

**FRIEND OR FOE?**

**Attitudes to and beliefs about English in Finland  
expressed by  
Finnish as a second language learners**

**Master's thesis  
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<p>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</p> <p>Tutkin pro gradu -työssäni S2-oppijoiden käsityksiä englannin kielen käytöstä ja asemasta Suomessa. Aiemmat tutkimukset englannin kielen käytöstä ja asemasta Suomessa ovat keskittyneet suomalaisten äidinkielenpuhujien käsityksiin. Tämän tutkielman tarkoituksena on selvittää minkälaisia käsityksiä S2-oppijoilla on englannin käytöstä ja asemasta Suomessa sekä heidän omassa elämässään että yleisemmällä tasolla. Lisäksi tutkin S2-oppijoiden asenteita englannin kieltä kohtaan. Tutkimus pyrkii samalla nostamaan esiin S2-oppijoiden käsityksiä englannin kielen mahdollisesta vaikutuksesta suomen kieleen sekä S2-oppimiseen ja -opettamiseen.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen aineisto koostuu sekä kirjallisesta että suullisesta materiaalista. Aineistona tutkimuksessa on kuusi esseetyyppistä kirjoitelmää sekä neljä yksilöhaastattelua. Tutkimukseen osallistui yhteensä kymmenen kansainvälistä yliopiston opiskelijaa eri kieli- ja kotimaataustoineen. Tarkastelin sisällönanalyysin avulla aineistoa.</p> <p>Tutkimukseen osallistuvat S2-oppijat huomauttivat, että heidän englannin kielen käyttönsä on lisääntynyt huomattavasti siitä lähtien, kun he muuttivat Suomeen. Tutkimuksessa selvisi, että englannin kieli on Suomessa vahvasti läsnä S2-oppijoiden arjessa ja erityisesti havaittavissa yliopistomaailmassa. Vaikka S2-oppijoiden mielestä Englanti on valloittanut Suomea, he eivät usko, että englannin kielestä tulee virallinen kolmas kotimainen. Englannin kielen korkea status näkyy S2-oppijoiden mukaan esimerkiksi suomalaisten innossa harrastaa englannin kielen taitoja S2-oppijoiden kanssa. Tutkimus paljasti, että tutkittavat kokivat suomalaisten vastahakoisuuden puhua heidän kanssaan suomea usein haittaavan S2-opiskelua ja opiskelumotivaatiota.</p> <p>Jatkotutkimuksissa on otettava S2-oppijoiden lisäksi huomioon myös S2-opettajat, jotta saadaan enemmän tietoa siitä, mitkä ovat englannin kielen vaikutukset S2-opetukseen.</p> <p>Asiasanat – Keywords</p> <p>Language contact, English language, language learning, beliefs about SLA, language attitudes, metacognitive knowledge, Finnish as a second language learners</p>	
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## 1 ENGLISH = FINLANDS THIRD OFFICIAL? – INTRODUCTION

The popularity of English in Finland cannot be explained by the number of native speakers living in the country, as the English native speakers rank with 12 063 speakers third after the Estonian native speakers (25 096) and are clearly overtaken by the Russian speakers with 51 683 people living constantly in Finland (Tilastokeskus 2010: 2). As highlighted by Leppänen and Nikula (2007: 333–380) a variety of historical, political, economical, social and cultural processes is responsible for the unique role and significant status that the English language has obtained in Finland.

Although Sajavaara (2006: 224) has claimed that Finland is (still) a monolingual country with 92% of the population speaking Finnish as their mother tongue, it has been argued that English is gaining more and more ground, according to Taavitsainen and Pahta (2003: 8), at the expense of Swedish, Finland's second official language. Yet, the use of English (e.g. in professional discourse and higher education) is increasing rapidly not only in Finland, but also in Denmark, Norway and Sweden (Taavitsainen and Pahta 2003: 4). Hoffmann (2000: 2) makes a similar point about the spread of English in Europe:

the presence of and need for English have become so widespread, and access to and provision for it so varied, that it is now possible to talk about 'bilingualism with English' rather than just the use of English as a foreign language. (Hoffmann 2000:2)

Indeed, it seems that English is also in Finland shifting from a foreign language to a second language. Leppänen et al. (2009: 155) point out that this shift is due to the importance of English use in educational, professional and media contexts, as well as the development of information and communication technologies. Leppänen and Nikula (2007: 351) refer to the growing popularity of content education in English, in which English functions as the language of instruction, as one meaningful example.

The new status of English as 'third official language' in Finland has been observed in various research projects. Worth mentioning is the national survey by VARIENG, the Centre of Excellence for the Study of Variation, Contacts and Change in English. The survey was interested especially in the actual use of English in Finland and in the interaction of English with Finnish. Key questions dealt with how English comes

into contact with Finnish and what Finns think about English (for the results of the national survey see Leppänen et al. 2009).

The questions of the national survey by Leppänen et al. (2009) serve also as starting points and guiding lines for my own research. In contrast to the national survey, the subjects of the present study are not Finns but Finnish as a second language (F2)-learners. In this study the attention is thus shifted from the main Finnish population to a more specific group of people speaking Finnish not as their mother tongue but as their a second language.

Leppänen and Nikula (2007: 368) point out that their findings do not involve Finnish society as a whole and call for further research to obtain a broader overview of the sociolinguistic situation in Finland. I agree with Leppänen and Nikula's suggestion as I believe that F2-learners differ significantly from the Finnish majority, because Finns are still a relatively homogenous group due to their small population and to the majority of people speaking Finnish as their first language.

For the present study international university students were selected to represent one specific group of F2-learners, since little or no previous research has been done on the ways how F2-learners perceive the spread of English in Finland, whereas there is a fair amount of research on Finnish learners' beliefs and attitudes towards English as a foreign language (EFL) (for a more general study see Elsinen (2007), who studied learner beliefs of university students in Finland.)

According to Blommaert (2005:14), when analyzing language in society the focus should be on what language use means to its user and therefore the present study investigates F2-learners attitudes to and beliefs about English in Finland. The main research questions concern the subjects' opinions about the use of English in Finland, both on an individual as well as on a general level, and the subjects' view of the status of English in Finland and on a global level. Furthermore, the data will be examined according to the subjects' attitudes to and beliefs about the influence of the English language on the Finnish language. In addition, the study looks at the opinions of the F2-learners that concern implications of the use of English for F2-learning and -teaching as well as for the subjects' learner motivation.

The driving force behind the present study is a personal motivation to raise awareness of the fact that Finland is getting more and more international in terms of its immigrants and their cultures and languages. Furthermore, the study intends to focus on the possible implications that demographic change has on language policy and instruction. The number of immigrants in Finland doubled in 2000-2009 and, at the end of 2009, 3.9 % of the Finnish population named other languages than Finnish, Swedish or Sami as their mother tongue (Tilastokeskus 2010: 2). The significance of F2 is thus getting greater and the increase in the number of F2-learners also means that these language users need to be taken more seriously and deserve more research for a more profound understanding of their needs and potential.

The present study consists of five chapters. The introduction is followed by an overview of former research on learner beliefs and attitudes as well as current research on language attitudes to and beliefs about English in Finland. Furthermore, the second chapter deals with the difficulty of defining the concepts of learner attitudes and learner beliefs. In the third chapter the set-up of this study, which combines oral data, collected in single interviews, with written data, based on short essays, will be described. The fourth chapter presents the analyzed findings of this empirical study. Finally, in the last chapter the main findings of the present study will be discussed with regard to possible implications for the future.

## **2 FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS' ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS - AN OVERVIEW**

### **2.1 Research of learners' attitudes and beliefs**

The following chapter examines former research on learners' beliefs and attitudes. The section 2.1.1 focuses on the origin of learners' attitudes' and beliefs' research in cognitive psychology, which established the concept of metacognitive knowledge, for example Flavell (1977, 1979, 1987) and Wenden (1987, 1998, 1999, 2001) used this concept as their theoretical framework. In section 2.1.2 the focus is on Gardner's social approach (1982) that originated in social psychology.

The next section, section 2.2, gives an overview of the different approaches (the normative, metacognitive and contextual) that have been employed to examine learners' beliefs. Further, this study's approach – the contextual approach – is the focus of section 2.3.

Section 2.4 points to the variety of terms in use that makes a clear definition of beliefs problematic and section 2.4.1 concentrates on the distinction between attitudes and beliefs. Finally, section 2.5 presents current research on language attitudes to and beliefs about English in Finland.

#### **2.1.1 Interdisciplinary research on learners' beliefs and attitudes – Starting from cognitive roots**

According to Bernat and Gvozdenko (2005: 4) the body of research literature on language learning beliefs has grown constantly since the 1970s. Barcelos (2003a: 7) further stresses that, the interest in beliefs about second language acquisition (SLA) has been growing ever since, even though SLA is a quite recent field compared to other fields such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, and education. Bernat and Gvozdenko rightfully argue in their paper for an interdisciplinary approach to beliefs about language learning research as academic fields such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, education and linguistics are not separate unities, but supplementary ones.

In the field of cognitive psychology Flavell (1977, 1979, 1987) has been investigating learner beliefs as components of metacognitive knowledge, as factors or



variables involved in the courses and outcome of the cognitive enterprise. According to Flavell (1977:104), metacognitive skills play an important role in many cognitive activities such as language acquisition. Metacognitive knowledge is defined by Flavell (1977: 105) as the knowledge and beliefs acquired through experience that are stored in long-term memory, and concern the human mind and its operation. More specifically, learner beliefs belong to the subcategory of metacognitive knowledge. Flavell calls this subcategory *person category*:

“The person category encompasses everything that you could come to believe about the nature of yourself and other people as cognitive processors.” (Flavell 1979: 907).

Also Wenden (1987, 1998, 1999, 2001) relies on cognitive psychology as her theoretical framework, employing the so-called metacognitive approach. Wenden (2001: 45) argues that foreign and second language learners’ beliefs have remained unrecognized in the SLA literature, even though most teachers will have encountered their learners’ knowledge and beliefs in action in their classrooms. There is, according to Dufva, Kalaja and Alanen (2007: 129), however, a rising interest in beliefs about language learning as it has been realized that awareness, reflection, and/or metacognitive abilities are crucial in language learning and education. Kalaja and Barcelos (2003a: 1) confirm that the recent interest originates in earlier discussions of “what characterizes good language learners, including such traits as motivation, aptitude, personality, cognitive styles, learning strategies.”

Even though Dufva et al. (2007: 130) agree with Flavell and Wenden on the assumption that beliefs are components of a learner’s metacognitive knowledge, they point out that there are different views on the true nature of beliefs, on the possible influence of beliefs on the language learning process and its outcome as well as the methods to be used to find out about it. These different views provide one explanation for the various definitions of learner beliefs and other terms involved, as highlighted in chapter 2.4.

## **2.1.2 Interdisciplinary research on learners' beliefs and attitudes**

### **– Growing social shoots**

Whereas cognitive psychology has provided a theoretical approach for Flavell's research of learners' beliefs, Gardner's approach of learners' attitudes is grounded in social psychology (Dörnyei 2003: 7). Ellis (1994: 208) stresses that Gardner was one of the first to stress the potential role of language attitudes and their relation to achievements in second language acquisition as well as the crucial role of motivation. According to Gardner (1982: 141) the "major impetus" for research on attitudes and language learning has been however Lambert's theoretical model, in which Lambert (1963) argues that

"the learner's ethnocentric tendencies and his attitudes toward the other group are believed to determine his success in learning the new language. His motivation to learn is thought to be determined by his attitudes and by his orientation toward learning a second language." (Lambert as quoted by Gardner 1982: 141)

Lambert believes that learners' attitudes influence the outcome of their language learning, as they have an effect on the learners' motivation. With regard to the close connection between motivation and SLA, as presented by Lambert, it is most surprising that SLA and second language (L2) motivation have been regarded, according to Dörnyei (2003: 21), as separate research fields. Dörnyei (ibid.) suggests that the different scholarly backgrounds of the researchers are a possible explanation for this separation. More precisely, while social psychologists usually focus on L2 motivation research, linguists then are concerned with SLA research.

Nevertheless, according to Dörnyei (2003: 22), also in the field of learners' attitudes a rising interest accounts for significant positive changes as regards interdisciplinary research, as both fields – psychology and linguistics – have increased their openness for inclusion of factors from the other field. Already at the beginning of the 1980s Giles and Ryan (1982: 216) pointed out that contextual constraints on language attitudes need to be examined more closely in the future. Yet, according to Dörnyei (2003: 21), this integrative approach is not adopted by Ellis (1994) in his extensive work on SLA. Nonetheless, Ellis (1994: 508) declares that SLA research views motivation as a key factor in L2 learning. Ellis (1994: 197) further states that social factors have a profound impact on L2 proficiency as they influence the learning

process and the shaping of learners' attitudes. The present study also regards motivation as an important factor in L2 learning, but further follows an integrative view of language learning with a contextual approach as described in chapter 2.3.

## **2.2 Normative, metacognitive versus contextual**

### **– Approaches to learners' beliefs**

Barcelos (2003a: 11) states that the current main approaches in the field of learners' beliefs are the normative, metacognitive and contextual approach. Kalaja (2003: 87) recognizes only two approaches: the mainstream and the alternative approach. In former work Kalaja (1995: 199) refers to the mainstream approach as the *current approach*, for a brief overview see the table *Review of the current approach to student beliefs and an alternative approach to it* provided by Kalaja (ibid.). Kalaja's own approach has become known also as the discursive approach, belonging to the alternative research, whereas she sees the normative and metacognitive approach as part of the mainstream approach.

In the present study I follow Barcelos's classification of three approaches, as I believe, following Aro (2009: 16), that the naming of the different approaches should illustrate the methodology chosen for the respective study, the definition of beliefs, and how relationship between beliefs and action is perceived. I believe that Barcelos's classification meets these requirements best. Additionally, it is important to note that although the three approaches differ in their view of defining and in methods of studying beliefs, they all suggest according to Barcelos (2003a: 28) that beliefs have an impact on students' approach to language learning as well as on their language learning strategies.

The normative approach is generally associated with its leading figure Horwitz (1987, 1999), who initiated research into beliefs. Horowitz developed the BALLI – Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory –, a (Likert-type) questionnaire. The use of this highly structured questionnaire demonstrated that in the normative approach students' beliefs are considered rather static and stable mental representations and it is thus, according to Kalaja (1995: 193), not possible to study them directly. Furthermore, according to Barcelos (2003a: 11), these mental representations have usually been seen as learners' misconceptions. Consequently, in order to help individual language learners to create more realistic goals, reduce anxiety and develop more effective learning

strategies these misconceptions need to be identified and rectified. As stated by Woods (2003: 202), the primary motive behind normative research on learner beliefs has been indeed teaching-centered, but Horwitz (as quoted by Aro 2009: 17) claims that the goal was to make both teachers and students aware of the(ir) learner beliefs.

Another central pioneer in the field of learner beliefs, Wenden (1987, 1998, 1999, 2001), following Flavell and Wellman, shared the cognitivist view of beliefs as “relatively stable information human thinkers have about their own cognitive processes and those of others” (Flavell and Wellman as quoted by Wenden 1998: 516) and developed an own approach, the metacognitive approach. For her data collection Wenden used semi-structured interviews and self-reports. Her special interest lies in the existence of explicit prescriptive (normative) beliefs that learners have, as well as on learners’ reflections on the beliefs and their significance. One of the strengths of the metacognitive approach, as stated by Bernat and Gvozdenko (2005: 6), lies in its emphasis on learners’ developing awareness of their learning styles, since the awareness of strategies and beliefs possibly leads to an improvement of their overall learning processes. Beliefs are thus seen as good indicators of learners’ autonomy and effectiveness in language learning.

Recently however, especially in the field of social psychology cognitivist approaches to research on beliefs have been criticized as language is seen, according to Kalaja (2003: 91) “as a mirror, reflecting (more or less accurately) what goes on in a person’s mind”. Both the normative and the metacognitive approach have been criticized, as stated by Kalaja (1994: 65), because of their fixation of beliefs as mental entities and the correlating neglect of the social construction of language. More specifically, in both the normative and metacognitive approach beliefs are not, according to Barcelos (2003a: 20), contextualized, which means that the context and its influence are not considered.

Kalaja (1995: 195) states that instead of seeing language as an abstract system the focus has shifted to seeing language as “a medium through which people interact and come to construct versions of the social world.” Kalaja stresses that within an alternative approach students’ beliefs can be seen as socially constructed, emerging from interaction with others, and consequently as non-cognitive and social in nature. Furthermore, in the contextual approach beliefs are indeed considered as dynamic and situated in nature,

which implies that different contexts and experiences have an impact on the emergence and construction beliefs (Dufva et al. 2007: 130).

The aim of the contextual approach is, according to Barcelos (2003a: 20), to achieve a better understanding of beliefs in special contexts. It is therefore characteristic of the contextual approach, that beliefs are viewed as embedded in students' social contexts:

“[...] based upon their previous educational experience, previous (and present) readings about language learning and contact with other people like family, friends, relatives, teacher and so forth.” Barcelos (quoted by Barcelos 2003a: 9).

Context is understood as being constructed by the learners' previous experiences and beliefs. Students' experiences and beliefs are, thus, seen as inseparably linked to their (social) environment. Therefore, I believe that learners' attitudes and beliefs should be studied within a contextual approach.

### **2.3 Context is crucial**

#### **– Towards a dialogical view**

Studies within the contextual approach tend to have diverse theoretical frameworks, ranging, for example, from neo-Vygotskian socio-cultural studies (Alanen 2003) and Bakhtinian work (Dufva 2003) to Deweyan studies (Barcelos 2003b). Furthermore, different data collection is used, for example Hosenfeld's (2003) data consists of personal diary entries. Also different analytical methods are employed, for example Kalaja (2003) uses discourse analysis in her research. Within the contextual approach, the diversity of theoretical frameworks and also the combination of different methods are seen as complementing each other. Nevertheless, all studies within in the contextual approach share the view that, as stated by Barcelos (2003a: 20), “context, understood as learners' constructions of their experiences, is crucial to this type of analysis”. Therefore, I believe it is necessary to study attitudes and beliefs within their contexts.

In this study I follow Kalaja and Barcelos (2003a: 2) in the suggestion that beliefs about SLA are shaped by students' cultural backgrounds and social context, following, therefore, the current contextual approach to learner beliefs. The contextual approach is also adopted with regard to the study of learner attitudes, because, as Ellis

(1994: 198) points out, “these attitudes are likely to reflect the particular social settings in which learners find themselves”.

In the framework of the contextual approach I adopt the Bakhtinian dialogical perspective applied by Dufva (1994, 1995, 1998, 2003, 2006) and Aro (2003, 2006, 2009). Bakhtin (as quoted by Dufva 1998: 88) sees life itself as continuously dialogic. Dufva (1995: 28–29), further, stresses that beliefs therefore cannot be seen as individual but as acquired in social interaction. Individual perception is, thus, always linked to social contexts, since it can only develop in human interaction:

“To live means to participate in dialogue: to ask a question, to heed, to respond, to agree, and so forth. In this dialogue a person participates wholly and throughout his whole life: with his eyes, lips, hands, soul, spirit, with his whole body and deeds”. (Bakhtin as quoted by Dufva 1998: 88)

In the dialogical approach the individual and the surrounding environment are furthermore seen, according to Dufva (1995: 28), to form a systemic unity, since the individual and the social are not seen oppositional as is the case in the cognitive approach that represents Cartesian dualism (Dufva 1995: 32). In the present study I follow the distinction between *cognitive* and *cognitivist* made by Dufva (2003: 131). Dufva adopts for her contextual research the cognitive perspective, which defines beliefs as non-Cartesian cognitive phenomena. In contrast to the Cartesian view beliefs are not seen as static or unchangeable. In the present study I acknowledge the cognitive core of the cognitivist view that knowledge about learning influences, according to Wenden (1998: 515), the learners’ approach to learning and their expectations of the outcome of their efforts

As Aro (2009: 35) clarifies, cognitive functions are, therefore, seen to emerge in the systemic relationship between the individual and his/her environment:

“Everything that pertains to me enters my consciousness, beginning with my name, from the external world through the mouths of others ... from them I receive words, forms, and tonalities...” (Bakhtin as quoted by Aro 2003: 278).

The Bakhtinian dialogical perspective sees knowledge as a constantly changeable entity that needs to be reconstructed in every new social interaction. The individual and social are seen as complementing, instead of contrasting entities.

## **2.4 Beliefs are not attitudes: attitudes are not beliefs**

### **– Problems of definition**

It is not easy to define beliefs, as they are a rather “messy construct” (Pajares as quoted in Barcelos 2003a: 7). Also Barcelos (2003a: 8–9) sees the definition of beliefs about SLA as difficult, considering the variety of terms, which are reflecting the researchers’ different agendas. The following terms are, according to Barcelos (ibid.), used to refer to beliefs: *learner representations, representations, beliefs, metacognitive knowledge and learning culture*. The term metacognitive knowledge is favored by Flavell and also by Wenden (2001: 45), who nevertheless points out that research findings on the metacognitive knowledge of language learners use more frequently the term *beliefs* instead of *metacognitive knowledge*.

Wenden (1987: 103) points out that, even though various terms and definitions are in use, except for Horwitz no one has attempted to identify them in any systematic way. Her statement seems justified regarding the diverse classification that, according to Bernat and Gvozdenko (2005: 3), depends on the theoretical orientations of the researchers. Apart from being a component of metacognitive knowledge, beliefs have been classified also as mini-theories, insights, cultures of learning, learner assumptions, implicit theories, self-constructed representational systems, conceptions of learning, general assumptions hold by students (ibid.).

According to Kalaja and Barcelos (2003a: 1), the numerous terms and definitions in use highlight the growing interest in learner beliefs, while they can also constitute possible stumbling stones on the road to a common understanding of what beliefs are. Freeman (as quoted by Barcelos 2008a: 8) however points to the fact that the variety of labels should not necessarily be seen as negative stating that “the issue is not the pluralism of labels, but the recognition of the phenomenon itself.” Indeed, the phenomenon, in this case the recognition of the various learner attitudes and beliefs, should be in the focus of research, not the terms involved. In order to achieve this condition, terms and definitions should be as clear as possible to avoid confusion.

Attitudes are central concepts of social psychology. According to Krosnick, Judd and Wittebrick (2005: 22), who refer to Allport’s (1935) definition, this centrality originates in the very broad definition stating that attitudes “were whatever internal sets

or predispositions motivated social behavior”. Albarracín, Johnson and Zanna (2005: 4) state, however, that even though definitions and concepts have changed over the years the evaluative aspects of attitudes have always played a major role. In fact, Albarracín et al. (2005: 5) claim that “regardless of the origins of attitudes, the term attitude is reserved for evaluative tendencies.” For the purpose of this study attitudes are, indeed, reduced to their evaluative tendencies. This study follows Eagly and Chaiken’s definition of attitude as “a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular degree of favor or disfavor” (as quoted by Albarracín et al. 2005: 4). This definition can be, according to Albarracín et al. (ibid.) seen as the most conventional and contemporary definition. In addition to their evaluative aspect, attitudes are viewed, in this study, as social constructs, following Prislin and Wood (2005: 697) who state that “all attitudes are social in the sense that they develop, function, and change in reciprocal relation with the social context.”

The interest in the present study is on learners’ attitudes, due to the impact that learners’ attitudes have on the level of L2 proficiency (or in this case also on EFL), as highlighted by Ellis (1994: 198). In the present study positive attitudes are believed to have a positive effect on the learning results as well as on the learners’ motivations and negative attitudes, on the other hand, are seen to be possibly detrimental to learning outcomes and to have a negative impact on learners’ motivation. In addition, the study follows Ellis (ibid.), who declares that the positive attitudes of learners, who experience success, will be reinforced whereas negative attitude will be strengthened by a lack of success.

Ellis identifies the following attitudes towards:

- 1) the target language
- 2) target language speakers
- 3) the target-language culture
- 4) the social value of learning the L2
- 5) particular uses of the target language
- 6) themselves as members of their own culture.



I regard all six types of attitudes as significant and important, but for the purpose of this small-scale study the central focus will be on the attitude types 1 and 5. Firstly, the present study examines learners' attitudes towards the target language, in this case English, and, secondly, the study is interested in the particular use of English in the subjects' life and in Finland in general.

### **2.4.1 Attitudes and beliefs: fuzzy friends?**

#### **– This study's attempt of a clear distinction**

Not only definitions of beliefs or attitudes seem to be to some extent fuzzy, but according to Edwards (as cited by Barcelos 2003a: 20), also the distinction between beliefs and attitudes. For the purpose of this study a clear distinction between beliefs and attitudes is made by using Oskamp's (1991: 12) definition:

“Beliefs are cognitive- thoughts and ideas; whereas attitudes are affective –feelings and emotions.” (Oskamp 1991: 21).

Oskamp's distinction between belief and attitude can be demonstrated by the following example:

I think the language is difficult → belief

I don't like this language → attitude.

In this study I follow Oskamp's distinction as I acknowledge that, in Triandis' words (as quoted by Ellis 1994: 199), “attitudes are cognitive (i.e. are capable of being thought about) and affective (i.e. have feelings and emotions attached to them)”. For the sake of simplification attitude and (dis)like will be seen as interchangeable in the present study.

Following Kalaja and Barcelos (2003a: 1) definition of beliefs being opinions and ideas that learners (and teachers) have about the task of learning a second/ foreign language, the terms opinions, ideas, assumptions and perceptions are also seen as interchangeable. It should be noted, however, that according to Kalaja (1995: 192), it might be problematic to use the terms belief and metacognitive knowledge as synonyms.

In addition, there is also no distinction made between the terms learner beliefs, student beliefs, language learning beliefs or beliefs about SLA. Nevertheless in this study the term learner belief is used, as it appears to be the most established one (Aro 2009: 12).

## **2.5 Current research on language attitudes and beliefs of English in Finland**

From the 1990s onwards learner beliefs and attitudes have also been studied in Finland, for example by Annola and Saarelainen (1994), Dufva, Lähteenmäki and Isoherranen (1996), further by Dufva (1995) and Lähteenmäki (1995). Additionally also teachers' beliefs have been investigated, for research on both language learners' and teachers' beliefs see for example Väisänen (1997). Most of the research of language learners' attitudes and beliefs of English in Finland has focused mostly on university students. Leppänen and Kalaja (1997) did a study on Finnish university freshmen's' beliefs emerging in their personal English learning autobiographies and Rantala (2002) studied university students' beliefs about learning English as a FL (EFL).

To a far smaller extent also high school ('lukio') students' beliefs have been surveyed; for a research study on high school learner beliefs on their English matriculation exam ('ylioppilaskirjoitukset') and their individual performances (whether they are like Mr/Mrs Hard Work, Mr/Mrs Skilled or Mr/Mrs Chance) see Kalaja, Pitkänen-Huhta and Huhta (2003). Additionally also Oksanen (2005) concentrated on student beliefs of high school students.

Kalaja, Duva Alanen (2005: 312) conclude that more research on the learner beliefs in comprehensive school ('perusaste'), especially in classes 7 to 9 (junior high school) and senior high school needs to be done in Finland in the future. Nevertheless, to some extent research concentrating on children's beliefs about EFL has been carried out within the project *Situated Metalinguistic Awareness and Foreign Language Learning*, a longitudinal case study focusing on a group of young Finnish learners of English see Dufva, Alanen and Aro (2003). Within this project 15 elementary school children were interviewed at the age of seven, ten and twelve (Aro 2009: 55). The answers of the young English learners point to the fact that learning English at school is not seen to have a connection with the use of English in the learners' everyday activities such as

playing computer games, but, instead, English is seen primarily as a school subject which involves learning words and grammar (Dufva, Alanen and Aro 2003: 299)

As Kalaja, Dufva and Alanen (2005: 295) state a great range of approaches and methodologies have been employed. A questionnaire study about attitudes towards foreign language in Finland was carried out by Kansikas (2002). The study found out that the majority of the study's high school subjects regarded English as "a language for everything and everyone" (Kansikas 2002: 75). Hyrkstedt (2007) on the other hand employed a discourse-analytic approach in her study (see also Hyrkstedt and Kalaja 1998), which focused on attitudes of college students towards English in Finland, collected in responses written to a fictional letter-to-the-Editor with the title: "Is English our second mother tongue?" In addition, Hyrkstedt (2007: 17–19) refers to two more studies of attitudes towards English and its use in Finland, which were both conducted at the University of Jyväskylä.

To conclude, it needs to be pointed out that there has been a fair share of research in the field of learners' beliefs and attitudes in Finland. Various approaches and methodology as well as characteristics of the subjects (language level, age and academic background) have been combined in the conducted research. Nevertheless, the focus has been almost exclusively on the Finnish native speakers.

### **3 SET-UP OF THE STUDY**

#### **3.1 Aims and research questions**

As little research concerning F2-learners' attitudes to and beliefs about EFL have been carried out so far, this study's theoretical framework combines interdisciplinary insights from cognitive and social psychology as well as SLA research and to some degree motivation research to describe and analyze the beliefs and attitudes of this specific learner group.

For this small-scale case study (see Eskola and Suoranta (1998: 65), who state that in fact all qualitative research studies are case studies) F2-learners were selected as the subjects for the investigation of learners' attitudes to and beliefs about English in Finland to compensate for the lack of previous research on this group of learners. The study aims at presenting qualitative findings based on empirical data collected from F2-learners.

The main research questions of this case study concern how F2-learners perceive the role and use of English in their life. The data will be examined according to the subjects' attitudes to and beliefs about the use and status of English as well as the possible influence it may have on the Finnish language. Further, this study takes a closer look at the subjects' attitudes to and beliefs about implications of the English use for F2-learning, -teaching and the subjects' learner motivation.

The three main analytic questions are divided into subquestions:

How do the subjects perceive the English use

1.1 in their individual daily life in their home country

1.2 in their individual life in Finland

2. How do the subjects perceive the status of English

2.1 in their home country

2.2 in Finland

2.3 globally

3. How do the subjects perceive the influence of English

3.1 on the Finnish language

3.2 on (their) F2-learning and -teaching

3.3 on the subjects' learner motivation

### 3.2 The data

The subjects in this study were asked to report about their experiences concerning English in general as well as in Finland and the possible influence of English on Finnish. Their attitudes and beliefs were collected by questionnaires, short essays and in individual interviews. Written and oral data were further combined as I believe that learner beliefs and attitudes are dynamic and socially constructed concepts that should be, following Kalaja's (2003: 11) suggestion, investigated in "learners' stretchers of talk and pieces of writing".

#### 3.2.1 "Pieces of writing"

The data of this empirical small-scale study were collected from international students of the University of Jyväskylä. The first part of the data used for this study is based on a questionnaire on the subjects' background combined with a short essay (see Appendix 3 for the assignment for the written task in Finnish). The six subjects in the written data collection took part in a *Suomi 5*-course, which is an upper-intermediate F2-course, provided by the language centre of the University of Jyväskylä. The following table provides the essential background information of the participants in the written data collection.

Table 1. Participants in written data collection

code	sex	age	L1	major	academic goal	time spent in Finland
M1	m	32	German	-	MA	3 years
F2	f	25	Russian	Mathematics	PhD	2 years 3 months
F3	f	32	Polish	Pedagogy	PhD	2 years 6 months
F4	f	22	Hungarian	English	BA	3 years 6 months
F5	f	22	Polish	Hungarian	MA	3 months
F6	f	22	Russian	Economics	BA	9 years

As can be seen from Table 1 five of the six participants were female. Even though the participants had hugely differing mother tongue backgrounds, it should be kept in mind that the Suomi 5-course is a B2-level (see Common European Framework of Reference) course that requires a similar level of F2-proficiency of the participants. In addition, there was also great variation in terms of the students' major subjects and the level of their academic achievements. The questionnaires and essay task were handed out in November 2008 and received back in December 2008. The incentives for participation were probably too weak, because only about one third of the tasks were turned in. It was then decided that, due to the unexpectedly small number of participants, the data pool needed to be expanded.

Moreover, new data provided the opportunity for a comparison of two subject groups. The combination of the existing written data with new oral data was seen as the best option to avoid possible restrictions of participants' answers in questionnaires.

### **3.2.2 “Stretches of talk”**

Interviews were seen as the best methodological option to elaborate on issues that have emerged in a tentative analysis of the previous written data, since they provide a high degree of flexibility. The individual interviews with four F2-learners, who had not taken part in the previous data collection, were conducted in the premises of the University of Jyväskylä in January 2009. The interviewees' different culture and language backgrounds were regarded as an important factor for creating a heterogeneous group of F2-leaners. Unlike the subjects involved in the collection of the written data, the interviewed subjects did shared Finnish (as a foreign or second) language as their major subject but did not take part in the same language course. All interviewees belong to the researcher's circle of acquaintances.

Table 2. Participants in interview data collection

code	sex	age	L1	major	academic goal	time spent in Finland
A	f	25	German	Finnish	MA	2 years 6 months
B	f	22	Hungarian	Finnish	BA	2 weeks
C	m	21	Mandarin	Finnish	BA	2 weeks
D	f	-	Ukrainian-Russian	Finnish	-	7 years

Table 2 shows that two of the interviewees, A and D, had already stayed in Finland for over two years and had thus had more experiences about the actual uses of English in Finland. These two interviewees were degree students at the University of Jyväskylä. Interviewee D had already obtained two Master's degrees and interviewee A was currently working on her Master's thesis. The other two interviewees, B and C, had been in Finland for only a couple of days and were taking part in an exchange program at the university level.

Not only the F2 language skills varied greatly among the participants, but also their knowledge and use of English varied a great deal. Only two of the four interviewees had had formal English language instruction over a continuous period of time, starting at school, while the other two had had no, or only a little, formal instruction in English and used English therefore in a rather autodidactic manner. The lack of English language instruction was due to their educational background, B had studied German and T had studied French at school. This aspect was also taken into account when choosing the study's subjects for a comparison of possibly differing beliefs and attitudes between subjects proficient in English and subjects that claimed not to be.

The interviews were conducted either in Finnish or English, according to the subjects' language proficiency. Individual interviews were preferred for privacy protection. The interviews were semi-structured interviews and conducted in a half-structured approach (see Eskola and Suoranta 1998: 86), in which the participants were asked the same questions but had the freedom to answer in their own words, not being restricted to alternative answers as is the case in structured interviews. This approach was chosen to give the interviewees the possibility to express their thoughts and feelings more freely and to influence the progression of the interview.

The language skills of the interviewees had an impact on the length of the interview. In average the interviews took about half an hour. It became clear that an interview conducted in a second/foreign language was a very intense experience and tiring for the interviewees, especially for those with weaker language skills. This can be seen, for instance, in the following citation from interviewee B (Appendix 1, Example 1): *sorry I am getting tired.*

### **3.3 Analytic methods**

The analysis is based on a bottom-up strategy (see Eskola and Suoranta 1998: 19). The inductive approach led to the categorization of the findings into various topics (see Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2000: 173) to create a descriptive overview. For the analysis of this small-scale study, content analysis of the data was chosen as the analytic method (see Toumi and Saarijärvi 2002: 93 ff.). Since the focus was on what kind of beliefs and attitudes the subjects have, rather than on the ways in which they expressed their attitudes and beliefs, the main attention of this study was drawn onto the content instead of the discourse. Another reason for choosing content analysis instead of discourse analysis was the fact that the material analysed was collected from subjects using a foreign or second language, English or Finnish.

It is worth noting that small-scale studies involving in-depth, descriptive and interpretive analysis have their limitations. According to Bernat and Gvozdenko (2005: 7), these limitations are reflected in the selectivity of the data, the degree of interpretive subjectivity, and context-specificity, resulting in a lack of application to broader contexts. As this study involves a fairly small sample, the results are not meant to implicate any generalization. In terms of validity, this study acknowledges that, according to Ellis (1994: 675), different types of data will serve different purposes and thus highlight different aspects as stated by. The scope of this study's data was, therefore, seen as appropriate for the purpose of this study, which intends to provide insights into F2-learners attitudes to and beliefs about English, in order to fill in the gap of missing previous research and to stimulate further research on this topic.



## **4 FRIEND OR FOE?**

### **– ANALYSIS OF ATTITUDES TO AND BELIEFS ABOUT ENGLISH**

The following analysis intends to shed light on the subjects' attitudes to and beliefs about English in Finland. The focus of chapter 4.1 lies on the subjects' use of English. Chapter 4.2 is concerned with their attitudes to and their beliefs about the use of English in Finland. In chapter 4.3 attitudes to and beliefs about the status of English on a global level are looked at, whereas chapter 4.4 examines more specifically the subjects' views on the status of English in Finland. Chapter 4.5 deals with the subjects' attitudes to and beliefs about the influence of English and for views on possible implications of the English use for F2-learning and -teaching see chapter 4.6.

Apart from the interviews with A and C, which were conducted in English, the rest of the data is in Finnish. The interview extracts of the participants B and D as well as all essay extracts of the participants M1, F1, F2, F3, F4, F5 and F6 were therefore translated into English. For the original essay extracts in Finnish see appendix 2. The assignment for the written task in Finnish can be found in Appendix 3. The original interview extracts in Finnish are listed in Appendix 1 and for the interview questions in English see Appendix 4.

#### **4.1 Attitudes to and beliefs about the use of English in the subjects' life**

##### **4.1.1 Subjects' views on their English language use and language learning**

###### **– From classroom to international society**

Out of four interviewees only two – A and C – had had official English language instruction at school over a longer period of time. C stated that he started English learning from the fourth year of his primary school and A confirmed that she learned English in school starting from third grade occasionally and then from fifth grade from grammar school basically onwards up to her last day at school. According to their statements, they did not use English that much in their home countries, that is, Germany in the case of subject A and China in the case of subject C.

*Back then it was still probably a little odd to speak English with your friends and also when I for example told people that I was speaking to my ex-boyfriend in English they were saying: Oh God I could never do that. (Participant A)*

*In China there are only a few chances if you go to take part in International party or something you communicate with foreigners so you can use English but not so much. (Participant C)*

Interestingly, however, English had an important role in their lives, as A for example used it online and C listened to English music being a *music type* and watched *thousands of English movies*. It thus seems that the subjects believe that (formal) language learning and (informal) language application form distinct entities that are not necessarily linked to each other. Language use is therefore seen as strictly divided into formal language instruction and acquisition as well as informal language usage. This double-sided view of language use was shared by the two interviewees who had not had any or only a bit of formal English language instruction.

Even though B and D state that they had never had formal English instruction, in case of B the instruction lasted less than one year (Example 2, Appendix 1), and even though they claim not to be proficient in English (Example 3, Appendix 1) they indeed use English on a quite frequent basis for example online. Interviewee D is able to use English in an autodidactic way as the use of the Internet has helped her to understand simple phrases and write short messages and emails in English (Example 4, Appendix 1). The necessity to understand English in order to be a competent Internet user was emphasized by interviewee C: *language on the internet is English so yeah and I think it's in if you I don't know how to say yeah it's you have to understand English so you can use the internet for most*. This necessity of a basic command of the English language can be seen as one explanation for B's acquisition of a basic English language level. In the course of the conducted interview subject B, who claimed at the beginning of the interview to be non-proficient in English, admitted that she uses English on a daily basis.

In reality subject B's language use is quite multifunctional ranging from listening to music, watching English movies (even though she rather concentrates on the Finnish subtitles), knowing some words and using English online, which is according to B not difficult as it is the same as in Hungarian (Example 5, Appendix 1). In this case subject B refers probably to social networks and portals such as Facebook for example.

B's understatement of her English use became clear during the interview in which the subject used English as a possible resource for understanding a Finnish word that was unknown to her: *influence? ... well say it in English* (Example 6, Appendix 1). This incident makes it clear that especially learner beliefs that are not reflected upon can seem very paradoxical regarding the behaviour of the learner. Furthermore, using English as a resource is an indicator for the active use of English, even though the learner believes that s/he does not learn it. This example highlights the belief of an existing discrepancy between language learning and language using.

Not only did the interviews reveal that the interviewees see language use and learning as distinct from each other, but, further, subjects A's assertions show a strong view on the active-/passiveness of language learning versus language using, which hence influences language proficiency. When she was asked how she would rate her English knowledge or usage A answered as follows:

*nowadays not that high anymore because I'm not really practicing it I'm just I'm of course speaking English with friends of mine or in university when needed if courses taught in English I'm not doing anything my grammar of course reading in English and listening to music or watching movies but there is no active learning anymore.* (Participant A)

Her statement implies that she distinguishes quite sharply between language use, which she sees as a self-evident circumstance, an everyday practice: speaking English with friends, attending courses taught in English, listening to music or watching movies, and active learning to which she refers paradoxically as practising. Active learning however seems to her to be possible only in formal (grammar) instruction and demands practice. Proficiency is an extremely important issue for A as she clearly expresses in the following:

*the English that we are using in everyday life is rather simple so and most of the time you are even talking to foreigners whose level of proficiency is could be worse so it might not immediately help you in your personal language learning.* (Participant A)

Interviewee A's beliefs show that she is a very ambiguous and critical language learner. According to her statements, a language learner has a higher status than a language user. This belief was shared by D, who claims *no I have never studied English* (Example 7, Appendix 1) but adds after being asked whether she uses English even though she has not learnt it that *well because it is daily life I can't do anything about it* (Example 8,

Appendix 1). Subject D adds that if a foreigner speaks Finnish Finns know that s/he has done a lot of work (Example 41, Appendix 1). The challenging learning of Finnish makes it rank above using English, as many Finns know how difficult their language is. For subject D, belittling her English language skills, language learning is relating stronger to her F2-language learner identity in contrast to A, who claims to be a proficient English speaker and does not relate her learner beliefs of English to Finnish.

#### 4.1.2 Subjects' reflections on their English use in Finland

*of course I'm using it much more often nowadays because I have to* (Participant A)

Even though the interviewees held, obviously due to their differing English proficiency, different beliefs about their language use, all four agreed that their use of English has increased notably after they had arrived to Finland. For interviewee A this change is due to becoming *part of the international society: I have to because I'm not only dealing with German native speakers*. Also participants in the written data collection pointed in their essays to the significance of English as the main language of intercultural communication in Finland.

In her essay subject F5 stressed that for her English is an important language of communication with international students, *whose mother tongue is not Hungarian, Finnish or Polish* (Example 1, Appendix 2) and subject F2 uses English with her *non-Finnish colleagues* (Example 2, Appendix 2). All subjects in the written data collection stated in their background information questionnaire that they use English in Finland. Out of six participants all participants use English in their free time, four use English study related and two use English at work. It is interesting that participant F4 stated that even though she majors in English language she mainly uses English in her free time.

Except for one subject in the written data collection all subjects had an unambiguously positive attitude towards their use of English. The positive attitude was, on the one hand, mostly related to their own positive evaluation of their English language skills: *I speak very well English, clearly*. (Participant F5) (Example 3, Appendix 2). On the other hand, this positive attitude, then, resulted in *relaxedness* (Participant F2) (Example 4, Appendix 2) about using English, as for example subject F4 described herself as a very self-confident English user (Example 5, Appendix 2) and

subject M1 thinks it is easy to use because he studied English (Example 6, Appendix 2). Subject F6 stated that she used English only if she has to or if she wants to practise it (Example 7, Appendix 2), but she added that in some situations expression oneself in English might be even easier than in Finnish (Example 8, Appendix 2).

The attitude about the English language being “easier” than the Finnish language and thus making conversations in English easier than in Finnish is reoccurring in the accounts of the other subjects, as, for example, in the statement of C after being asked how he feels as an English user: *it's cool I mean first it's much easier then Finnish*. Taking into account that, at the time of the interview, C had spent only 2 weeks in Finland makes his statement very understandable, but also subjects who have been in Finland for over a longer period of time claimed that they rather use English as their *main language of communication* (Example 9, Appendix 2) as, for example, subject F4, who had been in Finland for almost 3 ½ years at the time of the study. One reason for this is given by subject A, who states that

*yeah I'm using of course also English when speaking to Finns partly at least because I realize it for me to well that it sometimes is a better way of communication because I can then express myself still a little better than in Finnish even though I speak Finnish and this is that's why I sometimes choose English over Finnish in the conversation.*(Participant A)

English serves thus as an additional language to enable better intercultural communication possibilities. Even though according to their own reports all subjects have studied at least 2 years Finnish it should be kept in mind that regarding the educational policy in most of the subjects' home countries the participants have most likely had instruction in English over a period of time that has been probably four times as long. Naturally their ability to express themselves in English therefore seems to be higher than their ability to express themselves in Finnish. Subject A poignantly highlights with this in her following statement:

*if Finns are talking in English they are not talking their mother tongue which means they're talking a foreign language which means they are probably also not able to express themselves completely so they have they might have the same problem as I do when speaking Finnish [...].* (Participant A)

Her statement shows that using a foreign language will most likely result in a loss of a certain degree of articulateness, which the use of one's mother tongue would have made possible.

## 4.2 Attitudes and beliefs about the use of English in Finland

### 4.2.1 Subjects' views on the contexts of English language use in Finland

*English can be heard everywhere, outside, in busses, schools and offices* (Participant F6)  
(Example 10, Appendix 2)

When asked about their present use of English in Finland compared to their use of English in their home countries both interviewees C and A stated that their use of English has changed significantly when they came to Finland. In Finland subject C uses English as *the only way* to communicate with other exchange students not speaking Finnish and believes that *English is very useful you can speak English to anyone and anyone would understand you it's a survival language*. His belief that English is useful as a mediator language especially for foreign students arriving to Finland is shared by the majority of subjects, all university students themselves.

For example subject A believes that *of course if you're living in an international environment one should be able to speak a little bit of English*, seeing basic English skills therefore as a necessity for international interaction. In his essay subject M1 emphasized that the university is one area in which the use of English in Finland is very visible (Example 11, Appendix 2). In her interview subject D illuminated the presence of English in the academic world with the following personal account:

*it is quite funny that for example different scientific texts about the Finnish language are written in English and the same thing when I passed the pedagogical studies two years ago at the teachers college there were a lot of English sources that were not a problem for the Finns but I thought that I don't want only English works [...]* (Participant D) (Example 8, Appendix 1)

Subject D's personal experience shows that the use of English in academic contexts is not only common among exchange students, who are expected to speak English (see participant F4, Example 12, Appendix 2) and useful for academic interaction (see participant M1, Example 13, Appendix 2) but furthermore seen for all students as obligatory for a successful academic career (see participant F3, Example 14, Appendix 2). Even though English language skills are not specifically listed as prerequisite for a special study subject, they are nevertheless assessed as indispensable for successful studies. Indeed, Pirjo Hiidenmaa (2003: 61) states that without the knowledge of a foreign language, usually English, university studies become quite impossible as many

academic fields' course books are available only in English. Many of the subjects referred in their accounts to this problematic issue, as, for example, subject F3 (Example 15, Appendix 2).

Hiidenmaa (2003: 74) further stresses that many academic disciplines use English terms, a fact highlighted by the personal account of subject F2. According to subject F2 all articles in the mathematic field are written in English and as some terms do not even exist in the Finnish language discussions about mathematics in Finnish do not seem practical at all to her (Example 16, Appendix 2). Accordingly, Hiidenmaa (2003: 79) concludes that the problem is not what is done in English but what is not done in Finnish. Furthermore, Hiidenmaa points out that the exclusive use of English indicates that not only the Finnish language use gets restricted, but also disciplines are being narrowed down and as researchers see themselves not as developers of knowledge but as mere producers of results, the function of research itself therefore needs reconsideration.

Personal experiences about the necessity of using English in Finland have been made also by interviewee B. On the one hand subject B regrets that she cannot speak English, because she would like to communicate with others, and therefore want to study English later on (Example 10, Appendix 1). On the other hand, however, her impression of English as a *compulsory* language (Example 11, Appendix 1), which she repeatedly stated, is obviously at least partly responsible for her negative attitude towards the language itself.

Furthermore, her negative attitude seems to affect her motivation of studying English. As subject B has the impression of English being forced on her she is reluctant to learn it: *I'm not interested [in studying English] but you have to study English* (Example 12, Appendix 1). Subject B seems to struggle with conflicting beliefs about English. On the one hand subject B acknowledges that English is indeed a necessary and helpful language in social interaction, as can be seen in her following statement:

*if foreigners ask I understand a bit but not all I know some words in English but it is not enough, not enough, later on in Hungary I maybe study English* (Participant B) (Example 13, Appendix 1)

On the other hand, however, English is seen by subject B as a compulsory obligation, which makes her reluctant to study English.

English is not only used as an academic language in Finland, but also as a working language in international companies as subject M1 points out in his essay (Example 17, Appendix 2). Interviewee D believes that this is a result of the globalization and the opening of borders, which are responsible for making English the language in which people can communicate independently without the help of a translator (Example 14, Appendix 1). The same applies most likely for the worldwide domination of the internet, which, according to subject C, also influenced the use of English in Finland (Example 15, Appendix 1).

Indeed, Leppänen and Nikula (2007: 356) state that English is nowadays used as an additional resource alongside Finnish in certain contexts involving especially new media (e.g. chat rooms, IRC, web logs and fan fiction). In addition, English is, according to subject M1, used by the media as an advertising language as well as in TV programs (Example 18, Appendix 2). Finnish broadcast stations generally do not dub English speaking TV programs, which promotes consequently at least the passive use of English and, according to interviewee A, further *helps you learning a language*.

However, the use of English in Finland is not restricted to private free time activities and professional working language use, but has expanded also to almost all public institutions as pointed out by subject F3 (Example 19, Appendix 2). Subject B refers to banks as one example of public institutions providing English language services (Example 16, Appendix 1). To sum up, the areas of English language use in Finland are perceived by the subjects as quite diverse ranging from specific scientific or professional contexts to cultural mainstream contexts. Furthermore, almost all subjects commented on the frequency of English use, which thus is of course closely related to the multifunctional use of English in Finland.

#### **4.2.2 Subjects' views on the English language users in Finland**

*Finns want to practise English whenever they just have the chance to do so* (Participant F3)  
(Example 20, Appendix 2)

Not only is English used a lot in Finland, but, according to the subjects' joint belief, almost all Finns know Finnish (see e.g. Participant F2, Example 21, Appendix 2 or



Participant B, Example 17, Appendix 1). Subject F6 claims in her essay that almost all Finns regardless of their profession, age and social class know English to some extent (Example 22, Appendix 2). Indeed, the subjects agreed in their accounts on their perception of English use that almost all young people speak English in Finland. Subject F6 writes in her essay that even *Finnish children can easily communicate in English* (Example 23, Appendix 2). Considering that young people are the main users of new media and English is by far the most popular first foreign language in Finland (see Taavitsainen and Paahta 2003: 6) this impression of subject F6 seems very understandable. Furthermore, it does not seem surprising for the subjects to share interviewee D's view the view that *all young people aged 20-30 speak English and quite well* (Example 18, Appendix 1). Not only is English spoken by a lot of Finns but, moreover, in comparison with her home country Germany subject A concluded that *well people are of course speaking much more English here*.

In addition, subject A emphasized that in the part of Germany where she is from *almost only young people do speak English at all* whereas in Finland as well as in other Northern countries also *elderly people* speak English. In contrast to subject A, based on his personal experience subject C believes that the old people cannot speak English well and rather answer in Finnish (Example 19, Appendix 1). Also subject F5 shares negative experiences about *Finns that are afraid of speaking English when you really need it e.g. in the bank* (Example 24, Appendix 2) and she explains in her essay this phenomenon with the fear of possible problems caused by misunderstanding.

Another phenomenon that the majority of subjects have encountered in communicational situations with Finnish people is the fact that *Finns want to practise their English skills whenever possible* (Participant F3, Example 25, Appendix 2). For the purpose of this study this phenomenon of Finns using English when talking to F2-speakers will be called "ignorant politeness", as I assume that Finns are generally not aware of the fact that their using of English instead of Finnish as a communicational means is perceived by many F2-learners not only as *sometimes annoying* (Participant F2, Example 26, Appendix 2) or as *sometimes really annoying* (Participant F5, Example 27, Appendix 2), but further as detrimental in relation to their F2-learning.

I believe that the majority of Finns use English out of ignorant politeness in order to demonstrate their cosmopolitan and courteous awareness and not intentionally as a ‘linguistic weapon’ to disgrace their interlocutors. Yet, this phenomenon of ignorant politeness is perceived differently by the subjects of this study. According to her essay, subject F2 believes that *some Finns are somewhat proud of their English skills and when they see somebody struggling to use Finnish they will happily seize the opportunity to practise English* (Example 28, Appendix 2). However, for subject C *it’s good* that Finns use English and he thinks *that they [Finns] are just generous*, because it is better for Finns to speak English to him and other foreigners to maintain the conversation and mutual understanding.

As subject F2 in her essay and C in his interview, most of the subjects provided personal accounts of encountering ignorant Finnish politeness, but in contrast to subject C the majority of the other subjects had had negative experiences. Subject F5 shares C’s belief that Finns want to help when they answer in English, but still it is very annoying for her (Example 29, Appendix 2). Subject M1 stated that even though he speaks or tries to speak Finnish in everyday life (while shopping for example) Finns speak English to him, which he thinks is stupid and useless. However, also subject M1 views the Finns’ ignorant politeness as one possible form of helpfulness (Example 30, Appendix 2). Unfortunately also subject F6 had experienced ignorant politeness. In her essay subject F6 states that when she meets new people they ask her whether she speaks English better than Finnish and change then into English speaking it *with pleasure* (Example 31, Appendix 2).

The reluctance of Finns to speak Finnish to foreigners led in some cases to a counterbehaviour of F2-learners persisting to speak Finnish and therefore showing their determination to pursue their F2-learning in communication. For subject A this kind of English-Finnish conversation *ended up being a really funny communication*, but then she adds that she feels slightly annoyed encountering ignorant politeness. However, not only the subjects of this study have encountered this communicational behaviour of the Finns, but apparently also many other F2-learners, as for example a letter to the editor of the newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* shows, in which the student Erika Richter (2010)

states that at first she was hurt that Finns did not speak Finnish with her, but came later to the conclusion that Finns are just not used to speaking Finnish to foreigners.

Indeed, also subject C concludes that *they [Finns] are not so arrogant for example as French people they won't like to speak English yeah I think they just use English as a tool to communicate with people from different countries*. In addition, C stresses that *because [...] my Finnish is not so good so most of time I communicate with Finnish people in English so because [...] if these speak Finnish fast I can't understand so it's better to use English*. Subject C's belief that English should be used a mediator to enable fluent conversations between F2 and native speakers is shared by interviewee A:

*it's much easier way of expressing yourself if you know English better because the people will understand you and [...] you are not forced to really think hard what this and that word may be [...].* (Participant A)

Both subjects use voluntarily English as an additional communicational tool, whereas the accounts of the other F2-learners show clearly that the Finns' choice of English as the language of communication forced them to switch from Finnish into English although they would have preferred to use Finnish as the single language of interaction.

### 4.3 Attitudes to and beliefs about the status of English

#### – English = lingua franca?

*I think all the European people can speak English they got higher education than in China so English is very important [...] there are so many people from different countries because European people travels a lot so I think it helps to improve the peoples English skills everywhere.* (Participant C)

During his interview subject C emphasized the high status of English in Europe. His focus on the status of English is probably related to his belief that Europe offers better education, which he seemingly refers to as *higher education*. For subject C, then, education and English use are closely connected. Furthermore, he believes that international travel also improves language skills.

Also subject A considers the status of English as a *not universal but at least European question*. For her *the tendency is existent* that English is becoming more and more important and subject B shares her view. Growing up in Hungary interviewee B studied German at school, and even though she declares that German is important

because Hungary's neighboring country is Austria subject B believes that it would be better if more people would study English as she believes that English is more important than German (Example 20, Appendix 1). Additionally subject B sees English as the world language; the repetition of this fact shows how convinced she is of her opinion (Example 21, Appendix 1).

Nevertheless, the tendency of English as a lingua franca becoming more and more important can also be detected in Russia, as subject D demonstrates with her statement:

*right now I would say English is a must language in Russia it is a must and in fact even the young generation and even people of my age speak English.* (Participant D) (Example 22, Appendix 1)

Interviewee D has strong attitudes about English as well as about the use of a lingua franca. On the one hand interviewee D believes that in a global context, for the sake of communication and mutual understanding, it is nice that people have a common language, but on the other hand she thinks that it is not good when a language is an *aggressor* (Example 23, Appendix 1).

Even though not implicitly saying so, it seems obvious that interviewee D refers to the role English has for her as she further elaborates on her attitudes towards English native speakers. Interviewee D's generalizing belief that English native speakers speak only one language and think that everyone else should speak English demonstrates her belief of English native speakers being all monolingual, which is making them *limited* for her (Example 24, Appendix 1). This belief is based on her personal experience as she states that she does not know any English native speaker who knows another language. For her this fact is very annoying and certainly at least to some degree responsible for her attitude that makes her perceive English native speakers as *the lords of this world* (Example 25, Appendix 1). Thus, subject D apparently holds quite negative cultural stereotypes towards English native speakers.

Interestingly, interviewee A implicitly points to further negative cultural stereotypes related to the English language:

*[...] they [Finns] just know okey this involves not only English but noise and drunken people and other foreign languages and where is our home country.* (Participant A)

In her account, subject A refers to the stereotypes that Finns held towards foreigners in general and not exclusively towards English native speakers. Her assessment is probably based on her personal experience of social get-togethers between Finns and international students. However, she concludes her account with the comment saying that she does not want to judge in this case even if it sounded like that, trying to safeguard herself against the possible impression of her making generalizations and therefore demonstrating reflective skills.

Also subject C refers in his account to cultural stereotypes of Finns towards foreigners:

*I'm an Asian I looks like you know different from European people so no matter I speak [...] Finnish or I speak English and I think it's the same to the Finnish people to local people you are a foreigner or something it don't make much difference. (Participant C)*

This account shows that C holds the cultural belief that Finns make no distinction between foreigners that speak Finnish and those who do not, as Finns mark foreigners with their *foreigner or something* categorization as outsiders. This situation, however, changes after the intake of alcohol as C declares that after a few drinks they are the same cause everyone are friends (Example 26, Appendix 1). It is very remarkable that also the account of interviewee C involves the consumption of alcohol, which seems to provoke a lot of common cultural clichés. Eventually it therefore seems that no common language is needed to connect people, a fact that is highlighted by interviewee D, for whom *globalization is the only common language with which you can manage everywhere* (Example 27, Appendix 1).

#### **4.4 Attitudes and beliefs about the status of English in Finland**

##### **– English = third official language?**

*English is this prestige language right now (Participant A)*

All subjects agreed that English is an important language in Finland and rate therefore the status of English as very high. According to her essay, subject F4 believes that English even outranks Swedish in Finland (Example 32, Appendix 2). Interviewee B believes that Finland is already a country with three languages in use (Example 28, Appendix 1), this belief is expressed also by subject F6 (Example 33, Appendix 2).

Obviously subject B holds a negative attitude towards the idea of making English an official language in Finland as she thinks that two languages are enough (Example 29, Appendix 1).

With regard to the academic world, Susanna Shore (2002: 329) even believes that English holds a monopoly as the academic lingua franca in Finland. The monopolistic lingua franca status as well as the fact that English-speaking countries are the focus of international science are considered by Shore as highly problematic. Especially with regard to humanities this is for Shore an alarming development. Indeed interviewee D's account shows that this development is already part of Finnish academic life:

*sometimes it bothered me that because Finland has many good own lecturers in didactics but instead I don't know why students have to learn what Americans said about this problem.*  
(Participant D) (Example 30, Appendix 1)

According to Shore (2002: 329) research done in English-speaking countries is seen as the starting point for further studies as the scientific worldview, as subject D's account illuminates, is dominated by English-speaking scientists, a condition that is rightfully questioned by subject D. Nonetheless, even though interviewee D feels bothered by the use of English in the Finnish academic world she also detects advantages of it. Therefore, subject D acknowledges the fact that *actually it is totally true that if a Finn writes something solely in Finnish it is limited [...] but if it's in English it means for the whole world.* (Example 31, Appendix 1).

Thus, she sees the use of English as the academic lingua franca also as *progression* (Example 32, Appendix 1). Subject D is highly aware of the fact that a professional life without the necessary English skills is difficult as English skills are seen not only as useful but advantageous (Example 33, Appendix 1). Moreover, interviewee D refers to the advantage of English as a means of communication. Indeed, also interviewee C shares subject D's view. For subject C English is further a means to remove limits and enable communication between foreigners, with limited Finnish skills, and Finns. Subject C thinks that *as they are already a part of Finnish society [...] it would be more fair for them if the Finnish government [...] make English a third official language.* Apparently subject C believes that in the future English could possibly be declared an

official language as he holds the impression that Finnish people are generally positive and open-minded towards the use of English.

However, except for subject C all other subjects agreed in the point that English will not achieve an official language status in Finland. Interestingly, subject M1 believes that English gets too much attention in Finland (Example 31, Appendix 2), this might be true to some extent. Interviewee A acknowledges the fact that *there are lots of young people using English and consider it to be cool*. This fact is seen by her as responsible for English having a *higher social status [than Finnish] because they know it and they trying to use it in everyday language*. In addition, interviewee A states that *English is this prestige language right now*. Yet, subject M1 makes clear in his essay that for him neither the Finns' good language competence nor the status of English as an important lingua franca are sufficient justifications to make English an official language (Example 35, Appendix 2).

The belief of Finns' general openness towards English, which was expressed by subject C, is also shared by subject A. Nevertheless, subject A stresses that

*of course you also see some strange faces if there's obviously a group of foreigners then Finns kind of want to separate themselves from the foreigners or just keep speaking Finnish.*  
(Participant A)

Subject A's account of Finns distancing themselves from foreigners points to her (un)conscious awareness that language use is related to identity construction.

According to Hiidenmaa (2003: 63) the emphasis on language being a tool for international communication has made it however more difficult to identify the other functions of language, such as identity construction. Yet, interviewee A is highly aware of how close the connection between language and identity is, which can be detected in her following account:

*[...] it is probably the motivation [of Finns compared to Germans] is different they have the need because they're speaking such a small language [...] so they just have so they just want to impress themselves somehow to the outer world to show the others: Hey we are not that strange at all[...]* (Participant A)

In her account subject A refers to the Finns' inner need to *impress the outer world* as well as each other. Therefore, the Finns use, according to A, English as a tool to demonstrate their *not-strangeness*, their internationality so to speak. English is not seen

by subject A as a threat to the Finnish language and identity, because *Finland has a language policy and cares about its mother tongue*. The strong link between national identity and mother tongue is stressed further by interviewee B who claims that it is important that every nation has its own language (Example 34, Appendix 1).

Moreover, with regard of the language situation in Finland subject F3 explicitly states in her essay that the Finnish language will stay important for the construction of the Finnish identity (Example 36, Appendix 2). Subject F6 elaborated in her writing on the main reason for this:

*Finnish is however the only language, in which people in Finland can be their own self, because there is **something own** that you couldn't understand if you only speak English with Finns (Participant F6) (Example 37, Appendix 2 , emphasis added).*

The statement of subject F6 highlights how national language and culture are seen to be inseparably intertwined and how the use of English in Finland is seen as being detrimental for experiencing Finnish culture. Additionally, English is also seen by interviewee D as a threat to the Finnish language and therefore to the Finnish identity:

*Making English an official language in Finland would be unfair towards the Finnish language (Participant D) (Example 35, Appendix 1).*

Interviewee D believes that English does not deserve official language status, because she feels that English constitutes a threat for the Finnish language (Example 36, Appendix 1). Indeed, subject D's worry is justified as Hiidenmaa (2003: 90) claims that English will soon be the only language used in European communication. Therefore, the status of English might indeed constitute a serious threat to the use and know-how of other European languages such as Finnish.

#### **4.5 Attitudes to and beliefs about the influence of the English language on the Finnish language**

[...] *there are a lot of vocabulary in Finnish which comes from English (Participant C)*

Surprisingly all subjects mentioned in their accounts the influence of English on Finnish vocabulary. Apparently the influence was very perceptible by the F2-learners. Some subjects supported their perception with examples of anglicisms, for example *meikki* 'make-up' referred to by subject F2 (Example 38, Appendix 2). For subject F3 the



funniest anglicism is *filis* [fiilis] ‘feeling’ (Example 39, Appendix 2). Even though subject F5 thinks that these *new words* are really funny she believes that they should be used in colloquial speech only and that the standard language needs more attention (Example 40, Appendix 2). It seems that she is afraid that anglicisms might invade the standard language too much.

Many English loanwords are indeed used so frequently, particularly in colloquial speech, that Dufva (2005: 111) points out that these types of anglicisms have become for many Finns so ordinary that they are not always even recognized as deriving from English. However, the subjects in this study were highly aware of the fact that other languages have always had an influence on the Finnish language. For subject F5 these have been mainly Swedish and Russian. Yet, nowadays she believes that Russian has lost its influence, whereas English and Swedish interact with Finnish (Example 41, Appendix 2). This interaction is demonstrated by interviewee D, who uses in her interview the English word *aggressor* and adapts it with the help of an extra *i* (see e.g. Dufva 2005: 120) to the Finnish language conventions: *aggressor* (Example 23, Appendix 1). Subject D explains her own linguistic operation in the following statement: *not always is it directly taken for loan but it is as if made Finnish* (Example 37, Appendix 1).

Anglicisms as one group of loanwords have thus become a natural part of Finnish language and are, according to Dufva (2005: 117), used frequently especially by the younger English fans who think that English rules. The current prestige status of English for younger people is also seen by interviewee A as a reasonable explanation for the abundance of English loanwords, whose existence is *kind of normal*. Interviewee C holds a similar view and adds further that English *has a big influence on Finnish and the influence is getting bigger and bigger because of the globalization*. Dufva (2005: 112) supports interviewee C’s view stating that English is at the present the unchallenged dominant language and exerts a great influence on other languages. Regarding possible influence in the future subject F3 estimates that English might become even more important as Finland has now more contacts with other countries (Example 412, Appendix 2).

The modification and development of languages, especially youth language, are seen by subject M1 as parts of a normal process (Example 43, Appendix 2). In addition, subject M1 stresses in his essay that the use of anglicisms is at present a common phenomenon in many countries (Example 44, Appendix 2). However, subject M1 feels that *this might be an annoying fashion and hopefully disappears soon* (Example 45, Appendix 2). Negative attitudes towards the use of anglicisms are also held by subject F4, who does not like that *so many English words get into the Finnish language* (Example 46, Appendix 2).

Nevertheless, it is not the existence of anglicisms per se but their abundance that Dufva (2005: 111) perceives as problematic. The abundance of anglicisms in the Finnish language is a possible indicator for the generally positive and open attitude of the Finns towards the English language. The majority of subjects referred in their accounts to the Finns' frequent use of code-switching, which might be problematic in regard to the subjects' F2-learning.

#### **4.6 Possible implications of the English use for F2-learning and -teaching**

##### **4.6.1 Subjects' views on code-switching in Finland and its effect on their F2-learning**

*this might be a problem of everyone living in another country that [...] you just have problems in speaking only one language* (Participant A)

According to subject F4 Finns use a lot of code-switching (Example 47, Appendix 2) and except for subject M1 all other subjects in the written data collection state that they code-switch themselves. The phenomenon of code-switching seems to be closely linked to an ongoing internationalization, as subject A thinks that code-switching *happens a lot* and further believes that code-switching is a result of living abroad: *you just have problems in speaking only one language*. Apparently, this applies also to the other subjects, who refer to their code-switching in Finland.

Four of six written data collection participants report that they switch mostly between English and Finnish. In her background information questionnaire subject F6 declares that she switches mostly between her mother tongue Russian and Finnish. Probably due to his dislike of code-switching subject M1 declares that he did not code-

switch at all. However, he stresses that code-switching is common in many countries (Example 48, Appendix 2).

Regarding her own use of code-switching subject F4 declares that it makes her situation as a Finnish language user easier (Example 49, Appendix 2). Subject F2 makes the same statement in her essay (Example 50, Appendix 2). Interviewee A shares the view that English use can help F2-learners, which can be seen in her account:

*if you don't know a certain word then the other person can easily translate it and you are able to widen your vocabulary without having to look it up or without [...] understanding the Finnish explanation of the other. (Participant A)*

Her account makes clear that she believes that English can be used as a tool to learn Finnish. Indeed, subject A's belief is supported by an example of code-switching occurring during the interview of subject B: *koska naapuri on Austria Österreich suomeksi? 'because the neighbour is Austria Österreich in Finnish?'*. In order to widen her Finnish vocabulary interviewee B switched purposely from Finnish into English and German. This learning technique can, however, also lead to confusion as in the written account of subject F2 who reports that she was so used to *make easily Finnish words out of English ones* that she used the word *progressiivinen* instead of the Finnish word 'edistynyt' and was told that the word *progressiivinen* was not the appropriate term in that situation (Example 51, Appendix 2).

The belief that English can be used as a mediator language in F2-learning especially at the beginning is explicitly expressed also by other subjects. For subject M1 English can constitute an alternative language of communication between Finns and foreigners at the beginning of F2-learning, when language skills are still quite weak (Example 51, Appendix 2). However, even though subject M1 reports in his essay that teaching Finnish in English is *ok* at beginners' level, he stresses that in advanced courses it is more efficient to study Finnish in Finnish (Example 53, Appendix 2).

Based on personal experience interviewee C comes to a similar conclusion as subject M1 concerning the role of English in the F2-learning process. According to subject C, his former Finnish teacher in China apparently did not know English and therefore used gestures and facial expressions or action to demonstrate the meanings of

words. Interviewee C believes that his way of teaching led gradually to an understanding of Finnish words and the ability to study Finnish in Finnish (Example 38, Appendix 1). Furthermore, this experience of learning Finnish in Finnish also resulted in subject C's insights about efficient F2-learning:

*[...] it's very very difficult yeah at the beginning [to study Finnish in Finnish] in fact it's more effective [efficient] to study Finnish in Finnish. (Participant C)*

*[...] if you can't speak English you can only speak Chinese and a few a little Finnish and maybe you just communicate with others in Finnish and maybe it helps more for your Finnish study. (Participant C)*

The frequent use of English in Finland is thus seen by C as disadvantageous and detrimental for the F2-learning of those who came to study Finnish, therefore including himself. The belief of the negative impact of frequent code-switching is shared by subject F4, who believes that English has a large and undesirable impact on her Finnish language use. She usually does not use Finnish because she can cope in English, which she finds easier (Example 54, Appendix 2). She believes that she would speak Finnish much better if she did not know English or if the Finns did not speak it so well (Example 55, Appendix 2). Additionally, also F2-learner Richter (2010) points to the conflict of learning to communicate in Finnish that arises from the Finns' reluctance to speak Finnish to foreigners. Therefore it seems that interviewee B's belief (Example 39, Appendix 1) that it is more difficult for subject C to study Finnish as he uses three languages in comparison to B herself who does not use a second language apart from Finnish is quite reasonable.

#### **4.6.2 Subjects' views on the impact of English on the necessity and motivation of F2-learning**

*maassa maan tavalla 'when in Finland do as the Finns do' (Participant D)*  
(Example 40, Appendix 1)

Subject M1 states that also in Finland, like anywhere else, it is necessary for foreigners to learn the language of the country (Example 56, Appendix 2). Interviewee A agrees with this view stating that *if they're foreigners who live here [in Finland] who plan to stay here for a longer time they should try to study some Finnish*. Furthermore,

interviewee A expressed her lack of understanding for a resistance against Finnish learning and stresses her approval of obligatory Finnish courses. Also interviewee D accepts the fact that foreigners have the duty to learn Finnish stressing that *when in Finland do as the Finns do* (Example 40, Appendix 1).

However, according to the accounts of subject F6 and D, there are also foreigners, who have lived in Finland for many years without learning the Finnish language as they seemingly survive without Finnish skills. Subject F6 refers to a friend asking her after having stayed in Finland for about nine years why s/he should learn Finnish since s/he speaks English and can easily manage in English. Despite claiming the opposite, this friend of subject F6 nevertheless needs the help of subject F6 in official situations and asks her to help out as a translator. Rightfully subject F6 thus declares that learning at least some Finnish words would help a lot in making life easier for her friend. (Example 57, Appendix 2).

Finnish skills are indeed essential for everyday life and especially for social interaction. On the one hand, interviewee D points to the positive social implications Finnish language skills may have for the F2-learner. Interviewee D declares that Finns appreciate it when foreigners speak Finnish, because they know that Finnish is not an easy language to learn and respect therefore the effort that foreigners have put into learning Finnish (Example 41, Appendix 1). On the other hand, interviewee D refers to the negative social effects that missing F2-skills may have. Subject D reports that she has a Chinese colleague with whom she cannot communicate as her colleague cannot speak Finnish and subject D cannot communicate in English. Her colleague's lack of Finnish skills results therefore in an inability to communicate with subject D (Example 42, Appendix 1).

The lack of Finnish skills not only affects social life but also professional life and makes it very difficult, even impossible. Apparently, for subject M1 this is one reason why foreigners are under a lot of pressure to acquire Finnish and/or Swedish skills (Example 58, Appendix 2). Mikko Pakarinen (2004: 36) emphasizes the necessity of language skills. According to Pakarinen, only at universities and in few large companies, mostly in the field of information and communication technology, one can manage with English skills only.

For Pakarinen efficient F2-learning is one of the main keys to get access to Finnish professional life. Interviewee D shares the belief that it is essential to have Finnish skills for a successful social and professional life. Additionally she explains that humans always look for *life jackets* and if you use English it is your life jacket (Example 43, Appendix 1). In her case she cannot use English and thus she can only look get help from the Finnish language, which is more useful for her as a F2-learner (Example 44, Appendix 1).

However, it seems that sometimes the language itself cannot provide the support that language learners need as in the case of subject F4, who stated that when she came to Finland she could not speak Finnish and therefore her main language became English and now that she has acquired Finnish skills she has problems to establish Finnish as her main language (Example 59, Appendix 2). Her personal experience makes it clear how much language users are creatures of habit and that language use can be seen also as a habit. Habits are known to be difficult to change.

Apparently, subject F4 needs the support of Finnish ‘life jackets’ to support her to switch from English into Finnish, to make her feel comfortable in Finnish and to develop her Finnish skills in social interaction. Subject F2 stresses that Finns indeed should not switch straight away into English, when they notice that they speak with a foreigner, who tries to speak Finnish with them (Example 60, Appendix 2). Subject M1 explains why Finns should try to continue a conversation with a F2-learner in Finnish:

*if someone can support and help with a language it's a native speaker. Especially in daily life they could be good language teachers; English use in this context is detrimental. (Participant M1) (Example 61, Appendix 2)*

His statement shows that he clearly believes that every Finn is indeed a F2-teacher. Yet, as Finns seem to function rarely as ‘daily life F2-teachers’ and prefer to use English as the main language of communication with F2-learners. Apparently, they are not aware of how they could contribute to the F2 skills development of their interlocutors.

## **5 FINNS, CARRY OUT YOUR CIVIC DUTY! BE F2-TEACHERS!**

### **– DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

The present study's goal was to focus on the accounts of F2-learners regarding the use and status of English in Finland. The present study's focus was, furthermore, on the F2-learners' attitudes to and beliefs about possible implications of English for their personal life. The study intended to show how important the English language use is in the subjects' daily life in Finland and what implications the use of English has on the subjects' social interaction, their professional life as well as on their F2-learning and their F2-motivation.

Undoubtedly English has become a global lingua franca and there is a strong tendency of English becoming the third "official" language in Finland as the accounts of this study's subjects have highlighted. The subjects state that living in Finland has increased their personal use of English, because English is very present in almost all areas of daily life. Especially with regard to academic life the subjects claim that English skills are not only regarded as necessary but are indeed indispensable for successful university studies. The use of English has influenced, according to the subjects, also the Finnish language, which can be, for instance, seen in the abundance of anglicisms.

Furthermore, the subjects commented on the high status of English in Finland. The high status is seen as one reason why Finns like to practice their English skills with foreigners. Most subjects have experienced cases of ignorant politeness with Finns, who rather use English instead of Finnish as means of communication with foreigners. The reluctance to speak Finnish with F2-learners was mentioned as being detrimental to F2-learning and learners' motivation. Finally, even though the subjects accept the omnipresence of English in Finland, nine out of ten subjects oppose giving English an official language status in Finland.

This study aimed at presenting some insights in the beliefs and attitudes of the specific group of F2-learners as former research regarding learners' beliefs about and attitudes towards English in Finland did not take into account this specific learner group. As this study is a small-scale study and therefore restricted to a small group of persons it is not intended to be generalized. Furthermore, as all qualitative studies also the present

study faces the dilemma that the analysis of the interpretations of the subjects is indeed an interpretation of interpretations made by the researcher.

On the basis of this study I believe, however, that pedagogical implications of beliefs and attitudes of F2-learners deserve further academic attention and need to be investigated more closely and comprehensively in the future. The focus on F2-learners needs to be thus broadened to F2-teachers and their beliefs and attitudes. In addition, more research is needed to reveal the pedagogical implications of, firstly, the use and status English and their influence on F2-learning and teaching and, secondly, the students' beliefs and attitudes.

With regard to the growing number of immigrants in Finland, all of them future F2-learners, the importance of future research concerning F2-learners' and F2-teachers' beliefs and the effects of their beliefs on F2-learning and teaching is believed to grow constantly. Further, this study was driven by the personal motivation to raise awareness of the fact that future F2-learners need to speak Finnish in order to learn Finnish and they need F2-teachers to encourage them to speak Finnish. I believe that every Finn is indeed a F2-teacher and needs to be therefore made aware or reminded of this civic duty.



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## APPENDIX 1: THE ORIGINAL INTERVIEW EXTRACTS IN FINNISH

1. sori et mulla tule väsy (B)
2. mutta ei pitkä noin yksi vuotta yhtä vuotta opiskelin (B)
3. en osa englannin kieltä (B)
4. kyllä tällä hetkellä on ymmärrän vähän yksinkertaisia fraaseja ja kyllä internetin kautta kyllä jo tiedän sellaisia fraaseja joskus voin kirjoittaa jopa englanniksi pieniä viestiä ja lähetän sähköpostitse.[...] itse katson itse opiskelen (D)
5. käytän internetiä englanniksi mutta se ei vaikka [vaikea] kun sama kuin unkariksi käyttää [...] ju tiedän ju unkariksi ei vaikea englanniksi (B)
6. vaikutus? ... no sano englanniksi (B)
7. en en ole opiskellut ikinä englantia (D)
8. no koska se on arkipäivä en voi mitään (D)
9. yliopistossa ja sen lisäksi se on aika jännä esimerkiksi että suomen kielestä erilaisia tieteellisiä teoksia on kirjoitettu englanniksi ja sama juttu kun suoritin kaksi vuotta sitten opettajan pedagogiset opinnot se oli opettajankoulutuslaitos ja silloin kyllä oli aika paljon englanninkielisiä sanoisin lähteitä kyllä suomalaisille se ei ole mitään ongelma mutta ainakin minä mietin että ei pelkkä englanninkielisiä teoksia (D)
10. [...] myöhemmin haluaisin opiskella englantia [...] se on harmi että en puhu [...] haluaisin puhua toinen kanssa myös (B)
11. [...] pakko puhu [...] niin kun kaikki puhuu on pakko [...] on pakko [...] täytyy opiskella englantia (B)
12. [...] minusta ei harjoitus opiskella ja en kiinnostuu mutta täytyy opiskella englantia (B)
13. jos ulkomaalaisia kysyvät vähän ymmärrän mutta ei aivan tiedän pari sanoja englanniksi se on ei riitä ei ole riittä myöhemmin Unkarissa ehkä opiskelen (B)
14. [...] ihmiset jotka tarvitsevat esimerkiksi työn vuoksi kyllä puhuvat myös koska rajat ovat auki globalisaatio ja sitten ihminen ei halua et aina oli joku vieras ihminen on takana hän halua keskustella ihan itse ja siksi (D)
15. yes of course I think uses usage of language on the internet is English so yeah and I think it's in if you don't know how to say yeah it's you have to understand English so you can use the internet for most (C)
16. jo eli missä puhuvat Suomessa englanniksi ehkä pankissa ja koulussa (B)
17. täällä Suomessa on ju paljon ihmisiä puhuvat englantia (B)
18. kaikki nuoret ainakin kaikki nuoret kaksikymmentä kolmekymmentä vuotiaat kaikki puhuvat englantia kaikki ja aika hyvin huomasin (D)
19. I know the situation quite well because I got lost and when I ask old people they can't speak English they just speak Finnish (C)
20. minustakin on parempi olisi jos paljon no enempi ihmisiä opiskelevat englanniksi ei saksaksi mutta saksa kieli on tärkeä koska naapuri on Austria [...] (B)
21. englantia kieli on maailman kieli [...] se on maailman kieli (B)
22. tällä hetkellä Venäjällä englantia se on sanoisin pakkokieli se on pakko ja itse asiassa jo nuori sukupolvi ja jopa minun ikäiset ihmiset myös puhuvat englantia (D)

23. [...] toisaalta kyllä on kiva että joskus ihmisillä on yleinen [yhteinen] kieli he voivat kommunikoida he voivat keskustella ja he voivat ymmärtää toisiaan se on myös hyvä mutta ei ole hyvä kun kieli on aggressori (D)
24. [...] englanninkieliset joilla on englanti äidinkielenä he ovat rajetuttuja [rajattuja] henkilöitä koska heillä on vain yksi kieli [...] (D)
25. [...] he miettivät että kaikkien pitää tietää heidän äidinkielen ja he tuntuvat että he ovat vaikka herroja tässä maailmassa en tiedä ainakin en tunne yhtä englannin kielestä jolla on englanti äidinkielenä että hän puhuisi lisää joten kieltä (D)
26. [...] maybe they cold they are nice or something but after a few drinks they are the same cause everyone are friends (C)
27. globalisaatio se on ainoa yhteinen kieli jolla voi pärjätä missä vaan [...] (D)
28. ju on jo suomi on jo kolmas kieli maa [...] (B)
29. ei hyvä musta [että Suomi on 'kolmas kieli maa'] [...] juu [kaksi kieltä] riittää (B)
30. [...] joskus harmitti että koska Suomessa on paljon hyviä didaktikkoja mutta sen sijaan en tiedä mistä syystä oppijoiden pitää oppia mitä amerikkalaiset sanoivat tästä ongelmasta (D)
31. itse asiassa se on aivan totta jos suomalainen tai kirjoittaa jotain pelkkä suomeksi silloin se on vain sanoisin Suomessa se on raja [...] mutta jos englanniksi se tarkoittaa koko maailma [...] (D)
32. [...] kyllä se on progresssio (D)
33. [...] mutta kyllä se [englannin kielen taito] olisi hyödyllistä koska ihan pragmaattinen jos näkökulma ilman englantia aika vaikea ja toisaalta huomaisit että nyt viime aikoina on työministerin sivuilla on sanottu että englannin kielen taito on eduksi (D)
34. [...] minusta on tärkeä että oma kansassa on oma kieli [...] (B)
35. [...] se olisi epäoikeudenmukaista suomen kielen vastaan (D)
36. [...] englanti on uhka suomelle ainakin (D)
37. [...] ei aina se on ihan suora otettu lainaksi se on kuin tehty suomeksi (D)
38. my Finnish teacher can't speak English she he can speak a few languages for example Bulgarian, Russian of course Finnish but he can't speak English so he just use many gestures or just facial expressions or action to show me what the word means and gradually I just understand a few words of Finnish and I can gradually you know study Finnish in Finnish (C)
39. jos opiskelen suomea täällä ja minulla on helpompi niin opiskella suomea koska en puhu toinen kieli kieltä vaan suomea ja se on helpompi [...] hänellä [haastateltava C] on vaikeampi minusta suomea opiskella mutta hän käyttää kolme kieltä (B)
40. [...] maassa maan tavalla kyllä (D)
41. [...] he [suomalaiset] tietävät jos ulkomaalainen puhuu suomea se tarkoittaa että ulkomaalainen on tehnyt paljon työtä (D)
42. [...] emme voi kommunikoida meillä olisi kiva joskus keskustella koska me olemme työtoverit mutta emme voi koska hän puhuu englantia ja kiinaa (D)
43. [...] itse asiassa ihminen aina etsi jotain pelastusliivejä ja englanti silloin on kuin pelastusliivi (D)
44. [...] mutta jos ei ole muuta kun suomi minusta tuntuu et se on vain apua tästä suomi suomeksi (D)

## APPENDIX 2: THE ORIGINAL ESSAY EXTRACTS IN FINNISH

1. kun puhun opiskelijoille, joiden äidinkieli ei ole unkaria, suomea tai puolaa (F5)
2. minulla on myös ei-suomalaisia kollegoja (F2)
3. puhun tosi hyvin englantia, selvästi (F5)
4. ihan rentouttavalta (F2)
5. olen ihan itsevarma (F4)
6. Olen opiskelut englantia ja siksi se tuntuu helpolta (M1)
7. Englantia käytän vain silloin, kun on pakko tai silloin, kun haluan harjoitella sitä. (F6)
8. Joissakin tilanteissa ilmaiseminen itseensä englannin kielellä voi olla jopa helpompaa kuin suomeksi. (F6)
9. Mulla englanti on jäänyt vieläkin pääkielenä ja aina kun pärjään englannilla mä käytän sitä. (F4)
10. Englantia kuuluu kaikkialla, ulkona, bussissa, kouluissa ja toimistoissa. (F6)
11. On erilaisia alueita, joissa englannin käyttö on varsin näkyvää: yliopistossa se on tiedekieli ja auttaa ulkomaalaisia opiskelijoita ja tutkijoita. (M1)
12. Kaikki vaihtoopiskelijoiden pitää puhua englantia [...] (F4)
13. [...] yliopistossa se on tiedekieli ja auttaa ulkomaalaisia opiskelijoita ja tutkijoita. Tässä yhteydessä se on erityisesti hyödyllinen kieli ulkomaalaisille, [...] (M1)
14. Eli, englantia on tosi tärkeä, kun joku halua opiskella yliopistolla. (F3)
15. Paljon kirjoja ovat vain englanniksi. (F3)
16. Lopuksi haluaisin sanoa, että matematiikan kieli on englanti, kaikkia artikkeleja kirjoitetaan englanniksi ja siksi joskus matematiikasta keskusteleminen suomeksi ei tunnu yhtään järkevältä, kun jotkut termit eivät edes ole olemassa suomen kielessä. (F2)
17. Työmaailmassa englanti on talouskieli; erityisesti kansainvälisissä firmoissa kommunikoiivat englanniksi. (M1)
18. Sen lisäksi, englanti on mainoskieli, jota mediat arvostavat. TV:ssa on paljon englannin kielisiä ohjelmia [...] (M1)
19. Julkisesti voidaan melkein jokaisessa institutiossa selvittää asioita englanniksi. (F3)
20. Suomalaiset haluavat harjoitella englantia kun heillä on vain sellainen mahdollisuus. (F3)
21. Se on totta, että Suomessa melkein kaikki osaavat englantia. (F2)
22. Siitä osaavat ainakin jonkun verran melkein kaikki Suomen asukkaat riippumatta niiden ammateista, iästä ja sosiaaliluokista. (F6)
23. Suomalaiset lapset voivat helposti kommunikoida sillä. (F6)
24. Toisaalta, kun todella tarvitaan puhua englantia, esimerkiksi pankissa, suomalaiset pelkäävä puhua englantia. (F5)
25. Suomalaiset haluavat harjoitella englantia kun heillä on vain sellainen mahdollisuus. (F3)
26. Se joskus ärsyttää. (F2)
27. [...] kaikki halua harjoitella mutta joskus se on tosi ärsyttävää. (F5)
28. Ja näyttää vähän siltä, että jotkut ovat ylpeitä siitä [englannin kielen osaamisestaan]. Kun he näkevät, että joku on hämmenyksissä suomen kielen

- käyttäjänä, he aina iloitsevat englannin kielen harjoittamisen mahdollisuudesta. (F2)
29. [...] yleensä on vaikeaa harjoitella, koska he haluavat auttaa ja vaikka sanotaan suomea vastaavat englantia. (F5)
  30. Ehkä he haluavat olla auttavaisia, mutta lopuksi tämä ei auta-ja on lisäksi tarpeetonta. (M1)
  31. Olen usein sellaisissa tilanteissa, kun tapaan uusia ihmisiä, ne kysyvät minulta puhunko minä englantia paremmin kuin suomea ja jos se on näin voivat helposti vaihtaa kieltä ja puhuvat sillä iloksensa. (F6)
  32. [...] minusta tuntuu että se on tärkeämpi kuin ruotsi. (F4)
  33. [...] minusta näyttää siltä, että englannin kieli on jo Suomen kolmannes kotimainen kieli. (F6)
  34. Voidaan sanoa, että Englanti saa liian paljon huomiota Suomessa [...] (M1)
  35. Vaikka suomalaiset puhuvat yleensä hyvin englantia, ja vaikka Englanti on tärkeä lingua franca, en luule, että se on todella tullut kolmanneksi kieleksi. (M1)
  36. Suomea pysyy edelleen tärkeä suomalaisten identiteetin rakentamisessa. (F3)
  37. Suomen kieli on kuitenkin se ainoa kieli, jolla ihmiset Suomessa ovat itse itseseensä, koska siinä on jotain omaa, jonka ei ymmärtäisi, jos puhuisi vain englannin kielellä suomalaisten kanssa. (F6)
  38. Toisaalta, se on totta, että nyky Suomessa on paljon englannista tulevia sanoja (esim. meikki) tai synonyymeja, yksi joista on ihan englanninköinen (kuten asiayhteys ja konteksti). (F2)
  39. On Suomen kielessä sanoja jotka ovat lainattu englannin kielestä, esim. ”filis” on hauskoja neistä - mielestäni. (F3)
  40. Minusta näitä uusia sanoja ovat tosi hauskoja kun käytetään niitä puhekielessä, mutta pitää huolia kirjakieltä enemmän, ja jättää puhekielenä. (F5)
  41. Suomeen aina vaikuttivat muut kielet, pääosassa Ruotsi ja venäjä, nyt minusta eniten on vaikuttaneet englantia ja ruotsia, ei enää venäjää. (F5)
  42. Voi olla, että englantia on vielä vahvempi tulevaisuudessa. Suomi on nyt enemmän kontakteja muiden maiden kanssa. (F3)
  43. Tavallisesti kielet muuttuvat ja kehittyvät. Nuorisokielet ovat erilaisia sukupolvesta sukupolveen. (M1)
  44. Nykyisin anglisismien käyttö ja sekakielen puhuminen on ilmiö monissa maissa; (M1)
  45. [...] tämä [anglismien käyttö] voi olla ärsyttävä muoti ja toivottavasti se häviää joskus. (M1)
  46. [...] mä en tykkä että niin paljon englannin sanoja pääse suomen kieleen. (F4)
  47. [...] suomalaiset käyttävät hirveän paljon sekakieltä. (F4)
  48. [...] sekakielen puhuminen on ilmiö monissa maissa (M1)
  49. Se tekee mun tilanne helpommaksi suomen kielen opiskelijana [...] (F4)
  50. Niissä tapauksissa käytän useammin sellaisia englanninköisiä sanoja, koska se on paljon helpompaa (F2)
  51. Mutta se joskus aiheuttaa väärinkäsityksiä, kun kerran käytin „pogressiivinen”-sanaa „edistynyt” -sanan sijasta, koska olin niin tottunut siihen, että englantilaisista sanoista voidaan helposti tehdä suomalaisia sanoja. Minulle selitettiin, että tuossa tilanteessa „progressiivinen”-sana ei ollut sopiva. (F2)

52. Alussa, kun kielitaidot ovat heikko, englanti voi olla hyvä vaihtoehtoinen kili ulkomaalaisen ja suomalaisen välillä. (M1)
53. Opiskella suomea englanniksi on minusta ok opiskelun alussa, mutta myöhemmin jatkokursseilla on tehokkaampi opiskella suomea suomeksi. (M1)
54. Yleensä en käytä suomea koska selviän englannilla ja on helpompi käyttää englantia. (F4)
55. Varmasti puhuisin suomea paljon paremmin jos en osaisin puhua englantia tai jos suomalaiset eivät osaisi puhua sitä niin hyvin. (F4)
56. Kun kaikkialla, on tarpeellinen maahanmuuttajille opiskella isäntämaan kieltä. (M1)
57. Asuessaan Suomessa noin yhdeksän vuotta yksi minun kavereista sanoi kerran: “ Miksi minun täytyisi oppia suomea, kun osaan englantia ja pystyn vaivattomasti elää täällä”. Mutta, kaikki ei ole niin, kuin näyttää. Monissa virallisissa paikoissa vieraillessaan hän aina muistaa minut ja pyytää minulta tulkin apua. “ Olisitko yrittänyt oppia vaikkapa joitain suomalaisia sanoja, niin tajuisit kuinka paljon niiden osaaminen helpottaisi sinun elämääsi”[...] (F6)
58. Myös Suomessa on tavallisesti iso paine ulkomaalaisille opiskella suomea tai ruotsia tai kumpikin kieli. (M1)
59. [...] englantia tuli pääkieleksi mulle ja niiden jonkun kanssa mä aloitin puhua englanniksi ei tuntu luonnolliselta/normaaliselta puhua suomea, vaikka ne ovat suomalaiset. (F4)
60. Ja nyt, kun osaan jo riittävästi suomea, minun on silti vaikeaa muuttaa tätä tilannetta erityisesti siksi, että olen ujo henkilö, enkä voi painostaa puhumaan suomea, kun minulle pysyvästi aloitetaan puhua englanniksi. Uskon, että monella on sama ongelma. (F2)
61. Jos joku voi kannustaa ja tukea kieltä, se on äidinkielen ihmiset. Erityisesti arkipäivien tilanteissa he voisivat olla hyviä kielenopettajia; englannin käyttö on tässä yhteydessä haitallista. (M1)

### **APPENDIX 3: ASSIGNMENT FOR THE WRITTEN TASK IN FINNISH**

*Mitä ihmeen ”suomi-kerho”? Eikö Suomessa käytetä tarpeeksi suomea vai onko englannista jo todella tullut kolmas kotimainen kieli? ihmettelee Pihtiputaan mummo.*

Mitä vastaat mummolle? Mitä on sinun mielipidettäsi englannin käytöstä Suomessa? Mietti esimerkiksi englannin kielen vaikutusta suomen kielen käyttöösi. Kirjoita noin puolen liuskan, noin 200 sanaa. Saat kirjoittaa enemmänkin jos siltä tuntuu! ☺

## APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH

1

- ❖ Can you tell me shortly who you are, where you come from, what you are studying and how long you have been in Finland?

2a

- ❖ Have you learned English?
- ❖ Are you an English user?

☺

- Where did you learn English?
- How long? How intensive?
- How would you judge/rate your own English use? (good, sufficient, bad)
- How do you feel as an English user? (easy, relaxing, stressful)
- What picture, association comes to your mind when you think of your relationship to the English language? When you hear the following expression: English and you?

-You have learnt English e.g. at school, **where** else but in the classroom did you use English in your home country? Can you think of places, situations related to the use of English?

-Where did you use English?

-**With whom** did you use (a lot of) English?

-Are there **typical situations** (reoccurring), in which you (always) used English?

-**How?** Did you speak, write, read or listen (a lot)?

-Was there any (weighty, important) reason for you to use English instead of your mother tongue? = **What were the reasons** for the use of English? (possible benefits)

3a ☺

Now that you are living in Finland, have you noticed that your own **use of English has changed?**

Do you use more, less English?

**Why** is the situation different/or not now? Can you explain

-**Where** do you use English in Finland? Tell me about place, situations, that you can think of

-**With whom** did you use (a lot of) English?

-Are there **typical situations** (reoccurring), in which you (always) used English?

-**How?** Did you speak, write, read or listen (a lot)?

-How do you maintain/develop your English language skills? (books, internet, media)

-Why do you as a Finnish as a Second language –learner use English instead of Finnish?

-Have you noticed that you use English and Finnish at the same time? –In which situations?

-What do you think of Finnish as a second language-learners using English in Finland?

4

- ❖ Have you noticed an influence of media/internet on your own English usage/ English language use in general?

5

You have talked about your experiences and opinions of English language use in your home country and Finland, do you think there are differences? Which are the most significant ones?

Can you think of what influenced the most? (family, school(grades), language policy in your home country/Finland, global language policy-English as lingua franca

Does English have an influence on the Finnish language?

6

What kind of status/image/appearance English has in Finland?

What do you think of Finland's English language policy/practice?

Should English language learning be stressed more? Or is there sufficient teaching?

Think of your own situation (as a University student).

Nowadays, do all people have to use English? Do University students have to? (English as the academic language)

Do you think the use of English is useful in Finland? Where, for whom?

Do you think the use of English could bring disadvantages? Why?

More advantages or disadvantages?

7

My last question: Do you think English will become Finland's third official language (*kolmas kotimainen*) (after Swedish)?