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ENGLISH TEACHERS AS CONSTRUCTED IN THE LANGUAGE LEARNING AUTOBIOGRAPHIES WRITTEN BY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS
A discursive study

A Pro Gradu Thesis

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ENGLISH TEACHERS AS CONSTRUCTED IN THE LANGUAGE LEARNING
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Tutkielman tarkoituksena on kartoittaa yliopisto-opiskelijoiden muistelua heidän kouluaikaisista englannin opettajistaan. Oppijoiden muistot opettajista ovat suhteellisen uusi tutkimusaihe, ja erityisesti vieraiden kielten opettajia koskevia muistoja on tutkittu varsin vähän. Viimeisen vuosikymmenen aikana opettajamuistoja yleisemmin on lähestytty pääasiallisesti sisällönanalyysin keinoin. Muistojen tapahtumat on siten tulkittu muistelijan elettyinä kokemuksina sekä hänen niille antaminaan merkityksinä. Aiemmat tutkimukset ovat vahvistaneet käsitystä aiheen tärkeydestä: muistojen voimakkuuden ja yksityiskohtaisuuden on katsottu merkitsevän sitä, että opettajilla voi olla kauaskantoinen vaikutus oppilaidensa elämään

Tämä tutkielma perustuu käsitykselle muistojen moninaisesta luonteesta, joka tulisi huomioida niitä tutkittaessa. Muistojen katsotaan olevan muistelijan omaa tulkintaa tapahtumien kulusta, joka ilmaistaan kielellisin keinoin. Huomion kohteena on siis se, miten muistot rakentuvat kielen tasolla, diskursiivisina konstruktioina. Tällä tavoin opettajamuistoista oletetaan saavan toisenlainen ymmärrys aikaisempiin sisällönanalyysiin pohjautuviin tutkimuksiin verrattuna.

Tutkielman metodina on diskurssianalyysi, ja analyyttisenä yksikkönä tulkintarepertuaari. Tulkintarepertuaarit ovat puheessa ja kirjoituksessa esiintyviä yhtenäisiä kielellisten rakenteiden, termien ja metaforien muodostamia kokonaisuuksia, joita käyttämällä ja yhdistelemällä sosiaalisesta maailmasta voidaan tuottaa erilaisia versioita. Niiden avulla voidaan tutkia erityisesti kielen vaihtelevuutta. Tämän tutkielman tutkimusongelmiksi muodostuivatkin juuri se, millaista vaihtelevuutta englannin opettajia koskevissa muistoissa on, sekä millaisia rooleja opettajille ja oppijoille muodostuu kunkin repertuaarin käytön myötä.

Aineistona käytetään opettajamuistoja, jotka on poimittu 50 englannin yliopisto-opiskelijan kirjoittamasta omaelämäkerrasta, joissa he kuvaavat kokemuksiaan englannin oppijoina. Näistä muistoista tunnistettiin seitsemän eri tulkintarepertuaaria, jotka eroavat toisistaan erityisesti siinä, millaiset roolit opettajalle ja opiskelijalle itselleen repertuaarin käytön myötä muotoutuvat. *Kauhurepertuaari* mahdollistaa opiskelijoille opettajan kuvaamisen ilkeänä auktoriteettina, opiskelijan itsensä ottaessa uhrin roolin. *Rutiinirepertuaarin* avulla opettaja on mahdollista kuvata muuttumattomana ja kehittymättömänä, opiskelijan ottaessa turhautuneen oppijan roolin. *Arviointirepertuaarin* käyttö tekee opettajasta kriittisen arvioinnin kohteen, ja opiskelijasta asiantuntijamaisen arvioijan. *Edistymisrepertuaarin* avulla opettaja kuvataan oppimisen edistäjänä tai hidasteena, oman oppimisen ollessa riippuvainen opettajan toimista. *Vastuurepertuaarin* avulla opettajalle voidaan siirtää vastuuta omasta oppimisesta kuvailemalla, miten suuri tai pieni positiivinen tai negatiivinen vaikutus hänellä oli. *Epäpätevyysrepertuaari* puolestaan mahdollistaa opettajan kuvailun asiansa osaamattomana ammattilaisena, kun taas *taustarepertuaarin* avulla oppija voi korostaa omaa osaamistaan kuvailemalla opettajan reaktioita ja tekemisiä.

Tukeutumalla aineistosta tunnistettuihin tulkintarepertuaareihin, opiskelija voi kuvata opettajiaan moninaisin tavoin, sekä asettua kielen tasolla erilaisiin suhteisiin heidän kanssaan. Yhdenkään repertuaarin käyttö ei näyttänyt asettavan opettajan ja opiskelijan rooleja keskenään tasapainoon, vaan jompikumpi oli aina vahvemmassa asemassa. Tausta- ja arviointirepertuaarien käytön myötä hallitsevampi rooli lankesi opiskelijalle itselleen.

Asiasanat: second language acquisition. memories. teachers. narrative research. discourse analysis.

CONTENTS

1   INTRODUCTION

"Jos oppimisella ja opettamisella on muisti, onko meillä varaa unohtaa se?"
(If teaching and learning have a memory, can we afford to forget about it? Salo 2005: 14)

Teachers would naturally want their students to remember *what* has been taught in school even after many years. However, what often remains in the students' minds for years or even decades could be something as simple as the teacher smelling like coffee, the way she dressed or perhaps a phrase the teacher repeated lesson after lesson. The memory could also be linked to a particular test during which the student felt he/she was treated in an unjust way. Either way, what is significant is that memories of school and teachers tend to follow us into the adulthood (Metso 2001). They might affect the way in which one sees the subject taught by a particular teacher (Tarnanen 2003), the way in which parents orient to their children's school and teachers (Metso 2001) and the way in which teachers see their own role as teachers (Colucci 2000, Colucci and Paul 2000). For these reasons, uncovering and exploring these memories is important. As a result of such an exploration, teachers and teachers-to-be, for example, might become aware of them becoming a memory to a student of theirs one day (Karlsson 2008).

The decision to start studying memories of teachers was not taken overnight. I was initially drawn to narrative data, stories written by students about their experiences as language learners. I was hoping that by studying language learning autobiographies I could get a glimpse of what kind of experiences my future students might have had and get to know language students better. However, after some time, the role of the teachers in the stories started to seem more and more appealing and interesting. Focusing on what students wrote about their teachers seemed to offer a way to explore how teachers and the teacher-student relationship are experienced by students. The main research focus became thus *memories of English teachers*. This decision enabled me to increase my own understanding how an important role the teacher plays in the language learning process. In addition, not only was I able to reflect on my own past experiences with my former teachers and see how they had influenced me, but I also became aware of exercising such an influence on my future students.

Memories are not an easy topic to study. In the past, researchers have struggled with one aspect of them in particular, namely, their truth-value. According to the positivistic research tradition, the main aim of doing research is acquiring cumulative knowledge and getting closer and closer to uncovering the truth (Taylor 2001a).

However, it is difficult if not impossible to uncover the truth behind a particular memory (Saarenheimo 1991, Huotelin 1996). For this reason, memories have not been a popular research topic until quite recently.

Previous studies on memories of teachers have worked around the problem of truth-value by focusing on the memories at the level of subject reality (Pavlenko 2007). In other words, memories have been studied *at the level of experience*, and the significance the experiencers have given to their memories has been emphasized (Salo 2005, Uitto 2003, Kosonen 1998, Colucci 2000, Colucci and Paul 2000, Karlsson 2008). In order to add a fresh perspective into the body of research on memories of teachers, the present study adopted a third possible research direction: focusing on language, the building block of memories. Apart from studies on metaphors of former teachers (Oxford 2001, Turunen 2003), the language with which memories of teachers are constructed has not been taken as a research interest in past research. The present study sets out to do just this by adopting a discursive approach.

In the context of studying memories, *the discursive approach* enables the researcher to work around the issue of truth-value by focusing on the language. In other words, when the ways in which former teachers are constructed become important, the truth-value of what is being said becomes unimportant and uninteresting. The idea behind the discursive approach is to study how the object of interest is constructed out of linguistic resources and what is achieved by those constructions, what their consequences are (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 55). The research questions of the present study were formed along these lines and refined in the course of analysis to better accommodate the nature of the data. Namely, the present study set out to examine which interpretative repertoires are being drawn on while constructing memories of former English teachers and what the consequences of the uses of the repertoires are for the roles of students producing the discourse and their teachers.

Interpretative repertoires were chosen as the analytical unit of the study. They can be defined as "relatively coherent ways of talking about objects and events in the world" (Edley 2001: 198) and as such they can be considered to have their roots deep in the culture surrounding a particular community and its language. Interpretative repertoires are thus based on the concept of a particular language having multiple ways in which it is possible to make sense of the world. The use of interpretative repertoires as the unit of analysis enabled me to study language variation across different memories of teachers and also within a single memory identifying both similarities as well as differences.

The memories of English teachers that formed the data of the present study were collected from a total of 50 *language learning autobiographies* written by English university students. The language learning autobiographies had already been collected as part of a bigger longitudinal research project called *Noviisista ekspertiksi* (*From Novice to Expert*). The data collection took place during the academic year 2005-2006 as part of a compulsory first-year English course on how to learn foreign languages (*Opi oppimaan vieraita kieliä*). A close inspection of the passages on English teachers enabled the identification of seven interpretative repertoires.

Although some of the interpretative repertoires identified could be related to themes addressed in previous research on the topic of memories of teachers, the perspective adopted for the present study made it possible to examine these phenomena at a new level, that of language. In other words, the present study helped to see how some familiar themes (e.g. monstrous teachers) can be constructed linguistically and what the consequences of these constructions might be. The latter was examined specifically in relation to the roles teachers and students were assigned to within different repertoires.

The structure of the present study is the following: the first three chapters (2, 3 and 4) lay the theoretical ground of the present study. Firstly, previous research on memories of teachers is introduced and discussed. Next, the principles and main concepts of the discursive approach outlined, and finally the discursive terrain approached is described in greater detail by exploring the concepts of 'memory' and 'description'. Chapter 5 introduces the starting points of the present study and describes the analysis process. The decisions taken in terms of method of inquiry and data are also made explicit. Chapter 6, in its turn, presents the findings of the present study: the interpretative repertoires identified are exemplified, analysed and summarized. In chapter 7 they are also compared to one another as well as to previous research on the topic of memories of teachers. In the same chapter, the validation procedures of the present study are also introduced. Finally, chapter 8 oulines the major insights gained and future research directions which remain yet to be explored.

2   MEMORIES OF TEACHERS

The larger theme to which the present study can be linked is that of memories of teachers. This is why the focus is initially on previous studies on the topic. Before getting into more details, it is important to note that people's memories of their teachers have not been studied much. This could be explained by the general trends in science. The empirical research tradition has left little space to people's personal experiences and it has often relied more on third-person rather than first-person accounts (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2000). In other words, objectivity and facts have been valued more highly than subjective experiences. Memories have not been taken seriously because their truth-value cannot be effectively checked (Huotelin 1996).

Studies on school memories more broadly have frequently been a by-product of bigger, often ethnographic, research projects rather than a research topic in their own right (Kosonen 1998: 25). For example, Metso (2001) noticed how parents she was interviewing kept on referring back to their own memories of school and teachers while discussing the school experiences of their own children with the researcher. Based on this observation Metso decided to dedicate a separate article to the topic.

Memories of teachers are a research topic that appeals to larger audiences because most people have them. Anyone can be an expert (Salo 2005: 81). Many also seem willing to share their experiences. Kokkonen (1998:5) and Uitto (2003:115) had both noticed how people had spontaneously started telling about an episode or describing a former teacher of theirs after having heard the research topic. Some popularised books have also been written on the topic. For example, Uusikylä (2007) discusses the impact teachers have on their students' lives and sketches out the portraits of "good" and "bad" teachers through written memories of teachers of about 500 teachers-to-be. Hernberg (2001) has gathered together 17 stories of teachers written by, for example, authors, academics and artists who reminisce about the school of the past decades through their former teachers. In addition, old teachers are often mentioned in biographical interviews and they can be spotted in published autobiographies (Salo 2005:16).

Another issue that has become apparent when memories of teachers have been studied is that people often seem to have strong reactions to their teachers although years have passed since the actual encounters (Salo 2005, Oxford 2001, Colucci 2000, Colucci and Paul 2000). The negative experiences of monstrous teachers are often shared first (Karlsson 2008, Kosonen 1998: 123), perhaps because the negative tends to remain

more easily in mind and therefore experiences of shame and embarrassment turn into key moments that start dominating one's memories (Salo 2005: 121). Either way, it seems that some teachers can have a lasting impact on their students. This has often been interpreted as the encounters having been meaningful to people (Uitto 2003: 114). One thing is sure: memories of teachers seem to follow us into the adulthood (Metso 2001). Even after yeas and decades, teachers' actions might still be analysed (Salo 2005: 80).

In the following sections the focus of the present study centres on specific examples of systematic attempts to study memories of teachers. Since the studies do not share an easily definable framework but they all follow their own principles, each of them will be discussed separately in order to give a feel for the multitude of approaches that have been adopted in past works. Some of the studies focused explicitly on language/English teachers and they will be discussed in a separate section because they are particularly relevant to the present study that sets out to examine memories of English teachers. Most of the studies presented below have been carried out in the Finnish context. The aim of the following discussion is to outline the research terrain to which the present study adds its contribution.

2.1 Teachers in general

Although the following discussion focuses broadly on teachers of all subjects and does not highlight language teachers in specific, it can provide useful insights, since teaching any subject matter is based fundamentally on similar principles. As has already been established, all the studies examine teachers in retrospect, however, from different angles; in what follows the teacher will be looked at from the cultural and feminist perspectives, and from the points of view of the student-teacher relationship and negative/caring pedagogies. The main findings of each study will be briefly outlined and relevant points to the present study highlighted.

Teaching as a cultural phenomenon

The first study taken to the forefront is that of Salo (2005) and it represents the "cultural perspective" referred to above. The study was carried out in Finland and its participants reminisce about teachers of the modern days and past decades due to the widely differing ages of the participants. Salo used written stories that narrated experiences with

teachers as data. The stories (66 in all) were produced for a writing competition. These being her primary data, Salo compared the experiences of the participants to published stories of past teachers (e.g. Hernberg 2001) and autobiographies, being able to establish links between them and her participants' experiences.

Content analysis revealed a number of issues related to characteristics of good teachers, cultural and stereotypical ways of describing teachers, positive learning experiences and experiences of shame and embarrassment (Salo 2005). However, the dominant, underlying theme was the quest to examine teaching as a cultural phenomenon and this will be the focus of the following discussion since cultural ways of understanding relate directly to the analytical unit of the present study (see section 3.2).

To start off, some general observations concerning the complex relationship between culture, teaching, teachers and memories. Firstly, memories of teachers and school are by no means innocent, since they are born *in* school, within the institution that affects the minds of students (Salo 2005: 84). Secondly, when a child encounters a new teacher, the stories, beliefs and experiences of their older siblings and parents affect their ideas and guide their perceptions. It is as if the memories of former teachers are present in all new encounters between teachers and students (Salo 2005: 119). Stories are recycled in this manner – from parent to child, sibling to sibling, media to its consumers (Salo 2005: 20). Salo observed that the participants seemed to be well aware of such a "cultural collection of stories of teaching" (Salo 2005: 76). They often seemed to react to them somehow, and then continued the telling on a more personal note, which according to Salo, can be taken as a sign of their cultural strength.

Sometimes the way the teachers were approached was consistent with conventional, stereotypical ways of describing teachers (Salo 2005: 32). Karlsson (2008) refers to the same phenomenon using the concept of "frozen stories" that are recycled to a point where they loose their power and impede their teller to move into a deeper level (see section 2.2). Stereotypes, or myths portray the teacher in a black-and-white manner as either good or bad, interesting or boring and nothing in between, making it more difficult to break down and examine the phenomena of teaching (Salo 2005: 81). Myths can be defined as vague, yet strong beliefs that are trusted with blind faith and, consequently, they impede changes in thinking processes and concrete school practices (Salo 2005: 81). Salo (2005: 62) notes that she could detect stereotypes in her data, but also "counter-texts" to them. For example, one of her subjects described her teacher by

saying: "she was definitely no mother figure" implying that a teacher could be described as one, or that she perhaps should be one.

The stories were all unique, yet cultural unity could be detected. This was due to the accounts being socially and culturally formed (Salo 2005: 20). Leppänen and Kalaja's (1997) made a similar point. According to them, narratives could be thought of as both collective and individual because they seem to be constructed out of culturally recognizable story elements and structures that can be combined with one another. It is for these reasons that the readers who share the writers' cultural background find it easy to follow their course and relate to the experiences (Salo 2005:155).

To conclude, Salo notes (2005: 76) how the experiences and especially the meanings attached to them are the product of social reality on one hand, and on the other they produce social reality. From the point of view of the present study, Salo's observations on the cultural nature of teaching and encountering teachers, is significant. Discourse, as will be seen later, is produced in the culture while at the same time contributing to the social reality, and ways of making sense of it are culture-bound.

The student-teacher relationship in the learners' memories

The focus shifts now to the study of Uitto (2003) who examined memories of teachers from the perspective of teacher-student relationships. The term 'relationship' was replaced with 'encounter' for the purposes of the study. The latter term was closer to the language of the participants and it also managed to capture something essential about the data in which the teacher was never portrayed alone but always in relation to the learner (Uitto 2003: 112). This is not unique to Uitto's data. Also Laine's (2000:43) subjects seemed to define the teacher in the stories they wrote about lessons, in terms of how he/she created the social space between him/herself and the learner. The term 'encounter' also summarized something essential about the nature of the narrative study, which was filled with encounters – those between teachers and students in the data, between the reader of the study and the memories in the text and those between Uitto herself as a researcher, the data and the background literature (Uitto 2003: 18).

Uitto (2003), too, resorted to written data: compositions written by teachers-to-be. She attempted to discover what type of an encounter between a teacher and students stayed in the participants' minds and what was told about it. The compositions focused on learning experiences more broadly, however, they included a wide range of memories

of teachers ranging from a couple of sentences to several pages in length. The data were approached with the following two presuppositions: firstly, meaningful events are the ones that stay in mind and are reported, and secondly, memories do not represent real life events as such, but rather their interpretations[1] (Uitto 2003:2).

Five different types of encounters were identified by means of content analysis (Uitto 2003). The encounter could be portrayed either as physical, repressive, human, caring or influential. In the *physical* encounter pupils observed teachers not simply as professional instructors but as whole human beings starting from the appearance, the way they dressed to the use of gestures, facial expressions and voice. Similar observations were made by Salo (2005) whose data also included vivid, detailed descriptions of teachers. The *repressive* encounter, in its turn, centred on power relations and the stories portrayed vulnerable children forced to face an authority figure. The *human* encounter could be considered the other end of the same continuum with the repressive one. In it, the teacher cares for the pupils and sees them as unique human beings who have skills and abilities that differentiate them from the others. An encounter could also be a *caring* one. According to Uitto (2003: 74), the term 'care' can mean many things to different people (e.g. confidentiality, encouragement, discipline, being a mother-figure etc.). Finally, the *influential* encounter is what inspires pupils to learn: the teacher sets an example that can affect pupils' career choices, too. As a result of an influential encounter the teachers-to-be could either decide to become precisely like their teacher or the complete opposite.

Uitto (2003: 112) concludes that based on her data it seems that forming a relationship to the students is what matters the most in teaching.

Women's memories of teachers

Memories of teachers have also been looked at from the feminist perspective (Kosonen 1998). In the study, the focus was not solely on memories of teachers, but they emerged as women's school memories were collected through written compositions and oral group discussions. The participants were all women since the main focus of the study was on *women* looking back at their school days.

In the course of sharing the experiences, the school girls' relationships to their teachers emerged as ambivalent. At times they were portrayed as static and unchanging,

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[1] More of the debate whether memories are precise representations of life events or interpretations in section 4.1

dictated by the authority figure above leaving little space to the girls. Sometimes there was more development or the relationship was inversed because the pupils teased teachers that were particularly disliked or somehow lower on the ranking scale (e.g. substitute teachers or teacher trainees) collectively (Kosonen 1998: 121). However, what mostly caught Kosonen's (1998: 124) attention were the many feelings in the stories. She went on to criticise the tendency of traditional research to ignore personal feelings in narratives and not see their societal value. She claims that they could be seen as manifestations of evils in society.

Among the most salient emotions identified in the data were fear, bitterness, insecurity, repulsion and adoration of former teachers. The first two can be seen as closely related in that what causes *fear* at the time turns into *bitterness* as years pass by. Being the teacher's favourite or other students being openly favoured by the teacher were other sources of bitterness (Kosonen 1998:125-126). *Repulsion* was linked to the participants' experiences as girls and often included some aspects of the teachers' sexuality, either in general or in some way directed, inappropriately, towards pupils. *Adoration* was the only positive emotion and it came about in relation to particularly loved teachers. What became apparent by examining the participants' feelings was the conflict between teachers being seen both as feeling human beings and as a part of the institution. As a consequence, the participants' feelings towards the institution became intertwined with their feelings towards their teachers (Kosonen 1998: 140).

Negative and caring pedagogies

To conclude the discussion on memories of teachers 'in general', a further example from outside the Finnish context will be briefly touched on. Colucci (2000) and Colucci and Paul (2000) examined unsent letters to good/bad former teachers written as part of a course for teachers-to-be in the United States (Paul, Christensen and Falk 2000). The analysis was carried out by relying on the concepts of negative and caring pedagogies, which were understood as opposing approaches to teaching. It was emphasized that negative pedagogy is more than overtly negative behaviour and that it could manifest itself in the classroom routines and practices of even teachers with good intentions (Colucci: 2000). Care, in its turn, was seen as something existing on many levels starting from relationships in the classroom extending to those between the classroom and the rest of the school, surrounding community and curricula (Colucci and Paul 2000).

In the letters, the writers could address their past teachers in a direct yet non-threatening way confronting them on both positive and negative experiences. When the letters were put through analysis several themes concerning both negative and caring pedagogies emerged. These were discipline and relationships with students, evaluation, grouping of students, classroom/school procedures and rules, physical resources and methods of instruction for the first (Colucci 2000); and hospitality to strangers, safety and gestures of civility for the latter (Colucci and Paul 2000).

2.2   Language teachers in specific

In this section the examination of previous studies conducted on memories of teachers continues. However, the focus now turns to studies concerning FL/EFL teachers in particular. These studies offer yet alternative ways to approach the topic, namely, the perspectives of self-reflexivity and metaphors. However, before exploring these perspectives in more detail, a study by Leppänen and Kalaja (1997), which has already been mentioned in passing, will be considered as it, too, offers insights into the study of language learning experiences and their relation to English teachers.

The teachers were not the main focus of the study; its goals were different. Leppänen and Kalaja (1997) analysed a number of language learning autobiographies in order to distinguish story structures, thematic elements typical of the Western and Finnish cultures, and character roles the learners had assigned to themselves and to others within them. Their analysis followed the principles of narrative semiotics, influenced by the work of Propp and Greimas (for more, see Leppänen and Kalaja 1997; Titcsher et al. 2000). Five different thematic elements were identified: namely, acquisition without effort, learning as a struggle, learning as falling in love, learning as suffering and learning as a by-product. Fragments of them appeared in the students' narratives. Most stories contained more than one of them embedded in the text, because people normally rely on combining different thematic elements in the course of the telling.

The teacher, as could be expected, was one of the 'others' in the learners' stories. They had a role to play in three out of five thematic elements. The teacher was assigned the roles of the helper and the enemy in the experiences described as struggling, falling in love and suffering, whereas in the other two the learner was aided or hindered mainly by him/herself. Leppänen and Kalaja (1997) note that the teacher seemed to have the

most significant role out of all learner internal and external influences. They note that the teachers' role in and their significance to the language learning process has been little researched and that it is one of the new directions their findings pointed at, one of the issues future research could address.

The focus now turns to the studies of Karlsson (2008), Oxford (2001) and Turunen (2003).

Self-reflexivity and memories of language teachers

The perspective adopted by Karlsson (2008) was that of self-reflexivity. She defines her study as an autobiographical experiential narrative the goal of which was to bring together the stories of learners and teachers. She also felt the need to understand the teachers' roles in her students' narratives. It seemed to her as if the teacher figure simply "loomed over all other major influences" in people's experiences, often taking on the controversial role of a tyrant (Karlsson 2008: 83).

She chose the concepts of self-reflexivity and resonance as the starting points of the study and the reporting was aided by the metaphor of a kaleidoscope: when the kaleidoscope turns, different elements within it are rearranged and new patterns emerge. The participants' tellings revealed new details about their experiences in a similar fashion. The data were interpreted through dialogic readings. Karlsson (2008) wanted this to be reflected in her report by describing how she read the texts both as a researcher as well as a counsellor.

The data were triangulated in that they consisted of written (e.g. reflection texts) and oral sources (e.g. taped group and personal discussions). By taking advantage of the possibilities offered by these types of data, it was possible to track one student's memory as it appeared in different contexts, in different moments in time, taking diverse forms. Karlsson (2008) presented her findings concerning the participant's memory in the form of a fragmented storyline, which will be briefly traced below.

In the first fragment the researcher encounters the memory for the first time and a similar memory resonates in her mind helping her to relate to the student's feelings. Next she reads a different version of the memory in a reflection text written by the student. In a group interview the girl has tears in her eyes when she mentions negative school experiences, whereas in a videotaped group discussion she lays out an experience that resonates with those of the other participants. The subject is also interviewed one-

on-one and in that discussion new details of the memory emerge. In the sixth fragment the researcher discusses the case with the group counsellor and finds connections between the girl's experiences and her own vulnerability as a teacher; she realizes that she could well be a memory in someone's mind. In the last fragment the researcher presents the case in a conference, which is both the closure point and a new beginning. The study can now make its listeners and readers reflect on their own experiences.

The study shows how deep-rooted and far-reaching encounters with teachers can be, how experiences are somehow shared culturally and how stories of teachers are recycled. Karlsson (2008) notes the dangers of this by saying that recycled stories risk loosing their power hardening into 'frozen stories' that capture their teller. Due to people continually talking about tyrant-like teachers, her subject's story could have been dismissed as another sob story. However, its value can be discovered in how it resonates in other people's minds. It would seem appropriate to draw a link between these considerations and those of Kosonen (1998) discussed above (see section 2.1) concerning the importance of the emotions in narratives. As was mentioned previously, a closer examination of people's feelings can help identify the evils in society (Kosonen 1998: 124). In other words, listening to students' 'sob stories' can give teachers a valuable lesson.

Karlsson's (2008) approach was no doubt very different from many others discussed both above and below. Perhaps one of its biggest contributions is its relation to practice. In her quest for understanding stories of teachers, Karlsson herself came into touch with her own role as a teacher, her own professional vulnerability and the fact that she herself as a teacher is becoming or has already become a memory to someone. This shows that the study of memories of teachers could have practical, pedagogical and personal use, especially for teachers in reflecting upon their teaching.

Metaphorical constructions of language teachers

The last two studies (Oxford 2001, Turunen 2003) on how experiences with teachers have been examined in retrospect will be discussed together because they have the same overall goal: to identify metaphorical constructions of teachers in texts written by language learners. They also relate most closely to the present study, because metaphors have an important role in the analytical unit of the present study (see section 3.3).

There were some differences between the research designs. First of all, Oxford's subjects were students in a variety of fields, some at university and some in upper secondary school. Turunen's participants, on the other hand, were all Finnish university freshmen who studied English. As her data, Oxford used written narratives that focused explicitly on narrating experiences with language teachers. In other words, the focus was not solely on EFL/ESL teachers. Turunen, on the other hand, used written language learning autobiographies the focus of which was on the writers' language learning experiences more broadly. She analysed both the learners' constructions of themselves as language learners and of their English teachers. An important similarity can be found in the way the metaphors were seen. They were seen as naturally-occuring in people's writing and talk and they were thus not elicited directly. For example, the instructions for the writing tasks did not draw attention to them.

As for the theoretical understanding of the issue, both studies used metaphor analysis in uncovering the figures of speech used to describe language teachers. Oxford understood metaphor as any comparison that cannot be taken literally. Turunen, on the other hand, used a dictionary definition, "which claims that a metaphor is where 'X' is treated as if it was to some extent (but not completely) 'Y'" (Turunen 2003: 60). Turunen concentrated explicitly on metaphors whereas Oxford's interest stretched to teaching styles. In fact, she categorized the metaphors that emerged under the autocratic, democratic/participatory and laissez-faire approaches to teaching.

Despite the differences in the research designs, the results were partly similar. Turunen (2003: 94) compared her results to those of Oxford (2001) and concluded that four out of six teacher metaphors identified in her study found their counterpart in Oxford's findings. The comparison of the studies is summarized in Table 1.

The first common metaphor is the teacher AS A MANUFACTURER. The key feature of this metaphor is cost-efficiency (Turunen 2003: 83), covering a lot of ground in a fairly short period of time (Oxford 2001). In these accounts, the classroom turns into a factory and the teacher into its manager. This type of teaching, although described as frustrating can also be to the students' liking because it enables them to achieve results (Turunen 2003: 84). The second metaphor the studies shared was that of teacher AS A WITCH. Needless to say the teachers described in this way were frightening and governed the classroom with strictness. These teachers seemed to have a certain reputation among students, which added to the students' negative attitudes (Turunen 2003: 86).

Table 1 Metaphorical expressions identified by Oxford (2001) and Turunen (2003). The table is based on the interpretations of Turunen (2003).

	Oxford 2001	Turunen 2003
Shared metaphors	Teacher as a… 1) manufacturer 2) witch 3) sleep inducer/ bad babysitter/repeater nurturer/ 4) challenger/scaffoler/lover	Teacher as a… 1) manufacturer 2) witch 3) trier to patience 4) motivator
Differing metaphors	force of nature God's gift family member hanging judge preacher gossip absentee whirlwind blind eye[2]	target of mischief demigod

The third common metaphor between the two studies was that of teacher AS A TRIER TO PATIENCE. This was Turunen's (2003) term. According to Turunen (2003: 94), Oxford's (2001) teacher AS REPEATER, SLEEP INDUCER and BAD BABY SITTER were similar to her metaphor. Whereas the first two metaphors discussed above fell under the autocratic teaching approach in Oxford's (2001) study, these ones were linked to the laissez-faire approach since they all portrayed the teacher's indifference towards his/her students and their learning. Teachers constructed in this way were dull and made the learners feel frustrated (Turunen 2003: 81). Turunen (2003: 83) notes that the teacher AS A TRIER TO PATIENCE was the most frequent metaphor in her data.

The fourth and the last metaphor the studies shared was that of the teacher AS A MOTIVATOR. Again, this was a term used by Turunen (2003) according to whom Oxford used the metaphors of teacher AS A CHALLENGER, NURTURER, LOVER and SCAFFOLDER to express similar issues. Out of all the metaphors discussed thus far, this was the first clearly positive one. The metaphorical expressions in this category usually revolved around aspects of the teacher's personality (Turunen 2003: 79). Oxford (2001) linked these metaphors to the democratic/participatory teaching approach.

Turunen (2003) identified six metaphorical categories in all. The ones that did not seem to have a counterpart in Oxford's study were those of teacher AS A TARGET TO

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[2] Full list not provided. For more, see Oxford (2001)

MISCHIEF and teacher AS DEMIGOD. The first one could be linked to Kosonen's (1998; see section 2.1) account of girls collectively teasing disliked teachers. Oxford (2001) provided a full list of metaphors identified in her study, yet all of them were not discussed in detail. The full list will not be provided here, however some examples will be supplied in order to show the great variety of metaphorical expressions linked to teachers (see Table 1). The teacher could be described positively as THE FORCE OF NATURE, GOD'S GIFT or FAMILY MEMBER, negatively as THE HANGING JUDGE, PREACER or GOSSIP. The first set of examples was linked to the democratic/ participatory approach to teaching and the second set was placed under the autocratic teaching approach. Examples of laissez-faire teachers could be the teacher AS ABSENTEE, WHIRLWIND or BLIND EYE, for instance.

To conclude the overview of previous research carried out on the topic, some general observations will be made. In the course of the discussion it became clear that each of the studies introduced above had its own aims that differed greatly from those of the others. However, two broad similarities can be distinguished. First of all, most of the studies came from the fields of education or second language acquisition; they contributed to the same research fields. Secondly, all studies discussed here were qualitative in nature and most of them resorted to some form of written first-person account as data empowering the participants and putting their voices at the centre of attention. Now the focus turns to describing the approach chosen for the present study.

3   THE DISCURSIVE APPROACH

By now we have reviewed previous research on the topic of memories of teachers. Although the studies were conducted on diverse themes, addressing different issues, they shared a common feature. In each of them, the memories of teachers were seen as lived experiences referred to in retrospect, and they were thought of as gates to learners' conceptions of teachers and/or learning. They attempted to answer 'what' questions, as in what remained in the people's minds, for instance. In contrast, the approach chosen for the present study will emphasize how-questions (i.e. how memories of teachers are constructed). Memories of teachers will be looked at as discursive constructions that are used to do different things and lead to different consequences. The aim is not to move beyond the text, inside the participants' minds.

Discourse analysis will be used as a tool in the attempt to examine the participants' memories of teachers. Subjecting the data to discourse analysis means looking at it through very particular kinds of lenses. In this chapter, the world seen through those lenses will be outlined.

Discourse analysis cannot be characterized as a clear-cut method, but rather as a loose theoretical framework that permits a number of different emphases and applications (Jokinen et al. 1993). In fact, there are many different versions of it, each holding its own assumptions that can differ greatly from those of the others even on fundamental topics (Antaki et al. 2003). In fact, it is possible to read two books on discourse analysis without finding any overlap in content (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 6). It is therefore essential to define what is meant by discourse analysis in each particular case. In the present study discourse analysis is understood as defined by social psychologists Jonathan Potter and Margaret Wetherell (1987, 1988). Its main aim is to to study patterns in language variation. In what follows, the term 'discourse analysis' is used to refer to this type of discourse analysis exclusively. Overlapping terms 'the discursive approach' and 'discursive research' might also be used interchangeably.

3.1   Function, variability and construction

The aim of this section is to shed some light on the kinds of lenses a discourse analyst following the tradition set by Potter and Wetherell (1987, 1988) would adopt. When doing research from this perspective one sees the social world, language and their relationship from a particular angle. This can be best explained through the interrelated concepts of function, variability and construction. These will each be taken for closer examination in this order.

Function

Discourse analysis does not sustain the division into words and deeds, discourse and practice. Instead, language is considered to be a form of action (Edley 2001). In fact, people use language in order to *do* things (Wetherell and Potter 1988). These 'things' can be anything from questioning to accusing, and from forming social relationships to reminiscing. For these reasons, function is one of the major components of discourse analysis. The emphasis lies ultimately on developing hypotheses of language function.

Therefore the aim of discourse analysis is not to identify interpretative repertoires, but examine how they are *used* (Suoninen 1993a). By looking at the functions to which people's discourse is oriented, it is possible to start fully understand what goes on in the social life (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 322).

Functions can be both global and specific (Potter and Wetherell 1987:33). However, it is important to note that they do not need to be the ones intended by their producer. In fact, people are often not aware of the possible consequences of their utterances (Wetherell and Potter 1988). Therefore, the discourse analyst needs to pay attention to the functions that are potentially present, too (Jokinen et al. 1993). These unintended functions may turn out to be the most interesting ones for the analysis (Jokinen et al. 1993). In other words, discourse analysis examines what the language users do and what they potentially do (Suoninen 1993a).

Some functions have currency in the moment in which the discourse is produced, whereas others might have wide ideological implications (Suoninen 1993a). A rather good example of both ideological consequences and people not being aware of the consequences of their discourse is Wetherell and Potter's (1988) report on a study they conducted on the attitudes of white New Zealanders towards the Maori people. A close analysis of the data revealed that even seemingly positive talk managed to undermine the Maori culture in a number of ways and reinforce the position of the dominant group. Making these ideological implications visible is very important because it increases the relevance of discourse analytic work (Jokinen et al. 1993). The aim of the analysis is therefore to bring out hidden and contradictory consequences of language use.

Functions are not readily available for study. It is through the study of the resources with which an account is built that one can arrive at drawing conclusions about what might be achieved with a particular set of utterances (Wetherell and Potter 1988). Another reason for which it is difficult to speculate about functions is that people often use language inexplicitly. According to Potter and Wetherell (1987: 33), this is done because when a request, for instance, is formulated in an indirect way, so can its rejection. Due to these reasons, the revelation of functions is one of the endpoints rather than starting points of discourse analysis. Functions should therefore be seen as findings, rather than raw data. Functions are revealed through the study of variation (Wetherell and Potter 1988), on which our focus turns now.

Variation

When using questionnaires, for example, as the data collection method, it is normal to take the individual as an object of inquiry and expect coherence and consistency in his/her answers (Suoninen 1993b). In other words, it has been thought possible to describe objects and people in a satisfactory way, discovering their true nature (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 95). However, discursive researchers wish to challenge these ideas. They assume that people can talk and write about whatever topic in highly variable ways, due to their discourse being oriented towards different functions at different times (Wetherell and Potter 1988). Even the same object or action will be described differently according to what one wants to achieve. In other words, the role of variation is crucial in the analysis. It can provide clues to what function is being performed (Wetherell and Potter 1988). The first steps in the analysis consist therefore of determining where discourse is variable and how.

The very existence of variation is also enough to cause problems for what could be called 'the realistic model of language'; language use is much more variable than this model would admit (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 34). According to this view, language is a neutral means of communication that simply reflects the real world as it is. Variation, in its turn, causes the researcher a problem that needs to be solved by determining the real truth behind expressions. However, from the discursive perspective, variation can be made a way into analysis (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 64). In other words, variation should be taken as the topic of investigation in its own right (Jokinen et al. 1993).

As briefly noted above, different forms of expression can be right for different occasions (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 34). For example, an object may be described in a variety of different ways as function changes from constructing a positive evaluation to a negative one (Wetherell and Potter 1988). In practice, describing a teacher to a school friend (a mean witch), for example, is very different from describing the same person to another teacher (unjust). However, variation is not caused by deliberate and intentional thinking processes. Rather than actively selecting his/her words, a person is more likely to say and write what feels natural (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 34).

Variation is caused by the fact that Western culture provides a number of ways and resources through which a person can construct and justify different issues (Suoninen 1993b). Individual people do not have stable views of different issues, because even an individual's speech/writing on a given topic can be highly variable (Potter and Wetherell

1987: 67). Suoninen's (1993b) analysis of the speech of a stay-at-home mother demonstrated this. The study showed how the participant resorted to five different interpretative repertoires each of which helped her to characterize the same topic, family life, from different, even conflicting angles. In this way she was able to construct widely differing identities for herself as a mother and woman.

To conclude the discussion on language variation, it is stressed that finding variation in data is expected and predicted by the discourse analyst (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 54). In short, widely different accounts produced to do different things will be found in the data.

Construction

One more interrelated concept needs to be introduced before closer attention is given to the analytical unit of the study: function and variation are intertwined with the concept of construction.

The term 'construction' is related to the debate described previously; that is, whether language can be considered a neutral medium of interaction that merely reflects objects and events in the real world. From the discursive perspective, language is not considered to reflect the physical nor the psychological world in such a way (Jokinen et al. 1993). In fact, people are considered to actively *construct* versions of objects, events and categories. Therefore, discursive research aims at uncovering *how* attitudes, emotions and memories, for instance, are constructed rather than how they actually *are* (Edley 2001). As discussed above, in relation to the concept of function, people are thought to construct these different versions in order to achieve different objectives (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 32). While talking/writing, one does not merely describe the world as it is, but, one transforms the world through language use (Jokinen et al. 1993).

From the discursive perspective, all language, even the simplest utterances, are considered to be constructive and consequential (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 34). Even the most seemingly neutral expressions are loaded with expectations about what is natural (Jokinen et al. 1993). Potter and Wetherell (1987: 33-34) provide three reasons for why it is appropriate to use the term 'construction' in relation to language. Firstly, all discourse is constructed out of pre-existing linguistic resources, different grammatical constructions and vocabularies. Secondly, when putting together one's discourse there is an on-going active selection: something is included while something else left out.

However, the process is not necessarily a deliberate, intentional one. And thirdly, the term implies that language is action-oriented, that it has practical consequences.

Evaluative descriptions of others, too have been constructed for some particular purpose and therefore they are always distorted and not to be taken literally (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 36). One does not usually provide a neutral description and then express one's feelings towards the entity described. Rather, the version that was constructed carries off the evaluation (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 51). The evaluation is embedded in the language. For example, describing a person as a 'religious freak' as opposed to an 'active Christian', already implies that the language user holds a negative attitude.

Potter and Wetherell (1987: 33) have effectively summarized the relationships between function, variability and construction in the following way: "the principal tenet of discourse analysis is that function involves construction of versions and is demonstrated by language variation". These points in mind, the attention now shifts to the interpretative repertoires, the unit of analysis of discourse analysis.

3.2   The interpretative repertoire

In the previous section the basic components of discourse analysis were outlined through the concepts of function, variability and construction. We learnt that language use is highly variable, and that finding consistency in people and their talk is not a simple matter. Regularity and consistency do not exist at the level of the individuals, but they are represented by interpretative repertoires, the analytical unit of the present study (Wetherell and Potter 1988). In the following discussion, the term interpretative repertoire is first defined and illustrated through example metaphors. The concept will also be contrasted to a closely related term 'discourse'. Finally, their relation to the culture in which they are born is uncovered. A more detailed discussion on how interpretative repertoires are identified can be found in section 5.3.

The term 'interpretative repertoire' was first launched by Gilbert and Mulkay (1984, as quoted in Potter and Wetherell 1987: 138; Potter 1996: 153) when studying the language of scientists. The concept was adopted and further refined by Potter and Wetherell (1987). They provide the 'classical' definition. Accordingly, an interpretative repertoire can be seen as: "basically a lexicon or register of terms and metaphors drawn upon to characterize and evaluate actions and events" (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 138). They are organized around particular metaphors and figures of speech, and constituted

"through a limited range of terms used in particular stylistic and grammatical constructions" (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 149). Accordingly, interpretative repertoires are used selectively to provide evaluative versions of events and to characterize and evaluate actions, events and other phenomena. Due to a wide range of different situations, there is a need for widely different interpretative repertoires.

To further expand on these ideas, Reynolds and Wetherell's (2003: 496) definition of interpretative repertoires is quoted:

> "Interpretative repertoires are the recognizable routines of arguments, descriptions and evaluations found in people's talk often distinguished by familiar clichés, anecdotes and tropes. They are the building blocks through which people develop accounts and versions of significant events and through which they perform social life."

Edley (2001: 198) has widened the definition of the interpretative repertoire to cover not only actions and events, but also objects. He characterizes interpretative repertoires as: "relatively coherent ways of talking about objects and events in the world." This is the definition adopted by the present study.

Edley (2001) illustrates the nature of interpretative repertoires and their role in piecing together discourse through various metaphors. He refers to interpretative repertoires as the building blocks of conversations that can be used in the course of everyday interaction. He says that the blocks can be put together in different combinations in much the same way as pre-figured steps can be combined to put together different dances. Edley also uses the metaphor of library in which the interpretative repertoires represent books that are always available for borrowing.

The concept of the interpretative repertoire could also be understood in comparison to 'discourse', which is a closely related term. They both invoke the idea of distinctive ways of talking and writing about things (Edley 2001). It could be argued that discourse as a term has lost some of its freshness and power becoming vague, as it has become perhaps too fashionable a concept used in widely differing studies on different topics. It is more suitable to studies that examine the construction of entire institutions (e.g. medicine) and deal with issues of power, while interpretative repertoire puts greater emphasis on human agency (Edley 2001). Interpretative repertoire is a more suitable term to studies that examine everyday language use in detailed ways (Jokinen et al. 1993). They are also more fragmented and they offer the speaker a vast range of different rhetorical opportunities (Edley 2001).

Juhila (2007), too, notes that interpretative repertoires can be very fragmented. She says that repertoires are interwoven with each other in texts so that it is possible to shift

smoothly from one repertoire to another even in the middle of a sentence. A similar observation was also made by Huhta et. al (2006). The repertoires can be either parallel or compete with one another (Jokinen et al. 1993). They can be highly polarized, as Reynolds and Wetherell (2003) found in their study on ways of talking about singleness or fairly independent as in Savolainen's (2004) study on ways of constructing the internet as a source of information. It is also worth noting that repertoires do not function in isolation, rather they construct the social reality in relation to each other (Jokinen et al. 1993).

To conclude the discussion on interpretative repertoires, their relationship to culture will be examined. To start off, Reynolds and Wetherell (2003) say that interpretative repertoires include what 'everyone' knows of a topic. In other words, the interpretative repertoires provide the basis for each community's shared social understanding (Edley 2001). This means that interpretative repertoires do not appear randomly from within an individual's mind, but they are formed as part of different social practices (Jokinen et al. 1993). Reynolds and Wetherell (2003) go on to claim that not much of the argumentative chain is needed to let the other speaker/reader understand what type of a version of the world is being developed.

As native speakers of specific languages people are encultured into particular ways of understanding the world (Edley 2001). All texts are embedded within a linguistic and a historical context, which together form the source for the interpretative repertoires. It is the culture that provides its members with a range of ways of constructing an object and it is the individual who makes the choices. People thus think, talk and write in terms of possibilities offered to them by history (Edley 2001). However the choice between different repertoires is not entirely unlimited, since language users often have to resort to conventional, rather than radical, ways of constructing the world in order to be understood (Jokinen et al. 1993). This applies to the researcher as well, as he/she pieces together the research report: it needs to communicate and be culturally understandable.

As indicated above, some interpretative repertoires might be ruled out in certain situations based on them differing too much from conventional ways of presenting different issues. This can, at its most radical, lead to particular constructions taking over and becoming what Jokinen et al. (1993, 29) define as "self-evident truths". Edley (2001) expresses the same idea using slightly different words. According to him, some constructions are more readily available and as a consequence become culturally dominant assuming the status of facts. Suoninen (1993b) observed this principle in use.

He noted that the participant, a stay-at-home mother, constructed her speech in a way that enabled her to react to certain interpretative repertoires when there was no real need to, by presenting justifications from their point of view reacting to a form of 'silent criticism'. According to him, this goes to prove the cultural strength of certain interpretative repertoires.

At this point, it is important to note that interpretative repertoires are not static entities that define the individuals from the outside, but they come to being in different social practices (Jokinen et al. 1993). Worth noting is also the relationship between the repertoires and the social reality; the interpretative repertoires are constructed in social practices while at the same time constructing the social reality (Jokinen et al. 1993).

Interpretative repertoires have now been defined and their relation to culture established. The focus now turns to examining previous studies in the field of EFL that have used interpretative repertoires as their analytical unit.

3.3   Previous research in the field of EFL

The type of discourse analysis described above has been applied in many different fields and to various topics. The following list consists of studies conducted mostly in the field of social psychology, the field where the approach was first launched. All of the studies used interpretative repertoire as their unit of analysis. Wetherell and Potter (1988) examined the talk of white New Zealanders about the indigenous Maori, whereas Edley (2001) explored masculinity in men's talk. Reynolds and Wetherell (2003) investigated single women's conceptions of their identities, Juhila (2007) social care workers' conceptualisations of their homeless female clients and Savolainen (2004) studied how people talk about the Internet as a source of information. As fascinating as the studies above are, they will not be further explored here, since the focus now shifts to the field of EFL learning and teaching.

This type of discourse analysis found its way to the field of EFL some ten years ago and to date it has been applied in relatively few studies. The studies that are presented here were concerned with explanations of failure and success (Heikkinen 1999, Isomöttönen 2003, Kalaja 2006) and also with expectations of failure and success (Huhta et al. 2000). Three of these studies will now be given a closer look. Of special interest is what they had to say about the teacher's role in the failure/success accounts.

Heikkinen (1999), Isomöttönen (2003) and Kalaja (2006) all shared the same overall goal: to study the explanations of failure and success that appeared in narratives written by the participants. The discursive approach replaced the previous positivistic attribution theory. Kalaja (2006) also gave a more context-sensitive reading to the passages incorporating the rhetorical devices outlined by Potter (1996; see section 4.2) into the analysis. In Heikkinen and Kalaja's cases the participants were university students who studied English as either their major or minor subject whereas Isomöttönen's participants were a group of hard-of-hearing people.

Although discourse analysis is highly context-specific and wide generalizations cannot be drawn, there was some overlap in the interpretative repertoires identified by Isomöttönen (2003), Heikkinen (1999) and Kalaja (2006). The findings of these three studies will not be discussed in detail, however, they are summarized in Table 2 below. The most striking difference can be found between Isomöttönen's study and the other two, in that due to her participants' challenged hearing ability, five out of ten interpretative repertoires identified put hearing in a key position. The other five corresponded roughly to those identified by Heikkinen (1999) and Kalaja (2006).

While students were writing about their language learning experiences they naturally provided explanations for failure and success. The teacher was occasionally blamed/credited. In Heikkinen (1999) and Kalaja's (2006) studies the teacher was credited/blamed when the writers drew on the institutional repertoire. The repertoire put students and teachers in rather traditional roles. In other words, learners were depicted as passive recipients of information or as beneficiary of good teaching, and teachers as active agents. As a consequence, the learner's identity was constructed around his/her role as a school boy or girl (Heikkinen 1999: 71, 80). The failure/success accounts that relied on the institutional repertoire often seemed to be constructed on the assumption that teachers are responsible for their students' learning. However, learners had expectations for their teachers (Heikkinen 1999: 78).

In Isomöttönen's (2003) data the writers drew on the school repertoire, which roughly corresponds to the institutional repertoire described above. The learner is assigned the role of a traditional student whose job is to be the passive recipient of information. The teacher (and the learning context) is given an active role, which leaves the learner powerless and at the mercy of the learning environment (Isomöttönen 2003: 97). When resorting to the school repertoire, the writers portrayed themselves as average students who faced the same issues as everybody else and their hearing was not

considered particularly relevant (Isomöttönen 2003: 98). It could be that by portraying learning in a fairly traditional way, that is, the teacher teaches and the learner learns, the learner's own responsibility is reduced and the blame placed elsewhere (Isomöttönen 2003: 104). The teacher was also mentioned while the writers made use of the special learner repertoire. In it, too, the teacher had an active role whereas the learner was left powerless and at the mercy of the learning environment (Isomöttönen 2003: 70). However, the identity the learner constructed him/herself while drawing on this repertoire is that of a learner with special needs that should be taken into consideration by the teacher. Hearing is thus assigned a relevant role (Isomöttönen 2003: 66-67).

Table 2 Summary of the repertoires identified in Heikkinen (1999), Isomöttönen (2003) and kalaja (2006)

Study	Interpretative repertoires		Credit/blame assigned to…		Teacher in the repertoires
Heikkinen 1999	a) Individualistic repertoire b) Naturalistic repertoire c) Efficiency repertoire d) Institutional repertoire e) Fatalistic repertoire		a) learner's innate abilities b) learning environment c) learner's own efforts d) the school e) luck		The institutional repertoire
Isomöttönen 2003	a) Auditory repertoire b) The environmental repertoire c) The special learner repertoire d) The responsibility repertoire e) The specialist repertoire	f) Talent repertoire g) Naturalistic repertoire h) Effort repertoire i) School repertoire j) Chance repertoire	a) hearing (badly/well) b) environment making it easier/more difficult to hear c) institutional environment taking/not taking the learner's special need into account d) learner acknowledging/not his/her own special need e) language of specialists borrowed	f) learner's innate ability g)learning environment h)learner's hard work i)school j)luck	The special learner repertoire The school repertoire
Kalaja 2006	a) individualistic repertoire b) effort repertoire c) naturalistic repertoire d) institutional repertoire e) fatalistic repertoire		a) learner's innate abilities b) learner's own hard work c) the learning environment d) the institutional learning environment e) good/bad luck		The institutional repertoire

Overall, the present study will address a very different aspect of EFL learning, namely experiences with English teachers, from the same discursive perspective and will thus make a fresh contribution to this body of research. However, it might be expected that there is some overlap between the studies, because some of the passages in the data

might involve accounts that could be classified as failure/success accounts that involve the teacher.

4   THE DISCURSIVE TERRAIN

Discourse analysis is always applied and fitted to particular contexts. This last section of the theoretical background is dedicated to exploring the discursive terrain approached in the present study. This is done by exploring the concepts of 'memory' and 'description', because remembering and describing are the actions that characterize the formation of the type of data used for the present study. In other words, the production of memories of teachers is conditioned by the workings of human memory and an account of the past is bound to include descriptive language.

4.1   Memories

We will stray briefly from the discursive path outlined in the previous chapter in order to get a more complete idea of what it is to 'remember' and what happens when one looks back at one's life (e.g. in order to write an autobiography). The role of the memory in the production of autobiographical texts has not often been problematized, although it is the primary condition for producing such accounts. What is understood by memory and what practical consequences different perspectives might have for the study in question have often remained untouched in past studies (Saarenheimo 1991). The following discussion is aimed at taking a stand on some of the key issues. Remembering will first be examined in psychological terms and then various issues related to the nature of memories will be discussed. Towards the end, the discussion will lead back to the discursive perspective, closing the circle.

To start off, memory and memories will be looked at from the perspective of psychology. It is important to note, however, that most psychological research on memory is irrelevant from the point of view of narrative studies since the nature of autobiographical thinking and remembering has often been left unconsidered (Saarenheimo 1991). The following discussion aims at exploring some essential questions that are sensitive to the type of remembering that governs the production of autobiographical accounts.

The research trends can be divided into three stages (Huotelin 1996, Saarenheimo 1991). Initially memories were depicted as representations of life events as such. Memories were seen as *authentic and precise reflections of events* and it was thought that they could remain in people's minds unaltered for years (cf. a mirror metaphor of language, Potter 1996). This was thought to be especially true of memories with strong affective components (Saarenheimo 1991). Following the empirical research tradition, experiments were carried out in order to verify the precision of human memory (Huotelin 1996). However, it has proved difficult to support such claims empirically. In order to do so, one should be able to measure the precision of a memory against the real life event, and even if that were possible, it would still remain difficult to know whether an imprecision is caused in the moment of perception or in the moment of retrieval (Saarenheimo 1991). However, seeing memories as precise replica is common in everyday life. People normally consider their personal memories to be authentic representations of their past. When reminiscing about something the past 'comes back' or the person him/herself 'goes back in time' which makes it possible to re-live important (or painful) events (Saarenheimo 1991). In this context, the so-called copy-model of memory can have its value.

Where the followers of the copy-model of memory considered the memory to be a camera that captures the reality in all its detail, it could be better visualized as a painter, who interprets, organizes, modifies and selects while creating an artwork (Huotelin 1996). These are the issues emphasized by *the reconstruction theories* of memory, the second phase in the research development. According to this view, remembering *is* reconstruction. Truth is not and cannot be attained through memories, because memories might not consist of actual real life events, but rather of their ingredients (Huotelin 1996). In other words, memories are actually fragments of various events that people themselves combine into coherent and logical memories (Saarenheimo 1991).

The last set of theories is made up of the so-called *partial reconstruction theories*, and it represents the middle ground between the above-mentioned perspectives (Saarenheimo 1991). These theories, too, cherish the idea of reconstruction, however, by putting more emphasis on significance given to the memories by the experiencer. According to the partial reconstruction theorists, fragmented memories might fuse into new ones with time. New memories do not reflect the past as such, but they are in line with the person's self conception (Saarenheimo 1991) and they are authentic on the level of significance given to them (Huotelin 1996). In other words, memories contain

information on the actual events, yet additional elements that are unrelated to the original ones are attached to them as the person processes them (Huotelin 1996).

Having now explored memories from a psychological perspective, the discussion moves on to explore some key issues in greater detail. As was mentioned in relation to the copy-model of memory, it is quite normal for a person to consider his/her own memories as fairly stable entities. For example, it might be especially difficult to acknowledge the imprecision of one's childhood memories (Kemppainen 2001: 40). On the other hand, being able to remember vivid details of significant events can be a source of great satisfaction to old people (Saarenheimo 1991). However, abandoning the copy-model of memory, remembering could be viewed as a continuous process rather than a static state that can be achieved. During this process both the person looking back at a particular event and the event itself change due to the constant dialogue between a person's current stage of life and the past event (Kemppainen 2001: 38, 40). To elaborate on this, it can be said that new events give different perspectives on the past ones and as a consequence even the personal significance attached to a particular memory can change with time (Kemppainen 2001: 42). By evaluating the personal significance of past events, and trying to conclude why things went the way they did, reminiscing becomes a constant re-construction of the past (Salo 2005: 24, 44).

Memories are adjusted and re-oriented with each telling because of the changing circumstances; each time the memory is being re-told new meanings get attached to it because of the different context and audience (Kemppainen 2001: 38). Huotelin (1996) presents a more comprehensive list of issues affecting the telling at a particular point in time. Among others, in addition to life history, we find the influence of the person's current stage of life, his/her cultural background, identity, the purpose of the telling, his/her state of mind in that particular moment, motivation, the recipient or the imagined recipients and what he/she considers inappropriate to strangers' knowledge. Karlsson (2008) captures the changing nature of memories with the metaphor of kaleidoscope: the same elements take on a different form each time the kaleidoscope is turned. Each time a memory is being told, a new figure and new details are revealed.

People live in a specific cultural and social environment. This broader context is also present when one starts talking/writing about a particular event or object in retrospect. Reminiscing is both a personal as well as a social practice (Kemppainen 2001: 39). Memories consist of personal experiences and emotions, and they are being told in a specific time and social setting, which makes them reflect the dominant values

and beliefs of the community. It is the dominant culture that determines what is considered worth remembering and what can be expected to be remembered. As a consequence, one talks about one's life in culturally appropriate ways following certain rules set by the social environment (Kemppainen 2001: 42).

Critiques relying on the empirical/positivistic research tradition have questioned the reliability of memories as data. One of the biggest concerns of autobiographical researchers has in fact been the relationship between memories and 'true' events (Saarenheimo 1991). Differing standpoints can be taken on the issue. Kemppainen (2001: 42) states that the truth should not be the focus of study since it is impossible to prove memories 'right' empirically or otherwise. Saarenheimo (1991) points out that from a dialectical perspective an objective past in which things happen without interpretation and reflection can be considered fiction, and that subjective interpretations *are* in fact memory. Huotelin (1996) underlines how the reality (life as lived) and its interpretations (life as told) are far apart. According to him, the truth can only be sought through language and symbols, yet at the same time language and symbols make it unreachable. From the constructionist perspective, which highlights the role of the language in the production of memories, the truth-value of memories is not an interesting research topic (Saarenheimo 1991). Based on all these considerations, it would feel safe to suggest that memories must be viewed as particular kind of data; they cannot be interpreted in a straightforward manner. In general, it is important to acknowledge that memories offer the researcher different kind of information in respect to more traditional methods and data (Kosonen 1998: 25). Despite this, memories are worth studying because they enable the researcher to take advantage of people's experimental resources (Huotelin 1996).

As the previous paragraphs suggest, memories do not provide information on how things *were* precisely. Memories could be better viewed as *interpretations*. In the process of reminiscing, a person's own interpretations are being attached to the memory and due to this the way an event, a person or an object is being described is not an objective, neutral one (Kemppainen 2001: 38). Each telling is a new interpretation and it could also be affected by the previous tellings/interpretations rather than the original event (Kemppainen 2001: 39). Pavlenko (2007) makes a similar point when stressing that through autobiographical data, one gets in touch with the participant's telling and not the actual events. Due to these reasons, Kemppainen (2001: 42) says that the researcher's focus should be on why memories are told in a particular way in that

specific place and time. This standpoint is in line with the principles of the discursive approach the goal of which is to examine language use in detail and to identify what consequences different constructed versions of the world might have.

The attention now returns to the discursive perspective. In previous research on memories of teachers reviewed in chapter 2 the focus has not been on uncovering the truth behind memories. It has rather been on the significance and meaning the participants' have attached to their subjective memories. However, the present study highlights yet another aspect, taking an alternative path to the analysis of memories. Namely, the focus will be on language and how it is used to produce versions of the past (teachers). Language holds a key role in remembering and therefore linguistic descriptions form the basis for studies on memories, yet, language has rarely been emphasized in such studies (Saarenheimo 1991). In the present study language is seen in the way outlined in chapter 3: not simply as a reflection of reality, but a tool with which people can actively construct the (social) world around them.

Huotelin (1996) exemplifies how one could combine the study of memories with the discursive approach by outlining the research questions this type of perspective might provide the researcher with. They are firstly *how* people talk about their past, secondly, what type of constructions they produce with the help and limitations of the memory and, finally, what *consequences* the produced versions of the past might have. The research questions of the present study will be formed along these lines. Huotelin's (1996) definition of memories is in line with the principles of the discursive perspective and it also helps to summarize the contents of this section. Memories will be seen in the following pages as *constructions* of past events that are filtered through the present, interpreted and reconstructed and they are constantly changing both with time and in different contexts, and can always be re-interpreted. They are not static, clear-cut entities, but dynamic interpretations.

The issues discussed in this section affect the writing process of autobiographies. In addition to reminiscing, the participants of the study are also describing past life events (teachers along with it). In the next section, we turn to examine the concept of 'description' from the discursive perspective.

4.2   Descriptions

Organizing past life events into written form in a coherent way is guided and constrained by the workings of memory, as discussed above. While narrating experiences with former English teachers in a language learning autobiography, the writers are bound to use descriptive language. In the previous section we learnt that a memory is not a simple reflection of the past, but rather its constructed interpretation. This section will show that a description, in its turn, is more than a neutral mirror image of the world. Descriptions, like all language, are used to *do* things (Wetherell and Potter 1988).

The following discussion is based on Potter's (1996) work on descriptions and fact construction. First, the term 'description' will be defined and some illustrative metaphors presented. Next, the concepts of action and epistemological orientations will be explored. Lastly, some of the rhetorical procedures used to enhance the credibility of an account will be outlined.

Before discussing some of the relevant dimensions of 'describing', the term description needs some further exploration. Potter (1996:7) uses a dictionary definition to guide his discussion: "a statement which describes, sets forth or portrays; a graphic or detailed account of a person, thing, scene etc." and this is how describing is understood in the present study as well. Accordingly, two alternative approaches to the examination of descriptions are portrayed (Potter 1996: 97). The first one represents the more traditional way of seeing descriptions, and it can be exemplified through the mirror metaphor. By conceptualising descriptions in this way, one merely sees them as passive reflections of the world. By adopting the metaphor of construction, however, one can get to two important conclusions about descriptions. Firstly, descriptions construct the real world and secondly, they themselves are constructed to create certain effects. These approaches are in line with the general concepts of discourse analysis. In a similar way, language can be viewed either as a neutral medium of interaction or as a social practice by which its users actively construct versions of the world (see section 3.1).

Descriptions could be constructed in a number of ways. In other words, a whole range of competing alternatives exists for each description. A description undermines other descriptions as it is being built (Potter 1996: 106). When a teacher, for instance, is described as a competent professional the possibility of presenting him/her as someone lacking pedagogical skills is being undermined. There are numerous rhetorical

procedures and techniques through which one can either reify or ironize descriptions and factual accounts more generally. These will be briefly touched on below. Potter (1996: 107) uses another metaphor, that of war, to explain the workings of these procedures. He says it is possible to be both offensive and defensive using the same ammunition.

The functions of descriptions can be divided into two broad categories: action orientation and epistemological orientation (Potter 1996: 108). The first one simply refers to the fact that descriptions, just as language in general is used to do things and achieve particular consequences. The latter in its turn has to do with descriptions needing to be built up as solid, credible and factual in order to achieve their goals. The epistemological orientation is subordinate to the action orientation in that it, too, is a form of action. However, it is important to keep in mind that the division is somewhat artificial; in real discourse these two orientations are blended together.

Although the details of what is included in descriptions can vary endlessly, there are underlying commonalities in the procedures used in constructing them (Potter 1996: 112). The resources can be divided into those working on the identity of the speaker/writer and those that centre on producing the account as independent of its creator (Potter 1996:113).

Examples of the resources that work on the identity of the speaker/writer are the concepts of 'stake/interest management' and 'category entitlements'. Issues of stake and interest can pose a potential problem for the speaker as the credibility of a description becomes lower if the person producing it seems to have an interest in the issue. This interest could be something as small and banal as not wanting to seem foolish or something as serious as not wanting to be judged as a murderer (Potter 1996: 114). By evoking interest it is possible to undermine another person's account. Referring to category entitlements makes it possible to enhance the credibility of an account (Potter 1996: 114). By referring to social categories, one can access knowledge entitlements 'reserved' to the members of the group. For example, teachers are expected to be experts in their the subjects that they teach.

The independence of the writer/speaker, in its turn, can be created and sustained through numerous techniques. Illustrations of such externalising devices are presented and defined in Table 3. However, a full list of these techniques will not be presented here due to limitations of space (for details, see: Potter 1996) and also due to fact that construction is not the central focus of the present study. These techniques will serve as tools for analysing the data of the present study (see section 5.1), but do not constitute its

main interest. All rhetorical devices that are mentioned in the course of the analysis, but are not present in Table 3 will be defined as they appear. The scope of this section has been to explain their role in constructing descriptions, namely, building them up as solid, convincing and independent of their producers enhancing their credibility in this way.

Table 3. Rhetorical/externalising devices used to construct descriptions as independent of their producer (Potter 1996: 159-)

Externalising device	Definition
Consensus and corroboration	Consensus refers to other people witnessing the same event. Corroboration refers to whether the multiple 'witnesses' agreed. If more people say the same thing, an account seems more convincing.
Providing vivid details	Providing vivid details might help building the account up as more convincing, however, sometimes turning to vagueness helps to avoid the account being inspected for contradictions.
Extrematization and minimization	In both these cases the speaker/writer can draw on the extreme points of the entity being described.
Normalization and abnormalization	By resorting to normalization and abnormalization it is possible to build one's/others' actions up as normal and natural or deviant and problematic.

The previous chapters have laid the ground for the theoretical starting points of the present study. Previous research on memories of teachers has been discussed and reviewed, the principles and the analytical unit of the present study outlined and the discursive terrain the present study explores described in greater detail. The focus now turns to the starting points for the analysis.

5   THE PRESENT STUDY

5.1   Research questions

Previous studies on memories of teachers reviewed in chapter 2 have focused mostly on examining the topic on the level of subject reality (Pavlenko 2007, see section 5.2.2). Apart from the studies on metaphors (Oxford 2001, Turunen 2003) the participants' language has not been taken as the object of interest in its own right. The present study aims at doing this by using discourse analysis as its method of analysis.

According to Potter and Wetherell (1987: 55), the major questions discourse analysis enables the researcher to address are how a particular topic is constructed in the language of the participants and what the consequences of those constructions are. Huotelin (1996) proposes the discursive approach as a possible way to analyse memories and suggests the following questions to be the central ones to this type of research: firstly, how do people talk about their past, secondly, what type of constructions do they produce with the help and limitations of memory and, finally, what consequences do the produced versions of the past might have. The initial idea was to form the research questions of the present study along these lines. The focus would have thus been on uncovering the interpretative repertoires used to construct memories of teachers on the one hand, and develop hypothesis concerning their functions, consequences in the context of a language learning autobiography, on the other.

However, discourse analysis is data-driven (Suoninen 1993a), which means that findings always emerge in that particular data and discursive context. The data is what ultimately directs the researcher's attention and can lead to modifications in the research focus. Such was the case with the present study. Two observations were made. Firstly, after initial attempts at coding and analysing the data it became clear that when the students were describing their former teachers, they did not write about them in isolation. Rather, the students' selves were also present. This observation is in line with Uitto's (2003: 112). Her subjects clearly wrote about their teachers in relation to themselves and their feelings. From the discursive perspective, the participants of the present study were constructing a particular kind of image of themselves as language learners while constructing their English teachers. Secondly, these descriptions of teachers and selves seemed to be *one of the consequences* of the use of the different

interpretative repertoires, and clearly seemed the most interesting path to follow. It was then decided that functions of the different interpretative repertoires would not be examined broadly, but specifically and solely in relation to the consequences the different interpretative repertoires have for the roles of teachers and students take on.

In other words, the research questions the present study aims to examine are:

1. Which interpretative repertoires emerge as students look back on and describe their former English teachers and their teaching[3]?
2. What roles are assigned to the teachers and students within the repertoires?

A more context-sensitive reading was given to the passages following the example of Kalaja (2006). This was done using the rhetorical devices used to build descriptions as solid, convincing and independent of their producer introduced by Potter (1996) These procedures were briefly discussed in section 4.2. A full discussion of them was not provided due to the issue being subordinate to the two main research questions outlined above. The rhetorical devices offer a tool for the analyst rather than being the main interest; their identification is not the end, but a way to examine the data in a more systematic and appropriate way acknowledging the descriptive nature of the memories.

Having now outlined the research questions of the present study, a question that is *not* going to be addressed is briefly discussed. Discourse analysis is a qualitative research method that relies on qualitative data. It is a highly context-sensitive approach and its findings cannot be generalized to a great extent beyond the sample in question (Antaki et al. 2003), but findings can vary greatly from study to study. Its focus lies on exploring in depth linguistic details. In this context, numerical information on the frequency of the different repertoires does not offer the researcher particularly valuable information. It does not therefore seem justified to draw numerical conclusions about the frequency of the interpretative repertoires. For these reasons, this issue will not be further discussed in the following pages.

At this point, it is important to note that the focus of analysis will not be on actual events or on specific teachers or learners. The study, following the principles of

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[3] In the present study teachers are seen as a professional group, a social category. Such categories are, according to Potter and Wetherell (1987: 121) partly pre-formed in the surrounding community/culture and partly actively constructed by the participants.

discourse analysis, will not move beyond the text (Taylor 2001a); the language, the students' telling remains the sole object of study.

5.2 Data

5.2.1 Participants and data collection

Language learning autobiographies were chosen as the data of the present study. Two issues motivated this decision. Firstly, such written narratives offer the participants considerable freedom in expressing themselves as opposed to other forms of data collection. They can decide when to write the text, how much time to dedicate to it, what to write, how to write about it and how to organize the text. They can highlight whatever they feel important without being forced to react to questions chosen by the interviewer, for example. Secondly, a language learning autobiography is a coherent story the aim of which is to trace its writer's language learning experiences. The goal is not to explicitly analyse former teachers, which means that using language learning autobiographies as data permits an indirect elicitation of memories and descriptions of teachers. The memories appear rather naturally in the context provided by the narrative, and moreover, in moments chosen by the writer.

The data for the present study were collected in the academic year 2005-2006 as part of a longitudinal research project at the University of Jyväskylä (*Noviisista ekspertiksi - From Novice to Expert*). The aim of the project is to examine the development of English students from university freshmen to English language professionals. The data were collected during a compulsory first-year course that aimed at teaching the students how to learn foreign languages (e.g. learning strategies, styles, environments, etc.). The language learning autobiographies that are now used for the purposes of the present study had other aims besides producing data for research; the writing of one's own story was intended to give the students chances to look back at their English learning history and reflect on the experiences and help them to develop as language students. The stories were also part of the actual course work; they had to be written in order to pass the course. However, they were not graded. The students could choose whether their story would be used for research purposes.

The writers of the autobiographies were all first-year English students in their twenties. Some of them studied the language as a major and some as a minor subject. For the latter group the academic year was not necessarily the first one at university. The

total number of autobiographies reached 110, however, not all of them were used in the present study. Of them 50 were randomly selected and all the passages describing teachers in those 50 autobiographies formed the raw data of the study. Out of the 50 writers, 10 were male and the rest female students. This reflects the fact that the majority of English, and foreign language students more generally speaking, at the university of Jyväskylä are female. Among the students there were both future English teachers as well as other language experts.

The students form a rather homogeneous group. This applies to their age, gender and language proficiency. They had studied English for roughly ten years prior to entering university. In addition, in order to enter university they had had to take an entrance exam carried out in the target language, which required high linguistic proficiency. The students represent thus a rather advanced group of successful learners, which could be expected to result in somewhat positive learning experiences.

As mentioned above, the course during which the data were collected was a compulsory first-year course. The autobiographies were not graded, however they had to be returned in order for the student to pass. In other words, the students did not write them out of their own interest. The autobiographies were thus written while keeping in mind the audience – the course instructor and possibly peers – and the imagined audience – the researcher and people reading the study.

To help students get started a list of prompt questions (Appendix A) was provided along with the instructions. The list included questions concerning English teachers, however, the students were by no means forced to answer/react to all the prompt questions. They could freely decide which issues had been the most relevant for their own learning and highlight them. The students had the chance to discuss their work with peers before finalizing the autobiography and handing it back to the course instructor. It is naturally impossible to know how considerable an effect the discussion had on the final product and whether the changes and modifications made concerned the passages about English teachers. However, it can be said that the final product is the result of deliberate thinking as opposed to the more spontaneous telling of interview data.

Before discussing language learning autobiographies as data more broadly, two further observations are made. Firstly, the autobiographies were collected in the students' native language (Finnish), which has its consequences and implications for the study (see section 5.2.2). And secondly, despite the autobiographies being collected as part of a bigger research project, they have not yet been used in many studies. Kalaja,

Alanen and Dufva (in press) used some of them in their methodological discussion on the differences between different types of narrative texts (e.g. drawings and autobiographies). In their discussion it became clear that the choice of data has major consequences for the findings.

5.2.2   Language learning autobiographies as data in the field of EFL

In the previous section the reasons behind choosing language learning autobiographies as data were first outlined. Then the data collection process was described in greater detail. In this section language learning autobiographies, and other types of narratives, are discussed on a more general level. First, some definitions are provided, next their introduction to applied linguistics and SLA research is briefly described and finally, the type of information they provide evaluated. It will become clear that narratives are not simple data.

According to Pavlenko (2007), there are three types of narratives. Namely, learner diaries and journals, linguistic biographies and autobiographies and published linguistic autobiographies can all be used to analyse people's language learning experiences. Accordingly, the autobiographies used as the data in the present study fall under the second category. Recently, however, the concept of narrative has been expanded (see Kalaja, Menezes and Barcelos 2008 for a collection of articles). In addition to traditional oral and written narratives, it is possible to make use of visual narratives (e.g. pictures, drawings) and multimodal narratives that take advantage of computers and modern technologies. The same individual can be said to address different aspects of his/her learning experiences differently depending on the form of the narrative (Kalaja, Alanen and Dufva in press).

Narratives became the focus of interest in history, sociology, anthropology and education in the late 1960s and 1970s. The first narrative studies carried out in the field of SLA in the late 1970s, on the other hand, made use of language learning diaries (Pavlenko 2007). This "narrative turn" made it possible to start examining new questions, namely how people make sense of the learning process, and enter private worlds that otherwise would have been inaccessible. More importantly, narratives put learners in a central position turning them from "one-dimensional abstractions to human beings with feelings" (Pavlenko 2007: 163). Narratives put the learners' voice on a par with those of researchers and teachers (Pavlenko 2002).

It has been claimed that people have a tendency to examine their lives through a narrative principle: events are connected to one another and chronological plots formed. By organizing their lives according to a logical plot, individuals build a personal theory of themselves and of their lives (Saarenheimo 1991). In a way, narratives can thus be considered the means by which people give meaning to their lives across time (Pavlenko 2007). They impose order and coherence on various experiences, helping their producers to work out the significance of various events (Paul, Christensen and Falk 2000).

Narratives make interesting data because they have aesthetic value, they are accessible and appeal thus to larger audiences. They are also transformative since they, as discussed above, shift power relations between researchers, teachers and learners (Pavlenko 2007). They can be also considered both the method of data collection as well as the object of inquiry (Huotelin 1996). Pavlenko (2008) claims that narratives are among the least understood and theorized means of data analysis. She suggests that there are three levels on which narratives can be analysed: life, subject and text realities. These will be described next.

The first option is to study narratives at the level of *life reality*. In this type of approach everything that was said or written would be taken literally as truly reflecting real-life events. This type of understanding is in line with the mirror metaphor (Potter 1996, see section 4.2), the realistic model of language (Potter and Wetherell 1987, see section 3.1) and the 'copy' theories of human memory (Huotelin 1996 and Saarenheimo 1991, see section 4.1) discussed previously. According to Pavlenko (2007), focusing on the life reality level, one risks treating narratives as a mere collection of facts rather than discursive constructions and disregarding the interpretative nature of story-telling. In other words, it is important not to confuse textual and experiential realities by treating narrated episodes as real-life ones (Pavlenko 2008). Also Huotelin (1996) makes a similar distinction noting how life-as-lived and life-as-told are two very different things.

Having now somewhat dismissed the first possible level of analysis, Pavlenko (2007, 2008) introduces the second alternative. In the study of *subject reality*, one treats narratives as accounts of how people *experienced* things. The focus is thus on meanings given to the events by the tellers. The most popular means of analysis applied to uncover the information at this level has been some form of content or thematic analyses (Pavlenko 2007), however taking into consideration the complexity of narratives, content analysis is fairly difficult to carry out in a convincing way (Pavlenko 2008).

The third level of analysis is more sensitive to the textual and discursive features of narratives. In order words, if one wants to study the narratives not on the level of experiences but by treating them as discursive constructions, one needs to resort to the study of *text reality*. Here the focus is on how the narrative has been *constructed* (Pavlenko 2008). Possible theories that could be adapted to study text reality are the story grammar analysis (see section 2.2 the discussion on Leppänen and Kalaja's 1997 study), high point analysis and stanza analysis (Pavlenko 2007). The present study analyses information on the level of text reality.

Huotelin (1996) argues that anyone wanting to resort to autobiographical data should be aware of the factors affecting their production. He stresses that a story is always born under certain conditions and is constructed in one way rather than another due to the teller having the power over his/her decisions. The result is a selected image of life events presented following the conditions of what he terms "biographical discourse". Although Huotelin (1996) focuses mainly on characterizing oral autobiographical interviews, many of the factors he lists apply to written autobiographical data as well; namely, real or imagined recipients, cultural ways of presenting and expressing things, one's unique experiences and what is thought essential from the point of view of the "biographical discourse" have their effect on the form and content of the story. In addition, the role of human memory (see section 4.1), motifs behind telling one's story, what one considers aesthetic and how well one can express oneself in one's first language (spoken or written) also have their effect (Huotelin 1996). Some possible motifs behind sharing one's story were detected by Salo (2005: 27) who noticed how some of her participants clearly shared their stories with her in order to express gratitude towards an especially liked teacher, whereas others wanted to "set the record straight" and clear their own reputation, tell their own version of unfair events.

Narratives are closely linked to the surrounding culture. They are co-constructed "for us and with us" by recipients – real or imagined – by time and place in history (when the events took place and when they are told), by language chosen for telling and by the cultural conventions of the speech community in which the narrative can be located (Pavlenko 2007: 179). In other words, narratives reflect literary conventions, social norms and expectations of the culture (Pavlenko 2007).

The issue of language choice is especially important when studying *linguistic* autobiographies, learners' accounts of their language learning process. In such cases it could be justified to collect the data in the learners' target language. Such approach was

chosen for instance by Kalaja (2006) who used language learning autobiographies written in the target language of her subjects, as data. When the research report is written in a language other than the subjects' native language (e.g. English) collecting the data in the same language can facilitate the process. However, the telling might be less rich in detail and emotional intensity (Pavlenko 2007) and something crucial might easily be left out or be misinterpreted (Pavlenko 2008). Either way, it is important to analyse the data in the language in which they were written (Pavlenko 2007). Following this principle the data of the present study were collected and will be analysed in Finnish, and translated into English only in order to report the findings.

To draw the discussion back to the discursive perspective, an additional benefit can be found from having collected the data in the students' native language. According to Edley (2001), interpretative repertoires are part of any community's shared social understanding. In other words, ways of talking/writing about different issues, metaphors and word choices are formed within the culture, and consequently, in the language of that community. One could presume then that the participants resort most naturally to their own community's ways of making sense of life and are thus familiar with their own interpretative repertoires. It can be furthermore expected that a researcher who shares the participants' cultural background and native language is in a favourable position as far as interpreting the participants' language and its nuances is concerned. These are the reasons for which the participants of the present study tell their experiences of their former English teachers in their native language, Finnish, which is also my native language.

5.3   Method

5.3.1   Method selection

When the research topic had been established and the data selected the method of analysis had to be chosen. Both content and discourse analyses were considered and it was acknowledged that settling on either one of them would mean examining the issue from widely differing perspectives and lead to radically different results.

One of the main reasons for dismissing content analysis as a way to study memories of teachers was the simple fact that it had been used in some form in several previous studies (Salo 2005, Uitto 2003, Kosonen 1998, Colucci 2000, Colucci and Paul

2000, Oxford 2001). A new perspective on the issue was needed, and discourse analysis seemed to offer an interesting point of departure. No previous discursive studies on memories of teachers were found, which enables the present study to make a fresh contribution to the body of research on memories of teachers.

The present study wishes to emphasize the nature of written language learning autobiographies. In other words, they are seen as particular accounts that are affected by the workings of human memory, they include cultural elements and give a selected image of their writer. As a consequence, they are not treated as facts (life reality; Pavlenko 2007), nor as lived experiences (subject reality) but as their writers' interpretations of their own language learning experiences (text reality). Content analysis is not sensitive to these issues. By contrast, it might be insensitive to the discursive and linguistic properties of the stories (Pavlenko 2008) and "essentialize particular descriptions" (Pavlenko 2007: 166).

Discourse analysis, on the other hand, offers a way to acknowledge that writers use linguistic and narrative resources to build a certain image of themselves (Pavlenko 2007). The constructed, interpretative nature of narratives is taken into consideration (see section 3.1) while the "particular descriptions" are subjected to thorough analysis. From the discursive perspective it is easy to agree with Pavlenko (2008: 323) in that the researcher can arrive at interpreting the participants' *telling* and not the actual real life events. Based on these issues, discourse analysis was chosen as the method of analysis. In the following sections, the analysis process is described in more detail.

5.3.2   Coding

The aim of the following two sections is two describe the analysis process in detail. This is important for the validation of the study (see section 7.2). In this section the coding process is explained starting from the principles applied to the measures taken. In the next section the phases of analysis are outlined in more detail and the guidelines behind the identification of interpretative repertoires revealed.

The first step in preparing for the analysis is to select the data. In the case of the present study the reading of the autobiographies took place in a random order and stories that did not include passages about English teachers were left out. When passages including descriptions and memories of teachers were identified, they were copied and pasted into a separate file. At this stage the name of the student was cancelled to assure

anonymity and the original autobiography was given a code, for example 1F or 10M. The number refers to the number of the autobiography and the letter to the student's gender. The same code was then attached at the end of the passage and all other passages found in the same text, preserving the connection between the account and the original text for possible future reference. The same code can also be found at the end of each sample passage (sections 6.1-6.7). Enough context was preserved around the memory to make it understandable.

The guiding principles at this stage were, firstly, Potter and Wetherell's (1987: 167) suggestion to be as inclusive as possible in the first phases of analysis. In practice this means that all cases of students reminiscing about their English teachers were included. Secondly, it was kept in mind that the descriptions should be as varied as possible. After all, as has been outlined in chapter 3, the goal of this type of discourse analysis is to study patterns (interpretative repertoires) in language variation.

A total of 50 out of 110 language learning autobiographies were read through in the way outlined above. They produced a total of 169 memories of English teachers ranging from a sentence to a few paragraphs in length, and it was decided that the number of language instances was enough to proceed with the analysis.

Potter and Wetherell (1987: 161) characterize discourse analysis as "an extremely labour-intensive approach" whereas Taylor (2001a) describes it as relatively inefficient. This is because the coding and analysis processes require countless readings and re-readings of the data. In the case of the present study, these readings were started after having decided on the number of autobiographies needed to provide the necessary memories and descriptions.

In an attempt to "squeeze an unwieldy body of discourse into manageable chunks" (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 167), which is the main goal of the coding, the passages were first grouped following roughly the division into positive memories and negative ones. However, it soon became clear that this division is not a clear-cut one but that both positive and negative aspects can be present in the same account about the same teacher. The passages were then grouped in a different way following Taylor's (2001a) definition of coding. According to her, coding means the classification of the data into categories. The passages were thus grouped according to similarities and differences in their content. This division produced some initial findings yet further attempts at identifying similar and dissimilar features were carried out. This is when the actual analysis process started.

5.3.3   Analysis

Having defined which features of the material are relevant (Taylor 2001a) and coded the data into "manageable chunks" (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 167) as described above, it was time to start the actual analysis. Before describing the last phases of the analysis process, some principles related to conducting discourse analysis and identifying interpretative repertoires are now presented in more detail and on a more general level.

Firstly, it is important to note that there are no mechanical procedures to be carried out (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 168). There are no recipes, but rather the analysis consists of following up "hunches" and developing interpretative schemes that might have to be abandoned or revised (Wetherell and Potter 1988: 177). The identification of interpretative repertoires could be viewed as a "craft skill" that develops with practice (Edley 2001: 198). In order to achieve this, one needs to become familiar with the data. The analysis could also be seen as a creative process during which the identification of interpretative repertoires becomes constantly clearer (Suoninen 1993a).

The first step in the identification of interpretative repertoires is noting similarities and differences within and between passages. They can be found in both content and form (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 168). One must not settle on them, however. Instead, one must go through the possible findings over and over. This is not accomplished in "some sessions" (Taylor 2001a: 39). At some stage the researcher comes to recognize patterns across people's talk, which means he/she has become familiar with the discursive terrain that makes up the topic. In a way, he/she has "encountered most of what there is to say about a particular topic or object" (Edley 2001: 199).

Word choices can have subtle effects, of which the speakers themselves might not be aware. They might simply say what feels and comes natural (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 34). The details of the language are clues to different interpretative repertoires. They can be used to create hypotheses on language functions (Suoninen 1993a). It is worth noting that repertoires are not neat and coherent units, but that they appear in text and talk in fragments (Suoninen 1993a). Juhila (2007) observed this feature in practice as her subjects slipped from one repertoire to another even within the same sentence.

An important issue for the researcher to bear in mind is that the identification of interpretative repertoires should not be based on the researcher's own interpretations. Rather, the similarities and differences should be apparent to the participants as well. For example, a simple-seeming "but" could indicate that the speaker/writer acknowledges a

conflict in what he or she is saying (Suoninen 1993a). It is also essential to remember that the main goal of the analysis is not the identification of interpretative repertoires per se. Instead, the aim is to arrive at forming hypotheses of functions, at understanding of the uses of the interpretative repertoires in that particular context.

In the course of the readings and re-readings of the passages, it became evident that not all of them were suitable for the purposes of the present study. The number of passages first dropped from 169 to 122, and later still to 109. Finally, after several readings the seven interpretative repertoires identified in the study started to stand out. At this stage the research questions were further refined to suit the data (see section 5.1 for more). The 109 passages included 175 different instances of repertoire use, which is due to several interpretative repertoires being drawn on within the same description/memory.

All that has been described above goes to show the cyclical nature of discourse analysis. It is not unusual that the questions asked become clearer after some attempts have been made at theoretical interpretations (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 167). Taylor (2001a) notes that a discourse analyst needs to approach the data with a certain blind faith, with a confidence that there is something there to analyse, but not entirely certain about what that might be precisely.

Having now described the coding and analysis procedures in greater detail, it is time to turn to examine the findings of the present study.

6   FINDINGS

The focus now shifts to the findings of the present study. After multiple readings and re-readings of the data, a total of seven different interpretative repertoires were identified. These were the terror repertoire, the routine repertoire, the evaluation repertoire, the progress repertoire, the responsibility repertoire, the incompetence repertoire and the off-stage repertoire, and they are each introduced and discussed separately in the following sections.

Sections 6.1 through to 6.7 answer the first research question, namely, which interpretative repertoires were identified in the data. The structure of the sections is the following: first, the main features of each repertoire are briefly introduced. Next, a closer discussion of sample passages follows. Each example is thoroughly analysed and the salient feature(s) it highlights are made explicit. There might be some overlap between different interpretative repertoires as they are often intertwined in people's language (Juhila 2007). Such overlaps are also made explicit in the analysis. Section 6.8 provides a summary of the main linguistic and rhetorical features of the repertoires and allows the reader to get an idea of where the main differences between them lie. Section 6.9, on the other hand, intends to answer the second research question by addressing the consequences different repertoires have for the roles of teachers and students. The participants' language is quoted in order to summarize the roles.

Sample passages are laid out in Finnish, the language in which they were written and in which they were consequently analysed. Due to limitations of space, the English translations of all examples can be found in Appendix B. However, selected instances of the examples have been translated in the actual analysis in order to facilitate reading. The English version is presented first and the Finnish equivalent follows in parenthesis in order to make the text more coherent and easily readable. All the quotations of the participants' writing appear in *italics*.

6.1   The terror repertoire

The terror repertoire is used to construct negative experiences with disliked teachers. The repertoire was named after a charged expression because it reflects its nature: the language used while creating versions of memories of teachers drawing on this repertoire *is* rather charged. Presumably, educational professionals would prefer to avoid

using expressions such as *bomb (pommi)*, *hanging (hirttäminen)*, *tyrant (tyranni)*, *scar (arpi)*, *propaganda (propaganda)*, *fit of rage (raivonpuuska)* and *horror image (kauhukuva)* while describing the school environment and teachers. Yet, the participants of the present study referred precisely to these and many similar terms while constructing experiences with their former teachers.

There are four recurring features. The first, and perhaps the most salient one, are word choices, particularly nouns and adjectives. Being linked to violence, war and horror stories, they seem to be derived from fields outside the institutional context. Secondly, descriptions of scary teachers are often intertwined with descriptions of how the student felt and what his/her reactions were, further reinforcing the negative image. Thirdly, a sense of consensus (Potter 1996: 159) is often created. It means that by referring to many people claiming the same thing, an account can be made seem more convincing. In other words, by giving the readers the idea that the student was not the only one to hold a negative idea about the teacher, the criticism becomes well founded, not unreasonable. Finally, a close inspection of the language reveals a rather multi-faceted picture of power relations. Teachers seem to hold a lot of power, yet, sometimes the students are able to escape from the teacher's negative nature or are protected from it. The following discussion intends to illustrate these features in greater detail.

The main focus of example (1) is to illustrate the type of vocabulary linked to the way experiences with teachers can be built up when resorting to the terror repertoire. Such expressions can be *fits of rage (raivonpuuskat)*, *little scars (pikkuarpia)* and *a sociopath teacher (sosiopaattiopettaja)*, for instance. However, the passage will be now broken down to smaller units that will be analysed separately:

(1) Ala-asteen kaksi viimeistä vuotta olin (NAME OF SCHOOL), jossa englanninopettajana oli ihminen joka ihme kyllä saa viettää aikaa näköetäisyydellä lapsiin. Raivonpuuskat ja omintakeiset rangaistukset "tuhmille" oppilaille jättivät pikku arpia varmaan useammankin pikku ihmisen sieluun. Oppiminen oli kuitenkin vielä mieluisaa, ja sosiopaattiopettaja saattoi jopa kannustaa joitain oppilaita parempiin suorituksiin. (27M)[4]

The teacher is characterized in a rather complex way. He/she[5] is described as *a person who is, it's a wonder, allowed to spend time within sight of children* (*ihminen joka ihme kyllä saa viettää aikaa näköetäisyydellä lapsiin*). Firstly, by using the word *person*

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[4] For more information on the coding process, see section 5.3.2

[5] A peculiarity of the Finnish language is that the pronoun *hän* 'he/she' refers to both males and females and therefore in several parts of the data it is impossible to say whether the teacher in question was a man or a woman. Example (1) is an illustration of this.

(*ihminen*) instead of 'teacher', the student is able to suggest that the teacher's negative nature extends beyond the professional setting to cover his/her personality as well. Secondly, *is allowed to spend time* (*saa viettää aikaa*) evokes the idea of the existence of a higher instance that has the power to determine who gets to work with children and who does not. In this case this higher instance (left unspecified) lets the teacher work with children. The student comments on this by writing *it's a wonder* (*ihme kyllä*) accoding to the student. To be precise, the student goes beyond a mere 'working with children' and says *spend time with* (*viettää aikaa*). The construction is completed by *within sight* (*näköetäisyydellä*). Together these constructions reinforce the idea of an unfit teacher who, not meeting the requirements of his/her job, should not be allowed to spend time in the same space with children.

In the following sentence nouns such as *fits of rage* (*raivonpuuskat*), *punishments* (*rangaistukset*) and *little scars* (*pikku arpia*), which were already referred to above as examples of the type of vocabulary that can be associated with the terror repertoire, are introduced. The word *punishment* (*rangaistus*) is reinforced by the adjective *original* (*omaperäinen*), which helps to construct the behaviour as unusual. In other words, the adjective emphasizes that it went beyond normal classroom discipline, to which the word *punishment* could refer. The little scars the teacher's behaviour caused, in their turn, were left in the souls of *several little people* (*useammankin pikku ihmisen*). By referring to the pupils as small and vulnerable, the student creates a strong contrast between them and the teacher. The passage concludes with the student calling the teacher *a sociopath* (*sosiopaatti*), a term loaded with heavy associations. He concludes by saying that the sociopath teacher potentially caused better learning among some pupils. How he/she did it is left unspecified.

Also example (2) includes charged vocabulary. However, there are other features worth paying attention to as well. Firstly, the student constructs a sense of consensus and secondly includes descriptions of her own reactions to the teacher, which are both recurring features in passages that draw on the terror repertoire:

> (2) Varsinainen kielen opiskelu alkoi kolmannella luokalla, pelottavan (FEMALE TEACHER'S NAME) johdolla. Olin kuullut (TEACHER'S NAME) pelottavia juttuja, ja aluksi epäröin mennä tunnille. (TEACHER'S NAME) oli kuulemma joskus nostanut jonkun pojan paidan kauluksista seinää vasten… Sain huokaista helpotuksesta heti ensimmäisellä tunnilla, koska (TEACHER'S NAME) ei ollutkaan niin älyttömän pelottava, hieman tiukka vain, sanoi että ei hyväksy minkäänlaista pelleilyä. (39F)

The teacher is described as *scary* (*pelottava*) and the student's English studies started *under her lead* (*hänen johdolla*), which suggests the classroom setting was fairly traditional - the teacher was in control and the pupils subordinate. The sense of consensus is initially created when the student explains that she *had heard scary things about the teacher* (*olin kuullut hänestä pelottavia juttuja*), which made her hesitant about attending the lesson. What she had heard is expressed in the following sentence: the teacher had *lifted a boy up the wall by the collar* (*nostanut jonkun pojan paidan kauluksista seinää vasten*). The student does not end the sentence in a full stop, but uses three dots leaving the idea hanging in the air, possibly to let the reader him/herself arrive at a conclusion about the inappropriateness of the behaviour. A second instance where consensus is implied, is in the use of *had apparently* (*oli kuulemma*), which allows the student to imply that she is merely reporting on what she had heard from someone else while at the same time leaving open the precise source of information.

The student's emotional reactions to the teacher, on the other hand, are described on two occasions. Firstly, she felt *hesitant* (*epäröin*) to go in the class due to the stories she had heard. Secondly, the student could *sigh with relief* (*huokaista helpotuksesta*) in the first lesson on finding out that the teacher did not live up to the rumours. The student does mention that the teacher was slightly strict and had let the students know she put up with *no messing around* (*minkäänlaista pelleilyä*).

Example (2) incorporated descriptions about the writer's emotional reactions to the teacher, however example (3) represents the same idea in a purer way:

> (3) Parhaiten muistan sen kuinka kauhu jähmetti jäseneni astuessani luokkaan ja nähdessäni opettajanpöydän takana seisovan naikkosen. Tieto siitä, että kyseinen ihminen tulisi opettamaan minulle englantia –ja itse asiassa myös melkein kaikkia muita aineita- oli lähes tarpeeksi kammottava seisauttamaan vereni virtauksen (…) Mutta, kas vain, vanha, tuttu (FEMALE TEACHER'S NAME) se siellä pöydän takana hymyili maireasti. (1F)

The student is describing the first encounter with her new teacher in the first English lesson in a new school. She knows the woman by reputation from her previous school. The first emotional reaction can be found in the beginning of example (3). According to the student, she best remembers how *horror stiffened my limbs* (*kauhu jähmetti jäseneni*) when she stepped inside the classroom and saw the woman standing behind the teacher's desk. The student, however, does not use the word *woman* (*nainen*) to describe her teacher, but *naikkonen* a derogatory word that roughly corresponds to *bitch*. Another reference to the student's emotional reaction follows. She writes that

realizing that the teacher in question was going to teach her *was nearly terrible enough to make my blood flow go into a halt* (*lähes tarpeeksi kammottava seisauttamaan vereni virtauksen*). In both these descriptions the student feels in a concrete, physical way: her limbs were stiffened and her blood flow nearly stopped. Describing how she felt seems to contribute to letting the readers understand how negative the experience (and the teacher) was. A few sentences later, the student contrasts her own reactions with a description of the teacher. She describes the teacher's smile. She welcomed the class *smiling with a simper* (*hymyili maireasti).*

Example (4) is from the same student and about the same teacher. However, it illustrates how consensus can be created within the terror repertoire. In this particular case it is done by referring to the teacher's reputation among older pupils:

(4) (TEACHER'S NAME) oli aikaisemmassa koulussani opettanut niin kutsuttuja "yläluokkalaisia" eli 4.-6.-luokan oppilaita ja hänen maineensa kaikinpuolin inhottavana ja vastenmielisenä ihmisenä oli lähes legendaarinen. Totta kai suurien ja viisaiden yläluokkalaisten propaganda oli iskenyt minuun lujaa. Ennakkoluuloni (TEACHER'S NAME) kohtaan olivat suuret. Ja niinhän siinä lopulta kävi, että me kaikki kolmannen luokan kullanmurut vihasimme (TEACHER'S NAME) yhteistuumin. (1F)

The student first explains how she knew the teacher. As mentioned above, she had worked in the student's previous school. According to the student, the teacher's reputation was *nearly legendary* (*lähes legendaarinen*). Accordingly, the teacher was *a nasty and repulsive person overall* (*kaikinpuolin inhottava ja vastenmielinen ihminen*). Like in example (1), here too the use of the word *person* (*ihminen*) suggests that the teacher was disliked both as a teacher and also as a person.

In what follows, the student constructs both the older pupils telling stories about the teacher and the younger ones (the student herself included) who were exposed to the stories in an ironic way. The older pupils are described as *the great and wise* (*suurien ja viisaiden*) and the younger ones as *the sweethearts of the third grade* (*kolmannen luokan kullanmurut*). Irony implies the student is aware of the subjectivity of the interpretations drawn back then. The use of the term *propaganda* (*propaganda*) when referring to what the older pupils said evokes a sense of exaggeration and adds to the irony. Propaganda is something highly persuasive and one-sided. On the other hand, using the term enables the student to free herself from the position of someone who judged the teacher. The negative image of the teacher was imposed on her by *the great and wise* (*suuret ja viisaat*), whose propaganda had *naturally hit her hard* (*totta kai*

iskenyt lujaa) and it had generated her preconceptions about the teacher. The student notes that *so it went* (*niinhän siinä kävi*) the third grade sweethearts ended up hating the teacher *unanimously* (*yhteistuumin*). The sentence is constructed in a way to suggest that the hating was a natural consequence of the older pupils' sayings.

The following two examples both further illustrate how the teacher can be constructed in a way that lets the readers understand the student was not the only one to hold a negative idea about him/her. First example (5) is taken for a closer examination:

> (5) Yläasteen opettaja oli vastavalmistunut nuori nainen, josta pidin paljon. Lukiossa asia olikin sitten toisin. Opettajamme oli lähellä eläkeikää oleva nainen, joka oli vähiten pidetty opettaja koko lukiossamme. (13F)

In example (5) the sense of consensus is achieved by referring to a community of students (the school) holding the same opinion. A superlative construction is used to reinforce the idea. In other words, the teacher was *the least liked teacher in the entire upper secondary school* (*vähiten pidetty opettaja koko lukiossamme*). By using such a construction, the student resorts to extrematization, describing something by highlighting its extreme points (Potter 1996:176, 187). The student resorts to another rhetorical device known as quantification (Potter 1996: 190) to compare the teachers. In other words, she uses opposing numerical expressions in a way that enables her to effectively contrast the teachers. The liked teacher was *a young woman just out of university* (*vastavalmistunut nuori nainen*) and the other teacher is characterized as *a woman close to the retiring age* (*lähellä eläkeikää oleva nainen*) who, as already noted, was the least liked teacher. In reality age might not have anything to do with the teacher being nice or not, however, mentioning this numerical detail helps the student to differentiate the teachers from one another.

In example (6), on the other hand, the sense of consensus is created by building on the teacher's *reputation* (*maine*):

> (6) Naisella oli hurja maine, häntä pidettiin hieman kärttyisenä, ikääntyneenä ja kaikkea muuta kuin lapsirakkaana ihmisenä, mutta minun kokemukseni hänestä ei ollut huono. (24F)

Example (6) starts with the student noting that *the woman had a wild reputation* (*naisella oli hurja maine*). The passive construction *she was considered* (*häntä pidettiin*) follows evoking the idea of multiple voices characterizing the teacher, yet the actual source is left vague. How the teacher was considered is expressed through a three-part-

list (Potter 1996: 196), which is often used to summarize something convincingly. Namely, the teacher was considered *cranky* (*kärttyisenä*), *aged* (*ikääntyneenä*) and *everything but fond of children* (*kaikkea muuta kuin lapsirakas*). Curiously enough, the teacher's age is included in this rather negative characterization similarly to example (5).

Teachers seem to be in a more powerful position within the terror repertoire. This can be seen when students describe how they were protected from or how they had to escape the teacher's negative influence. The following three examples illustrate the latter case. Example (7) will be the first one taken for a closer examination:

(7) Kuten sanoin, minulla ei ollut hätää koska osasin "kaiken" ja sain mahdolliset myöhästelytkin siksi anteeksi, mutta muistan ettei silti ollut mukavaa kun opettaja räyhäsi luokalle sanakokeiden tuloksista. (32F)

In example (7), the terror repertoire is intertwined with the off-stage repertoire (see section 6.7). Instances belonging to the off-stage repertoire are the ones that describe the teachers' sayings and doings, differentiating the student positively from her classmates, putting her in the limelight and praising her language skills. However, what can be interpreted as belonging to the terror repertoire is the construction *I had no problems* (*minulla ei ollut hätää*). The English translation does not do justice to the strength of the original Finnish expression in that *hätä* literally corresponds to expressions such as *emergency*, *worry* and *distress*. In other words, the student was safe (as opposed to being at risk or in danger) due to her excellent language skills; she was able to escape the teacher's negative nature because of them. However, she notes *it still didn't feel nice* (*ei silti ollut mukavaa*) when the teacher *was brawling at the rest of the class* (*räyhäsi luokalle*). *To brawl* (*räyhätä*) is another strong expression often linked to, for example, people misbehaving, picking a fight or dogs barking in a strong way.

In example (8) the student is also safe from the teacher's negative nature thanks to her linguistic skills:

(8) Hän oli nainen, todella tehokas työssään, mutta samalla äärimmäisen epämiellyttävä persoona. Minä sain olla rauhassa, koska olin luokan tähtioppilas, mutta englannin tunneilla opettaja sai jopa yläasteikäiset pojat itkemään, mikä mielestäni on miltei mahdoton saavutus. (42F)

In example (8) the student resorts to extrematisation (Potter 1996: 176) when describing the teacher as *a woman who was very efficient at her job* (*nainen joka oli todella tehokas työssään*), in other words in what she does, but at the same time as *an extremely*

unpleasant person (*äärimmäisen epämiellyttävä persona*), how she is. As with some previous examples, this characterization separates the teacher's professional self from her private persona. The student herself *was left in peace* (*sai olla rauhassa*) because she was *the top student* (*tähtioppilas*). Again, it was the language proficiency that protected the student from the teacher. However, the student describes her classmates' reactions, which helps her construct the teacher negatively. According to the student, the teacher managed to make *even the upper level aged boys cry* (*jopa yläasteikäiset pojat itkemään*), a statement that she further comments on by characterizing this as *an almost impossible achievement* (*melkein mahdoton saavutus*). *Achievement* is a noun that implies that a person actively strives for arriving at a goal. By using this noun, the student constructs a teacher who strives for making her students cry. The student builds on the saying 'boys don't cry', however not just any boys, but boys who attend the upper levels of comprehensive school and are thus aged around 13 to 15, which corresponds to the period of puberty. By referring to the boys' age she constructs the teacher as particularly mean since, it can be inferred, boys that age are particularly tough and conversely it takes a lot to make them cry.

In example (9), the idea of the student avoiding the teacher's negative influence is expressed by referring to luck. Being out of the teacher's reach seems to be outside the student's own control:

(9) Onneksi minulle ei sattunut sen suurempia virheitä, joten pysyin poissa hänen hampaistaan. (4F)

Example (9) is the concluding remark of a longer memory in which the student describes her teacher negatively. It starts with the adverb *luckily* (*onneksi*), which evokes arbitrariness and suggests the issue was out of the student's control. The verb constuction *I did not happen to make particularly big mistakes* (*minulle ei sattunut sen suurempia virheitä*) follows. It carries with it an implication of something happening by chance. The student did not *happen to* make big mistakes, which allowed her to *stay away from the teacher's teeth* (*pysyin poissa hänen hampaistaan*). The metaphor at the end of the sentence, read literally, evokes violent images of some animal or beast taking the learner with its teeth.

Example (10) is rather different from the previous examples discussed above. Nouns and adjectives do not hold a key role in it, instead two verbs are used to create a negative image of the teacher:

(10) Kukaan tuosta veljeni luokasta ei lopulta reputtanut, joka luultavasti vain harmitti opettajaa…
(…) Ja tuntui lähinnä siltä, että opettaja nautti siitä, että emme osanneet vastata täydellisesti. (13F)

Example (10) is part of a longer account of a teacher who had taught the student's older brother. In the first part of example (10), the student describes her brother's negative experiences with the teacher and in the latter part she writes about her own negative experiences of the same teacher. Referring to the brother and his experiences can be considered yet another illustration of creating a sense of consensus within the terror repertoire. The student first tells that no one in her brother's class failed (the matriculation exam), which *probably only annoyed the teacher* (*luultavasti vain harmitti opettajaa*). In the latter part of the example, she refers to her own experiences noting how the teacher seemed to *enjoy* (*nauttia*) the fact that the students could not answer perfectly. The verbs annoy and enjoy are used inversely, if one presumes that teachers strive for helping the students proceed in their studies, and consequently, are supposed to enjoy none of his/her students failing and be annoyed by their mistakes. This unusual usage of the verbs helps the student to create an idea of an unjust teacher.

In the concluding example (11) the terror repertoire can be observed from a different angle. Namely, the student reacts to it rather than constructs her account on it:

(11) Hän oli purevan, nerokkaan sarkastinen ja täten tunneilla piikitteli oppilaitaan lähes jatkuvasti. Mutta hän ei koskaan tarkoittanut sillä mitään pahaa. Se oli aitoa, puhdasta sarkasmia, nopeaälyistä ivaa vain pelkän huumorin vuoksi, ei kenenkään loukkaamiseksi. (1F)

Example (11) is, unlike all other examples discussed previously, one where the student is constructing the teacher positively. In the student's words, the teacher was *waspishly, brilliantly sarcastic* (*purevan, nerokkaan sarkastinen*) and *taunted* (*piikitteli*) her students *nearly constantly* (*lähes jatkuvasti*) about various things. The verb *taunt* carries a negative implication and since the student is describing a teacher she later characterizes as *the funniest teacher I've ever had*, she needs to ward off potential negative interpretations the readers could draw based on the verb. The student is not thus drawing on the terror repertoire to describe her teacher, but rather **reacting to it** acknowledging that her word choices could lead to such interpretations. The student starts defending the teacher **against** the terror repertoire. The reaction to the verb *taunt* starts with the conjunction *but* (*mutta*) and the subordinate clause that follows is left to stand on its own, which is an unusual way to build a sentence. The student says the

teacher *never meant anything bad* (*ei koskaan tarkoittanut mitään pahaa*) and explains that the sarcasm and irony were there only for humour's sake, *not in order to hurt anyone* (*ei kenenkään loukkaamiseksi*). *Never* (*ei koskaan*) has an extrematizing function (Potter 1996: 196) and it seems to be there to emphasize the teacher's positive nature and dissolve all doubts about her ever hurting her students' feelings.

6.2   The routine repertoire

The routine repertoire is also used to construct English teachers negatively. None of the instances the data allowed to be interpreted as belonging to the routine repertoire carry positive connotations. Negative descriptions rise from the teacher being predictable and repetitive. In other words, the teacher and his/her teaching do not change. He/she does not offer the students any variation. In the data, the teacher's character is intertwined with what the teacher had the students do. Descriptions of teachers are inseparable from descriptions of what went on in the classroom. It seems that the students have little power; the teacher decides what happens in class.

There are three recurring features that seem to make up the routine repertoire. Firstly, there are clearly identifiable core metaphors on which students construct their descriptions. For example, they compare the teacher or his/her teaching to a *pattern* (*kaava*), or a *tape* (*nauha*). Secondly, classroom practices are described in order to create a sense of routine. Thirdly, students often resort to adverbs of time, e.g. *always* (*aina*) and *never* (*never*), or similar expressions, e.g. *endless repetition* (*loputon kertaaminen*), that have an extrematizing function (Potter 1996: 176) reinforcing the idea of routine and stability. These features will now be given a closer look.

To start with, a few illustrations of the type of metaphors that can be encountered in the passages that draw on the routine repertoire. The two first examples both include metaphors that are constructed around the idea of repetition. Example (12) includes the metaphor of *pattern* (*kaava*):

(12) Tunneille oli ahdistavaa mennä kun tiesi niiden menevän aina saman kaavan mukaan. (13F)

Example (12) is part of a longer memory where the writer first describes her upper secondary school English teacher drawing on the terror repertoire. After the example passage she continues the telling using the terror repertoire. Example (12) is thus an

isolated, short glimpse of the routine repertoire that briefly interrupts the use of another repertoire. The fact that the shift from one repertoire to another is not heavily marked by the writer, suggests that the terror repertoire and the routine repertoire are not opposing, contrasting repertoires, but rather parallel ones (Jokinen et al. 1993). In other words, they can co-exist in the text without any major conflict, perhaps due to both of them being used to construct negative images of teachers. Their overall goal is the same.

What makes example (12) stand as a reference to the routine rather than the terror repertoire is the fact that it does not build an image of a mean teacher who makes the students feel scared, but instead it describes a repetitive learning experience. The teacher is not explicitly mentioned in the example, however, the teacher is responsible for organizing the lessons. What is included in a lesson can thus be considered tangible evidence of the teacher's thinking and decision-making processes. The student says that she felt distressed attending the lessons because she *knew they always followed the same pattern* (*kun tiesi niiden menevän aina saman kaavan mukaan*). The verb *know* (*tietää*) is one that leaves no room for doubt, its degree of certainty is high. The student did not guess, nor did she have to presume that the lessons went in a particular way, she knew. By using the adverb of time *always* (*aina*) the student reinforces the message and resorts to extrematization (Potter 1996: 176). The teaching was invariably similar and it did not provide the students with any surprises. The use of the adjective *distressing* (*ahdistavaa*) suggests that knowing how the lessons were going to be was an unpleasant rather than a pleasant experience.

Example (13) illustrates other two metaphors that are built around the idea of repetition. The metaphors are those of *track* (*rata*) and *tape* (*nauha*):

(13) Koko yläasteen loppuaika englannin kielen suhteen meni tällä kyseisellä radalla. Kun nauha tuli loppuun, se kelattiin alkuun ja soitettiin uudestaan. (48M)

In example (13) the idea of routine is created in two different ways. First of all, the student states that *the entire time that was left of the upper levels of comprehensive school* (*koko yläasteen loppuaika*) was similar to what had just been described. In doing so, the student resorts to a form of quantification (Potter 1996: 190), which means using some form of numerical description to emphasize the desired aspect of a phenomenon. In this case, it is the rest of the time in the upper levels. Secondly, two metaphors are introduced. What was left of the upper levels went *on the same track* (*samaa rata*) and when the tape ended, it was simply *rewound and played again* (*kelattiin alkuun ja*

soitettiin uudestaan). Both these metaphors help create an idea of repetition: when something follows a track, each turn and curve is the same, and when a tape is rewound and played again, all the recordings appear in precisely the same order.

In the following two examples, describing classroom practices is used to create the idea of repetition. These practices were not used once, in other words, the students are not describing a single lesson, but the contents of several lessons. This phenomenon is first observed in example (14):

(14) Tunnilla seurattiin oppikirjoja, opeteltiin sanastoa ja kielioppia, eikä sitten juuri muuta. (33F)

In example (14) the student describes the contents of the teaching she had had in upper secondary school. The class was involved in rather typical language teaching in that they *followed textbooks* (*seurattiin oppikirjoja*) and *learnt vocabulary and grammar* (*opeteltiin sanastoa ja kielioppia*). The student concludes the passage by writing *and that's about it* (*eipä sitten juuri muuta*). With the help of this construction the student seems to be able to suggest that it was possible to summarize the entire upper secondary school teaching in one sentence.

In example (15), on the other hand, the student does not summarize the contents of teaching, but rather she describes what usually took place during the lessons:

(15) "Let's make a round", (TEACHER'S SURNAME) sanoi, ja kotitehtäviä tarkistettiin rivi riviltä, pulpetti pulpetila ja oppilas oppilaalta. (26F)

The student first provides a direct quotation from the teacher. In this way she resorts to active voicing (Potter 1996: 160), creating an impression that these were the teacher's actual words, although this might not be true. The quote is in English and is presumably what the teacher said frequently since it is part of a longer memory that portrays the teacher as monotonous. In other words, the student is not describing an isolated incident, something that happened on a particular occasion, but rather the teacher's ways more generally. Having established that the teacher often said *let's make a round*, the student describes what this meant in the form of a three-part list (Potter 1996: 196): *homework was checked row by row, desk by desk and pupil by pupil* (*kotitehtäviä tarkistettiin rivi riviltä, pulpetti pulpetila ja oppilas oppilaalta*). In this way, the student constructs the classroom routine as something rather tedious.

The following two examples are intended to illustrate the type of extrematizing expressions that can be used within the routine repertoire to create an idea of stability. Example (16) provides us with two examples, namely *solely* (*pelkästään*) and *never* (*ei koskaan*). They will now be observed in context:

(16) Eräs opettaja oli kaavoihin kangistunut, antoi pelkästään negatiivista palautetta ja piti pitkän välimatkat oppilaisiin. Hänen opetustapansa oli jämähtänyt, eikä hän koskaan kokeillut mitään uutta. (26F)

Example (16) starts with the student characterizing the teacher using a three-part list (Potter 1996: 196). First of all, the teacher is described as *stiffened in his/her patterns* (*kaavoihin kangistunut*), a metaphor that denotes stability and repetition. Secondly, he/she gave *solely negative feedback* (*antoi pelkästään negatiivista palautetta*). The adverb *solely* (*pelkästään*), enables the student to reinforce the teacher's non-changing character: the feedback could not be positive or encouraging, it was *solely* negative. The third characterisation on the list is the teacher *keeping a long distance to the students* (*piti pitkän välimatkan oppilaisiin*). After the three-part list the student continues describing the teacher by characterizing his/her teaching style as *stuck* (*jämähtänyt*), which evokes the idea of something not moving forward. The conclusion of the passage contains the extrematising 'never': *and he/she never tried anything new* (*eikä hän koskaan kokeillut mitään uutta*). The adjective *new* (*uutta*) contrasts with the stability. By trying something new the teacher could have broken the stability and stop being stuck. However, this did not happen.

Example (17), illustrates how two repertoires can be used together to construct a teacher's teaching. The extrematising expression, in its turn, is *every time* (*joka kerta*):

(17) Muistan, että meillä oli opettaja, joka ei tosiaankaan käyttänyt mielenkiintoisia ja vaihtelevia opetusmuotoja, vaan joka kerta tarkistimme kotitehtäviä tai opettelimme uusia asioita kalvolta. (15F)

Example (17) starts by the student writing: *I remember that we had a teacher who most certainly did not use interesting and variable methods* (*muistan, että meillä oli opettaja, joka ei tosiaankaan käyttänyt mielenkiintoisia ja vaihtelevia opetusmuotoja*). This initial part of the sentence, it could be argued, is a glimpse of the evaluation repertoire and it has been analysed as example (29) in section 6.3. In it the student evaluates the teacher critically taking a stand on what the teacher could/should have done, which is typical of the use of the evaluation repertoire. While being a reference to the evaluation repertoire,

the main clause also functions as background to what follows. In the subordinate clause, it is possible to detect a shift to the routine repertoire. The shift is marked by the adverb *instead* (*vaan*). What follows is the student describing the reality of things. Namely, *every time we checked homework and studied new things from the OHP* (*vaan joka kerta tarkistimme kotitehtäviä ja opettelimme uusia asioita kalvolta*). It can be argued that whereas the routine repertoire is used to describe how things were, the evaluation repertoire shows how things could have been or perhaps should have been. Namely, the methods could have been *interesting* (*mielenkiintoisia*) and *variable* (*vaihtelevia*).

In the data, stability exists in classroom practices across different lessons as has been showed above in examples (14) and (15). However, it is also something that can exist across time. Namely, teachers can be portrayed as professionals whose teaching remains the same despite the fact that years go by and changes take place in research and teaching methods. The following three examples illustrate how this kind of stability can be created over time. The first example taken for a closer examination is example (18):

> (18) Hän vaati, että puhuisimme brittienglantia emmekä sanoisi ``wanna´´ tai ``yeah´´. Hän ei muutenkaan sietänyt muutoksia englannin kielen käytössä. (36F)

Prior to example (18) the student has characterized the teacher as old-fashioned. In example (18) the student is elaborating on the teacher being old-fashioned. He/she *demanded that we speak British English and wouldn't say "wanna" or "yeah"* (*vaati, että puhuisimme brittienglantia emmekä sanoisi "wanna" tai "yeah"*). The verb *demand* (*vaatia*) is a rather strong one. The teacher did not recommend the students to use the British variety of English, nor did he/she suggest it – he/she demanded it with the power he/she held as a teacher. It is worth noting how in this example British English is seen as something traditional and old-fashioned because it was what the teacher insisted on. Expressions *wanna* and *yeah*, on the other hand, are seen as modern language, which the old-fashioned teacher objected to. The student continues by concluding that the teacher *did not anyway stand changes in the uses of English* (*hän ei muutenkaan sietänyt muutoksia englannin kielen käytössä*). The noun *changes* (*muutoksia*) contrasts with the teacher's being old-fashioned. *Changes* were what he/she could not bear.

In example (19) the idea of stability over years is constructed by resorting to quantification (Potter 1996: 190):

(19) Uusi opettajamme osoittautui todella vanhanaikaiseksi tapaukseksi, joka ei ollut poikennut tutusta kaavastaan viimeiseen kolmeenkymmeneen vuoteen. Joten ensimmäisen tunnin jälkeen tiesimme, millainen koko loppu vuosi ja jäljellä oleva peruskoulun englannin opiskelu olisi. (48M)[6]

The teacher is first characterized as a *very old-fashioned case* (*todella vanhanaikaiseksi tapaukseksi*) by resorting to extrematization (Potter 1996: 176). The student reinforces the idea by hypothesizing that he/she *hadn't strayed from the familiar pattern for the last thirty years* (*ei ollut poikennut tutusta kaavasta viimeiseen kolmeenkymmeneen vuoteen*). There are three issues worth noting in this construction. Firstly, the student evokes the metaphor of 'pattern', which has already been referred to in the previous examples. Secondly, the noun *pattern* (*kaava*) is paired up with the adjective *familiar* (*tuttu*), which contrasts with being dynamic, adventurous and resorting to new ways of doing. Thirdly, the student then suggests the teacher has been using this familiar pattern for thirty years. Quantifying (Potter 1996: 190) the teacher's teaching in this way helps the student to emphasize just how static the teacher was. He/she was not like that on a single lesson, nor during that particular academic year, but had been like that for decades. As a consequence, the pupils *knew* (*tiesimme*) how *the rest of the year* (*koko loppu vuosi*) would be. Like in example (12), here too, the student knows how the teacher organizes the lessons rather than guesses. The teacher was and had been for the past thirty years so predictable that the students knew what was ahead.

In the final example (20), in its turn, stability over years is constructed by comparing and contrasting two teachers, a young one with an older one:

(20) Kävin koko ala-asteen samassa rakennuksessa, ja sen aikana minulla oli kaksi englannin opettajaa, toinen nuori, toinen huomattavasti vanhempi, mutta heidän opetustyylinsä olivat melko samanlaiset. Tunnit olivat melko perinteisiä luonteeltaan. (31M)

The two teachers are described through opposite adjectives that refer to their age: *one was young and the other considerably older* (*toinen nuori, toinen huomattavasti vanhempi*). Conjunction *but* (*mutta*) follows. After the conjunction the student further compares the teachers finding common ground. Despite their different ages, they shared something, namely, the student notes how *their teaching styles were fairly similar* (*heidän opetustyylinsä olivat melko samanlaiset*). This similarity in teaching styles resulted in reasonably *traditional* (*perinteisiä*) lessons. By constructing the sentence in this way, the student seems to suggest that a young teacher could be expected to have a

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[6] Example (20) is from the same student and about the same teacher as example (15).

differing teaching style from an older teacher, that teaching styles change as time goes by. However, the younger teacher also had traditional lessons and the learner's learning experience remained static. As a consequence, stability extends across teachers.

6.3   The evaluation repertoire

It can be argued that several of the interpretative repertoires identified in the present study can be used to evaluate the teacher in some way. However, critical evaluation of the teacher's practices most clearly takes place in the passages that are constructed on the evaluation repertoire. It can be used to assess these practices both negatively and positively and its use puts the language user in a knowledgeable position.

There are three recurring features. Firstly, the vocabulary consists of terminology used by educational professionals or professionals in the field of SLA and can therefore normally be seen in professional journals, textbooks and articles. A few illustrations of such terminology are *experimental teaching methods* (*kokeellisia opetusmuotoja*), *so-called authentic material* (*ns. autenttinen materiaali*), *through acquisition* (*omaksumisen kautta*) and *teaching style* (*opetustyyli*). Secondly, the critical inspection of the teacher's practices often takes place from the perspective of the young adult writing the autobiography. In other words, instances constructed by resorting to the evaluation repertoire are often explicitly or subtly detached from the chronology of the life story. This can be achieved by using expressions such as *back in my time* (*minun aikanani*), *now that I think* (*nyt kun mietin*) or *already then* (*jo silloin)*. Thirdly, the students seem to base their criticism on beliefs they have about language learning and teaching. This can be seen when the teacher is evaluated in terms of what he/she should/ could have done instead of what he/she actually did. Conditional structures are often used to achieve this effect.

A closer examination of sample passages starts with three examples that illustrate the type of professional vocabulary used while resorting to the evaluation repertoire. The first example taken for a closer examination is example (21):

(21) Hän toi tunneille usein mukanaan myös ns. autenttista materiaalia, esim. pieniä matkamuistoja tai postikortteja. (6F)

Example (21) is part of a positive memory of an English teacher. In the preceding sentences, the student has already praised the teacher's language skills. Example (21) is

the concluding sentence of the memory and it is intended to give further evidence of the teacher being a good teacher. What is considered positive is that the teacher *often brought so-called authentic material into class* (*toi tunneille usein mukanaan ns. autenttista materiaalia*). The term *authentic material* is one used by researchers and language teachers. In example (21), it is reinforced by the construction *so-called* (*ns.*), perhaps to signal that the term is different from the other words in the sentence. Its use implies that the student seems to be aware that not everyone might be familiar with it and that is why it needs to be made evident in the sentence. By using the term *authentic material*, the student is able to show her mastery of buzz words in the field making her account more convincing in the academic context. She is able to name the items the teacher brought with her as 'authentic material' rather than seeing them simply as *small souvenirs* (*pieniä matkamuistoja*) and *postcards* (*postikortteja*).

Example (22) is similar to example (21) in that it, too, resorts to the *so-called* structure while introducing professional terminology:

(22) Lukion opettaja käytti enemmän ns. vaihtoehtoisia oppimismuotoja hyväkseen, vaikkei hänkään kuitenkaan kovin paljon. (25F)

The teacher described in example (23) *took more advantage of the so-called alternative learning styles* (*käytti enemmän ns. vaihtoehtoisia oppimismuotoja hyväkseen*), which is portrayed as something fairly positive. The adverb *more* (*enemmän*) indicates that the teacher is being compared to the other teachers the student has had. In other words, he/she did something more than them and stood out positively. In what follows, however, the student goes on to criticize the same teacher for not using these alternative ways to a great extent. The student notes that *neither him/her* (*hänkään*) did it that much. It can be inferred then that taking advantage of such alternatives more frequently could have been considered something good.

Also example (23) illustrates the type of professional vocabulary used while constructing memories of teachers drawing on the evaluation repertoire:

(23) Mitään kokeellisia opetusmetodeja meillä ei käytetty. (31M)

Prior to example (23) the student has constructed the teaching of several teachers as fairly traditional drawning on the routine repertoire. His criticism extends thus beyond a single teacher. Example (23), in its turn, contrasts the teachers' being traditional with

what they could have done. The use of a professional term *experimental teaching methods* (*kokeellisia opetusmetodeja*) enables the student to evaluate the teachers' doings from a more professional perspective: such methods were not used. At the same time the reference to the very existence of *experimental teaching methods* allows the student to portray his mastery and knowledge of language teaching and suggest that perhaps such methods could have or should have been used. Subtle word choices have thus allowed the student to give a knowledgeable image of himself while at the same time evaluating his old teachers critically.

In the following two examples, the students seem to acknowledge that teaching changes as years go by. At the same time they distance themselves from the chronological plot of the life story by commenting on the events from the present. These features will be first observed in example (24):

> (24) Peruskoulussa oli vielä minun aikanani ainakin opettajien keskuudessa vallalla ajatus, että ihmiset (tytöt ja pojat) jakautuvat matemaattisiin osaajiin ja kieli-ihmisiin. Tämä ajatus putkahti useaan kertaan esille opetuksessa. (…) On oikeastaan pelottavaa, miten suuri valta opettajan ideologisilla asenteilla on oppimisprosessissa. (42F)

In example (24) the effect of commenting on the memory from the present is achieved through the construction *back in my days* (*vielä minun aikanani*). In addition, by resorting to *still* (*vielä*) and *at least* (*ainakin*) the student suggests that things might have changed since her own school days and that teachers can hold different ideas today.

In example (24), the student claims that when she was still in the upper levels of comprehensive school, the teachers had the idea that *people (girls and boys) can be divided into those good at maths and those good at languages* (*ihmiset (tytöt ja pojat) jakautuvat matemaattisiin osaajiin ja kieli-ihmisiin*). To be precise, instead of the teachers having the idea, the idea *was dominant among teachers* (*oli opettajien keskuudessa vallalla*). By constructing the sentence in this way, the teachers' idea is put in the subject position in the sentence, taking on a central and active role. The claim is backed up by noting how the idea *appeared numerous times in teaching* (*putkahti useaan kertaan esille opetuksessa*). Again, the teachers' idea is given the subject role in the sentence. It is not thus the student guessing the teachers' thoughts – and possibly interpreting them erranously, but it is the idea *appearing* (*putkahti esiin*) becoming thus observable. In this way, the student's claim becomes difficult to undermine.

In what has been left out, the student tells how she eventually had a maths teacher who encouraged her to continue working on her skills and choose an advanced maths course in the upper secondary school. The teacher had believed in her skills even though she was a girl, and was thus supposed to be good at languages rather than maths. The concluding sentence follows. In it the student comments on her experiences. The student notes that it is *actually scary, that teacher's ideological attitudes have such a big influence on the learning process* (*oikeastaan pelottavaa, miten suuri valta opettajan ideologisilla asenteilla on oppimisprosessissa*). It can be argued that *ideological attitudes* (*ideologisilla asenteilla*) and *the learning process* (*oppimisprosessissa*), too, are part of the professional vocabulary.

Teaching changing with time and the student distancing himself from the chronology of the story are observable in example (25), too. In it, the contrast between then and now is created by using adverbs *even then* (*jo silloin*) and *now* (*tällä hetkellä*):

(25) Tavat, joilla opettelimme tätä maailman kieltä, olivat minusta jo silloin suorastaan halveksuttavia laiskoja, puhumattakaan tällä hetkellä. Sanalla laiska tarkoitan sitä, että opettaja tekee hyvin vähän sen eteen että oppilaat oppisivat mahdollisimman tehokkaasti tai edes viihtyisivät tunneilla. (48M)

The passage is about a teacher who has thus far been constructed through both terror and routine repertoires. In example (25), the student reflects on the teacher's teaching methods. According to him, they were *despicably lazy even then, not to mention now* (*halveksuttavan laiskoja jo silloin, puhumattakaan tällä hetkellä*). Here one can observe the above-mentioned *even then* and *now* in context. By constructing the sentence in this way, the student seems to be able to suggest that he acknowledges that trends in teaching change with the years. The student then defines what he means by 'lazy'. To him, it means *the teacher doing very little in order to help students learn most effectively or at least like being in class* (*opettaja tekee hyvin vähän sen eteen että oppilaat oppisivat mahdollisimman tehokkaasti tai edes viihtyisivät tunneilla*).

In the following two examples the students constructs themselves as people who did not know how to be critical 'back then'. Read inversely, this seems to suggest that they are more critical 'now'. How this is achieved is first examined in example (26):

(26) Muuten vastuu englannin oppimisesta oli jossain määrin opettajalla ainakin siinä mielessä, että kieltä ei tullut juurikaan harjoiteltua koulun ulkopuolella, eikä tietoa epäselvistä asioista välttämättä edes osannut hakea itse. Lisäksi opetukselta ja sen laadulta ei osannut vaatia kovin paljoa. (46F)

Example (26) includes an overlap with the responsibility repertoire (see section 6.5). Namely, the student constructs the teacher as someone who has a big influence on the learning process. The student uses the passive voice to minimize her own input. In other words, she writes *one didn't really practice the language outside school* (*kieltä ei juuri tullut harjoiteltua koulun ulkopuolella*) and *one wasn't necessarily able to find out more about unclear points on one's own* (*eikä tietoa epäselvistä asioista välttämättä osannut hakea itse*) instead of 'I didn't really practice the language outside school', for example. In other words, it was up to the teacher to manage the learning process. In the concluding sentence, a shift to the evaluation repertoire can be observed: the student passes from constructing the teacher as partially responsible for the learning to justifying why she was not able to evaluate the teacher's teaching while still at school. She notes how *one wasn't able to demand a lot from teaching and its quality* (*opetukselta ja sen laadulta ei osannut vaatia kovin paljon*) subtly creating a contrast between her former and actual selves. The student's direct involvement is hidden again by the passive voice. However, what can be inferred from the past tense is that the student was not able to do something that she, presumably, is able to do 'now'.

In example (27) being critical and becoming critical is depicted as a process that started 'back then' and presumably continues even 'now':

(27) Mielestäni hän ei myöskäään osannut ottaa huomioon eritasoisia oppilaita esim. jakamalla ryhmätöitä sen mukaan, antamalla lisätehtäviä tms. Toisaalta tuntuu että hän teki varmasti parhaansa niillä resursseilla mitä käytettävissä oli. Yläasteella aloin suhtautua kriittisemmin opiskeluun. (29F)

In example (27), the student evaluates the teacher in terms of how well he/she took into consideration *students with differing abilities* (*eritasoisia oppilaita*). In this case the teacher did not do so. The evaluation is made explicit by using the construction *in my opinion* (*minun mielestäni*). The student then shows that she is able to evaluate the issue from different perspectives, which is signalled by construction *on the other hand* (*toisaalta*). Namely, she thinks the teacher did the best he/she could *with the resources that were at disposal* (*niillä resursseilla, mitä käytettävissä oli*). In other words, the student acknowledges the fact that teachers' possibilities are restricted by the practical constraints, expressing her understanding of the complex nature of teaching and the everyday reality of schools. *Resources* (*resurssit*) as well as *students with differing abilities* (*erotasoiset oppilaat*) are yet other terms that make up the terminology of an

institutional context. The then-now contrast, in its turn, is evoked in the concluding sentence. In her own words, the student *started taking studying more critically in the upper levels* (*yläasteella aloin suhtautua kriittisemmin opiskeluun*). The use of the verb *start* (*aloin*) suggests that becoming critical of something is a process. For the student this process started in the upper levels and it cannot be said to have ended.

The next three examples illustrate how the students' beliefs about language teaching are reflected in the use of the evaluation repertoire. In other words, the evaluation of the English teachers' practices is constructed on what they should or could have done. Such a belief is firstly observed in example (28):

(28) Hän kyllä alkoi käyttää jo jonkin verran englantia opetuksessaan, mutta puhetta oli siinä määrin niin vähän ettei siitä ollut juuri hyötyä. (48M)

The belief about language learning and teaching concerns the language of instruction. The student gives the teacher credit for using English in his/her teaching. In the student's own words, the teacher *started using some English in his/her teaching already* (*alkoi käyttää jo jonkin verran englantia opetuksessaan*). The use of *already* (*jo*) carries the idea that when the student himself was still in school, using English as the medium of instruction was not common. The teacher is thus credited for being relatively modern in this sense. However, the student continues the evaluation by noting that there was not much talk and therefore using English in instruction *was not of much use* (*ettei siitä ollut juuri hyötyä*). It can then be inferred that had there been more talk in class, the students might have benefited from it.

Also example (29) centres on a belief about how good language teaching should be. This time good language teaching is discussed in terms of teaching methods:

(29) Muistan, että meillä oli opettaja, joka ei tosiaankaan käyttänyt mielenkiintoisia ja vaihtelevia opetusmuotoja, vaan joka kerta tarkistimme kotitehtäviä tai opettelimme uusia asioita kalvolta. (15F)

Example (29) appeared in the discussion on the routine repertoire. It was previously analysed as example (17). It was argued that the student describes what was done in the lessons by using the routine repertoire and what could have been done by using the evaluation repertoire. While the latter part of example (30) can be thought of as drawing on the routine repertoire, it can be argued that the initial part of it is constructed through the expert repertoire. There are two features that make it possible to make such an

interpretation. Firstly, the student characterizes the teaching by incorporating professional terminology in the memory. Namely, she refers to *forms of teaching* (*opetusmuotoja*). Secondly, she bases her criticism on a belief that forms of teaching should be *interesting and variable* (*mielenkiintoisia ja vaihtelevia*). The way the student constructs the teacher as someone who did not use such forms of teaching, is rather strong. She uses the contrsuction *most certainly did not* (*ei tosiaankaan*) to highlight what he/she did not do rather than describing what he/she did. Read inversely, the student seems to suggest that interesting and variable forms of teaching are desirable.

In example (30), the belief about language learning and teaching concerns the oral activities carried out in the class. The example also illustrates how it is possible to make quick shifts from one repertoire to another even within one sentence (Juhila 2007, Huhta et al. 2006):

(30) Toisaalta opettaja oli kuitenkin tapoihinsa ja kaavoihinsa kangistunut, ei ääntänyt englantia hyvin sekä sisällytti tunteihin hyvin vähän keskustelutilanteita. (7F)

Example (30) is basically a three-part list (Potter 1996: 196) that describes a teacher in a rather negative light pointing out his/her weaknesses. Each part of the 'list' is constructed through a different interpretative repertoire. Firstly, the teacher is characterized as someone *stuck in his/her ways and patterns* (*tapoihinsa ja kaavoihinsa kangistunut*), which can be interpreted as drawing on the routine repertoire. Secondly, the teacher in question *didn't pronounce English well* (*ei ääntänyt englantia hyvin*), which can be interpreted as a shift to the incompetence repertoire (see section 6.6). And thirdly, the student tells that the teacher *incorporated very few oral activities into the lessons* (*sisällytti tunteihin hyvin vähän keskustelutilanteita*). The latter can be considered a glimpse of the evaluation repertoire because in it the student evaluates the teacher's practices by using professional terminology (*oral activities*) and by expressing a belief of what good language teaching is like. In other words, offering the students chances to use the language orally is something teachers should do. However, in the student's opinion, the teacher in question did not meet this criterion of good teaching.

Example (31) is a rich illustration of a memory constructed on the evaluation repertoire. It summarizes many of the features discussed above: firstly, it contains professional terminology. Secondly it centres on beliefs about language learning and teaching marked by conditional structures. Thirdly it is clearly distanced from the

chronology of the autobiography, and finally in it the student explicitly takes on the role of a knowledgeable expert:

(31) Koko kielien opiskelun ajan, sekä ala- että yläasteella ja lukiossa, minua on kummastuttanut se, mikseivät opettajani lukion saksan opettajaa lukuun ottamatta puhuneet opetettavalla kielellä enemmän. Opiskelen opettajaksi, ja nyt olemme käsitelleet paljon erilaisia käsityksiä kielen oppimisesta. Erään käsityksen mukaan vieras kieli tulisi oppia omaksumisen kautta, mielekkäässä vuorovaikutuksessa toisten kanssa. Kielioppia tulisi opettaa vain tukemaan jo opittuja asioita. Kuitenkin, nyt kun mietin minun kielien oppimisen historiaa, kielioppiseikkoihin sun muihin on käytetty aikaa enemmän kuin mihinkään muuhun, ja ylioppilaskirjoituksiin tähtäävän opetuksen takia suulliselle harjoittelulle ei ole juurikaan uhrattu aikaa. (25F)

Example (31) can be divided into three parts. The first one starts with the student stating that throughout the entire time she has been studying languages she has felt puzzled about the teachers not using the target language more. The student implies that these thoughts have been in her mind *both in the elementary school and the upper levels as well as in upper secondary school* (*sekä ala- että yläasteella ja lukiossa*), which suggests that she has been critical of the issue even in the past. In the next sentence the student clearly uses the voice of the young adult writing the autobiography. By resorting to the construction *I study to become a teacher* (*opiskelen opettajaksi*), the student evokes a category entitlement (Potter 1996: 133) to herself. In this case the category would be that of 'teacher'. In other words, as a teacher-to-be, the student positions herself as someone who has access to knowledge about learning and teaching, and is thus a valid person to evaluate the teachers' practices critically. At the same time she positions herself as someone on a par with, or possibly even higher than her former teachers.

Having established herself as someone who is able and allowed to evaluate language teaching, the student starts describing what she has learnt recently in her university studies. She and her fellow students *have discussed different theories of language learning* (*olemme käsitelleet erilaisia käsityksiä kielen oppimisesta*). One of these theories is then taken for a closer examination. Accordingly, *a foreign language should be learnt through acquisition, in meaningful interaction with others* (*vieras kieli tulisi oppia omaksumisen kautta, mielekkäässä vuorovaikutuksessa toisten kanssa*). In addition, *grammar should only be taught to enhance what has already been learnt* (*kielioppia tulisi opettaa vain tukemaan jo opittuja asioita*). These sentences provide the basis for how language teaching should be and they are constructed using conditional structures. They also include illustrations of professional terminology, a feature that can be linked to the use of the evaluation repertoire. There are, for example, *through*

acquisition (*omaksumisen kautta*) and *in meaningful interaction* (*mielekkäässä vuorovaikutuksessa*) that can be seen in SLA literature.

Having outlined one theory of language learning, the student relates it to her own learning experiences, reflecting on her own English teachers' practices. This is achieved by writing *now that I think about my language learning history* (*nyt kun mietin minun kielien oppimisen historiaa*). The theory provides a powerful tool for the student and allows her to conclude that, grammar and the matriculation examination have been emphasized over oral practice, which is not in line with the theory, and for which she is critical of her teachers.

6.4 The progress repertoire

It seems that the use of the progress repertoire, enables the student to construct language learning as a fairly linear process in which he/she either makes progress or not. The teacher seems to hold a key role in the process. The progress repertoire can be used to characterize the teacher both positively and negatively, either as an efficient professional who helps his/her students to proceed in their learning or, by contrast, as someone holding back the development of either an individual student or the entire group.

There are three recurring features. Firstly, the progress repertoire is constructed around expressions of direction, speed, quantity and time. Such expressions can be, for example, *ahead* (*edellä*), *slowing down* (*hidastuminen*) and *get more out of* (*saada enemmänkin irti*). These elements also constitute the basis for the metaphors that appear in the accounts constructed by drawing on the progress repertoire. Examples of such metaphors are *fall off the carriage* (*tippua kärryiltä*) and *feel chained* (*tuntea itsensä kahlituksi*). Secondly, the rate of progress might be reinforced or minimized by resorting to quantification (Potter 1996: 190). Namely, using some type of numerical expression to construct the progress made enables the student to show how in/efficient the teaching was. Thirdly, it seems that learning and teaching are regulated by a pace, which can be that of the teacher, the students or one determined from the outside. Either way, it is the teacher who seems to control it. These features will now be observed in context.

The first three examples contain a metaphor that centres on elements of speed and direction. In example (32), the metaphor is that of *carriage* (*kärryiltä*):

(32) Hän vaati todella paljon oppilailtaan mutta oli sen takia mielestäni aika tehokas. Heikommat oppilaat tosin saattoivat tippua kärryiltä. (3F)

Because the teacher *demanded very much from his/her students* (*vaati todella paljon oppilailtaan*), the student considers him/her to be *quite efficient* (*aika tehokas*). Demanding a lot and being efficient are positioned on both sides of the conjunction *but* (*mutta*). This implies that demanding a lot can be seen as somewhat negative behaviour, however, at the same time it leads to efficiency. The student also acknowledges its problems. Namely, she notes that *though weaker students could fall off the carriage* (*heikommat oppilaat tosin saattoivat tippua kärryiltä*). 'Fall off the carriage' is a figure of speech that evokes the idea of movement: the teacher does not take the weaker students into consideration, but moves on without them. It is also worth noting how the student separates herself from those who fell off by referring to them as *weaker students* (*heikommat oppilaat*).

In example (33) the metaphor that relates to direction and movement is that of *feeling chained* (*tuntea kahlituksi*):

(33) Juuri sen mieluisan opettajan kohdalta opetus vastasi odotuksia tai toivoja siinä määrin että en tuntenut itseäni kahlituksi. (27M)

The student is describing a teacher who did not leave him feeling frustrated as many others had done previously. These comparisons can be inferred when the student refers to the teacher in question as *the preferred one* (*se mieluisa*). His/her teaching matched the student's *expectations and hopes* (*odotuksia ja toivoja*) and as a consequence, he did not feel *chained* (*kahlituksi*). In other words, the student was able to proceed in his studies instead of being constrained to stay motionless by any ties.

In example (34) the metaphor that can be related to direction and movement is that of *wading through* (*kahlasin läpi*):

(34) Kun tunti ei etene, ei siellä jaksa istua. Muistaakseni kahlasin yhden hänen pitämistään kursseista läpi, mutta päätin sen aikana, että toiselle en tule. (39F)

Similarly to example (33), also example (34) centres on the student's frustration. However, unlike in example (33), in example (34) the student is not satisfied with the teacher. The student first notes that *when the lesson does not proceed, you don't have the energy to sit there* (*kun tunti ei etene ei siellä jaksa istua*). Sitting is something rather passive and does not require much effort. However, suggesting she did not *have the energy* (*ei jaksa*) to do even that due to the lesson not proceeding enables the student to

express her negative opinion of the situation. The student then notes she has *waded through* (*kahlasin läpi*) one of the teacher's courses. Wading through, by contrast, suggests that the student had to make an effort in order to move forward. The effort relates to bearing the teacher's course during which the student *decided I wouldn't come to any other* (*päätin sen aikana, että toiselle en tule*).

In the following two examples, language learning and teaching seem to follow a pace determined from the outside. In other words, e.g. the national curriculum regulates how quickly learning should proceed. However, the teacher is the one who is in charge of implementing and controlling the pace. Example (35) will be examined first:

(35) Silti, vaikka kävimme asioita tiukan tuntuisen kurssisuunnitelman mukaan, aina riitti aikaa yksittäisten asioiden tarkisteluun. Opettajan assosiaatiot milloin mistäkin sanasta johtivat synonyymiryhmien keräilyyn taululle, kertomuksiin hänen brittiläisestä ystävättärestään ja tämän kömpelöstä tavauksesta tai opettajan Iso-Britannian vierailuista. (47F)

The student notes that they *went through things following a seemingly strict course curriculum* (*asioita tiukan tuntuisen kurssisuunnitelman mukaan*), in other words, a particular pre-made plan. However, the teacher does not follow it blindly, but breaks the rhythm of the lessons: *there was always time to examine isolated points* (*aina riitti aikaa yksittäisten asioiden tarkisteluun*). The student has chosen to position the conjunction *although* (*vaikka*) at the beginning of the sentence. By doing this she indicates that following a strict schedule might be considered to be negative, whereas stepping aside and dedicating time to spontaneously examining issues that come up during the lesson can be viewed positively. The teacher was not tied to the pre-established plan, but was able to react to different situations spontaneously. In the latter part of example (35) the student gives examples of the *isolated points* (*yksittäisten asioiden*) that were paid attention to. Namely, the teacher had associations about different words and started gathering synonyms on the blackboard and told the students stories about her visits to Britain and about a British friend of hers.

In example (36) there also seems to be an outside instance that determines how quickly the class needs to move forward:

(36) Ensimmäinen englannin opettajani yläasteella oli kyllä ihan mukava ja sydämellinen ihminen, mutta hänen tuntinsa "rönsyilivät" liikaa, ja hän ei saanut pidettyä kuria luokassa, mistä seurasi yleistä levottomuutta ja hidastuminen opetussuunnitelmassa. Onneksi oman panokseni kieleen auttoi minua tässäkin vaiheessa etenemään kielen oppimisessa. (31M)

The student starts describing the teacher rather negatively. The criticism is softened by noting he/she was *quite a nice and warm person* (*ihan mukava ja sydämellinen ihminen*) separating the criticism from the teacher's personality. The conjunction *but* (*mutta*) follows indicating a shift to the negative. The teacher's lessons "*meandered" too much* ("*rönsyilivät" liikaa*) and he/she failed *to maintain discipline in class* (*ei saanut pidettyä kuria luokassa*). Due to these reasons there was a *slowing down in the curriculum* (*hidastuminen opetussuunnitelmassa*). In other words, the curriculum seems to be where the progress takes place and where it should take place at a certain pace. It is not clear why the student has decided to put the word *meander* within quotation marks. It could be argued that, in this context, the word is loaded with metaphorical power and therefore the student has decided to mark it. In the concluding sentence, the student notes that his own efforts helped him to compensate for the teaching and *proceed in language learning* (*etenemään kielen oppimisessa*).

In the previous examples, the pace of teaching has been proposed from the outside and implemented by the teacher. In the next two examples, there is no outside instance against which the pace can be measured, but the rate of classroom learning depends solely on the teacher. The progress caused by the teacher is marked by references to quantity. In example (37) the student learnt *a lot* (*paljon*):

> (37) Tämän jälkimmäisen tunnit lähentelivät jo melkein lukiotasoa, mitä tuli luetun- ja kuullunymmärtämisiin, keskusteluihin ja erilaisiin kokeisiin. Ensi kertaa tunsin oppivani paljon pelkästään tunneilla olemalla. (31M)

Example (37) is a continuation to example (36). It is the latter part of a longer passage about the student's experiences in the upper levels of comprehensive school. In it the student characterizes a teacher's lessons as of high quality. The teacher is not the same one as in example (36), but the student does contrast them with one another. Whereas in example (36) the student had to count on his own efforts to move forward, in example (37) he *felt I was learning a lot simply by being in the lessons* (*tunsin oppivani paljon pelkästään tunneilla olemalla*). In other words, mere *being* (*olemalla*) in the teacher's class, which does not require strong efforts and hard work, was enough to make the student learn *a lot* (*paljon*). He did not have to actively take charge of his own learning because the teacher was so efficient.

In example (38), on the other hand, the idea of quantity is evoked by the student noting that he learnt *the most* (*eniten*) in the teacher's lessons:

(38) Hänen oppituntinsa olivat oleskelutunteja, joiden parasta antia oli ainekirjoitus. (…)Tunnetusti vaativan opettajan tunneilla opinkin mielestäni eniten englannin kielestä koko lukion aikana. (40M)

Two teachers are being contrasted with each other in example (38), too. The lessons of the first one are characterized as *lounging lessons* (*oleskelutunteja*) and the best thing about them are *compositions* (*ainekirjoitus*). By describing the lessons as 'lounging' the student is able to suggest that the lessons were not used into anything productive that required much effort. Writing, on the other hand, is a fairly independent task and requires the student's own conscious effort and by it as the best the lessons could offer, the effects of the teacher's teaching are minimized. The other teacher, on the other hand, is described as *notably demanding* (*tunnetusti vaativa*) and the student claims he learnt *most English* (*eniten englantia*) in this teacher's lessons.

The students' frustration can be born out of a collision between the teacher's rhythm and their own. The following two examples include such a contrast between how the lesson proceeded and the student's own need to make progress. In both these examples, the teacher's pace is constructed by referring to time. The first example taken for a closer examination is example (39):

(39) Muistan erittäin turhauttavana nuo tunnit. Saatoimme toistaa joitakin kahta sanaa puoli tuntia, kun opettaja oli keksinyt, että kissanpentu on kitten ja pieni pupu on bunny. Sanat olivat hänestä niin hauskoja, että lausuimme niitä yhdessä ja vuorotellen. Huokaus. Tällä välin toinen englannin kielen ryhmä oli meitä jo huomattavasti kehittyneempiä englannin kielen taitajia. (11F)

In example (39) the student explicitly notes she felt frustrated in class: *I remember those lessons were very frustrating* (*muistan erittäin turhauttavana nuo tunnit*). Later on, having described how the lessons were, she also writes *sigh* (*huokaus*) expressing her opinion of the issue. By explicitly writing down *sigh*, the student brings a written text closer to speech and allows the readers to 'hear' her reaction, not only read it. The student uses quantification (Potter 1996: 190) to further describe her frustration. The students had to repeat *two words* (*kahta sanaa*) out loud for *half an hour* (*puoli tuntia*). It is highly possible that in reality the lesson did not proceed quite like this. However, by minimizing the number of the words to two and referring to the amount of time, the student is able to emphasize her point and draw attention to just how inefficiently her teacher made progress. Towards the end, the student compares the progress her group was making to that of another group, which is yet another way to show in a concrete way her own teacher's inefficiency. According to the student, the other teacher's group

was *considerably more advanced* (*huomattavasti kehittyneempiä*) than hers. In other words, they had moved forward whereas the student's group lagged behind.

In example (40), too, the student describes the time the teacher invested in a single point. By doing so, the student resorts to a form of quantification (Potter 1996: 190):

(40) Siinä hän sitten sössötti tunnin ajan 'the' äännettä, jonka minä tietenkin hallitsin aivan hyvin ja muistan ihmetelleeni, miksi ihmeessä tuota samaa äännettä on opeteltava noin pitkään. Samaa harjoitusta kaipasi englannin 'r' äänne, jonka hallitsin unissanikin. (28F)

In example (40) the teacher repeats, or *slurs* (*sössöttää*) the *sound 'the' for an hour* (*tunnin ajan 'the' äännettä*). By minimizing the number of words and maximizing the amount of time spent on it, similarly to example (39), the student is able to describe the teacher's inefficiency and suggest that she herself found investing all this time to one sound unnecessary. She *of course* (*tietenkin*) mastered the sound already and *wondered why one sound needs to be practiced for such a long time* (*ihmetelleeni, miksi ihmeessä tuota samaa äännettä on opeteltava noin pitkään*). In this way, the student is able to suggest she was already ahead, she knew and would have needed more challenges. Precisely put, she *knew even in my sleep* (*hallitsin unissanikin*) even the way to pronounce *the r-sound* (*r-äänne*), which got the same treatement of *the*.

The final example (41) contains another illustration of the teacher-regulated pace of the teaching colliding with the student's own needs:

(41) Kahdeksannella ja yhdeksännellä luokalla opetustahti muuttui minusta liian hitaaksi. Samoja jo unissanikin osaamiani asioita pyöriteltiin aivan liian kauan. Se oli turhauttavaa, kun osasin asian jo ulkoa ja olin aina edellä tehtävissä. Olisin halunnut oppia enemmän ja uutta.(19F)

The student is writing about her experiences in the upper levels of comprehensive school. According to her, *the teaching pace became too slow* (*opetustahti muuttui liian hitaksi*) in the last two years. The topics that were handled are characterized as *things I knew in my sleep* (*jo unissanikin osaamiani asioita*). As mentioned in connection to example (40), resorting to such a construction enables the student to suggest that the topics were ones she had already fully internalized. Furthermore, these things were *rolled around far too much* (*pyöriteltiin aivan liikaa*). Rolling as a movement involves repetition and here it is further emphasized by the construction *too much*. The student already mastering the topics is expressed by other constructions, such as *I already knew it by heart* (*osasin asian jo ulkoa*) and *I was always ahead* (*olin aina edellä*), too. The

final sentence captures the student's frustration. The student *would have wanted to learn more and new things* (*olisin halunnut oppia enemmän ja uutta*). However, the teacher-regulated pace was not fast enough to help her move forward in her learning. Instead, she had to slow down and follow the teacher's pace.

6.5   The responsibility repertoire

The responsibility repertoire seems to revolve around the idea that the teacher can have a direct effect on the learning process. Its use includes issues of responsibility, credit and blame. In other words, students can either make the teacher partially or entirely responsible for their own low or high motivation and enthusiasm or assign the teacher credit/blame for their own success/failure. By contrast, the student can also downplay the teacher's influence in his/her learning. Who is responsible for the student's enthusiasm, hard work or motivation becomes the key question.

There are two recurring features. Firstly, the teacher's responsibility can be constructed by using various conjunctions and positioning teachers and students on both sides of those conjunctions. In addition, casual relationships between phrases and sentences can also be constructed through other linking words, such as *for this reason* (*siitä syystä*), for example. Another feature is that the students' characteristics such as motivation, enthusiasm and shyness, for instance, might be put in the subject position in sentences. As a consequence, the teacher does not affect the learner as a whole person, but rather some part of his/her personality. Therefore, shyness, enthusiasm and faith, for example, start leading their own lives as they *blossom* (*puhkesi kukkaan*), *jump high up to the edge of a cloud* (*loikkaa pilvenreunalle*) and *hide away from the gaze* (*pakenee etsivää katsetta*) of the student accordingly as a response to a specific teacher. A closer inspection of these features will now follow.

The first two examples illustrate how students draw on and manage the underlying idea that the teacher has an effect on their learning. However, they both do this in opposing ways. First, example (42) will be discussed:

(42) Tottakai myös opettaja ja ryhmä vaikuttivat opiskeluun. (33F)

In example (42), the student constructs the teacher's influence as a natural and self-evident issue. The certainty is achieved by the use of *of course* (*tottakai*) at the

beginning of the sentence, which seems to imply that the issue is agreed on by everyone. In other words, *of course* the teachers *influenced studying* (*vaikuttivat opiskeluun*). The student, however, acknowledges that although his/her influence is certain, the teacher is only one influence among others. First of all, she mentions teacher influence on a par with peer influence. Secondly, she includes the expression *too* (*myös*) implying that there are other possible influences as well.

In example (43), by contrast, although the student draws on the same underlying idea, namely the teacher influencing her learning, the influence is not constructed as something self-evident:

> (43) Lukiossa sai myös ensi kertaa valita opettajan, jonka kursseja valitsin, ja tälläkin, uskoi tai ei, oli suurta vaikutusta oppimiseen. (22F)

The student first describes an upper secondary school policy, namely, students are allowed to choose when to take courses, and in bigger schools, whose courses to take. She then says *and this, too, believe it or not, had a big impact on learning* (*ja tälläkin, uskoi tai ei, oli suurta vaikutusta oppimiseen*). The main message, which is that the choice of a teacher had an impact on the actual learning, is reinforced by the construction *believe it or not* (*uskoi tai ei*). This construction seems to suggest that the student is aware that perhaps it is not entirely convincing and credible to make the teacher responsible for learning and that such a claim can be questioned and challenged. She thus reacts to a form of silent criticism acknowledging that is is possible to draw such conclusions. In example (42), therefore the student draws on the idea of the teacher being responsible quite bluntly and explicitly, whereas in example (43) the idea is reinforced and the reader persuaded.

The teacher influences the students and their learning, however, the way memories of teachers are often constructed implies that the teacher does not influence the students as whole persons. Rather, the student's motivation, enthusiasm or faith, for example, are being influenced by the teacher. The following two examples illustrate this. First example (44) is taken for a closer examination:

> (44) Englannin opinnot alkoivat todellakin myönteisesti, koska opettaja oli hyvin ammattitaitoinen, sosiaalinen ja tuli opiskelijoiden kanssa hyvin toimeen. Jo pelkästään hänen oma asenteensa auttoi minua muistamaan sen uskon, joka oli jo kolmen vuoden ajan pakoillut etsivää katsettani. (48M)

It is firstly possible to observe how conjunctions and coherence more broadly are used to make teachers responsible, which is a salient feature of the passages that are constructed drawing on the responsibility repertoire. Example (44) starts with the student noting that his English studies started positively in the upper secondary school *because the teacher was very professional, sociable and got along extremely well with students* (*koska opettaja oli hyvin ammattitaitoinen, sosiaalinen ja tuli opiskelijoiden kanssa hyvin toimeen*). As can be seen, this positive description of the teacher is preceded by the conjunction *because* (*koska*), which connects the description to the student noting how positively his studies started. It is therefore due to the teacher's characteristics that the student's studies started well. The student then continues describing the positive teacher influence and it is in this latter part of the memory that aspects of the teacher and student's personality take on subject positions. Firstly, *the teacher's mere attitude helped* (*jo pelkästään hänen oma asenteensa auttoi*) the student to regain his faith. In this phrase it is the teacher's attitude that becomes the subject. In the latter part of the same sentence, by contrast, it is the student's faith. Namely, his faith had *been hiding away from my searching gaze* (*pakoillut etsivää katsettani*). What can be concluded is that the teacher only needed one aspect of herself, her attitude, to help the student regain his faith, she did not have to use all aspects of her personality – her influence was that strong. Faith, in its turn, becomes a living entity that has actively tried to hide away from the student. The student needed the teacher to help him capture it; he was not able to do so by himself.

In example (45) teacher influence is constructed through word choices that have a connecting effect, namely the construction *this factor also had to do with* (*tämä seikka vaikutti myös osaltaan*) relates the teacher to the student's learning. Furthermore it can be seen again how the teacher affects only one aspect of the student, her enthusiasm:

(45) Hän on hauskin opettaja, mitä minulla on koskaan ollut. Luulenpa, että tämä seikka vaikutti myös osaltaan siihen, että äkkiä kiinnostukseni englantia kohtaan ponnahti ylös ja jäi istumaan pilven reunalle. (1F)

The student first describes her teacher positively as *the funniest teacher I have ever had* (*hauskin opettaja, mitä minulla on koskaan ollut*). She then continues by constructing the following sentence in relation to this one. This is achieved by firstly noting *I think* (*luulenpa*) and then explicitly stating how *this factor had partly to do with* (*että tämä seikka vaikutti myös osaltaan siihen, että*) her increased enthusiasm. Precisely put, her

enthusiasm jumped high up and sat down at the edge of a cloud (*kiinnostukseni englantia kohtaan ponnahti ylös ja jäi istumaan pilven reunalle*). Enthusiasm becomes the subject and an active agent that was affected by the teacher, and as a consequence of the teacher's nature, performs an action.

Example (46) illustrates how it is possible to connect one's own learning outcomes to the teacher. In addition, it offers an illustration of how the structure of the sentence helps reinforce teacher influence. In this specific case, this reinforcement takes place through the conjunction *when* (*kun*):

(46) Kun valitsin eri opettajan kursseja, opin taas huomattavasti paremmin. (8F)

Example (46) consists of the main clause and a subordinate clause. It starts with the latter in which the student says that *when I chose courses of a different teacher* (*kun valitsin eri opettajan kursseja*). The student's own choice is being emphasized, in other words, she could affect the situation. In the main clause that follows, the student relates the outcome *learning considerably better* (*opin huomattavasti paremmin*) to choosing courses of a particular teacher. Learning better becomes the consequence of changing teachers. This construction implies that learning *considerably better* was dependent not on the student's own efforts, but rather on the teacher.

In example (47), too, the student's learning is closely tied to who happens to be her teacher. However, unlike in example (46), in example (47), the student cannot choose who her teacher is, but the issue is completely out of her control:

(47) Ala-asteen viimeisellä luokalla opettajan taas vaihtuessa opiskeluintoni väheni hetkeksi, koska entisen mukavan opettajan lähtö oli pettymys. Mutta jonkin ajan kuluttua tämäkin opettaja osoittautui ihan mukavaksi, ja edesauttoi menestyksen jatkumista. (44F)

In example (47) the connecting words and expressions are *because* (*koska*), *but* (*mutta*) and *and* (*ja*). These conjunctions construct the casual relationships between the changing teachers and the student's enthusiasm to learn. Enthusiasm decreasing and success continuing are constructed as dependent on the teachers. The student first writes how *as the teacher changed my enthusiasm for studying went temporarily down* (*opettajan taas vaihtuessa opiskeluintoni väheni hetkeksi*). By using the conjunction *because* (*koska*), the drop in her enthusiasm is directly linked to the arrival of a new teacher and to saying goodbye to the old one whom she characterizes as *nice* (*mukava*).

However, as the conjunction *but* (*mutta*) at the beginning of the next sentence suggests, there was a change for the better. When the new teacher *turned out to be quite nice* (*osoittautui ihan mukavaksi*), the student's *success continued* (*menestyksen jatkumista*).

Example (48) illustrates how a success/failure account can be constructed drawing on the responsibility repertoire. In it, the teacher is made responsible for a low grade:

(48) En tiedä, vaikuttiko tämä asia oppimiseeni, sillä sain kurssikokeesta hädin tuskin yhdeksikön. Minun perfektionistiselle luonteelleni se ei ollut mikään hyvä suoritus! (…)Hiljalleen suhde opettajaan muuttui kuitenkin helpommaksi ja opiskelu normalisoitui. (...) Sain kaikista lopuista kursseista kympit, joten neloskurssin yhdeksikkö jäi vain pikku notkahdukseksi. (30F)

Prior to example (48), the student has been describing the teacher's character by resorting to the terror repertoire. The teacher's character is then hypothesized to have influenced the student's learning outcomes. The sentence starts in a somewhat cautious way. The student constructs the teacher influence in a careful manner using constructions such as *I don't know* (*en tiedä*) and *whether it had an effect* (*vaikuttiko*), perhaps sensitive to possible criticism from the readers: it might not seem convincing to make the teacher responsible for a low grade. The conjunction *but* (*mutta*) indicates that something did take place. Namely, the student struggled and *barely managed to get a nine* (*sain hädin tuskin yhdeksikön*). *Grade nine* (*yhdeksikkö*) is portrayed as evidence of the negative teacher influence and represents a failure in this memory. The grade is seen and defined as such by the student herself. She notes that to her *perfectionist character it was no good performance* (*perfektionistiselle luonteelleni se ei ollut mikään hyvä suoritus*). Next the student describes how the teacher-student relationship evolved, how it *became easier* (*muuttui helpommaksi*) and *studying became normalized* (*opiskelu normalisoitui*) with time. Since the two are linked with the conjunction *and* (*ja*) it can be inferred that the normalization of studying had to do with the relationship becoming easier. As a result, the student *got a ten of all the rest of the courses* (*sain kaikista lopuista kursseista kympit*). Getting the best grades represents a success in the memory and it is tied to the student-teacher relationship and its positive evolution.

In the previous examples resorting to the responsibility repertoire has been done in order to make the teacher responsible for the students' successes or failures, enthusiasm or its lack. It is also possible, however, to negate the teacher's responsibility. The last two examples illustrate the students negating the teacher influence in their learning

taking thus full credit for and responsibility of the learning outcomes. In example (49) the teacher influence is minimized through the student's own language abilities:

(49) Opettajamme oli ihan mukava, ehkä hänellä oli kuitenkin välillä hieman vaikeuksia saada porukkaamme aisoihin, koska olimme aika levoton ryhmä. Mutta se ei haitannut minua eikä englannin opiskeluani, olin siinä edelleenkin hyvä ja lahjakas. (5F)

The teacher is first characterized rather negatively. Namely, although *quite nice* (*ihan mukava*), the teacher had trouble in maintaining discipline in the classroom. In the latter part of the memory the student detaches herself from the situation and says that *it didn't bother me or my English studies* (*se ei haitannut miua eikä englannin opiskeluani*). The conjunction *but* (*mutta*) links the sentence to the description of the teacher. The latter part of the sentence reveals the reason for the teacher not having an effect on the student. The student was out of the reach of the teacher's influence because she was *still good and talented in it* (*olin siinä edelleenkin hyvä ja lahjakas*). It is thus her language skills that helped her become immune to the negative teacher influence.

In the last example taken for a closer examination, the possible negative teacher influence is not annulled by the student's language skills as such, but rather by her own positive attitude towards school in general and English in specific:

(50) Olen aina pitänyt koulunkäynnistä, joten opettajat tai muut oppilaat eivät ole koskaan haitanneet minua tai vaikuttaneet mielipiteisiini oppimisessa. Varsinkin englannin opettajista pidin aina, vaikka muut välillä haukkuivatkin yläasteen opettajaa. Positiivinen asenne aineeseen ehkä vaikutti positiivisesti myös mielipiteeseen opettajasta. (49F)

Example (50) starts with the student noting how she has *always liked going to school* (*aina pitänyt koulunkäynnistä*). This characterization is followed by the conjunction *therefore* (*joten*), which makes way for the student describing how *teachers or other students have never bothered me* (*opettajat tai muut oppilaat eivät ole koskaan haitanneet minua*). According to the student, they have not influenced her opinions either. She further distinguishes herself from others by resorting to extrematization (Potter 1996: 176) and saying how she *always liked especially English teachers* (*varsinkin englannin opettajista pidin aina*) even if others *badmouthed the teacher in the upper levels from time to time* (*välillä haukkuivatkin yläasteen opettajaa*). The student concludes by saying how her *positive attitude may have influenced the opinion of the teacher positively* (*positiivinen asenne aineeseen ehkä vaikutti positiivisesti myös*

mielipiteeseen opettajasta). Thanks to her positive attitude, the student was safe of all possible negative influences the teacher might have otherwise had on her learning.

6.6 The incompetence repertoire

Teachers were described as both professionally competent and incompetent in the data. However, descriptions of the teachers' incompetence were more frequent, and incompetence and competence seem to be partly constructed in different ways. This is why the focus is placed on uncovering how incompetence is constructed by drawing on the incompetence repertoire. It is possible that there is a counterpart repertoire to the present one that enables to address teachers positively. However, such claim cannot be verified based on the data of the present study.

Briefly put, the incompetence repertoire can be used to construct the teacher as a professional who does not master his/her profession. It seems to be based on a fairly traditional idea of classroom teaching with a clear division of responsibilities. In other words, the teacher is expected to provide the students with information. In the data, incompetence seems to stem from the teacher's weak language skills due to which his/her pedagogical skills are affected, too, causing him/her to fail at his/her job.

There are three recurring features. Firstly, much of the vocabulary has to do with language skills. Examples of such expressions can be *her pronunciation* (*hänen ääntämisensä*), *vocabulary* (*sanavarasto*) and *dictionary* (*sanakirja*) and they can be linked to the teacher's linguistic skills. Secondly, negations are used to construct the teacher as someone who is not able: the teacher is constructed through what he/she is not. Thirdly, verb choices put the students in active positions. They *ask* (*kysyi*), *know* (*tiesi*) and *long for* (*kaipasi*) better teaching and they are often forced to find alternative routes to better learning results. These features will now be observed more closely.

The first example taken to the forefront is example (51). It illustrates how the teacher not being the more knowledgeable one can be constructed by resorting to a rhetorical device called abnormalization (Potter 1996: 177). In practice, this means emphasizing the unusual characteristics of a particular phenomenon in order to construct an object or event as exceptional or problematic:

(51) Erikoisimpana kokemuksena ala-asteelta mieleen on jäänyt se, kun tiesin erään suomen kielisen sanan englanniksi, mutta opettaja ei sitä tiennyt. Hän myös epäili, että olin väärässä, mutta sanakirjasta asian tarkistettuaan hänen oli todettava, että olin ollut täsmälleen oikeassa. (12F)

Abnormalization is achieved in the beginning of example (51) by using a superlative construction in order to emphasize the unusual, unique nature of the situation. The student characterizes the situation as *the most unusual experience of the elementary school* (*erikoisimpana kokemuksena ala-asteelta*). She then proceeds to describe the situation in more detail. What happened was that she *knew a Finnish word in English* (*tiesin erään suomen kielisen sanan englanniksi*), however *the teacher did not know it* (*opettaja ei sitä tiennyt*). In this way the student manages to create an idea of her own skills exceeding the teacher's in a particular moment. As for the latter part of the example, it could be argued that in it the incompetence repertoire is intertwined with the off-stage repertoire. Namely, the student describes the teacher's words and actions that reinforce the idea of her as a good language learner. In other words, the teacher *suspected* (*epäili*) the student was wrong and had to resort to a dictionary for verification. Having done so, she *had to admit* (*oli todettava*) that the student had been *completely right* (*täsmälleen oikeassa*). To recap, the student first constructs the teacher not knowing a word as something unusual by resorting to the incompetence repertoire and in the latter part of the same example, she uses the teacher's actions and words to give a positive image of herself as a language learner by drawing on the off-stage repertoire.

Also example (52) reflects the idea that the teacher is supposed to know more than his/her students. It does this by describing a competent teacher who is able to avoid such a situation *a priori*:

(52) Yläasteen opettaja oli syntyjään englantilainen, joka oli hassuna yhteensattumana ollut opettajani leikkikoulussa, ja osasi nostaa tasoa jos opetettava oli meille liian helppo, emmekä joutuneet koskaan niin ikävään tilanteeseen, että puolet luokasta osaa kieltä opettajaa paremmin.Tätäkin olen kuullut sattuneen. (10M)

The student first describes his English teacher in the upper levels of comprehensive school. According to the student, he/she was a native speaker who had taught him in the play school as well. He/she was *able to raise the bar* (*osasi nostaa tasoa*) if the topic seemed too easy for the class. In what follows the student constructs his teacher as someone who did not find him/herself in a situation where the class would know more than the teacher. In the student's own words, *we never found ourselves in the unfortunate situation where half of the class knows the language better than the teacher* (*emmekä joutuneet koskaan niin ikävään tilanteeseen, että puolet luokasta osaa kieltä opettajaa paremmin*). Such a situation is described by the student as *unfortunate* (*ikävä*),

something undesirable, and he compliments the teacher on avoiding it. Example (52) concludes with the student noting how such a situation is not something far-fetched. The student *has heard it to have happened* (*tätäkin olen kuullut sattuneen*).

The following two examples illustrate how negations can build the teacher's incompetence. In other words, the teacher is described by noting what he/she was not able to do rather than what he/she was able to do. At the same time, the negations seem to suggest what a competent teacher should be able to do and what can thus be expected of them. The first example taken for a closer examination is example (53):

(53) Teimme tehtäviä kalvolta, mutta emme saaneet kunnon perusteluja miksi jokin oli oikein ja väärin. Opettaja ei siis hallinnut kielen rakenteita ja sääntöjä, vaan selitti meille suoraan kirjasta asiat, jotka itsekin pystyimme lukemaan. (11F)

The example starts by the student describing some of the classroom practices. The students did exercises, *but didn't get good justifications for why something was wrong and something was right* (*mutta emme saaneet kunnon perusteluja miksi jokin oli oikein ja väärin*). By describing what the teacher could not do or did not do, the student seems to suggest that providing reasons and explaining why something is correct or incorrect is a part of teachers' duties. The student then draws conclusions about the teacher's behaviour. Not being able to provide justifications means that *the teacher therefore didn't master the forms and rules of the language* (*opettaja ei siis hallinnut kielen rakenteita ja sääntöjä*). Again, by examining more closely the negation, it can be suggested that a teacher is expected to master the forms and rules of the language. What the teacher did do is described in the second sentence that concludes example (53). Instead of mastering the language, the teacher *explained things citing the book* (*selitti meille suoraan kirjasta*). The book is what the teacher leans on, however, the student points out that they were *able to read it for ourselves* (*itsekin pystyimme lukemaan*). The teacher did not therefore offer the students anything beyond the book, beyond what the students were able to do on their own.

Example (54) continues along the same lines. It, too, contains a negation that enables the student to describe what her teachers were not:

(54) Kuitenkin opetuksen taso ja vaatimustaso oppilaille kovenivat hetkessä, aikaisemmat opettajat kun eivät olleet uskaltaneet oikein vaatiakaan mitään, koska eivät itse juuri osanneet tarpeeksi. (11F)

In example (54) the student is actually describing a ninth grade teacher whom she found fairly competent. However, the competence is created in contrast to her previous teachers who were characterized as incompetent in the preceding sentences. In the initial part of the example, the student therefore notes what was positive about the new teacher. Because of the new teacher *the level of teaching and demands for students got higher in a moment* (*opetuksen taso ja vaatimustaso oppilaille kovenivat hetkessä*). Even here the teacher's teaching is compared to that of his/her predecessors, however, in what follows the comparisons are made more explicit. The student notes that *previous teachers had not had the courage to demand anything* (*aikaisemmat opettajat kun eivät olleet uskaltaneet oikein vaatiakaan mitään*). She then provides a reason for this: *because they didn't really know enough* (*koska eivät itse juuri osanneet tarpeeksi*). Both these negations work in favour of the new teacher and construct the old ones as incompetent by stating what they were not.

In the following two examples, the teacher is constructed as incompetent by placing his/her strenghts somewhere else. The teacher might be linked to the teaching of another language, for example. The first example taken for a closer examination is example (55):

(55) (…) englanti oli lukion heikko lenkki. Koulussa oli kaksi opettajaa, jotka pitivät englantia, ja kuulemani mukaan juuri se toinen olisi ollut hyvinkin pätevä, mutta minulle piti kaikki kurssit opettaja, jonka vahvuus oli ruotsi, ei englanti. (24F)

Prior to example (55) the student has been describing the teaching in her upper secondary school more broadly. In the beginning of example (55) she characterizes English teaching as the *weakest link* (*heikoin lenkki*) of the school. She then explains in greater detail what this means. The school had two English teachers. Basing her analysis on what she had heard, she says that *the other one would have been very qualified indeed* (*juuri se toinen olisi ollut hyvinkin pätevä*). However, she was taught by *a teacher whose strength was Swedish, not English* (*opettaja, jonka vahvuus oli ruotsi, ei englanti*). The end result is that the description of the teacher is not an entirely negative one. The teacher was good at something, namely Swedish, but that is not helpful when it comes to English teaching, which as a result became the weakest link of the school.

In example (56), too, the student constructs the teacher as competent in another area of expertise, namely Swedish. However, she also contrasts the teacher with another one, whom she considered qualified and competent:

(56) Ikäluokkamme jaettiin kahteen ryhmään, joista toisella ryhmällä opettajana oli kauan Isossa-Britanniassa asunutkin, tehokas ja ammattitaitoinen opettaja. Omalle puoliskolleni päteviä englannin kielen opettajaa ei valitettavasti "riittänyt". Opettajaksemme tuli siis ruotsinkielen opettaja. (11F)

The student first describes how their age group had been divided into two groups in the upper levels of comprehensive school. In other words, *our age group was divided in two* (*ikäluokkamme jaettiin kahteen ryhmään*). The use of the passive voice suggests that the events were something she or the other students had no control of. She then contrasts the teachers of the two groups in favour of the other teacher. He/she is characterized through three expressions. Firstly he/she was *someone who had even lived in the U.K for quite a while* (*kauan Isossa-Britanniassa asunutkin*), secondly he/she was *efficient* (*tehokas*) and finally, he/she is characterized as *qualified* (*ammattitaitoinen*). Having established that there were not enough qualified English teachers to go around for her half of the age group, the student describes her teacher as *a Swedish teacher* (*ruotsinkielen opettaja*). In this way she creates a strong contrast between the two teachers. The better one is tied closely to the English-speaking world because the student mentions he/she has lived there. At the same time the other teacher's expertise is placed elsewhere. He/she is characterized primarily as a Swedish not an English teacher.

In the final three examples, the students describe an alternative route to learning that they were forced to take. The students are forced to be active because the teacher is not able to offer them enough due to his/her incompetence. The first example taken for a closer examination is example (57):

(57) Jos siis oikeasti halusi oppia jotain, oli oltava todella aktiivinen omalla ajalla.(11F)

Example (57) is from the same writer and about the same teacher as example (53). Having already constructed the teacher as someone who is not able to do what he/she is expected to, the student arrives at a conclusion, which is example (57). She notes that *if one really wanted to learn something, one had to be very active in one's spare time* (*jos siis oikeasti halusi oppia jotain, oli oltava todella aktiivinen omalla ajalla*). It was not thus enough to attend lessons; learning did not *really* (*oikeasti*) take place there. Instead, the student had to use her own, personal time outside classes to study. Learning is then the result of the student's active efforts rather than the teacher's teaching.

Similar issues are reflected in example (58). Again, it is the teacher failing at what he/she does that forces the students to seek alternative routes to learning. In this

particular case, the students are forced to become responsible for compensating for the teacher's lack of teaching skills:

> (58) Minulla oli ala-asteella noin 5 eri englannin opettajaa. Yhtä lukuunottamatta kaikki olivat ihan mukavia ja päteviä. Tämä yksi ei tuntunut olevan hirmuisen perillä kielestä ja pedagogiset taidotkin olivat aika puutteelliset. Olimme kuitenkin jo siinä vaiheessa sen verran isoja, että osasimme ottaa jo itsekin hieman vastuuta. Rupesimme itse pyytämään, että järjestäisimme sanakokeita. Emmekä luntanneet, vaikka hän saattoi jättää meidät tekemään koetta keskenään. (46F)

The student first notes that she had had five different English teachers in the elementary school. One of them is then separated from the rest of the teachers. All the others were *quite nice and competent* (*ihan mukavia ja päteviä*). The fifth one presumably then was not. He/she is criticized both when it comes to his/her language as well as his/her teaching skills. According to the student, the teacher *didn't seem to be that aware of the language and his/her pedagogical skills were insufficient* (*ei tuntunut olevan hirmuisen perillä kielestä ja pedagogiset taidotkin olivat puutteelliset*). If the negation is read inversely, a language teacher should be on top of the language and master it. The student then starts describing how the class reacted to such a teacher. They were *big enough to take some responsibility* (*olimme sen verran isoja, että osasimme ottaa jo itsekin hieman vastuuta*). Two examples of taking responsibility are provided. Firstly, *we started to ask for word quizzes* (*rupesimme itse pyytämään, että järjestäisimme sanakokeita*) and secondly, *we didn't cheat even if he/she might have left us to take the quiz by ourselves* (*emmekä luntanneet, vaikka hän saattoi jättää meidät tekemään koetta keskenään*). Traditionally it is the teacher who decides when quizzes take place and makes sure that students do not cheat by monitoring the test situation. However, the teacher described in example (58) did not do these things forcing the students to do some of the teacher's chores. It is also worth noting how the student uses the pronoun *we* (*me*) to refer to the entire class, not singling herself or certain students out as the responsible ones.

In the concluding example (59) the teacher fails again to provide the student the kind of teaching she would appreciate. The student describes two alternative learning routes, namely, getting to know a foreign boy and the textbook:

> (59) Oli onni, että tapasin kyseisen pojan, sillä englannin kielen opetus lukiossamme ei ollut kovinkaan hyvää. Opettaja oli sähläävä keski-ikäinen nainen, joka oli kyllä luonteeltaan äärettömän kiltti, mutta hänen tapansa opettaa oli sekava. Jos häneltä kysyi kysymyksen miksi, hän ei osannut vastata. Yleensä hän lupasi selvittää asian seuraavaksi tunniksi, ja unohti sitten koko asian. Onneksi oppikirja tarjosi hyviä tehtäviä. (42F)

Prior to example (59), the student has been describing her friendship with a native-speaker boy. In the beginning of example (59) she relates that experience to English teaching in her upper secondary school. She notes that *it was fortunate* (*oli onni*) she had got to know the boy *because English teaching wasn't very good in my upper secondary school* (*sillä englannin kielen opetus lukiossamme ei ollut kovinkaan hyvää*). This construction suggests that the friend was able to provide the student with something the upper secondary school failed to. The teacher is described next. She is constructed positively as a person, *she was extremely kind* (*oli luonteeltaan äärettömän kiltti*), but negatively as a teacher, *her way of teaching was confusing* (*hänen tapansa opettaa oli sekava*). The student then illustrates this by noting that *if you asked her a question, she wasn't able to answer* (*jos häneltä kysyi kysymyksen, hän ei osannut vastata*). Again the use of negation suggests that the teacher should be able to answer the questions the students have concerning the language. The teacher's inability to answer is made even worse by the fact that she *usually promised to find it out for the next lesson, and then forgot about it* (*yleensä hän lupasi selvittää asian seuraavaksi tunniksi, ja unohti sitten koko asian*). The students thus ask and want to find out the answers to their questions, and the teacher fails at meeting these needs. The passage concludes by the student noting that *luckily the textbook offered good exercises* (*onneksi oppikirja tarjosi hyviä tehtäviä*). While the teacher is described as someone who does not know the answer and is not able to provide it even afterwards, the exercise book is put in an active position in the sentence. It *offered* (*tarjosi*) good exercises, compensating thus for the teacher's inability to answer the students' needs.

6.7   The off-stage repertoire

The name of the off-stage repertoire originates from the fact that its use is not about describing former English teachers per se. In the memories associated with it, former teachers are described, however, the main focus lies somewhere else. Namely, the off-stage repertoire makes it possible for students to create a positive image of themselves as language learners by describing their former teachers, what they said and did. In other words, students take the spotlight leaving teachers off-stage.

There are three recurring features. Firstly, the teacher's opinions of the student are voiced through direct quotations, or active voicing in Potter's (1996: 160) terms, and reported speech. In other words, the teacher *said* (*sanoi*) something about the student or

to the student, *characterized* (*luonnehti*) him/her in one way, or *complimented* (*kehuvat*) the student on his/her language skills, perhaps by referring to her as *"a real language genius"* (*"oikea kielinero"*). Secondly, the teacher's doings can be described to achieve a similar effect: highlight the student writing the autobiography. For example, the teacher *letting me do extra exercises* (*minä sain tehdä lisätehtäviä*) while the others went through the mistakes they had made in a test might be described. Descriptions of both the teachers' sayings and doings separate the student from the rest of the group. This can also be achieved by resorting to the third recurring feature that can be associated with the off-stage repertoire: pronoun choices. *We* (*me*) can, for example, be used to refer to the student and the teacher rather than to the student and his/her classmates, and expressions such as *their mistakes were corrected in front of the class* (*heidän virheensä korjattiin luokan edessä*) when talking about weaker students clearly leave the student writing the autobiography out. These features will now be observed in context.

The first three examples illustrate how active voicing (Potter 1996:160) can be used to reinforce the idea of the student writing the autobiography being a good learner. The first example taken for a closer examination is example (60):

(60) (...) loin tekstin, josta yhä tänäkin päivänä olen ylpeä. Eläväisin muisto englannin kielen opiskelusta koko peruskouluajoiltani on se hetki, kun opettaja palauttaa minulle tuon aineen ja kysyy: "Kirjoititko sinä tämän ihan varmasti itse? Ettet vain olisi internetistä kopioinut…". Opettajan mielestä teksti oli liian hyvä ja minä otin tuon lausahduksen imarteluna. Olen säilyttänyt aineen pienenä muistona. (1F)

Prior to example (60) the student has described an assignment she had had to carry out in grade 9. She characterizes the written task as *a text of which I am proud to date* (*teksti, josta yhä tänä päivänä olen ylpeä*). The student then starts describing her teacher's reaction to it. The student notes that the event is her *most vivid memory of studying English in my times of comprehensive school* (*eläväisin muisto englannin kielen opiskelusta koko peruskouluajoiltani*). The student shifts from using the simple past (describing the text) to the present tense (describing the teacher's reaction), which creates a rather dramatic effect. The reader is taken back in time to *the moment in which the teacher hands me back that composition and asks* (*hetki, jolloin opettaja palauttaa minulle tuon aineen ja kysyy*). What follows appears to be a direct quotation from the teacher. Potter (1996:160) calls this type of quoting active voicing. The point of resorting to active voicing is to enhance the credibility of an account by creating the

idea that the words are the actual ones the person uttered. In reality the words might not have been said precisely in the same way. Therefore, the teacher might not have said precisely *are you sure you wrote this by yourself?* (*kirjoititko sinä tämän ihan varmasti itse?*) as example (60) would suggest. The student does not limit herself to laying out the teacher's words, but goes on to explain what they meant. Namely, *in the teacher's opinion* (*opettajan mielestä*) the text was *too good* (*liian hyvä*). The student also explains what her personal interpretation of the situation was: she *took it as a compliment* (*otin sen imarteluna*). To further reinforce the significance of this writing task, she concludes by saying that she has kept the composition as a small memory.

Example (61) further illustrates how active voicing and reported speech can be used to create a positive image of the student writing the autobiography:

(61) Opettajamme oli aina todella kannustava minua kohtaan – muistan, miten innoissani olin kun hän eräässä joulujuhlassa sanoi vanhemmilleni minun olevan "oikea kielinero". (9F)

The student first tells that the teacher was always *very supportive* (*todella kannustava*) towards her. It is worth noting how the student does not describe the teacher as supportive in general, but precisely when it came to the student herself. In example (61) the teacher does not address the student directly, but compliments her to her parents in the school's Christmas party. The student tells that she still remembers *how excited I was* (*miten innoissani olin*) to receive such a compliment. The teacher's words are put inside quotation marks in order to suggest they were precisely the phrase the teacher had used. In this way the student resorts to active voicing like in example (60). The teacher had characterized the student as a *"real language genius"* (*"oikea kielinero"*).

Example (62) continues along the same lines with the previous two examples: it further illustrates how active voicing can be used to portray the student positively. This time this is achieved by describing how the teacher reacted to the student's mistake:

(62) Sain minäkin kuitenkin kolauksen. Kerran opettaja kysyi kysymyksen konditionaalista if-lauseessa. Minä olin, kuten usein tavallista, ainoa viittaaja. Opettaja sanoi nimeni. Avasin suuni. Vastasin väärin. Opettajan silmät pullistuivat päästä ja hän rupesi päivittelemään: "(STUDENT'S NAME), miten SINÄ saatoit tehdä tuollaisen virheen." En tiedä kumpaa häpesin enemmän: väärää vastaustani vai faktaa, että hän oli paljastanut kaikille luokassa, että olin suosikkiasemassa. (42F)

Prior to example (62) the teacher in question has been characterized using the terror repertoire. The student has mainly described what her classmates had had to deal with. In example (62) she starts telling about a particular episode in which she herself had had

to face the teacher's criticism. She notes how *I too did get a blow however* (*sain minäkin kuitenkin kolauksen*). The student then describes the situation in more detail. The teacher had asked about the conditional and its relation to so-called *if*-clauses. The student notes how she was *as usual, the only one who had her hand up* (*kuten usein tavallista, ainoa viittaaja*). By describing herself being the only one answering the teacher's questions as something habitual, the student separates herself from the rest of the group and highlights her own participation. The student then switches into describing the unfolding of the situation step by step. *The teacher said my name* (*opettaja sanoi nimeni*), *I opened my mouth* (*avasin suuni*) and *I gave the wrong answer* (*vastasin väärin*) are all individual, sentences separated by full stops. They all consist solely of main clauses and take the story forward quickly and efficiently. By resorting to brief main clauses the student is able to construct an intense rhythm to the telling and capture the readers' attention. After this the teacher's reaction is described, first physically and then verbally. The teacher's amazement was physically observable, his/her *eyes grew wider* (*silmät pullistuivat päästä*). The teacher's amazement is further reinforced by telling that she started to *wag her tongue* (*päivittelemään*), which suggests that the teacher found the situation hard to believe. The teacher's precise words are put inside quotation marks. The principles of active voicing described along with the previous two examples apply here as well. The words might not have been uttered precisely in this way, however, suggesting that they were is a way to enhance the credibility of the memory and of what the teacher had had to say about the student. The teacher said *"how could YOU make such an error"* (*"miten SINÄ saatoit tehdä tuollaisen virheen"*). The pronoun you is written in capital letters, which presumably reflects the teacher's tone indicating that he/she put a lot of emphasis on the pronoun. What the teacher found hard to believe was that it was the student who commited such an error. Example (62) concludes with the student noting that she is unsure whether it was more embarrassing to give the wrong answer or to have the teacher reveal to everyone that she was *in a favourite position* (*suosikkiasemassa*).

The following three examples illustrate how teachers' doings or sayings can be used to put the student writing the autobiography in a knowledgeable position. Reported speech and describing classroom practices can be used to achieve this effect. The first example taken for a closer examination is example (63):

(63) Koulussa minua kiusasi vain sietämätön ujous. En koskaan uskaltanut olla aktiivinen, en edes englannin tunneilla. Yleensä opettaja kuitenkin kysyi minulta koska tiesi että osaan, mutta se tuntui lähinnä kiusalliselta. (34F)

The student first describes herself as a learner. She was *teased by shyness* (*minua kiusasi ujous*), which resulted in her never having *the courage to be active* (*uskaltanut olla aktiivinen*). By using the adverb *usually* (*yleensä*) that denotes habit, the student resorts to normalization (Potter 1996: 177). In other words, she gives the idea that what the teacher did was something that he/she did with great regularity. In this context such a procedure allows the student to suggest the teacher had trust in her. Namely, what *usually* happened was the teacher asking the student to answer the questions, because he/she *knew that I was able to [answer]* (*tiesi etta osaan*). The teacher asked because he/she *knew* (*tiesi*) that the student was able to provide the correct answer. By describing the teacher's knowledge about the student's skills, she is able to give a positive image of herself. The passage concludes with the student noting that it felt *awkward* (*kiusalliselta*) to be asked questions in such a direct way.

Also example (64) illustrates how one can describe both the teacher's doings as well as sayings in order to characterize one's own learning:

(64) Pelleilin koko matkan ja onnekseni opettaja joka suurimman osan ajasta oli kanssani tekemisissä ymmärsi vinksahtanutta ilmaisuani ja näki sen ohi että äijähän tajuaa kielestä jotain. Heti ensimmäisellä tunnilla kirjoitetun aineen jälkeen opettaja kysyi josko haluaisin suorittaa kursseja mahd. Itsenäisesti (...) (27M)

The student is writing about his upper secondary school experiences, which were overall positive. In example (64) the student says that he *goofed around all the way through it* (*pelleilin koko matkan*), which manages to suggest that the student perhaps did not take part in all the activities with the desired level of seriousness. In fact, the student then describes his contentment over the fact that the teacher *understood my twisted ways of expression* (*ymmärsi vinksahtanutta ilmaisuani*). In other words, the teacher *saw through it that this dude knows something about the language* (*näki sen ohi että äijähän tajuaa kielestä jotain*). The teacher understanding the student and seeing past his unique ways of doing resulted in concrete practices. One such practice is described. *Right after the first classroom assignment* (*heti ensimmäisellä tunnilla kirjoitetun aineen jälkeen*) the teacher went to the student and *asked* (*kysyi*) whether he would like to take courses *as independently as possible* (*mahd. itsenäisesti*). Referring

to the very first lesson and the teacher reacting quickly to the student's abilities could be considered a form of extrematization through quantification (Potter 1996: 190). Building on a numeral construction allows the student to emphasize just how quickly his abilities became evident to the teacher forcing him/her to react.

Also example (65) focuses explicitly on describing the teacher's actions and words. In it, the teacher's reaction, amazement, is described in order to highlight the student's language skills:

(65) Hänestä muistan parhaiten sen kuinka hän eräällä tunnilla kysyi, että olenko koskaan käynyt Britanniassa. Vastatessani ei hän ei aluksi tahtonut uskoa minua, sillä hänen mukaansa englannin kielen ääntämiseni oli liian hyvää ollakseen vain itse opeteltua. (1F)

The student is reminiscing about a teacher who had taught her for a couple of courses in the upper secondary school. The student writes about what she *remembers best* (*muistan parhaiten*) about the teacher. The student describes how the teacher had asked her whether she had ever been to Great Britain during a particular lesson. Since the student had never been there, she gave the teacher a negative answer, which provoked a reaction in the teacher. In other words, *she initially didn't want to believe* (*ei aluksi tahtonut uskoa*) the student. This doubt is then explained. *According to her* (*hänen mukaansa*) the student's pronunciation *was too good to have been learnt independently* (*ääntämiseni oli liian hyvää ollakseen vain itse opeteltua*).

The use of pronouns is another way to highlight the learner and his/her language skills. The final three examples are intended to illustrate this. In example (66), the student uses the pronoun *we* (*me*) to refer to herself and the teacher rather than to herself and her peers:

(66) Eka enkun kurssi lukiossa osoittautui todella mielenkiintoiseksi, sillä opettajana toimi amerikkalainen nainen. Hän oli sekä empaattinen että huumorintajuinen ja olimme hänen kanssaan samalla aaltopituudella. Valitettavasti muut oppilaat eivät olleet ja pääsin/jouduin tulkkausavuksi sekä opettajalle että oppilaille, mikä antoi minulle uskoa itseeni (17F)

The teacher described in example (66) was an American woman, in other words, a native speaker of the language. Due to this, the student describes the course as *very interesting* (*todella mielenkiintoiseksi*). The student then refers to herself and her own relationship to the teacher by saying that *we were in the same wavelength* (*olimme samalla aaltopituudella*). As mentioned briefly above, the pronoun *we* (*me*) is used here

to refer to the student and the teacher. In the next sentence, the rest of the student's class is left outside the pronoun *we* and they are characterized through the noun phrase *other students* (*muut oppilaat*). In other words, they were not in the same wavelength with the teacher, which meant that the student *got to/had to* (*pääsin/jouduin*) function as the mediator in the classroom. She had to translate to *both the teacher and the students* (*sekä opettajalle etta oppilaille*), which eventually *gave me more faith in myself* (*antoi minulle uskoa itseeni*). The use of both *got to* (*pääsin*) and *had to* (*jouduin*) in the same context indicates that the student was both bothered and happy about the situation. On the one hand, it was an additional task to carry out and it brought with it a certain amount of responsibility, and, on the other hand, it gave her a chance to be useful and help the teacher. This further enhances her language skills.

Also in example (67) the student is differentiated from her classmates through the teacher's practices and actions. They are signaled by pronoun choices:

> (67) Kuuluin hänen suosikkioppilaisiin, koska osasin läksyni ja pyrin tekemään ylimääräistäkin eikä minua tarvinnut neuvoa. Luin aina sanakokeisiin, taivutin verbejä ja pyysin jotakuta kotona kuulustelemaan sanoja. Ne oppilaat, jotka eivät osanneet tai joita piti joka asiassa olla ohjaamassa, eivät kyllä saaneet kannustusta opiskeluunsa tältä opettajalta. Heidän virheitänsä korjattiin koko luokan kuullen ja usein myös heidän huonot koenumerot tulivat muiden tietoon. Itse sain aina parikseni jonkun, joka oli myös hyvä kielessä ja yhdessä saimme 'loistaa' luokassa. (37F)

Prior to example (67), the student has provided some basic information about her teacher. She was a relatively old woman and had taught her for four years in the elementary school. She then starts describing her own relationship to the teacher: *I was one of her favourite students* (*kuuluin hänen suosikkioppilaisiin*). This claim is backed up by different reasons in the form of a three-part list (Potter 1996: 196). Firstly, the student *knew her homework* (*osasin läksyni*), secondly she *strived for making something extra* (*pyrin tekemään ylimääräistäkin*) and thirdly she *did not have to be given advice* (*eikä minua tarvinnut neuvoa*). In this way the student establishes herself within one type of group of students, namely, the good ones. Then she starts describing a different kind of group to which she does not belong. The students belonging to the other group are characterized as *the students who weren't able and who needed guidance in everything* (*ne oppilaat, jotka eivät osanneet tai joita piti joka asiassa olla ohjaamassa*). They *didn't really get encouragement from this teacher* (*eivät kyllä saaneet kannustusta opiskeluunsa tältä opettajalta*). The use of the pronoun *they* (*he*) suggests the student does not consider herself part of this group. She then explains what this other group of

learners had to deal with. Namely, *their mistakes were corrected in front of the class* (*heidän virheitänsä korjattiin koko luokan kuullen*) and *the class came to know their bad test grades* (*heidän huonot koenumerot tulivat muiden tietoon*). Although it is not stated explicitly due to the student resorting to the passive voice, it can be inferred that it is the teacher who corrected the errors publicly and let the class know the grades of the weaker students. Finally, the student contrasts her own experience to the experience of the others. She was paired up with *someone who was good at the language* (*jonkun, joka oli hyvä kielessä*) and together *we got to 'shine'* (*ja yhdessä saimme 'loistaa'*). In this way the student reinforces her being a part of a 'we' rather than 'they'.

The concluding example (68) also illustrates how the student is separated from the rest of the class through pronoun use and by describing the teacher's practices and actions:

> (68) Neljännellä luokalla saimme ihanan yllätyksen enkunopettajalta: kaikki halukkaat joiden enkuntaito oli riittävä, saisivat omat ulkomaalaiset kirjekaverit! Tämä oli ehkä epäreilua niitä kohtaan joiden kielitaito ei ollut riittävä (ja niitä oli vielä siinä vaiheessa aika paljon), mutta opettaja varmaankin halusi tarjota lisää haasteita meille muutamalle, jotka olivat muita parempia, ja halusi kehittää kielitaitoamme ettei se jämähtäisi jos tunnit ovat liian helppoja. Enkä muista että kukaan, joka oli huono enkussa, olisi halunnutkaan mitään ulkomaalaista kirjekaveria. (20F)

In this memory, the student describes something she characterizes as a *lovely surprise from the teacher* (*ihanan yllätyksen enkunopettajalta*). The surprise was that all those who wanted to and had sufficient English skills got to have their own foreign pen pal. The student then examines this practice from different angles. Firstly, she notes it might have been *unfair to those who didn't have sufficient language skills* (*niitä kohtaan, joiden kielitaito ei ollut riittävä*). She also notes that *there were quite many of them at that stage* (*niitä oli vielä siinä vaiheessa aika paljon*). By using the pronoun *they* (*he*), the student makes it clear that she considered herself one of those who had sufficient language skills and could thus start writing letters in English. Having acknowledged the teacher's practice might have been unequally fair, the student starts justifying it. This shift is marked by the conjunction *but* (*mutta*). The student hypothesizes that the teacher *probably wanted to offer more challenges* (*tarjota lisää haasteita*) and these challenges were offered to *the few of us who were better than others* (*meille muutamalle, jotka olivat muita parempia*) in order to help their language skills develop. The student contrasts the two groups through quantification (Potter 1996: 190), namely, the weaker students were *many* (*paljon*) whereas the better students are characterized by using *few*

(*muutama*). She concludes these considerations by saying that to her recollection, *no one who was bad at English wanted a foreign pen pal anyway* (*kukaan, joka oli huono enkussa, olisi halunnutkaan mitään ulkomaalaista kirjekaveria*).

All the seven interpretative repertoires have now been introduced and illustrated with an analysis of sample excerpts. It can be concluded that three of the repertoires were used to characterize teachers solely negatively. The terror, routine and incompetence repertoires all enabled students to emphasize a different negative aspect of the teacher, namely, his/her mean nature, routine or lack of (linguistic) skills respectively. The responsibility, progress and evaluation repertoires, by contrast, made it possible to write about teachers either negatively or positively. In other words, the teacher was either a positive *or* a negative influence, helped students to make progress *or* not and they could *also* be evaluated positively. Curiously enough, none of the interpretative repertoires identified in the present study enabled students to characterize teachers solely positively. In addition, one repertoire in particular made it possible for students to create a positive image of *themselves*. Students were assigned different roles within all seven repertoires (see section 6.9), however, the off-stage repertoire was the only one that was as or perhaps even more focused on students rather than teachers: they were portrayed as good language learners.

The next sections provide a summary of the main linguistic and rhetorical features of each repertoire (section 6.8) and of teacher and student roles within the interpretative repertoires (section 6.9).

6.8   Summary of the linguistic and rhetorical features of the repertoires

The main linguistic and rhetorical features of the interpretative repertoires identified are summarized in Table 3. They can be considered the features that are especially dominant in the use of a particular repertoire and distinguish it from the others. The right-hand column shows which rhetorical devices (Potter: 1996) were especially common in the use of a particular repertoire. Rhetorical devices are *not* tied to particular interpretative repertoires, however, some seem to be in a key role in constructing passages drawing on a particular repertoire. In such cases, the rhetorical device is mentioned in the table. For example, a sense of consensus seems to be created fairly often in relation to the terror repertoire, however, this does not mean consensus is used solely within it.

Table 3 – Main features of each interpretative repertoire identified

Name of the repertoire	Linguistic features	Potter 1996
1. The terror repertoire	Nouns and adjectives Vocabulary from other fields (e.g. horror stories)	Consensus and corroboration
2. The routine repertoire	Metaphors that denote repetitiveness Adverbs of time and similar expressions	Extrematisation
3. The evaluation repertoire	Professional terminology Writing from the perspective of the present (e.g. adverbs) Conditional	(Category entitlement)
4. The progress repertoire	Vocabulary linked to direction, speed and quantity Metaphors that denote moving forward	Quantification
5. The responsibility repertoire	Creating casual relationships by using conjunctions and other linking words Positioning the teacher and students (or some aspects of them) as subjects/objects	None
6. The incompetence repertoire	Vocabulary linked to language proficiency Comparing teachers to others Negations	None
7. The off-stage repertoire	Verbs that describe the teachers' sayings or doings Reported speech Pronoun choices	Active voicing

Both Table 3 and the discussion below demonstrate how the seven interpretative repertoires identified draw on very different linguistic and grammatical features. For instance, whereas one repertoire relies on negations (incompetence) in particular, the strength of another repertoire might lie in conjunctions and other linking words (responsibility). These features will now be discussed in greater detail highlighting the main differences between the interpretative repertoires.

Nouns and adjectives seem to be in a central role in using *the terror repertoire*. They are derived from settings other than the school context, such as horror stories, for example. They enabled students to exaggerate teachers' negative natures and create a strong contrast between themselves and their teachers. Out of all the rhetorical devices introduced by Potter (1996), creating a sense of consensus and corroboration seemed to be important for the use of this repertoire. It can be hypothesized that, due to the language being charged and some of the teachers' actions somewhat 'out of ordinary' (e.g. *lifting a boy up the wall*), the memories need to be constructed as more credible and

convincing. By not being the only one criticizing the teacher, the experiences can be taken more seriously.

The main linguistic features of *the routine repertoire*, by contrast, are metaphors that denote repetition. Illustrations of these include *pattern* (*kaava*), *track* (*rata*) and *tape* (*nauha*). They can be used to create an unchanging impression of teachers. Furthemore, it is possible to use adverbs of time and extrematizing expressions in order to achieve the same effect. Consequently, the rhetorical device that is often used to construct accounts drawing on the routine repertoire is extrematisation (Potter 1996: 176).

The main linguistic features of *the evaluation repertoire* include the use of professional terminology that can be linked to both education as well as SLA. Such word choices enable students to show their mastery of the main concepts in their field. Another recurring feature is creating a contrast between 'then' and 'now'. This can be achieved, for example, by the use of adverbs. As a result, the voice of the young adult can be heard and the chronology of the life story broken. Finally, the evaluation of teachers is often built on students' beliefs about what good language teaching is like. These beliefs are expressed subtly by using conditional structures to describe what teachers should have done. No rhetorical procedure seemed especially dominant within passages that were interpreted as belonging to the expert repertoire. However, it could be argued that creating a category entitlement to the category of 'expert' or 'teacher' is important, because it allows students to portray themselves as people who are able to evaluate teachers reliably and critically. This is why it is included in Table 3 in parenthesis.

The terminology of *the progress repertoire* consists of words that can be linked to direction, speed and quantity. Such words can be verbs (*sit – istua*), adverbs *(slowly - hitaasti*) and adjectives (*chained - kahlituksi*). By using words that evoke the idea of direction, students are able to convey whether learning proceeded or not. Expressions of quantity refer to how much teachers enabled the class to learn, and expressions of speed enable students to suggest whether teachers were able to respond to their own rhythm of acquisition. In addition, the metaphors that appeared in passages that were constructed on the progress repertoire also reflected these issues. As for the rhetorical devices, it seems that the use of quantification (Potter 1996: 190) is used fairly regularly. It helps students to emphasize numerically how much was learnt (quantity) or how quickly learning proceeded (speed).

The main linguistic features of *the responsibility repertoire* can be found on the level of sentence and clause structures. Teachers' influence on the learning process can be constructed first of all through conjunctions and other linking words that enable language users to create casual relationships between events. Secondly, by positioning teachers and students as subjects and objects in the sentences, it is possible to reinforce or negate the teacher influence. By putting some aspect of the student in a subject position, it is possible to suggest that the teacher influences only a part of him/her (e.g. motivation) rather than him/her as a whole person. Accordingly, the teacher's positive influence can be reinforced by highlighting how only one aspect of his/her personality was enough to help students. It must also be noted that none of Potter's (1996) rhetorical devices seemed especially dominant in the use of the responsibility repertoire.

Much of the vocabulary encountered in the passages that draw on *the incompetence repertoire* consists of references to language proficiency. Expressions such as *dictionary* (*sanakirja*), *pronunciation* (*ääntäminen*) and *the structures and rules of the language* (*kielen rakenteita ja sääntöjä*) can be linked to the teacher's language skills in specific. Another linguistic feature is that the teacher might be constructed by comparing him/her to other teachers. In this way his/her weaknesses can be emphasized. A third recurring feature is to use negations to describe what the teacher was not able to do. Negations not only allow the students to construct a negative image of the teacher, but also to imply how a competent teacher should be. In other words, by telling which skills the teacher did not have, students list the ones a good teacher should have. None of Potter's (1996) rhetorical devices seemed particularly dominant within the passages linked to the incompetence repertoire.

The main linguistic features of *the off-stage repertoire* are verbs that describe the teachers' sayings or doings. In other words, these verbs allow students to describe some of the teacher's classroom practices that clearly put the student in a different position in relation to the rest of the class. Verbs used to describe the teachers' sayings often imply *how* a teacher said something. The verb *wag one's tongue* (*päivitellä*), for example, allows the student to portray how shocked the teacher was due to an error she made. Reported speech can also be used to describe the teachers' sayings. Finally, pronouns can be used to highlight the special nature and skills of the student. Pronouns create relationships both between the student and the teacher and between him/her and the rest of the class. As for the rhetorical devices, it seems that active voicing (Potter 1996: 196) is used fairly frequently to, again, describe what the teacher said to or about the student.

By putting the teacher's sayings between quotation marks, the student is able to suggest those were his/her precise words although that might not be true.

6.9   Teacher and student roles within the repertoires

In the previous sections each of the seven interpretative repertoires identified were summarized in terms of their linguistic and rhetorical features. In this way the first research question (see section 5.1) was answered. The following discussion aims at answering the second research question: summarizing the roles the use of each repertoire provides the students and their teachers with. The roles are first described individually, after which their relationship to one another is discussed. The roles are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4 – Teacher and student roles in the interpretative repertoires identified

Name of the repertoire	Teachers	Students	Stronger position
1. The terror repertoire	Mean-spirited authority figures	Victims	Ambivalent
2. The routine repertoire	Monotonous and non-changing	Bored and frustrated learners	Teacher
3. The evaluation repertoire	The ones who are being evaluated	The ones who evaluate	Student
4. The progress repertoire	In control of the direction and speed of learning	Dependent on the teacher	Teacher
5. The responsibility repertoire	The ones who influence	The ones who are being influenced	Teacher
6. The incompetence repertoire	Fail in the role of information provider	Active learners, who need more than the teacher can offer	Ambivalent
7. The off-stage repertoire	Professionals who are able to give a valid evaluation of the student	Good students	Student

Teacher and student roles are pieced together combining the participants' words. In this way, the reader gets an idea of the kind of discursive terrain that made up the data of the present study. In addition, an analytical shortcoming, *summary of findings* (Antaki et al. 2003, see section 7.2), is avoided: the researcher's own words do not replace and distort the participants' language and its details are not lost. The quotations are not solely from the sample passages chosen to represent each repertoire (section 6.1-6.7), but from the

data more broadly. Therefore some of them will be familiar from the previous sections whereas others completely novel.

The terror repertoire. In the world created by using the terror repertoire, teachers are constructed as **mean authority figures** that make learning a negative experience. They *grade severly* (*arvostelee rankalla kädellä*), *become infuriated* (*tulistuu suunnattomasti*), *completely humiliate* (*nolaa täysin*) and are *scary* (*pelottava*). These *bitches* (*naikkonen*) and *sociopaths* (*sosiopaatti*) have *fits of rage* (*raivonpuuskat*) and *enjoy* (*nauttia*) their students' mistakes. Teachers provoke negative feelings in the students who are in a rather vulnerable position. The student is portrayed as a **victim** who is *afraid* (*pelkäsin*), *hates* (*vihasimme*), *feels overwhelming horror* (*tuntee suurta kauhua*) and does not feel *any joy of learning* (*minkäänlaista oppimisen iloa*). He/she *does the exercises in order to stay alive* (*tekee tehtävät pysyäkseen hengissä*) and *finds it hard to attend a lesson* (*tunnille meneminen oli vaikeaa*). The student's language skills or hard work might help him/her to *stay away from the teacher's teeth* (*pysyä poissa hänen hampaistaan*). Content-wise, it might seem that the teacher is clearly in a stronger position in relation to the student. However, following the principles of the discursive approach, the language must not be viewed as something that reflects the reality as such, but as a way to achieve certain effects. From the discursive perspective, it could therefore be claimed that the use of the terror repertoire enables the student to work up the teacher's negative nature in his/her own benefit, for example, by getting the readers' sympathy. Extremely negative expressions might achieve this effect by creating a strong contrast between the teacher and the student and exaggerating the teacher's negative nature. As a result, it is difficult to pinpoint whether it is the teacher or the student who is in a stronger position in the accounts that are constructed by drawing on the terror repertoire. In other words, the relation between the roles remains ambivalent.

The routine repertoire. The routine repertoire makes it possible to describe teachers as **professionals who do not keep up with developments** in their profession. In other words, he/she is *old-fashioned* (*vanhanaikainen*), *stuck in his/her patterns* (*kaavoihin kangistunut*) and *fed up with his/her job* (*työhönsä kyllästynyt*). He/she is not flexible but *demands* (*vaatii*) certain things from students and *cannot bear changes* (*ei siedä muutoksia*). His/her teaching style is *stuck* (*jämähtänyt*) and he/she *never tries anything new* (*ei koskaan kokeile mitään uutta*). The teacher's teaching *always follows the same pattern* (*aina saman kaavan mukaan*). Student are left in the role of **frustrated or bored learners** who need variation and are not excited about attending lessons.

He/she feels *distressed* (*ahdistavaa*) and *bored* (*tylsiä*) because he/she *knows* (*tiesimme*) how the lesson is going to be. The routine repertoire thus enables students to suggest that language learning in the classroom can be a predictable and repetitive experience. The extrematizing expressions (*always, never,* etc.) create an image of practices that do not change and that cannot be influenced. Therefore the teacher seems to be the only one who can affect the situation and is therefore in a stronger position in relation to students in the accounts that make up the routine repertoire.

The evaluation repertoire. When drawing on the expert repertoire, the teacher becomes **the one who is being evaluated**. He/she is looked at critically by students who describe what the teacher could have done based on beliefs and knowledge they hold about language learning and teaching. The teacher can be criticized for many reasons. For example he/she *includes very few oral activities in the lessons* (*sisällytti tunteihin hyvin vähän keskustelutilanteita*), *doesn't know how to take into consideration learners of differing abilities* (*hän ei myöskään osannut ottaa huomioon eritasoisia oppilaita*) and *most certainly doesn't use interesting and variable forms of teaching* (*ei tosiaankaan käyttänyt mielenkiintoisia ja vaihtelevia opetusmuotoja*). Furthermore he/she *should teach grammar only to support what has already been learnt* (*kielioppia tulisi opettaa vain tukemaan jo opittuja asioita*). Such a critical examination of the teacher's practices is possible due to students having taken on the role of **novice experts** who are able to evaluate teachers and relate their actions to professional knowledge and terminology. Such terminology includes expressions such as *so-called authentic material* (*ns. autenttista materiaalia*) or *alternative learning styles* (*vaihtoehtoisia oppimismuotoja*). Constructions such as *in my opinion* (*mielestäni*), *on the other hand* (*toisaalta*) and *now that I think about my history of language learning* (*nyt kun mietin minun kielien oppimisen historiaa*), in their turn, create an image of an individual capable of expressing his/her opinions and examining the issue from different perspectives. Although 'back then' the student *naturally did not know how to take teaching critically in the same way as today* (*nuorempana ei tietysti osannut suhtautua opetukseen samalla tavalla kriittisesti kun nykyään*), he/she is able to do it now. By resorting to the expert repertoire, students are able to reverse the conventional power relations and roles. Suddenly, they are the ones who have the power to blame or give credit, a priviledge traditionally reserved for teachers. When constructing memories of English teachers by drawing on the expert repertoire, the student therefore is in a stronger position in relation to the teacher.

The progress repertoire. When resorting to the progress repertoire, the teacher is constructed as someone who is **in control of the rate** with which lessons and learning proceed. He/she can manage this task and be *efficient* (*tehokas*) by moving forward *following a strict course plan* (*tiukan tuntuisen kurssisuunnitelman mukaan*) and his/her teaching can *match the expectations and hopes* (*vastaa odotuksia ja toivoja*) of students. On the other hand, the teacher can also fail at helping the class or individual students make progress in their learning. In this case his/her lessons might be described as *lounging lessons* (*oleskelutunteja*) that *do not proceed* (*ei etene*) because he/she might *repeat two words for half an hour* (*toistaa kahta sanaa puoli tuntia*) and cause *slowing down in the curriculum* (*hidastuminen opetussuunnitelmassa*). The student, on the other hand, is rather **dependent on the teacher** regulating the learning. If the teacher does a good job, the student might *learn simply by being in the lesson* (*oppia pelkästään olemalla tunnilla*) and *get a lot out of English* (*saada paljon irti englannista*). By acknowledging the student's personal pace, the teacher can make him/her feel *not chained* (*ei kahlituksi*). On the other hand, if the teacher does not acknowledge the student's needs, he/she might feel *frustrated* (*turhautuneeksi*) because he/she is *always ahead* (*aina edellä*) and knows the topics *in his/her sleep* (*unissaan*) and is forced to *wade through* (*kahlata läpi*) the teacher's lessons. The discussion above already hinted which of the two, is in a stronger position: the student's dependency on the teacher regulating the pace and rate of learning puts the teacher in a stronger position and the student at his/her mercy. The teacher has the power to determine how quickly or slowly lessons and learning proceed.

The responsibility repertoire. The responsibility repertoire puts the teacher in the role of **the one who influences** and the student in the role of **the one who is being influenced**. These roles are naturally intertwined in that when someone influences, someone else is being influenced, one does not exist without the other. Therefore whereas teachers *influence studying* (*vaikuttivat opiskeluun*), the student's *enthusiasm jumps high up* (*innostukseni ponnahti ylös*) and *because* (*koska*) the teacher is a *strong personality* (*jyräävä persoona*), the student's *shyness starts to blossom* (*ujouteni puhkesi kukkaan*). *When* (*kun*) the student chooses *another teacher's course* (*toisen opettajan kursseja*), he/she *starts learning much better* (*aloin oppia huomattavasti paremmin*). On the other hand, sometimes the teacher *doesn't bother* (*ei haittaa*) the student, because he/she is *good and talented* (*hyvä ja lahjakas*). It seems that the relationship between the roles only goes one way: it is the teacher who influences the student. At most the student

can negate the teacher's influence, but in the accounts that are constructed on the responsibility repertoire, it seems he/she is not able to influence the teacher back. Therefore the teacher seems to to hold the stronger position. However, the teacher influence can be made into a tool that enables the student to minimize his/her own responsibility in learning. The student can work up the teacher's influence and make him/her either partly or entirely responsible for something drawing the readers' attention away from his/her own role in the situation: perhaps he/she could have taken more responsibility for his/her own learning.

The incompetence repertoire. In passages that draw on the incompetence repertoire, the teacher does not know enough and thus **fails to take on the role of the information-provider**. In fact, the teacher *doesn't know how to answer* (*ei osannut vastata*), *doesn't master the language* (*ei hallinnut kieltä*) and he/she *doesn't have the courage to demand* (*ei uskalla vaatia*) due to not knowing well enough. It might be that the teacher's *strength is Swedish* (*vahvuus oli ruotsi*) and due to this he/she *does not have a wide vocabulary* (*ei ollut laaja sanavarasto*), he/she *has a weird pronunciation* (*lausui oudosti*) and he/she has to *look nearly every word up from the dictionary* (*tarkisti lähes joka sanan sanakirjasta*). The student, by contrast, takes on the role of an **active learner who has needs that were not met**. He/she *doesn't get justifications* (*ei saaneet perusteluja*) and *has to settle for superficial treatment of topics* (*sai tyytyä asioiden pintapuoliseen käsittelyyn*). In addition, he/she *longs for* (*kaipasi*) better teaching, *asks for word quizzes* (*pyytämään sanakokeita*) when none are provided and *doesn't cheat* (*emme luntanneet*) although the teacher provides the class with golden opportunities to do so. Students are forced to *be active in their spare time* (*olla aktiivinen omalla ajalla*), *take responsibility* (*ottamaan vastuuta*) and they are happy that *the textbook offered good exercises* (*oppikirja tarjosi hyviä tehtäviä*) that compensate for the actual teaching. The relationship between the roles is ambivalent. On the one hand, the teacher's lack of knowledge can be made to dominate the classroom setting and, on the other hand, the student might construct him/herself as someone who was able to compensate for the teacher's incompetence in some way. It could be claimed, therefore, that the repertoire offers its users different opportunities. It is possible to emphasize either one of the roles. The teacher can be made into an obstacle to learning or, alternatively, it is possible to stress the student's role as an active learner who is able to respond to his/her own needs if the teacher fails at his/her task.

The off-stage repertoire. The off-stage repertoire is used essentially to give a positive image of oneself as a language learner. In order to reinforce this positive image, the teacher is assigned the role of **a professional English teacher who is able to give a reliable and valid evaluation of students**. What he/she says or does stands as evidence for the student's goodness. In other words, the teacher *sees talent in* (*huomannut lahjoja*) the student, *marvels at* (*hämmästelee*) his/her achievements and *compliments* (*kehuu*) him/her. The teacher knows that the student knows and therefore he/she *asks* (*kysyy*) the student for the correct answer even if he/she does not have his/her hand up. This might also result in him/her being *shocked* (*järkyttynyt*) if the student makes a mistake and in *refusing to believe* (*ei tahtonut uskoa*) that the student has not spent extended periods of time abroad, because *in the teacher's opinion* (*opettajan mielestä*) the student's pronunciation is too good to have been learnt independently. In the accounts that draw on the off-stage repertoire, the teacher is literally off-stage. Although he/she is present and described, it is the student who takes the spotlight. By describing the teacher's sayings and doings, the user of the off-stage repertoire is able to portray him/herself as **a good language learner** who takes the teachers' feedback *as a compliment* (*imarteluna*). The student is *in a favourite position* (*suosikkiasemassa*), one of the teacher's *favourite students* (*suosikkioppilaisiin*) and *a real teacher's pet* (*oikea opettajan lellikki*). He/she is *in the same wavelength* (*samalla aaltopituudella*) with the teacher and they seem to *'understand' each other* (*ymmärsimme toisiamme*). In class, he/she is *the only one with his/her hand up* (*ainoa viittaaja*) and gets to do something else while *others go through the mistakes they had made in the test* (*muut kävivät läpi kokeessa tekemiään virheitä*). Although sometimes the two roles might seem harmonious, for example, when the student stresses the mutual understanding between him/herself and the teacher, the student is essentially in a stronger position. It is the teacher who is constructed as acknowledging, appreciating or even admiring the student's language skills. By describing such appreciation, the student drawing on the off-stage repertoire is able to highlight him/herself as a good language learner.

To sum up, it can be said that the routine, progress and responsibility repertoires allow students to characterize teachers from a weaker role. It seems that students cannot affect the teacher's routine, are dependent on him/her deciding how much progress is made during lessons and they are not able to influence the teacher, but are being influenced by him/her. The evaluation and off-stage repertoires, by contrast, enable students to characterize teachers from a stronger role. Traditional classroom roles are

being reversed when students evaluate teachers, and the student and his/her language skills take the spotlight leaving the teacher off-stage. The terror and incompetence repertoires, on the other hand, provided a more ambivalent picture of the dynamics between the roles. In other words, it is difficult to pinpoint whether it is the terrible teacher or the weak victim that is in a stronger role discursively. Content-wise it is the teacher that dominates the memories, however, it must be kept in mind that portraying the teacher in a strongly negative way enables the student to take on the role of a victim and get the readers' sympathy. The incompetence repertoire seems to make it possible to emphasize both roles. It is possible to focus on the teacher failing at being a provider of information or the student overcoming the problems caused by the teacher's incompetence by being an active learner.

It can be concluded that none of the interpretative repertoires enabled students to construct two harmonious and equally strong roles. The dynamics between the roles remained asymmetrical. One or the other always seemed to be dominant leaving the other subordinate. However, the teacher was not always the dominant one: some repertoires assinged the stronger role to students.

The discussion on teacher and student roles concludes with a final note on what happens to these roles when students combine different interpretative repertoires in their discourse. It is essential to bear in mind that the seven interpretative repertoires identified do not always appear neatly separated from one another characterizing single teachers. The repertoires are not in fact tied to particular teachers. By contrast, they overlap and are used together in different combinations as has been shown by various examples discussed in sections 6.1 through to 6.7. For example, examples (14), (20), (26) and (29) are all about the same teacher who is describred drawing on the routine repertoire in the first two and on the evaluation repertoire in the latter two. In addition, in other parts of the same lengthy memory the teacher was also constructed through the terror and responsibility repertoires. Consequently, when the student slipped from one repertoire to another, the roles he and his teacher took on also changed. Therefore the teacher was described as the mean authority figure (the terror repertoire) in one moment and as the static non-developer (the routine repertoire) in another. He/she was also put in the role of someone who is being evaluated (the evaluation repertoire) and someone who influences the learning process (the responsibility repertoire). Accordingly, the student producing the discourse could move smoothly from the role of a victim (the terror repertoire) to that of a bored learner needing variation (the routine repertoire), and from

the role of a novice expert (the evaluation repertoire) to that of the one who is being influenced by the teacher (the responsibility repertoire). In this way, the changing and overlapping interpretative repertoires reveal a complex and multi-faceted image of the teacher-student relationship.

7   DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study have now been outlined and in this chapter they are discussed further. In the first section, the interpretative repertoires are contrasted with previous studies on memories of teachers and with previous studies relying on the discursive approach in the field of EFL. In the second section, the present study is evaluated from the point of view of validation. The criteria derived from the principles of discourse analysis are discussed and related to the execution of the present study.

7.1   Comparing the findings to previous research

The findings of the present study are first compared to previous research on a general level. In other words, what the discursive approach had to offer is contrasted with the type of information that using content analysis and moving on the level of subject reality (Pavlenko 2007) could offer. Then, four interpretative repertoires identified in the present study are discussed more closely because they shared most ground with previous research (the terror repertoire, the responsibility repertoire) and differed the most from it (the evaluation repertoire, the off-stage repertoire). In other words, all seven interpretative repertoires are not discussed, but the most dominant differences and similarities are going to be highlighted.

To start off, it is important to note that although past studies shared some ground with the findings of the present study, the interpretations drawn differ because of the differing theoretical stands: most past research on the topic has been carried out by resorting to content analysis, whereas the present study relied on the discursive approach. Example (60) is re-introduced to illustrate this point:

> (60) (...) loin tekstin, josta yhä tänäkin päivänä olen ylpeä. Eläväisin muisto englannin kielen opiskelusta koko peruskouluajoiltani on se hetki, kun opettaja palauttaa minulle tuon aineen ja kysyy: "Kirjoititko sinä tämän ihan varmasti itse? Ettet vain olisi internetistä kopioinut…". Opettajan mielestä teksti oli liian hyvä ja minä otin tuon lausahduksen imarteluna. Olen säilyttänyt aineen pienenä muistona. (1F)

Had this example been analysed at the level of subject reality (Pavlenko 2007) focusing on content and experience, it could have been claimed that the incident was clearly meaningful to the student: it has remained in her mind in great detail. The teacher's words are cited, which might be interpreted as them having been important for the student. They would be taken literally. It could be concluded that teachers play an important role in the lives and learning of their students. However, from the discursive perspective and moving at the level of text reality (Pavlenko 2007), example (60) can be read quite differently. For example, quoting the teacher can be interpreted through the concept of active voicing (Potter 1996: 160): the words were not necessarily these ones, however by creating that *impression* the student is able to make the memory more convincing and achieve something. That something could be portraying herself as a good language learner. Whether this was the writer's intention is not crucial, because discourse analysis explores both the intended consequences of people's language use as well as those of which they are unaware (Jokinen et al. 1993). The discursive approach has thus enabled the researcher to observe firstly that the student has not simply laid down an experience with a former teacher, but that she has achieved something with it. And secondly, that the main focus of the memory is not on the teacher, but rather on the student herself.

A researcher studying memories of teachers at the level of subject reality (Pavlenko 2007) and a discursive researcher focusing on text reality (Pavlenko 2007) would have thus approached example (60) in very differing ways with differing results and interpretations. Therefore, the present study allowed the examinination of familiar themes from previous studies from a *new angle*. For example, in the present study, the teacher's efficiency (Oxford 2001, Turunen 2003: 83) was studied in terms of progress (the progress repertoire) examining how it can be *constructed* out of linguistic resources (e.g. expressions of direction, speed and quantity) and what consequences these constructions have for the roles of students producing the discourse and their teachers.

Two repertoires in particular shared ground with previous research on memories of teachers and with previous discursive research in the field of EFL. These repertoires were the terror repertoire and the responsibility repertoire and they will be discussed in greater detail next.

A way of talking and writing about teachers resembling *the terror repertoire* has been identified by Karlsson (2008) and Kosonen (1998: 123) who had both noticed how teachers often seemed to be portrayed in a very negative light as some sorts of monsters

or tyrants. Furthermore, Oxford (2001) and Turunen (2003: 86) detected metaphors of teacher AS A WITCH and AS A TYRANT, and teacher AS A WITCH respectively that correspond to the type of vocabulary used within the terror repertoire. However, the discursive approach made it possible to move deeper into the linguistic details of such discourse and see that word choices and creating a sense of consensus hold an important role in such constructions of teachers. The discursive approach also made it possible to note that such language does not reflect the reality of things as such, but that it has been *constructed* to achieve particular effects in terms of how the teacher is seen. At the same time, the use of the terror repertoire has consequences for the role the student him/herself is assigned.

The responsibility repertoire can be compared to previous discursive research in the field of EFL. It is similar to and overlaps with the institutional/school repertoires identified in the previous discursive studies on explanations (Heikkinen 1999, Isomöttönen 2003, Kalaja 2006, see section 3.3). The main differences between these and the present study are, first of all, that the institutional/school repertoires include other aspects of the institutional context, too, besides the teacher, and secondly them being used to explain successes and failures specifically. The responsibility repertoire, on the other hand, focuses explicitly on teachers and, although it is possible to construct success/failure accounts that assign the credit/blame to the teacher drawing on it, its use extends beyond them. The responsibility repertoire is used to manage issues of motivation and enthusiasm, and the very concept of responsibility is understood in relation to these issues. The key question is who is responsible for the students' enthusiasm, motivation or hard work and by drawing on the responsibility repertoire, it is possible to both emphasize and downplay the teacher's influence in the learning process.

There were also two repertoires the identification of which most clearly offered new perspectives to the research on memories of teachers. These were *the evaluation repertoire* and *the off-stage repertoire*. Although Uitto (2003: 112) noticed the students' selves were present in their memories of teachers, none of the previous studies on the topic have explicitly addressed what the consequences of memories of teachers are for how the student reminiscing about the teacher can be seen. Out of all the interpretative repertoires identified in the present study, the evaluation and off-stage repertoires had perhaps the most wide-reaching consequences for the roles of the students. The evaluation repertoire, for example, shifted power relations between the teacher and the

student giving the student a chance to evaluate the teacher critically and convincingly from an expert role. Such a role was created by using professional vocabulary, for instance. The off-stage repertoire, on the other hand, is an illustration of how a memory of a teacher can be used to achieve a completely different effect than simply laying out an experience with a former teacher. In other words, students could reminisce about teachers in order to enhance the image of themselves as language learners by resorting to the off-stage repertoire.

The findings of the present study have now been compared to previous research on memories of teachers on a general as well as a specific level. The focus now shifts to discussing the criteria for validating the study.

7.2   Validation of the study

Conducting discourse analysis as outlined by Potter and Wetherell (1987) differs greatly from many others ways of doing research. This is due to discourse analysis holding different principles than methods that follow the positivistic research tradition. Namely, knowledge has been seen as neutral, value-free, cumulative and generalizable to other contexts and it has been thought to take the researcher towards universal truths (Taylor 2001a). A discourse analyst, by contrast, does not aim at presenting neutral facts, but sets out to offer an *interpretation* of the phenomenon. These interpretations are seen as partial, since no neutral single truths are thought possible to uncover. As a matter of fact, discourse analysis accepts the existence of multiple realities, and as a natural consequence, of multiple truths (Taylor 2001a). Generalizability is not considered possible, because the findings of discourse analysis are always situated and fitted to particular contexts (Wetherell and Potter 1988). As a consequence of these underlying issues, the findings of discourse analytic work cannot be validated by 'traditional' methods, such as statistical means, or by replicating the study. New criteria are needed. In what follows, such criteria are discussed.

Potter and Wetherell (1987: 169-172) suggest there to be four main techniques for validating discourse analysis. These are coherence, participants' orientation, new problems and fruitfulness. The first one, *coherence*, refers to presenting the findings in a convincing, understandable way for the reader accounting for all the exceptions and leaving no "loose ends" to the interpretations drawn (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 169). The second one, *participants' orientation*, on the other hand, refers to basing one's

interpretations on what participants themselves see as consistent. In other words, the data should be read from their perspective respecting what they find meaningful (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 170). Thirdly, discourse analysis should be able to generate *new problems* (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 171), make the researcher ask new questions. Finally, *fruitfulness*, the fourth and last criterion of validation, means whether the analysis is able to provide fresh solutions to problems in the field and it can be considered the most powerful criterion (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 171).

The above-mentioned techniques of validation can be seen as extension of analysis. Some others, however, are intrinsic to the presentation of the findings (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 169). In other words, the actual research report becomes a crucial part of the validation process. The entire reasoning process has to be included in it in detail from the data to the conclusions (Wetherell and Potter 1988). The report is the tool that permits readers to evaluate the researcher's interpretations (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 172) and the examples provided by the researcher can be subjected to reintepretation.

The techniques discussed above as well as the importance of the research report were kept in mind throughout the analysis and writing processes. In addition, the quality of the analysis was monitored by relying on a critical discussion of "non-analysis" provided by Antaki et al. (2003). They present the most common shortcomings encountered in discourse analytic work in their field (social psychology). These are now briefly defined and their relevance for the present study discussed.

The first out of the six analytical shortcomings is providing a *summary of findings* without paying much attention to the participants' language. By resorting to mere summary, the researcher uses his/her own words instead of the participants' language and much detail can be lost in the process. In order to avoid this, each example provided for the present study was analysed in detail and only the teacher/student roles were summarized. However, this too, was done by sticking to the participants' language. The second analytical shortcoming is *taking sides*. This could be done, for example, by providing extensive quotes to support a particular view while leaving contrasting examples out (Antaki et al. 2003). In order to avoid this, special attention was paid to selecting and analysing the sample passages. Taking sides might have taken place when presenting the findings of the terror repertoire, for example; it could have been easy to feel sorry for the students and present them as victims. However, their language was not interpreted in a straightforward manner as the truth of events. Instead, the interpretation

acknowledged that the role of a victim might have been constructed by exaggerating the descriptions of teachers by using nouns suitable to horror stories, to achieve a particular effect rather than reflecting something existing beyond the text.

The third analytical shortcoming is *over and isolated quotation*. Over quoting means providing a number of quotes but making little effort to go beyond the text and analyse them in detail. Isolated quotation, on the other hand, means leaving quotes to stand on their own and expecting the readers to see what the researcher is seeing. In order to avoid over and isolated quotation, each example was analysed in detail and none was left to "speak for itself" (Antaki et al. 2003). The risk of the fourth analytical shortcoming, namely *circular discovery*, is high when the study aims at uncovering patterns of understanding. Interpretative repertoires are such patterns, and therefore the fourth analytical shortcoming introduced by Antaki et al. (2003) was of special interest to the present study. Circular discovery means claiming, for instance, that participants use similar linguistic resources or word choices because they are drawing on the same interpretative repertoire. In order to avoid this, each example was described separately and its key features were made explicit in the analysis.

The fifth analytical shortcoming is *false survey*. It basically means over-generalizing one's findings to cover all members of the geographical/social category. In the case of the present study, the findings would be generalized to cover university students of English or successful language learners. In order to avoid false survey, it was emphasized that the findings of discourse analytic work are always specific and restricted to the sample in question. The generalizations drawn therefore concerned strictly the data of the present study. The final analytical shortcoming is *spotting features*. Spotting different linguistic and rhetorical features is important, but not enough. The researcher should examine what is achieved by their use in the particular context in which they are spotted (Antaki et al. 2003). In order to avoid mere spotting of features the rhetorical devices identified in the course of the analysis, for example, were always examined in relation to the sample passage in question.

To conclude the discussion on validation procedures, one more important principle is discussed. Namely, it is important for the researcher to become sensitive to the fact that while writing the research report, he/she, too, is creating a text with consequences and is thus not immune to the principles he/she is putting into practice in the study (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 3). In other words, the researcher's own language is constructing a version of the world, too (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 182). Keeping this

in mind is important, because the researcher might unconsciously be advocating conventional ways of looking at the world, reinforcing old categories and ways of understanding (Suoninen 1993a).

8   CONCLUSION

The present study aimed at examining memories of teachers from a fresh perspective. In past research, the topic has been approached mainly by means of content or metaphor analyses. In order to ask new questions, discourse analysis was applied to the analysis of autobiographical data aiming at arriving at a deeper understanding on *how* memories of English teachers were constructed by university students. The second research question was what the consequences of certain ways of writing about former English teachers were to teacher and student roles. Numerous readings and re-readings of memories of teachers found in 50 language learning autobiographies written by university students of English produced a total of seven interpretative repertoires, which was the analytical unit of the study.

The interpretative repertoires. Each interpretative repertoire made it possible to characterize the roles of teachers and students from a different angle. Depending on which repertoire the student adopted he/she was able to characterize the teacher differently and at the same time portray him/herself in a particular way. These roles are now briefly summarized.

The first three repertoires taken for a closer examination were all used solely to construct teachers in a negative way. The terror repertoire enabled the student to put him/herself in the position of a victim by emphasizing the mean nature of a powerful and mean authority figure. The routine repertoire, by contrast, made it possible for the student to criticize the teacher by portraying him/her as someone who did not develop over time but remained the same over years and him/herself as a frustrated learner. The incompetence repertoire, in its turn, enabled the student to criticize English teachers for their lack of (language) expertise. The teacher was assigned the role of someone who did not meet the student's needs and as a consequence, the student took on an active role emphasizing what he/she would have needed, on the one hand, and what alternative routes he/she was forced to take to learning, on the other.

Three repertoires could be used to construct the teacher both positively as well as negatively. By using the progress repertoire students seemed to be able to construct language learning as a linear process the speed and efficiency of which were controlled by the teacher. The teacher could be positively and negatively in control of the progress made in class, leaving the student fairly dependent on him/her: the teacher also had the power to slow the students down. The responsibility repertoire, by contrast, was used to manage issues of responsibility. It enabled students to make the teacher partly or entirely responsible for their own enthusiasm, lack of motivation or learning outcomes, for instance, minimizing their own role in the process. The teacher-student relationship unfolded as a one-way relationship where the teacher might or might not influence the student, but the student did not influence the teacher. It was also possible for the student to provide both positive and negative evaluations of the teacher from the expert role provided for him/her by the evaluation repertoire. More on this follows below.

The last two repertoires had perhaps the most wide-reaching consequences for the teacher and student roles. The evaluation repertoire, already referred to above, shifted power relations, inversing the traditional roles of teachers and students. In other words, the teacher became the one who was being evaluated and the student the one who got to evaluate. The evaluation took place from the role of a novice expert and the use of this repertoire enabled the student to give a knowledgeable image of him/herself in the academic context. The off-stage repertoire, in its turn, differed greatly from all the other repertoires outlined above. Namely, its main focus was strongly on the student him/herself. The off-stage repertoire made it possible for the student to give the idea about him/herself as a good language learner by referring to the teachers' sayings and doings. The teacher's goodness did not seem to constitute a major issue: he/she seemed to be constructed as a professional English teacher, a member of a social category (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 121), capable of giving a positive evaluation of the student.

Insights. I set out to examine memories of teachers as discursive constructions. However, adopting this perspective enabled me to arrive at a similar conclusion with Uitto (2003: 112). She noted that when her subjects wrote about their former teachers they did so in relation to themselves and their feelings. In other words, the students were always present in their own memories of teachers. Perhaps this can be explained by Salo's (2005: 44) observation of reminiscing about former teachers. Accordingly, reminiscing about former teachers is like stepping back into the teacher-student relationship, only this time having the power to speak up. Either way, the students'

selves were intertwined with their teachers in the data of the present study, too. This aspect of the data reflects one of the principles of discourse analysis, namely, that the construction of selves does not take place only when one talks explicitly about oneself, but also *when one talks about something else* (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 111). As a consequence, we create images of ourselves even when we talk or write about other people. To accommodate the presence of the students' selves in the data, the research questions of the present study were modified and the research focus refined as described in section 5.1. It can be claimed, that without doing this and focusing solely on teachers as the intention was, an important aspect of the data would have been missed.

Another observation reflects the findings of Suoninen (1993b) who studied the ways in which a stay-at-home mother talked about family life. Suoninen found that she resorted to multiple interpretative repertoires while talking about the single topic creating widely differing and contrasting identities for herself in the process. Similarly, the findings of the present study indicate that it was possible for students to characterize *a single teacher* and his/her teaching by drawing on several interpretative repertoires creating widely differing and contrasting roles for themselves. For example, by characterizing a teacher by resorting to the evaluation, routine, terror and responsibility repertoires[7], the student takes on the roles of an expert capable of evaluating the teacher's practices, of a frustrated learner dominated by the teacher's routine and of a victim that gets the readers' sympathy. In addition, the student is able to make the teacher partly accountable for something, freeing him/herself from the responsibility. He/she can thus be both in a stronger position in relation to the teacher (e.g. the evaluation repertoire) as well as in a weaker one (e.g. the routine repertoire) *within the same account*. The roles that teachers and students take on change as the student moves from one repertoire to another, and the teacher-student relationships unfolds thus as a complex issue.

One more observation was made in the course of the analysis. Although the data consisted of descriptions of former teachers written in retrospect, not many of the interpretative repertoires identified could be clearly linked to reminiscing. In other words, many of them could well be used to talk or write about one's present teachers. One could easily construct a teacher as a terrible, mean person by resorting to the terror repertoire or complain how unchanging his/her lessons are by using the routine

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[7] The memory that was constructed by drawing on all these repertoires was discussed in section 6.9, too. Parts of it have been analysed as examples (14), (20), (26) and (29).

repertoire. It could also be possible to use the off-stage repertoire to highlight one's own skills by describing the teacher's actions. Perhaps the only repertoire that stands out in this respect is the evaluation repertoire. Its use is based on the dynamics between experts and novice experts, teachers and university students studying the language their former teachers taught, and within it distinctions between 'then' and 'now' are often made and the chronology of the life story interrupted. It is possible, therefore, that the findings of the present study do not describe solely the ways in which people reminisce about their former teachers, but they could also reveal something about how students write (or talk) about their present teachers, too. However, whether the interpretative repertoires apply to such contexts and in general to other contexts remains to be seen because discourse analysis is, as has been noted, *highly context-sensitive*.

Reflection. Next, the strengths and limitations of the present study are discussed. In addition, some suggestions for future research are made.

Strenghts. First of all, the present study managed to successfully combine the study of memories using narrative data with a suitable method that was sensitive to the cultural, interpretative nature of autobiographies (Pavlenko 2007) and to the particular character of memories (Huotelin 1996). By viewing memories and language learning autobiographies as discursive constructions, the issue of truth-value was resolved: the focus was strictly on language (Huotelin 1996). The concepts of 'remembering' and 'memory' were incorporated into the theoretical framework. In other words, remembering was problematized (Saarenheimo 1991) and it was seen as the primary condition behind the production of autobiographical data (Huotelin 1996). Remembering (Kemppainen 2001) and writing language learning autobiographies (Pavlenko 2007) were both seen as cultural phenomena, which was in line with the analytical unit of the study, the interpretative repertoire that also has its roots in the culture (Edley 2001). In other words, the complex nature of the data was taken into consideration and no questionable shortcuts were taken in their interpretation (Pavlenko 2007).

Secondly, using language learning autobiographies as data turned out to be a good way to collect memories of teachers. Memories occurred quite naturally in the course of the stories without having been explicitly drawn attention to. The students could decide when and what to write about their former teachers. The descriptions varied both in length and content, which suited this type of discourse analysis that sets out to examine language variation.

Thirdly, combining the search for interpretative repertoires with the rhetorical devices (Potter 1996) worked well. The identification of the interpretative repertoires made it possible to recognize similarities and differences between and within memories of teachers and the rhetorical devices enabled to take into consideration the descriptive nature of the data. They were made explicit in the analysis where appropriate and in this way the analysis got deepened. In other words, examining language variation seemed to suit the study of memories of teachers. The fact that similarities were spotted reinforces the idea that talking about teaching and teachers is cultural in nature.

Finally, the criteria for validating the study were discussed and made explicit (see section 7.2). This was important because, there is a lack of agreed criteria of evaluation of discourse analytic work, which means that each researcher "has to present arguments for the value of each particular study" (Taylor 2001b: 323). Furthermore, as previously noted, discourse analysis cannot be evaluated and validated using traditional criteria (e.g. replication).

Limitations. The problems of the present study will now be taken for a closer examination. First of all, the present study took advantage of memories of teachers born in the context of language learning autobiographies. However, although the particular nature of narrative data was taken into consideration as discussed above, the ties between the memories and their original context were not explored in great detail. In other words, the consequences, functions, of different interpretative repertoires were not examined more broadly in relation to the story in which they originated. However, this need not be entirely problematic. A single study cannot cover all interesting aspects of the data (Suoninen 1993a). The present study focused rather on uncovering the similarities and differences between memories of teachers that appeared in different language learning autobiographies and the *roles* the repertoires provided teachers and students with. Therefore, examining what broader functions memories of teachers achieve in narrative data might be a suggestion for future studies.

Secondly, discursive research is living a period of transition. Old concepts, including interpretative repertoires, are being re-evaluated and new directions pointed out. A critical discussion of the state of discursive research is provided by Wiggings and Hepburn (2007). They do acknowledge that interpretative repertoires capture the idea of complex, historically developed organisations of ideas that can be identified in the data, and that at the same time they are flexible enough to be reworked in different practices and contexts. However, they also note that the concept fails to accommodate the

complexity of human conduct. The focus of the present study was not to cover the complexity of human conduct. Instead, it was the first attempt to study memories of teachers using interpretative repertoires as the unit of analysis. The aim was therefore to get an initial idea of the possible ways in which former teachers are constructed in discourse and the concept enabled to reach this goal.

Another aspect criticized by Wiggings and Hepburn (2007) is data collection. Most discursive researchers rely on interview data, although, for example, language learning autobiographies have been used successfully in the field of EFL (Heikkinen 1999, Isomöttönen 2003, Kalaja 2006). According to Wiggings and Hepburn, however, interview data might fail to capture people's actual language use since interviews are always situations set up by the researcher. Therefore, they encourage discursive researchers to look into the possibilities of naturalistic data, in other words, people in everyday situations whose language use would be recorded as well as transcribed. When using written data, as was the case with the present study, the concept of naturalistic data becomes somewhat complicated. People rarely write spontaneously or at least writing can be considered less spontaneous than talk. However, the fact that the data for the present study were collected in an actual context, a course in the university, makes the language learning autobiographies *authentic as course assignments*. Such assignments are written for specific purposes to a specific audience (e.g. teachers), and these issues are reflected in the style and form of writing. Furthermore, the memories of teachers were not elicited directly: they were one of the many other topics students could address and they had a full freedom to decide which points to stress in their stories. They could write about their former teacher when and if they felt it was necessary. In fact, not all language learning autobiographies included memories of teachers. It is possible, therefore, to argue that the data of the present study had an aspect of 'naturalistic' in them; writing was the consequence of a course assignment in the university.

Suggestions for further research. Memories of teachers have not been studied previously from the discursive perspective. Therefore, there is plenty of room for future studies on the topic using this approach. This idea is further strengthened by the fact that the ways in which the teachers were constructed in the data of the present study were extremely varied. Several paths had to be left unexplored because, although it was possible to see similarities between various accounts and realize that there was something there, this particular set of data did not allow examining them further. Furthermore, each discursive study is a researcher's interpretation of the phenomenon

(Taylor 2001a) and therefore it might well be possible to analyse even the data of the present study differently. Discourse analysis is a highly context-sensitive approach, which means each set of data provides possibilities for different interpretations.

It would also be interesting to study the memories of English teachers of a less successful group of students. The participants of the present study being advanced learners of English who studied at university was reflected in many of the memories. This feature was the most salient in the off-stage repertoire, the emphasis of which was to portray the student as a good language learner. Such accounts, and consequently the off-stage repertoire, would surely be absent in the memories of less successful learners. Another possible avenue to explore might be using spoken rather than written data to uncover ways of reminiscing about former teachers.

The findings of the present study cannot be generalized to cover the ways in which all successful learners reminisce about their English teachers (see Antaki et. al 2003). Instead, the findings offer an illustration of how *one group of advanced English learners* wrote about their former teachers and *an interpretation* of these accounts. However, the present study does add to our understanding on the topic of memories of teachers. It also made its contribution to discursive research on the phenomena of EFL. The findings might be of interest to present and future teachers in specific and to anyone in general. After all, we all have our own, personal memories of teachers.

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APPENDIX A - Instructions for the writing of the autobiography

TUTKIMUSPROJEKTI "Noviisista ekspertiksi"
Kielten laitos / englanti, SOLKI ja OKL 2005-6

Kerro tarinasi englannin kielen oppijana

Olet opiskellut englantia yliopistolla jo jonkin aikaa. Nyt on hyvä aika pysähtyä ja miettiä elämääsi, menneisyyttä, nykyisyyttä ja tulevia aikoja, kielten oppijan/opiskelijan roolissasi.

Kerro tarinasi englannin kielen oppijana: aloita ensikontaktistasi ja jatka kertomalla englannin kielen oppimiskokemuksistasi peruskoulusta yliopistoon – ja koulun ulkopuolella. Tarinan tulee perustua omiin kokemuksiisi ja näkemyksiisi, ja sinä olet tarinan päähenkilö. Tee tarinastasi kronologisesti etenevä, ajatuksellisesti yhtenäinen. (Lisää ohjeita seuraavalla sivulla.)

Kirjoita rehellisesti ja avoimesti. Anna asioista havainnollisia esimerkkejä. Kirjoita äidinkielelläsi, omalla tyylilläsi ja äänelläsi. Lauseiden ei tarvitse olla täydellisiä eikä pilkutuksesta tarvitse olla huolissaan. Voit käyttää englanninkielisiä sanoja tai sanontoja, *no problem*. Kirjoitat elämäkerran osana englannin kielen kurssia; sitä ei sellaisenaan kuitenkaan arvostella.

Kirjoita noin **5-10 A4-sivua** (marginaalit n. 2,5 cm, fonttikoko 12, riviväli 2), käytä mieluiten Word-ohjelmaa (tai rtf).

Aineistoa käytetään opetus- ja tutkimustarkoituksiin ja sitä käsitellään nimettömästi ja luottamuksellisesti.

Aikataulu:

- Tarinan 1. versio: tulosta teksti Opi oppimaan vieraita kieliä -kurssin tunnille viikolla ____.
- Tarinan täydennetty ja viimeistelty versio: tallenna elämäkertasi muodossa etunimi.sukunimi ja lähetä se liitetiedostona sähköpostiosoitteeseen noviisistaekspertiksi@suomi24.fi viikolla _____. Laita viestisi aiheeksi vielä toistamiseen etu- ja sukunimesi.

Tarinassasi voit kertoa mm. seuraavista seikoista, sikäli kun katsot ne **englannin kielen oppimisesi** kannalta tärkeiksi (sinun ei siis tarvitse vastata kaikkiin kysymyksiin). Muista vielä **otsikoida** tarinasi ja antaa nimesi.

- Kerro englannin kielen oppimisestasi lapsena ja peruskouluikäisenä

  Mitkä ovat ensikokemuksesi englannin kielestä (mahdollisesti jo ennen kouluaikoja)? Millaista oli opiskella englantia peruskoulun ala- ja yläasteella? Miten sen koit? Mitä opit? Millaisena koit englannin kielen opettajasi, kurssikaverit, luokan/kurssien ilmapiirin? Millaisena koit kurssikirjat, työkirjat, kieliopin? Mitä odotit englannin opiskelulta peruskoulussa? Vastasiko opetus odotuksiasi? Kerro yksityiskohtaisesti joistain niin myönteisistä kuin kielteisistä oppimiskokemuksistasi peruskouluajalta. Mikä oli sinulle helppoa, mikä vaikeaa? Kenen oli vastuu oppimisestasi? Millainen oli englannin kielitaitosi peruskoulun päättyessä? Olitko peruskoulussa mielestäsi hyvä oppilas englannin kielessä, miksi?

- Kerro englannin kielen oppimisestasi lukioikäisenä

  Millaista oli opiskella englantia lukiossa? Miten sen koit? Mitä opit? Millaisena koit englannin kielen opettajasi, kurssikaverit, kurssien ilmapiirin? Millaisena koit kurssikirjat, työkirjat, kieliopin? Mitä odotit englannin opiskelulta tässä vaiheessa? Vastasiko opetus odotuksiasi? Kerro yksityiskohtaisesti joistain niin myönteisistä kuin kielteisistä oppimiskokemuksistasi lukiossa. Mikä oli sinulle helppoa, mikä vaikeaa? Kenen oli vastuu oppimisestasi? Millainen oli englannin kielitaitosi ylioppilaaksi tullessasi? Olitko lukiossa mielestäsi hyvä oppilas englannin kielessä, miksi? Millaista oli englannin kielen opiskelu verrattuna muihin kieliin, entä muihin lukuaineisiin?

  Oletko muutoin kouluaikanasi harrastanut/käyttänyt kieltä? Mihin? Ollut vaihto-oppilaana, piikomassa, kielikurssilla, interreilannut, …? Kerro näistä tarkemmin englannin kielen oppimisen kannalta.

- Kerro englannin kielen oppimisestasi lukion jälkeen – ja nyt yliopistolla

  Miten/miksi päädyit opiskelemaan englantia yliopistolla? Millaista englannin opiskelu on yliopistolla ollut verrattuna peruskoulu- ja lukioaikoihin, ja miten olet kokenut sen? Mitä olet toistaiseksi oppinut? Miten? Millainen on englannin kielen taitosi nyt – verrattuna äidinkieleesi, muihin osaamiisi kieliin, syntyperäisiin kielen taitajiin? Mikä sinusta tulee isona: kieltenopettajako vai jotain muuta? Miten englannin kielen opiskelu liittyy ammattihaaveisiisi? Mitkä ovat nyt tavoitteesi englannin kielen opiskelun osalta? Mitä englannin kieli merkitsee sinulle itsellesi: onko se itseisarvo vai väline?

  Aivan lopuksi: leikitellään ajatuksella, että kaikki toiveesi englannin kielen opinnoissasi toteutuisivat, mitä ne olisivat?

Elämäkertasi *loppuun* kirjoita vielä: Aineistoa saa käyttää nimettömänä tutkimustarkoituksiin *tai* Aineistoa ei saa käyttää tutkimustarkoituksiin.

APPENDIX B - English translations of sample passages

(1) For the last two years of the elementary school I went to (NAME OF SCHOOL) where there was a person who can, it's a wonder, spend time within sight of children to teach English. Fits of rage and original punishments to "naughty" pupils probably left little scars in the souls of several little people. Learning was still pleasant and the sociopath teacher might have even encouraged some pupils to better achievements. (27M)

(2) The actual language study started in the third grade under the lead of scary (FEMALE TEACHER'S NAME). I had heard scary things about (TEACHER'S NAME) and initially hesitated about attending the lesson. (TEACHER'S NAME) had apparently once lifted a boy up the wall by the collar… I got to sigh with relief in the first lesson, because (TEACHER'S NAME) wasn't so scary after all, just a little strict and she said she didn't put up with any messing around. (39F)

(3) I remember best how horror stiffened my limbs when I stepped into the classroom and saw the bitch standing behind the teacher's desk. Knowing that the person in question was going to teach me English – and almost all other subjects for that matter – was nearly terrible enough to make my blood flow go into a halt (…) But, oh my, it was good old (FEMALE TEACHER'S NAME) standing behind the desk, smiling with a simper. (1F)

(4) (TEACHER'S NAME) had taught the so-called "upper class" pupils, 4th-6th graders, in my previous school and her reputation as a nasty and repulsive person overall was nearly legendary. Naturally, the propaganda of the great and wise had hit me hard. My preconceptions towards (TEACHER'S NAME) were great. And so it went that all of us third-grade sweethearts ended up hating (TEACHER'S NAME) unanimously. (1F)

(5) The teacher in the upper levels was a young woman just out of university whom I liked a lot. In upper secondary school things were different. Our teacher was a woman close to the retiring age who was the least liked teacher in our entire upper secondary school. (13F)

(6) The woman had a wild reputation, she was considered a little cranky, aged and everything but fond of children, but my experiences of her were not bad. (24F)

(7) Like I said, I didn't have problems because I knew "everything" and was excused even for being late, but I remember it wasn't nice when the teacher was brawling at the class for the results of the word quizzes. (32F)

(8) She was very efficient at her job, but at the same time an extremely unpleasant person. I was left in peace because I was the top student, but during the English lessons the teacher managed to make even the upper level aged boys cry, which in my opinion is an almost impossible achievement. (42F)

(9) Fortunately, I did not happen to make big mistakes, so I stayed away from his/her teeth. (4F)

(10) No one in my brother's class failed [the matriculation exam], which probably only annoyed the teacher… (…) And it mainly felt like the teacher was enjoying none of us being able to answer perfectly. (13F)

(11) She was brilliantly, waspishly sarcastic and therefore taunted her students nearly constantly. But she never meant anything bad by it. It was genuine, pure sarcasm, witty irony for the sake of humour only, not in order to hurt anyone. (1F)

(12) It was distressing to attend lessons because one knew that they always followed the same pattern. (13F)

(13) The entire time that was left of the upper levels went on the same track when it came to English. When the tape finished, it was rewound and played again. (48M)

(14) During the lesson we followed textbooks, studied vocabulary and grammar, and that's about it. (33F)

(15) "Let's make a round," (TEACHER'S SURNAME) said and homework was checked row by row, desk by desk and pupil by pupil. (26F)

(16) One teacher was stuck in his/her patterns, gave solely negative feedback and kept a long distance to the students. His/her teaching style was stuck and he/she never tried anything new. (26F)

(17) I remember that we had a teacher who most certainly did not use interesting and variable teaching methods, but we checked homework and studied new things off the OHP every time. (15F)

(18) He/she demanded that we spoke British English and wouldn't say "wanna" or "yeah". He/she didn't bear changes in the use of English anyway. (36F)

(19) Our new teacher turned out to be a very old-fashioned case who had not strayed from the familiar pattern for the last thirty years. So, after the first lesson we knew how the rest of the year and the comprehensive school were going to be. (48M)

(20) I had two English teachers, one was young and the other considerably older, but their teaching styles were fairly similar. The lessons were quite traditional in nature. (31M)

(21) She often brought so-called authentic material into class, e.g. small souvenirs or postcards. (6F)

(22) The teacher in upper secondary school took more advantage of the so-called alternative learning styles, although neither him/her did it that much. (25F)

(23) No experimental teaching methods were used in our class. (31M)

(24) In comprehensive school, back in my days, there was still an idea dominant at least among teachers that people (girls and boys) can be divided into those good at maths and those good at languages. The idea appeared numerous times in teaching (…) It is actually scary, that teacher's ideological attitudes have such a big influence on the learning process. (42F)

(25) The ways in which we were learning this world language were in my opinion despicably lazy even then, not to mention now. By lazy I mean the teacher doing very little in order to help students learn most effectively or at least like being in class. (48M)

(26) Otherwise the responsibility for learning English was to an extent the teacher's in that one didn't really practice the language outside school and one wasn't necessarily able to find out more about unclear points on one's own. In addition, one wasn't able to demand a lot from teaching and its quality. (46F)

(27) In my opinion he/she could not take into consideration students with differing abilities either by for example dividing group work accordingly or by giving extra work etc. On the other hand it feels he/she probably did his/her best with the resources that were at disposal. I started taking studying more critically in the upper levels. (29F)

(28) He/she started using some English in his/her teaching already, but there was such little talk that it was not of much use. (48M)

(29) I remember we had a teacher who most certainly did not use interesting and variable forms of teaching, but we checked homework and studied new things off the OHP every time. (15F)

(30) On the other had the teacher was stuck in his/her ways and patterns, didn't pronounce English well and incorporated very few oral activities into the lessons. (7F)

(31) Throughout the entire time I have been studying languages, both in the elementary school and the upper levels as well as in upper secondary school I have been wondering why haven't teachers, apart from the German teacher in the upper secondary school, spoken the target language more. I study to become a teacher and now we have been discussing different theories of language learning. According to a theory, a foreign language should be learnt through acquisition, in meaningful interaction with others. Grammar should only be taught to enhance what has already been learnt. However, now that I think about my language learning history, grammar points and such have been dedicated more time over everything else and because of teaching focusing on the matriculation examination, oral practice has not really been given much time. (25F)

(32) He/she demanded very much from his/her students, but I think he/she was quite efficient because of this. Though weaker students could fall off the carriage. (3F)

(33) Precisely when it came to the preferred teacher, the teaching matched the expectations and hopes to the extent I did not feel chained. (27M)

(34) When the lesson does not proceed, you don't have the energy to sit there. I remember to have waded through one of her courses, but during it I decided I wouldn't come to any other. (39F)

(35) Although we went through things following a seemingly strict course curriculum there was always time to examine isolated points. The teacher's associations on whatever word lead to the grouping of synonyms on the blackboard, stories about the teacher's trips to Britain or about a British friend of hers and her clumsy spelling. (47F)

(36) My first teacher in the upper levels was quite a nice and warm person, but his/her lessons "meandered" too much and he/she failed to maintain discipline in class, which resulted in general restlessness and slowing down in the curriculum. Luckily my own input helped me to proceed in language learning at this stage, too. (31M)

(37) The lessons of the latter were almost upper secondary school level when it came to reading and listening comprehension exercises, oral practice and different tests. For the first time I felt I was learning a lot simply by being in the lessons. (31M)

(38) His/her lessons were lounging lessons the best part of which were compositions (…) In my opinion, I learnt most English in the entire upper secondary school in the lessons of a notably demanding teacher. (40M)

(39) I remember those lessons were very frustrating. We could repeat some two words for half an hour because the teacher had come up with kitten being said kitten and bunny being said bunny. In his/her opinion, the words were so funny that we pronounced them together and in turns. Sigh. Meanwhile the other English group was full of considerably more advanced experts of English. (11F)

(40) There he/she was slurring the sound 'the', which I naturally mastered quite well, for an hour and I remember wondering why one sound needed to be practiced for such a long time. The r-sound, which I knew in my sleep, needed the same practice. (28F)

(41) In grades eight and nine the teaching pace became too slow. The same things that I knew in my sleep were rolled around for far too long. It was frustrating when I already knew it by heart and was always ahead in the exercises. I would have wanted to learn more and new things. (19F)

(42) Of course the teacher and the group influenced studying. (33F)

(43) In the upper secondary school it was possible for the first time to choose the teacher whose courses to take and this, too, believe it or not, had a big impact on learning. (22F)

(44) English studies started very positively because the teacher was very professional, sociable and got along extremely well with her students. The teacher's mere attitude helped me to remember the faith that had been hiding away from my searching gaze for three years already. (48M)

(45) She is the funniest teacher I have ever had. I think this factor had partly to do with the fact that suddenly my enthusiasm towards English jumped high up and sat down at the edge of a cloud. (1F)

(46) When I chose courses of a different teacher, I learnt considerably better again. (8F)

(47) In the last grade of the elementary school, as the teacher changed again, my enthusiasm for studying went temporarily down, because the former nice teacher going away was a disappointment. But after some time this new teacher, too, turned out to be quite nice, which enabled the success to continue. (44F)

(48) I don't know whether it had an effect on my learning, because I barely managed to get a nine in the course test. For my perfectionist character it was no good performance! (…) Little by little the relationship to the teacher became easier and studying became normalized. (…) I got a ten of all the rest of the courses, so the grade nine of the fourth course was in the end only a small setback. (30F)

(49) Our teacher was quite nice, maybe he/she did have some trouble to keep our group under control every now and again, because we were quite a restless group. But it didn't bother me or my English studies, I was still good and talented in it. (5F)

(50) I have always liked going to school, therefore teachers or other students have never bothered me or influenced my opinions on learning. I have always liked English teachers especially although the others badmouthed the teacher in the upper levels from time to time. Positive attitude towards the subject may have influenced the opinion of the teacher positively, too. (49F)

(51) The most unusual experience that has remained in my mind from the time in the elementary school is when I knew a Finnish word in English, but the teacher did not know it. He/she also suspected that I was wrong, but having checked the dictionary he/she had to admit I had been completely right. (12F)

(52) The teacher in the upper levels was originally from England, and had funnily enough been my teacher in the play school, and he/she was able to raise the bar if the topic was too easy for us, and we never found ourselves in the unfortunate situation where half of the class knows the language better than the teacher. I have heard it to have happened. (10M)

(53) We did exercises from the OHP, but didn't get justifications for why something was wrong and something was right. The teacher didn't therefore master the forms and rules of the language, but explained things that we could have been able to read for ourselves citing the book. (11F)

(54) However, the level of teaching and demands for students got higher in a moment, previous teachers had not had the courage to demand anything because they didn't really know enough. (11F)

(55) (…) English was the weakest link of the upper secondary school. There were two teachers who taught English in the school, and from what I've heard the other one would have been very qualified indeed, but I was taught by a teacher whose strength was Swedish, not English. (24F)

(56) Our age group was divided in two groups, one of which had someone who had even lived in the U.K for quite a while and was efficient and qualified as a teacher. Unfortunately, there were not enough competent English teachers to "go around" for my half of the group. Therefore we got a Swedish teacher to be our teacher. (11F)

(57) If one really wanted to learn something, one had to be very active in one's spare time. (11F)

(58) I had about 5 different English teachers in the elementary school. All but one were quite nice and competent. This one case didn't seem to be that aware of the language and his/her pedagogical skills were insufficient. However, by that time we were big enough to take some responsibility. We started to ask for word quizzes. We also didn't cheat even if he/she might have left us to take the test by ourselves. (46F)

(59) It was a real fortune that I met the boy, because English teaching wasn't very good in my upper secondary school. The teacher was a middle-aged woman who fumbled around. She was extremely kind by her nature, but her way of teaching was confusing. If you asked her a question, she wasn't able to answer. Usually she promised to find out for the next lesson, and then forgot about it. Luckily the textbook offered good exercises. (42F)

(60) (…) I created a text of which I am proud to date. The most vivid memory of studying English in my times of comprehensive school is the moment in which the teacher hands me back that composition and asks: "Are you sure you wrote this by yourself? That you didn't copy it from the internet…". In the teacher's opinion the text was too good and I took it as a compliment. I have conserved the composition as a small memory. (1F)

(61) Our teacher was very supportive towards me – I remember how excited I was when he/she said to my parents at a Christmas party that I was a "real language genius". (9F)

(62) I, too, got a blow, however. Once the teacher made a question about the conditional in the if-clauses. I was, as usual, the only one who had her hand up. The teacher said my name. I opened my mouth. I gave the wrong answer. The teacher's eyes grew wider and she started wagging her tongue: "(STUDENT'S NAME), how could YOU make such an error." I don't know which I was the most ashamed of: my wrong answer or the fact that she had revealed to everyone in the class that I was in a favourite position. (42F)

(63) In school, I was teased by an unbearable shyness. I never had the courage to be active, not even in English lessons. Usually the teacher asked me, however, because he/she knew that I was able to [answer], but it felt mainly awkward. (34F)

(64) I goofed around all the way through it and luckily the teacher that mostly had to do with me understood my twisted ways of expression and saw through them that this dude knows something about the language. Right after the first classroom assignment the teacher asked me if I wanted to take courses as independently as possible. (27M)

(65) What I best remember about her is how during one lesson she asked me whether I had even been to Britain. When I answered no she initially didn't want to believe me, because according to her my pronunciation was too good to have been learnt independently. (1F)

(66) The first English course in upper secondary school turned out to be very interesting, because the teacher was an American woman. She was both empathetic and had a good sense of humour, and we were in the same wavelength. Unfortunately the other students were not and so I got to/had to translate to both the teacher and the students, which gave me more faith in myself. (17F)

(67) I was one of her favourite students because I knew my homework and strived for making something extra and I did not have to be given advice. I always studied for the word quizzes, inflected verbs and asked someone to hear the words. The students who weren't able and who needed guidance in everything didn't really get encouragement from this teacher. Their mistakes were corrected in front of the entire class and the class often came to know their bad test grades. I was always paired up with someone who was good at the language and together we got to 'shine'. (37F)

(68) In the fourth grade we got a lovely surprise from the teacher: everyone who was willing and who had sufficient English skills got to have their own foreign pen pal! This was probably unfair to those who didn't have sufficient language skills (and there were quite many of them at that stage), but the teacher probably wanted to offer more challenges to the few of us who were better than others and wanted to improve our language skills so that they would not come to a halt if the lessons were too easy. And I don't remember that anyone who was bad at English wanted a foreign pen pal anyway. (20F)