COLLABORATIVE WEB-BASED COURSE TO LEARN MILITARY ENGLISH VOCABULARY ON THE FDFMOODLE PLATFORM

How can collaboration based on the KATRIKS-model in military pedagogy be integrated into the course?

Master's thesis

Merja Pohjus

University of Jyväskylä
Department of Languages
English
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Tekijä – Author
Merja Pohjus

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract

Tämän työn tarkoituksena oli suunnitella kielikurssi, joka edistäisi puolustusvoimien henkilökunnan sotilasterminologian oppimista. Kurssin päätavoitteena oli käyttää täysipainoisesti konstruktivismiperustaista PVMoodlea oppimisessa, sekä sitouttaa oppijat yhteisölliseen oppimiseen, ottaen huomioon sotilaspedagogiikan oppimisen ohjaamisen KATRIKS periaatemallin (muistimalli, joka tukee oppimis- ja opetussuunnitelman laadintaa). Teoriataustassa käsitellään kohderyhmän mukaisesti aikuisoppimista, yhteisöllistä oppimista, sanaston oppimista, sekä verkon käyttöä oppimistapahtumassa.

Teoreettisen osan perusteella luotiin PVMoodleen sanastokurssi. Kurssin painotus on konstruktiivisessa oppimisessa, ja miten sosiaaliset painopisteet voidaan huomioida kurssilla. Varsinaisessa sanastonoppimisosiossa päädyttiin käyttämään päämetodina sanaselityksiä (*glosses*). Oppilaat käyttävät kurssilla Moodlen ominaisuutta *Glossary*, johon he itse luovat valitsemansa sanat ja lisäävät viikkotehtävien mukaiset kohdat. Kurssimoduuli kestää neljä viikkoa, jonka jälkeen oppilaat valitsevat uuden tekstin ja uudet sanat opittavaksi valintansa mukaan. Kurssin oppilaat voivat vaikuttaa valittuihin teksteihin ja sanoihin. Kurssilla on käytössä myös muita Moodlen aktiviteetti-moduleita, joilla saadaan kurssiin yhteisöllisyyttä ja vertaistuen käyttöä tehtävissä.

Asiasanat – Keywords
Online learning, collaborative learning, Moodle, vocabulary learning

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1 INTRODUCTION

English is the language for international crisis management operations and the reason for arranging English language courses for the military personnel. As Boyle and Mellor-Clark (2006:4) state, there is a huge demand for English language training because of the "changing role of the military and changes in defence relations", such as the growing number of humanitarian assistance and peace operations. Furthermore, English is usually the operational language of a mission, the language to converse with the representatives of non-governmental organizations in the mission area, as well as the official military lingua franca. According to a needs analysis, language skills are needed both in everyday communication and in relation to military terminology in peace support operations, NATO and NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) contexts and terminology related to NATO standardization Agreements (STANAG) (Danylova, Garza, Mihalka, Synytsya, and Voychenko 2004:1). Tick (2009:1) continues that professional military English is needed in meetings, conferences and summits in the UN or NATO contexts by officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers. Aho (2003:174) adds international joint exercises and crisis management operations as situations where language skills are needed.

In addition, English is an important language in Finland, "English used to be considered a foreign language in Finland, but today it is used as an everyday language by many people in several fields of life" as stated by Leppänen and Nikula in the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, 2007/09:48 language survey (EACEA 2007/09).

With these notions in mind, the main idea of my thesis was clear from the beginning: it had to deal with *a collaborative web-based course to learn military terminology on the FDFMoodle (the Finnish Defence Forces Moodle) platform.* When the Defence Forces started to use FDFMoodle in January 2012, I knew that I definitely wanted to learn more about it. The main reasons were that in order to improve the courses that are offered currently, as well as to include new

available techniques into our course curriculum, Moodle and its options needed to be researched.

There must of course also be other reasons, in addition to merely wanting to use the web, why a web-based course could be useful for the target group, which consists of adult military language learners. The reasons are firstly, that our learners already have a heavy workload and cannot attend scheduled lessons regularly. For them, independent learning methods are more suitable. Secondly, in this way we can provide courses for a larger number of students and thirdly, there is a demand for a new language course since our learners have shown their eagerness to study and it is important to cater to this enthusiasm.

As mentioned firstly, since some learners are not able to attend a class, or even not to take part in blended learning because of their tight schedules, an entire course offered on the Internet could be a satisfactory solution for these part time learners. Surely, one could doubt that if one is already highly occupied, how would he or she be able to find the time. In this case, learners who feel that they need this kind of preparation before starting in a new post in a mission area abroad usually are interested enough. The second reason was that learners from any unit could attend an online course because they would not need to travel anywhere. That would have an effect on the learner groups: groups could be based on language-related criteria, for example the same language skills level or the same military branch around Finland. The third reason was that after having completed the eight-week blended learning Military English Course that is currently offered, the learners have indicated that they would appreciate the option to continue their studies. They have specifically been interested in learning more military English, vocabulary and terminology.

With regard to motivation to study, for example Korhonen (2003:134) analyzes that personal and professional interests which strongly intertwine with one's stage of life are examples of interest that guide learners' studies. Also EACEA 2007/09 language survey reinforces this thought:

'When all online respondents were asked to identify the factors that encourage them to learn languages, the top three motivators were ('strongly agree' and 'agree'): your interest in getting to know and understand other languages and cultures 92.9%, *a strong practical need in your life 92.2%* internal drive to learn 91.7 % '(EACEA 2007/09:57, italics added).

Juurakko-Paavola & Airola (2002:31) see also other reasons, such as work place promotions or the need to use the language at work, that is, extrinsic reasons beyond intrinsic motivation, and likewise, integrative motivation which is a wish to improve one's communicative competence skills. Aho (2003:39) refines the notions still further with a reason which was originally related to commerce and industry, but could as well be connected to the military: to avoid situations where language skills are needed and the lack of them could result in defeats and losses. For this target group, all of these types of motivation could be in question – the learners quest for workplace-based "promotions", the need to use the language properly in demanding situations, as well as a genuine pursuit for being a better English communicator.

As a response to these thoughts, Juurakko-Paavola & Airola (2002:53) state that autonomous and self-directed learning suits vocabulary learning well, furthermore, online language learning suits military personnel (Danylova et al. 2004:2). Tick (2008:1) adds that online learning is today's reality and needs to be paid attention to also in military language institutions.

When I started, I had in mind the concepts *web-based learning, a language course, military English, vocabulary enhancing and Moodle*, which clearly relate to the field of English for Special Purposes (ESP) and to the Vocationally Oriented Language Learning (VOLL). Those were the very first ideas. Later, when I read more about the topic, collaborative learning, Content-Based Instruction (CBI), Computer Assisted Language Learning, (CALL), as well as Computer Supported Collaborative Learning (CSCL), clearly emerged as new concepts that had to be handled. In the beginning, I did not realize that computer science is that closely related to my topic. Now I have learned that planning a web-based course needs varied computer and technology skills as well. Technology

provides ideas on the systems planning side which can be incorporated into teaching and learning in general. That indicates that planning a language course on the Internet is not an affair of a language teacher´s competence alone. Instead, many other computer-related factors need to be taken into account. Furthermore, it is important that a teacher updates his or her skills regularly with latest research knowledge and pedagogy, because technology develops fast and the courses have to be updated accordingly (Rozgiene and Medvedeva, 2008:9, EACEA 2007/09).

The set theme for this thesis is: Collaborative web-based course to learn military English vocabulary on the FDFMoodle platform, and the research objective: How can collaboration based on the KATRIKS-model in military pedagogy be integrated into the course? KATRIKS is a memory model and as such it is a tool for guiding learning and drawing up course curriculums (see sub-section 3.2.2). The Defence Forces is directing towards new learning theories which better correspond with the future's challenges. Important issues will be for example individual responsibility and self-learning (Nieminen 2007:14).

This thesis is professionally orientated and its frame of reference consists of learning and teaching a foreign language. The thesis consists of two parts. The first part is theoretical literature research under the title "Adult learners learning vocabulary constructively online", and the second part introduces the creation of the course on the FDFMoodle platform. In the theoretical framework everything starts with the realization of the target group, which here is adult military learners. The next section deals with adult learners and online learning (section 3.1) and it is followed by pedagogical choice on the course, which is constructivism (section 3.2), learning military vocabulary (section 3.3) and computers and keys for successful language learning (section 3.4).

The issue here is of how to create the course and how to reach the expected goal, which is a sound, usable and functional web-based course, which could in

reality be implemented. The main focus is firstly, the planning from the teacher's point of view while strongly keeping the learner in mind, that is, constructivism plays a crucial role here. Secondly, how a web-based course could be pedagogically sound, not on the issues of how such a course should be planned and executed in general. Discussions about practical arrangements will not be handled. However, I will briefly refer to some of these issues in the last chapter in the sub-section of the course description. As a result, a course called English Military Vocabulary (EMV) was created on FDFMoodle. I have also conducted small-scale surveys or polls among our recent students on our blended language courses in order to gather some insight into how the web-based part functions. This learner group is suitable for the survey because it is the same potential learner group as for this planned course, furthermore, they have already used our FDFMoodle platform for language studies. The Defence Forces has not had much experience of web-based language courses, not to mention such courses using collaboration. In that way the planned course will also fulfill a void in the offered supply.

2 BASIS FOR THE STUDY

2.1 Interface with action research

In action research, one person or a group of people are involved in the work. In this work, I am both the so called insider as well as the writer and developer. This work encompasses my professional development, an idea which is supported by Herr and Anderson (2005:17) by their statement that action research has "enjoyed widespread success" in the field of education. According to Herr and Anderson (2005:3) "action research is inquiry that is done *by* or *with* insiders to an organization or community, but never *to* or *on* them". They propose that even if only one person is involved in the process, it might be profitable to ask peers' or superiors' feedback since action research is highly effective in a collaborative setting. The idea is enhanced in the chapter "Addressing Bias in Action Research" where the writers pose the question of validity and as a solution offer "critical friends" (Lomax, Woodward, and Parker (1996) as stated in Herr and Anderson 2005:60).

Dick (1993:7) has explored writing an action research and emphasizes several issues: "action research cycle consists at least of intention or planning before action, and review or critique after"; it is a methodology consisting of action to bring about change and research to increase understanding on the part of the researcher. He also insists on responsiveness to the found data, which partly determines how the research should continue and what can be learned from the experiences, which after all, is the main purpose of an action research. Ferrance for her part (2000:15) introduces five phases of an action research:

> '1. Identification of problem area,
> 2. Collection and organization of data,
> 3. Interpretation of data,
> 4. Action based on data and
> 5. Reflection'.

She sees many reasons for using action research, such as the teacher's self development, where the teacher gains confidence in his or her work. Secondly,

research in the actual environment is relevant and adds to the validity of the work. Thirdly, the work might add collegiality and communication about the issues researched in principal. Finally, action research is a good way to reflect on one's own work (Ferrance 2000:20-21). Furthermore, action research is suitable for this type of thesis, a material package with a professional orientation (Skaniakos, 2004:24). Because the nature of action research is continuous, the work does not end when this thesis is finished, in other words, the development of the course will continue. All in all, I believe that this work combines three important issues: educational research, language learning and information systems; the work being part of linguistic research.

2.2 Key concepts

Before advancing, some terms that the reader will meet in this thesis are introduced. The usage of the terms varies a great deal in the literature. I will use *learner* for both learners and students because it describes better our adult target group. *Web* and *net* are both used denoting the same phenomenon and online learning is used to describe learning on the Internet in general. Constructivism in this thesis is used as a general term and its various distinctions are ignored (the term is dealt more closely in section 3.2.). Some key abbreviations that are closely related to the thesis and this field of study are stated below:

CAI   Computer Assisted Instruction
CALL   Computer Assisted Language Learning
CAVL   Computer-Assisted Vocabulary Learning
CBI   Content-based Instruction
CMC   Computer Mediated Communication
CSCL   Computer Supported Collaborative Learning
CSILE   Computer-supported Intentional Learning Environments
             Computer Supported Language Learning
ESP   English for Special Purposes
SLA   Second Language Acquisition
VOLL   Vocationally Oriented Language Learning

L1   one's mother tongue

L2   foreign language

A gloss, explanation about the word

High-frequency words, words that are used often

Low-frequency words, words that are used less frequently

Synchronous, time dependent online tools (chats)

Asynchronous, time independent online tools (forums).

2.3 Observations on previous studies on online learning

Next, the reader is offered notions about other similar kinds of courses. It would be beneficial to learn more about the web-based courses already executed in order to see their advantages and disadvantages – and which advantageous aspects could be applicable here. Web pedagogy and collaborative learning are fairly recent issues and the future trend in teaching and learning might focus increasingly on collaboration because it gives the students freedom. Additionally, it is becoming easier and easier to achieve with the future platforms offered on the web or also more and more as mobile learning using iPads, iPods or various kinds of tablets (Bonk and Wisher 2000:10, Dooly 2008:66, Lehtinen, Hakkarainen, Lipponen, Rahikainen, Muukkonen, Lakkala & Laine 2000:10, Tenno 2011:15, Centre for Research on Networked Learning and Knowledge Building (n.d.), ADL Conference May 2013, ADL Conference May 2014).

As Eaton (2010:5, italics added) claims, some issues are 'in', some are 'out' in language education, her list is as below. The planned course should concentrate on the 'in' themes, such as changing from authoritative teacher attitudes to individualized and learner-centered approaches.

> *What's out*
> Vague, hollow promises that can't be proven.
> Saying that learning languages is easy.
> Authoritative teacher attitudes.
> Complaining about cutbacks and lack of funding.

Language labs.

What's in
Clear, provable demonstrations of learning.
Frameworks, benchmarks and other asset-based approaches to
assessment.
Individualized, customizable, learner-centred approaches.
Proving the value of language learning through stories and speech.
Using technology for language learning.
Linking language learning to leadership skills.
Showing funders the impact their investment has on our students, our
communities and our world.

Many works have been written on how to conduct web-based courses, such as in Kuittinen and Virtanen-Vaaranmaa (2008), who edited a publication which focuses on several projects on online learning. The main goal of the projects was to find the best ways to learn and teach on the web. The teachers produced various kinds of courses and conducted practical experiments. Also pedagogy and relations to working life were of interest. One of the remarkable results was how much the participants' professional confidence enhanced during the process. These kinds of courses give good background information, but not many have dealt with the challenges that this work might face: *the teachers' new role, how the learners will adapt to and learn the new learning style and how to keep the learners active, working and not dropping out of the course.* Halonen (2007:160) has pointed out that in order to start using new learning styles, outlearning of the old ones must be accomplished first.

The collection of previous literature has been assembled in order to show how multifaceted the online learning issue is. The first work to comment on, edited by Maijala, Hulkko and Honka (2009), focuses on the teacher's work and includes engaging articles about language learning and teaching. In the opening words Väätäjä (2009:5) ponders that teaching and learning languages really is changing: the teacher's role in the network-based courses will – or has already started to - change and will in a sense be combined with other staff expert tasks. This is supported by Eteläpelto and Rasku-Puttonen (2002: 183) who state that the new virtual learning model will not make the teacher unnecessary and that the teacher's role in open and interconnected environments will become more

and more challenging and demanding, not to mention that scaffolding will still stay as the teacher's responsibility. Valleala (2007:74) adds that when the question is of adult learners, the teacher cannot be "just" a teacher, but he/she needs to take the role of a facilitator or coordinator. An equal dialogue between the learner and the teacher /facilitator /coordinator, whatever the teacher will be called in the future, is essential in order to enhance realization and critical reflection. Koponen (2009:124) takes a practical view and emphasizes: " in e-learning the teacher's role is to utilize ICT in supporting the learner's learning" (information and communications technology).

Norri (2009), on the other hand, focuses on the tutor's work. What is a tutor's main task? In relation to a teacher's role, the tutors-of-today are actually the teachers-of-the-past. He (ibid.) concludes that the teacher's work has changed: he or she is currently a supporter, an organizer, an activator as well as still staying as the pedagogical support and expert on the studied matter.

When combining all these attributes, four teacher categories on collaborative online courses can be summoned up: pedagogical, managerial, technical, and social, as stated by Ashton, Roberts, and Teles 1999 (quoted by Bonk and Wisher 2000:12).

Table 1. Teacher categories on collaborative online course (Ashton et al. 1999, quoted in Bonk and Wisher 2000:12).

Pedagogical	Feedback, providing instructions, giving information, offering advice and preferences, summarizing or weaving student comments, and referring to outside resources and experts in the field.
Managerial	Overseeing task and course structuring, coordinating assignments, discussions, and the course.
Technical	Helping with user or system technology issues.
Social	Instructor empathy, interpersonal outreach (e.g. welcoming statements, invitations, and apologies), discussion of one's own online experiences, and humor.

After learning about teachers' and tutors' tasks, also the students' role is of interest. Honka (2009:11-19) describes a course in which the planners of the course content are the focused and motivated students themselves. However, as she mentions, there are some certain principles which are not negotiable, and which will be included or excluded, depending on the issue, in the course curriculum. Vallela (2004:18) agrees stating that in all circumstances the teacher is the one who knows the pedagogical restrictions. She also reminds that when the learners have a say, they definitely are more focused on their learning. EACEA (2007/09:62) acknowledges that it has been known for a long time that "public/group interaction and collaboration, on one hand, and the need for a personalised approach that respects the needs of individual learners on the other have been one of the challenges in language education". This clearly supports the idea that today's students are asking for more freedom and choice with their studies. The formula could be usable at least in semi-open collaborative learning, as in the currently planned course. In an ADL (Advanced Distributed Learning) Seminar in May 2013 in Gol, Norway (ADL 2013), the same idea was expressed. In one presentation (Lien 2013), a story was told about what happened in a university: first-year students were eager to begin their studies and asked the professor about their course curriculum. The professor answered that she had not the slightest idea. And added that she, of course, well knew the goals. On the other hand, Eteläpelto and Rasku-Puttonen (2002: 204) worry that when learners have too much power, subject contents might remain undefined and that is definitely not the desired goal.

Other theses and articles focusing on the students are of interest also. Nevgi (2000:191-193) has in her article handled two web-based courses and more precisely the students' experiences on web-based courses. As in many other lists of why students tend to drop out, she brings into focus the adult learner's challenges: time management, tight course schedules, unexpectedly busy work days, general weariness, good plans to carry out the course, but the starting failed or assignments were unexpectedly labored. Those seem to be reasons that have not been settled, as found out in the EACEA research (2007/09:58), again

busy lifestyles as well as needed multifaceted skills are mentioned. A survey on adult learners using the Internet by Kuussalo (2005), and to be exact, using the Moodle learning platform was also of interest. The platform was discovered to be a good and viable aid on online learning. That all could be linked with a demand for personalized learning, because personalized learning and motivated learners are usually connected and motivated learners generally find the time one way or another. As the old saying goes, "if you really want to do something, you'll find the way".

 With regard to two important concepts in this thesis, vocabulary learning and military, some Master's theses and other papers are of interest. Firstly, vocabulary learning strategies used by upper secondary school students by Marttinen (2008). Marttinen concludes that successful students use several vocabulary learning strategies, furthermore, she found that many students were not aware of the helpful strategies. Secondly, Warjus (2010) studied strategic vocabulary learning and she consequently promotes learner independence and self-regulation and the learner's right to choose his or her way of learning. She stresses less the number than the quality of vocabulary learning strategies.

In addition, interesting because of a link to the military, is Leskinen & Suomalainen's (2002) pro gradu thesis which deals with adult learners in a web-based environment and includes learners from the Military University. One of the findings was that the learning was considered useful, in particular because the studies were work-related. Nieminen's (2008) research *Finnish Air Force Cadets in network* finds online teaching practicable in principle, yet, the learning portal of that time was not the best for learning. Another piece of interest is Kastepohja's (2011) newish work which handles language learning in the military and focuses on functional language skills in learning Russian.

Furthemore, there are also inspiring licentiate and doctoral theses focusing on socio-cultural issues and technology: Mäkinen's work (2002) deals with the differences between virtual and classroom language teaching. Ansela (2004)

raises the question of socio-cultural issues related to online language learning and how social context and dimensions affect the learning of an individual learner – each learner has his or her own manners. Furthermore, technological choices are important in not adding to the learners' learning burden. "Emotions in a web-based learning environment", written by Nummenmaa (2007:12) raises the question of "lurkers":

> Lurkers are students who do not actively participate in the joint learning effort but visit the online environment frequently and spend a considerable time following the discussions. Lurkers might have a negative impact on the course atmosphere and as such should be avoided.

The thesis also handles collaborative learning and collaborative visible and non-collaborative invisible activities in web-based learning environments. Juutinen (2011) researched emotional obstacles in e-learning, e.g. technophobia and how to create a course which really motivates students, because e-learning requires from the students more effort, technical skills and maturity than traditional teaching and learning. Obstacles might be technical or in the learner's mind and emotions, such as frustration.

Having pointed out some challenging issues related to online teaching and learning, I will now move on to discuss adult online learning. The target group on the planned course is adult language learners. It is worth reserving first some time to define the target group and its characteristic features, since the basis for a successful course is to know the target audience properly, considering also possible challenges.

3 ADULT LEARNERS LEARNING VOCABULARY CONSTRUCTIVELY ONLINE

3.1 Adult learners and online learning

In principle, an adult learner, when compared to teenagers, is supposed to be more autonomous and reliable because of the greater life experience. On the other hand, an adult learner might have more challenges because of previously learned matters which are difficult to change. Adult learners often have other areas of interest or demands which need to be taken into account and which greatly affect their lives, such as long working days, hobbies and close family relations. However, adult learners are experienced in making their own decisions.

3.1.1 Features of adult learners

Silvén,, Kinnunen, Keskinen, (1991:9), Koro (1994:131-133), and also Valleala (2007:72-74) point out that adult learners learn differently to children. Firstly, they have a large amount of self-determination and personal initiative and they want to set their own goals. Secondly, the very important point of the learned issue being connected to their work or other interests, that is to say, learning must be meaningful. Students should have the choice to learn what they feel is worth learning, and what they feel they need. Also the freedom to choose the way of learning is important. Lallimo & Veermans (2005:14) conclude that letting the learners have some freedom will affect positively their learning process, the learners will be more willing to contribute and to take more responsibility.

It is important to understand that the previous experience of some adult learners might affect the learning process. The learner might feel anxious or pleased with the learning environment depending on his or her previous experiences. Because adult learners have longer studying history, and more life

experience than children, also the ways they have learned might be difficult to change even if the change would be called for (Rauste-von Wright et al. 2003:79). Valleala (2007:72-74) confirms that adult learners often experience frustration and disappointments, but also success. This might affect the learning, either that the learner feels at ease or not at ease with the studying. Silvén et al. (1991:11) point out that the way of learning has changed and motivation might be affected by new learning environments. Those would need more time to get accustomed to, and with all the different commitments in life, such as the family and hobbies, it is difficult to find time for all.

An important question arises of how much adult learners should affect the nuances of what they are learning and how the learning should be conducted and evaluated. Ruohotie (2002:126 with reference to Knowles 1980) considers that teaching has to be based on cooperative planning in which a democratic interaction prevails. It is important for adult learners to have a say in the matter, after all, they do have strong views regarding their own learning and the learning atmosphere should be suited for them. This clearly has a connection with the teacher's role in the future: the teacher is seen as "one of the students", but still the one carrying the responsibility. Lallimo & Veermans (2005:14) continue with self-efficacy, which deals with the learners' assumptions about themselves: how "strong" they are to accomplish the given tasks. The more self-confidence the leaner has, the easier the new way of learning will become.

Adult learners are demanding learners, in addition, the change from an old style to a new one might cause challenges. This will be dealt with in the next chapters.

3.1.2 Challenges and solutions in adult online learning

Adult learners are often conservative in the way they learn, to change the learning style and to learn new ways might prove to be difficult (Lindh &

Parkkonen, 2000: 149). If the learner is accustomed to sitting in class and waiting for the teacher to do everything, the way learning is conducted on a web-based course might seem to cause too much work on the student's part. Some believe that the teacher should teach as teachers have always taught in seated courses - in a behavioristic way. Cotteral (2008:111) argues that giving learners more autonomy will benefit the learners. On the other hand, are all learners ready for that? As argued in the Common European Framework (141), when support ends after the finished courses, the learners are supposed to be autonomous. The fact is, nevertheless, that very few learners have the ability even if "learning to learn" had been taken into consideration. Mällinen (2007:215) argues that "highly motivated students' metacognitive and self-regulation skills could cope with such a very open assignment. Most of us, after all, might find too much independence frustrating".

This problem leads to a discussion on how to deal with adult learners in a new learning environment. The challenges are
- firstly, how to introduce the learners to basic online learning,
- secondly, how to justify the new manner of studying,
- and lastly, how to change the learners' assumed old-fashioned approaches.

Juurakko-Paavola & Airola (2002:23-24) argue that teachers need to take an active role, they have the responsibility to find out if their students are self-directed or if they need help, which, in most cases is the fact. It should be kept in mind, though, that efforts on the web demand from the student an above average motivation, and an active and long-lasting commitment to given goals, which both need to be in line with the learner's internal motivation (Hentunen 2004:14, Suominen and Nurmela 2011:53).

How to introduce the learners to basic online learning

Starting with the first challenge 'how to introduce the learners to basic online learning' the skills the learners will need are both technical and learning-

related: simply, how to use the learning platform technically and how to see oneself succeeding as a learner on a web-based course (Meisalo, Sutinen and Tarhio 2003:47, also Tenno 2011:43).

How to use the learning platform technically

The obvious solution to technical claims is to write clear instructions on how to use the learning platform. That is, nevertheless, not an easy task, if the desirable results are considered. Learners might read the instructions and forget them at the very moment, or choose not to read the instructions at all supposing they know it all anyway. As Boulton, Château, Pereiro and Azzam-Hannachi (2008:10) found in their study "learner training is offered in all situations but is frequently ignored, as most learners perceive it as a waste of time and want to go straight to the point". That is a phenomenon we have observed on our other courses, the learners prefer hands-on methods and quite often seem to neglect given advice. As mentioned in Boulton et al. (2008:11), learners want to see results, not to lose time with reading instructions. The solution is to introduce guidelines and then add a compulsory quiz about them. That would help both parties: the learners would feel more assured with the coming tasks and how to use the platform and the teacher would not need to worry about the learners' skills related to basic platform use. Reminding the learners of the platform's usable features from time to time is also worth doing. That might better guarantee that instructions are understood.

Being doubtful about that with our present English courses, I presented some questions on the topic on the Military English Course 1/14. The "survey" included three open questions, how the learners read instructions and how they feel about wiki and forum writing. The learners (8) had started their course three weeks previously on the FDFMoodle platform. The paper questionnaire was delivered when the students arrived at the instructor-led period and two options to return the paper were given: either during the instructor-led period or during the next week by email. All eight learners answered. Six of the

learners said that they had read the instructions, however, as many as three of them had read them only partly or in a hurry and not noticing everything. Two learners said that they did not read the instructions, one mentioned that he wanted to begin by trying himself and one did not notice the instructions. In analyzing the replies, one clear improvement would be to write only one concise, complete page of instructions ("a quick reference guide") that each student would find easily and would have time to read through. More detailed information could be added in sub-pages for voluntary reading. In addition, a quiz was arranged in class as part of the course introduction on the first day. The quiz showed that the learners were well aware of practicalities, but the Moodle instructions could be better formulated and more clearly introduced.

How to see oneself succeeding as a learner on a web-based course

Many research papers (see Danylova 2004:5, Château, 2008, Kumar and Tammelin, 2008:30-31, Mozzon-Mcpherson, 2000), introduce the most important factors on online courses as follows: teach the students how to study independently, how to study online and how to benefit from the offered material. Furthermore, human interaction, how the students could develop good social contacts both with peers and teachers, is of importance. Still one point can be added: the learners need to be taught how to work as a team despite the fact that team work has been used in class for many years. Teachers or tutors should not think that learners know how to work in teams. Tenno found in her study that it is important to create a clearly structured course which needs to be presented to the learners before the studying commences (2011:199).

The fact is, both individual and collaborative learning skills will be needed in the planned EMV course, therefore the issue needs to be examined further. It is also good to keep in mind what Dirkx and Smith (2004:149) found: "online learning groups get stuck between opposing fears of loss of individual voice

and identity, associated with belonging, and fears of isolation, alienation and estrangement from the group, associated with asserting one's individuality".

Uhl Chamot, Keatley, Foster, Gonglewski and Bartoshhesky (2011:6) claim a successful learner has "self-knowledge and skill in regulating one's own learning", which is obtained when the learner first understands his or her learning process and starts to act accordingly. Even so, this does not take place if the learner is not aware of learning strategies and how to benefit from them. Uhl Chamot et al. (2011:12-19) introduce two categories of learning strategies: "Metacognitive and Task-Based", all together 20 strategies for language learning. Metacognitive strategies include themes such as organize/plan; manage; monitor and evaluate your own learning:

> What do I do before I start? (Organize/Plan)
> What do I do while I am working on the task? (Manage)
> How do I make sure I am doing the task correctly? (Monitor)
> What do I do after I have finished the task? (Evaluate)
> It is important to remember, however, that learners are not as linear as our models suggest. In reality, we go back and forth: planning, then monitoring, then planning again, managing, organizing, etc.

Task-based strategies include

> - Use what you know (Use Background Knowledge, Make Inferences, Make Predictions, Personalize, Transfer / Use Cognates, Substitute / Paraphrase);
> - Your imagination (Use Imagery, Use Real Objects / Role Play)
> - Organizational skills (Find/Apply Patterns, Group/Classify, Use Graphic Organizers/Take Notes, Summarize, Use Selective Attention)
> - A variety of resources (Access Information Sources, Cooperate, Talk Yourself Through It (SelfTalk).

The main purpose of these strategies is to show the learners how they could manage their learning processes themselves, in other words it promotes "the learner-centered approach to instruction" (Uhl Chamot et al. 2011:22).

Juutinen (2011:23) points out that learners will most probably become frustrated in their learning process at some time with relation to the "technical aspect, design, usability, lack of instructions or their messiness" and then the support offered is essential. For these problems, Juutinen introduces a Pride-Frustration model. The Pride-Frustration model has two sides: a negative cycle and a positive cycle. Negative emotions make the students narrow their thinking and

want to leave the course while positive emotions help the students to learn more and overcome their possible problems. In cases of negative emotions, it is important that a tutor or teacher helps the students out of the negative thinking (Juutinen 2011:53-55).

As Korhonen (2003:145) found, learners' successful time management is of importance. Time frames on the course, the learners' own schedules and a decent plan for doing exercises give a good start for studies, which contribute to the general success of the learning process. Korhonen (2003:131-137) also found that learners might face difficulties in their learning process if they fail in goal setting and prioritizing, if their self-discipline is weak or if they find independent learning difficult. In that case, their metacognitive skills are not up to the learning process. Korhonen continues that goal setting is essential, otherwise the students do not know if they are proceeding or merely learning something related to the topic. Motivation and a positive attitude to learning, and in particular to online learning, is one of the base criteria for a successful learner.

It is obvious that learning styles are worth considering, and when they are taken into account in online learning, the work does not become any easier. For example, in language classes, some students are not eager to study grammar points, they trust that those can be learned in practice. Others have great difficulties in activating their communicative language skills. One might want to start a conversation with others right away being socially oriented, another prefers to learn grammar points first and needs the teacher's help (Meisalo et al. 2003:78). Bonk and Wisher (2000:28-29) add that "some prefer stories, some observation, some hands on experiences, etc.". When adult learners and their preferred styles are in question, the problem is that the new style does not easily correspond with the old one – learning grammar in class.

In fact, many differing learning styles should be easier to take into account while teaching on the Internet. The teacher can create material according to the

styles, for those who prefer to read, who prefer to listen and who prefer to do exercises and learn that way (Hiltunen 2005:29). Still, that might not be so easy in practice: if the learning platform is predetermined, that might not allow the teacher to do the things in the way he or she would like, this is supported by Lallimo and Veermans (2005:20). Another challenge can be that the teacher does not have the skills required to create different kinds of activities, maybe he or she is not that interested in trying new ways or the teacher might clearly be too occupied with other tasks.

How to justify the new manner of studying, and how to change assumed old-fashioned approaches

There are books dealing with adult learning and learning theories which date back a long time. Many of the issues brought up in those books are still sound and valid. This indicates that learning models do not change fast, it takes time for the teachers and learners to adopt a new style. That is supported by Kumar and Tammelin (2008:32). The Centre for Research on Networked Learning and Knowledge Building (n.d.) offer the same view:

> 'we have learned to understand that educational change is very hard to bring about. Although CSCL experiments usually improve quality of learning and lead to teachers' professional development, it is most challenging to attempt actually change the prevailing educational culture. Pedagogical and cultural changes in cases of institutions and individual agents (e.g., teachers, students, employees and their communities) are very hard to bring about and are likely to take a long time' (no page).

 That might be one of the challenges affecting the planned course, the students' learning preferences are hard to change. That has already been noticed in other language courses we offer, the new, promising collaboration tools are not taken into use enthusiastically. Yet, as Meisalo et al. (2003:17) and Koponen (2008:131) have argued, integrating computer science into teaching will enhance the options a student has with his or her studies as well as that this is a way for teachers to refresh their teaching methods. Many options that have previously been imaginable but unattainable are now available.

To start with, e-learning environments are rising tendencies and if one is not able to move from traditional learning into this new style, that might cause problems in one's working life and even in an individual's promotion and future challenges (Juutinen, 2011:15). Dooly (2008:68) has found the same challenge, learners need to be prepared for future ways of studying. Furthermore, Kumar and Tammelin (2008:33) state that educational leaders need to be aware of these signals and trends and be proactive in preparing to educate their learners to meet the needs of the rapidly changing working environments and society.

With reference to former approaches to learning, the question arises, how to motivate students to try new methods. Adult students might wish to do all their homework assignments in their own way, alone, not collaboratively. For example on our courses some students have expressed their desire to work alone because they felt they would have worked better that way. This dilemma is also found by Capdeferro and Romero (2012:9-11) and Bradley (2013:52) who state that individual learners may not share the responsibility for joint goals. Boulton et al. (2008:13) conclude somewhat pessimistically that

> nonetheless, whatever we suggest our student do will be doomed to failure if we keep on believing that learners will do it voluntarily and spontaneously. Like us, they have tight schedules and, like us, they do first what seems most urgent.

All in all, as Mäyrä (2001:26) reminds, it is important to keep in mind that an efficient way to learn is to learn: in practical situations, to learn topics that really interest the learner, and see that the learning takes place in a social situation.

In addition, the teacher's role in the new way of learning is not clear, which may cause anxiety among teachers if they are worried about the future and more precisely if there will even be need for a teacher in the future. Learners will have a great deal of rights over their studies which might influence the learning process. The teachers might not be able to show their professionalism and they might experience losing control over the students (EACEA 2007/09:71-72). Mällinen (2007:202) agrees with the anxiety phenomenon and

adds that 'expert teachers feel they do not know what to do. They have been trained to teach but teaching seems out of the question'.

In summary, it is important to keep in mind several issues while planning a course: firstly, to be aware of the learners' other interests in life, in other words, the learning must be tempting. Secondly, remember that learners should have a say on the course curriculum and the course content has to be connected to work in order for the students to take responsibility. Thirdly, a challenging and open learning environment needs to be constructed. The fourth point is that it is important to promote the new style clearly and attractively, keeping in mind cooperative and collaborative planning and clear rules which need to be decided upon together. With reference to challenges in adult, independent and group learning, learners might be used to sitting in a classroom listening to the teacher and do not understand that in online environments and collaborative learning it is the learners who will do visibly the main work. Adult learners might have a tendency to work best alone, to finish homework assignments preferably by themselves, which does not succeed in collaborative learning. In order for the learners to adapt to the new style, they need firstly to be taught how to use the learning platform technically, that is, to be given enough clear instructions, and not become confused by too many technical details and different kinds of activities. Secondly, they need to be taught metacognitive skills, how to manage online learning, that is, how to study independently, how to study in groups, how to develop good social contacts and how to fully use and exploit the course material. In addition, teaching methods need to cater for different learning styles, which might be challenging even in the online environment: the given platform does not give many options for changes, teachers might need extra training – and also more time. It must also be emphasized that even if the learning seems laborious, online learning is a skill one should adapt to and one must learn to overcome frustration.

3.2 Pedagogical choice on the course: constructivism

No online course can be established without pondering pedagogical issues. Pedagogy is linked to formal and non-formal learning. Formal, non-formal and informal learning are all parts of adult learning. Formal learning is diploma-oriented learning where students receive a formal certificate, non-formal learning differs in that the learners do not receive a formal certificate, nevertheless, the learning is structured with set learning objectives. Non-formal training can take place either at an institute or at a work place, whereas informal education includes all lifelong learning issues even when the person is not signed on a course (Heinonen 2002:22–23). Our planned course is non-formal and as such does not have any formal diploma-oriented criterion.

Pedagogy is the theoretical term to explain learning and teaching processes in general. Some scientists refer to andragogy with adult learners, because andragogy focuses more on adult learning in comparison to children's learning. The focus in andragogy is on flexible adult learning and more on the student than on teaching (Koro 1994:129). Varila (1995:130-131) claims that adult education differs from the education of the younger generation in that the curriculum for adults often is merely a course program, not a "real" curriculum at least in a work place. He adds that education for adults is built upon a different base and at a work place it is connected to what the employer feels is important considering time, resources and results.

Meisalo et al. (2003:20) ponder that modern IT can support learning in many significant ways, mainly by stressing the learner's own activity and how the learner constructs his or her skills by learning, reflecting and getting feedback. New technologies can be cost-effective and they do promote student independence and individual control as well as offer an option for personalized learning. Nevertheless, there are stimulating tasks ahead because technology advances fast and pedagogy seems to trail behind at the moment.

Since constructivism, one of the learning models, is the praised feature of the e-learning platform *Moodle, Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment* (Brandl, 2005:1), which will be used in the planned course, a perusal on it is called for. Constructivism has been the subject of much writing, possibly because "old-fashioned" behavioral styles are seen as if not ineffective, at least not serving an individual's needs.

On the whole, the reasons for choosing a constructivist approach might be that the focus then is clearly on the student, on the student's abilities and readiness, which is nowadays strived after (Rauste-von Wright et al. 2003:162). Consequently, constructivism seems to be dominant both in education in general and in e-learning in particular (Bonk and Wisher 2000:6, Tynjälä 2002:162-163, Halonen 2007:120-121, Koponen 2008:149). There are a variety of approaches, but for example Hentunen (2004:6-7) lists the main features of constructivism as follows:

Table 2. The main features of constructivism according to Hentunen (2004:6-7).

1	the learner constructs knowledge on the knowledge he or she already possesses
2	the learning needs to be connected to authentic and problem-based situations
3	learning is not based on individual work, but instead on other forms which strengthens learning as well as cooperation skills
4	the focus is on the learner, not on the teacher
5	plenty of effort is put on creating a positive learning atmosphere
6	learners are taken as individuals with individual goals
7	there will be room for curriculum changes when need be
8	there are no "wrong answers", merely an option for improvement
9	feedback is very important,
10	metacognitive skills are essential in learning to learn.

Hentunen (2004: 6-7,17, 78, 84) emphasizes basic knowledge that a language learner possesses, knowledge that is supposed to be enhanced in a constructivist setting. This knowledge, even if it might seem to be "wrong" in the eyes of behaviorism, actually is the base for further development and as such serves also to the learner's cognitive development. Hentunen sees constructivist language teaching featuring the enhancement of learner independence, such as partaking in planning and learning evaluation, actively

handling the information, forgetting knowledge transfer and instead focusing on knowledge management and enhancing and developing the ways of handling problems. The ways to support these points are mainly by establishing new roles for the students and teachers, that is, letting the students study independently. Hentunen also emphasizes the importance of collaboration, the ways in which authentic learning material is used and how learners are motivated. She reminds that learning themes these days are negotiated and reflected together with the teacher and the students. In addition, the "old" way to learn theory first, for example a grammar point, followed up with exercises might start to be outdated. Collaborative exercises followed up with a reflective theory might give better results and strengthen the previously acquired knowledge.

Lehtinen (1997:14) explains that there is no way to "transfer" knowledge from the teacher, course book or Internet directly to the student's use and mind. Instead, the question is of constructivism and the learners' active work. Suominen and Nurmela (2011:21) ponder constructivism-based courses which might be wise decisions in order to avoid old teacher-centered teaching. One example of teacher-centered teaching might be using the web portal for only material delivery, without taking along any cooperative or collaborative activities.

Pollari (2010:64) sees the use of constructivism as positive, but reminds that teaching according to constructivist principles is very challenging. The teachers will need to act in a new way, and – there are no unambiguous instructions how to plan the teaching. Mällinen (2007:194) agrees and defines that "results indicate that when teachers with rather behaviorist conceptions of teaching and learning, but positively inclined towards constructivism, are faced with new constructivist concepts, they adopt the familiar part of the new concepts and disregard the unfamiliar".

The problem with constructivist teaching might rather be in the teacher's attitude than anywhere else; he or she would altruistically transfer all

information for the students without realizing that according to constructivism, learning does not occur in the way that the teacher teaches and accordingly the learner learns (Hentunen 2004:18-20). Hentunen adds that rather, the individual learner needs to construct his or her learning in his or her individual way and preferably by the means he or she has chosen him- or herself. Mällinen (2007: 186-187) researched polytechnic teachers' attitudes and practice towards online learning and constructivism and she strongly argues that attitude change takes more time than expected. She found in her study that for example difficulties arose in defining the teachers' role, student-centred focus and social interaction. In principle, the teachers saw the usefulness of constructivism, understood that the students should be given more freedom and responsibility and that further social interaction on a course would be beneficial for the learners. However, the practice did not correspond to their ways of thinking and the teachers, if not completely fell back into old habits, at least maintained most features of the old teaching style.

Boulton et al. (2008:12) question the language teaching by claiming that: "If we begin by helping our students identify who they are as language learners, they might start thinking about language learning rather than just trying to learn the language". Uhl Chamot et al. (2011:22) continue and introduce *learning* strategies instead of *teaching* strategies, where the learners have the responsibility leading to independence. Forshaw (2000 n.p.) would like the learners to explore the most effective ways to learn, when given time and resources, whereas Mozzon-Mcpherson (2000: n.p.) lists ways to support independent learners: "providing information guides, face to face induction sessions with a learning advisor / tutor, providing interactive induction materials and portfolio building". Moreover, it is not only the teacher's role to explain the composition of language learning, on the contrary, the learners should build that knowledge themselves (Taalas 2007:416).

Regarding the learners, even if a learner does not seem to be able to adapt a constructivist style into his or her learning process, he or she has the capability.

It might be a question of attitude or on the other hand, the learner might need more individual support. That is then both the teacher's and the learner's task to solve the problem together, even if the learner has the responsibility (Hentunen 2004:15).

There are also opposite views concerning the autocracy of constructivism. Manninen and Pesonen (2000:67) conclude that constructivism cannot and should not be the only learning approach used in web-based learning even if it might be a natural choice and currently "in". Only after serious consideration is it possible to select the right model, not purely by believing that constructivism is the key to success.

Moreover, Koponen (2008:223-224) sees standardized individual learning more as a threat than a positive option for students. He argues that categorizing the students according to their competence level and using adaptable learning materials would mean an excess of surveillance and control over the students which would not be ethically accepted. Forshaw (2000: n.p.) likewise doubts that "some students and their teachers may consider themselves shackled by things which purport to help them, such as learning logs, worksheets and reflective essays".

3.2.1 Constructivism on a Moodle-based language course

Moodle is the most used online learning environment in the world (Karevaara 2009:15). Brandl (2005:1) defines Moodle as:

> a course management system for online learning. The acronym MOODLE stands for Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment. It was the brainchild of Martin Dougiamas, a former WebCT administrator with postgraduate degrees in Computer Science and Education.

As mentioned previously, Moodle's pedagogical basis is in socio-constructivism. There are also many prominent features for a collaborative language course, such as synchronous chats and asynchronous (time independent) forums and wikis, though it must be considered that all activities need to be directed by the theories of second language teaching, not by the

learning platform's features (Brandl 2005:3-7, Suvorov 2010). Moodle offers good tools for interaction and for learners with different kinds of learning styles. Also noteworthy is the option for knowledge sharing as a social process, which is an integral part of collaborative learning and constructivism (Martinez and Jagannathan 2010:72-76). The writers add that in the future,

> Learners must learn to be active consumers of information on the Web, be able to articulate and publish their ideas and thoughts online, be adept at working collaboratively with others in virtual environments and also be able to manage vast amounts of information. For adult learners this is a challenge (Martinez and Jagannathan (2010:78).

3.2.2 Military Pedagogy and KATRIKS

Military pedagogy will briefly be handled next, because it features the target group. To start with, Bonk and Wisher (2000:1-3) ponder that there is no such thing as being "over educated" within education, whereas "a student being over trained can be costly, in terms of time and money, to a training provider", further summarizing the difference by "open acquisition of knowledge" with "improving job performance" (Bonk and Wisher 2000:4).

Starr-Glass (2011:2-7), albeit cautiously, differentiates military adult learners from non-military adult learners. Firstly, there is the way that the military is trained: in groups. This kind of training does not focus on individual differences. Secondly, authority has always played a critical role in military training. Military personnel have clear responsibilities and leadership at work, and their organizational commitment might differ from that of non-military learners. In the case of operational duties, training comes as the second choice. Military learners are aware that work commitments come first, sometimes even unexpectedly; a field exercise might be lengthened or a new post made available, to mention a few. Many have international experience, which may help with cultural issues. Starr-Glass (2011:6) also states that military learners take their courses seriously because they are "influenced by a military culture that values perseverance, tenacity, and positive outcomes". Boyle and Mellor-Clark (2006:5) reckon on military training including high standards of instruction, themes connected to military life and an individual's tasks with

hands-on training. Bonk and Wisher (2000:11) add that military instructors presently have many roles: "chair, host, lecturer, tutor, facilitator, mediator, mentor, provocateur, observer, participant, co-learner, assistant, and community organizer".

Halonen (2007:129) mentions that traditionally military training has been seen as emphasizing mass instruction and a very formal way of teaching, where the learner is supposed to listen to and act accordingly. Nieminen (2008:101) after all, describes a cadet of today in his academic dissertation by saying that a cadet is supposed to be an active learner who learns by reflection and collaborative interaction.

Military pedagogy consists of the development of continuing training as well as the development of research related training. New ways of conducting training need to be traced and experimented with. The principal idea is that an instructor's work is "working with people" (Sotilaspedagogiikan perusteet 1998:9-10). Halonen (2007:143) reminds that the military has its own rules and regulations which are an essential part of the whole system and as such must be appreciated.

The pedagogical planning in military training uses as reference a check list called KATRIKS (Kasautuvuus/cumulativeness, Aktiivisuus /activity, Tavoitteellisuus /goal-orientation, Rytmi /rhythm, Itsearviointi /self-assessment, Käytännöllisyys / practicality, Sosiaalisuus /sociability). KATRIKS is a memory tool for guiding learning and writing course curriculums. It includes, among other things, social aspects (e.g. collaborative learning) which will be focused on here. Other dimensions are cumulativeness, activity, goal-orientation, rhythm, self-assessment, and practicality. Cumulativeness is connected to constructivism and emphasizes skills that the learners have, that is, new learning should be based on those skills. Activity is related to meaningful learning, learners need to feel good about the learning and learning environment in order to be active. The learners also need to understand and accept the goals on the course, which also has an impact on the activity of

learning. Rhythm connects to versatility; activities need to vary in order to maintain the interest for learning. Self-assessment is an important part of the learning process. The learners need to take an active role in assessing themselves, but tools for that need to be given first. Practicality is one of the dimensions that have an enormous impact on the learning process. The teachers should focus on planning activities which are connected both to reality and usefulness and in addition to previously learned skills which will ease learning new skills. This is something KATRIKS model in itself emphasizes: constructivism and each point strengthening the previous one. The last step is taking into consideration social aspects (Sotilaspedagogiikan perusteet 1998:43-44).

As mentioned in the booklet (Sotilaspedagogiikan perusteet, 1998:49-50) it is beneficial to ponder issues together. Collaboration with other students and instructors is vital and strengthens learning. Tutors or instructors are to consider how to advance social interaction on the courses. When students converse with each other, or even teach/peer support each other, they also learn better themselves. The booklet also emphasizes deeper learning via self orientation. Kouluttajan opas (2007:40) stresses the multiplicity of military training, which includes both individual and group work.

Halonen (2007:151) states that in the military it is easy to write orders, but the question arises how to outline the adaptation. He adds that a dilemma occurs if orders are too tight, which may prevent people from trying out new innovative ways.

There are, of course, challenges in conducting military courses although the same challenges might also be found in adult learning in general. Paananen (2011:26-31) points out some of them: attitude, inexpertness and fear of technique, lack of resources, technical challenges, lack of support and pedagogical choices. Firstly, attitude challenges related to time: should students study in their own time. This raises the question of whether students are eager to use their own time for issues that should actually be handled in

class. Secondly, according to Paananen, inexpertness and fear of technique and the lack of resources are prone to cause problems. People are occupied at work and have no time for studies. If one can attend classroom training instead of e-learning, that is usually chosen since it is easier to take a set time from work instead of trying to find the time at the workplace. Just as important would be to know if working on the Internet is considered real work or merely edutainment (education and entertainment). Also instructors were at some point reluctant to change good, old teaching styles. Old systems are easier to maintain than use energy for new innovations which always take both time and money to begin. Hentunen (2004:12) concludes that the teachers might undergo stress and insecurity, taking new steps might cause consequences that were not anticipated, to follow a well-tried path might be an easier solution.

In summary, pedagogical arguments are needed when planning a course, seated or online. For the planned course the theory has been chosen: constructivism, because that is an integral part of the Moodle learning platform. Constructivism has many positive features: it serves an individual's needs, the focus is on the learner, on the learner's independence and on collaboration. All learners will learn to learn constructively, however, for some learners, it might take more time and effort. Pedagogical choices are important, but it is as important to focus on the content of the learning, and these two are intertwined in the next chapters.

3.3. Learning vocabulary

> Learning vocabulary is largely about remembering (McCarten 2007:21).

3.3.1 Authentic material and learning transfer

Before starting with the vocabulary learning, a few words need to be said about authentic materials, which are a central part of online language learning and consequently of learning transfer. Authentic materials are real life situation materials and not explicitly created for language learning purposes. Authentic

materials might be challenging because they are not directly planned for educational purposes, they are not graded, in other words, they are not necessarily at the given student skills levels. One way to judge authenticity is to use the learner's point of view: is the material really working for him or her (Juurakko-Paavola & Airola 2002:12). Taalas (2007:426) agrees and adds that functional authenticity is more important than material authenticity. Furthermore, authenticity can be understood in many ways, often focusing extensively on materials. As Taalas (2007:426) explains, some might assume that reading a newspaper on the Internet is more authentic than reading the same newspaper on paper. Taylor (1994, n.p.) distinguishes three types of authenticity: "of language, of task, or of situation". He continues:

> Let us therefore acknowledge that there is no such thing as an abstract quality "authenticity" which can be defined once and for all and that authenticity is a function not only of the language but also of the participants, the use to which language is put, the setting, the nature of the interaction, and the interpretation the participants bring to both the setting and the activity (Taylor 1994: n.p.).

With reference to learning transfer, when people learn at school, they frequently learn for tests and exams and that information is rarely usable in real life, there is no learning transfer. Instead, the institution offering the training could offer more authentic materials which would also be usable later in life. There is no need to have a gap between the institution and training and both should focus on the same goal (Rauste-von Wright et al. 2003:125).

As Huhta (1997:131-133) remarks, to learn the jargon connected to work motivates more than just learning the language because the jargon is directly usable in everyday communication and as such serves learning transfer. Cotteral (2008:118) adds that "language practice needs to be linked to meaningful instances of personal language use if learners are to persist with it".

3.3.2 English for Special Purposes

Aho (2000:19-21) and Juurakko-Paavola and Airola (2002:9-11) claim that planning English for Specific Purposes requires more attention to student needs than basic language teaching, because the goal is to learn specific language that

will be used in a particular context. General English teaching focuses on many common aspects of the language, whereas language for special purposes focuses more on limited material and goals. The writers also remind that general English skills must be learned before getting involved in specific English – one must have the basic knowledge of the language in order to use specific language in working contexts. Mežek (2013:2) agrees and adds that the question then is one of learning new subject areas and even concepts. Tammelin (2004:46) explains that such teaching is also part of content-based language teaching, which means "integration of language learning and content learning". The planned military terminology course here could be a combination of these all.

3.3.3 Vocabulary learning

It is worth commencing the topic of learning vocabulary with Green and Meara's (1995:1) argument:

> "However, vocabulary acquisition is one of the key processes involved in learning a language, and fluency with word is one of the central skills which people need to develop if they are to speak a second language well".

This is a challenge to most language learners, but Juurakko-Paavola and Airola (2002:51) reassure that vocabulary learning is the area in which learners can best use their self-orientated, autonomous learning styles.

What do we then need vocabulary for? An obvious and common sense answer would be: for communication.   If communication is the goal, then we would need words to communicate what is on our mind, which narrows the target language focus, we would need the words that are important for our own communicative purposes, whether they are related to our social life, our work or our tasks. Nation and Waring (1997:10), Schmitt (2008:348) and Walmsley (2011:n.p) claim that in general, extensive reading and listening are promising ways to enhance vocabulary range, yet, these activities should be based on good resources with a clear context and authentic texts. Vocabulary does build up

even without conscious effort, but unfortunately very slowly and that is why many learners complain that they are lacking adequate vocabulary. Thus there is a clear demand for explicit learning. Nation (2005:2) remarks that it is not possible to teach all vocabulary in class, the learners are assumed to do part of the work on their own. This also emphasizes constructivism: individual responsibility and the right to decide him- or herself how to learn, when to learn and what to learn. However, it is also important to offer the learners concrete ways how to further the matter. In this the learning techniques become important.

Learning vocabulary is an ongoing process and when the learning process commences, the first step for an individual is to verify the means for learning vocabulary. Many learners are not aware of vocabulary learning strategies and do not proceed as they could if they used the strategies productively. The dilemma, clearly, for vocabulary learning is that individuals learn individually and what works for one does not work as well for another learner, in other words, there is no general panacea to be offered for the learners. Furthermore, one strategy is not enough but in order to achieve the best results, a wider combination of different strategies is called for (Kilickaya, Krajka 2010:5). The writers also strongly emphasize that the focus needs to be on an individual learner and on the ways in which his or her best ways of learning could be promoted. One issue is clear: the learner is the one responsible for his or her vocabulary learning (Juurakko-Paavola & Airola 2002:53). Oxford and Crookall (1990:22), Finn Miller (2005) and Schmitt (2008:333) add that the learner's will and interest are here of paramount importance. Moir and Nation (2008:159) state unambiguously that "in order to take control of their vocabulary learning, learners need to know what vocabulary to learn, how to go about learning it, and how to assess and monitor their progress". Consequently, these are the topics to focus on next.

Hentunen (2004:65-67 guides that it is essential that the learner learns the new words by actively adding them into his or her present vocabulary with the aid

of personal connotation. It is not enough to read word lists and try to bear the words in mind. That will not work in the course of time. New words should be learned in a context, for then they are easier to remember. The learner needs to "make the word his or her own" in order to have it in the active vocabulary. Finn Miller (2005:32) adds that in order to obtain a required impact, the words also need to be chosen by the learner.

Moir and Nation (2008:160-168) found in a study, which reported on learning words of individual need and interest, that learners were not highly involved in personalizing their vocabulary learning. When the learners were asked to choose words themselves, it turned out that they chose random words that looked unfamiliar, not words that they thought they would need. Furthermore, the learners continued without noticing that their vocabulary learning strategies failed when comparing the results and the amount of exercise time. This suggests that the learners did not know how to take personal responsibility for their vocabulary learning. In the study, one participant overrode others. The reasons were that he chose words that he assumed he knew, and elaborated them. In addition, he used a wide range of materials, both in spoken and written form. This indicates that he knew what the other learners did not know: knowing a word in order to be able to use it both orally and in writing includes more than mere memorizing the word in the short-term memory. This denotes also that he was aware of the learning techniques and was not studying the language for the test only. Another difference was that he did not wait for the time to arrive to learn vocabulary, but used all short periods whenever the occasion arose (Moir and Nation 2008: 160-168).

Based on the findings, a learner could focus on the words he or she is already familiar with (Moir and Nation, 2008:170). It clearly makes sense to expand and deepen vocabulary that way. New words should be linked and associated with something familiar, a voice or a word, which would make learning the new words easier as the words would be meaningful (e.g. Oxford, Crookall 1990:16).

Once more, constructivism can be linked into this – knowledge is slowly growing by adding new information on what has already been learned.

What is then meant by a *word* and *vocabulary?* Oxford and Crookall (1990:1) muse that in order to say that one knows a word, he or she needs to be able to use the word in communication and in all four skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. Moir and Nation's (2008:160) definition includes " word, information relating to pronunciation, meaning, grammatical use, collocations, a sentence containing the target word, and other item from the same word family", whereas Nation (2005:2-4) introduces "learning burden" of words. He explains that the burden fluctuates according to words, but in principle it means finding out the word's meaning, form and use. The words to concentrate on are high frequency words, that is, words that are used often. Moreover, Schmitt (2008:333) concludes that in order to use words productively, to know form-meaning link is clearly not enough. Nation's (2012:413) very basic definition for knowing a word is "being familiar with the written and spoken forms of the word and being able to associate a meaning with those forms", whereas a more complicated definition includes

> being able to use it grammatically correctly in a sentence with suitable collocations, being able to interpret and create other members of its word family by using inflectional and derivational affixes, being aware of restrictions on the use of the word for cultural, geographical, stylistic or register reasons, and being aware of the range of meanings and associations the word has.

According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (no year:110-112) the two lexical elements of vocabulary are single word forms and fixed expressions. Single word forms are easy to recognize, whereas fixed expressions are "sentential formulae, phrasal idioms, fixed frames, other fixed phrases and fixed collocations". The framework differentiates vocabulary range and vocabulary control, giving the scale of A1-C2 for both. For example C2 in vocabulary range stands for "Has a good command of a very broad lexical repertoire including idiomatic expressions and colloqualisms; shows awareness of connotative levels of meaning" and A1 " has a basic vocabulary repertoire of isolated words and phrases related to particular concrete situations".

Consequently "vocabulary control" gives the explanations: C2 "Consistently correct and appropriate use of vocabulary" and A2 (because there is no descriptor available for A1) "Can control a narrow repertoire dealing with concrete everyday needs". The scales are usable in assessing learners' language skills, as was mentioned, the learners need to assess and monitor their learning if they want success. Another way to assess one's own learning is to use online tests, one to mention here is DIALANG ("a language diagnosis system developed by many European higher education institutions").

After clarifying *word and vocabulary* in their basic forms, it is time to ponder which words are worth learning. One of the ways to determine the essential words is to benefit from frequency lists. An example is West's (1953) frequency and range list criteria as stated in Nation and Waring (1997:18). The criteria includes: 1. ease or difficulty of learning, 2. necessity, 3. cover, 4. stylistic level and emotional words. "Ease and difficulty" deals with learning either a new word or an easier one related to a previously known word, "necessity" deals with words that are unique in the meaning, that is, it would be difficult to use a substitute, "cover" deals with the question of if one word for an expression is enough or not enough, in other words, it is not always necessary to know all alternatives, and "stylistic level and emotional words" deal with the idea that if the learner is not a native speaker, he or she might get along with more neutral words. Nation (2012:216) reminds that for example technical vocabulary, such as terminology words, are low frequency words which occur only in certain kinds of texts, but in order to understand specialized texts, they are the ones one needs to learn. He also argues that "clearly, learning technical words is closely connected with learning the subject" (Nation 2012:220).

It must be noted that there are arguments both for and against using frequency lists. The question is, are the frequency list words really the words that an individual learner should learn. As Nation and Waring (1997:16) remind "we need to have clear and sensible goals for vocabulary learning". They further

state that the course designers should be aware of what words the learners should study.

3.3.4 Ways to learn vocabulary

General ideas about vocabulary learning were introduced in the previous chapters and now the attention is aimed at vocabulary learning strategies even if one cannot think of vocabulary learning as a separate action, because it clearly is part of a comprehensive language learning process.

Before continuing with the exact ways of learning vocabulary , it might be beneficial to consider Oxford and Crookall's (1990:9) critical analysis of techniques. Oxford and Crookall take a firm stand in finding many of the vocabulary learning strategies useless, and actually they are claiming that too many times none of them have been introduced at the first place (1990:9). The writers argue for example that word lists, rote memorization and flashcards without context are ineffective and conventional bilingual dictionary usage will prevent the learner using the target language effortlessly since the learner will simply compare the two languages. According to them, semi-contextualizing techniques are not recommended either: for example words grouping, word or concept association, visual imagery, keyword, and semantic mapping. However, the basic techniques could be modified in order for them to work better. Oxford and Crookall (1990:26) base their argument on the fact that most techniques remove the words from a communicative context and if the words are learned separately, the learner does not learn about the language as she or he could if the words were learned in a context.

Anyhow, there need to be prominent ways how to learn vocabulary. While choosing to introduce some, because there are several to choose from, I have tried to keep in mind our target group, *adult, military learners* (see Section 3.1) as well as enhanced learner involvement. Consequently, I have chosen to introduce five techniques, which will be used one way or another on the course,

and which will complement each other. They are based either on social, memory or cognitive strategies, furthermore, the use of the Internet and Moodle need to be included. As is introduced in Section 3.1, learning needs to be interesting and motivating in order for the learners to continue with the program. Nation (2012:239) adds that it is highly pertinent to convince the learners about the importance of learning good techniques, and moreover in relation to low-frequency words, which are of question here. Learners also need time to become familiar with the use of these techniques in order to profit from them fully, that is to say, if a technique does not seem to work the first time, some more time is needed before giving up.

The vocabulary learning techniques that are introduced are: 1. the note-taking strategy, 2. the mind-map technique and 3. the word cards technique, which will be used for individual vocabulary learning on the course and lastly, the techniques that will be used collaboratively: 4. the use of corpus and concordances and 5. using glosses, which will be the main tool on the course.

1. The note-taking strategy is familiar to most learners, as teachers usually prompt learners to make notes in order to learn the topic in question. For example on our language courses, the learners will get a notebook to use for that purpose. When the learners encounter new words, they should write them down. The note-taking strategy could be an effective way of learning new vocabulary, but only if the learners are ready to reflect on their work (Mežek, 2013:22-23). Mežek adds that the learners need also to focus on the words they feel would be usable for them in the future. Furthermore, he concludes that the learners should write down word definitions in their own words and/or use reformulated versions of the descriptions. Identically, Uzun (2013:8-9) supports the note-taking strategy and adds that it is not enough to write a language equivalent of the word, instead extra information is needed, for example synonyms, antonyms and collocations. He also estimates that learners' reflection and even a tutor's supervision might add to a positive outcome. Walters and Bozkurt (2009:10) discovered in their research that while the

learners found a vocabulary notebook to be a useful tool, they also noticed that it was time-consuming and the technique was better adapted by enthusiastic learners who were ready to invest time in vocabulary learning. McCrostie (2007:2) states that vocabulary notebooks are kept in order to acquire vocabulary as well as to enhance student independence. However, McCrostie questions the practice of the learners deciding on the words. He thus introduces "Vocabprofile" to be used to decide on words worth learning according to frequency lists. He found in his study that the learners often chose words that were new to them, not because they had encountered the words several times in different connections and thus thought they were worth learning (McCrostie 2007:5-6). Walters and Bozkurt (2009:2) for their part define a vocabulary notebook as "a kind of personal dictionary" and reveal that keeping a notebook actually involves many other vocabulary learning strategies, such as using a dictionary, guessing from context, and clearly retrieving the new words many times.

2. Another way of learning vocabulary is the mind-map technique, though it is not that common in language learning. In the mind-map technique, the learner is supposed to draw a picture in order to visualize the idea and to keep the connections clear. It is usually used for information gathering or organizing one's thoughts. This idea might fascinate visual and kinesthetic learners who want to do things themselves. Because the learner needs to approach a vocabulary task comprehensively, the mind-map technique could be of help (Hentunen 2004:56-57). It is noteworthy that this technique would also take into consideration the relations between words. Furthermore, the idea could be enhanced by organizing vocabulary into meaningful parts systematically. As McCarten (2007:21-22) proposes, vocabulary can be arranged by thematic sets, but also by real-world groups (occur in the real world), language-based groups (parts of speech) and personalized groups (learners' preferences). One example of using a mind-map technique would be to write the main word "military vehicles" in the center of the paper and then add main themes and following

lists. Mind map tools are also offered on the Internet if one is not ready to start writing on a paper, which might seem old-fashioned.

3. The word cards technique involves several concise steps: deciding which words to learn, preparing the cards and using the cards and it is essential that the learners are taught how to accomplish all this (Nation 2012:319-320). Word cards or flash cards are a controversial phenomenon. Some say that they are old-fashioned and not worth using. Yet, Nation and Waring (1997:11-12) suggest that it could work with certain persons and for a certain purpose. Nation (2012:315-316, 319) also strongly argues that word cards are an effective way to learn vocabulary, learning is then "focused, efficient and certain", in other words, results are quickly achieved. Word cards also help with retrieval process (Nation 2012:95). With computers or handheld devices, the task is easier to handle than before. Military learners who need to improve their vocabulary size fast, could profit from this technique. Even if Oxford and Crookall (1990:12, 20) condemn flash cards as ineffective, they agree that with some amendments the technique might work. They propose the learners "arrange flashcards on the floor in a kind of semantic map" and add real context sentences. In addition, that might suit visual learners exceptionally well. Hague's (1987) six steps for semantic mapping as summarized by Oxford and Crookall (1990:21):

> 1. Write the target word on the chalkboard or transparency.
> 2. Have the class members brainstorm words related to the topic.
> 3. Write / list the words by categories in the form of a map.
> 4. Have the students provide labels for each category (optional).
> 5. Discuss the words on the semantic map. Students should be encouraged to discover how the concepts are related to each other.
> 6. Revise the map after discussion, if necessary. Add new concepts to the map as the lesson progresses.

4. The use of corpus and concordances as tools for vocabulary learning are worth examining because they most probably would arouse interest among the target audience as being new and challenging. A corpus is "basically a collection of texts which is stored in computer" (McCarten 2007:2). McCarten differentiates two kinds of corpuses: written and spoken, because the language used in both is different. That is why it is important to decide on what kind of language corpus is needed. What she proposes the learner will learn through a

corpus is: word frequency, differences in speaking and writing, contexts of use, collocation (how words are used together), grammatical patterns and strategic use of vocabulary (McCarten 2007:2-3). Kern (2006:10-11) complies and emphasizes authentic information in different contexts. He also suspects the use of a corpus to be a future trend.

A concordance is "a list of contexts exemplifying a word or word family" (Nation 2012:127). Nation presents advantages of using concordances:

> - Learners meet vocabulary in real contexts. The information which these provide often differs from non-corpus-based descriptions.
> - Multiple contexts provide rich information on a variety of aspects of knowing a word including collocates, grammatical patterns, word family members, related meanings and homonyms.
> - The use of concordances involves discovery learning, where the learners are being challenged to actively construct generalizations and note patterns and exceptions.
> - Learners control their learning and learn investigative strategies.

Horst, Cobb, Nicolae (2005:2) studied the usage of concordances in vocabulary learning and found in a study of computerized activities (Cobb 1999 as stated in Horst, Cobb, Nicolae) that "learners were more able to transfer newly acquired knowledge of a word to a novel context if it had been studied in the concordance condition". Poole (2012:1-5) examined in his study both textual glosses and corpus-based sentences in concordance lines. The target group was intermediate to advance level learners at university. The conclusion was that the group clearly benefited from this kind of vocabulary learning. Moreover, the learners' attitudes were positive. However, it must be noted that the usage of concordances must be explained, concordances might look confusing without knowing how to use them.

5. Teachers have over years read and explained words in class and the students have listened, that being a technique called "What is it", as stated in Nation (2012:76, quoted from Nation 1978). In this technique the teacher gradually introduces the new words. It is highly important for the teacher to know how to use the technique, otherwise the result will not be what was intended. On the other hand, the learners could also be more involved. In other words, the learners could instead analyze a text in pairs or groups, learn the words in the

context and the memorization process would be assisted by active work (Hentunen, 2004:67-68). When the learners go through texts together, they also need to converse with each other, negotiate and find common answers. At the same time they are helping each other, the stronger ones help the weaker ones, the stronger ones get good practice in explaining things to others and the weaker ones learn some metacognitive skills in addition to new words. One extra benefit, which has become evident in our previous classes, is that military learners are usually willing to do things themselves and do not feel satisfied with merely sitting and listening to the teacher. As a result, collaborative glosses are the main too on the course.

 A gloss is a brief definition or synonym, either in L1 or L2, which is provided with the text (Nation 2012:190) or glosses can also be described as "short L1 or L2 definitions that appear next to difficult words" (Walmsley 2011:2). Taylor (2006:5-6) advocates online native language (L1) glosses, as he says, they clearly are of benefit: most learners are willing to translate unknown words anyway. As a matter of fact, some learners on our previous courses have asked for exact translations of words even if the meaning of words have been explained during the lessons. That probably has to do with the 'old learning system' and practice for translations. Translations could even strengthen learner self-assurance in a new learning environment. Nation (2012:191) implies that when learners notice the words as words, that may arouse their interest to learn more. Taylor (2006:7-8) promotes L1 glosses also because they are simple to use and the learners are willing to use them which results in increased word comprehension and consequently in increased text comprehension, which might have a positive impact on motivation because learners are often known for low perseverance. He is, yet, aware of counterarguments: many words cannot be translated directly from one language into another, which may cause confusion. Furthermore, the learners' contribution to the task might be minimal, which does not help with memorizing the words later (also Walmsley 2011:1-2). Likewise, Kilickaya and Krajka (2010:3) promote glossing, though they reveal the use of "excessive clicking", which might not add long-term memorization

processes. As seen, glosses are interesting methods to be used in vocabulary learning. With regard to the EMV course planned here, glosses will form the very base of the course. However, not that the learners will simply read the glosses, but instead they will be the ones who create, write, reflect and use them.

Many of the techniques rely on using dictionaries and it needs to be pointed out that learners are to be taught how to use dictionaries effectively (Nation 2012:300-302). The adapted tasks in receptive use, in reading and listening, include for example the following issues: to find out if the word is worth learning (usefulness in the future), concrete usage of dictionaries (alphabetical order, symbols used in the dictionary, part of speech, choosing between the various entries), and deciding whether the found word matches in the context. There are several kinds of dictionaries available: monolingual, bilingual and bilingualised (Nation 2012:305). The best outcome might manifest itself while using both monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, since both have different kinds of advantages. Monolingual dictionaries are good for advanced learners and they usually contain more information on the words, whereas bilingual dictionaries have access in both ways, L1 to L2 or L2 to L1, which assists when the learner needs to know a word in the L2. However, dictionary use is not suitable for beginners because they start trusting the dictionaries excessively and will not develop the manner of guessing word meanings from the context, which is one of the ways to learn vocabulary (Walmsley 2011:1-2, Oxford and Crookall 1990:12-13).

Even if one or more strategies would be chosen and used, the vocabulary learning task does not end there. In other words, then the active reviewing phase begins (Schmitt 2008:329). Nation (2012:238) reminds that it is better to retrieve information than merely read the same words and word explanations several times, that is to say, the learner needs to participate in the work actively. One way is to cover part of the information and determinedly try to remember it. Oxford and Crookall (1990:24) introduce structured reviewing, in which the

new words need to be met several times at intervals of different lengths. They emphasize that unfortunately this is a part that is continually neglected.

The writers also give advice on how to teach the strategies in eight steps:

>"(1). Determine learners' needs by exploring expectations and current vocabulary learning techniques;
>(2) choose relevant techniques to teach;
>(3) find ways to integrate these techniques into everyday language instruction;
>(4) consider issues of student motivation toward and anxieties concerning learning L2 vocabulary;
>(5) prepare materials and activities;
>(6) conduct completely informed training, in which learners are explicitly told how to use a particular technique to learn a given word, how to evaluate the success of the technique, and how to transfer it to a new word or set of words;
>(7) evaluate the training in terms of improvement in vocabulary learning, attitudes, and self-confidence;
>and (8) revise the training as needed" (Oxford and Crookall 1990:26-27).

Horst et al. (2005:2-3) referring to using multiple-choice activities, state that in order for rehearsal to be productive, the learners should not do the same exercises several times, but would need to try the exercise in a new way every time. Nation (2012:84) complies with the idea and introduces generative processing of words, mere repetition is not enough in order to memorize the words later. Nation (2012:199) also reminds that the learners themselves need to have motivation to use the new words.

In conclusion, the basic idea thus must be to use authentic materials, materials that the learners can decide upon themselves in the collaborative learning process. The materials should promote learning transfer as well and be well connected to tasks at work. Many researchers claim that the learners are responsible for their vocabulary learning (obviously because there is not enough time for that in class), but they also claim that the learners need to be interested in the task. That is clearly a challenge, how to make learners believe that vocabulary learning is actually fun? While considering the means for vocabulary learning based on the theory in the previous sub-sections, the clear deductions are firstly, that context is important, not learning words in isolation

which merely resembles learning for tests only and trying to keep some words in mind for a short period. Secondly, that the words really mean something for the learners, that is, the words need in some way to be connected to the learners' life. This might be easier to achieve on a course that is planned here: the question is of low-frequency words that are connected to work. With regard to vocabulary learning techniques, there are several available. The learners are different and they would need themselves to decide which would work best for them. It must be also noted that learning learning methods does take time, and even if the chosen method does not seem to work in the beginning, some time should be reserved to get used to it. Trying once is not enough. Learning words is a long process and does not end when the word's definition is read and understood. A clear system how to reread the words many times is called for, and even that is not enough – one needs to vary the process.

The previous chapters have dealt with adult learners and the challenges in online learning in general as well as with pedagogical choices and vocabulary learning. The time has now arrived to put this into practice by considering how to combine this all on the Internet.

3.4 Computers and keys for successful language learning

Warschauer (1999a, n.p.) as stated in Kern (2006:3):
'The truly powerful technologies are so integrated as to be invisible. We have no "BALL" (book-assisted language learning), no "PALL" (pen-assisted language learning), and no "LALL" (library-assisted language learning). When we have no "CALL," computers will have taken their place as a natural and powerful part of the language learning process.

The difference between the older and newer articles of CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) and CSCL (Computer Supported Collaborative Learning) is that previously there were "warnings" that one should not create a web-based course if one did not have a very good reason to, it was absolutely disapproved of to use computer supported learning without a real cause. Nowadays this has changed: the web is suitable for all kinds of learning, the dilemma is how to find the best solution among many. As Karevaara (2009:14) concludes, the web is used even in teaching woodwork and sailing. Kern (2006:6) ponders that there is no answer yet to the question of the effectiveness

of using computers in language learning. As a matter of fact, he argues that that is not the way to pose the question at the first hand, the matter is clearly too complicated. Boulton et al. (2008:3) continue the same cautious pondering by arguing that integrating ICT into courses does not necessarily improve the quality of the learning though that is usually the goal and that too often the learners are not sufficiently trained for the new style of learning. Still, Centre for Research on Networked Learning and Knowledge Building (n.d.) confirms that CSCL can greatly improve interactions on a course, correspondingly Kilickaya and Krajka (2010:1) report that online language learning affects learners' results positively.

When an online language course is compared with classroom teaching, the common advantages are that learners can learn at the time convenient for them, they can organize their learning themselves, and they can use authentic material, the variety and novelty of which might add motivation, whereas some of the disadvantages are that the teachers might not be aware of passive learners, the learners might not feel at ease with the new learning style and their computer skills might not be good enough (e.g. Rozgiene, Medvedeva, 2000:16-20). Kumar and Tammelin (2008:5-6) are of one mind and propose some more advantages: cooperation and collaboration in many different ways and learning that focuses on individual learners with emphasis on learners' needs and varying learning styles. Hara and Kling (2000 n.p.) add some disadvantages, mostly related to technology and communication: lack of teacher feedback, lack of prompt teacher feedback, problems of how to use the web, problems with ambiguous assignment instructions and problems of interpreting teachers' communicative styles when there are no facial hints or gestures.

Coupled with these, Schrum and Hong (2002:4-11) have a proposition for online success strategies. They found in a survey clear critical factors that need to be taken into consideration while teaching online: 'tools; technology experience; learning preferences; study habits and skills; goals and purposes; lifestyle

factors; personal traits and characteristics'. "Tools" is extremely important because if learners experience difficulties with computers, used programs or platforms, they easily loose the zest for learning. What actually could be more frustrating in online learning than from the outset failure to use the learning platform? Technological competence is also important because not all learners are technology experts. If the learner needs to learn both how to use a complicated learning environment and at the same time focus on course content, that might result in less time to devote to the real issue. It is noteworthy that collaborative learning could offer a solution to learners who need assistance with learning. Flexibility and having control over the work seems to work well with online learners, but it must be noticed that self motivation has a clear connection to learning success as well as self-discipline: one needs to reserve time for online assignments (Schrum and Hong 2002:4-11). (See also challenges in adult and online learning in Section 3).

There might be doubts regarding the usefulness of online courses, as stated previously, but online courses are here to stay and it is best to proceed with the planning with the best practices in mind. What must be noted is, that a web-based language course should fully use the new options offered online (EACEA 2007/09:93)." Simply using the computer as a replacement for a set of flash cards doesn't strike us an effective or an imaginative use of a powerful technology" add Green and Meara dryly (1995:2).

Even if the new options are taken into use with careful planning, the courses do not always succeed. Boulton et al. (2008:10) suspect that one of the reasons for failed web-based courses, unused forums and other components seems to be that the learners have not received enough – or any – training for web-based learning and netiquette. Secondly, the learners might be taking their first web-based course without realizing which kind of knowledge and skills they should have, that is, individual, group work and collaboration skills. They might not find e-learning motivating and would like to be seated in class, where the teachers are available. In a classroom, the teacher can motivate the learner in

several ways, by direct comments, by praising or by finding out if the learner has difficulties. How is individual scaffolding accomplished in an online setting? One could always argue that the learning is changing, one simply needs to get accustomed to that. On the other hand, a new officeholder has been invented "a web tutor", who could be of paramount assistance in helping with learning problems. Thirdly, one of the reasons for failure is that the learners are clearly not autonomous enough to find their way around the course and would need more teacher attention and guidelines. For example, learners do not know how to act in forums and often do not want to be the ones to start a conversation thread. Likewise, very few learners find forums enhancing their learning, on the contrary, forums might be taken as waste of time (Boulton et al. 2008:9). According to Juurakko-Paavola & Airola (2002:22) learner's autonomy is not achieved easily though it guarantees that the learner is in charge of his or her learning, for example being able to decide on the learning, including style, time and content.

Carrier (2010:26-27) introduces the concept of 'first-time adult online learners' and lists some practical advice because adult learners often fear failure. First of all, one does not need to be a technology expert, basic computer skills are enough. Secondly, there are tutors, if any questions arise, the learners are not left on their own. Lastly, Internet lingo, which means the language characterized by web users, is good to know. It makes a difference when the writers use *computer constructed icons or emoticons* in their writing, because on the Internet, there are no facial expressions.

3.4.1 Feeling of community

Before proposing any ideas about collaborative (language) learning, it is highly pertinent to refer to the *feeling of community*, because the phenomena are closely related. When the participants will not meet each other physically, it is important to create a feeling of community and interaction between the teachers and learners by other means (Lallimo, Veermans, 2005:19, Mäkitalo 2006:22).

The students might feel isolated and loose interest and motivation if there is no personal contact from the teacher. The web offers many ways to collaborate and create social interaction. Nonetheless, there must be real persons who create the feeling of interaction, who nurture the feeling of trust and cooperation. One of the ways is to ensure that the participants get to know each other, which contributes to mutual understanding and cooperation (Suominen, Nurmela 2011:39).

According to Korhonen (2003:137-140), peers have a significant effect on positive collaborative learning. Firstly, peers give support, secondly, learners can exchange ideas and arguments and have a real dialogue, and thirdly, if not anything else, they are at least "present". One way to deal with the feeling of community, is to agree in advance how people should act in their role. It is important that everyone participating feels at ease and good about the studies. When the question is of adult learners, that is even more important. A good idea is to write down the rules of conduct and cooperation in advance to avoid frustration (Kuittinen 2008:13-14).

Appropriate ways for the teacher to support interaction according to Suominen and Nurmela (2011:43-44) simply are to ask questions, to give feedback, to counsel and to support. By asking questions, the teacher can find out the challenges the learners are facing. Giving feedback clarifies to the learner what he or she has learned and what might still be missing. Counseling will help the learner examine the issues from many different perspectives. Giving support can be materialized by listening, supporting and encouraging the learner. Martinez and Jagannathan (2010:71) include emotions because they strongly affect our learning. They anticipate that the future learning theories might be based on neuroscience explaining different learning styles. They also add that

> educators who can expertly tap into happy, engaged emotions in a supportive social networking environment have a powerful advantage, especially in addressing the individual needs of the learner and helping them with lifelong successful learning experiences (Martinez and Jagannathan 2010:72).

Mäyrä (2001:35-38) ponders that social presence online, the web status, should always be visible. Moreover, learners could work together on a common document, for example, editing a piece. As important is to consider the learners' ability to contribute; adult learners have different kinds of special skills that the others could benefit from. Special skills are also emphasized by Hentunen (2004:22-23), who calls for collaboration in sharing good learning practices that some learners possess. Starr-Glass (2011:6) points out that "shared values, common experience, and commitment derived from military service all provide an initial sense of community", which is a good starting point for an online community as well, this is being supported by Bonk et. al (2000:29).

3.4.2 Collaboration on a language course

First of all, several research papers have indicated that technique and collaborative learning adapt productively (e.g. Häkkinen and Arvaja 2002:216, Dooly 2008:66, Pollari 2010:65). An online environment offers many new ways of learning and practicing a language that have not been easily conducted in a classroom environment, such as collaborative writing making use of peer feedback (Bradley, 2013:102-103). However "learning to learn collaboratively often involves a dramatic shift in one's views of teaching and learning" as observed by Dirkx and Smith (2004:152). Furthermore, a social infrastructure on online courses is a new phenomenon with various kinds of forums and other social tools. If the course includes many collaborative activities, the significance of the infrastructure might become of importance (Tenno 2011:82).

Collaboration can be defined as "consisting of three crucial elements: participation, interaction and synthesis". In other words, each member needs to participate in the work equally, needs to interact with each other in a meaningful way and the final product needs to be produced together (Ingram and Hathorn 2004:231-236).

Pollari (2010:50) sees collaborative learning to be an upper concept which includes cooperative learning. Mäkitalo (2006:17) lists synonyms for collaboration: mutual understanding, joint problem spaces, joint knowledge building, shared meaning-making, collective thinking and coordinative interaction, which clearly illustrate the issue.

Collaborative learning needs to be differentiated from cooperative learning. The difference can be based on the learners' role and participation: in principle in cooperative learning each participant is doing his or her part and the final stage includes the combination of these parts, whereas in collaborative learning the learners are working together on the given task (Lehtinen et al. 2000:11). Likewise, Pollari (2010:50) supports and adds as a nuance that in collaborative learning learners often work without clear division of labor. In collaborative tasks learners work together in a common project and negotiate for the best result at the same time receiving more practice (Bradley 2013:95-96, Dooly 2008:72). Collaborative groups, compared with cooperative groups, are not competitive, the groups are not emphasizing individual skills and competing for who is the best in the group, instead the focus is on finishing the work together. Furthermore, there is no place for an instructor in collaborative learning – the learners need to work together, learn from each other and find the answers to their questions together (Ingram and Hathorn 2004:231-236).

Dooly (2008:75) gathered ways to promote collaboration on an online language course: to write down commitments on how to divide the work equally between participants considering individual roles and how to promote social skills. As important is to require the teams to write reports for the teachers to know how their work is proceeding. Vuopala (2010:49) agrees with his opinion about dividing work equally and adds that the group participants also must have a common goal and a feeling of being part of a group.

Even though collaborative learning has its merits, Dirkx and Smith (2004:154-158) explain that finding consensus among learners on collaborative projects

clearly is not easy. Firstly, there is the question of losing one's individuality, secondly, group work admittedly is more time-consuming than individual work because of the differing opinions, not to mention differing learning styles, thirdly, some learners are born free passengers, fourthly, some are predominant, and lastly, there is no authoritarian teacher presence to count on in difficult situations. Heinze (2008:154-155) reports about dissimilarity between the learners; learners who feel that their classmates are at a higher lever might be prone to leave the class because of lack of confidence.

With reference to student well-being, Capdeferro and Romero (2012:1) launched a survey on online learners' frustration with collaborative learning. As a fact, they found that frustration is a common feeling. The reasons were connected to group work, goal setting, peers' commitment and quality of work, the time the work consumes and communication. Their main findings were:

> - imbalance in the level of commitment, responsibility and effort;
> - unshared goals and difficulties in organization;
> - difficulties in communication / dialogue in terms of frequency;
> - problems with negotiation skills;
> - imbalance in quality of individual contributions;
> - excess of time spent and workload;
> - conflict and problems in reaching consensus;
> - imbalance between individual expected mark and group mark;
> - misunderstandings; and lack of instructor's support / orientation (Capdeferro and Romero 2012:6-7).

An important issue in collaborative learning is feedback. Feedback needs to be received and as importantly given. Students are often reluctant to give feedback to each other because they are not accustomed to that, even if they all themselves are the content producers (Bradley, 2013:55). Nevertheless, feedback is not a task for the teacher only and now when the roles are changing or at least coming closer to each other, probably also this teacher's role has had its time? Boulton et al. (2008:13) found in their study that learners' readiness for self-assessment was not convincing either, they clearly preferred to be assessed by a teacher. That is a challenge, how to introduce peer feedback and self-assessment on a course. For example, what would be a proper way to give constructive feedback, how to 'correct' someone else's work and how to act in conflicts. Nation (2012:410) reminds that checking on learning and

improvements is also the learners' work, not the teachers' only, in other words, the learners need to take personal control of their learning.

3.4.3 Wikis and forums in language learning

Bremer (2012 :1-4) argues that wikis and forums can be powerful tools to use in language teaching and learning, but unfortunately, these collaboration tools do not do it "by themselves". As pointed out in Nielsen's online post (Nielsen 2006), the rule on online communities is "90-9-1", that is, one percent of Members contribute 90 percent of the postings, whereas 90 percent are so called "lurkers" who do not contribute, but can follow discussions. The 9 percent group contributes some postings. Bremer (2012:6) suggests that the teacher needs to demand active online writing, otherwise the work would most probably not be done.

Wiki writing

Even if wiki writing might sound like a basic writing task, Bradley, Lindström, Rystedt and Vigmo (2010:15) distinguish three different kinds of wiki activities: contributing and writing together; evaluating and peer-reviewing; and arguing and discussing. Of these, arguing and discussing might include real dialogic features and resemble face-to-face discussions. It is also possible to focus on form: to correct grammar and spelling and to improve sentence formation. Loder Büchel (2010:5-7) adds that wiki writing is productive because the learners need to negotiate with their peers and often the knowledge building proves profitable. It is also good written language practice in which collaborative peer (expert) feedback plays a crucial role. However, he also questions whether learners would rather work alone without peer intervention, if they had the choice. Moreover, wikis will not work as planned if learners are reluctant to participate by adding text or marking others' contributions. That might be avoided by giving clear rules and minimal number of postings, not merely expectations, of learners' participation (Loder Büchel 2010:5-7).

Wiki writing is problematic. A study on Finnish military personnel shows that they did not start using wikis in the office as was anticipated. The study researched the use of wikis at a work place as a learning support and in it four persons were interviewed. The focus of the work was to gain an understanding of the everyday lives of the participants and the kinds of changes that take place. According to the study, the main reasons for not using the wiki were that the organizational culture was not yet ready for it, the staff were short of time and the users found it difficult to write on a wiki. (Wickström (2009).

Being slightly alarmed by this with regard to our present English course, a question about wiki writing was launched in the relatively small survey on the Military English Course 1/13 as explained in sub-section 3.1.2 . One of the homework assignments on the course was to collaborate in a listening task: to listen to a program, answer some of the questions individually and finalize the work collaboratively on the FDFMoodle platform. The learners found wiki writing easy: most of them did not even read the instructions but instead tried it directly. The ones who read the instructions commented that they got enough advice. Some of the students amended their peers' writing as was prompted, but most learners were content with writing their part and leaving the task at that. The task probably did not emphasize collaborative writing enough because clearly more comments and peer feedback was anticipated.

Forum writing

Forum writing is an asynchronous (time independent) tool which would assist learners' writing skills in several ways. Loder Büchel (2010:3) introduces them as follows: the learners can elaborate their ideas because they have time for reflection, they need to reply to other learners' postings by agreeing or disagreeing and they need to learn how to start new discussion threads. One additional benefit could be that the teacher would see where help in writing skills is needed (Loder Büchel, 2010:3). Still and all, as mentioned in many

research papers, a long argument without a single reply does not contribute to language learning, not to the form nor to the content. Furthermore, to see a hard-written text on a forum for weeks without any replies is depressing. Hiltunen (2010:131) found in her study the same issues that seem to be a common phenomenon that I have also encountered while participating in online courses and on the courses we have conducted: learners are reluctant to start discussions and realize on the last posting day that they have to do it, which leads to one long posting without any responses and real discussion.

Using roles in wiki and forum writing might prove to be profitable. Such roles, according to Loder Büchel (2010:5) are e.g. initiator, responder, summarizer and respondent. In that way the learner would need to approach the topic in several different ways. Moreover, that would be an effective way to engage all learners – it would be noted if "a player" would be missing (Loder Büchel, 2010:5). Dooly (2008:72) prompts role playing: each learner could do the task that best suits him or her, which could promote interdependence. Nieminen (2008:94) reminds that forum writing combined with reflection can help learners to learn from others' contributions and possible problems.

Writing challenges

The new e-learning style and the use of wikis and forums bring along challenges. Collaborative writing tasks are one of the problematic areas. Firstly, learners are used to working alone, write their pieces alone and be able to do exactly as they see the task is best done. It is extremely difficult for some people to give up this freedom and openly listen to others' contributions. Secondly, students might not see writing on wikis as a useful learning tool because of their former studying habits (Bradley et al. 2010:3-4). Another challenge is that the students might be reluctant to write on wikis and forums, being worried about their skills and poor quality (Bremer 2012:1-8). This is found in Mäkitalo's (2006:25) work also, writing faultlessly on a wiki or forum takes more time than saying something aloud to a fellow learner. That could actually also be a

question of learners' time management, the learners might see writing too time-consuming. Online writing might be a demanding task also because everyone can see all written errors and lapses of thoughts, which learners generally wish to avoid (Boulton et al. 2008:8, Heinze 2008:173-174).

In conclusion, the collaboration tools are mainly wikis, forums and chats, of which wikis and forums were discussed here. These interaction tools facilitate working together, contributing to writing tasks, revising and negotiating meanings, while taking both content and form into focus (Bradley, 2013:82-83). Collaborative group assignments enhance learning: for example, when students start with an individual writing task and receive peer feedback, they have to reflect on their writing more thoroughly while negotiating the result. In addition, seeing and noticing different kinds of errors is an efficient way to learn. I have tried to introduce forum writing into our other blended language courses and it has proved to be fairly difficult. With reference to the questionnaire introduced in the wiki writing part, one of the questionnaire questions was about forum writing. The learners commented that it is probably the Finnish nature that prevents active forum writing: it is difficult to write with people one does not know and on topics that are not of clear interest to the learners. The learners did not find Moodle forums easy to use, on the contrary they were seen quite troublesome. In addition, the writing tasks should be mandatory, otherwise the tasks will not be taken seriously. In principle the writing task was seen as a good way to practice online writing.

4 ENGLISH MILITARY VOCABULARY (EMV)

In principle, Moodle should be a suitable learning platform for the planned course because it meets the basic requirements: it supports collaboration, it is a future learning environment, it enhances student-centered learning and it is learner-friendly. Furthermore, even though Moodle was not especially created for language learning, it suits it well (Suvorov, 2010).

It is comforting to learners that according to Juurakko-Paavola & Airola (2002:3) each of us is capable of learning foreign languages. We need to find the best ways for us, we need to work hard and we must have the right and efficient methods that we know are the best for us. This all needs work, but it will pay back later in the course of the studies. Horst et al. (2005:17-18) add that a collaborative database is suitable for vocabulary learning for intermediate learners. Likewise, Nation (2012:124) is a supporter of computer-assisted vocabulary learning.

The Moodle platform is appropriate for the planned course and the learners, if their motivation is strong enough, should manage the course. That is, in this case, Von Schilling's (2007:1) notion of old attitudes related to teaching and learning could be taken as the course motto: there is no reason why languages have to be taught, as opposed to being learnt.

Nation (2012:410-411) ponders vocabulary learning with connection to autonomy and concludes that three factors are relevant: attitude, awareness, and capability. There is not enough class time for learning vocabulary, that is to say, the learners need to work on their own. They can even use so called rich instruction (Nation 2012:111), where a lot of time can be spent on the individual words, not like in class where there is often a hectic schedule. Rich instruction suits to computer-assisted vocabulary learning very well (Nation 2012:124) and group activities can be used to gather information (Nation 2012:414). As Nation

(2012:238) introduces, generating is important. There are several strategies to accomplish it:

> "attaching new aspects of knowledge to what is known through instantiation (visualizing examples of the word), word analysis, semantic mapping, and using scales and grids. It also includes rule-based generation by creating contexts, collocations and sentences containing the word, mnemonic strategies like the keyword technique, and meeting and using the word in new contexts across the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing".

4.1 Target group: adult military language learners

The target group on the course is adult military language learners. An adult learner in this particular case is an officer, which means a man or a woman between the ages of approximately 25-50, who have a similar kind of background in relation to previous training, and who is currently working in the military.

The learners on the EMV course will participate voluntarily mainly to enhance their professional expertise. The course will be non-formal and it focuses on the learners' future needs and will significantly be related to one's own working environment. All learners will have a good basic knowledge of the English language, and of military language in Finnish and their assumed language level is intermediate.

Courses taken at a work place will usually be finished because they are often part of promotional procedures whereas courses taken in an educational establishment are easier to leave unfinished (Suominen, Nurmela 2011:32). Starr-Glass (2011:6) adds that with reference to military learners, they usually accomplish the courses they take. There are two kinds of motivation, the younger ones see the training as being good for promotion purposes, whereas the older learners might plan a new career after the years in the military in which the training might prove to be useful.

Adult learners are concerned with the mental climate, as Minkkinen and Penttinen (2007:34) declare in the *Opetussuunnitelmaohje,Ilmasotakoulu*, the learners should feel secure, be given the needed support and the learning environment should be democratic and reciprocal. According to them, the climate should be mentally challenging, enable self-directiveness and commitment to active learning, as well as being open and enable the freedom of opinions.

4.2 Course description

With reference to technical issues, all learners will have the same programs, web connections and an already familiar environment. Also, the important aspect of peer support will be found easily since all work for the same employer. The planned course will be implemented entirely on the Internet, there will be no supporting instructor-led periods offered. The course will continue in four-week periods, and would be scheduled, in essence, so that there would be set days when the tasks must be done and returned. However, the learners would be able to decide on their own when to do the required tasks. The estimated required weekly working time would be two hours, which is normal in these kinds of courses, where participation is on a voluntary basis and people are working full-time. One of the criteria in general quality requirements is that the learning is well measured and strained.

The course has two separate parts: firstly, collaborative vocabulary assignments on the FDFMoodle learning environment and secondly, individual work using other vocabulary learning strategies. The main goal of the course is to foster the learner's vocabulary growth in military terms. Put simply, the core of the course is to define new words in the Glossary and link them to the text (in other words to write glosses).

After completing the course, the students should:

- understand what it means to "know a word"
- have learned techniques to learn vocabulary
- have learned some personalized military English
- have worked out ways to enhance their vocabulary, both collaboratively and individually
- have got used to working with dictionaries and corpuses
- have created a zest for vocabulary learning.

Detailed course description is in Annex 1.

4.3 Course formula on the FDFMoodle

> To create the urge to learn, is the web teacher's most important task, learning will be the by-product (Suominen, Nurmela 2011:53).

The course page on the FDFMoodle is composed of five parts called "topics". For the learners to feel prepared and ready for the learning, some advice is given on how to use the FDFMoodle, how to work collaboratively, how to write in wikis as well as how to use a Glossary for the course purposes, as was requested in sub-section 3.1.2 when dealing with adult learner challenges in the new way of learning. Likewise, Boulton et al. (2008:13) remind us since learners seldom, and very few of them, learn to learn autonomously overnight, it might be better to first give more instruction and build that confidence in smaller steps. Additionally, there can be on the course so called pedagogical patterns, for example for group formation and problem solving. These models could assist with learning and gaining cognitive skills (Tenno, 2011:41-42).

The topics are introduced below:

1. General information on the course, a short welcome message (see an abridged extract below).

> EMV English Military Vocabulary
> Collaborative web-based course to learn military English vocabulary on the FDFMoodle platform
>
> English Military Vocabulary is a brand-new course that is taking its very first steps. It is an online course and all activities will take place on this course page. In order to succeed, the learners will need to be both self-orientated and eager to learn collaboratively - we offer the platform, the support of a group of peers and tutors, hopefully a nice atmosphere and a feeling of community, but it is you learners who will do the actual work. You will have assignments to return at given times, but in general flexibility prevails. The course is based on the idea

that if there is no motivation to learn vocabulary, other weekly chores often come in the way. On a collaborative course, where everyone's input is essential, the task has better chances to be accomplished.

Contact information
First things to do listed in bullet points.
A resource page: How to use FDFMoodle

2. Course introduction

A forum: Ongoing course feedback
A resource book: *Course basics about adult and vocabulary learning*, including short introductions on: Features of adult learners, A successful learner, Online learners' frustrations, What is meant by a word and vocabulary, Learning vocabulary, Vocabulary learning strategies, Common European Framework of Reference for Language – vocabulary range and control
A resource page : Course description
A chapter: Course goals

3. Course Assignments

A resource page: Week 1 Assignment *by date*
A resource page: Week 2 Assignment *by date*
A resource page: Week 3 Assignment *by date*
A resource page: Week 4 Assignment *by date*

Assignment tools:
An activity: Wiki-page for the text
An activity: Glossary for the word entries
An activity: Peer comments on glossary entries
A resource page: How to use the Glossary
An activity: Quiz (choice of the working method)

Dictionary links

A resource book: Vocabulary learning strategies for individual learning, sub-pages: Vocabulary learning (glosses and concordances), Note-taking, Mind map, Word cards, Assessment

4. Collaborative tools

An activity: Common Room for official and unofficial discussions (a forum)
A resource page: Netiquette tips
An activity: Voluntary Collaborative Grammar (based on a glossary activity).

5. Extra assignment for Week 1 onwards
A resource file: a text proposed for the extra assignment
An activity: "Choice" where participant's opinions are gathered
An activity: Wiki page

A resource page: Wiki writing tips

The course tutor's work includes active tutoring, in other words, following the learners activity, such as their postings, and ensuring that no learner remains passive or even fails to participate at all. The tutor needs to weave discussions on the discussion boards as well as send weekly bulletins, which focus on the quality of work done during the previous week and remind students of forthcoming tasks. In addition, the tutor needs to be sensitive to the learners' feelings and offer help when the need arises. The teacher needs to amend the word entries in the Glossary during the fourth week of the tasks.

5 DISCUSSION

The basic idea for this thesis was spontaneous as there was no external demand to write it, all the same, this topic definitely fascinated me. When thinking back to the point when I started writing I must say that I have learned a great deal along the way. Considering that this thesis was supposed to enhance my skills professionally, I feel that it has worked very well.

In the beginning, there were several options from which to choose the focus of the planned course: military vocabulary learning, learning to use word chunks or learning academic English according to frequency lists, to mention a few. My choice was military vocabulary even if all the other options were equally tempting. During the writing process, there arose new things to ponder: should the focus be on individual learning or collaborative learning, should the learning environment be open, semi-open, partly structured or a finished product? Again, how does it affect the learning process that learning is on a voluntary basis, which communicates the idea that the learners are already motivated? I also realized that there is not that much material on how to manage learning in practice on the Internet, many research papers dealt with these issues, but no clear answers were offered. It was said all over that the learners need to be taught how to learn productively on the net, but advice on how to conduct that learning was non-existent.

An important issue related to vocabulary learning came up with the question of who should decide the words to study: the teachers, who have the know-how, or should frequency lists be used since the most frequent words are the ones worth learning first. Then again, the words needed to have a meaning for the learners, which does not have that much in common with the frequency lists, or the teachers' decisions of the useful words to study. In addition, when the question is of clearly low-frequency words as in this case, I came to the conclusion that on this course, based on constructivism, on adult learners' will and right to decide what is important for them, it is the learners who will have

the 'last word' in this discussion. In addition, collaborative learning emphasizes the change of atmosphere in learning - maybe it is time to finally respond to this initiative.

Similarly confusing was the idea that if a learner has found the best way for him or her to study vocabulary, should it be changed or not. Should it be changed on the basis that the style is old-fashioned and more prominent styles are available? Or should we have the learner to decide him- or herself? Based on constructivism, the learner should be the one to take the decision, but then again, it takes time to change the old learning styles and if the learner is not ready for that, and cannot decide on his or her own, will there ever be a change? Offering the learner more options to try could be the answer.

I arrived at choosing glosses as the main tool on the course because glosses were a new and interesting concept to me, and I think would be such to most of the learners as well. Moreover, technology in most cases interest our target group. New and interesting ways to learn vocabulary are always welcome.

Being able to conduct blended courses as I had done so previously and having a feeling for our learner 'profiles', I have decided to start with small steps. That is to say that even though it would be fascinating to start a new open environment course purely based on constructivism by letting the learners decide everything and see how it goes, I am afraid that would be too huge a change and would not work out. Additionally, as the learners are full-time workers, it cannot be assumed that they would have extra time to work out all practicalities. Very often the learners want to have fast results and will lose the zest for learning if they do not seem to accomplish anything. Moreover, without any due dates and compulsory tasks, adult learners might do the so called more important tasks first and let the course fall into oblivion. That is why on the EMV course several things are ready-made, such as time-tables, the first texts to work on, a formula for the word entries, clearly stated weekly assignments what to do, when to do and how to do. Even if this is not according to constructivism, it

gives the students advice on how to collaborate. Moreover, this should not prevent learner autonomy, on the contrary, this should help the learner to learn how to act individually and autonomously in the long run.

It is possible to enhance the learners' responsibilities when the course advances, that is one of the prominent features of constructivist learning, there need not be a fixed course and changes are acceptable.

5.1 Choices on the EMV course based on the theoretical part

Preconditions for a successful course are to take into consideration both the demands adult learners present as well as the basics of constructivist learning. When these are combined with collaborative learning, it is noticed that they all emphasize the very same issues: *learner independence, focus on the learner (previous skills), meaningful learning and active work.*

A new and interesting way to learn is offered: writing glosses, which should please the learners since military learners want to do the things themselves (learner independence, active work). Materials are authentic, they are taken from the Internet and they promote learning transfer (meaningful, work-related texts). The learners will take part in planning, such as deciding on the texts and studied words, in other words the learners are constructing knowledge on what they already know (constructivism, learner independence, meaningful tasks, focus on the learner). In addition, there are two polls on the course page: how to choose the second task's words and what to work on in the voluntary extra assignment. Extra assignments are meant for working together on a piece that one or a group of learners find important or topical (one translation task is suggested), such as a draft of an email, invitation or report someone needs to write. The main idea is to work collaboratively on the task and simultaneously learn from each other. That is, learners' opinions have a meaning (focus on the learner).

The first text to work on is an extract from the Peace Support Operations Tactical Manual and it should interest the learners because it is in a military context (meaningfulness). The first text is given in order not to lose time with practicalities because the learners want to have fast results (meaningful learning and active work).

The assignment tasks grow more difficult during the following weeks (constructivism), the first actual task is to add a translation and a definition on a word, the second is to add synonyms, antonyms and/or collocations, and the third is to write (not copy and paste) meaningful sentence examples. The last task is to learn to use a corpora and concordances and from the example sentences to choose the best ones. Even if the main goal on the course is to learn vocabulary collaboratively, the minor task is to learn words individually and in this the learner can choose him- or herself the most suitable technique and the words to study (focus on the learner, learner independence). Three methods are introduced: word cards, the note-taking and the mind-map technique.

Because the new learning style might cause anxieties to the learners, several pages of instructions are offered in order for the learners to get familiar with the learning process and collaborative online learning: how to use Moodle in principle, how to write in wikis, how to write on forums and how to use the glossary for the best results (an example of glosses is given). Text excerpts from this thesis are provided in order for the learners to better understand the new way of learning, in other words how to justify the new manner of studying. Since most of the learners are first-timers, clear instructions are given. Later on, when the learners feel comfortable with the system more freedom of choice can be offered.   To help with students' time management, clearly stated return dates for the assignments are displayed on the course's main page. Furthermore, it is mentioned how much time the learners should reserve for the weekly tasks. Active online work is demanded, clear rules, dates and assignments, not merely expectations, are given, because as already mentioned, adult learners also have other time-consuming commitments in their lives.

Rules of conduct are introduced in order to avoid frustration and in order to divide the work equally because they seem to be the reasons that most often cause learner frustration.

Social contacts are emphasized. Firstly, the learners are asked to introduce themselves on the discussion forum "Common room" (asynchronous, time independent) when they enter the course. Secondly, knowledge sharing as a social process is important: peer feedback is materialized by way of assignment tasks. The learners are to add comments in weekly tasks and to participate in an extra collaborative task which will be done on a voluntary basis. Peer feedback is important, again, because there is not teacher presence. However, the teacher will amend the word entries during the fourth (the last) week of the course. The learners are in addition asked to take part in polls and quizzes as well as to share their good learning practices, to ask help if any need arises and to give constant course feedback in the discussion forum. Self-assessment is encouraged as well.

5.2 Evaluation of the process and recommendations

When I started the process, I first read several books dealing with writing a thesis, how to write it in general and what caused extra work, how to write a thesis with either a material package or like here, creating a course. Most of the instructions focused on the traditional kind of theses. When I started the writing process, I found a great deal of material on collaborative learning and on web-based learning, then later on I realized that there is material available on combined collaborative web-based language courses as well. I think that I would have saved time if I had noticed that these two concepts are already intertwined and available for perusal. Then on the other hand, it might have been good for me to learn the basics first and then to enhance the reflection process. During the very last weeks I finally collided with CAVL Computer Assisted Vocabulary Learning which clearly would have combined all I have worked on in this thesis. Yet, even today, writing CAVL in the search function

of an online browser, the results show nothing related to language learning. Clearly the concept is not that familiar yet.

I encountered many vocabulary enhancing programs on the Internet, but they were usually based on individual work and this course will be based on collaborative work. Another issue was that I found several research papers dealing with vocabulary learning strategies including students' reactions, but unfortunately they were mostly dealing with students from the East or with younger students. Because the learning and teaching traditions are not comparable with Finland, I did not feel that I could count on those results even if the research papers were good to read in general.

During the process I decided not to use any in-house military material as references, but instead be content with public sources. Using in-house materials might have had an impact on resources. Yet, the main focus was on vocabulary learning among adult learners and the military component came from the target group's background. Military pedagogy concerning language learning, after all, does not differ that much from general language learning pedagogy.

The clear difference between previous courses and this course is the paradigm shift from teaching to learning. In no means does this mean that the teachers' work is not appreciated. On the contrary, the teachers or tutors are an important part of the courses as are frontal teaching and blended learning. However, on this new EMV course the focus is on the learner and his or her learning process. Constructivism, letting the learners take an active role enhances learner activity and interest.

I see the potential of using the same model in other language courses, and with some adaptation, for example for grammar learning. Collating user experiences would be beneficial for future development. Other options for development or research could be to study vocabulary learning strategies related to online

learning style preferences, to focus on learning word chunks and collocations, the use of which separate fluent language users from less fluent ones, to examine how online tutoring would affect the learning process and lastly, which I see as the most significant, creating a military-based corpus which could be used on the courses.

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7 APPENDIX 1: COURSE DESCRIPTION

Course description on Moodle **Adding Glosses (defining words in the Glossary)**

Put simply, the core of the course is to define new words in the Glossary and link them to the text (in other words to write glosses).
A gloss is a brief definition or synonym, either in L1 or L2, which is provided with the text (Nation 2012).

- The time needed to reserve for the task is approximately two hours per week.
- The learners are asked to give peer support and feedback to each other in order to benefit fully from the course and others' skills.
- A tutor/teacher will keep an eye on the tasks on a weekly basis, but will not interfere. He or she will amend the texts at the beginning of the fourth week (on the fourth week ready-made corpus examples are added).

In addition to the mentioned Glossary, which is the main tool on this course, also other collaborative online tools are used (called 'Activities"), such as Wikis, Forums and Choices. These tools are hoped to appeal to the learners. As is stated in the docs.moodle.org, "The heart of Moodle is courses that contain activities and resources". Since military learners are interested in task-based exercises, this should be something to keep the interest vivid. Furthermore, the learners will decide on the 'words to be learned' themselves and would also be prompted to decide on the texts themselves, based on constructivism and enhanced learner responsibility, which should add to student motivation. A combination of the techniques is called for in order to learn new words to the optimum. That is why several other ways of learning vocabulary individually are displayed (on the main page under the title Vocabulary learning strategies).

The glosses are always added in the Moodle activity Glossary. The Glossary is linked to all FDFMoodle texts except for appendixes. Each learner is able to add the definitions in the Glossary. In order for the task to be fair, the learners are given the number of words that they need to work on (4x25). In that way the learning is collaborative, each learner will do his or her part and the final product will be finalized accordingly. There are two alternatives for choosing the words to study: individually each four times or a ready-made plan is available for the last three assignments. The learners are asked to participate in a poll to decide on the method.
* For the reason of not confusing the users, an example is given on how to write the definitions and other information in the Glossary.

At the end of the course, all the marked words are seen as glosses in an understandable context in the original text. It is noteworthy that each learner can read the whole text as many times as he or she wishes, with all glosses available. However, it is also important for the sake of learning words to

decontextualize them, that is, to take the words as words, not as part of a story (Nation 2012:80). On this course both ways are used, the glosses introduce the words (or word chunks) separately and the entire text introduces the word in the context.

The first text is given in order not to lose time in practical issues, and it is taken from the PSO Tactical Manual. The next text will be collaboratively decided upon among the learners. A discussion forum and an activity called Choice will be created for that purpose. Several RSS-feeds (Really Simple Syndication) or web page links are displayed in order to give ideas where to find interesting documents.

Words need to be encountered several times in order for them to be memorized and in order for the learner to be able to say that he or she "knows the word". Why the learner needs to work on four word groups of 25, is that merely reading the other word groups of 25 would not enhance the learner's skills as well as when he or she needs to really work on the words. This all also strengthens the learning process and cognitive (learning) skills.

Furthermore, the learners are also prompted to create their own personal glossaries, such as using the note taking strategy, word cards, or mind map technique based on their own vocabulary shortages.

Week 1
a) The learner is asked to choose words or lexical chunks he or she would like to learn him- or herself. After choosing approximately 25 words or lexical chunks, the learner will write down the definitions in L1 and L2 (L1 the mother language, L2 the foreign language). It is emphasized that the learner should not merely copy descriptions from a dictionary, but instead should examine the definitions and then write their own description. Guidelines on how to choose the words are given.
b) The learner should also read the text with the new glosses several times during the week in order to start the memorizing process.
c) During the first week, the learners are also prompted to start working with extra exercises, such as a collaborative translation task, or alternatively go through letters or emails the learners would need to work on at work. A wiki page will be created for that purpose.

Week 2
a) The learner is asked to read through the words he or she worked on in the first week. This is to strengthen the remembering of the new words.
b) The learner will then choose another 25 words that another learner started to work on during the first week, and add the words' antonyms, synonyms and / or collocations (lexical partners) etc.
c) The learner is also asked to give peer support on previous week's assignment (on these new 25 words) by proposing additions, removals or amendments (Glossary tool: Remarks).

d) Additionally, the learner is asked to keep an eye on his or her word entries, that is, see if anyone has added remarks in the entries (peer support task).

Week 3
a) The learner is asked to read through the two previous weeks' words in order to meet the 25 + 25 words again.
b) The learner will then choose another 25 words already worked on by two previous learners and this time add a couple of example sentences that are appropriate for the learning task.
c) The learner is also asked to give peer support previous week's assignment (on these new 25 words) by proposing additions, removals or amendments (Glossary tool: Comments).
d) Additionally, the learner is asked to keep an eye on his or her word entries, that is, see if anyone has added remarks in the entries (peer support task).

Week 4
a) The learner is asked to read through the previously learned words by reading the whole text and focusing on the 25 + 25 + 25 glosses.
b) The learner will then choose 25 new words, read their Week 1, 2 and 3 descriptions and run through them e.g. BNC British National Corpus in order to see the words used in several different contexts. Two or three example sentences are prompted to be added to the word in the Glossary.

Week 5 and onwards
The learners will together choose a new text and the work starts again. An alternative: the group chooses an audio program.

Extra exercises
Extra exercises are meant for working together on a piece that one or a group of learners find important or topical, such as a draft of an email, invitation or report someone needs to write. The main idea is to work collaboratively on the task and simultaneously learn from each other.