyy**

I: millos se on vaikeempaa?

G1.1: **ku ei keskity**

I: onkos sillä väliä kenen kanssa puhuu?

G1.1: ei (57)

G1.2: en tiää **ihan kivalta joskus vähän tylsältä** (58)

Girl 2 considered speaking in English fun. The reasons she mentioned were that she learned new words and was able to use them when necessary. She seemed to be very enthusiastic about using English since she used it at home, for example, when being alone and while reading a book aloud. She also gave an example of how she used English with her mother although she did not speak English:

G2.1: se on **kivvaa**

I: miks se on kivvaa?

G2.1: ku siinä **oppii eri sanoja** ja sit jos tulee.. **lähtee** vaikka jonnekin **ulkomaille ja pittää puhua englantia nii ossaa sitte puhua toiselle** (59)

G2.2: **kivalta**, se on, minä tykkään englannista ihan hirveesti ku **sitä on mukava puhua mää aina kotonakkii yksin puhun englantia tai sitten luen kirjaa** tai I: minkälaisia kirjoja? Onks sulla englanninkielisiä kirjoja?

G2.2: ei oo, ylleensä mää niinku **vaan puhun englanniks ja sitte äitille aina puhun**, äiti ei kyllä tykkää siitä kauheesti ku se ei puhu englantia ja sitte ku se ei tajua siitä mittää nii se on aina vähä sillee että yksin kyllä tykkään puhua englantia et se on ihan mukavaa (60)

Primarily the students seemed to have quite positive feelings about speaking in English. The factors that affected their feelings were, first, their level of concentration, and thus, the preparation of speaking, that was, thinking before speaking, and, second, their own skills in speaking in English. Indeed, learning and knowing English seemed to increase their positive feelings about using English as a means of communication.

Writing in English

Feelings about writing seemed to divide the students in two groups. Writing was difficult for the first group of students and therefore their feelings about it were a little confused. Girl 2 mentioned that it was difficult for her to write in English, for instance, she was unable to spell some words. She also said that writing was her weakness in English:

G1.2: **vähän vaikeelta varsinkin kun ei ossaa kirjottaa jottain sanaa** (61)

G2.2: **siinä se vaikeus onkin ku en oikein ossaa kirjottaa** ni se on sitte vähä se **heikkous siinä englannissa** ku en ossaa kirjottaa kunnolla (62)

Boy 2 had also difficulties in writing and this reflected in his feelings. He was worried about mistakes he might make:

B2.2: **kirjoittaminen on hirveän vaikeeta mulle**, vaikeimmasta päästä

I: minkä takia se kirjoittaminen on vaikeeta?

B2.2: no se **ossaako kirjottaa lauseita oikein**, kyllä mä ossaan kirjoittaa jotain englannin lauseita oikein mut. (63)

However, in the first interview boy 2 had stated that he felt quite good when writing. The reason he mentioned was that he was able to do it all on his own and he did not need to ask help all the time. This independence made him feel good:

B2.1: **ihan hyvältä**

I: minkä takia se tuntuu hyvälle?

B2.1: **ettei aina tarvii kysyä jottain vaan etsii sanastosta**

I: nii että voi ihan ite selvittää sen?

B2.1: mm (64)

For the second group of students writing was quite easy. Girl 1 and boy 1 both had no trouble with it at the moment at least:

G1.1: no on **se ihan heleppoo** (65)

B1.2: noo tällä **hetkellä se on aika helppoa** (66)

Boy 1 said that for him it was easier to remember the letters and words by heart than earlier. He also thought that in writing he was more able to put his words right than in speaking:

I: minkä takia se on helppoa?

B1.2: no kun **muistaa niitä kirjaimia tai niitä sanoja ossaa ulukoo**

I: mites jos vertaat sitä puhumista ja kirjottamista niin mikä niissä on erona?

B1.2: no siinä pystyy siinä **kirjottamisessa ni pystyy korjaamaan sen lauseen jos se on väärin**

I: puheessako ei pysty?

B1.2: niin tai en tiää pystyyhän sen siinäkin tekemään (67)

Reading in English

Reading in English did not divide the students' feelings as much as writing. Reading was considered fun and quite nice although the students had not read any other books than those used in English lessons. Girl 2 thought that reading English textbooks was nice:

G2.2: sekkii on **ihan mukavaa** mut en oo kyllä koskaan lukenu mittää englantiilaista kirjaa mutta, mukavaa se on, **mitä kirjasta oon aina lukenu nii koulukirjasta** (68)

Boy 2 said that reading English books was not that interesting. He felt it was long-winded and English books were boring. He, however, thought that reading other books than those used in English lessons might be different:

B2.2: no se kun **ei se englannin lukeminen juuri kiinnosta**

I: minkä takia se ei kiinnosta?

B2.2: kun se on **pitkäveteistä**, englannin lukeminen

I: onko englannin kielen kirjat sellaisia?

B2.2: joo

I: **entäs jos lukis jotain muuta kuin oppikirjoja?**

B2.2: **ehkä sitten vois**

I: oletko sä lukenu jotain muutan englanniks kuin koulukirjoja?

B2.2: no enpä oikeastaan (69)

Boy 1 thought that reading was fun although he too had not read any other books than schoolbooks. Still, he pointed out that he had read texts in English while surfing on the Internet:

B1.2: no sekkiin **on kivvaa**
 I: luetko sä muita kirjoja muuta kuin niitä oppikirjoja?
 B1.2: no enpä muuta mutta **netissä** sitten luen (70)

Girl 1 had again mixed feelings. She felt that reading and reading comprehension was sometimes difficult and sometimes a little easier if she knew how to pronounce words:

G1.2: **joskus vähän vaikeelta ja joskus vähä helpolta jos niitä sanoja ossaa ääntää** (71)

Listening in English

Listening raised only positive feelings in the students. Boy 1 mentioned that listening in English was fun and he heard English being spoken on television. Thus, it was not only connected to the school environment:

B1.2: no onhan se **kivvaa**
 I: entäs englanninkielen kuuntelu tuleeko sitä muualla kuin täällä koulussa?
 B1.2: no kyllähän sitä aina **joskus telkkarista kuuntelee** (72)

Girl 2 also enjoyed listening and she mentioned that she liked to listen to music in which the lyrics were in English. She thought it was nice to hear how the words were pronounced and it was easier for her to understand what was said when it was sung:

G2.2: sekkii on hirveen **mää kuuntelen sillee niinku vaan ku lauletaan englanniks ja se on helppoo ymmärtää sen ku ne laulaa** ni sit kuunteleminen on **ihan mukavaa**
 I: joo, mikä siinä englanniks kuuntelemisessa on mukavaa?
 G2.2: hmm.
 I: jos kuuntelet vaikka musiikkia englanniks niin mikä siinä on mukavaa?
 G2.2: **se miten ne lausutaan ja se on helppoo sitte kuunnella sitä** (73)

Girl 1, however, had noticed that she liked to listen in English since while listening, she learned new words and in addition, she learned how to pronounce them. Listening was an effective way of learning for her then:

G1.2: en minä tiä **ihan kiva oppii ainakin sanoja kuuntelemaan ja ääntämään** niitä sanoja (74)

All in all, the students' feelings about learning and studying English were quite positive. Their feelings in the English classroom did not differ much from any other classes. Their feelings about using English in speaking and writing varied the most. Reading and listening provoked mainly or only positive feelings. There was no frustration and feeling of failure in any of the aspects and that was a truly positive finding. Only writing caused some doubtful feelings in some students. They seemed to be a little worried how they might succeed but still they had not given up.

6.1.5 Need for further practice

In both the interviews, the students were asked to mention issues that they needed further practice in. The most frequently stated issue was comprehension. Need for further practice in comprehension was often expressed indirectly but the underlying need was usually difficulty to understand. Girl 1 hoped that she would receive further practice on understanding written language:

G1.1: ehkä.. **että ymmärtäisin paljon paremmin ku mitä lukkee** (75)

Girl 3 was more specific and said that she would need help in translating words in Finnish:

G3.1: ehkä siinä **sanojen suomennetuksi**.. englantilainen sana suomennetuksi (76)

Girl 2 pointed out that it was not enough to be able to read texts. She needed to know how to pronounce words and understand what she read. She gave an example that sometimes she had read without understanding what she had just said:

G2.2: ne verbit on ja sitte on just tämä **lukeminen ja ymmärtäminen**

I: mikä siinä lukemisessa on vaikeeta?

G2.2: joskus ne **sanat on sillee niin että niitä ei ymmärrä ja sitte niitä ei ossaa lausua** ja ku se sitä lukkee niin sitte joskus tullee semmosia että **en ymmärrä mitä mä luen ja joskus on että mä en ees ymmärrä mitä mä sanon** ja tällee näin (77)

Boy 3 mentioned that he would need further practice in listening comprehension. He claimed that he did not always know what the other person was saying:

B3.1: no on ne kaikki ihan (...) mä tarviin siinä.. ei siinä kirjottaminen on ihan hyvä mutta vois siinä.. puhuminenki on iha hyvä.. mut sitte **se kuunt. se sanojen ymmärtäminen** se vois kyllä vähä harjotella enemmän

B3.1: niin kato että **niinku joku puhuu nii sitä ei aina ihan tiiä että mitä se sanoo** (...) (78)

Writing was difficult for most of the students in the first interview. Further practice was needed in writing words, sentences, and stories. In other words, in everything related to writing. Both boy 1 and girl 2 claimed they needed help in writing:

B1.1: siinä **lauseiden tota kirjoittamisessa**
I: joo. onkos muita?
B1.1: mm.. siinä **sanojen kirjoittamisessa** (79)

G2.1: siinä **kirjoittamisessa**
I: onkos muita (missä tarvitset harjoittelua)?
G2.1: tossa **tarinan kirjoittamisessa ja lauseiden kirjoittamisessa ja tuo kirjoittaminen** (80)

In addition to writing, girl 3 had also trouble learning pronunciation:

G3.1: **lauseiden kirjoittamisessa ja tarinoiden kirjoittamisessa ja ääntämisessä** (81)

Pronunciation caused difficulties to the other students, too. In fact, in the second interview, pronunciation was emphasized more than in the first interview. Boy 1 considered words difficult to pronounce:

B1.2: ehkä **lausunnassa**
I: minkä takia siinä?
B1.2: **aika vaikeeta** on tuo lausua niitä sanoja (82)

Girl 1, however, needed more practice in reading. She had trouble with reading. Pronunciation made long sentences difficult:

G1.2: en minä tiiä varmaan niissä **lukemisessa** ja näissä
I: miks lukemisessa?
G1.2: **en minä kunnolla ossaa pitkiä lauseita lukkee enkä ossaa niitä ääntääkään**
I: mikä on niissä pitkissä lauseissa vaikeinta? Mikä tekee niistä vaikeita?
G1.2: **en määhän ossaa lausua niitä kunnolla** (83)

A new target of practice was mentioned in the second interviews. Boy 2 regarded homework as his object of further training. He was not interested in doing his homework because he considered it boring:

B2.2: ehkä niissä englannin kirjan **läksyjen tekemisessä** kun niitä ei koskaan huvita tehdä
I: minkä takia ne ei huvita?
B2.2: no ne on **sellasia tylsiä, tylsän puoleisempia** (84)

To summarize, above all the students needed further practice in comprehension. This was true in both the interviews. Otherwise, the two interviews had quite different results. In the first interview, writing was the most frequently stated issues while in the second interview pronunciation was often brought up. One reason for these differences might be that the objectives and thus the tasks differ in different grades.

6.1.6 Difficulties in learning English

The students' difficulties in learning English were conveyed by asking them for their strengths and weaknesses in learning English. In the first interview, they were given a list of all the aspects covering language learning (See appendix...) but in the second interview, no lists were given. The students had difficulties in all aspects of the language including remembering, writing, listening and reading comprehension, and pronunciation. These sections are discussed in the order of frequency.

Remembering

The biggest difficulty for the students was remembering. This seemed to be the cause of many other difficulties. Most of all it affected writing. The effect was seen in all the levels of writing, that is, in word and sentence level. Girl 2 is a good example of this difficulty. She had to check at least a couple of letters in the example on the black board. The longer the word the more difficult writing became and then she had to check almost all the letters:

I: mikä siinä kirjottamisessa on kaikkein vaikeinta?

G2.1: no se **ku pitää muistaa** ne.. ku **ylleensä mää kirjotan nii mun pitää aina kahtoo** aina.. ku on **aina joku pari kirjainta siis kaks kirjainta.. pitää kahtoo aina taululle ku unohan ne kirjaimet ku ei oikeen muista**

I: entäs jos on joku pidempi sana? onko se vaikeempi?

G2.1: on se vaikee ku **pitää kahtoo aina taululle ja sitte miettiä että tullee kohan siihen tuo kirjain tai tuo** (85)

The same girl mentioned that the lack of letter – sound correspondence in English had also an effect on writing. She might have remembered the pronunciation of a word but spelling was then more difficult:

I: mikä on kaikkein vaikeinta englannin kielen oppimisessa?

G2.2: se **kirjoittaminen**

I: mikä siinä kirjoittamisessa on?

G2.2: noku **ei muista niitä sanoja ja sitte muistaa sen ääntämisen mut sitte ei muista miten se kirjoitetaan kun se kirjoitetaan erilailla** se mulle on se kirjoittaminen kaikkein vaikeinta (86)

Boy 1 pointed out that difficulty to remember words affected writing in the sentence level, too. He mentioned that writing sentences could be difficult for him if he had to remember some words by heart:

I: no entäs sitten lauseiden kirjoittaminen?

B1.1: se **voi olla vähän vaikeeta jos sillee pittää että ulkoo muistaa jottain sanoja** (...)

I: siinä lauseiden kirjoittamisessa se ulkoa muistaminen on siis vaikeeta?

B1.1: on se vähän sillee (87)

In addition to writing, difficulties in remembering affected other aspects of language learning. Boy 3 stated that he had difficulties in remembering what was said. He seemed truly annoyed about the problem since if the other person was speaking fast he was unable to remember the words spoken earlier. He was frustrated with this difficulty:

I: mitkä on kaikkein vaikeimpia asioita englannin kielen oppimisessa?

B3.1: no on ne kaikki iha hyviä mutta **se on minusta vähä ärsyttävää että se jos vaikka toinen puhuu ja sit se mennee aina ohi se.. ku se puhuu niin nopeesti ni mennee ne aikasemmat sanat iha ohitse.. se minua ärsyttää ku minä en enää muista niitä** (88)

Writing

The students mentioned other difficulties in writing. The letters often caused trouble for them. Girl 1 stated that writing sentences was difficult because words were often spelled wrongly:

I: entäs minkä takia se tarinoitten kirjoittaminen on vaikeeta?

G1.1: ku **en minä ossaa niitä lauseita kirjottaa aina oikein**

I: mikä niissä menee väärin?

G1.1: **kirjaimet** (89)

Boy 3, on the other hand, pointed out that the number of letters in a word caused sometimes difficulties for him. He said that there could be too many letters or too few, for example, the word *coffee* might be written with only one letter *f* even though he knew the correct spelling:

B3.1: sitten tuo **kirjoittaminen..** no ei siinäkään mittään ongelmia oikeastaan ole.. välillä joskus voi tulla..

I: minkälaisia ongelmia?

B3.1: no jos on vaikka joku.. **sillee siinä on vähä liikaa kirjaimia** esimerkiks joku.. sanotaan vaikka **coffee niin siihen voi tulla vaikka yks äffä.. vaikka se on kahella** (90)

Boy 1 claimed that he might be confused with the order of letters and words. The letters could be in the wrong order or the word could be in the wrong place in a sentence. That was why he thought writing was the most difficult aspect of learning English:

I: mikä siinä (sanojen kirjoittamisessa) on vaikeeta?

B1.1: mm.. sitä että **jos pittää laittaa monta sanaa niin voi olla että laittaa vahingossa väärän sanan siihen riville tai sitten voi sekottaa ne kirjaimet..**

I: joo. mitkäs asiat on sun mielestä kaikkein vaikeimpia englannin kielen oppimisessa?

B1.1: **se lauseiden kirjoittaminen ja se kirjoittaminen** (91)

Writing caused other kinds of difficulties as well. Girl 1 thought that writing stories was difficult since she did not know what to write. In other words, creativity was difficult for her:

I: entäs tarinoiden kirjoittaminen?

G1.1: se on **vaikeeta**

I: minkä takia se on vaikeeta?

G1.1: **en minä keksi mitään** (...) (92)

Boy 3 mentioned that while writing grammar sometimes caused difficulties for him. In addition to mistakes in spelling words, he said articles and shortened forms of words (such as *I'm*) were difficult for him. Sometimes the beginning of a word might be missing, too:

B3.1: sitte toi lauseiden muodostaminen.. no se kyllä vois vähä harjotusta **ei ne aina mee oikein että kirjottaa vaikka jonkun pitkän sanan nii siinä voi olla vähän virheitä..** kyllä mä tarviin siihen harjotusta

I: just että kaikki kirjaimet on paikoillaan?

B3.1: niin ja sit tulee se että **millon tulee se the ja se tulee se I'm ja tälle.. se alku se voi joskus puuttua** (93)

Girl 2 had a suggestion how the difficulty to write could be overcome. The teacher sometimes helped the students in exams by showing how a word was pronounced.

Girl 2 was of the opinion that this made understanding and writing the word easier:

I: minkälaiset tehtävät on niitä vaikeita tehtäviä

G2.1: no ne lauseet ja sit on joskus jos on että pittää kirjottaa jottain esim jos on niinku joku semmonen sana mikä puuttuu sana välistä ni sekin on aika vaikee.. (...) **opettaja** ei niinku isossa kokkeessa ni **se joskus aina auttaa meitä.. jos ei vaikka tiiä miten se sana lausutaan niin se yleensä auttaa se mitenkä se lausutaan..**

I: onko se sitte helpompi ymmärtää se sana ku kuulee sen?

G2.1: **nii sillee miten se lausutaan englanniks..** jos on vaikka sillee kissa.. tai sillee niinku englanniks joku vaikee sana niin se sannoo aina miten se lausutaan (94)

Listening and reading comprehension

Comprehension caused also difficulties for the students. Troubles in listening comprehension were more common than in reading comprehension. The speed of speech affected comprehension the most. Girl 2 mentioned that the difficult words used by the teacher had an effect on comprehension but in addition, the speed made understanding even more difficult. She did not have enough time to figure out the words heard:

I: entäs kuullun ymmärtäminen (onko vaikeaa)? jos opettaja puhuu vaikka englanniks?

G2.1: no kyllä mä sieltä niinku **jottain sanoja ymmärrän ja sitte jotkut on vaikeempia**

I: no entäs jos kuuntelette nauhalta jotakin?

G2.1: sekin on aika vaikeeta ku **se puhuu joskus puhuu niin nopeesti nii ei oikein saa selvää mitä se sannoo** (95)

Boy 3 had the same kind of difficulty as girl 2 above. He could not understand what he heard if it was said quickly:

B3.1: **(kuullun) ymmärtäminen..** kyllä minä ymmärrän sen aika hyvin sen mitä siinä tajutaan (sanotaan) mut **jos se on nopee nii sitte siitä ei oikeen kerkee saaha selvää** (96)

Girl 2 pointed out a related aspect. She was annoyed that her difficulty to understand spoken language was emphasized and highlighted by repeated rewinding of the tape recorder. The teacher had to rewind the tape back to the beginning and this took some time. Thus, all this seemed to annoy the students and make them feel unsuccessful:

I: miks se kuuntelu on vaikeeta?

G2.2: kun **ne puhuu niin nopeesti ja sitte niitä sanoja ei ymmärrä kun ne sannoo ne ihan erilailla, niin nopeempaa**, ku ei joskus ymmärrä niitä sanoja ja sitte sitä mitä ne sannoo siinä **mennee aina ihan suu auki jää toljottamaan ku tälle näin mitähän siinä sanotaan ja sitte pittää aina kelata uuestaan ja sitte kuunnella uuestaan ja siinä se on sitte ärsyttävää** (97)

Girl 1 mentioned that listening comprehension was difficult because she could not understand all sentences, unlike girl 2 above, who thought difficult words were the cause. Girl 1 claimed that she did not know what sentences meant:

I: entäs kuullun ymmärtäminen (onko helppoa)?

G1.1: **ei**

I: mikä tekee kuullun ymmärtämisestä vaikean?

G1.1: **en minä sitä ossaa ku en minä ossaa ees kaikkia lauseita ymmärtää.. en tiää että mitä ne tarkoittaa** (98)

Girl 3 mentioned a rather interesting and a little unclear issue that made listening comprehension easier for her. She said that listening to spoken language on tape was easier if there were some sounds in the background:

I: mallia sieltä. entäs kuullun ymmärtäminen (onko se helppoa)? vaikka opettajan kuunteleminen

G3.1: **ei oo kauheen helppoo**

I: entäs jos kasetilta kuunteleminen?

G3.1: **on se vähän jos siinä taustalla kuuluu jotain muutakin** (99)

Reading comprehension caused also difficulties but not to as many students as listening comprehension. Girl 3 claimed that if she read something she might not know what it meant:

I: mikä siinä luetun ymmärtämisessä on vaikeeta?

G3.1: **jos luen niin en ehkä tiää mitä se tarkoittaa** (100)

Girl 2 explained her difficulty more specifically. She mentioned that she could not understand a word and thus, she did not know how to pronounce it. On the other hand, she was able to read something aloud fluently without understanding what she had just said:

I: mikä siinä lukemisessa on vaikeeta?

G2.2: joskus ne **sanat on sillee niin että niitä ei ymmärrä ja sitte niitä ei ossaa lausua** ja ku se sitä lukkee niin sitte **joskus tullee semmosia että en ymmärrä mitä mä luen** ja **joskus on että mä en ees ymmärrä mitä mä sanon** ja tälle näin (101)

Speaking and pronunciation

The students emphasized difficulties in speaking and pronunciation in the second interview. Girl 1 had difficulties relying on her own skills in pronunciation. She was of the opinion that she could never get it right:

I: entäs ääntäminen?

G1.1: **vähän vaikeeta**

I: minkä takia se ääntäminen on vaikeeta?

G1.1: **en minä ossaa sitä kunnolla ääntää.. se mennee aina väärin** (102)

Boy 2 thought that having a conversation in English was something he did not understand. He was able to answer questions posed by the teacher but having a conversation with his partner was too difficult:

I: entäs keskusteleminen (onko se vaikeaa)?

B2.1: no **sitä mä en tajuu**

I: esimerkiksi jos opettaja kysyy jotain niin osaatko sä vastata siihen?

B2.1: **osaan**

I: entäs jos pareittain pitäis keskustella niin..?

B2.1: no **siitä mä en tiää** (103)

Boy 1, however, thought that having a conversation with his partner would be quite easy if his partner was aware that he might make some mistakes:

I: entäs jos parin kanssa pitäis keskustella niin onko se helppoo?

B1.1: no on se sillee **jos se kaverei tietää että minä voi olla että tulee pikkusia virheitä että on helppoo..** (104)

Exams

In the second interview, a new difficulty, exams, was mentioned. Exams were difficult for boy 1 because as he mentioned, if he did not study for them, they would be a strain on him. He also thought that the exam questions were quite difficult:

B1.2: no ehkä **kokkeet**

I: mikä niissä kokeissa?

B1.2: no sillee **jos ei lue ni sitä varten on paineita sitte on aika vaikeita kysymyksiä** (105)

Boy 2 also thought that studying for exams was the most difficult issue in learning English. He was, however, unable to give a rational explanation for it:

B2.2: no ehkä **kokkeisiin lukeminen**

I: minkä takia se on vaikeeta?

B2.2: no ku, **ei se niin vaativa oo mut kyllä se jonkun verran vaikeeta on**

I: onko se että joutuu yksin tekemään?

B2.2: no en minä nyt tiää (106)

To summarize, the difficulties in learning English included all aspects of the language. Difficulties in remembering, however, were emphasized a great deal. In addition, it seemed to differ from the other aspects in its effects. Difficulties in remembering affected language learning more widely and were the underlying cause for other difficulties. The lack of sound-grapheme correspondence in English language adds to the difficulties in remembering since the students are required to

learn two different things about words, that is, spelling and pronunciation. All the students learning English face this challenge, but it is even more obvious and visible with dysphatic students.

6.2 Beliefs about learning English

Beliefs about learning English include five aspects of the students' skills in English. All of these are evaluated by the students themselves. First, the students described the ways they should study English. Second, the students were asked about the ways they studied English in different kinds of environments. Third, the students' thoughts of exercises are discussed from several viewpoints. Fourth, the students' notions about English language are viewed. Last, the students considered the possible changes in their learning.

6.2.1 Ways to learn English – what should the students do?

To uncover the different ways to learn English the students were asked what they should do to learn it. The students made a number of points. First, they answered that they should practice. The meaning and definition of this term was diverse; however, it seemed to be sometimes a little unclear for the students. Girl 2 stated that she should practice a couple of hours every day. She should practice the issue that was difficult for her, and that was writing. This way she thought she would learn English:

G2.2: harjottelu päivässä vaikka pari tuntia harjottellee englantia niin sitte joka päivä vaikka pari tuntia, niin sehän se ois se paras keino harjotella sitä vaikeeta ja sitä kirjottamista niin eiköhän se auta siihen että oppis sen (107)

Boy 2 claimed that practicing meant studying words. He thought that he should practice the meaning of words from the vocabulary:

B2.1: harjotella

I: millä tavalla sun pitäs harjotella?

B2.1: harjotella sieltä **sanastosta että mitä tarkoittaa mitäkin** (108)

Boy 1 claimed that in order to learn English he should spend more time on practicing English. He was of the opinion that to learn English he had to work for it:

B1.1: no **pitäs harjotella aina enemmän** ja sitte pitäs **antaa aikaa sille englannille** että **jos halluu oppia nii sitä pittää tehdä töitä** (109)

Second, the students thought that their behaviour in the classroom affected their learning of English. Girl 1 thought that in addition to practicing she should listen, be quiet, and behave herself in the classroom:

G1.2: no **harjotella kunnolla ja kuunnella tunnilla ja olla kunnolla ja opiskella ahkerasti**

I: mitä se tarkoittaa että opiskellee ahkerasti?

G1.2: että **kunnolla opiskellee ja ei puhu tunneilla** (110)

Boy 2 mentioned that he should perhaps study more. When asked what was hindering his studies he stated that he felt a little confused about himself and thus homework did not interest him at all:

B2.2: **opiskella vähä enemmän**, luulisin

I: mikä siinä opiskelun esteenä on?

B2.2: **itekin on vähä sekava, oon vähän sekasin että ei millään huvita läksyt ja** hmm niin (111)

Girl 3 thought that a way of practicing was attending remedial instruction and following the teaching in the classroom:

G3.1: **harjotella sitä**

I: onko jotakin keino että millä tavalla harjotella?

G3.1: **käydä tukioetuksessa.. seurata tunnilla** (112)

Boy 1 gave an example of how the behaviour in the classroom effected on learning. He claimed that listening in the classroom was terribly important since if he was just looking elsewhere he would not know what was assigned as homework exercises or what the teacher said:

I: entäs tunnilla kuunteleminen?

B1.1: se on **hirveen tärkeätä jos sää vaan katot muualle niin et sää tiiä mitä**

läksyjä etkä tiiä mitä sulle tulee tehtäväks ja mitä se ope sanoo (113)

Boy 1 thought that active participation in the classroom was also important. He stated that if he stayed quiet the teacher would not know whether he had done his homework and what grade to give him in the school report:

I: entäs onko tunnilla aktiivisesti osallistuminen tärkeätä?

B1.1: onhan se **jos on hiljaa niin eihän se ope tiiä että ootko sinä tehny läksyjä ja** **mitä se antaa sulle todistukseen sen arvosanan** (114)

Boy 3 was of the same opinion as boy 1: classroom participation was important. He, however, thought that he did not know answers to the questions posed by the teacher every time but if he knew, he ought to raise his hand then. He mentioned that he had had quite a job in answering but accordingly he had learned well:

B3.1: no **jos tietää eihän ne aina kaikki voi sillee tietää sitä vastausta (...)** on **pittää siellä** kyllä ihan varmasti.. **aika paljon pitää viitata.. minullakin on ollu aika paljon sitä urakkaa tässä että kyllä mää oon oppinu hyvin** ku mulla meni viime kerralla ni mä sain todistuksesta seiskan ja kaks vuotta sitten sain kasin nii on mulla kyllä sujunu paljon paremmin tämä (115)

Third, reading and writing were considered important ways to learn English. Girl 2 thought that she should read more and then practice writing. She should, for example, first read a word and then try to remember its spelling, and thus practice English:

G2.1: no niiku **lukkee enemmän ja sitte harjotella kirjottamaan** sillee vaikka **joku sana lukkee ja koettaa muistaa se mitenkä se kirjotetaan ja sillee harjotella** (116)

Boy 3 pointed out that he should read a lot and then do exercises. If there were exams, he should study for them a lot and try his best:

B3.1: no **paljon lukkee** ja sitte **tehhä niitä tehtäviä ja jos on kokkeet nii niihinkin paljon lukkee ja yrittää parhaansa** (117)

In the second interview, the students were asked about the skills that they needed to learn English. This seemed to be quite a difficult question but still the students gave very good answers. Boy 1 mentioned that he needed reading and writing skills to learn English. He thought that reading steadily was important so that he would not just quickly slapdash it:

B1.2: no siitä **että ossaa lukkee hyvin ja että kirjoitus onnistuu** siinähan se on I: minkä takia lukeminen?
B1.2: no että **ossais sitä lukkee että ei hutasis että ossais sitä tasasesti lukkee** (118)

Boy 2 thought that he needed speaking and writing skills to learn English:

B2.2: ehkä **puhumista ja kirjoittamista** ja sitten sen semmosta (119)

Girl 2 emphasized patience in learning. She needed patience to practice over and over the difficult points, for example, how to spell words. The patience to practice

helped her to learn and remember. If she lacked patience, she would usually give in and then she would never learn:

G2.2: kärsivällisyyttä, monneen kertaan harjottellee se asian mitä ei ossaa ja sitte monneen kertaan kirjottaa sanat ja sekkii auttaa siihen muistamiseen, eniten on se kärsivällisyys kun minulla ei sitä kärsivällisyyttä oikein oo niin sitä pitäs kyllä vähän, siihen jos jottain ruppee tekemään nii sitte jos se ei onnistu niin ylleensä mää luovutan helposti, sen jättää siihen ja sitte sitä ei opi koskaan (120)

All in all the students claimed that in order to learn English they should practice a lot. Practicing was regarded as reading and studying words, practicing difficult issues, writing, reading, and listening and participating in the classroom. Practicing was emphasized although the students were actually able to name only a few specific ways how to do so. The practicing of words was also highlighted. Nevertheless, it was delightful to find out that some of the students thought that in addition to giving time and effort, trying one's best and patience were important.

6.2.2 Learning strategies – what are the students actually doing?

Learning strategies and what actions the students are actually taking to learn English were considered from several points of views. The aspects of learning at school, learning outside the school, studying words and for exams, and ways to cope with too difficult, and too easy exercises were all covered.

Learning at school

When asked what the students did during lessons the most frequent answer was doing exercises. Boy 1 pointed out that he read, answered the teacher's questions, and translated texts. However, most of all he did exercises of the textbook and workbook:

B1.1: luen ja sitte jos ope kyssyy läksyä ja pittää suomentaa niitä kirjasta niitä tehtäviä ja tehä tehtäviä siitä työkirjasta (121)

Girl 1 mentioned that she also did exercises. Sometimes she talked with other students but she added quickly that she did exercises while she spoke:

G1.1: joskus teen tehtäviä.. ja jos joskus puhun nii kyllä mää teen tehtäviä samanaikaisesti (122)

Concentration seemed to be difficult for some students. The level of concentration varied and it had an effect on their behaviour in the classroom. Boy 2 and girl 1 claimed they sometimes followed the instruction and sometimes they did not:

B2.1: **välillä seuraan ja välillä en** (haukotus) (123)

G1.2: **joskus saatan puhua ja joskus saatan opiskella** (124)

Girl 2 admitted that sometimes she too did not concentrate on learning. She even mentioned that sometimes she and her friend had messed with their mobile phones but nowadays the use of them was forbidden in the classrooms because of the disturbance they caused. After that, she had begun to concentrate and listen to the teacher. She noted that now she participated actively by listening and answering:

G2.1: **joskus pälpätän kavereitten kanssa tai sitte kuuntelen opettajaa** ja sitte joskus ku on vähä sillee.. ni kaverin kanssa kännyköitä rämplätään siellä **ja sitte nykyään ei saa enää viiä niitä sinne** ku se on häiriköiny niin paljo tuntia.. ja **sitte on ruvennu kuuntelemaan opettajaa.. mitä se puhuu ja vastaamaan ja viittaamaan** ja.. siinäpä ne (125)

In the second interview, girl 2 continued that listening in the classroom made her learning of English easier. She claimed that listening, concentrating on instructions, and participating in teaching had helped her to remember the issues and learn better:

G2.2: **kuuntelen tunnilla ni se auttaa helposti jos kuuntelee tunnit nii sit se jää paremmin mieleen ja ei tee omiaan tunnilla ja sit osallistuu kaikkiin tehtäviin ja sillee näin** (126)

Boy 1 mentioned a specific learning strategy that the teacher had taught him. The teacher had instructed him to write down the words and most important issues so that he would remember them better. He thought this had been a good piece of advice since writing did really help him to remember:

B1.1: no luokassahan niitä että.. ku **ope aina sanoo että pistä aina ylös se sana että.. se kannattaa** että jos on kokkeita tulossa nii että kannattaa **laittaa aina tärkeimmät asiat ni sää muistat sen paremmin..**

I: onko se ollut hyvä neuvo?

B1.1: on se ollu.. **että muistaa vähän paremmin että kirjottaa sen** (127)

Learning outside the school

Studying outside the school was regarded as mandatory studying at home and as fun and exciting learning on their own. First, the studying at home is discussed and then sometimes even unconscious learning strategies are looked at. The students

mentioned that at home they usually did their homework. Homework meant different things for different students but this was obvious since homework varied from lesson to lesson. However, it was interesting to find out how the students defined their homework. Girl 1 stated that she did not do much studying at home except her homework. She tried to do them properly but if they were too difficult, she would leave them unfinished:

G1.2: **en mää paljon** mutta sitte **kun tullee läksyä niin sitte teen ne** sitte

I: miten sää teet läksyt?

G1.2: **koitan tehä kunnolla ja sitte jos en ossaa niin jätän kesken** (128)

Girl 3 regarded studying at home as practicing the words that had been given as homework:

I: miten sinä opiskelet englantia kotona?

G3.1: **harjoittelen niitä sanoja mitä tuli läksyks** (129)

Girl 1 did her homework but it seemed that the reason why she did them was that the teacher would check them on the next lesson. She was able to specify her way of studying; claiming that first, she revised words and then tried to remember them by heart. In other words, she defined homework like the girl 3 above, as words:

G1.1: **jos on tullu läksyjä nii mä teen ne ja sitte harjoittelen niitä ku ope kyssyy niitä** nii harjoittelen

I: millä tavalla sä harjottelet?

G1.1: no sillee **eka luen ja koetan muistanko ulkoo ne sanat** (130)

Boy 2 claimed that he hardly studied at home. He said that honestly speaking he had not done his homework either although he added “often” in the end:

B2.2: no **kotona minä en kyllä opiskele sitä juuri yhtään**

I: mites sää teet englannin läksyt?

B2.2: **niitäkään mää en kyllä sillee jos rehellisesti sanotaan niin en oo kyllä erityisemmin tehny, usein** (131)

Boy 1 did not mention homework instead he thought that the best way to learn at home was by reading and if there were any writing tasks, then doing them as well:

B1.2: **lukemallahan sitä oppii** sitte **jos on nuita kirjoitustehtäviä niin sitte pittää kirjottaa** (132)

Girl 2 claimed that she studied the same way at school as at home. She did her homework but in addition, she studied the exercises, too. She also pointed out that she could learn and practice English if she had an English friend. Thus, she could

practice understanding, for example. Finally, she concluded that she studied the textbook, words, and sentences:

G2.2: samalla lailla ku koulussa **teen läksyt ja luen ja sitte luen niitä tehtäviä** mitä on tullu ja se just **jos on englantilainen kaveri niin senkin kanssa tulee sit harjoteltua sitä englantia ja sitä ymmärtämistä** ja eipä siinä muuta, (..) että **luen niitä kirjoja ja sitte opettelen niitä sanoja ja lauseita** (133)

In fact, the students listed quite a number of ways to learn English outside the school other than just doing their homework. Boy 1 mentioned that he found mind maps helpful. He used this strategy while studying for exams. He wrote down the most important issues:

B1.1: no sillee et jos on vaikka tulossa tuo.. mikäs se oli.. iso koe nii **tekkee semmosen ajatuskartan tai sitte yrittää pistää paperille niitä tärkeimpiä asioita** (134)

The current technology, such as television, computers, and the Internet, assisted learning of English. The use of technology seemed to fade the line between conscious and unconscious, and mandatory and independent learning. Boy 3 pointed out that he sometimes learned English while watching television. He mentioned that if there were no Finnish subtitles he tried to speak himself and thus figure out meanings for words:

B3.1: noo **en minä oo nytte mitenkään** ku paitsi jos on jotakin.. **joskus minä yritän jos televisiossa on joku ohjelma ja siinä ei oo sitä suomalaista tekstitystä ni sitte minä sillee puhun ja yritän saada ite selvää siitä mitä se tarkoittaa** (135)

Music was also an important way to learn English. Boy 1 mentioned that while watching programs of the music television that were only in English he learned English by solving meanings in Finnish:

B1.1: oon mää sillee että ku joskus jos tulee semmosia et ku yrittää miettiä sillee sanna jos sitte mm.. joku englantilainen joku vaikka **musiikkiteeveeltä ku tulee niitä ohjelmia englanniks nii yrittää miettiä mitä se tarkoittaa suomeks..** (136)

Listening to music in English was wonderful and made girl 2 sing along and thus she learned English as a byproduct. She added that sometimes she needed English on the Internet and while playing there. She had to read and figure out meaning, too:

G2.1: ..**mää tykkään aina niinku hirveesti laulaa englantilaisia lauluja..** jos tulee joku kappale nii mää ruppeen aina laulamaan ni **siinäki oppii..** ja sitte jos on joku engla.. ku mä käyn yleensä **jollain pelisivulla nii siellä on englantia nii pittää sitte lukkee ja miettiä että mitä se tarkoittaa** (137)

Boy 1 mentioned that if he encountered a new word while surfing on the Internet, he would look up the translation for it. He claimed that the next time he saw the word he would remember it and thus he had learned more English:

B1.2: lukemalla ja **netissä käy ja kahtelee jos on joku sana ja ei ossaa niin ehtii sen sanan suomeks ja sitte kun se tulee toisen kerran niin kyllä sen sitte jo ossaa** (138)

Boy 2, however, doubted that he could learn English while playing a computer game. After a short discussion about the subject, he concluded that he was not able to learn from such a game:

I: voikos siitä (pleikkaripelissä) oppia (englantia)?
B2.2: **no ei** (139)

Girl 1 was of the opinion that the school was the only place where she could learn English. She doubted first a little but in the second interview, she had the same opinion. She said that she could learn if she studied well enough but still the school was the only place to learn English:

I: voiko sun mielestä englantia oppia jotenkin muuten kun koulussa?
G1.1: **..ei..** (140)

I: voikos englantia oppia jotenkin muuten kuin koulussa?
G1.2: kyllä voi **jos opettellee kunnolla** ja
I: keksitkö minkälaisia tilanteita tai esimerkkejä miten sitä oppia?
G1.2: en keksi
I: onko koulu ainut paikka missä sitä voi oppia?
G1.2: **on** (141)

Boy 3 was of the same opinion that he would learn the best at school although he thought that his parents might teach him English. He was, however, worried that he might not learn that way:

I: voiko englantia oppia jotenkin muuten kun täällä koulussa?
B3.1: no voihan sitä **jos vaikka iskä tai äiti opettaa sitä..** jos vaikka ei oppis englantia (...) kyllä siinäki oppii mut kyllä **minusta eniten oppii koulussa** (142)

Learning words

Studying and learning words is one of the basic tasks in second language learning and there are a number of ways to learn them. The learning strategies for studying words were quite traditional in this study. The students studied words several times and at some point they would close the book or cover the words and thus try to

remember them in English with Finnish translations. Boy 1 provided a good example of this:

B1.1: on se siie sanakokkeisiinni että **eka jankkaa monta kertaa sen sanan sillee että.. siinä kirjassa ja sitte laittaa kiinni sen ja sitte yrittää muistaa sen sanan.. silleejän sen oppii.. ja sitte ku laittaa lapun siihen kirjalle ku mitä se tarkoittaa suomeks ja englanniks..** (143)

Boy 3 pointed out that by covering words he was able to check his memory by himself:

B3.1: no minä laitan siihen vaikka sillee että **peitän ne kirjan sanat ja sitte mää muistan ne ulkoo ja sitte mä katon aina että onko se oikein** (144)

Girl 2 added that after studying words as presented above, she would write the words in her notebook three times. She claimed that this made learning more efficient:

G2.2: mää niinku **luen yhteen kertaan ja sitte pistän piiloon ne ja yritän muistaa ne ja sitte kirjotan vihkoon kolme kertaa sitte ne jää paremmin mieleen** (145)

Boy 1 stated that he studied words quietly on his own. In other words, he did not read the words aloud:

B1.2: no **hiljaa itekseen** (146)

Boy 3 mentioned that sometimes he studied words just before the English lesson during the recess:

B3.1: mää luen **joskus vaikka koulussa tuossa ennen tunnin alottamista** tai sitte kotona (147)

Boy 2 claimed that he did not study words at all. Therefore, he did not describe any strategy for studying them:

B2.1: no **niitä en oo lukenut** (148)

Studying for exams

The students were quite unanimous about how to study for exams. They were of the opinion that they should read the given chapters from their textbooks, do possible exercises, and study words. Boy 3 is a good example of this; he had to read the assigned chapters and do exercises:

B3.1: no sitte minun **pittää vaan rueta lukemaan niitä kappaleita ja tehdä tehtäviä** (149)

Boy 1 pointed out that he had to study several times in order to remember. He also added that he read translations of the chapters from his notebook:

B1.2: no siihen **pittää monta kertaa lukkee että jää mieleen päähän**

I: mitä sää luet?

B1.2: no **kappaleet ja sitte nuo suomennokset ja tehtävät että jos on tehtäviä niin sitte ne pitää tehdä siihen** (150)

Girl 1 claimed that first, she studied words and then her sister or mother helped her by examining her:

G1.1: no **luen niitä sanoja ja sit laitan kirjan kiinni ja muistelen tekstejä ja sisko tai äiti kyssyy** (151)

In the second interview, girl 1 stated that in addition to words she now reviewed textbook chapters. She said that she read them aloud every day:

G1.2: **luen ääneen ja joka päivä luen**

I: mitä sää luet ääneen?

G1.2: no **ne kappaleet ja sanoja luen ääneen** (152)

Boy 2 stated that he had to study for exams. He was not quite sure how to study for them but he mentioned that the given pages should be read. Although it seemed that he did not study them:

B2.2: **pakkohan se on lukkee**

I: millä tavalla sää luet siihen?

B2.2: sitäkään mä en tarkalleen osaa sanoa

I: luetko sää niitä kappaleita tai sanoja?

B2.2: sitä **mitä on annettu koe-aukeemaks niin sitä kyllä yleensä pitäs lukkee mutta..** (153)

Girl 2 was the only student who claimed that she did not study for exams. She relied on herself and that she would remember and know the issues already since she had studied them for word quizzes:

G2.1: **en mä ylleensä lue kokeeseen**

I: sää luotat siihen että sä muistat ne asiat?

G2.1: no ku **ylleensä mitä mä luen nii mä muistan sen..** niiku viime enkun sanakokeista sain jonku kasin muistaakseni.. ku luin nii jää päähän ne kaikki ne jutut nii mä muistan ne (154)

Girl 2's opinion did not change in the second interview and she received average grades even though she did not study for exams. She, however, admitted that she studied for word quizzes and if there were some difficult issues. She was of the

opinion that the easiest issues were unnecessary to read since she already knew them, only the difficult ones were good to study:

G2.2: **mä en lue koskaan kokkeisiin**

I: mites sun kokeet menee?

G2.2: no viimeki kokkeesta sain olikohan se 8+ sain

I: joo, niin että sä opiskelet sitten muuten.

G2.2: niin, **kyllä mää aina jos tulee joku vaikee niin kyllä mää sitte siihen luen ja sit esim pistokkaksiin sanakokkeisiin niihinkii luen**

I: miten niihin kokeisiin kannattais lukkee?

G2.2: no **ne vaikeimmat** ja sitte. ne vaikeimmat osat **pitäs siihen lukkee** ja sit **jos on joku helppo ni ei sitä ei oikeestaan tarvii ees lukkee kun sen ossaa jo** ne vaikeimmat ois hyvä harjotella siihen kokkeeseen (155)

Too difficult exercises

When asked what the student would do when they encountered too difficult exercises their frequent answer was to ask for help. Girl 2, for example, said that she asked help from the teacher or from a friend. She added that if the teacher was already helping another student, she would ask her friend for help:

G2.2: **kysyn opettajalta apua tai kaverilta tai jos ope auttaa jottain muuta nii kysyn kaverilta apua** (156)

Interestingly, if the students were not able to receive help immediately or if there was no help available, their concentration suffered. For instance, boy 1 mentioned that first he would ask the teacher to help him, and then he would start playing with his pencils, etc. He noticed himself that he would no longer be able to concentrate:

B1.2: **kysyn opettajalta ja sitte ruppee melkein leikkimään kynillä ja kaikkee tämmöstä eikä keskity siihen tehtävään** (157)

The difficulties in concentration appeared in other ways, too. Boy 2 claimed that if exercises were too difficult for him, he would give up and leave them unfinished:

B2.2: minä kuitenkin **varmaan jätän tekemättä** (158)

Girl 1, however, did not give up all together. She said that she would come back to the difficult exercise a bit later and try to do it again:

G1.2: no **jätän sen tekemättä ja koitan sitte tehä uelleen** (159)

The students mentioned other learning strategies that they used when they were faced with a difficult learning situation. Girl 3 mentioned that when she did not understand

written texts she would look the word up in the vocabulary and accordingly find out its Finnish translation:

I: mitäs sä sillon teet (kun et ymmärrä lukemaasi)?

G3.1: **katson onko se sanastossa ja siitä katson sen suomenkielisen** (160)

Girl 2 had encountered a similar situation as girl 3 above while playing a computer game. She used a bit different strategy. First, she would try to figure out the meaning by trying out to find the pronunciation of the word. If she did not know it, she would think about the other words in the sentence and thus uncover the basic meaning of the sentence:

I: mitäs jos sää et tiää jotain sanaa ni miten sä otat selvää siitä?

G2.1: yleensä määhän sillee niiku **mietin mitä se tarkoittaa** ku mä en oikein ossaa lausua vaikeita sanoja ni määhän **mietin mitenkähän se lausutaan** ja (...) sit **jos en tiää nii annan olla ja mietin sitä toista sanna mitä se tarkoittaa..** (161)

Girl 2 also mentioned that if she were reading in English on her own and faced difficulties, she would reread the sentence repeatedly. Then she would look the words up in the vocabulary list and practice its pronunciation. After this, she would practice the whole sentence again several times and thus she would remember and learn it:

I: mitäs jos sää oot ihan itekses niin mitä sää sitte teet?

G2.2: määhän vaan **luen sitä lausetta koko ajan uuestaan ja uuestaan ja harjoittelen sitä ja sitte katon sanastosta niitä sanoja ja sitte sitä ääntämistä harjoittelen ja tällee näin**

I: mutta sanastosta sää katot niitä sanoja?

G2.2: niin **jos on vaikeita sanoja** niin sitte katon aina sieltä ja jos en muista jottain sanna **niin sitte aina sanastosta katon** ja sitte mmm, niin sitte **suomennan sen ja sitte harjoittelen koko ajan sitä lausetta uuestaan ja se jää mieleen ja ossaa paremmin** (162)

Girl 2 had encountered a situation where she needed communication strategies. Her uncle's Australian friend sometimes spoke too fast and she did not understand him. She, however, was able to point out several strategies how to cope in the situation. First, she repeated her question or statement. Second, she would ask her uncle to help her. This meant that her uncle asked for clarification. Third, she mentioned that the friend could explain the difficult words or articulate them clearly and slowly. With the help of these strategies girl 2 was able to communicate with this native speaker:

I: entäs jos sä puhut sen enon miesystävän kanssa niin jos se puhuu liian nopeesti niin mitä sää sitte teet?

G2.2: minä kysyn siltä uuestaan että tai sitte jos en ossaa sitä sanoo sitä sanmaa niin kysyn Markolta yleensä niin sitte se kyssyy sitä, ku se puhuu aussienkkua sillee austraaliaa ja englantia sillee sekasin niin se on sitte vähä vaikeempaa ku ei sitä oikein ymmärrä niin joutuu puhumaan sillee vähä hittaammin ja selvemmin, Markokaan ei ite tajua välillä että mitä se puhuu
 I: voikos muuta tehä kun pyytää puhumaan hitaampaa?
 G2.2: selittää ne sanat niinku tai puhua sillee niinku selvemmin että ei sillee hirveen nopeesti suhase sitä ja se on sillon helpompaa (163)

Too easy exercises

When asked how the students reacted to exercises that were too easy the replies were quite similar. None of the students left these exercises undone. Girl 2 stated that she did the easy exercises first and did not ask any help from the teacher:

G2.2: sitte mää teen sen enkä kysy opelta apua (164)

Boy 1 was eager to do exercises. He claimed that he did the easy exercises quickly and asked for more exercises from the teacher:

B1.2: minähän teen se äkkiä ja kysyn opettajalta lissää (165)

Boy 2 seemed to think that it would be quite silly to leave easy exercises undone. He did them right away and that was it:

B2.2: sitte se on siinä

I: silloin et jätä tekemättä?

B2.2: no eihän sitä silloin piä jättää tekemättä jos se on liian helppo (166)

Girl 1 also stated that she did the easy exercises first and left the difficult ones to be completed last. She said that it was much easier and perhaps wiser to leave the difficult exercises for the last since otherwise she might spend the whole lesson struggling with them:

G1.2: mää teen sen ekana ja jätän kaikki vaikeet viimeseks

I: miks niin päin?

G1.2: niin on paljon helpompaa jättää ne vaikeet kun ei jää niitä vaikeita miettimään koko tunniks (167)

To sum up, the students' learning strategies were considered from several viewpoints. Overall, the students seemed to know quite many ways how to study and they used numerous strategies. Depending on the environment and situation, the students found ways to learn. However, their concentration varied sometimes especially when faced with difficult exercises. Some students did some things just for the teacher or since they had to and not because they wanted to learn. On the other

hand, sometimes learning English was a by-product of doing something else. The learning strategies for studying words were perhaps more traditional than effective since the students mainly tried to learn the words by heart just by repeating them several times.

6.2.3 Exercises

The students were asked to divide exercises into four groups: fun, useful, unnecessary, and annoying. First, the students talked quite enthusiastically about their favourite types of exercises. Crosswords were the most popular. As girl 3 and 2 pointed out, the funniest exercises were ones in which she was able to search words in the vocabulary and fill the crossword puzzle with those words:

G3.1: ..vaikka että **pittää etsiä joistakin sanastoista vaatteita..** tai sitten semmonen **ristikko** (168)

G2.2: ne **kun pitää ne sanat ehtiä ja sitte tehä semmonen ristikko** niin se on sitte kivvaa niissä tehtävissä (169)

Girl 2 specified why the crosswords were so much fun. She stated that she was able to use her own brain while thinking. She considered these exercises quite challenging since she had to do many things at the same time. Using of both textbook and workbook was also fun. The time given to do crosswords seemed to be sufficient since she claimed that she had enough time to do these exercises:

I: minkä takia semmoset ristikot tai sanan etsimiset on mukavia?

G2.2: kun siinä **pittää sillee niinku käyttää vähän niinku omia aivoja** että kun on **ristikko ja sana ja sit se pitää sieltä takkaa ehtiä ni se on aika semmonen haastava ja ei sitte löyä sitä ja sit vaan pitää sitä muistaa ja muistaa ja se on sillee mukavaa ku pitää olla se toinen kirja siinä mukana ja sitte saa ehtiä ja tehä rauhassa** ei oo semmosia häslinkejä siellä sitte jos yhdessä tehään nii se mennee semmoseks huutokilpailuks niin se on yksin mukavampaa tehä (170)

Other exercises in which the students were required to look for some information were considered fun, too. Boy 1 stated that easy exercises and the ones that needed looking for information were enjoyable:

B1.2: **helepot** ja semmoset että **pittää ehtii tietoo** ne on mukavia (171)

Girl 2 mentioned that in addition to crosswords, bingo games were fun. She explained that in bingo she was not required to raise her hand to answer, she could just shout whether she had the bingo or not:

I: onko muita mukavia tehtäviä?

G2.2: kaikki tämmöset **sanojen ehtimiset** ja sitte se **jos lauseeseen puuttuu** ni sekkii on ihan kivvaa ku pittää ehtiä siihen se oikee sana ja semmosia kaikkia kivoja ja kaikki tämmöset **bingopelit** ja tämmöset on tosi mukavia niissä kirjoissa

I: mikäs bingossa on mukavaa?

G2.2: ku siinä saa niinku valita ne ja opettaja sanoo sieltä ja jos tälle näin on niin siellä saa ihan tälle näin ei tarvii viitata ees sit **saa vaan sanoo että tuliko mittää ja että ei tarvii aina niinku viitata tunnilla** (172)

Boy 3 liked also crosswords puzzles and bingo, but he added exercises that required translating. He considered them fun as well:

B3.1: no mä tykkään niistä **ristikoista**.. en mää muista niin hirveesti välitä.. tai sitte **semmoset missä pittää suomentaa**.. nekin on hauskoja.. **bingo** ja.. (173)

In addition to games, some students considered ordinary translation and writing exercises enjoyable. Girl 1 and 2 stated that writing exercises were fun too:

G2.1: no ne ristikkotehtävät ja **semmoset että pittää joku sana suomentaa tai kirjottaa englanniks** (174)

G1.2: **kaikki helpot**

I: mitä tehtäviä ne helpot tehtävät on?

G1.2: pystyy kaverin kanssa tekemään ja sitte **vihkoon tehhään vaikka jotakin lauseita**

I: kirjottamistehtäviä?

G1.2: niin (175)

Boy 2 had quite a peculiar answer since he thought that the most enjoyable exercises were the ones in which he could fill in his information and then draw a picture of himself. He possibly meant the very first pages of the workbook that often contain these kinds of tasks:

B2.1: että **täyttää tiedot itsestään ja sitten piirtää kuvan itsestään** (176)

Second, the students explained what they meant by useful exercises. In the first interview, girl 1 had some difficulties naming these kinds of exercises. After a little hesitation, she stated that reading and all the basic issues were useful:

G1.1: en tiiä.. ehkä **lukeminen ja nämä.. perusasiat** (177)

In the second interview, she regarded difficult exercises as useful. She thought that learning to pronounce and write difficult words was useful for learning and thus they were useful exercises:

G1.2: varmaan ne **vaikeet** (sanat) **ku niitä oppii ääntämään ja kirjottamaan** (178)

Writing exercises were generally considered useful. Boy 1 thought that writing and pronunciation exercises were important because if he knew how to pronounce words it would help him to remember them. Thus, writing became easier, too:

B1.1: oisko **kirjottamis ja ääntämistehtävät** että ne on sillee tärkeitä **että ossaa ääntää hyvin ja muistaa niitä sanoja ni pystyy kirjottamaan** (179)

Girl 2 stated that learning verbs, writing, and reading were useful exercises. She was of the opinion that difficult exercises are useful:

G2.2: just kaikki nämä **verbit ja sitte kirjottaminen ja sit se lukeminen** on ja siinähan ne

I: minkä takia ne verbit on hyödyllisiä?

G2.2: ku ne on vaikeet minun hyvästi oppia (180)

Boy 1 thought that all oral exercises and word quizzes were useful. These exercises helped him to remember words. In order to succeed in word quizzes he had to study words several times:

B1.2: no ne on **sanalliset ja sanakokkeet** että pitää tietää suomeks sanoja ja **ulkoo muistaa**

I: minkä takia ne on hyödyllisiä?

B1.2: no että **kun pitää harjotella monta kertaa** tehä siihen niin **ne kertaautuu** (181)

Third, the students described unnecessary exercises. Boy 1 thought that exercises that were the same from year to year were useless. He admitted that there was a reason why some exercises were repeated; often these exercises were used to remind important issues. Despite that, he considered them unnecessary since he was able to remember how these exercises were done:

B1.2: no **semmoset jotka on ollu monesti** semmoset jotka on ollu joskus aikasemmilla luokilla sillähän yritetään muistella sitte ne mennee niin äkkiä ne tehtävät **kun muistaa ne** (182)

Girl 1 thought that there were not really unnecessary or useless exercises. She assumed that all exercises were useful and important:

G1.2: **ei varmaan mitkään oo ihan turhia kaikki on ihan hyödyllisiä ja tärkeitä**
(183)

Girl 2 claimed that drawing exercises, however, were useless since those required only drawing and colouring:

G2.2: kaikki **piirrustustehtävät** ja tämmöset
I: minkä takia ne on turhia?
G2.2: kun niissä **ei piä ku piirtää ja värittää** (184)

Fourth, annoying exercises were described. The students' opinions varied greatly. Every student had his or her own opinion. Boy 1 thought that difficult exercises were the most annoying. He claimed that the right answer was almost impossible to find no matter how hard he looked for it:

B1.2: **vaikeet tehtävät** että **ei taho löytyä sitä oikeeta vaikka kuinka ehtii** (185)

Boy 2 stated that reading for an exam and word quizzes was annoying. He just was not motivated to study for those:

B2.2: **kokkeisiin lukemiset ja sanakokkeisiin lukemiset** ja niin pois päin
I: minkä takia ne kokeet on ärsyttäviä?
B2.2: niitä **ei vaan millään huvita tehdä** (186)

Girl 1 regarded some reading exercises and homework that included reading as irritating. The reason for her opinion was that she did not know how to pronounce those long sentences and thus these were difficult for her:

G1.2: eipä oikeestaan **jotkut lukutehtävät** ärsyttää ja **ehkä jotkut lukuläksyt** tai kaikki tämmöset
I: minkä takia?
G1.2: **jos ei ossaa niitä lauseita lausua niin sitte niin pitkiä lauseita** (187)

Girl 2 claimed that listening exercises were annoying (see extract 97 above). The words were said so quickly that she did not have time to comprehend what was said. She also thought that rewinding the tape was frustrating.

To sum up, the exercises that encouraged the students the most seemed to be ones in which they challenged their skills. Exercises that required searching for information on their own and applying their individual thinking were the most popular. Useful exercises included difficult tasks, writing, and learning words. Although the students did not necessarily enjoy these exercises, they understood that there was a good

reason for doing them. The students had difficulties with naming unnecessary exercises. The annoying exercises, however, were quite easy to point out and they had individual thoughts about them.

6.2.4 Ideas about the language

The students were asked whether there was something in the English language that they would like to know more about. Interestingly the students had very little to say on this topic. They seemed to be quite satisfied with what they had learned already. As boy 3 stated he had learned all the necessary issues. He said that there was no need to learn anything new but the basic issues could be rehearsed more:

B3.1: en oikeestaan.. **tässä on minusta ihan hyvä tarpeelliset**.. että ei mitään uutta tarviis kyllä.. **niitä perusasioita**.. ei tarviis enää mitään lisätä.. minä oon tyytyväinen iha näin (188)

Students, girl 3 and boy 1, were not quite sure what they would like or needed to learn about English:

G3.1: ..**en tiedä** (189)

B1.1: **en oikein ossaa sannoo** (...) (190)

Girl 1 was of the opinion that there was nothing more to learn of English. However, she hesitated in her statement a little:

G1.2: **ei oikeestaan** (191)

Boy 2 had a clear opinion of what he would like to learn more. In both of the interviews, he pointed out that he would like to learn more about writing. In the first interview, he was very specific about what kind of writing he would like to learn but in the second interview he mentioned writing overall:

B2.1: **tarinoitten kirjoittamista** englanniks (192)

B2.2: ehkä **vähän enemmän**

I: mitä?

B2.2: no **sitä kirjoittamista** ja, vaikei ne kiinnostaiskaan (193)

Girl 2 was of the same opinion but her reason was her difficulty in writing. Because this worried her, she wanted to learn more of it:

G2.1: no ne **lauseen kirjottamisen ja tarinan kirjottamisen..** ja siinäpä ne on ne (194)

G2.2: **sen kirjottamisen**, se ei, **se minua sillä lailla painaa ku minä en ossaa kunnolla kirjottaa englanniks, se on ihan hirveen vaikeeta mulle**, oppia ne sanat ja kirjottaminen, sen minä haluaisin oppia (195)

Boy 1 was very ambitious in what he wanted to learn more about the English language. He wanted to learn almost all the words. This would be useful but considering the number of words in English, it might be an impossible task to accomplish:

I: onko jotain mitä haluaisit vielä oppia englanninkielestä?
B1.2: melekein no **että tietäs melekein kaikki sanat** (196)

In addition, the students made spontaneous remarks about the English language and language learning in general. These were students' own, individual notions about language. Boy 1 commented on the English words and their spelling compared to Finnish. He said that sometimes he was confused and puzzled by the spelling and letters of English words because they differ so much from Finnish words:

B1.1: se on vähä sillee et **kahtoo vähä et joku suomeks sanotaan.. ei oo semmosia** oikein joku g.. gr semmosia päätteitä et alkuja semmosia et gr on alussa tai se on siellä keskellä et **kahtoo että ompas tässä outo sana..** (197)

In the second interview, boy 1 was able to point out at least one word, *a tie*, which was common in both English and Finnish although its meaning was different. He seemed to be amused about this similarity and claimed that the spelling of the word was open to misunderstanding:

B1.2: on niissä aika paljon eroja niissä (kielissä) on **paljon erilaisia sanoja** paitsi onhan siellä **yks sana ainakin niinku tie** se on sama sana sillee että sitä luulee että tie että **aluks sitä luulee niinku että onko se tie niinku suomeks mutta eikös se onkin niin ku kravatti** (198)

Girl 2 was of the opinion that English sometimes sounded funny and peculiar because it was mixed with some other language. This was a very sharp observation; however, it seemed that the girl was not aware of the different forms of English. She was referring to her uncle's boyfriend who spoke Australian English:

I: minkälainen kieli englanti on sinun mielestä?

G2.2: aika vaikee ja joskus se on **ihan hassun kuullostaki ku siihen sekotetaan jottain toista kieltä ja se kuullostaa ihan omituiselta** (199)

Girl 2 pointed out that there were differences between English and Finnish word order. She thought that reading in English was fun, interesting, and exciting due to this difference:

I: minkä takia ne on ihan mukavia lukkee?

G2.2: ku se tuota siinä **niissä on niin jännästi tehty se**, se mennee ihan erilailla ku suomenkieleks tehty kirja ni **se on vähä erilaista lukkee englanniks ku suomeks**

I: osaatko antaa esimerkkiä siitä millä tavalla?

G2.2: no **ne sanat on ihan sillee niinku** jos on vaikka joku suomenkielinen lause niin siinä on ne ihan oikein ne sanat ihan sillee rivissä mutta englannissa ku ne on kirjoitettu nii **ne on sillee ihan eri kohissa siellä**

I: meinaatko sää niitä vuorosanoja?

G2.2: niin tai sillee, niin. niin se on sillee niinku ne on ne sanat ihan eri kohissa ku suomenkielessä. **niinku englanniks ne kirjoitetaan sillee eri paikkoihin ni sillee niinku lauseessa sit suomessa se on vähä erilaisessa järjestyksessä**

I: niin sää tarkoitat sitä sanajärjestystä?

G2.2: mmm (200)

Girl 2 also claimed that English was easier to pronounce than Finnish words. That was the reason why she considered English an easier language than Finnish:

G2.2: se on niinku **suomeks jotkut sanat on vaikee ääntää ja sitte niitä ei ossaa sannoo ja sit englanniks jotkut sanoja on niin helppoja sanoa ja ääntää** ehkä se siks tuntuu että englantia on helpompaa kuin suomi (201)

Boy 1 pointed out that language learning had to happen in certain stages. He was thinking about story writing when he stated that he did not know how to do it since he had never learned it. They had studied and learned how to write words and now they were learning how to write sentences. Thus, he had to know about words and sentences before he would be able to write stories:

I: entäs **tarinoitten kirjottaminen** (onko helppoa)?

B1.1: no en oo ikinä kyllä kokkeillu tota voi olla että kohtalaista ku sehä on että **eka pitäis opetella niitä lauseita.. että sanat pitäis tietenni opetella ensin ja sitte pitäis osata ne lauseet ja sit voi tehä mutta ku ollaan vasta siinä lauseissa menossa** (...) (202)

To sum up, students' notions about English language and language learning were quite accurate but only few students made these points. Only couple of the students made notions about English language but they made remarks about the similarities and differences between Finnish and English, such as spelling, pronunciation, meaning of the words, and word order. Often these observations were amusing and

funny and thus, they possibly caught the students' attention. Perhaps other students had not paid so much attention to languages and differences and similarities in them.

6.2.5 Changes in learning

The students were asked to assess changes in their learning of English. They evaluated whether there had been any changes in learning or if their learning had become easier. The changes varied from some to substantial ones depending on the student. Boy 2 thought that there might have been changes although he did not seem to be convinced about it. He assumed that he knew how to speak English better:

B2.2: kai siinä on
I: minkälaisia muutoksia?
B2.2: no **ehkä minä ossaan paremmin puhua englantia** (203)

Girl 1 claimed that there had been some changes. She thought that the changes were due to her different behaviour in the classroom. She had tried to be active and study:

G1.2: no jonkun verran
I: millälaiilla?
G1.2: no **oon yrittäny olla tunnilla mukana sillee ja opetella** (204)

Boy 1 mentioned that there had been changes but he still had to do his homework and participate more in the classroom. He thought that the grade he would receive now would be important:

B1.2: **onhan niitä vaikka kyllä sitä pittää aina läksyjä tehdä pittää olla paljon aktiivinen**
I: minkä takia pittää olla aktiivinen?
B1.2: kun luokka vaihtuu ja nyt on yks tärkeimmistä todistuksista (205)

Girl 2 claimed that the changes had been substantial. Now learning was easier than before because she had practiced more. She emphasized that practice always helps:

G2.2: **on ihan huomattavasti** koska viime vuonna oli paljon huonompi ku **nyt se on menny parempaan päin ja paljo helpompaa on nyt kun on paljon enemmän harjoiteltu** nyt siihen englantiin ja tälle näin ja niin **se on sitte helpompaa nytte** kun on paljon parempaan päin menossa
I: onko se enempi harjoittelu auttanut?
G2.2: joo **se harjoittelu auttaa tosi paljon aina** (206)

The students also thought whether their learning was easier now than earlier. Girl 2 above stated that more practice had made her learning easier. Girl 1 and boy 2 shared

her opinion. Girl 1 claimed that learning was a bit easier now since she was quiet during lessons and studied:

G1.2: nyt **opin vähä helpommin**
 I: minkä takia?
 G1.2: **oon tunnilla hiljaa ja opiskelen** (207)

Boy 2 was of the opinion that his computer game that was in English had taught him English:

B2.2: meillä on sellainen **englanninkielinen sotapeli** missä ne puhuu jonkun verran englantia niin **minä oon ehkä siitä vähä oppinu jottain** (208)

Boy 1, however, thought that learning English had been easier before and now it had become more difficult. He mentioned that earlier he was able to learn English from television and movies. He also stated that earlier he had been motivated and enthusiastic about studying. Now English as a subject had become more difficult, as he claimed:

B1.2: kyllähän se kun silloin kun se koulu meni paremmin **kun sitä aloitettiin käymään tuntu että se meni paremmin**
 I: olikos aiemmin helpompi opiskella?
 B1.2: olihan se **oli helpompi käydä koulua oppi jostain telekkarista ja elokuvista ni osas**
 I: minkä takia se oli ennen helpompaa?
 B1.2: kun **oli varmaan sitä intoa käydä koulua**
 I: onko se englanninkieli muuttunut vaikeammaksi nytten?
 B1.2: kyllähän se on **kaikkia lauseita pittää tehdä** (209)

To summarize, there had been some changes in the students' learning. The students pointed out that even though there had been changes they still had to study and practise hard in order to learn. Participating actively during lessons quite obviously seemed to help the students to learn English. One student, however, claimed that she learned more by being quiet but it seemed that she referred to the times when she had not listened.

6.3 Beliefs about the situational context

Beliefs about the situational context include two aspects of the task of learning English. First, the students described the kind of learning environment in which they would enjoy learning and in which their learning would be difficult. Second, the help

of others is discussed separately since it was considered an important aspect of language learning. Especially, since the dysphatic students need more support in their learning than the students usually.

6.3.1 Learning environment

A learning environment is in fact quite a broad topic. It includes the students' thoughts about the ways in which they would like to study in the classroom, with whom, in what kind of situations they learned the best and worst, and issues they considered unpleasant and enjoyable in the classroom and in learning English. Boy 2 had again difficulties expressing his thoughts and thus, his answers are left out.

Wishes about how to study in the classroom

The students' thoughts about the ways in which they would like to study varied a great deal. Almost every student had a unique idea. Girl 1 wanted to read a lot more because she thought that she would learn more by doing so:

G1.1: en tiää **ehkä lukkee paljon enemmän.. siitä oppii** paljon enemmän (210)

Girl 2 hoped that there would be more exercises, reading, and performing in the classroom. She was up to everything fun:

G2.1: **tehä tehtäviä enemmän ja lukkee ja esittää siellä ja.. niitä kappaleita ja kaikkee semmosta kivvaa** (211)

Boy 3 was ready to learn brand new issues, words, for example:

B3.1: nyt vois kyllä **ihan sellasia uusia asioita..** vaikka jotain uusia **sanoja..** (212)

Peacefulness and patience were considered important in the learning situation. Girl 2 wished that she could learn peacefully, slowly, and patiently:

G2.2: **rauhallisesti ja kärsivällisesti** (213)

Boy 1 was of the same opinion with girl 2 above but he added that if anyone made mistakes, they should be corrected:

B1.1: no **sillee rauhallisesti** ja sitte **jos jollaki mennee jotaki väärin ni sitte se korjataan se asia** (214)

Girl 3 hoped that she would know how to answer correctly. Her opinion was slightly different from boy 1's above, since her statement seems to indicate that her replies were often incorrect:

G3.1: että **osaisin vastata englannin kielellä oikein** (215)

Studying with whom

The students were asked with whom they would like to study: alone, with a friend, or in a group. Studying with a friend or a partner was the most frequent answer. As boy 2 claimed, working with a partner is better since the other student could help in learning:

I: onkos sinusta mukavinta tehdä tehtäviä yksin vai oisko mukavampi tehdä pareittain?

B2.1: **pareittain ois parempi**

I: auttaako se toinen?

B2.1: **auttaa se vähäsen** (216)

Boy 3 mentioned that sometimes he liked studying on his own but sometimes he would like to work with friends. He thought that working alone was tedious and there was no help available then:

I: onko sulla kiva tehdä yksin vai pareittain vai ryhmässä?

B3.1: no kyllä minä **joskus halluun tehä yksin mutta joskus halluisin kavereittenkin kanssa..**

I: mikäs siinä on että pareittain on kiva?

B3.1: no ku **on tylsä joskus kyllä yksin tehä ku ei mittään mikä auttaa** (217)

Girl 2 chose working with a partner over group since she easily lost her temper if working in a group. She claimed that there was too much noise in group work. She said that she needed peace and quiet to study and with a partner that was possible:

I: entäs jos saisit valita niin oisko yksin vai pareittain vai ryhmissä kaikkein mieluisin?

G2.2: **pareittain**, sillä jos **ryhmässä** tekkee niin siitä tulee **hirveesti hälinää** ja tällee näin **ja mulla menee yleensä hermot** siinä ja se on sillee aika että **pittää olla rauhallinen** että **jos pareittain tekkee niin se on aika rauhallista työntekköä** sitte ryhmässä se on joskus semmosta älämöllöö ja huutoo ja tällee näin (218)

Some students preferred working alone. Often the students claimed that by working alone they were able to concentrate better. Girl 3 was of the opinion that by working alone it was possible to work in peace:

I: onko susta mukava tehdä töitä yksin vai pareittain vai ryhmässä?

G3.1: **yksin**

I: mikä siinä on että se on kaikkein mukavinta?

G3.1: **ehkä silloin saa rauhan** (219)

Girl 1 pointed out that she would learn words better if she worked on her own. Then her partner would not tell all the answers without her thinking about them:

I: minkä takia yksin?

G1.2: **oppis niitä sanoja paremmin eikä pari kertoo niitä kaikkia vastauksia** (220)

Girl 2 was willing to do group work in addition to working in pairs. She thought that by doing group work she could learn to work with others. In other words, in addition to learning the language, she would learn co-operation:

I: haluaisitko sää tehdä ryhmätöitä tai pareittain tai

G2.2: **pareittain ja sitte ryhmätöitäkin on ihan hyviä ku oppii tekemään toisten kanssa niitä** (221)

In the first interview, girl 2 had been a bit doubtful about group work but perhaps by the second interview she had had some good experiences of it:

I: onko yksin mukava tehdä tehtäviä yksin vai pareittain vai ryhmässä?

G2.1: **pareittain on kiva ja yksin.. en tiää ryhmässä onnistuuko se mitenkä hyvin** (222)

Girl 1 was not at all excited about group work. She thought that there would be too many to ask their opinion of:

I: entäs ryhmätöitä?

G1.1: **en ku pitää nii monelta kysyä mielipidettä** (223)

Learning situations

The students thought about the situations in which they learned the best. The students usually preferred a quiet and peaceful environment. Boy 1 wanted to work on his own with the help of the teacher. He emphasized that that way there would not be so much noise and he would be able to concentrate:

B1.2: **ehkä yksin ja sitte opettaja auttaa**

I: miksi sellaisessa tilanteessa?

B1.2: **siinä ei oo sitä melua niin paljon pystyy keskittymään** (224)

Girl 2 needed a calm and quiet studying environment, too. She thought that when studying on her own she was able to think by herself without anyone babbling next to her:

G2.2: silloin **ku on rauhallista ja ei oo hirveetä hälinää** ja sitte on niinku sillee **ihan yksin saa** ja on rauhassa ja sitte **on hiljasta ja sit saa ihan omilla ajatuksilla miettiä** että kukkaa ei oo pölisemässä siinä vieressä, se on **se hiljasuus ja rauhallisuus on ihan parhainta** (225)

In addition to the best learning situations, the students described the unpleasant points in learning English. Girl 2 pointed out that in addition to concentration the noise and the talking in the classroom affected learning. She said that she often took part in talking and thus, forgot to do what she was supposed to be doing:

G2.2: no se **jos on hirveesti hälinää** ja tällee näin, **ei sitte pysty keskittymään** ja sitte, toiset niinku puhuu ja **siihen lähtee itekkii mukkaan ja sitte ei muista tehdä mitää** (226)

Boy 1 told that an unpleasant issue in language learning was forgetting to do his homework, even by accident. He pointed out that thus he would fall behind the others:

B1.2: kyllä niitä on **kun on jääny vahingossa läksyt tekemättä että ei oo tehty sitte jääpi vähä toisten jäläkeen** (227)

Boy 2, too, talked about homework. He was not at all motivated to do them. Nevertheless, he concluded that he could not learn unless he did his homework:

B2.2: no se **ku ei millään pysty läksyt ku en oo**
 I: onko ne läksyt semmosia vaikeita?
 B2.2: no **niitä ei koskaan huvita tehdä** mistä aineesta oiskaan
 I: voikos sitä oppia muuten kuin läksyjä tekemällä
 B2.2: **ei kai voi ku läksyjä pittää tehdä ku muuten ei opi** (228)

Girl 1 stated that the most unpleasant point in learning English was exams. She said that the reason for this was they were difficult:

G1.2: **kokeet**
 I: minkä takia kokeet?
 G1.2: **kun ne on vaikeita** (229)

Besides unpleasant points, the students talked about the fun and enjoyable points in language learning. Girl 2 emphasized the quiet classroom environment:

G2.2: **sillon ku siellä on rauhallista ja pystyy keskittymään omiin tehtäviin ja tekemään niitä sillee rauhallisesti ja sillee** (230)

Girl 1 was of the opinion that easy exercises and homework made learning English fun. She claimed that by doing homework, she learned how to do certain exercises and in addition, she learned the language quite well:

G1.2: varmaan **helpot tehtävät ja sitte läksyt jos on helppoja tehtäviä**

I: minkä takia ne läksyt on mukavia?

G1.2: **niissä oppii tekemään niitä tehtäviä ja oppii sitä kieltä ihan hyvin** (231)

Boy 1 concluded that he was also excited when he learned new issues:

B1.2: no että on läksyt tehty ja heleppoo asiaa ja **tietoo tulloo ja innostuu** (232)

Overall, the students' preferred to work in a peaceful and slow-paced environment with a partner or on their own. Then they truly seemed to enjoy and get excited about language learning. The students expected the teacher to maintain the peaceful environment and correct their mistakes. The unpleasant issues about learning English included mostly restless learning environment, forgotten homework, or exams.

6.3.2 Help of others

The students were asked about help of others. These other people included the teacher, their parents and siblings, and friends. The help came in various forms and it was considered important. First, I will discuss the help offered by the teacher and second, the parents, siblings, and friends.

The students mentioned two ways how the teacher could help them. First, the students hoped that the teacher would help them with difficult exercises by explaining how they should proceed. For example, girl 1 wanted that the teacher would explain her how the exercise should be done and thus she could learn from it:

I: jos on esimerkiks joku vaikee tehtävä niin miten sää haluaisit että ope auttais siinä?

G1.2: **koittaa niinku selittää niinku miten se pitä olla ja oppia niinku siitä**

(233)

Girl 2 also hoped that the teacher would explain the issue that she did not understand. She mentioned that understanding was difficult for her. For example, if there were a

word that she would not understand, it should be explained to her quite explicitly. Her concern was audible in her speech while she thought about the issue:

G2.2: **selittämällä sen asian jos en ymmärrä**, mulle on se asioitten ymmärtäminen sellanen vaikee asia

I: onks se just se kuulemalla?

G2.2: niin ja sitte se jos on **joku vaikee sana jota en ymmärrä niin se pittää selittää mulle sillee aika tarkkaan että mä sitte älyän sen** ja tajuun sen, ku **mulla on se ymmärtäminen ja se tajuaminen aika vaikee asia** sanoissa ja näissä (234)

Boy 1 claimed right away that the teacher should give tips and clues for figuring out difficult exercises. He emphasized that the teacher should not give the right answer but require students to think more. Boy 1 was of the opinion that with the help of clues he would be able to find the answer to exercises by himself:

B1.2: **kun kyssyy opelta niin se auttaa ja antaa vinkkejä** siihen tehtävään **eikä anna suoraa vastausta** siihen että **pittää vielä miettiä sitä vastausta** sillee ettei suoraan anna sitä että tuo on se vastaus kertoo sen

I: miks ei saa kertoa suoraan?

B1.2: no **että pittää miettiä sitä ja sitte se vastaus tulloo ku se vaan auttaa** (235)

The second way in which the teacher could help students was quite interesting. Girls 3 and 1 thought the teacher should help them by questioning. Girl 3 did not mention any other way in which she could be helped:

G3.1: **kuullustelee** (236)

Girl 1, however, specified that the teacher could give word quizzes. She also mentioned that the teacher could help her by giving exercises and helping with them if necessary:

I: millä tavalla sitä voi auttaa?

G1.2: no niitä **sanoja** vaikka **kysymällä** ja sitte **antaa sitte jottain tehtäviä** ja sitte **jos ei ossaa niin ope kahtoo** (237)

Beside the teacher, the students received help from their parents, siblings, and friends. The students mentioned that the help of parents was important. Parents helped in preparing for word quizzes and reviewing of homework, as girl 3 stated:

G3.1: **kuullustellessa isä tai äiti** (238)

The parents' skills sometimes inhibited their help. Boy 1 said that his father could not really help him in learning English since in his days they did not learn it:

B1.2: no **eipä tuolla oikein kukkaan kotona auta isäkään kun ei sen aikaankaan sitä paljoo ollu** (239)

The parents were not the only relatives who were able to help. Girl 1 said that her elder sister sometimes helped her if she needed assistance:

G1.2: **joskus isosisko** auttaa jos tarviin apua (240)

In addition to relatives, the students mentioned that their friends could help them in learning English. Friends were often a good help in learning words. They could test their memory by reviewing words. They also helped in learning homework by asking questions:

B1.2: ne kyselöö sanoja ja kyselee sitä läksyä (241)

Boy 1 mentioned that he could answer questions posed by his friend or they could talk to each other in English. That would be one way to learn English:

B1.1: no **kaveri vaikka kyselee** jottain ja voi sannoo englanniks **kysyä jottain kysymyksiä tai puhua englanniks** (242)

Nevertheless, friends' help was not always very effective. Girl 2 pointed out that her friend helped her in difficult issues by showing her the right answers. She admitted that it was not the best way to learn and that she should study and practice on her own:

G2.2: **kaveri aina auttaa jos en jottain ossaa siltä katon aina kaikki vastaukset**

I: auttaako se että kattoo vastaukset?

G2.2: eihän se auta **pitäs ite lukkee ja harjotella** ja sieltä kattoo kaikki vastaukset ite sieltä kirjasta siinä se ois (243)

Although the help of relatives and friends was considered important, the students also studied independently. Boy 3 claimed that even though he sometimes asked his mother to help him he did the studying more on his own:

B3.1: kyllä minä **joskus oon pyytäny äitiä apuun** mutta **enemmän minä oon kyllä tehny ite** (244)

Girl 2 pointed out that the person who helped her to learn was she herself. She said that by practicing she helped herself to learn:

I: joo. auttaako sua joku muu kuin englannin opettaja siinä opiskelussa?

G2.2: no **ite autan, harjottelen niinku** (245)

Some students had not asked help from their friends. Girl 1, for example, said that she had not done so:

I: ootko kavereilta pyytäny apua?
G1.2: **en oo** (246)

However, the other person was sometimes needed for support. Girl 2 mentioned that the other person did not necessarily have to do anything, just sitting next to her made her feel confident and thus, exercises felt easier. She said that when she was studying alone she sometimes thought she was not able to do a thing:

I: onko tehtävien tekeminen (tärkeätä)?
G2.1: sekin on aika **helpoo jos on joku siinä vieressä apuna nii sit tuntuu aika helpolle.. sit ku on yksin ja ajattellee että ei ossaa ni..** (247)

All in all, help of others was considered important and the students were willing to ask help if they needed it. The parents, siblings, and friends were mainly needed for preparing for exams and quizzes. The teacher, on the other hand, was needed in several ways. Teaching, helping, and maintaining a peaceful learning environment were regarded as the most important tasks of the teacher. The students were quite specific about the way the teacher should help them. They pointed out that the teacher should not just provide them with correct answers but help them by giving explanations, tips, and clues. It seemed that sometimes simply the presence of help made the students trust their own skills.

7 DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to find out the beliefs about second language learning held by dysphatic students. Beliefs about language learning were divided into three categories based on the previous studies by Benson and Lor (1998) and Wenden (1986,1987). The first category included beliefs about self as English language learner. The beliefs in the second category referred to learning English. The third category contained the students' beliefs about the situational context, that is, the learning environment at school and the people who can help the students in their learning.

Overall, the dysphatic students had realistic beliefs about themselves as English learners. They acknowledged their difficulties but despite them, they considered learning English important and had quite positive feelings about learning it. Beliefs about learning English consisted of useful and ineffective conceptions. On the one hand, the students were of the opinion that they were responsible for their own learning and therefore, being active and participating was considered very important. On the other hand, they regarded practicing hours and hours as an effective learning method and in addition, learning of words was highly emphasized. Practicing would benefit learning only if the methods and strategies were diverse and effective. Learning words is part of learning a language but it should not be the main or only priority. Beliefs about the situational context pointed out some requirements for the learning environment and situation. The students wished a peaceful and quiet environment in which they could work on their own or with a partner. They felt more confident if help was presence. They thought that help should be in the form of instructions and little hints and not direct answers.

The subjects of this study differed from those of the previous studies (see Chapter 4). Wenden (1986,1987) studied the beliefs held by adults who had lived in the United States for less than two years. The idea of the first phase of Wenden's study (1986) was to create a categorization of the beliefs that the learners were capable of talking about. The second phase (Wenden 1987) concentrated on the learners' beliefs about how best to approach language learning. Benson and Lor (1998) were interested in the beliefs held by university students in Hong Kong. They concentrated on finding

whether there was a relationship between the beliefs about language learning and autonomous learning. They evaluated the beliefs being either quantitative or qualitative and made further conclusions about the learners' readiness for autonomy. The study by Salminen (2001) had dysphatic students as its subjects but the research context was not SLA and the focus was not in beliefs as such. The subjects and the context of Hokkanen's (1996) study resemble the present study the most. Hokkanen conveyed the beliefs held by unsuccessful 9th grade students in Finland. The language-learning context was almost the same, however, the subjects of this study were not classified as unsuccessful, but they had a specific learning difficulty. Nevertheless, in the following some comparisons to the other studies are made when possible.

In this study, the categorization by Benson and Lor (1998) was used although as they pointed out, categorizations are characteristic of particular subjects. Therefore, the categories of this study were slightly different from the previous studies. The present study concentrated on the beliefs about self and learning English and since all the subjects were dysphatic, learning difficulties were emphasized. In addition to Benson and Lor's (1998) categorization, the categories of this study roughly corresponded to Wenden's (1986,1987) categories, too. The first category, beliefs about self, referred to self-analysing and diagnosing. The second category, beliefs about learning English, corresponded with theorizing, evaluation, and with designating. The third category, beliefs about the situational context, was based only on Benson and Lor's category. The situational context, in the present study, was regarded as the learning environment overall including other people who were there to help learning in different contexts. Thus, this study confirmed that the categories of beliefs depend on the subjects and the categorization could not be set fully beforehand although the previous studies provided a basis for classifying the beliefs about SLA.

In her study, Wenden (1986) found that learners were capable of stating their beliefs. Accordingly, the beliefs were statable. Salminen (2001), however, claimed in his study that dysphatic students could say very little of their own learning. This study proved the contrary. The subjects of this study were capable of articulating their beliefs, despite their learning difficulty. Dysphasia was recognisable in the students' answers since often they had difficulties in elaborating their ideas and finding certain

words. Nevertheless, they were able to express their beliefs in their own way. The students talked the most about the meaning of learning English, learning difficulties, exercises, and the help of others. In other words, the learners' beliefs about themselves tended to consist of their own proficiency and role in language learning, as Benson and Lor (1998:35) found in their study. Less frequently, they made notions about the language, feelings, and self. Still, the conceptions of themselves as learners of English were explained in a very mature way since only one student defined himself by the grade he had in English.

All the students in the study regarded learning English as important. They used English already at school and outside of it, too. The students who had personal experience of using English outside the school had a more positive attitude towards learning it. Salminen (2001) found that English was the first subject that dysphatic students would drop out of the curriculum. This study found the contrary; although some students considered English a mandatory subject to learn, they thought it was an important and useful skill to learn. The students found several reasons to learn English, as did the subjects in Hokkanen's (1996) study. The subjects of this study were of the opinion that learning English had been useful for them even now and not only in the future. The reasons for studying were quite practical, such as travelling and work, and therefore the students' motivation to learn English could be classified more instrumental than integrative although they wanted to use English to communicate with people in different situations. Hokkanen (1996) found that her subjects studied for the same reasons but in addition, their motivation was extrinsic since they studied for the teacher and not for themselves. However, the students' motivation in this study was intrinsic rather than extrinsic since many of them simply enjoyed learning English.

The students' conceptions of themselves as learners of English were quite interesting although they claimed using only a few words. The students mainly relied on their own evaluation and experience and not on the grade they had in English. The grade of a subject does not necessarily express the amount of effort and work that has been put in the studying especially with students who have linguistic difficulties. The beliefs about themselves as learners divided into two groups: girls were modest and uncertain about their abilities compared to boys who were confident of themselves as

learners. The reason for this division can only be guessed. Girls probably tend to be more modest and often underestimate their abilities whereas boys often think more highly of themselves and even overestimate their skills. The previous studies did not report any similar findings.

The students' feelings about English varied according to their abilities and concentration. Hokkanen (1996) had a similar finding. In her study, the subjects claimed that feelings and physical states count in learning. In the present study, feelings were analysed considering the different areas of language learning. As a result, listening, which the students felt to be quite easy, was regarded as positive and writing, which caused many difficulties for the students, raised the most negative feelings.

Since all the subjects of the present study had dysphasia, learning difficulties had quite a significant role in the subjects' language learning. In comparison, Hokkanen (1996) found that unsuccessful students without any diagnosed difficulty named grammar, speaking, and vocabulary as difficult to learn. The subjects of the present study named several difficulties but the biggest and sometimes underlying difficulty was difficulties in remembering. This affected most of all writing but sometimes listening comprehension, too. Otherwise, the individual difficulties caused by dysphasia shaped the subjects' language learning. If these difficulties are compared to Hokkanen's (1996) findings, it is obvious that the difficulties are different. The difficulties the dysphatic students face have to do with the basic skills of language learning and perhaps that is the reason why grammar was never mentioned in the present study. The subjects had concentrated on spelling and remembering words and the emphasis seemed to be more on production of words rather than sentences that require greater knowledge of grammar. For all that, the students did not name dysphasia as the cause of their learning difficulties; in fact, they just claimed that these were their difficulties. Salminen (2001) had a similar finding that the students did not blame dysphasia for their difficulties. On the other hand, speaking and oral production, which were mentioned as difficult in Hokkanen's (1996) study, were often the strongest areas for the dysphatic students. This might indicate that the objective for the dysphatic students was to develop their oral skills despite their

grammar mistakes or perhaps they learned whole, fixed phrases in which they did not need to know that much grammar.

The beliefs about learning English were studied thoroughly in all the previous studies. In the study by Wenden (1987), the most frequent belief about language learning was practice. Benson and Lor (1998) had a similar finding although they did not count any frequencies. The subjects of the present study also believed that practicing is important or essential to learn English. The students were also of the opinion that they needed plenty of repetition. This finding agrees with the study by Salminen (2001) since he pointed out that dysphatic students require repetition to learn. As the subjects mentioned, repetition needed to be in many forms in order to not to suffer their concentration. Thus, concentration and patience were considered important in the language learning process. The studies by Benson and Lor (1998), Hokkanen (1996) and Salminen (2001) agree with this, in other words, learning has to be non-intensive and there has to be enough time to learn. Benson and Lor (1998) pointed out that the time itself was not enough but the learner had to be patient because results were not visible right away.

In all the previous studies (Wenden 1987, Hokkanen 1996, and Benson and Lor 1998), the subjects were of the opinion that formal learning is a part of language learning and the subjects of the present study agreed with this. In the previous studies, the students also mentioned learning the natural way, for example, in Wenden's study (1987) natural learning was considered as important as formal learning. In the present study, however, the students did not always consider natural learning as a way of learning a language. Some of them had noticed they were able to practise and even to learn by watching television, using the Internet, and playing computer games but they did not necessarily regard these as language learning situations. The reason for this might be the subjects' age and immaturity since in Wenden's (1987) and Benson and Lor's (1998) studies the subjects were adults. However, this cannot be the only reason since the subjects in the study by Hokkanen were almost the same age as the subjects in the present study. Another reason might be an issue about appreciation and values. Learning outside the school and classroom was not considered proper or "real" learning. In fact, this might be a case of a shared belief. In other words, this belief was available for all the students in this social

context. The teachers and parents might maintain this belief, even unknowingly, by not emphasizing the importance of natural learning situations.

Different from the previous studies were the beliefs about what should be learned about the language. In the present study, the students were of the opinion that they should learn the basic skills, such as reading, writing, and speaking and in addition, they should study words. Wenden (1987), on the other hand, found that students wanted to learn grammar and vocabulary. Hokkanen (1996) claimed that students wished to learn grammar and oral skills. Furthermore, Benson and Lor (1998) found that students wanted to pay attention to all aspects of the language. The dysphatic students might emphasize the basic academic skills because these cause them a lot of difficulties. The language as such may have become a secondary matter due to the students' learning difficulties.

Wenden (1987:108) claimed that the subjects in her study tended to have a preferred set of beliefs about language learning. However, in the present study, the students made less remarks about language learning compared to Wenden's study, perhaps because their age and experience. Nevertheless, their beliefs could not be classified into a certain set of beliefs as in Wenden's study.

Closely connected to the beliefs about language learning were the students' beliefs about language learning strategies. Some students simply emphasized listening and active participation in the classroom. The subjects in Wenden's study (1987) considered mental activity important in learning, too. Similar finding with Hokkanen (1996) was that the students recognised their own responsibility of learning. Of specific learning strategies, on one hand, some of the students had very concrete learning strategies, such as making a mind map and figuring out the meanings by repeating the word aloud. On the other hand, the students named only one way they could learn words and that was repeatedly read, write, and cover the words in the book. This did not sound as the most efficient and interesting learning method. As Salminen (2001) claimed, repetition is important in learning but repetition could be made more interesting by changing the method of it, for example using new words in a sentence. The students, however, thought that there were no unnecessary exercises and they did not seem to be frustrated with the traditional method of learning words.

They were of the opinion that exercises should require thinking, making conclusions, and independent work, an example would be an exercise that would require the students look for information by themselves.

Beliefs about the situational context included the learning environment and the help of others. The students wished that they would have enough time to learn in a peaceful and quiet environment. Thus, the importance of the teacher's role as maintaining the peaceful learning environment was emphasized. The students also expected the teacher to correct their mistakes because otherwise they would not learn. Hokkanen (1996) found that students had acknowledged that taking risks and making mistakes were part of language learning. In addition, a similar finding with Hokkanen was that the students preferred to work with a partner or a friend. The students were of the opinion that a friend could help them if necessary. However, the dysphatic students sometimes wanted to study by themselves since then they were able to concentrate better on the task.

The help of others was not studied in the previous studies but in the present study it was considered important because the dysphatic students need more support in their language learning. The students were of the opinion that the most important tasks of a teacher, in addition to maintaining a peaceful learning environment, were explaining exercises and new issues properly, giving instructions and advice of exercises and the best learning methods, and testing the students' learning. The students received quite a lot of help of other people than their teacher for their homework and for preparing for the exams and quizzes. Interesting was that sometimes the simple presence of the help was enough for the students to rely on their own skills and perform successfully in their tasks. This could mean that the students have accepted that receiving help is acceptable. However, if the objective is to help students become autonomous, they should learn how to study and overcome the obstacles in learning by themselves. Nevertheless, relying only on the knowledge of the help could be seen as a step towards autonomous learning, since then the students are first trying to accomplish the tasks by themselves without any help.

This study has contributed to the study of beliefs about SLA in the way that it was interested in the beliefs of dysphatic students whose beliefs had not been studied

before. In addition, this study confirmed Benson and Lor's (1998) claim that the categorization of beliefs depends on the subjects. Thus, the classifications of the previous studies can only be used as a basis for the further studies.

8 CONCLUSIONS

The present study focused on dysphatic students as learners of English, in other words, to learn more about their beliefs about SLA. The aim was to view their beliefs using the metacognitive approach and apply roughly classification by Benson and Lor (1998). The data came from a total of 10 interviews where in the first interview six dysphatic students and in the second interview four dysphatic students were asked to describe their beliefs about themselves as English learners, about learning English, and about the situational context of language learning. The method of analysis was meaning condensation in which the categories were organized according to their occurrence even though frequencies were not emphasized.

Overall, the dysphatic students were capable of stating their beliefs about SLA. Some students were able to analyze their beliefs in more detail than others but every one of them had insightful beliefs. Since all the students had linguistic difficulties, the learning difficulties and their effects played a major role in the data. Nevertheless, the students had a positive or quite a positive attitude towards learning English. They all considered learning English important and thus, the negative experiences were not the uppermost issue when they considered their beliefs about SLA. The dysphatic students were enthusiastic to learn and they acknowledged their own role as an active participant in the learning process, still, their learning strategies and methods were sometimes very ineffective and insufficient. The students were, however, willing to ask for help and did not struggle with the difficulties by themselves. The students had very clear beliefs about the situational context of language learning. They seemed to be of the opinion that a peaceful, quiet environment with help if necessary was an ideal learning environment.

The present study used interviews as a method of collecting data. The first interview was a structured interview with pre-structured lists of different answer alternatives, and the second interview was a semi-structured interview with an interview schedule. Interviewing was considered the best method since it allowed rephrasing the questions and asking for clarifying questions. No written documents, such as diaries, or questionnaires were used because dysphasia would have affected too much completing them. In addition, interaction between the interviewee and the

interviewer was seen as important and possibly, for this reason, the data consisted of a total of 61 pages. In other words, the students were able to articulate their beliefs quite thoroughly. However, the student interviews could have been complemented with interviewing the teacher. This would have given the background knowledge of the students and the teacher's and students' beliefs could have been compared.

Interviewing was quite a difficult method to collect data and during the first interview many topics remained somewhat superficial because the interviewer did not come to ask for clarifications. In the second interview, the interviewer had more experience and more clarifying questions were made. Thus, the two interviews improved the study's reliability. Reliability was also improved by developing the interview questions for the second interview. Some issues that remained uncovered after the first interview could be asked in the second phase.

In the present study, the classification by Benson and Lor (1998) provided a good basis for the current classification. The main categories, beliefs about self, about language learning, and about the situational context of language learning were the same as in Benson and Lor's study but the content of the categories were slightly different. This was expected since Benson and Lor (1998:25) reminded that categories depend on the subjects. In this study, the students' beliefs about themselves as learners were emphasized as well as their beliefs about language learning and these categories included issues that were not covered in the previous studies, such as difficulties in learning English and help of others.

The classification and categorization of the entire data was done over the two years during which the data was classified several times and categories were formed. Categorization was re-arranged again after a half a year pause in the research process. With time, the classification of data improved and the final categories became more valid. On the other hand, the reliability of the classification of data could have been increased if a second-rater had been used. The second-rater could have verified that the classifications were correct and in addition, new classifications or categories might have been found. Dysphasia caused also some difficulties in analysing the students' answers since they were sometimes verbalized in a very

difficult way. A discussion with a second-rater would have improved the analysis of these replies.

The study provided many practical recommendations and most importantly those were all produced by the students themselves. First, students need to find or they need to be helped in finding a personal meaning for learning a language. When students have a practical reason, for example, reading English comics, to learn English, they enjoy it more and do not let difficulties discourage them. Second, students need clear instructions for effective language learning. Their enthusiasm to learn can easily be put down if their effort does not manifest itself in success. Now, it seemed that the students tried to work hard but the methods were not sufficient and therefore, their trust in themselves as learners suffered. The students should be taught different learning methods and strategies and they should be able to try them to find the best ones for themselves. Third, the difficulties students have should be compensated by developing their strong areas. The difficulties should not be forgotten totally but just enough that the student could experience success in some areas of language learning. Finally, practice and repetition should be made interesting by learning phrases instead of individual words. Phrases would allow more interactive use of language and thus, they could be used while writing, reading, and acting out different situations in the classroom. Repetition of phrases in various ways would automate parts of the language and students would be able to move on with their learning. All in all, the practical recommendations are applicable when teaching all students and especially when teaching students with linguistic difficulties although dysphasia is in the far end of these difficulties.

It would be interesting to find out whether these recommendations would be useful and how teaching these and learning them would affect students' beliefs about SLA. Consequently, students' readiness for autonomy and the process of becoming an autonomous learner could be studied more thoroughly. Now it seemed that the students fulfilled roughly four of the five pre-requisites for autonomy, according to Raappana (1994:79-82). These were first, acknowledging the beliefs about themselves as learners, second, motivation to learn, third, meaningfulness of learning, and fourth, self-evaluation. The students lacked primarily the study skills that could be taught, as discussed above.

The present study followed the principles of the metacognitive approach. However, the metacognitive approach was complemented with the theoretical definitions and classifications by Benson and Lor (1998). This enabled viewing students' beliefs as a "snapshot" of their current beliefs. This was regarded as important because the subjects of this study were in their early teens and thus, they had gained some experience of studying a foreign language and their thinking was quite developed but at the same time, they were in the middle of the emotional and physical turmoil, puberty, in which they were only beginning to know themselves. Therefore, it could be argued that these students' beliefs about SLA would be different if the study were repeated, for instance, after ten years. This would provide us with more information about the stability of the beliefs since the students' beliefs had not changed considerably between the two interviews that were carried out in the present study over a period of about one year.

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APPENDIX 1: The first interview schedule

Haastattelulomake tyttö poika _____ vuotta vanha

1. Pidätkö sinä englannin kielen opiskelusta?
2. Millainen englannin kielen oppija mielestäsi olet?
3. Millaisissa asioissa englannin kielen oppimisessa olet hyvä?
4. Millaiset asiat englannin kielen oppimisessa ovat sinulle helppoja?
5. Miltä sinusta tuntuu puhua tai kirjoittaa englanniksi?
6. Missä tarvitset enemmän harjoittelua?
7. Mitkä asiat ovat kaikkein vaikeimpia englannin kielen oppimisessa?
8. Mitkä ovat mielestäsi suurimmat vaikeutesi englannin kielen oppimisessa?
9. Mitä sinun tulisi tehdä, että oppisit englantia?
10. Miten sinä teet englannin kielen tunneilla?
11. Miten sinä opiskelet englantia kotona?
 - Miten teet englannin läksyt? Miten luet kokeeseen?
 - Voiko englantia oppia jotenkin muuten? Muualla kuin koulussa?
 - Käytätkö / tarvitsetko englantia johonkin?
12. Mikä on sinusta opettajan tärkein tehtävä englannin kielen tunnilla?
13. Miten opettaja yleensä opettaa englannin kielen tunnilla?
14. Miten haluaisit opiskella englannin kielen tunnilla? (Yksin, pareittain, ryhmässä, vaihdellen)
15. Millaiset harjoitukset ja tehtävät ovat mielestäsi mukavimpia ja hyödyllisimpiä?
 - Onko jotain, mitä et ole tehnyt koskaan tai olet tehnyt liian harvoin?
16. Onko sinusta tärkeää oppia englannin kieltä?
17. Mitä haluaisit vielä oppia englannin kielestä?
18. Mihin tarvitset englannin kieltä tulevaisuudessa?

4. / 6. / 7.	Puhuminen Kuullun ymmärtäminen Lauseiden kirjoittaminen Sanasto	Kirjoittaminen Luetun ymmärtäminen Tarinan kirjoittaminen Ääntäminen
8.	Sanaston oppiminen Keskusteleminen Kuullun ymmärtäminen Kirjoittamisen oppiminen Kiinnostuksen puute	Ääntämisen oppiminen Lauseiden muodostaminen Luetun ymmärtäminen Ajan puute Harjoituksen puute
9.	Opiskella ahkerasti Osallistua aktiivisesti tunnilla Käyttää englantia niin usein kuin mahdollista	Tehdä tehtävät Kuunnella tunnilla
12.	Antaa ja näyttää mallia Opettaa sanoja Opettaa lauseiden kirjoittamista Neuvoa miten oppii parhaiten	Korjata virheet Olla innostava Antaa erilaisia tehtäviä
13.	Kirjoittaa taululle tai piirtoheittimelle Käyttää videoita Käyttää kasetteja tai cd-levyjä Antaa tehtäviä Antaa riittävästi aikaa oppia asioita	Käyttää kuvia Käyttää pelejä Näyttää mallia ääntämisessä Antaa palautetta Pitää kokeita
15.	Pelit Kuuntelutehtävät Kirjoitustehtävät Sanojen opiskelu Aukkotehtävät Rastiruutuun Sanojen suomentaminen	Puhumistehtävät Lukemistehtävät Tarinoiden kirjoittaminen Kokeet Monivalinta Sanojen tunnistaminen Sanojen kääntäminen

APPENDIX 2: The second interview schedule

Haastattelulomake

Oletko tyttö vai poika? Kuinka vanha olet?

PERSON KNOWLEDGE

1) KIINNOSTUS ENGLANNIN KIELEEN – MOTIVAATIO

Pidätkö sinä englannin kielen opiskelusta? Miksi? Onko sinusta tärkeää oppia englannin kieltä? Miksi? Tarvitsetko englannin kieltä tulevaisuudessa? Mihin?

2) KÄSITYS ITSESTÄ OPPIJANA

Millainen englannin kielen oppija mielestäsi olet? Missä suhteessa? Miten? Millaisissa asioissa englannin kielen oppimisessa olet hyvä? Miksi?

Missä tarvitset enemmän harjoittelua? Mitkä ovat mielestäsi suurimmat vaikeutesi englannin kielen oppimisessa? Miksi?

Onko oppimisessasi tapahtunut muutoksia? Opitko aiemmin paremmin/ helpommin kuin nyt vai päinvastoin?

Millaisessa tilanteessa opit parhaiten? Entä heikoimmin? (esimerkkejä tilanteista) Miksi?

Miltä sinusta tuntuu olla englannin tunneilla? Miltä sinusta tuntuu puhua englanniksi? Entäs kirjoittaa? Kuunnella? Lukea? Miksi?

TASK KNOWLEDGE AND STRATEGIC KNOWLEDGE

1) ENGLANNIN KIELI

Millainen kieli englantia on mielestäsi verrattuna suomen kieleen? Entä ruotsiin? Millaisia taitoja tarvitset englannin oppimiseen? Miksi?

2) ENGLANNIN OPPIMINEN – MITEN?

Käytätkö / tarvitsetko englantia johonkin? Miksi opiskelet englantia? Mitä haluaisit vielä oppia englannin kielestä? Mitä sinun tulisi tehdä, että oppisit englantia? Mitä sinä teet englannin kielen tunneilla?

3) ITSENÄINEN TYÖSKENTELY

Miten sinä opiskelet englantia kotona? Miten teet englannin läksyt? Miten luet kokeeseen? Auttaako sinua joku muu kuin opettaja englannin opiskelussa? Kuka? (vanhemmat, sisarukset)

Voiko englantia oppia jotenkin muuten? Miten? Muualla kuin koulussa? Missä?

4) TEHTÄVÄT

Millaiset harjoitukset ja tehtävät ovat mielestäsi mukavimpia? Entä hyödyllisimpiä? Miksi?

Millaiset tehtävät ovat mielestäsi turhia? Entä ärsyttäviä? Miksi?

Mitä teet, jos huomaat, että tehtävä on liian vaikea? Tai liian helppo?

5) OPETTAJAN ROOLI JA TOIVEET OPETUKSESTA

Mitä opettaja yleensä tekee englannin kielen tunnilla? Mikä on sinusta opettajan tärkein tehtävä? Miksi?

Miten haluaisit, että opettaja auttaisi sinua (vaikeissa tilanteissa)? Miksi?

6) TOIMINTATAVAT TUNNILLA

Miten haluaisit opiskella englannin kielen tunnilla (Yksin, pareittain, ryhmässä, vaihdellen)? Miksi?

Onko jotain, mitä et ole tehnyt koskaan englannin tunneilla? Tai jotain jota haluaisit tehdä useammin? Miksi?

Mikä on ollut ikävintä/kauheinta englannin tunneilla? Entä mukavinta? Miksi?

APPENDIX 3: Translations of quotations into English

(1) G2.2: because it is **an important language**, just like Finnish is important, you have to learn other.. like English since **if you go abroad** and **you need it** there and if you don't know any you would be all helpless. That's why you have to learn it because it is so important the English language.

(2) B3.1: well.. more like **I study English for fun**. Because it is so much fun and **I will need it when travelling**.. I will need it now in Egypt.

(3) B1.2: well.. **one needs it** and it is a **school subject**

(4) G1.2: **mandatory**

(5) B2.2: **I'm not sure**

(6) I: yes. Do you use English for something now?

B2.2: well you can use it for.. if someone complains and (...) my sister knows some English too and when I'm playing she says that "I want to play now" so I have said to her "you" something like this "you can't play now" like "because I too play now"

I: so you can **talk with your sister**

B2.2: yeah maybe

(7) I: do you use English for something? you mentioned earlier that you **talk with your uncle**?

G2.2: yes **and with my uncle's boyfriend I talk**, he is all English so he doesn't speak any Finnish, he knows some words but he lives in Australia so with him I always talk.. If I had his address I would write to him in English and then **I have that English friend in the Messenger** so with him/her I always write, and now my writing has improved since I have studied words and how to write them

(8) I: what about using English as often as possible? would it help learning?

G2.1: hmm.. for example my sister, she likes English so sometimes we... when she lived at home 'cause she moved to my father's house.. so **we pretended to be in a restaurant and always spoke in English**

I: how did it go?

G2.1: quite good.. and Tiina.. **my sister, Tiina, sometimes reads to me in English** because she likes to read in English

I: can you learn like that?

G2.1: (nods)

(9) I: how about.. do you need it now?

G1.2: well maybe a little

I: in what kinds of situations?

G1.2: for example **if you meet people you know who speak English so then you have to speak with them**

(10) I: could you face a situation in Finland in which you would need to know English?

G2.1: well.. for example if some Finnish.. **English tourists came to visit our school** then I should speak in English to them

(11) I: have you used English anywhere else than in the classroom?

B3.1: yes I have.. **while travelling** I have used it and **sometimes with friends**.. and **music**.. when you listen to music you can sing along.. then I need it too

(12) I: do you use English for something?

B1.2: yes **on the Internet** I use it and when the **games** are in English I have to know it

I: is it written or spoken language in the games?

B1.2: they have both and in many games you can put on the subtitles

I: are the subtitles in Finnish or in English?

B1.2: it is in English too

(13) I: do you use or need English for something?

B1.1: yes I need it if when I grow up I want to do something I might need it.. and if I have had a toy and **the instructions are in English** then I would have to know it so would not build it in a wrong way or something

(14) I: do you need English anywhere else than in the school?

G3.1: perhaps a bit **at home**

I: in what kind of situations?

G3.1: if I do my **homework on English**

(15) I: what about do you use or need English for something?

G1.1: **no**

I: so it is only here at school? as a subject?

G1.1: yes

(16) I: do you use English anywhere else than at school?

B2.1: **no I do not!**

(17) B2.2: if I travel **abroad**, then there

(18) G3.1: **for speaking**

I: in what kind of situations?

G3.1: **in England** for example

(19) I: yes. do you think you need English in the future?

G2.2: yes because my **uncle** is like half English so **with him I have to speak in English** and he lives abroad and does not know Finnish that well

(20) I: for what do you need English in the future?

B3.1: well **for travelling** and then.. **if I get into some.. vocational education** so there I need to know it.. I don't need it for anything else except if I have **an English friend** and he has come from somewhere so with him I would have to talk and that is where I would need that skill

(21) G2.1: **If I'm.. like as a salesperson** and then there would be some Englishman and asks how much this costs so then I might need it

(22) G1.1: yes I might need it.. (...) **at work..**

I: in what kind of work?

G1.1: if I worked **in some restaurant**

(23) B1.1: well there abroad and if I have to.. or if **I become a teacher or at work** you might need it almost.. every now and **then to the everyday life.. it will come some day**

(24) B3.1: it is an important matter.. **if I don't learn anything when I'm grown-up I wouldn't know a thing** (...) that's why I participate **'cause I'm such a traveller** so that's why I have to use it a lot.. it's nothing.. if **I didn't know anything** when someone asks something I would not understand anything that **you'd be all the time all confused** and that would not work.. **when you learn more you can even speak in English**

(25) B2.1: because you **learn everything important**

I: what kinds of important issues you learn?

B2.1: **words by heart** and other

(26) B3.1: it is see when your a grown-up.. you will need it quite a lot.. **it is one basic... basic issue is language.. that it is quite important to learn** the others aren't like Swedish and they aren't that necessary but English is quite good to learn in my opinion

(27) B1.1: well for the future.. that **learns and then it is that the person develops..** so that if you go abroad so you have the language.. that **English is quite popular so that they use it in many countries..** it is quite important

- (28) B1.2: **for the future it is so you know what happens in the world**
 I: so you need it in the future, where you might need it?
 B1.2: **for almost everything**
 I: can you give me an example?
 B1.2: well **if you're mending something and in the instructions would need it** so that almost everything you need
- (29) B3.1: well 'cause we have those **exercises** and 'cause **it is nice to read** and then there are **all these understandings.. everything.. and the exams are fun to do too**
- (30) G2.1: well it **sounds funny** and then **you're allowed to talk** and then you can **do those English exercises..** that's nicest
- (31) G2.2: yes it is like **easy language** and it is **nice to speak and write** and all that, quite nice
- (32) B2.1: well in the exercise book there are good exercises and you **learn new words**
- (33) B1.2: yes that's quite fun
 I: why?
 B1.2: you **learn that English and that you'll need it and you know new words**
- (34) B1.1: 'cause.. you can do these exciting things that for example if you watch music television and then ask (...) what language is that and **when you're studying English you know then what they are saying**
- (35) I: do you enjoy studying English?
 B2.2: **not particularly**
 I: why is that?
 B2.2: 'cause it is a bit **boring and longwinded**, I haven't studied English that much
- (36) I: do you enjoy studying English?
 G1.1: **no**
 I: why you don't like it?
 G1.1: **difficult**
 I: what makes it difficult?
 G1.1: **I can't speak it**
- (37) I: do you enjoy studying English?
 G1.2: well **somehow, not very much**
 I: why is that?
 G1.2: I don't like it because **I don't know it**
- (38) B1.1: hmm.. like **average**
- (39) B2.1: quite good.. **quite good to learn**
- (40) B3.1: well I'm **pretty good** 'cause I have received **always full grades from the word quizzes** and (...) quite adequate
- (41) G2.1: it is a bit **difficult.. to learn it.. I don't always understand** what the words mean
- (42) G3.1: sometimes **I have to think** what it means but **sometimes the others always rush to say it first**
- (43) G1.1: I don't know.. I don't know it very well.. **I don't learn much**
- (44) G2.2: **I learn everything very quickly**, sometimes there are some difficult issues and those I don't seem to learn in any way but **some issues are so easy that I know them right away and those are easy to remember** and so

(45) B1.2: well quite good, in bad days **I don't participate much** in the classes

(46) See translation no. 42

(47) G1.2: heh **I don't know that properly**

(48) See translation no. 41

(49) See translation no. 44

(50) See translation no. 40

(51) B2.2: **sometimes good sometimes not**

I: when it is good?

B2.2: I can't specify it

I: so that it varies

B2.2: perhaps

(52) G1.2: **quite nice, sometimes it's annoying** in the classes

I: what's the annoying issue there?

G1.2: **when I haven't done my homework and don't know how to do the exercises**

(53) B1.2: like **normal** it feels there's **nothing special**

I: it doesn't differ from other classes?

B1.2: not much

(54) G2.2: **quite fun**

I: why is that?

G2.2: **the words are funny** and then it is so **nice when you know how to speak** that English so it is nice always to use English and **then if you don't know it then it's nasty 'cause you just have to be quiet during the lesson** if you don't know anything and **then you can be there freely and it doesn't matter if it goes wrong**, there you **feel like free 'cause you can answer freely** that you can answer **in peace and no-one's there next to you making noise** and that's why there is nice to be in these classes

(55) B1.1: well it's **a bit weird to speak**

I: why is it weird?

B1.1: 'cause **I've never talked like that it is like a bit funny**

(56) B1.2: it's like that always **you have to think always what you would say**

(57) G1.1: I don't know.. **partly easy and difficult**

I: when is it easy? are there any situations when it's easier?

G1.1: **if you concentrate**

I: when it more difficult?

G1.1: **when you don't concentrate**

I: does it matter who you're talking to?

G1.1: no

(58) G1.2: I don't know **quite nice sometimes a bit boring**

(59) G2.1: it's **fun**

I: why is it fun?

G2.1: 'cause you **learn different words** and then if someone comes.. **go somewhere abroad and you have to speak in English so you know how to talk to the other person**

(60) G2.2: **nice**, it is, I like English very much because **it is so fun to speak I always speak in English even when I'm home alone or when reading a book**

I: what kind of books? have you got books written in English?

G2.2: no I haven't, usually **I just speak in English and then to mom I always talk**, mom doesn't like that very much 'cause she doesn't speak English and since she doesn't understand anything so it is like that I enjoy talking to myself in English I like that

(61) G1.2: it is a **bit difficult especially when you don't know how to write some word**

(62) G2.2: **that's the trouble since I don't know how to write** so it is like **the weakness in English** because I can't write properly

(63) B2.2: **writing is really difficult for me**, it's one of the hardest

I: why writing is difficult?

B2.2: well that **whether I can write the sentences correctly**, I can write some English sentences correctly but..

(64) B2.1: **quite good**

I: why does it feel good?

B2.1: that **I don't always have to ask something but I can search from the vocabulary**

I: so you can find it out all by yourself?

B2.1: mm

(65) G1.1: well it is **very easy**

(66) B1.2: well **at the moment it is quite easy**

(67) I: why it is easy?

B1.2: because **I remember the letters or those words by heart**

I: how about if you compare speaking and writing so what's the difference?

B1.2: well **in writing you can change the sentence if it's wrong**

I: in speech you can't?

B1.2: well I don't know you can do it then I suppose

(68) G2.2: that's **quite nice** too but I haven't really read any English book but it is nice, **what I have read of a book I have always read of a schoolbook**

(69) B2.2: well that **reading in English doesn't interest me**

I: why it doesn't interest you?

B2.2: because it such a **longwinded**, reading in English

I: are the English books like that?

B2.2: yes

I: **what if you read something else than the schoolbooks?**

B2.2: **maybe then it might..**

I: have you read anything else than schoolbooks?

B2.2: well not really

(70) B1.2: that's **fun** too

I: do you read other books than the schoolbooks?

B1.2: no but **on the Internet** I read in English

(71) G1.2: **sometimes it feels a bit difficult and sometimes a bit easy if I know how to pronounce the words**

(72) B1.2: well it is **nice**

I: what about listening English do you do that anywhere else than at school?

B1.2: well yes **sometimes I listen to it on TV**

(73) G2.2: that's terribly too **I listen when they sing in English and that's easy to understand** since they sing that's why listening is **quite fun**

I: yes what makes it fun?

G2.2: hmm.

I: if you listening to music in English what makes it fun?

G2.2: **the way they pronounce and it is easy to listen to it then**

(74) G1.2: I don't know **quite nice that you learn to listen and pronounce** the words at least

(75) G1.1: perhaps.. so **that I would understand much better what I read**

(76) G3.1: maybe **with translation of the words..** from English into Finnish

(77) G2.2: those verbs and then this **reading and understanding**

I: what makes reading so difficult?

G2.2: sometimes **the words are so that you can't understand them and then you can't pronounce them** and when you read there sometimes are words that **I don't understand what I'm reading and sometimes I don't even understand what I'm saying** and like that

(78) B3.1: well those are all quite (...) I need in.. not in writing that's quite good but I could in that.. speaking is also quite good.. but then **that listeni. that understanding of the words** that I could practise more

B3.1: see **like when someone speaks you don't really know exactly what they say (...)**

(79) B1.1: with that **writing sentences**

I: yes. is there anything else?

B1.1: mm.. with **writing words**

(80) G2.1: with **writing**

I: is there anything else (you need practise with)?

G2.1: with that **writing a story and sentences it's that writing**

(81) G3.1: **writing sentences and stories and pronunciation**

(82) B1.2: perhaps with **pronunciation**

I: why with that?

B1.2: it's **quite difficult** to pronounce the words

(83) G1.2: I don't know perhaps with **reading**

I: why reading?

G1.2: **I can't read long sentences properly and I can't pronounce them either**

I: what is difficult with the long sentences? what makes them difficult?

G1.2: **I can't pronounce them properly**

(84) B2.2: maybe with **doing the homework** on English since I never feel like doing them

I: why you don't feel doing them?

B2.2: well **they are boring, more like boring**

(85) I: what is the most difficult thing in writing?

G2.1: well **when you have to remember** those.. **usually when I write I have to always look.. 'cause always some couple of letters I mean two letters.. I have to look at the board always 'cause I forget those letters 'cause I can't remember**

I: what if there's a longer word? is it more difficult?

G2.1: it is difficult 'cause **I have to look at the board and then have to think whether there's this and that letter**

(86) I: what is the most difficult thing in learning English?

G2.2: that **writing**

I: what's it in writing?

G2.2: well 'cause **I can't remember the words and then I remember the pronunciation but then I don't remember how to spell it because it's spelled in a different way** that writing is the most difficult thing for me

(87) I: what about writing sentences?

B1.1: **it can be a bit difficult if you have to remember some words by heart (...)**

I: that remembering is difficult in writing sentences?

B1.1: yes it is a bit like that

(88) I: what are the most difficult issues in learning English?

B3.1: well all of them are quite good but that **I find a bit annoying that if other person is talking and I always miss that.. when they speak so quickly all the previous words just past by me.. that annoys me 'cause I don't remember them any more**

(89) I: what about why writing stories is difficult?

G1.1: 'cause **I don't always know how to write the sentences correctly**

I: what goes wrong with them?

G1.1: **the letters**

(90) B3.1: then that **writing**.. well I don't really have any problems with that.. sometimes there can be..

I: what kind of problems?

B3.1: well if there's for example.. **there can be too many letters for instance.. let's say "coffee" so there can be only one letter "f".. although there are two**

(91) I: what makes (writing words) difficult?

B1.1: hmm.. that if **you have to put many words so you might put the wrong word on that line or you might mix the letters**

I: yes. what issues are the most difficult in learning English?

B1.1: that **writing sentences and that writing**

(92) I: what about writing stories?

G1.1: **that's difficult**

I: why is it difficult?

G1.1: **I can't think of anything (...)**

(93) B3.1: then that forming of sentences.. well I could do a little practise with **I don't always get those right for instance I write a long word and there might be lots of mistakes..** I will need practise with that

I: to get all the letters right?

B3.1: yes and **when you need that the and I'm and so on.. and the beginning might be missing sometimes**

(94) I: what kind of exercises are the most difficult?

G2.1: the sentences and sometimes if you have to write something for example if there is a word missing those are quite difficult too.. (...) **teacher sometimes helps us.. if you don't know how to pronounce the word so she usually helps by pronouncing the word**

I: is it easier to understand when you hear the word?

G2.1: **yes how you say it English..** if the word is a cat.. or some difficult word in English she'll always say how to say that word

(95) I: what about listening comprehension (is it difficult)? if the teacher speaks in English?

G2.1: well I understand **some words and some words are more difficult**

I: what about if you listen to a tape?

G2.1: that's also quite difficult 'cause **sometimes they speak so fast so that it isn't clear what they say**

(96) B3.1: **(listening) comprehension..** I do understand that quite well what they say but **if it's fast then it isn't clear what they say**

(97) I: why listening is difficult?

G2.2: when **they speak so fast and then you don't understand all the words since they say then differently, so fast,** 'cause sometimes I don't understand the words and what they say there **I'm always left with my mouth open 'cause I don't understand what they say and then we always have to rewind the tape over and over again and listen to it over and over again and that's annoying**

(98) I: what about listening comprehension (is it easy)?

G1.1: **no**

I: what makes it difficult?

G1.1: **I don't know it 'cause I don't understand all the sentences.. I don't know what they mean**

(99) I: what about listening comprehension (is it easy)? listening to a teacher?

G3.1: **it's not that easy**

I: what if you listen to a tape?

G1.1: **it's a bit easier if there's some sounds in the background**

(100) I: what makes reading comprehension difficult?

G3.1: **if I read I might not know what it means**

(101) I: what makes reading difficult?

G2.2: sometimes **the words are so that I don't understand them and then I can't say them either and when you read sometimes I don't understand what I'm reading and sometimes I don't understand what I'm saying**

(102) I: what about pronunciation?

G1.1: **a bit difficult**

I: why is it difficult?

G1.1: I don't know how to pronounce them properly.. **I always get it wrong**

(103) I: what about conversation (is it difficult)?

B2.1: **sometimes I don't get it**

I: for example if the teacher asks something can you answer?

B2.1: **yes**

I: what if you're working with a partner?

B2.1: well **that I don't know**

(104) I: what if you're supposed to talk with a partner is it easy?

B1.1: it might be **if the partner knows that I might make little mistakes so then it is easy**

(105) B1.2: perhaps **exams**

I: what in exams?

B1.2: **if I don't study for them I am subject to stress and then the questions are quite difficult**

(106) B2.2: perhaps **reading for exams**

I: why is that difficult?

B2.2: **it's not that difficult but it is quite difficult**

I: is it because you have to do it all by yourself?

B2.2: that I don't know

(107) G2.2: **practicing for example couple of hours per day every day, that would be the best way to practice the difficult issue and that writing I would think that would help learning**

(108) B2.1: **practice**

I: in what way you should practice?

B2.1: **practice the meaning of the words from the vocabulary**

(109) B1.1: well **I should practice more always and then I should give more time to English so if you want to learn it you have to work for it**

(110) G1.2: well **practice properly and listen during the lesson and behave and study hard**

I: what does it mean if you study hard?

G1.2: that **I study properly and don't talk during the lesson**

(111) B2.2: **study a bit more**, I would think

I: what's hindering studying?

B2.2: **I'm a bit confused myself, I'm a bit messed up so homework don't interest me** and mm yes

(112) G3.1: **practice it**

I: is there a way how to practice?

G3.1: **attend remedial instruction.. and listen in the classroom**

(113) I: what about listening during the lesson?

B1.1: **that it is terribly important if you're just looking elsewhere you won't know what was for homework or you won't know what exercises you should do and what the teacher says**

(114) I: what about is active participation in the classroom important?

B1.1: **it is if you're quiet then the teacher won't know whether you have done your homework and what grade she will give you**

(115) B3.1: well **if you know you can't always know the answer** (...) yes you have to for sure.. **pretty much I have had to participate by putting my hand up.. I've had quite a chore in that so that I've learned well** since last time I received grade seven and two years ago I got an eight so it has been better

(116) G2.1: well **read more and then practice writing** for instance **read a word and try to recollect the spelling and thus practice**

(117) B3.1: well **read a lot** and then do those exercises **and if there's an exam read a lot for that and try one's best**

(118) B1.2: well that **I could read well and that writing succeeds** that's it

I: why reading?

B1.2: well that **I could read steadily** and not dash through it

(119) B2.2: perhaps **speaking and writing** and all that

(120) G2.2: **patience, practice several times the issue that you don't know and then writing the words many times and that will help to remember**, most of all the patience since I don't really have patience and I should have it, if you start doing something and that doesn't work out **I usually give up easily, I leave it there and then you never learn it**

(121) B1.1: **I read** and then if the teacher questions homework and you **have to translate the exercises from the book into Finnish and then do the exercises from the workbook**

(122) G1.1: **sometimes I do exercises.. and sometimes I talk but I do the exercises at the same time**

(123) B2.1: **sometimes I follow and sometimes not** (yawn)

(124) G1.2: **sometimes I may talk and sometimes I might study**

(125) G2.1: **sometimes I chat with my friends or then I listen to the teacher** and then sometimes I'm like.. **like fiddle with mobilephones with my friend and nowadays you're not allowed to take them to the classroom** 'cause it has caused so much trouble during the lesson.. and **then I've begun to listen to the teacher.. what she says and answer and putting my hand up..** that's all

(126) G2.2: **listen during the lesson so that helps easily if you listen the lessons you will remember better and not do something else and then participate in all the exercises**

(127) B1.1: well in the classroom so that.. when **the teacher always says to write down the word so.. it's worth doing it** that if there are exams **it's always worth writing down the most important issues so you will remember it better..**

I: has it been a good piece of advice?

B1.1: yes it has been.. **that you remember a bit better when you write it**

(128) G1.2: **I don't do much but when we get homework then I do them**

I: how do you do them?

G1.2: **I try to do them properly and then if I can't I'll leave them unfinished**

(129) I: how do you do study English at home?

G3.1: **I practice the words that were given for homework**

(130) G1.1: **if there are homework I'll do them and then practice them since the teacher will ask them** so I practice

I: how do you practice?

G1.1: well **first I read and try to remember by heart the words**

(131) B2.2: well **at home I don't really study at all**

I: how do you do your homework?

B2.2: **those I don't do either if I'm being honest I haven't done them particularly, often**

(132) B1.2: **by reading you learn then if you have those writing exercises then you have to write**

(133) G2.2: the same as at school **I do homework and then read the exercises** that we have had and **if you have an English friend you can practice English with her and that understanding** and that's all, (...) that **I read the books and then I practice the words and sentences**

(134) B1.1: well like if we have.. what was it.. a big exam so you **do a mind map or try to write down the most important issues**

(135) B3.1: well **I haven't done anything** except if there is something.. **sometimes I try to speak and work out by myself what it means if there is a program on tv and there are no Finnish subtitles**

(136) B1.1: I have sometimes tried to think of a word.. mm.. some English for example **in the Music Television they have those programs in English so I try to think what it means in Finnish..**

(137) G2.1: **..I always like to sing along with English songs..** if there's a song I always start singing so **I learn that way..** when I usually go to some game site [on the Internet] **they use English so then I have to read and think what it means**

(138) B1.2: by reading and **on the Internet and looking if there's a word and you don't know it so look that word up in Finnish and the next time you come across with that word you know it then**

(139) I: can you learn English of a PlayStation game?

B2.2: **well no**

(140) I: in your opinion can you learn English somewhere else than in school?

G1.1: **..no..**

(141) I: can you learn English somewhere else than in school?

G1.2: yes you can **if you learn properly**

I: can you think of an example how you can learn it?

G1.2: no

I: is the school the only place where you can learn?

G1.2: **yes**

(142) I: can you learn English anywhere else than in school?

B3.1: well you could learn it **if your mom or dad would teach it..** if you wouldn't learn English (...) you would learn it like that **but I think that you learn the most at school**

(143) B1.1: it's for the word quizzes **first repeat the word many times.. then closing the book and trying to remember it..** that's the way you learn.. **and when you cover the book the words in Finnish and English..**

(144) B3.1: well I always **cover the words and then I remember them by heart and then I'll always check whether it was right**

(145) G2.2: **I read them once and then hide them and try to remember them and then I write them in the notebook three times that's how I remember them better**

(146) B1.2: **quietly by myself**

(147) B3.1: I read **sometimes at school just before the lesson** or at home

(148) B2.1: well **I haven't studied them**

(149) B3.1: well then **I have to start reading the chapters and do exercises**

(150) B1.2: well for that **I need to read many times so I will remember**

I: what do you read?

B1.2: **the chapters and the translations and exercises so if there are exercises I have to do them**

(151) G1.1: **I read the words and then close the book and memorize the texts and sister or mum will question me**

(152) G1.2: **I read aloud and every day I read**

I: what do you read?

G1.2: **the chapters and words I read aloud**

(153) B2.2: **I must study**

I: in what way do you study for it?

B2.2: that I cannot say exactly

I: do you study the chapters or words?

B2.2: **the area that is given for the exam that I should usually read but..**

(154) G2.1: **I don't usually study for exams**

I: you trust yourself that you will remember the issues?

G2.1: well **usually I remember what I read..** like in last English quiz I got a grade eight.. when I read I remember all the issues

(155) G2.2: **I never study for exams**

I: how do you do in them?

G2.2: I received grade 8+ from the last exam

I: so you study some other way

G2.2: yeah.. **if there is some difficult issue I will study for it and then I study for quizzes**

I: how do you think you should study for exams?

G2.2: **by studying the most difficult issues** and then.. the difficult parts should be studied and then **if there is some easy issue you really don't have to study that since you know it already** the most difficult issues would be good to practice for the exam

(156) G2.2: **I ask help from the teacher or a friend or if the teacher if helping someone else I'll ask help from a friend**

(157) B1.2: **ask the teacher and then start to play with pencils and everything and don't concentrate on the task**

(158) B2.2: I probably **leave it unfinished**

(159) G1.2: **well I leave it undone and then try to do it again**

(160) I: what do you do when you don't understand what you have just read?

G3.1: **I'll see if the word is in the vocabulary and that way check the Finnish word**

(161) I: what if you don't know some word how will you find out the meaning?

G2.1: usually **I think what it means** 'cause I can't pronounce difficult words **I think how to pronounce it** and (...) then **if I don't know I'll leave it be and think the meaning of the other word..**

(162) I: what if you are all by yourself what do you do then?

G2.2: I just **read the sentence over and over again and practice it and then I'll check the words from the vocabulary and then I'll practice the pronunciation**

I: but you check the words from the vocabulary?

G2.2: yes **if there are some difficult words** so I always check from there and if I don't remember a word **so then I always check the vocabulary** and then.. um, **then translate the word and then practice that sentence all the time and I will remember it and I know better**

(163) I: what if you talking with your uncle's friend and he speaks too fast then what do you do?

G2.2: **I ask him to repeat or if I don't know the word I'll ask Marko and he will ask it** because he speaks Australian English you know Australia and English mixed together so it is a bit more difficult when you don't quite understand you have to speak more slowly and clearly, even Marko doesn't quite get what he says sometimes

I: can you do anything else than that?

G2.2: **explain the words or speak more clearly that don't speak so quickly that way it is easier**

(164) G2.2: **then I do it and don't ask help from the teacher**

(165) B1.2: **I will do it quickly and ask some more from the teacher**

(166) B2.2: well **that's that then**

I: you won't leave it unfinished then?

B2.2: well **you shouldn't leave it unfinished if it's too easy**

(167) G1.2: **I do it first and leave all the difficult exercises the last**

I: why in that order?

G1.2: **it is a lot easier to leave the difficult ones then you don't ponder them for the entire lesson**

(168) G3.1: ..for example you have to **search from the vocabulary** words relating to clothes.. or **do a crossword puzzle**

(169) G2.2: the ones where **you're supposed to search the words and then do a crossword puzzle** so that's fun about the exercises

(170) I: why the crosswords and searching exercises are fun?

G2.2: because **you have to use your own brains so when there's the crossword and the word and then you have to search the word from the back of the book it is quite challenging and if you don't find the word you just have to remember it and it is fun also that you have to use both of your books and there's time to do it** there's no hassle in the class if we do it together it will turn into a shouting competition so by yourself it is more fun

(171) B1.2: **easy and the ones where you need to search for information** those are nice

(172) I: are there any other fun exercises?

G2.2: all the ones requiring **searching for words** and then if there's a **blank in a sentence** those are nice too when you have to search the correct word for it and **bingo** and all those are really fun

I: what is it about bingo that makes it fun?

G2.2: you get to choose them and the teacher says them and **you don't even have to put your hand up you can just say whether you got it or not**

(173) B3.1: I like **crosswords..** I don't care about the others.. or **the ones in which you have to translate..** those are fun too.. **bingo**

(174) G2.1: the crosswords and **the ones where you have to translate a word or write it in English**

(175) G1.2: **all the easy ones**

I: what kind of exercises are easy?

G1.2: the ones you can do with a friend and writing sentences in the notebook

I: writing tasks?

G1.2: yes

(176) B2.1: **to fill in the information about yourself and then draw a picture of yourself**

(177) G1.1: I don't know.. perhaps **reading and these.. basic issues**

(178) G1.2: perhaps the **difficult** (words) **when you learn to pronounce and write them**

(179) B1.1: **writing and pronunciation tasks** because those are important since **when you can pronounce well and remember the words then you can write**

(180) G2.2: all these **verbs and then writing and then reading**

I: why the verbs are useful?

G2.2: because I have difficulties in learning them well

(181) B1.2: the **verbal and word quizzes** where you need to know words in Finnish and **remember them by heart**

I: why those are useful?

B1.2: **because you have to practice many times to do them so you repeat them**

(182) B1.2: **the ones that have been many times before** the point is to memorize them but **I remember those exercises**

(183) G1.2: **perhaps there are no unnecessary exercises all are quite useful and important**

(184) G2.2: **all drawing exercises** and those

I: why those are unnecessary?

G2.2: **'cause you just have to draw and colour**

(185) B1.2: **difficult exercises that you don't find the correct answer no matter how you try**

(186) B2.2: **reading for exams and quizzes**

I: why exams are annoying?

B2.2: **I just don't feel like doing them**

(187) G1.2: not really **some reading tasks** are annoying and perhaps some **homework requiring reading**

I: why?

G1.2: **if you don't know how to pronounce such long sentences**

(188) B3.1: not really.. **this all we need in my opinion.. these basics..** I'm happy with this

(189) G3.1: **I don't know**

(190) B1.1: **I can't really say (...)**

(191) G1.2: **not really**

(192) B2.1: **writing stories** in English

(193) B2.2: perhaps **a bit more**

I: more what?

B2.2: **writing** even if I'm not interested

(194) G2.1: **writing sentences and stories..** that's all

(195) G2.2: that **writing, that's worrying me because I can't write properly in English, it is very difficult for me, to learn the words and writing**, that's what I'd like to learn

(196) I: is there something that you'd like to learn about the English language?
B1.2: that **I'd know almost all the words**

(197) B1.1: it is a bit like **I might look at some Finnish word.. there are no** some g.. gr -endings or beginnings so that you've got gr in the beginning or in the middle so **you look at the word and think my it's a weirds word..**

(198) B1.2: there are quite a lot of differences (in languages) there are **many different words except one word like tie** it is the same word or **you might think in the beginning that is it a tie (road) like in Finnish but isn't it a tie**

(199) I: what kind of language English is in your opinion?
G2.2: quite difficult and sometimes **it sounds funny when you mix some other language it sounds quite peculiar**

(200) I: why do you enjoy reading them?
G2.2: 'cause **it's made completely different than Finnish books so it is quite different to read in English**
I: can you give me an example of that?
G2.2: **the words are if there's a Finnish sentence the words are in order in a line but in English they are written in different places**
I: do you mean the dialogue?
G2.2: yeah or.. the words are in different places that in Finnish **like in English you write the words in different places in a sentence and in Finnish words are in a different order**
I: do you mean the word order?
G2.2: yea..

(201) G2.2: **in Finnish some words are difficult to say and then I don't know how to say them and in English some words are so easy to say and pronounce** perhaps that's why I feel that English is easier than Finnish

(202) I: what about **writing stories** (is that easy)?
B1.1: I have never tried that so it might be average but **first I should learn the sentences.. I should learn the words at first of course and then I should know the sentences and then I might write (stories) but we're only learning sentences (...)**

(203) B2.2: I guess there has been
I: what kind of changes?
B2.2: **perhaps I can speak English better**

(204) G1.2: some how
I: in what way?
G1.2: **I've tried to participate the lesson and study**

(205) B1.2: **there are although I always have to do homework and be active**
I: why do you have to be active?
B1.2: 'cause the class will change and this is one of the most important grades

(206) G2.2: **quite noticeably** because last year I was much worse now **I have improved and it is much easier now that I have practiced more so it is easier now**
I: has more practice helped you?
G2.2: yes **practice helps a lot always**

(207) G1.2: now **I learn a bit easier**
I: why?
G1.2: **I'm quiet in the class and study**

(208) B2.2: we've got **an English war game** in which they speak some English so **I have perhaps learned some from that**

(209) B1.2: it has when my school went a bit better **when we started studying it felt that it went better**

I: was it easier to study before?

B1.2: it was easier to go to school and you learned from the tv and movies

I: why was it easier before?

B1.2: I guess **I had more enthusiasm to study**

I: has English turned more difficult nowadays?

B1.2: yes it has you **have to write sentences** and all that

(210) G1.1: I don't know **perhaps read a lot more.. that's how you learn** more

(211) G2.1: **do more exercises and read and perform in the class and.. those chapters and all that fun**

(212) B3.1: now I could **totally new issues..** some new **words** for instance..

(213) G2.2: **peacefully and patiently**

(214) B1.1: **peacefully and then if someone gets it wrong it will be fixed**

(215) G3.1: that **I could answer correctly in English**

(216) I: do you enjoy working on your own or with a partner?

B2.1: **with a partner would be better**

I: does the partner help you?

B2.1: **it would help me a bit**

(217) I: do you enjoy working on your own or with a partner or in group?

B3.1: **sometimes I like working on my own but sometimes I'd like to work with friends**

I: why working with a friend would be nice?

B3.1: 'cause **it's sometimes boring to be by yourself and there's nothing to help you**

(218) I: what if you could choose would you work by yourself or with a partner or in groups?

G2.2: **with a partner** since **working in groups makes so much noise and I usually lose my nerves** and **it should be calm so if you work with a partner it is usually quite peaceful** working in a group it is sometimes loud shouting

(219) I: do you enjoy working on your own or with a partner or in group?

G3.1: **alone**

I: why do you prefer working alone?

G3.1: **perhaps that's the most peaceful**

(220) I: why alone?

G1.2: **I would learn much better and the partner wouldn't tell me all the answers**

(221) I: would you like to work in a group or with a partner or

G2.2: **with a partner and then working in a group is good too since you learn to work with others**

(222) I: do you prefer working alone or with a friend or in a group?

G2.1: **with a friend is nice and alone.. I don't know if working in a group is successful**

(223) I: what about groupwork?

G1.1: **no since you have to ask opinion from so many people**

(224) B1.2: **perhaps alone and then with the help of the teacher**

I: why in that kind of a situation?

B1.2: **there's not so much noise so you can concentrate**

(225) G2.2: when **it's peaceful and there's not too much noise** and then when **you're working all by yourself and there's quiet and you can think with your own thoughts** without anyone being next to you babbling, **it's that quietness and peacefulness that are the best**

(226) G2.2: **if there's awful hassle** and so on, then **you can't concentrate** and then the others are talking and then **you join their chat and then you forget to do what you're supposed to do**

(227) B1.2: yes there has been **when I've forgotten to do my homework that I haven't done them I'll be left behind from others**

(228) B2.2: well **I can't do homework when I'm not..**

I: is homework too difficult?

B2.2: well **I never feel like doing them** no matter what the subject is

I: could you then learn some other way than doing homework?

B2.2: **I suppose not 'cause I have to do homework otherwise I won't learn**

(229) G1.2: **exams**

I: why exams?

G1.2: **because they are difficult**

(230)G2.2: **when there is peaceful and you can concentrate on your own exercises and do them in peace**

(231) G1.2: perhaps **easy exercises and then homework if there are easy exercises**

I: why homework is fun?

G1.2: **you learn to do those exercises by doing homework and then you learn the language quite well**

(232) B1.2: well that homework has been made and there are easy issues and **information comes and you get excited**

(233) I: if there for example is some difficult exercise how would you like the teacher to help you?

G1.2: **try to explain like how it should be and learn from that**

(234) G2.2: **by explaining the issue if I don't understand it**, understanding issues is difficult for me

I: is it just by listening?

G2.2: yes and then **if there's a difficult word that I don't understand it has to be explained to me quite specifically so that I will understand it** and comprehend it, 'cause **I have that understanding and comprehending issues quite a difficult issue** in words and these

(235) B1.2: **when you ask from the teacher she will help and give you advice** for the exercise and **doesn't give you the right answer** straight away for it so that **you have to think about the answer** so that she doesn't give it straight away like that is the answer

I: why it cannot be said straight away?

B1.2: **so that you have to think about it and the answer comes when she just helps**

(236) G3.1: **by questioning**

(237) I: how can you be helped?

G1.2: well **by asking the words** and then **by giving some exercises** and then **if you don't know how to do then the teacher would look at them**

(238) G3.1: **while questioning dad or mom**

(239) B1.2: well **there's not really no-one at home to help dad either because when he was at school they didn't study it much**

(240) G1.2: **sometimes big sister** helps if I need help

(241) B1.2: **they ask words and question the homework**

(242) B1.1: well **a friend could ask** something and could say in English **ask some questions or speak in English**

(243) G2.2: **a friend always helps me if I don't know something I always check all the answers from her**

I: does that help you if you check the answers?

G2.2: no it doesn't help **I should study and practice myself** and look all the answers from the book by myself that would be it

(244) B3.1: yes I have **sometimes ask my mom to help me** but **more I have done them by myself**

(245) I: yes, does anyone else help you with studying than the English teacher?

G2.2: well **I help myself, practice you know**

(246) I: have you asked help from your friends?

G1.2: **no I haven't**

(247) I: is doing exercises (important)?

G2.1: that is quite **easy if there's some next to you giving help so then it feels quite easy.. when you're alone and think that you can't do anything then..**