

**An exploration of how teacher students create their
understanding of language awareness**

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ABSTRACT

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Globalisation and increased migration have led to demographic shifts in Finnish classrooms with more pupils coming from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The Finnish national core curriculum acknowledges this shift defining school communities and each community member as being multilingual stressing the importance of school communities to be language aware. Studies indicate that the practical implementation of language aware pedagogies are lacking in Finland and the purpose of this study is to explore how teacher students at the University of Jyväskylä create their understanding of language awareness.

The study compares discourses of 14 class teacher and 3 special education teacher students in order to determine whether their educational backgrounds influence their understanding of language awareness. Data were collected by a field worker for a research project being conducted by the university. An iterative qualitative approach was used for the analysis.

Findings indicated that class teacher and special education teacher students created their understanding of language awareness slightly differently from one another, with their educational backgrounds potentially affecting how they create this understanding.

The main conclusion from this study is that class and special education teacher students could benefit from increased collaboration and sharing of knowledge to ensure that they are better equipped to meet the linguistic demands of present-day Finnish classrooms.

Keywords: language awareness, multilingualism, national curriculum, teacher education, Finland

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1 INTRODUCTION

As a result of globalisation and increased migration during the 21st century, classrooms across Europe are becoming increasingly diverse with pupils coming from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This demographic shift has been acknowledged by the European Commission (2020) who actively promote multilingualism as they see it as a means to ‘unite people, render other countries and their cultures accessible, and strengthen intercultural understanding’. Finland has been no exception to this demographic shift and has recognised this need to promote multilingualism in schools through the Finnish national core curriculum (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2014). The curriculum highlights a school’s vital role in shaping Finland’s contemporary multilingual society, and which aims ‘to strengthen students’ desire and ability to act in culturally, internationally and linguistically diverse environments and contexts’ (Moloney, Lobytsyna, & Moate, 2020, p. 18). However, whilst many pupils in Finnish classrooms are multilingual, the languages of instruction in schools continue to be mostly in either Finnish or Swedish, the two national languages of Finland.

The Finnish Constitution states that everyone living in Finland has the right to maintain and develop their own language and culture (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2020). One attempt to promote this notion has been the availability of heritage language (home language/mother tongue) classes at pre-school, comprehensive school and upper secondary school levels. These classes, however, are organised on a municipal basis, meaning that the classes and languages offered vary between municipalities according to demand, and they are not a mandatory service so municipalities could decide not to offer them (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2016). Furthermore, the responsibility for preserving and developing a pupil’s home language and culture lies with the family and they must enrol the pupil to the classes, the pupil is not automatically enrolled. Even though heritage language classes may be offered and pupils have access to them, this does not change the fact that home languages are seldom

acknowledged within the mainstream classrooms, suggesting their institutional status could be strengthened (Tarnanen, Kauppinen, & Ylämäki, 2017).

Alisaari, Heikkola, Commins and Acquah (2019) found that whilst Finnish teachers' attitudes towards multilingualism and teaching multilingual pupils are generally positive, which is in line with Kimanen, Alisaari and Kallioniemi's (2019) findings, they also found that Finnish teachers held varying views about multilingual ideologies and the use of the home language in the classroom. One quarter of the teachers they studied implemented a 'Finnish only' language policy in their classrooms, believing that use of the home language would hinder the pupils' learning of Finnish. This coincides with the findings of Tarnanen, Kauppinen and Ylämäki (2017) in which pupils described how languages overlapped in their free time, however in school the simultaneous use of different languages was rare. Tarnanen et al. (2017) also reported that the importance and potential of pupils' home languages as learning resources did not emerge in the speech of the teachers and students.

These findings demonstrate that, whilst at a macro-level context, multilingualism and multilingual practices in school exist within the context of the Finnish national core curriculum, however on the micro-level these practices are not being realised in the classroom. This indicates that Finnish teachers may lack sufficient knowledge about multilingual learners' language development in addition to not understanding the importance of the home language in learning. Therefore, the education of all pre-service teachers in language awareness, along with the professional development of all in-service teachers, could be considered vital if progress is to be made at the micro-level regarding multilingualism and multilingual practices in Finnish schools.

The purpose of this Master's thesis will therefore be to explore how pre-service teachers at a Finnish higher education institution orient to and create their understanding of language awareness in relation to their educational backgrounds and interests. The research questions for this study are as follows:

1. How do the teacher students orient to the notion of language awareness?

2. Do the teacher students' educational backgrounds and interests influence their understanding of language awareness? If so, how are they influenced?

Through gaining insight into how teacher students understand the concept of language awareness, teacher educators could become more knowledgeable about where potential gaps in their students' understanding come from, thus enabling them to make appropriate adaptations and changes to initial teacher education programmes to ensure that all future teachers receive the necessary tools to best equip them to meet the linguistically diverse demands of the modern Finnish classroom and to meet the demands set by the Finnish national core curriculum.

The data for this study have been collected as part of a research project conducted by the University of Jyväskylä. The research project is an international collaborative project funded both nationally and internationally. The research project focuses on the role of language and education and aims to make concerted efforts to better understand and develop the pedagogical use of language across the board for all teachers.

2 LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION

2.1 Multilingual education and multilingualism in Finland

The Finnish national core curriculum (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2014, p. 28), from the offset, defines every school community and community member as being multilingual and stresses the importance of school communities as being language conscious or language aware. Before exploring what it means to be language aware, we first must understand what it means to be multilingual and how multilingualism fits into the context of education.

The European Commission (2007, p. 6) has defined multilingualism as ‘the ability of societies, institutions, groups and individuals to engage, on a regular basis, with more than one language in their day-to-day lives’, which highlights both the individual and social aspects of being multilingual. This resonates with Moate’s (2017, p. 1) understanding of language as ‘a complex system connecting individuals with the social world’, and it is through these connections that we begin to create identities for ourselves. Edwards (2009) explains that, as humans, we innately need psychosocial anchors, psychological ways to connect ourselves to the surrounding social environment to provide a sense of being, and that is why we create identities. By using language as a tool to communicate and connect with others, it then ‘becomes the conduit for constructing an identity’ (Niño-Murcia & Rothman, 2008, p. 16). As Bustamante-López (2008) argues, the identity one assumes varies greatly depending on the social context and with whom one is speaking and in what language. In addition to providing multiple senses of identity, Cenoz (2009, p. 5) notes that multilingual individuals may also benefit from having increased possibilities for mobility, increased awareness of other cultures, and being multilingual may also improve individual cognitive skills. These benefits support Edwards’s (2003, p. 41) understanding that the importance of being bi- or multilingual is above all social and psychological rather than linguistic.

What, then, are the implications of this when we consider multilingualism within the context of education? Multilingual education has been defined in many ways, with traditional definitions tending to refer to the use of two or more languages of instruction such as those by Cummins (2008) and Skutnabb-Kangas and McCarty (2008). Cenoz (2009, p. 4) develops the definition further by stating that multilingual education is 'the use of two or more languages in education provided that schools aim at multilingualism and multiliteracy'. Here the definition shifts away from referring specifically to the language of instruction to a more general 'use of languages in education' indicating that multilingual education is a more complex phenomenon. Cenoz (2009, p. 3) elaborates on this by explaining that multilingualism in education can encompass many perspectives such as language processing, language acquisition and language use by individual learners. She does however overlook the role teachers play in multilingual education and how teachers' use of language and teachers' responses to learners' language use could further shape the sense of multilingual education.

Cenoz's (2009) definition also refers to schools aiming at multilingualism, which is an important distinction from simply labelling a school as multilingual because the pupils speak different languages. It implies that educational planning plays a central role in multilingual education. By affording space for multilingualism in schools, educational planners are also advocating for social justice, empowerment and access to democracy (Paulsrud, Zilliacus, & Ekberg, 2020). This notion is supported by Hélot and Young's (2006, p. 69) definition of a multilingual school as a space where linguistic and cultural diversity is acknowledged and valued; a space where pupils feel safe to speak their home languages and where teachers do not feel threatened when they hear languages they do not know; and a space where multilingualism and plurilingual repertoires of pupils are recognised and valued as resources. In addition to this definition, understanding how language contributes to the formation of identities should also be considered, because by supporting and valuing pupils' home languages multilingual schools are also supporting and valuing pupils'

identities shaped by those languages. It involves much more than just valuing linguistic and cultural diversity, pupils' entire senses of being and existence are also being supported and valued.

In their study, Paulsrud et al. (2020) concluded that space for multilingualism is explicitly afforded through the national core curriculum of Finland and that it supports the type of multilingual school envisioned by Hélot and Young (2006). However, they did also conclude that, despite the advocacy for multilingualism in the national core curriculum, the Finnish education system is 'a monolingual way of perceiving multilingualism' (Paulsrud et al., 2020, p. 309). This is due to Finland's official status as a bilingual nation, and as stated in the Basic Education Act (628/1998) (Finnish Parliament, 1998), the language of instruction in school is either Finnish or Swedish. The result of this being a system of parallel monolingualism in which Finnish speakers and Swedish speakers are taught separately rather than a functionally bilingual system existing. This monolingualism in schools is also restrictive of pupils' home languages as Alisaari et al.'s (2019) findings highlight. They found that, although Finnish teachers hold generally positive attitudes towards multilingualism and teaching multilingual learners, many Finnish teachers still taught monolingually with many even advocating for the use of Finnish in the homes of those students whose home language is a language other than Finnish. Findings from Slembrouck, Van Avermaet and Van Gorp's (2018, p. 15) study showed that 'strong monolingual beliefs appear to go together with less confidence in the multilingual learner' and, as a result of having less confidence in the learner's abilities, lower expectations tend to be manifested which impacts on the behaviour of both the teacher and the learner. Therefore, whilst many teachers may believe that advocating a monolingual approach will benefit learners by immersing them in the dominant language, the result may have the opposite desired outcome. This highlights the potential importance of educating teachers in multilingual approaches to education. Supporting this notion, Alisaari et al.'s (2019) findings also indicated that language awareness significantly influenced

teachers' beliefs related to multilingualism, and they concluded that both pre- and in-service teachers would benefit from training in language aware teaching.

As Lasagabaster and Huguet (2007, p. 1) state, 'language attitudes are learnt and, therefore, educators play a paramount role in their formation'. They also concluded that pre-service teachers are more likely to renegotiate their attitudes and understandings towards linguistic diversity (2007, p. 237). A similar conclusion was reached by Gorter and Arocena (2020) in their study of in-service teachers and how an in-service professional development course helped to positively change teachers' attitudes and beliefs towards multilingualism and the utilization of multilingual pedagogies to address the linguistic diversity in classrooms. Furthermore, a intervention study conducted in Germany also demonstrated that change in educators' attitudes towards linguistic diversity is possible (Putjata, 2018). These studies support Alisaari et al.'s (2019) findings which emphasise the importance of increased pre-service and in-service teacher training in language awareness and language aware teaching practices in Finland.

2.2 Language awareness

The term language awareness (LA) began to gain prominence during the early 1980s following the publication of a book entitled *Awareness of Language* by Eric Hawkins in 1984. Hawkins recognised 'three major problems in the UK education system: the teaching of literacy in English, the teaching of foreign languages and the growing prejudices towards immigrant languages' (Hélot, van Gorp, Frijns, & Sierens, 2018, p. 2) and he also felt that there was a lack of cooperation between teachers of English and teachers of foreign languages (Hélot, 2017). In his LA model, Hawkins (1991) proposed the contrasting of new or foreign languages with languages that the students already knew as a means to help facilitate the beginning of foreign language studies but also as a means to help increase literacy in the mother tongue (Finkbeiner & White, 2017). Hawkins's LA model draws on the work of Vygotsky (1986), who theorised that

metalinguistic abilities emerge as cognition develops and changes as a child gets older. Vygotsky stated that 'a child's understanding of his native language is enhanced by learning a foreign' (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 160), and Hawkins's model expands on this by suggesting that knowledge or understanding of any language, be it the mother tongue or a foreign language, can be enhanced through the understanding of the interconnected nature of language.

Hawkins's LA model pioneered the way for interest and research in LA amongst educators and researchers, which led to the need to effectively define it. One of the first definitions of LA was by Donmall (1985, p. 7), who defined LA as 'a person's sensitivity to and conscious awareness of the nature of language and its role in human life'. Later in 1994, the Association for Language Awareness (ALA) was founded, which aims at 'supporting and promoting activities across the whole breadth of Language Awareness' (ALA, Mission statement, 2021) and which defines LA as 'explicit knowledge about language, and conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning, language teaching and language use' (ALA, 2021). The aims of ALA highlight the 'breadth' of LA, and as Jessner (2017, p. 27) points out, the 'breadth', or theoretical scope, of LA can cover fields in (but is not limited to) linguistics, developmental psychology and education, meaning that 'to reach a definition of language awareness which could be acknowledged by all linguistic disciplines might present an unrealistic albeit wishful endeavor'.

Within the context of today's modern and globalising society, a society characterised by changing populations and increasing linguistic and cultural diversity, LA has garnered renewed attention across many European countries. Due to this renewed interest, Frijns, Sierens, van Avermaet, Sercu and van Gorp (2018) stressed the need to identify an evidence-based definition of LA in order to develop the concept within education making it more coherent and relevant to all teachers and learners today. Frijns et al. (2018) aimed to clarify the concept by evaluating the effects of LA against the five domains of LA as proposed by James and Garrett (1992).

The five domains of LA are (1) cognitive, (2) affective, (3) social, (4) performance, and (5) power and can be summarised as follows (Frijns et al., 2018) (Finkbeiner & White, 2017):

- (1) The cognitive domain focuses on the patterns and rules of language and deals with gains in metalinguistic and broader metacognitive competences.
- (2) The affective domain focuses on attitudes and emotions and concerns developing curiosity, tolerance, positive attitudes and understanding towards dialects and other languages.
- (3) The social domain focuses on the role of language in effective communication and interaction with others in order to improve relationships and establish social harmony.
- (4) The performance domain focuses on the positive gains in a learner's language skills as a result of having greater awareness of language.
- (5) The power domain focuses on the potential of language to be used as a tool of manipulation and on civic empowerment in that all citizens have an equal possibility to participate in society.

Following their examination of 40 studies that reported the effects of LA, Frijns et al. (2018, p. 97) reported that of the five domains, 'the most robust evidence-based effects of LA' were situated within the cognitive, affective and social domains and not within the performance and power domains. Based on these findings, the following evidence-based definition of LA was proposed (Frijns et al., 2018, p. 100):

'Language awareness aims at the development of sensitivity to and awareness of the existence of a multitude of languages and associated underlying cultures and frames of reference in our world. The potential of LA is situated in three domains: (1) the affective domain, by creating an attitude of openness and sensitivity towards linguistic diversity; (2) the cognitive domain, by improving knowledge about and insights into

language and metalinguistic skills and (3) the social domain, by improving the engagement and well-being of pupils, especially ethnic minority children, if their linguistic identity is welcomed unconditionally at school.'

This evidence-based definition of LA provides the theoretical lens through which this present study will be conducted. In order to explore how teacher students orient to and create their understanding of LA, it is necessary therefore to examine their discourses through the lenses of the affective, cognitive and social domains. By examining the teacher students' discourses through the lens of the affective domain we seek to gain insights into their emotional responses to and openness to linguistic diversity; the lens of the cognitive domain may provide insights into their greater metalinguistic understanding; and the lens of the social domain may provide insights into their understanding of how pupils' wellbeing and social harmony can be upheld.

Examining the teacher student discourses in this way may make it easier to identify where potential gaps in their knowledge exist, thus providing a tool to inform initial teacher educators in how to better prepare future teachers with the 'competences and skills needed for handling linguistic diversity' in schools today (Bergroth & Haagensen, 2020, p. 1).

3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STUDY

3.1 Qualitative research: an exploratory case study

The overarching purpose of this research is to explore the phenomenon of language awareness within the context of teacher education at a Finnish higher education institution with the specific aim to explore how pre-service teachers from different educational backgrounds orient themselves to the concept of language awareness and how they create their understanding of this phenomenon in order to better inform initial teacher education. Considering the purpose and aim of the research, a qualitative research method was used as it focuses on the participants, their lived experiences and understandings, and allows for interpretation and analysis of their viewpoints regarding the phenomenon (Tracy, 2013, p. 5). Furthermore, Tracy (2013, p. 7) highlights the usefulness of qualitative research ‘for understanding a range of societal issues that arise from particular cultural contexts’, making a qualitative method relevant for this research as it explores the phenomenon within a particular cultural (Finnish) context.

The specific approach used for this research is an exploratory case study. The case study method was chosen as it enables the researcher to investigate ‘a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context’ (Yin, 2009, p. 18) allowing for a more holistic investigation of the phenomena. This case study can be considered exploratory since the data collection took place prior to the final definition of the research questions (Yin, 2012). In other words, the data were collected with the general aim of collating as many insights as possible from teacher students, although the particular research questions addressed in this study were developed later based on the data that were gathered.

Yin (2009) details four types of case study design, and this present study can be classified as an embedded single-case design. The rationale for this research being a single-case study is that it is a representative case. It aims to explore a phenomenon and provide a ‘representative’ or ‘typical’ understanding

of the phenomenon (Ibid., p. 48). The case study can be considered embedded as it contains 'more than one unit of analysis' (Ibid., p. 50).

For the present case study, the context of the study are the Departments of Education and Teacher Education at the University of Jyväskylä. The case, or phenomenon, being examined is language awareness and the units selected for analysis are class teacher students who have elected to specialise in language education and special education teacher students.

This research can also be considered a comparative study as its aim is to highlight any similarities and differences between the two teacher groups in how they understand language awareness. By comparing the two datasets side by side, it made it easier to distinguish these similarities and differences and it also enabled the researcher to be more sensitive to what was included within the data.

3.2 Research participants and data collection

This present study is based on data collected over a period of six months for a research project conducted at the University of Jyväskylä. The research project is an international collaborative project funded both nationally and internationally. The research project focuses on the role of language and education and aims to make concerted efforts to better understand and develop the pedagogical use of language across the board for all teachers. The data were collected by a project field worker at the university.

The student participants for the research project include student teachers from four disciplinary backgrounds: subject teachers specialising in music education, classroom teachers, classroom teachers electing to specialise in language teaching, and special education teachers. However, due to the limited amount of data gathered from the first two groups, they will not be taken into consideration for this study. Therefore, this study focuses solely on the special education teacher students (SETS) and classroom teacher students who elected to specialise in language education (CTS).

In total, 14 CTSs participated in the data collection. All 14 students were in the first year of their studies at the time of data collection. It should also be noted that at the time of data collection, the CTSs had not yet completed any credits in their language education specialisation. Three SETS participated in the data collection. The SETS were at varying stages of their studies at the time of data collection with one student being in the first year of their studies and the two others being in the third year. Distinctions will be made in the data analysis as to what stage the special education students are at in their studies as deemed significant to the findings. All of the students involved signed consent forms and gave permission for data collection in accordance with the terms provided by the research project.

Multiple forms of data were collected, which are outlined in Table 1. below.

STUDENT GROUP	TYPE OF DATA	MEANS OF DATA COLLECTION	NATURE OF THE DATA	AMOUNT OF DATA
Class teacher students specialising in language education	Written.	Collected using the Padlet online learning platform.	The data are split into two groups: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. personal thoughts on language awareness and linguistically sensitive teaching. 2. group reflection on language awareness and linguistically sensitive teaching. 	Approximately 2 pages of text with consistent font size and line spacing
	Transcription of online meeting.	Collected from recordings of online meetings hosted using the Zoom web conferencing platform.	The discussions from these meetings cover the following topics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. what language awareness and linguistically sensitive teaching mean to them. 2. why language awareness is or is not important to 	Approximately 48 pages of text with consistent font size and line spacing

			pupils, teachers and teaching.	
Special education students	Written.	Collected using the Moodle online learning platform.	<p>The data consists of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. individual reflections on language aware practices. 2. group discussions and reflections on language aware practices in response to four videos the students were required to watch. 3. individual reflections on what language awareness and linguistically sensitive teaching is. 4. individual reflection and SWOT-analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) regarding language awareness. 	Approximately 31 pages of text with consistent font size and line spacing
	Transcription of online meeting.	Collected from a recording of an online meeting hosted using the Zoom web conferencing platform.	The group discussion involved the students discussing their personal SWOT-analyses and then formulating a group SWOT-analysis together regarding language awareness.	Approximately 28 pages of text with consistent font size and line spacing
	Written.	Collected using a SWOT-analysis handout.	The data consist of individual and group SWOT-analyses.	Approximately 11 pages of text with consistent font size and line spacing

Table. 1 An overview of the data set

As seen in Table 1 above, two main types of data were collected, written data and transcription data. Both of these data types help bring their own insights to the study. The transcriptions of the online lectures and discussions provide a real-time lens from which to view the participants thought processes, giving a clearer insight into how the participants create their understanding. The written data on the other hand provide more insight into the conclusions reached by the participants since the data are of a more reflective nature as the participants have had time to think about and process the topic they are studying.

The nature of the data collected also varied. Firstly, both individual and collective data were collected. Whilst individual data help provide a glimpse of the understandings of individual participants, through the collective data insights can be gained from how the participants create and expand their understanding from one another. The tasks given to the participants also affected the nature of the data. Both teacher student groups were asked to reflect on what LA is and what it means to them. SETS exclusively, however, were asked to reflect on language aware practices from their own schooling, their time at the university and from their teaching and work practices. Additionally, they were asked to reflect on language aware practices in response to four videos they watched dealing with the topic. SETS were also asked to conduct SWOT analyses reflecting on their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in relation to LA. These extra tasks that SETS were asked to complete could encourage more unfolding of thought and deeper thinking about the topic of LA in comparison to CTS. CTS did, however, have more participants so they had more opportunities to promote and encourage new ideas from one another.

3.3 Data analysis

The approach chosen for the data analysis was an iterative analysis as it allowed me the freedom and flexibility to connect the emergent data with other existing theories and models. As Tracy (2013, p. 184) explains, 'rather than grounding the

meaning solely in the emergent data, an iterative approach also encourages reflection upon the active interests, current literature, granted priorities, and various theories the researcher brings to the data'. This approach enabled me to revisit the data multiple times, which in turn allowed me to refine my focus and understanding of the data.

The data analysis consisted of four main phases: data organisation, data immersion, primary-cycle coding and secondary-cycle coding, which will be outlined in the following sub-sections.

3.3.1 Data organisation

Since the data were collected by the research project field worker and later forwarded to me in accordance with the University of Jyväskylä's agreement for use of research data, the data first needed to be organised in order to make the analysis more straightforward.

When I received the data from the field worker, they had already been organised into four folders according to the disciplinary background of the teacher students: class teachers, subject teachers specialising in music education, class teachers specialising in language education, and special education teachers. Additionally, the data concerning the special education teacher students had been further organised according to the nature of the data: reflections on language awareness, reflections on language aware practices and SWOT analyses.

I began my data organisation by first numbering the individual documents and titling them according to the students' disciplinary background. Document 1 contained data concerning class teacher students. Document 2 contained data concerning class teacher students and subject teacher students specialising in music education. Documents 3 to 6 contained data concerning class teacher students specialising in language education, and documents 7 to 20 contained data concerning special education teacher students.

After this initial stage of organisation, I edited the titles of the documents adding further information about where the data were collected and the nature of the data. For example, document 3 contains data concerning class teacher students collected from the Padlet online learning platform in which the students reflected on what language awareness means to them. This document was titled as follows: '3. CTS – padlet – what does LA mean to you.docx'

For the special education teacher students, further distinctions were made in the document titles according to their level of study. For example, document 12 was titled as follows: '12. SETS – moodle – intermediate student 1 – reflection on what LA is.docx'

By organising and titling the data in this way, it meant that I could quickly and easily access specific data entries making for a more efficient handling and analysis of the data.

3.3.2 Data immersion and primary-cycle coding

After organising the data in a way that was logical for me, the next step was to familiarise myself with the data and I did this through multiple closed readings of the data. This aided me in understanding the nature of the data I was dealing with, whilst also enabling me to think about the data and begin to gain insights and make connections with other studies and literature. Already during the closed reading phase important themes and topics emerged, which would help make the subsequent coding cycles easier and more efficient. These themes and topics were noted down in my coding journal, but no actual codes were established yet at this stage.

Following the closed readings of the dataset, I began the primary-cycle of coding. For the primary-cycle I used three codes, cognitive, social and affective, which were derived from the five domains of language awareness as proposed by James and Garrett (1992). The performance and power domains were excluded due to findings by Frijns et al. (2018, p. 97) who determined that 'the most robust evidence-based effects of LA are not situated within the performance

and power domains but within the cognitive, affective and social domains'. In addition, colours were assigned to each of the codes, green to cognitive, red to social, and blue to affective. By assigning colours to the codes, it allowed me to easily make highlights in the dataset using the respective code colours. This meant I could see more clearly the different instances for each of the primary codes.

Before commencing the primary-cycle of coding, it was essential to define what is meant by the cognitive, social and affective domains so I knew what to look out for as I worked through the data again. I used the definitions presented by Frijns et al. (2018) in their aforementioned study.

Frijns et al. (2018, p. 90) defined the cognitive domain as concerning 'a growing insight into patterns and rules of languages and deals with gains in metalinguistic or broader metacognitive competences. It also focuses on the development of knowledge about language, languages and varieties of languages'. Below is an excerpt from the dataset to demonstrate how this code was applied.

"talking about the rhymes of the words, synonymies, opposites and so on are from my opinion things that are useful for all pupils" - class teacher student - Padlet data

In this example, the student makes direct reference to the importance of talking about words and the patterns associated with words. Such patterns can include word rhymes, synonyms and antonyms, which are all explicitly mentioned. Talking about language in this way is a metalinguistic competence. Therefore, I determined that this extract matches the definition of the cognitive domain and was coded as such.

The social domain was defined by Frijns et al. (2018, p. 90) as concerning 'the improvement of relationships between different groups of language users in society in order to establish better relationships and, eventually, social harmony'. Below is an excerpt from the dataset to demonstrate how this code was applied.

“If a class is multicultural, one takes into consideration every pupil’s own mother tongue and culture and gives every student the same skills both for the student’s own language and for learning and practicing the language that she/he is learning.” – special education teacher student – Moodle data – student reflection

In this excerpt, the student discusses the importance of considering every pupil’s own mother tongue and culture and providing every student with the same skills to progress in both their mother tongue and in the language they are learning. This student understands that no pupil should be treated as inferior or superior based on the language they speak, therefore demonstrating their understanding of the need to improve the relationships between different groups of language users and matching the definition of the social domain. Furthermore, I understood the phrase ‘the improvement of relationships between different groups of language users’ as also including providing equal opportunities, reducing bias or prejudice between users, developing understanding of other people, culture and languages.

LA in the affective domain is defined by Frijns et al. (2018, p. 90) as ‘developing curiosity and a positive attitude towards languages in the world’, however I found this definition quite limiting in its scope as it relates only towards attitudes held towards languages. Many of the participants held various other opinions and attitudes towards LA, which did not relate specifically to developing attitudes towards languages, and I feel these opinions of LA still inform the participants understanding of the concept in a meaningful way. For example, below are two excerpts from the dataset.

“I myself have been thinking a lot about linguistically sensitive teaching and teacherhood, that there is a ‘model for language awareness’ and in the curriculum, the subjects are even mentioned separately. Naturally, it makes me feel a little pressure on my shoulders as the special education teacher might as

well have all the subjects.” - special education teacher student – Moodle data – student reflection

“It is always hard in a way that in teacherhood, at least for myself, it comes somehow a little automatically that one repeats those things that oneself has learnt and what one has seen in teacherhood and what has happened in my school [...], at least for me it feels like this language awareness brings in that regard challenges when for me it was not a part of my school life and then somehow one needs to go to a new field in a way, to break new grounds, so one needs to be really conscious, like it demands a conscious change at least from me.” - class teacher student – Zoom discussion

In these excerpts, both of the participants perceive LA as being something challenging. Both participants also make reference to their future practice with the SETS feeling that there will be more pressure to teach in a language aware way due to the fact that special education teachers must teach a variety of subjects compared to a subject teacher who usually only needs to focus on a couple of subjects. The CTS refers to the difficulty of emancipating oneself from the attitudes acquired through a lived experience. If one has not experienced language aware teaching during their own education, then it becomes more difficult to relate to the concept and apply it to your own future teaching. Whilst these two excerpts do not deal with the attitudes towards languages, and thus do not fall under Frijns et al.’s (2018) definition of the affective domain of LA, the excerpts do deal with attitudes towards LA overall, which are equally important to consider as they could have implications for how future teachers implement LA in their teaching practices.

Donmall (1985, p. 7) provides a more comprehensive definition of the affective domain of LA describing it as ‘forming attitudes, awakening and developing attention, sensitivity, curiosity, interest and aesthetic response’. I feel this definition is more holistic as it includes the formation of attitudes of LA more generally and it not limited to forming attitudes towards languages specifically.

I therefore based my reasoning for applying the primary affective code to the dataset on this definition.

Having established the three primary-level, or descriptive, codes based on Frijns et al.'s (2018) evidence-based definitions of the cognitive, social and affective domains of LA, in the following subsection I will outline the processes involved in determining the secondary-level, or analytic and interpretive codes.

3.3.3 Secondary-cycle coding

Secondary-cycle coding is essential as it provides a critical examination of the codes identified during the primary cycle and it requires the researcher to undergo a more data driven reading of the dataset. The purpose of the secondary-level codes is, as described by Tracy (2013, p. 194), to 'explain, theorize and synthesize' the data. They provide a refined understanding of the primary-level codes and provide the means by which to analyse the data.

Whilst primary-level codes are generated by the data, secondary-level codes require creative interpretation and a strong familiarity with the dataset. Therefore, the first step in establishing secondary-level codes for my dataset was to identify recurring topics and themes within the data. The second step was to then link these topics and themes together in relation to the particular concepts with which they relate to, in this instance the domains of LA. The final step in determining the secondary-level codes was to consider the interpretation of the data and to establish codes that allow for interpretation and analysis of the data.

In total, 23 distinct secondary-level codes were generated for my dataset and these are outlined below:

Primary code: cognitive

Secondary codes: metalinguistic; language use; support for learning; subject language; language variation; learning difficulties

Primary code: social

Secondary codes: develop social understanding; sense of community; promotion of heritage language/culture; equality; atmosphere; support identity; reduce prejudice; empowerment; stakeholder collaboration; conflict of opinion

Primary code: affective

Secondary codes: develop understanding of language; language appreciation; language as a resource; challenge; past experience; personal development; support identity; personal motivation

In order to demonstrate how I came to generate these codes and how I understood them for the purpose of my analysis, I will now provide some examples from each of the three primary-level codes and examples from the dataset. It should also be noted that the secondary code 'support identity' was generated under both the social and affective primary codes. I understand the concept of identity as something that comes both from within ourselves (affective) but also as something that is shaped by the people, communities and cultures around us (social). Therefore, the code 'support identity' functions as a hybrid secondary-level code as I understand it to exist both socially and affectively.

One of the secondary-level codes created under the primary-level code 'cognitive' was 'subject language'. I understood and defined this using the following criterion:

- Subject language refers to the notion that school subjects have their own subject-specific vocabularies that need to be learned as they have specific meanings in specialised contexts. Having awareness of and understanding that each school subject has its own language and therefore, that language can be incorporated and become part of all school subjects.

Below are two examples from the dataset to illustrate how this code was applied.

“Then for example how that everyday language school language and subject specific language like how they all should be taken into consideration.”

– class teacher student – Zoom discussion

In the above example, the teacher student directly refers to the distinction in language used within the school understanding that everyday language and school language are different. Furthermore, they also directly refer to the notion of subject specific language which agrees with criteria one mentioned above.

“If a school and a classroom are language aware, can language aware practice in my opinion be for example noticing the language of the subject that is being taught, not only for example in teaching English or Swedish but, as I have learnt from the course materials, every subject has its own language, also for example physics and mathematics.” – special education teacher student – Moodle data – student reflection

In the above example, the teacher student refers to ‘noticing the language of the subject that is being taught’ and that ‘every subject has its own language’ which indicates that the student has an awareness of and understanding that all school subjects have their own language, and that language teaching can occur in any subject, not just in foreign language or mother tongue language classes.

If we now consider the secondary-level code ‘language variation’, which was also created under the primary-level code ‘cognitive’, one could argue that different subject languages could be examples of language variation as the language used, taught and learnt varies according to the subject, however to make the distinction between subject language and language variation I used a sociolinguistic definition of language variation which ‘refers to regional, social,

or contextual differences in the ways that a particular language is used' (Barzan & Heydari, 2019, p. 2), for example, in regional dialects and slang language. An example of how the code 'language variation' was applied is shown below, in which a student considers whether dialects and slang should also be included in language aware practices:

"This is so broad term as possible where all the dialects too would be included and then again also for example slang" - class teacher student - Zoom discussion

Two of the secondary-level codes created under the primary-level code 'social' were 'sense of community' and 'atmosphere', which one could argue also have overlapping meanings. For example, if we consider a classroom setting in which the atmosphere of the classroom can refer to the physical environment or the feeling of the classroom, whether there is harmony among the students or hostility. If the atmosphere can be considered harmonious then one might understand that a sense of community also exists since the students are getting along. In order to distinguish between these two concepts, I maintained that in order for an instance to be coded as 'sense of community', then there needed to be a direct reference to a feeling of belonging or working together in a positive manner. The code 'atmosphere' was then used when there was a reference to the working environment or to the attitudes held by the people within that environment.

Below are two examples from the dataset to illustrate how these codes were applied and their distinction from one another.

"If you make it (mother tongue) like as such a nice and shared thing so then like everyone can get that kind of a positive picture of it then like perhaps if one ignores it all the way then it might become like that kind of negative (thing)."

- class teacher student - Zoom discussion

In the above example, the teacher student directly refers to the notion of mother tongues being a 'shared thing' so that 'everyone can get [...] a positive picture of it'. Encapsulated in this is the understanding that teachers and pupils are working together and sharing aspects of themselves with one another in order to create positive images of each other. They are working together for a common goal, and the use of the word 'positive' instils this notion of community as it is something good and beneficial to everyone. This instance was therefore coded as 'sense of community'.

"I myself was working as a substitute teacher in one school where there were many pupils with other language than Finnish and they were on a Finnish as a second language class. There, the practice was that only Finnish was allowed to be used when the pupils came into the classroom which in my opinion is quite a bad thing. It felt really bad to watch how a pupil said something to the pupil sitting beside her/him in her/his own language and the teacher in a way "silenced" that pupil and said then "here we speak Finnish, outside you can speak Russian again." – special education teacher student – Moodle data – student reflection

In the above example, the teacher student recalls an incident when they witnessed a pupil being 'silenced' from using their mother tongue in the Finnish as a second language classroom. In this instance the teacher's attitude towards language use in the classroom clearly negatively affected the atmosphere of the class as the teacher student recalls feeling 'really bad' in that moment. This instance was therefore coded as 'atmosphere' as it did not meet the positive criterion to be coded as 'sense of community'.

The final primary-level code is 'affective' and two of the secondary-level codes generated under this primary-level code are 'language appreciation' and 'language as a resource'. Again, one could argue that there could be some overlap between these two codes, for example, if one views language as a resource, something positive that provides a benefit, then one could also understand that

an appreciation for language exists. I understand the distinction between these two codes as being contextual, and for an instance to be coded as 'language as a resource' then it must directly refer to or imply that language is viewed or used as a resource within the context of a school.

Below are two examples from the dataset to illustrate how these codes were applied and their distinction from one another.

"It is good for teacher to utilize for example different languages and...bring them like as part of everyday life." – class teacher student – Zoom discussion

In the above example, the teacher student directly refers to a teacher thereby establishing the context as that of a school. The teacher student also explicitly mentions the utilization of different languages and acknowledges this as a good, or positive, thing for a teacher to do, hence meeting the criteria to be coded as 'language as a resource'.

"I myself like to think that I am very language aware being, I notice different languages, their forms, and cultures around the people and things around me. Also, I have always been eager to learn different languages which partly surely affects my language awareness and how it shows to others." – special education teacher student – Moodle data – student reflection

In the above example, the teacher student reflects on how their interest in learning languages has benefitted them in becoming more language aware and they also consider how this may affect how they project their language awareness to others. There is, however, no reference to the context of a school or how their language awareness can be applied there. Therefore, this instance was coded as 'language appreciation'.

Now that I have outlined how I organised and refined my dataset to extract analytical and interpretive meaning, in the following section I will outline what findings were derived from the dataset in relation to the research questions.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

Whether the data were collected by myself or obtained from another researcher who collected them, there are a number of ethical considerations that needed to be made by the researcher responsible for the data collection.

Trust between the researcher and the participants is one of the core starting points for any scientific research. Data concerning SETS were collected as part of a course which was specifically created and designed around the research project. The field worker acted as the course leader and facilitated the tasks undertaken by the participants. As the course leader, the field worker positioned themselves in an automatic position of trust to the participants. It is unknown whether the participants had taken part in any other courses lead by the field worker, however, by electing to take the course created for the research project the participants were placing their trust in the course leader. For the CTS group, the field worker was less involved, however the CTS group's own teacher was present during the activities when the data collection took place, therefore the already established trust between the group and their teacher was carried through during the activities in which the data were collected.

Furthermore, it is vitally important that participants gave informed consent to participate in the research. Informed consent meaning that the participants have an accurate understanding and receive 'an accurate account of the effects and potential benefits of the research' for which the data are collected prior to consenting to their participation (Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK, 2019, p. 52). All participants in the study signed consent forms and gave permission for data collection in accordance with the terms of the research project for which the data was collected. I did not have access to the original consent forms signed by the participants, however I assume that the forms included a clause regarding the sharing of the data as the study I am conducting is not officially affiliated with the research project for which the data were collected. It is also important to remember that the participants have the right to refuse to participate in the first place and they have the right to pull out of the study and withdraw their data contributions at any point with no negative consequences

impacting them. I trust that the field worker who collected the data will inform me of any such changes prior to the publication of this study.

To further protect the identity and wellbeing of the participants, it is essential that the data are stored in a secure way so as a data breach could not occur and that someone cannot access the data who does not have the right to access them. For the transferral of the data to me, the field worker used B2DROP (EUDAT Ltd, 2020) which is 'a secure and trusted data exchange service for researchers and scientists to keep their research data synchronized and up-to-date and to exchange them with other researchers.' I subsequently, downloaded the data straight to the secure server of the University of Jyväskylä, where it has been stored and accessed for the duration of this study. Upon completion of the study, all data will be destroyed in a secure manner. Furthermore, since I did not collect the data myself, I was required to sign an agreement for use of research data in accordance with the terms of the Faculty of Education and Psychology at the University of Jyväskylä to further protect the participants.

Anonymity of the participants is also of the utmost importance, and it must not be possible to identify any individuals from the published data. When I received the data, it had already been anonymised by the field worker with names of the participants having been removed and any cultural markers such as their nationality or details from their earlier life which could identify them were also removed.

When it came to the analysis of the data and the subsequent discussion of the findings which emerged from the data for the study, I had to ensure that all the guidelines and procedures mentioned above were followed to maintain the anonymity of the participants. When I cited from the data from specific participants to help verify the points I raised, I made sure to only refer to the teacher student group to which that participant belonged. There was one exception when I referred to the year of study of one participant because I deemed this information important and significant to the findings. When citing participants from the data, I also made sure not to quote out of context in order to maintain the integrity and validity of the study.

4 FINDINGS

The first research question for this study was to explore how each of the teacher student groups oriented to the notion of language awareness. Using Frijns et al.'s (2018) evidence-based definition of language awareness, the cognitive, social and affective domains of language awareness were the basis for the analysis and, in order to determine the degree of orientation for each teacher student group, the number of instances for each primary-level code (cognitive, social and affective) was divided by the total number of primary-level instances. Although the datasets and number of participants for the two groups differed, Figures 1 and 2 provide an overview of the number of instances relative to each of the groups. Therefore, they also provide the reader with an illustration of how each teacher student group oriented to language awareness in relation to these three domains.

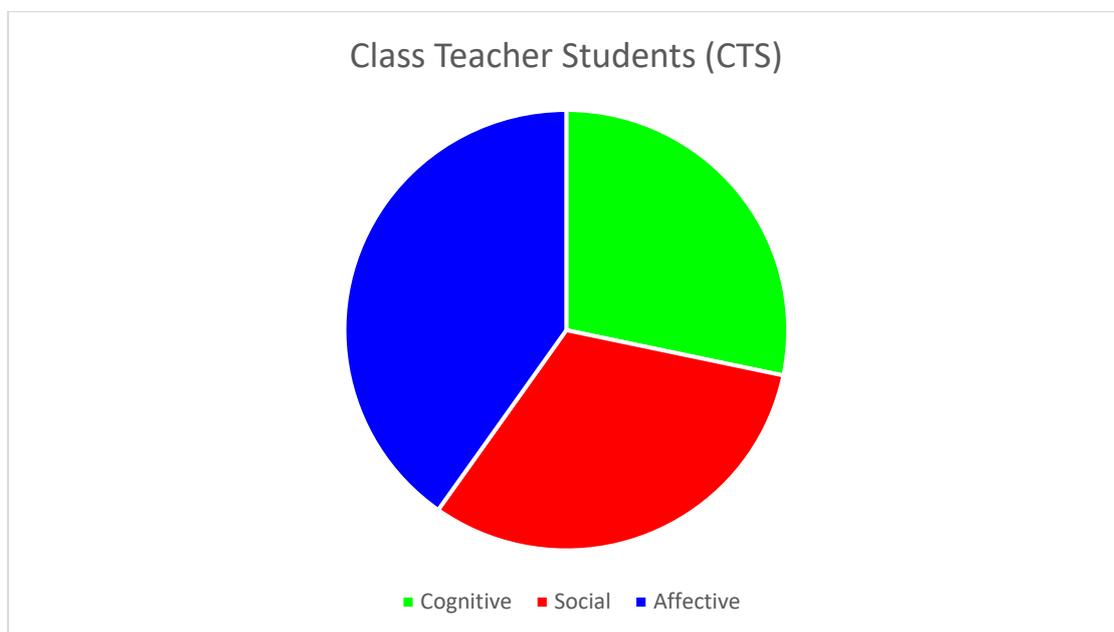


Fig. 1 Orientation of class teacher students to language awareness

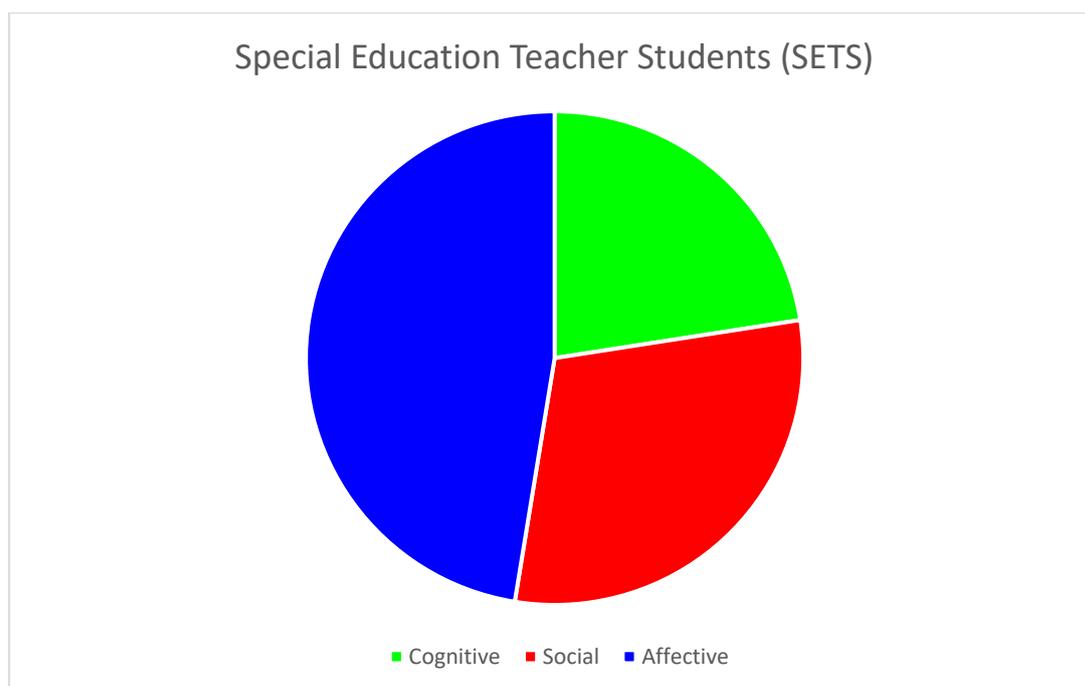


Fig. 2 Orientation of special education teacher students to language awareness

As can be seen above in Figures 1 and 2, the general distribution across the three domains was the same for both teacher student groups, both oriented mostly to the affective domain followed by the social domain and lastly to the cognitive domain. Noticeable differences between the two groups are that SETS oriented more to the affective domain (47.4%) compared to CTS (40.2%), and CTS oriented more to the cognitive domain (28.3%) compared to SETS (22.5%). Both groups had a similar orientation to the social domain with a difference of only 1.5% in favour of CTS.

The subsequent subsections present the findings from the cognitive, social and affective domains using their secondary-level codes to provide a more detailed analysis of how the two teacher student groups oriented towards them.

4.1 The cognitive domain

As detailed in the methodology (see section 3.3.3), six secondary-level codes were generated within the cognitive domain. Using the same method as with the

primary-level codes, the codes which were most and least prominent for each of the teacher student groups were identified. The number of instances for each secondary-level code was divided by the total number of cognitive instances for that student group. Table 2. below details the trend of each teacher student group towards each of the secondary-level codes. These are ranked from most prominent to least prominent.

	Class Teacher	Special Education
1.	Language use	Language use
2.	Metalinguistic	Metalinguistic
3.	Support for learning	Support for learning
4.	Subject language	Subject language
5.	Language variation	Learning difficulties
6.	Learning difficulties	Language variation

Table 2. Ranking of how teacher student groups oriented within the cognitive domain of language awareness

Table 2 shows that the orientation of the two teacher student groups towards language awareness varied slightly within the cognitive domain. The findings suggest that both CTS and SETS drew mostly on their knowledge of how language can be used in school and the classroom as well as their metalinguistic knowledge.

On examination of the data, it emerged that both teacher student groups shared the same metalinguistic understanding and the same acknowledgment and understanding of subject specific language. However, three distinct differences were identified in how the two teacher student groups viewed the use of language. Firstly, SETS mentioned the use of multimodal and non-verbal teaching techniques at a considerably higher rate compared to CTS. The excerpt below highlights this understanding:

“Linguistically sensitive teaching enables then, in my opinion, rich and generous use of different forms of languages, using of rhymes, singing, and seeing the diversity of the world of different texts, pictures and shapes” – special education – Moodle data – student reflection

Secondly, CTS demonstrated a stronger understanding that “language awareness is also that one teaches to the children that in different places different languages are spoken” (class teacher – Zoom discussion). In other words, that different contexts require different languages and they make more distinction between the use of everyday language and school language compared to SETS.

The final difference worth noting between the two teacher student groups regarding language use is that CTS recognised that “language awareness is also really important [...] because the meaning of words is only learned through using them” (class teacher – Padlet data). They acknowledged the link between constructing meaning through the active use of language, which was an aspect of language use that was overlooked by SETS.

Both teacher student groups shared a predominantly common understanding of how language awareness can be used as a support for pupils’ learning, however one difference emerged in relation to the learning of abstract concepts in that SETS noted the importance of finding “ways to connect those [the abstract concepts] to the lived experiences to support the memory traces of a pupil. How this and that could be connected to pupils’ everyday life and to living in a society. How things become a part of the pupils’ own thoughts and they don’t remain disconnected and vague” (special education – Moodle data – student reflection). This mention of making connections to pupils’ lived experiences could indicate that SETS maintain a more pupil-focused perspective compared to CTS.

When considering language variation which, as previously noted (see section 4.3.3.), I understood from a sociolinguistic perspective, CTS had a clearer understanding making reference to dialects and slang language and how these should also be considered in a language aware classroom. SETS had a somewhat

more ambiguous understanding referring to “the different forms of language and the wide range of language” (special education – Moodle data – student reflection), which may or may not include regional dialects or slang language.

The final point to be considered in respect to the teacher students’ orientation within the cognitive domain of language awareness is that concerning learning difficulties. Both teacher student groups expressed the same difficulty in being able to distinguish between a learning disability, for example dyslexia, and a language learning problem. SETS, however, more frequently mentioned the use of multimodal and non-verbal teaching techniques as a means to support those pupils with learning difficulties. Both teacher student groups mentioned the use of repetition to help maintain focus and concentration for those pupils with problems in concentrating.

The findings are summarised in Table 3. below illustrating the orientation of the two teacher student groups within the cognitive domain of language awareness.

	Class Teacher	Special Education
Language Use	+ different contexts require different languages e.g. everyday language versus school language	+ use of multimodal and non-verbal teaching techniques overall and specifically to support pupils with learning difficulties
	+ constructing meaning of words through active language use	
Support for Learning		+ make connections to pupils’ lived experiences to support learning of abstract concepts
Language Variation	+ including regional dialects and slang in a language aware classroom	

Table 3. Summary of the aspects of the cognitive domain of LA to which the teacher student groups oriented more

4.2 The social domain

For the social domain, a total of ten secondary-level codes were generated and, using the same method as with the cognitive domain, these ten codes were ranked from most to least prominent for the two teacher student groups and are presented in Table 4 below.

	Class Teacher		Special Education
1.	Equality	1.	Sense of community
1.	Sense of community	2.	Stakeholder collaboration
3.	Promotion of heritage language/culture	3.	Promotion of heritage language /culture
4.	Support identity	4.	Equality
5.	Reduce prejudice	5.	Atmosphere
6.	Develop social understanding	6.	Develop social understanding
7.	Atmosphere	6.	Conflict of opinion
8.	Empowerment	8.	Reduce prejudice
8.	Conflict of opinion	9.	Support identity
10.	Stakeholder collaboration	10.	Empowerment

Table 4. Ranking of how teacher student groups oriented within the social domain of language awareness

Table 4 shows that there was variation in how each of the teacher student groups oriented within the social domain of language awareness with the most noticeable difference concerning stakeholder collaboration. From the dataset SETS recorded 25 instances coded as stakeholder collaboration whereas CTS recorded 0. Since many of the secondary-level codes overlap, this exclusivity of

the stakeholder collaboration code to SETS has also influenced their orientation towards some of the other codes.

The code 'stakeholder collaboration' is understood by the mentioning of other stakeholders who are involved in the governance of the school. SETS mention the need to work with families, other teachers, other schools and also call upon a greater understanding of language awareness politically and regionally as indicated below:

"A bigger, communal understanding about this is needed, so that the importance of this would get noticed both politically, regionally and by individual schools and the support for language aware work would come through the whole school community."

- special education - Moodle data - student reflection

The findings appear to show that SETS understand the notion of school community in an expansive way and as one that includes the stakeholders. CTS, however, demonstrate a more ambiguous understanding of what school community consists of due to the lack of mentioning of the stakeholders. They do acknowledge that language awareness helps build a sense of community and that "it is important to make languages and language awareness a nice and shared thing for everyone" (class teacher - Padlet data).

A similar trend is also evident in relation to how the teacher student groups understand the atmosphere or environment. CTS again have a more ambiguous conceptualisation of atmosphere mentioning that establishing a "positive and open atmosphere in general" and "in a way merciful atmosphere" (class teacher - Zoom discussion) are important aspects of language aware teaching. SETS maintain that a positive, open and merciful atmosphere is important, but they also elaborate on what can contribute to creating this positive atmosphere. For example, they mention "giving visibility to languages" (special education - Moodle data - student reflection) and utilising the classroom environment by using "language aware decorations such as months and weekdays in different

languages, the map of the world on the wall and a globe on display in the classroom” (special education – Moodle – reflection on linguistically sensitive teaching). This notion of giving visibility to languages was also one difference that emerged from the code ‘promotion of heritage language/culture’, but from which otherwise both teacher student groups oriented in a similar manner.

Another example of differences between the two student groups emerged from the code ‘conflict of opinion’. CTS appeared to focus on the potential conflicts arising from the meeting of cultures and how to negotiate and prevent that. The following excerpt provides a glimpse of this thought process.

“One brings their own culture in a way to this culture too so then in a way that because then some things can collide [-] with each other... it would be important perhaps to learn to connect (those)... like in a way that those wouldn’t be in conflict” – class teacher – Zoom discussion

On the other hand, SETS gave more specific examples of where such conflicts could occur, for example, between different schools, between different teachers, between teachers and parents, and even the inner conflict of a teacher’s own prejudice.

Continuing with the theme of prejudice, it emerged from the dataset that both teacher student groups had a similar understanding of how language aware teaching could help reduce prejudice and develop social understanding. Both groups held the same view that language aware teaching is important as it “teaches equality [...] and the appreciation and understanding of different cultures” (class teacher – Padlet data).

Similarly, both teacher student groups shared the same understanding of how language awareness could help empower pupils by allowing them to see that their “own language is of equal value” (class teacher – Padlet data), and through allowing the pupils to help and teach one another.

“The most important thing was that one would get her/his point said, would be understood, and would understand others. Another student could remember that particular word and could help in getting the message clear to the others.” – special education – Moodle data – student reflection

Both teacher student groups understood and oriented to the notion of ‘equality’ in a similar manner acknowledging the inequalities and the importance of considering every pupil as an equal and making sure that their individual languages, identities, and needs are supported. Both groups also acknowledged the responsibility of the teacher to enact this equality. Below are two examples from the dataset to illustrate this understanding.

“Fostering language awareness and multiculturalism touches every pupil and is in that way a responsibility of all teachers.” – special education – Moodle data – student reflection

“If everyone must fit in this kind of box of Finnishness then in some way it becomes an identity crisis for those people who don’t have Finnish as a first language or Finnish is not ...Finland is like a new country... it becomes like a real crisis if it like it won’t get accepted and if that what you already have what you initially had isn’t used as a foundation.” – class teacher – Zoom discussion

A final trend that appeared across multiple codes for the social domain was that SETS appeared to be more reflective on their role as a teacher compared to CTS. For example, SETS identified that “racism of teachers and bias as milder forms of racism are things that we should absolutely in one way or another get rid of” (special education – Moodle data – student reflection) and that “the lack of resources and the reluctance of the staff [...] to carry out linguistically sensitive teaching” (special education – SWOT analysis) could present obstacles for the teacher.

As previously mentioned (see section 3.3.3), the code ‘supporting identity’ exists as a hybrid code of both the social and affective domains. For this reason,

the findings related to this code will be presented separately after the findings from the affective domain have been presented in the following section.

The findings are summarised in Table 5 below illustrating the orientation of the two teacher student groups within the social domain of language awareness.

	Class Teacher	Special Education
Stakeholder Collaboration		+ exclusive mention of the role stakeholders have in the successful implantation of language aware teaching
Sense of Community/Atmosphere		+ more expansive understanding of these concepts and what they consist of
Conflict of Opinion		+ more frequent and specific mentions of where potential conflicts could arise in response to language aware teaching
Multiple Codes		+ more reflective on their role as a teacher

Table 5. Summary of the aspects of the social domain of LA to which the teacher student groups oriented more

4.3 The affective domain

For the affective domain a total of eight secondary-level codes were generated and, using the same method as with the cognitive and social domains, these codes were ranked from most to least prominent for each of the teacher student groups and are presented in Table 6 below.

	Class Teacher		Special Education
1.	Language appreciation	1.	Personal development
2.	Challenge	2.	Challenge
3.	Personal development	3.	Language as a resource
4.	Language as a resource	4.	Past experience
5.	Past experience	5.	Develop understanding of language
5.	Support identity	6.	Personal motivation
7.	Develop understanding of language	7.	Language appreciation
8.	Personal motivation	8.	Support identity

Table 6. Ranking of how teacher student groups oriented within the affective domain of language awareness

Table 6 shows that there was variation between the teacher student groups in how they oriented within the affective domain of language awareness. While there are notable differences between the two groups, there were also a number of commonalities.

Both teacher student groups expressed concerns about the difficulties and challenges they could face in the implementation of language aware teaching and the code 'challenge' ranked highly for both groups. A common challenge indicated by the teacher students was that language awareness is a new term for them and that it is also a term which they found difficult to define. Below is an excerpt from the dataset to demonstrate this.

“Language awareness is a new term for me, and I’ve understood that it is new also for the school world [...] but because it [language awareness] is such a broad term, it is still slightly hard for me to give an overall definition for it.”

– special education – SWOT analysis

For this reason, it could be difficult for the teacher students to “recognize in how many different ways linguistically sensitive teaching can be carried out” (special education – SWOT analysis). Other examples of potential common challenges faced by both teacher student groups include “how you can cover that insecurity of your own about that language that you don’t for example understand”? (class teacher – Zoom discussion) and, if the school in which they will eventually be working is monolingually Finnish speaking with no other languages present, how would they then execute language aware teaching in such an environment?

Connected to their perceived challenges with language aware teaching was how the teacher students related to their past experiences. Both groups related to their past experiences in similar proportions to one another, as they did with the challenges, but it is through some of these past experiences that other challenges emerged. These challenges, however, were of a different nature to one another. CTS reflected more on their own experiences when they themselves were at school, whereas SETS reflected more on their teaching experience. Below are two excerpts from the dataset to illustrate this.

“It is always hard in a way that in teacherhood, at least for myself, it comes somehow a little automatically that one repeats those things that oneself has learnt and what one has seen in teacherhood and what has happened in my school, and then somehow at least for me it feels like this language awareness brings, in that regard, challenges when for me it was not a part of my school life and then somehow one needs to go to a new field in a way to break new grounds so one needs to be really conscious, like it demands a conscious change at least from me” – class teacher – Zoom discussion

“I feel that my weaknesses connected to linguistically sensitive teaching are mostly the lack of knowledge and experience on language awareness overall and of linguistically sensitive teaching.” – special education – SWOT analysis

Although the teacher student groups oriented to the code 'language appreciation' more and less strongly to one another (for CTS it was the most prominent and for SETS it was the second least prominent), how they related to this notion was very similar with both groups mentioning that having interest in other languages plays a role in how one appreciates language. Both groups also mentioned that language aware practices should start as early as possible as children could encounter and appreciate other languages and cultures from an early age and "then it becomes quite normal for those children" (class teacher - Zoom discussion).

Regarding personal motivation for language aware teaching, both groups identified that it could help if you have your own interest in languages and that it is possible to draw motivation from examples, such as reading about other schools which have successfully implemented language aware teaching.

Another challenge mentioned by both teacher student groups was how they should implement language aware teaching if the environment in which they are teaching is homogenous and monolingually Finnish and there are not natural language resources to draw from? In this instance, CTS were able to propose a solution to this problem by suggesting "a twin school could be sought from somewhere else and then videos or letters could be sent to each other" (class teacher- Zoom discussion). SETS often mentioned this same problem but were unable to see a solution to it. Furthermore, in the consideration of language as a resource, CTS suggested that languages provide opportunities to think in different ways compared to SETS who saw it more as a combination of knowledges.

There were other notable differences in the potential challenges perceived by the two groups. SETS mentioned added work pressure due to the nature of having to teach all school subjects and they also acknowledged a lack of knowledge and understanding of how languages support one another. SETS were also concerned about how other teachers and schools would implement language aware teaching.

Considering the teacher students' personal development both groups recognised similar areas for development, for example in challenging their old beliefs and attitudes and being able to think outside the box and be innovative. Differences occurred with SETS who mentioned the need to meet the demands of the curriculum, adding that "we act as truly being idealistic but then on the practical level we can really go badly down the drain" (special education - Moodle data - student reflection). Additionally, SETS acknowledged the need to be able to recognise individual students' needs amongst a bigger group.

With regard to developing their understanding of language, some differences also emerged between the teacher student groups. CTS mentioned the intrinsic nature of language and culture noting that "language builds culture, language awareness helps to understand other cultures" (class teacher - Padlet data), an aspect of language which was overlooked by SETS. SETS did however acknowledge that language is something that is continuously being learned throughout your life, a point missed by CTS. SETS were also concerned with how to differentiate problems with language and learning problems noting that "the things we've learned and our skills to acquire [new things] do not disappear anywhere even though language would change" (special education - Moodle data - student reflection).

Lastly, in the subsequent subsection the findings will be presented on how the teacher students oriented to the notion of supporting identity. This is presented separately as it was considered as a hybrid of both the social and affective domains of language awareness as previously mentioned (see 3.3.3).

4.3.1 Supporting identity

Within both the social and affective domains, the code 'support identity' received more attention from CTS. In the social domain it ranked 4th out of 10 compared to the SETS 9th out of 10, and within the affective domain it ranked 5th out of 8 compared with 8th out of 8 for SETS.

This difference in overall orientation also yielded differences within the concept itself. Firstly, CTS acknowledged the contribution language has in the formation of identity and how language aware teaching can help “to reduce racism and shame about one’s own language if one has felt oneself earlier as outsider” (class teacher – Padlet data). CTS also noted the importance of supporting already established identities along with newly forming identities in order to help avoid potential identity crises. The excerpt below illustrates this understanding.

“If everyone must fit in the same kind of box of Finnishness then in some way it becomes an identity crisis for those people who don’t have Finnish as a first language or Finland is a new country... it becomes a real crisis if it won’t get accepted and if that what you already have, what you initially had isn’t used as a foundation [...] the supporting of identity is like of course Finland comes there and shapes your already existing, like the already developed identity, but if I think that I would, for example, move into another country then I would want in a way that that Finnish identity of mine is already there as a foundation and it is somehow accepted” – class teacher – Zoom discussion

Whilst SETS did mention that every identity should be supported, they did not make the connection between language and cultural identity. They did however mention that without supporting pupils’ identities then there could be a “risk that the identity of a pupil might change from being capable to not being capable” (special education – student reflection). SETS also made reference to their own professional identities as language aware teachers and how that they are “only awakening” (special education – SWOT analysis), acknowledging that these identities too need supported.

The findings summarised in Table 7 below illustrate the orientation of the two teacher student groups within the affective domain of language awareness as well as within the hybrid secondary-level code ‘support identity’.

	Class Teacher	Special Education
Past Experience	+ more reflection on their experiences from their own schooling	+ more reflection on their own work and teaching experience
Language as a Resource	+ different languages provide opportunities to think in different ways + seek twin schools or exchange agreements to draw on more resources	+ different languages allow for combination of different knowledges
Challenge		+ added work pressure from having to consider the teaching of all subjects + lacking in knowledge of how languages support one another + lacking teaching experience + how other teachers and schools implement language aware teaching
Personal Development		+ need to meet the demands of the curriculum + learning to recognise individual pupils' needs
Develop Understanding of Language	+ intrinsic connection between language and culture	+ language is continuously being learned + differentiating language problems and learning problems
Support Identity	+ language contributes to identity formation + support already established identities as well as newly forming identities	+ risk of pupils' identities shifting from capable to not capable without support + teachers' professional identities also need support

Table 7. Summary of the aspects of the affective domain of LA and the concept of 'supporting identity' to which the teacher student groups oriented more

5 DISCUSSION

This comparative study aimed at better understanding how class teacher and special education teacher students oriented to the notion of LA and whether the educational backgrounds and interests of the teacher students influenced their understanding of LA. Born through necessity due to the Finnish national core curriculum (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2014, p. 28) stressing the importance of school communities and community members as being multilingual and language aware, the study also aimed to highlight any potential gaps in teacher students' understanding surrounding the notion of language awareness as these may have implications for the teacher students in their future working practices and may also help inform the development and provision of teacher education.

The findings of the study will next be discussed in relation to the study's research questions.

RQ1: How do the teacher students orient to the notion of language awareness?

In response to this research question, the findings indicate that the two groups of teacher students oriented to the notion of LA slightly differently from one another with SETS orienting more strongly towards the affective domain of LA and CTS orienting more strongly towards the cognitive domain. The orientation of both teacher student groups towards the social domain was very similar with CTS orienting marginally more than SETS. The general distribution of the teacher students' orientation towards LA can be seen in the pie charts in section 5. Furthermore, despite the overall orientation towards the social domain being similar for both groups, significant differences did emerge within the social domain between the two groups.

RQ2: Do the teacher students' educational backgrounds and interests influence their understanding of language awareness? If so, how are they influenced?

Having established the general orientation of the teacher students towards LA, in order to then determine whether or not their educational backgrounds and interests influenced their understanding of LA, a closer examination of the findings was conducted.

The largest difference in general orientation towards LA occurred in the affective domain and the most significant differences emerged in how the two student groups perceived challenges and issues of personal development in relation to LA. Both groups acknowledged the challenge in understanding what is meant by language awareness and being language aware with a SETS stating that the “meaning and the concrete implementation [of language awareness] has remained a bit unclear” (special education – Moodle data – student reflection) since it came into their working school life through the most recent national curriculum. However, the same student elaborated that after continued studies “the concept has finally started to become more clear step by step”. On the other hand, a CTS stated that the concept “is really hard for me to kind of put into words” (classroom teacher – Zoom discussion). This highlights the vital role that teacher education could have on shaping the teacher students' understanding of LA as the CTS was in their first year of study and the SETS in their third year of study. Nevertheless, the data provided from SETS indicates that gaps in their understanding of LA still exist as they also stated that an added challenge for them is how to realise LA practically, especially given LA's direct mention in the Finnish national core curriculum (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2014). Lack of understanding about what LA is and means will inevitably provide a challenge in its implementation thus highlighting the important role teacher education plays in supporting and reaffirming teacher students' understanding of newer concepts like LA.

SETS also mentioned that they lacked the knowledge of how languages support one another, a point which was not raised by CTS. This point may be explained by way of the teacher students' own multilingualism. According to Otwinowska's (2017) study, a teacher's LA is influenced by their own degree of multilingualism. In other words, those teachers who can speak a second, third or more languages, are more likely to succeed in implementing a multilingual/plurilingual pedagogy. Based on the data analysed for this study, it was not evident what other languages the teacher students had knowledge of or of what proficiency of the languages the teacher students were, but one might assume that due to the educational interest in language teaching CTS may be more capable in working in other languages than their L1 and have a greater understanding of how languages can support one another. Additionally, SETS also mentioned possible increased work pressure due to the fact that they must teach a variety of subjects as opposed to a subject teacher who focuses their teaching on one or two subjects. CTS, however, whilst having their specialisation in language education, must also teach a variety of subjects, yet the problem of additional work pressure due to a language aware pedagogy was not raised by them. Data from the cognitive domain would appear to support this as CTS indicated that they had better understanding of how different languages are used in different contexts, thereby reducing their perceived amount of concern of work pressure from having to teach multiple subjects using a language aware pedagogy. In other words, because they appear to have a better understanding of the 'different language in a different context' paradigm, it could be easier for them to switch between and/or interrelate these languages and contexts. Hence reducing their perceived amount of work pressure resulting from this. In both these instances, the teacher students' own degree of multilingualism and understanding of languages could perhaps then explain the difference in perceived challenges related to language awareness.

Another trend which emerged from the cognitive domain data indicated that the teacher student groups perceived the connection between language learning and language use differently. For example, CTS made the assumption

that “the meaning of words is only learned through using them” (class teacher – Padlet data – student reflection), whereas SETS emphasised the importance of finding “ways to connect those [new words] to the lived experiences to support the memory traces of a pupil” (special education – Moodle data – student reflection). SETS also mentioned the use of multimodal teaching methods more frequently than their CTS counterparts. This example could be considered an indication of how the teacher students’ interests and educational backgrounds have shaped their understanding of LA, with the CTS having a more active approach to language learning and SETS taking a more relatable approach. This difference in approach could be related to the teacher students’ personal interpretive framework (Kelchtermans, 2009), or their ‘set of cognitions or mental representations that shape the way they look at teaching, give meaning to it and act as professionals’ (Kimanen, Alisaari, & Kallioniemi, 2019, p. 36). Whilst class teachers will inevitably teach pupils with learning and/or behavioural difficulties, it could be assumed that special education teachers encounter these types of difficulties on a more frequent basis, therefore their teaching methods could be more innovative and flexible as they attempt to negotiate the pupils’ learning difficulties and find teaching methods that work for each pupil. There may also be more focus on this way of teaching in the curricula of special teacher education. SETS could therefore view this as being an important and professional aspect of their job as a special education teacher.

Beliefs about the teacher students’ professionalism may also help explain some of the other differences which emerged from the data. In their study examining how student teachers in Finland, Norway and Sweden viewed inclusive education, Takala, Hausstätter, Ahl and Head (2012) found that the professional competence discourse was most common in Finland. One aspect which emerged from the professional competence discourse was that special education teacher students worried about their professionalism and whether or not it was adequate enough to meet all of the needs of a diverse school (Takala et al., 2012, p. 317). These worries about their own professionalism appear to be reflected in this study’s data in how SETS referred to their past experiences

dealing with LA. SETS referred more often to experiences of LA in their teaching practices compared to CTS who referred more to their experiences of LA in their own schooling. With a greater focus on their own professionalism as a special education teacher, SETS perhaps more instinctively reflected on instances of LA where they saw themselves in a more professional capacity during their teacher practices as opposed to how they themselves experienced LA during their own schooling.

Another central point of the professional competence discourse is the belief that the whole staff and whole school need to be adequately competent in order for inclusion to work (Takala et al., 2012, *ibid.*). This could then help explain the striking difference which emerged in the data related to stakeholders. SETS exclusively discussed the role of stakeholders in the implementation of language aware practices. Furthermore, the perspective of how one views special teacher education could also affect a special education teacher's perceived degree of professionalism. In a comparative study between Norway and Sweden which examined special educators' practices and beliefs about key aspects of their profession, Jortveit, Tveit, Cameron and Lindqvist (2020) found that Swedish special education professionals orient more dominantly towards a relational perspective with respect to special needs. This relational perspective places emphasis on the system, sociological structures and the learning environment surrounding the person in question (Cameron, 2016, p. 24) and, whilst Sweden is not Finland, on comparison of their special teacher education curricula, it emerged that the curricula were similar and shared the same key elements and focuses (Takala, Nordmark, & Allard, 2019). This could therefore suggest that Finnish special education professionals also orient more dominantly towards the relational perspective, which in turn, along with the professional competence discourse, could help explain the strong focus SETS had on stakeholders and their role in the implementation of language aware practices compared with CTS.

The notion of and relation to professionalism is also reflected in the data in how the teacher student groups discuss the concept of identity. SETS refer to their teachers' and professional identity, understanding that being language aware is

an important part of this identity, although one SETS acknowledges that their “own professional identity as a language aware teacher is only awakening” (special education – SWOT analysis). CTS, on the other hand, make no reference to their own professional identity, but rather refer only to the identities of the pupils. These different orientations towards the concept of identity may also be explained by the professional competence discourse which is prominent within the field of special education in Finland.

With regard to pupils’ cultural identity, some differences emerged between the teacher student groups. Whilst SETS demonstrated understanding that language can be a part of and expression of one’s cultural identity, there appeared to be a weaker understanding of how language contributes to and helps form and support this identity. CTS, on the other hand, showed a better understanding of this phenomenon. One CTS gave an example (see section 5.3.1) of an immigrant moving to Finland and described the potential identity crisis that that immigrant may face as they negotiate their already established cultural identity from their country of origin and their newly establishing Finnish identity. The student empathises to this by imagining themselves in a similar situation and recognising how important it would be for them to be able to maintain their already established cultural identity.

“If I think that I would, for example, move into another country then I would want in a way that that Finnish identity of mine is already there as a foundation and it is somehow accepted, like that I want to stay one meter away from others or something similar but in the way that people acknowledge it.”

- class teacher - Zoom discussion

There are many different aspects that constitute a person’s cultural identity aside from language, for example in the quotation above the student talks about respecting personal space as being an important part of them being Finnish. Therefore, these multiple aspects of cultural identity should also be taken into consideration in classrooms. There are also multiple ways to construct and

express cultural identity, but one of the central ways to do this is through the use of language, a notion supported by Niño-Murcia and Rothman (2008, p. 16) who state that 'language becomes the conduit for constructing an identity'. From the data, it emerged that CTS have a deeper understanding of the intrinsic connection between language, culture and identity and the importance of keeping these three aspects in equilibrium with one another compared to their SETS counterparts. This deeper understanding of the nature of language, culture and identity could perhaps be explained by CTS's personal interests in language education and their own degree of multilingualism, which was discussed earlier in this section. As also discussed earlier, SETS admitted to lacking knowledge of how languages support one another and, therefore, a parallel to that lack of knowledge could then be this weaker understanding of how language, culture and identity also support one another.

To conclude, the study has shown that special education and class teacher students did orient slightly differently to the concept of LA and it also showed that the teacher students' educational interests and backgrounds appeared to influence their understanding of LA to some extent. A direct example from a SETS demonstrated how the concept of LA became "more clear step by step" (special education -Moodle data - student reflection) as their studies progressed. This demonstrates the potential impact that teacher education could have in shaping pre-service teachers' beliefs regarding LA, reaffirming Lasagabaster and Huguet's (2007, p. 1) stance that 'language attitudes are learnt and, therefore, educators play a paramount role in their formation'. The importance of this notion becomes clearer due to the fact that many of the teacher students recalled having experienced very little language aware teaching or even having been unaware of any linguistic diversity during their own schooling. With many of the teacher students having little to no personal experiences of LA to inform or guide their teaching, then it is paramount that a deep understanding of LA and language aware practices is instilled in them during their teacher education.

Whilst both teacher student groups did share a common understanding of many aspects of LA, notable differences did emerge in how they understood and oriented to the concept and it has been argued how their educational interests and backgrounds could have contributed to these differences. Since language aware teaching could be considered an inclusive practice and is a concept that ought to be implemented by all teachers, regardless of their teaching specialisation, it has become apparent that in order to fill the gaps in their understanding, teacher students would benefit from a greater degree of collaboration between the fields of teacher education. This supports the sentiment of Takala et al. (2019, p. 30) that 'they [different fields of teacher education] could benefit from approaching each other since, at school, general and special teachers have common responsibilities for the education of diverse learners'. The findings from this study have shown how SETS could benefit more from having an increased focus on the nature of language and how languages can support one another, and, on the other hand, CTS could benefit more by having an increased focus on inclusive practices to help them take the scope of language awareness out of the classroom and into the whole school community. This echoes one of the reasons Hawkins (1991) devised LA in the first place, when he noticed a lack of collaboration between mother tongue and foreign language teachers and the potential that existed there in helping develop learners' language and literacy skills. As the scope of LA has increased over the years, so has the need to collaborate and share knowledge to keep gaps in understanding to a minimum. To reiterate the Finnish national core curriculum (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2014, p. 28), every school community and community member are considered multilingual and, as Cenoz (2009, p. 56) states, schools need to aim at multilingualism. There needs to be active participation, collaboration, understanding and will from everyone in the school community if the aims of the curriculum are to be truly realised.

5.1 Limitations

Whilst the study did provide useful insights into how CTS and SETS oriented the notion of LA, there were a number of limitations to this study which should be taken into consideration.

Firstly, the number of participants for the two teacher student groups varied with 14 CTS and 3 SETS participating. Furthermore, and contrary to what one would expect given the number of participants for each teacher student group, the amount of data generated varied. In total, approximately 50 pages of data were generated for CTS and 70 pages of data were generated for SETS. All pages containing data used the same font, font size and line spacing. These differences in number of participants and amount of data generated could have implications regarding any potential skewedness of the data and the over- or underrepresentation of a particular teacher group. Despite the disparity in the two datasets, this study has cautiously navigated and analysed the datasets to keep any skewedness of the data and subsequent findings to a minimum. Moreover, while ideally an equal number of teacher students for each group should be sought and equal amounts of data should be sought to be generated, it was not possible to gather more or equivalent data during the study, therefore the findings should be considered as indicative rather than definitive.

Another limitation to the study was the type of data that were collected (See section 4.2 for overview of dataset). Four documents of data were collected for CTS. Three of these documents contained transcripts from small group discussions conducted using Zoom. The last document contained data collected using Padlet and were an accumulation of individual reflections and summaries of reflections from the small group discussions. This means of data collection could be limiting in the scope of potential data generated. Whilst small group discussions can be a comfortable and familiar way of working and, in this sense, aid students in prompting and generating each other's thoughts, the task environment could be limiting regarding the scope of thought as students may be more likely to prompt similar ideas and not think as deeply on some topics. Furthermore, the nature of the task also limited the study as CTS were only asked

to reflect on LA and what is meant by it individually and then collectively in the small groups. They were only asked to reflect on one aspect of LA limiting their perspective on the phenomenon and the depth of their understanding. Additionally, data from the transcripts of the small group discussions were reflected in the small group summaries gathered on Padlet, meaning the variety of the ideas being generated was also limited.

SETS, on the other hand, generated data of different types and different natures. They were also asked to individually reflect on LA and what is meant by the concept, just like CTS, however the difference being that for SETS it was done solely individually and did not involve any group reflection or summary. In addition to this task, SETS were prompted to reflect on other aspects of LA. They were asked to individually reflect on language aware practices during their studies, their teaching practices and in the schools they had attended. This specific prompt to reflect on their teaching practices could help explain the trend which emerged from the data in which SETS tended to reflect more on their teaching practice than CTS, thus providing more skewed findings. SETS were given two further reflection tasks to complete including sharing their responses to four videos they were asked to watch and, lastly, conducting a SWOT analysis on themselves to identify their personal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats connected to language aware teaching. It could be considered therefore, that SETS had richer stimuli to prompt their reflections in turn producing more unfolding of thoughts and deeper thinking about the topic compared to CTS.

The study-level of the participants was another limitation for the study as all the CTS participants were in their first year of studies having also not yet completed any of their language specialisation credits. One of the SETS was also in their first year of studies with the remaining two SETS being in their third year of studies. The duration of the participants' studies could also have affected the data in that two of the SETS had more experience, from both studies and teaching practice, to draw and reflect on, thus contributing more depth to their responses.

One final limitation that could be considered for this study was the fact that the data being worked with was an English translation of a Finnish original. If there were some nuances or meanings lost during the translation of the data, then I was not in a strong position to necessarily notice these due to my own limited knowledge of the Finnish language.

5.2 Internal validity

Closely related to the limitations of the study, as discussed above, is the consideration of the study's internal validity. That is to consider to what extent the findings of the study represent the truth in the population as opposed to being methodological errors. Whilst arguments have been carefully presented as a means to explain the findings of the study, it is also important to acknowledge that there were a number of variables outside of my control, as the researcher, that may have also affected the outcomes. In other words, there were a number of 'threats to internal validity' of the study (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2015, p. 181).

The largest threat to the study's internal validity was that of subject characteristics as there could have been unknown differences between the participants which could have affected the outcomes. One such characteristic is the age of the participants. As detailed in the methodology (see section 3.4), all the participants had to be anonymised in order to protect their identity, and this also included removal of any information detailing their ages. Closely related to and undoubtedly affected by their age is the participants' experience. Since the study explored the participants' understanding and orientation towards language awareness, the amount of experience the participants had, for example in teaching, could have impacted the outcomes. Additionally, the types of experiences the participants had also could have affected the outcomes. For example, some participants could have had teaching experience in a more multilingually diverse school compared to some others. Their own lived

experiences may also have impacted the outcomes if, for example, they spent some time living abroad and had the first-hand experience of being an outsider in an otherwise different native majority setting. From the dataset, one participant explicitly mentioned their own lived experience as an outsider, but because the others did not explicitly mention this, then we cannot assume that some of them did not have similar experiences.

Furthermore, no details were provided about the participants educational backgrounds other than their current programme of study and year of study. Some of the participants could have already completed other studies prior to their current which may or may not have benefitted them in their creation and understanding of language awareness.

One final aspect of the subject characteristic threat could be the participants' own degree of multilingualism, which was discussed in section 5. The language backgrounds of the participants were also unknown, which could have especially impacted how much the participants knew about or how aware the participants were of how languages can support one another, thus again potentially affecting the outcomes of the study.

Another threat to internal validity of this study existed in the implementation of the study by way of the data collection. As discussed in section 5.1, the nature of the data collected for the teacher student groups varied as the special education teacher students were asked to reflect on and complete additional tasks compared to the class teacher students which could have promoted deeper thinking and understanding about the topics.

As comes with the nature of qualitative research, the aim of the study was not to generalise about class teacher and special education teacher students, but rather to gain insight into the phenomenon of language awareness through the understanding and experiences of these teacher student groups. Whilst the datasets varied in the scope of their content and multiple external variables could have otherwise influenced the outcomes, by having two datasets it allowed me to examine more closely and ask questions across the datasets, for example, why did the mentioning of school stakeholders occur exclusively with the special

education teacher students? Individual subject characteristics would therefore only have contributed more depth and insights into the answering of these questions and into my understanding of the phenomenon of language awareness as opposed to undermining the credibility of this study.

5.3 Future research

The scope of this study was limited in a number of ways as detailed in the previous subsection, therefore to better gauge how teacher students orient to and understand language awareness further research would be deemed necessary. As discussed in this study and in the literature contributing to it, language awareness is a concept that concerns the whole school community, therefore it would be beneficial to expand the sample of participants to include teacher students from multiple teacher education backgrounds. Conducting a longitudinal study may also give better insight into how teacher students construct their understanding of language awareness during the course of their studies. Deeper knowledge of how teacher students construct this understanding may then help to better inform initial teacher education to make it more concise in how it addresses future language aware practices.

Initial teacher education would also benefit from gaining insights from in-service teachers who have already had first-hand experiences of working in multilingual classrooms. Better understanding the challenges that present themselves in the real working life of a teacher regarding pupils' multilingualism could help initial teacher education better prepare pre-service teachers for the reality of their future working practices.

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