UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

FROM INTERDEPEDENCE TO AGENCY: MIGRANTS AS LEARNERS OF
ENGLISH AND FINNISH IN FINLAND

A Pro Gradu Thesis in English

by

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract

Maahanmuuttajien määrä Suomessa on kasvanut räjähdysmäisesti sitten 1990-luvun. Muutos väestörakenteessa vaikuttaa myös suomalaisten koulujen arkeen ja opettajien työhön, mutta tutkimusta maahanmuuttajista erityisesti kieliaineiden oppijina on vähän. Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena olikin selvittää millainen maahanmuuttajan kielellinen ympäristö Suomessa on ja erityisesti sitä millainen vaikutus sillä on kielten oppimiseen. Tutkimus tarkastelee maahanmuuttajia toiminnan teorian valossa, ja vastauksia haettiin seuraaviin kysymyksiin: 1) miten maahanmuuttajaoppijat käsitteellistävät itsensä englannin ja suomen kielten oppijina, 2) minkälaisia välittyneisyyden keinoja he käyttävät englannin ja suomen kielten opiskelussa, 3) minkälainen suhde muodostuu formaalin ja informaalin oppimisen välille ja 4) miten maahanmuuttajaoppijat rakentavat omaa toiminnallisuuttaan englannin ja suomen kielten oppijina.

Tutkimuksen aineistona oli 46 englannin ja 46 suomen kielen oppimiskuvaa ja yksi puolistrukturoitu haastattelu. Aineisto analysointiin sisällön analyysin periaatteiden keinoin. Tutkimukseen osallistujat olivat iältään 15-35-vuotiaita maahanmuuttajanuoria eri kieli- ja kulttuuritaustoista. Heidän saapumisikänsä Suomeen vaihteli huomattavasti, mutta yhteistä kaikille oli, että he eivät olleet syntyneet Suomessa. Tässä tutkimuksessa termi *maahanmuuttaja* viittaakin ainoastaan henkilöihin, jotka eivät ole syntyneet maassa.

Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittivat, että ensiksikin maahanmuuttajanuoret ovat monipuolisia kielenoppijia, jotka rakentavat identiteettiä jatkuvassa dialogissa ympäristön kanssa. Toiseksi he käyttivät hyväkseen monia välittyneisyyden keinoja: erityisesti muilla ihmisillä oli tärkeä rooli oppimisprosessissa, mutta myös media (sis. kirjat) vaikutti oppimiseen. Kolmanneksi niin formaalit kuin informaalit oppimisen keinot muodostivat pohjan maahanmuuttajanuorten englannin ja suomen kielen omaksumiselle. He etsivät aktiivisesti mahdollisuuksia käyttää kieliä koulun ulkopuolella. Lisäksi neljännes vastaajista osoitti merkkejä toiminnallisuus-ajattelusta, mikä oli odotettua vähemmän, sillä muut tulokset osoittivat heidän elämässään olevan paljolti sosiaalista ja kulttuurillista pääomaa, jossa toiminnallisuus voisi kasvaa. Tuloksen ajateltiin heijastavan enemminkin valittua tutkimusmetodia kuin vastaajien toiminnallisuusajattelun puutetta.

Kaiken kaikkiaan tutkimuksen tulokset antavat toisen ja vieraiden kielten opettajille sekä tutkijoille kuvan siitä, millainen maahanmuuttajan kielellinen todellisuus Suomessa on ja miten tätä voidaan hyödyntää kielten opetuksessa.

Asiasanat – Keywords
sociocultural framework, activity theory, migrants, immigrants, content analysis, learning portraits, foreign language learning, second language learning

Säilytyspaikka – Depository
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Muita tietoja – Additional information

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1 INTRODUCTION

Migrants make up only three per cent of the entire population of Finland (Statistics Finland 2010c), which is quite a low number when compared to, for example, the other Nordic countries. The demographic change, however, has been significant and it has taken place in a relatively short period of time as the number of migrants did not really start to increase rapidly until the 1990s. Subsequently, the Finnish education system has had to adapt to new kinds of challenges and learners' needs. Matters are made more complicated by the fact that migrants form an extremely heterogeneous group whose linguistic, cultural and educational backgrounds vary extensively. In other words, the term *migrant* is used to talk about a wide variety of people, some of whom have just arrived in the country, while others have been born in Finland. Recent studies (Kuusela et al 2008) have shown that migrant learners generally performed weaker than other learners, and as a consequence, the present study rose out of questions such as what can be done to help migrants to succeed in Finnish schools, and in particular, in language classrooms. It is important to note that in the present study the term migrant only refers to people who have not been born in the country.

While migrants in Finland have been studied quite extensively starting from the 1970s, the focus has for the most part been on Finnish migrants moving from Finland to Sweden and vice versa, migrants' adaptation process into Finnish society or the education system at large (Alitolppa-Niitamo 2004; Jaakkola et al 2004; Jasinskalaja-Lahti 2000; Jasinskaja-Lahti et al 2002), or they have been studied from the perspective of the (class) teacher (Jauhiainen and Luostarinen 2004; Leducq 2006; Miettinen 2001). Relatively little research has been done on the "new" group of migrants in the Finnish school system especially in foreign language classrooms and in particular from the point of view of the learner. Teaching a foreign language, in this case English, in a language that is not the learners' mother tongue, that is, a second language, in this case Finnish, poses an obvious dilemma for language teachers and of course also to the language learner himself/herself. Therefore, the present study set out to examine the linguistic world of a migrant learner, that is to say, what are migrant's foreign and second language learning experiences like, and above all, what is the relationship of the environment to the learning process.

Carrying out research in this particular field was thought significant as migrant learners in Finnish classrooms have not only become a topic of educational discourse

but also a part of a national dialogue. Teachers and policymakers alike have expressed concern over the growing migrant population and the different measures taken to facilitate for them in the fear of following the current developments regarding migrants in other European countries. In order to avoid similar issues, that is, to improve migrants' integration process into Finnish society and that of the society's to the demographic and cultural change, more research on migrants in general and in migrant learners in particular is required.

The present study operates within activity theory, which is a later development in the framework of sociocultural research. The fundamental concept of activity theory is that while humans may appear to operate on an individual level, their actions are the result of ontogenesis in a particular community or society (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 59; Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 144). This view offers an interesting concept to investigating the linguistic world of learners in general, and particularly that of migrant learners who have experienced a change of the linguistic environment. What activity theorists propose is that language learning is more than just the acquisition of forms: it is about finding and developing "new ways of mediating ourselves and our relationships to others and to ourselves" (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 145). In essence, as migrants' histories no longer necessarily serve them in the new community, they are forced to build a new narrative in an attempt to become integrated within the new society. The process involves the individual actively seeking out meaningful relationships within the host community and using the available resources (mediational tools) to their benefit. To which degree membership in the host community is achieved, is not only depended on the learner but also on the community and the people living in it: essentially integration is a dialogue between the newcomers and the old-timers.

On the basis of the concepts developed by activity theorists, the first objective of the study was to investigate how migrant learners see and conceptualize themselves as learners of English and Finnish. The second objective dealt with exploring the mediational tools they use in learning English and Finnish, followed by an examination of the relationship between formal and informal ways of learning. The final objective of the present study was to assess how migrant learners construct their own learning, that is, their agency in regards to learning English and Finnish. The present study set out to study the topic through visual narratives, to be exact, language learning portraits, the concept of which was based on a pre-existing study by Kalaja et al (2008). The data

consisted of 46 English learning portraits and of 46 Finnish learning portraits in addition to one semi-structured interview. The data was analysed by means of content analysis.

The journey into the world of a migrant learner begins by a description of the role of migrants in Finnish society in the past and now in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 moves on to discussing activity theory and its contributions to foreign and second language learning, that is, the theoretical framework behind the present study. This is followed by an examination of the linguistic world of a migrant in Chapter 4 from three perspectives, the legislative, the educational and the societal. The focus is then shifted to previous research in Chapter 5, followed by a thorough account of the choice of methodology, data collection, participants and the analysis procedures in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 presents the findings of the study, which are then discussed in the light of previous research in Chapter 8, in which also the strengths and weaknesses of the present study will be evaluated and suggestions for future research suggested.

2 MIGRANTS IN FINLAND

Migration into Finland accelerated in the 1980s and 1990s, and there is no sign that this development is going to decelerate any time soon. Handling the rapid growth of the migrant population and responding to the needs of the new group has not been easy for Finnish society. This chapter aims to illustrate how the demographic structure has changed, but first it is essential to examine the term *migrant* itself.

2.1 Defining terms: who is a migrant?

The term *immigrant* is a so called umbrella term, that is, it is a general term which encompasses a diverse group of people. Immigrants have traditionally been classified into specific groups on the basis of their reason for entry. Such groups are as follows: *refugees*, *asylum-seekers*, *quota refugees, returnees* and *migrants* (Liebkind 1994: 10). It should be noted, however, that even though immigrants can be classified into the aforementioned groups, people's reasons for emigration even within one group vary significantly. Moreover, there is debate over what terms to use when discussing each specific group in question.

In the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention, the UNHRC (2010) defined a *refugee* to be a person who "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country". In short, the term *refugee* refers to a person who has been forced to leave his/her country of origin and seek refuge somewhere else. The term *asylum-seeker* is often confused with the term *refugee*, and the two are indeed interrelated. The UNHRC (2010) defines an *asylum-seeker* as a person applying for the status of *refugee* but who is still under evaluation. *Quota refugees* are *refugees* who have already received an official refugee status from the United Nations prior to entering the host country (Liebkind 1994: 10). As stated by the Aliens Act (301/2004: 32) of Finland, the Refugee Quota Policy denotes admitting people in need of international protection and redeployment in relation to the government's yearly budget. According to the Ministry of the Interior (Sisäasiainministeriö 2010a), Finland's Refugee Quota Policy in 2011 covers 750 refugees: 200 Myanmarians from Thailand, 150 Congolese from Ruanda, 300 Afghans

from Iran, in addition to 100 refugees in urgent need of redeployment from undefined nationalities. Afghans have not been accepted into Finland under the Refugee Quota Policy since 2005, because at the time it was thought that conditions in Afghanistan and Iran would improve quickly (Sisäasianministeriö 2010b). This has, however, not been the case, and for many Afghans the possibility of returning home is minimal, and thus, they were included in Finland's Refugee Quota Policy again in 2010 and 2011. The Ministry of the Interior (Sisäasiainministeriö 2010b) states that *quota refugees* are chosen on the basis of personal interviews, and that Finland has in the past stressed the importance of choosing women in a weak standing.

Essentially, *(quota) refugees* and *asylum seekers* look for protection outside of their own country's borders and have, consequently, been forced to leave their homes. *Returnees* and *migrants*, on the other hand, choose to relocate in search of a better life, for instance. Liebkind (1994: 9) says that *a migrant* is, therefore, a person who moves to another country voluntarily and permanently. The reasons behind the relocation are multiple: marriage, work, or studies, just to name a few. *Migrant workers,* as well as seasonal workers, form a group of their own as they do not usually intend to stay permanently even though their relocation is voluntary. According to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö 2007: 16), *a returnee* is either a person who has lived in the country before but has later decided to emigrate somewhere else, or a person who is a member of an ethnic group of Finnish extraction (e.g. Ingrians). In other words, people with Finnish heritage or some other close connection to Finland can receive a permit of residence under specific conditions. For instance, up until July 2011 an Ingrian who during 1943-1944 was displaced in Finland and later returned to the Soviet Union, a person who had served in the Finnish army during 1939-1945, or a person or one of his/her parents or at least two of his/her four grandparents have or have had Finnish citizenship and who speak adequate Finnish or Swedish, was eligible for a residence permit as stated in the Aliens Act (301/2004: 13). As mentioned, legislation concerning Ingrians has recently changed and from 2011 onwards they have had to go trough the same procedures as other foreigners willing to reside in the country (Sisäasiainministeriö 2011).

It is clear that the term *immigrant* is not unambiguous by nature. Instead, it includes people from various backgrounds. Nonetheless, what is common to all groups with the exception of returnees, is that they form new ethnic minorities in the new country of residence (Liebkind 1994: 10). It is important to be aware of the

dissimilarities between the different groups as, for example, their status affects their rights and obligations in the host country (discussed in more detail in Chapter 4). Furthermore, one should also be aware of the fact that who is perceived to be *an immigrant* is often defined by other means than by official definitions, that is, the majority tends to associate the term with certain people and groups only - more often than not, with people whose outward appearance somehow differs from "the norm" (Löytty 2009). Thus, people who blend into the host population, or for instance, highly educated people, are not generally recognized as immigrants. It should also be noted that not all immigrants perceive themselves to be immigrants even if the majority does.

In addition, the term immigrant is often linked to people of immigrant background, in other words, people who have been born in the country and thus are usually citizens, but whose parent or parents have arrived in the country from somewhere else. These days the term *person with/from an immigrant background* is considered a condescending and derogatory term: when exactly is it that one stops being an immigrant? Liebkind (1994: 10-11) points out that it is without a doubt different to grow up in a family in which both parents are immigrants than in one in which one or both parents belong to the majority. This is undeniably true, but we have to account for the fact that a Finn whose parents are immigrants or an immigrant who arrives in the country at a very early age, is in a very different position than an immigrant who arrives in the country at an older age. The first two mentioned grow to be a part of society in a drastically dissimilar way than the latter as one has to learn an entirely new language and familiarize oneself with a new culture after being forced to leave one's home. The rather problematic term has recently been replaced by *a person from a multicultural background,* which is a more neutral term, even though it seems to imply that a person who belongs to the majority and who speaks the majority language, does not live in a multicultural environment.

As has become evident, there has been a great deal of debate over what terms to use when talking about immigrants and of who should be classified as one in the first place. Thus, using specific terms when discussing immigrants is to some extent problematic, and it seems that each researcher has to coin terms best suited for their own purposes. In Pisa 2000, for example, immigrant pupils were categorized into three groups: 1) native pupils who were born in the country and who have at least one parent born in the country, 2) first-generation pupils who were born in the country but whose parents were not, and 3) non-native pupils who were born outside the country (Malin

2005: 49). The pupils assessed were in other words categorized on the basis of their own as well as their parents' birth place, which is somewhat less problematic than categorization based on, for example, mother tongue. That is to say, an individual might regard some other language than the first one as their mother tongue. There is, however, evidence of a gradual shift from the use of the term *immigrant*, which has during recent years been associated with rather negative connotations, to the term *migrant* as a general term to be used when talking about immigrants. Nonetheless, a consensus has not been reached, and the two terms are often used interchangeably in current research (see for example Hélot and Young 2002; Hoffman 2007; Malin 2005). In the present study the term *migrant* (and all of its derivatives) will be adopted to mean the entire group in question, that is, the present study does not differentiate between different statuses or reasons for entry as it was not seen relevant. What should be remembered, however, is that in the present study the term *migrant* only refers to people who were not born in Finland, and who do not speak Finnish or Swedish as their mother tongue (or at least Finnish or Swedish was not the first language they acquired).

2.2 Migrants in Finland in the past and today

Wallenius (2001: 59) is of the opinion that the topic of migration may be slightly more "controversial and difficult" in Finland than in other European Union (EU) countries as Finns "are not yet very used to foreigners". Even though this statement was made ten years ago, Wallenius has a point: for most of Finland's history, Finland has been a country which people emigrated from, rather than migrated to. Of course, this does not mean that there was no migration to Finland until recently. According to Wallenius (2001: 59), there was already a significant foreign population in Finland in the 18th century as a result of Finland first being a part of Sweden until 1809, and then a Grand Duchy of Imperial Russia until independence in 1917. During the 1930s and 1940s, however, Finland had no choice but to focus on domestic matters because of the turmoil caused by the World Wars, and for the next few decades migration patterns into the country remained quiet: Finland was "characterized as a net population loser" (Wallenius 2001: 59). It was not until the 1980s and 1990s that migration finally picked up speed due to changes in Finland's international role. Firstly, post Cold War geopolitics took a turn when the Soviet Union collapsed at the turn of the decade giving Finland's image an immediate uplift, and secondly, Finland became a member of the

EU in 1995 which enhanced international mobility to and from the country (Martikainen 2009: 23; Wallenius 2001: 59, 61). At this time Finland also made it easier for Finnish speaking people or their descendants - mostly Ingrian Finns - from nearby areas to return to Finland by creating a special migration class *returnees* (Wallenius 2001: 61). The law regarding Ingrians, however, changed in July of 2011 and they are no longer eligible for a residence permit on the basis of previous standards (Sisäasianministeriö 2011).

The number of migrants in Finland has increased steadily since the 1980s and particularly during the 1990s. The rapid growth curve is illustrated in Table 1. The number of migrants in Finland in 1990 was 26,255, but already in 2000, it had increased to 91,074 (Statistics Finland 2010c). In 2009, the number had grown to 155,705, nearly doubling the amount of migrants in Finland in a period of nine years (Statistics Finland 2011). The number of Finnish citizens in 2009 was 5,195,722 of whom 93,536 had been born abroad (ibid). All in all, almost 3% of all inhabitants in Finland are migrants, which is still a relatively low figure when compared to, for example, the other Nordic countries. According to the United Nations report World Population Policies 2005 (Wikipedia 2010), Sweden reported that 12.3% of its total population were migrants, and similar figures for Denmark were 7.163%, for Norway 7.73% and for Iceland 7.666%. It should be noted that numerous migrants in Finland have already become citizens, suggesting that the number of migrants could actually be somewhat higher than 3%. Having said that, it does not change the fact that the figure is still one of the lowest in Europe. Nearly half of all migrants in Finland (44%) live in the greater Helsinki region, that is, Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa and Kauniainen (Liebkind et al 2004).

Table 1. Foreigners in Finland (Statistics Finland 2010c; *2011)

Country of citizenship:	1990	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	*2009
Russia		20 552	22 724	24 336	24 998	24 626	24 621	25 326	26 211	26 909	
Estonia		10 839	11 662	12 428	13 397	13 978	15 459	17 599	20 006	22 604	
Sweden	6 051	7 887	7 999	8 037	8 124	8 209	8 196	8 265	8 349	8 439	
Somalia	44	4 190	4 355	4 537	4 642	4 689	4 704	4 623	4 852	4 919	
China	312	1 668	1 929	2 086	2 372	2 613	2 992	3 382	3 978	4 620	
Thailand	239	1 306	1 540	1 784	2 055	2 289	2 605	2 994	3 470	3 932	
Germany	1 568	2 201	2 327	2 461	2 565	2 626	2 792	2 978	3 318	3 502	
Turkey	310	1 784	1 981	2 146	2 287	2 359	2 621	2 886	3 182	3 429	
Irak	107	3 102	3 222	3 420	3 485	3 392	3 267	3 045	3 036	3 238	
United Kingdom	1 365	2 207	2 352	2 535	2 651	2 655	2 762	2 910	3 143	3 213	
India	270	756	892	1 012	1 169	1 343	1 619	1 990	2 333	2 736	
Former Serbia and Montenegro		1 204	1 935	2 177	2 782	3 336	3 321	3 340	2 986	2 637	
Iran	336	1 941	2 166	2 363	2 531	2 555	2 562	2 602	2 611	2 508	
United States	1 475	2 010	2 110	2 146	2 149	2 040	2 086	2 199	2 296	2 282	
Vietnam	292	1 814	1 778	1 713	1 661	1 538	1 657	1 811	2 010	2 270	
Afghanistan	3	386	719	1 061	1 312	1 588	1 833	2 011	2 197	2 189	
Poland	582	694	743	768	802	810	899	1 083	1 446	1 888	
Ukraine		961	1 133	1 248	1 317	1 298	1 352	1 460	1 618	1 798	
Bosnia and Herzegovina		1 627	1 668	1 701	1 694	1 641	1 584	1 599	1 658	1 723	
France	327	859	947	962	1 041	985	1 114	1 240	1 376	1 490	
Others	12 974	23 086	24 395	24 761	23 969	23 776	25 806	28 396	32 632	36 930	
Total	**26 255**	**91 074**	**98 577**	**103 682**	**107 003**	**108 346**	**113 852**	**121 739**	**132 708**	**143 256**	***155 705**

According to Statistics Finland (2010c), 90.7% of the people residing in Finland, citizens and non-citizens alike, spoke Finnish as their mother tongue, when 5.4% reported Swedish, and 0.03% Sami to be their native language. 3.9% of the population spoke some other language as their mother tongue. As shown in Figure 1, the five largest foreign language groups were formed by Russian, Estonian, English, Somali and Arabic speakers. There has not been much shifting or change in the numbers: the largest language groups have maintained their position during the last two decades. It should be remembered that one can only report one mother tongue to these kinds of statistics, and thus, natively bilingual individuals have to choose which one to declare as their native language. Hence, it is likely that there are more foreign language speakers, that is, not Finnish, Swedish or Sami speakers, in Finland than these statistics suggest.
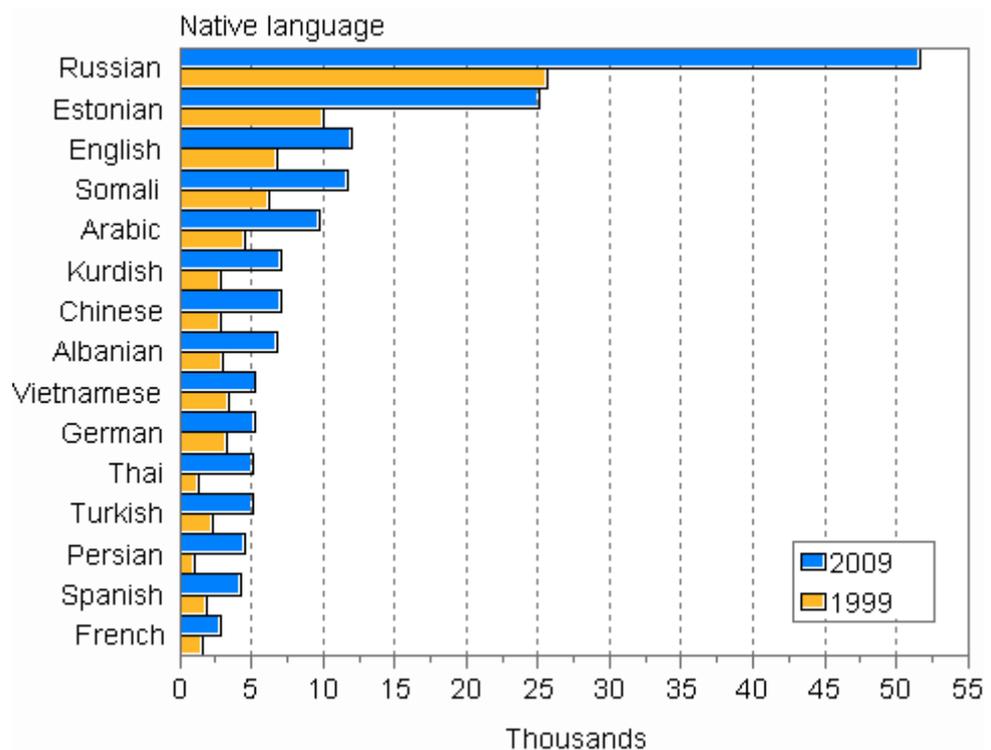
Figure 1. The largest groups by native language 1999 and 2009 (Statistics Finland 2010a).

On the whole it is clear from all of the statistics presented that Finland is not as a homogeneous country as is often portrayed, and all signs point to the current trend continuing. For example, it has been predicted that the population in the greater Helsinki area (covering Helsinki, Espoo, Kauniainen, Vantaa and Hyvinkää, Järvenpää,

Kerava, Kirkkonummi, Mäntsälä, Nurmijärvi, Pornainen, Sipoo, Tuusula and Vihti) will grow from the current 1.32 million to 1.6 million by 2030, of which 15% will be of foreign origin (Helsingin kaupungin tietokeskus 2010: 13). The current number is 7.5%, meaning that the number of migrants will double by the year 2030. Nearly half of the 15% is under 18 years old, which indicates that the number of migrant learners entering the Finnish education system will grow in the future. When it comes to teaching migrant learners, Finnish society has come a long way since the initial years but it is evident that there still is a long road ahead. For that reason, it is important that this heterogeneous group of learners be researched in more detail in order for the Finnish education system to be able to meet the needs of the learners in question. This is an issue to which teacher training in particular has to pay more attention - not just in the future, but now.

3 ACTIVITY THEORY

Activity theory is a part of the sociocultural framework, and thus, inspired by the works of Vygotsky, Leontjev and Bakhtin. Activity theory is a later development in the aforementioned field of research but as described by Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 209), it has matured to be "a well-established approach to contemporary research in the fields of applied linguistics, psychology, human-computer interaction, cognitive science, anthropology, communications, workplace studies", and most importantly in terms of this study, education. Engeström (1999: 19-20), describes the evolution of the theory in question over three generations. As one might presume, the first generation concentrates on the work of Vygotsky, and in particular on his conception of *cultural mediation*: a human being is mediated by concepts and cultural entities with the help of diverse artefacts. The second generation centres on the work of Vygotsky's grandson A.N. Leontjev, who moved from Vygotsky's cultural mediation towards human *activity* taking into account issues of cultural diversity and difference. The work of the third generation, then, is still under progress. According to Engeström (1999: 20), the focus should now be directed towards developing and improving the multivoicedness of the theory. At this point we would like to point out that it ought to be remembered that the sociocultural framework or the activity theory is by no means one unified theory, even though most interpretations draw on the ideas of the above-mentioned Russian academics. Therefore, overlap will not only occur within the three generations of activity theorists, but also with activity theory and sociocultural theories.

The ideas of the second and third generation of activity theorists are the most relevant to the present study as they have paid increasing attention to the (cultural) environment in which learners live: how does environment affect human interaction and behaviour in a specific community? This offers new interesting ways of investigating the linguistic world of learners in general, and in particular that of migrant learners who have had to move from one linguistic environment to another. In this respect, the second and third generations of activity theorists offer an especially useful concept of agency - broadly defined as an individual's capacity to act in a set environment - which allows us to examine the ways in which learners adjust to and act in a new setting. The purpose of this chapter, then, is to provide a description of activity theory and to clarify the theory's key concepts, some of which have already been mentioned above, and how exactly they can be adapted to such a heterogeneous and diverse group of people as

migrants. To start with, the focus will first be on the mediated mind, a key notion in the sociocultural framework and in activity theory, and then on activity itself. Lastly, we will move on to discussing agency, and the perspectives and adaptations activity theory offers to second language learning and teaching.

3.1 The mediated mind and artefacts

Mediation is a fundamental concept in the sociocultural framework, and hence it also contributes to activity theory which is likewise based on the idea that all human activity is mediated due to the fact that the human mind, consciousness, is mediated. The argument is that humans inhabit two worlds: 1) one consists of signs and symbols, which are mainly controlled through language, 2) and the other comprises of material objects, which are principally managed through the individual's hands and brain (Harré and Gillet as cited by Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 59). Vygotsky proposed that the two worlds are indeed interrelated: "human development is the product of a broader system than just the system of a person's individual functions, specifically, systems of social connections and relations, of collective forms of behaviour and social cooperation" (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 59). The statement, therefore, is that while humans may operate on an individual level, their actions are the result of ontogenesis in a particular community or society, and thus, the cultural and biological inheritance of an individual regulates his/her actions and mental processes. Thus, the control of mental functions regulating the individual's activity is in essence a shift from the environment to the individual (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 144-145).

According to Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 59), Vygotsky's primary claim consequently is that "higher functions of human mental activity are mediated by culturally constructed auxiliary means", which in turn are developed as a result of participation and involvement in cultural activities (e.g. raising and educating children) in which cultural artefacts (e.g. books, technology, toys) and cultural concepts (e.g. self, family, time, law, religion) "interact in complex, dynamic ways with each other and with psychological phenomena" (Ratner 2002: 10). In other words, humans' higher mental functions such as memory, attention, rational thinking, emotion and learning, which have been shaped by the individual's cultural and biological inheritance, are under the intentional and voluntary control of the human, and the common factor regulating all functions is human language activity (Lantolf and Thorne 2009: 59). As

follows, the human mind is "mediated through culturally constructed and organized means" (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 60).

What we can conclude hitherto is that mediation is a process during which "humans deploy culturally constructed artefacts, concepts, and activities to regulate (i.e. gain voluntary control over and transform) the material world or their own and each other's social and mental activity" (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 79). What is then actually meant by *artefact*? Artefacts can be described as tools that help humans control their actions. Typically, we can talk of symbolic and material tools (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 60, 62). Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 60) and Engeström (1983: 92) describe material tools (e.g. hammer, computer) as artefacts that are placed between human activity and the external object of that particular activity. Fundamentally, "physical tools extend the reach and power of our bodies and their use results in a change in the object toward which they are directed" thus altering the material world (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 60). Furthermore, Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 60) and Engeström (1983: 92) explain that symbolic artefacts include tools such as speaking and writing activity, that is, language, and similarly to material tools, they can to some degree be used to regulate the object, which in this case involves the people to whom the language activity is directed. In addition, unlike material tools, symbolic tools may also be directed inwardly as a means of self-regulation. What is common to all kinds of artefacts is that they can be viewed as amplifiers - material tools enhance humans' ability to act in the material world, and correspondingly symbolic tools (e.g. literacy) increase memory and "the capacity to organize and communicate information and knowledge" (Scollon in Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 60). Artefacts can in this fashion be determined as "simultaneously material and conceptual aspects of human goal-directed activity", which at times are external and thus visible to other humans (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 62-63).

Quintessentially, everything can be summarized in the diagram in Figure 2. As explained by Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 61-62), the relationship between people and the world is mediated, indirect (solid arrows) and direct (dotted arrow). On the one hand, the direct relationship refers to involuntary actions such as involuntary attention (e.g. turn towards loud noise), involuntary reflex (e.g. sidestepping from the course of a fast moving object), and involuntary memory (e.g. highly emotional memories triggered by stimuli). On the other hand, the indirect relationship is composed of the "historically cumulative cultural generations of auxiliary means [symbolic and physical artefacts]

that are inserted between ourselves and objects - -" (p. 62). These auxiliary means, primarily language, enable humans to voluntarily control and organize, that is, mediate, mental activity, which in turn is concretized in practical activity in the material world (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 62, 211). Language is the most important tool for humans as it is a way to deploy meditational means for thinking, that is, to regulate thinking and not construct it (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 79). Language does not only serve as a tool to control one's mental functions but it also serves the role of social interaction as well as an arbitrator of socially elaborated meanings embedded in the language practises of the community (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 216).

Artifacts/concepts/activities

Subject < - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - > object
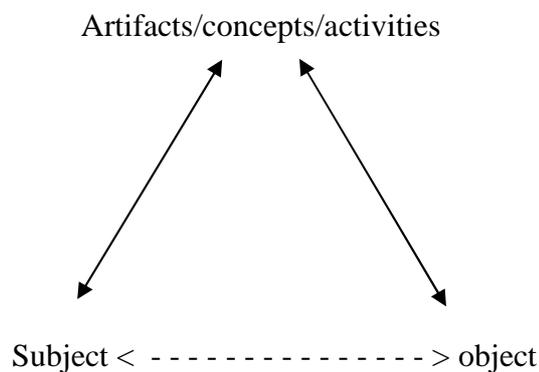
Figure 2. The mediate nature of human/world relationship (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 62).

When considering all of the above, it becomes apparent that not only does the environment regulate the behaviour of individuals, but the individual also actively takes part in constructing the environment in which s/he lives. In other words, people are not "free agents" as one might put it, but rather we all belong to different communities of practise, which affect the way we live our lives. But what actually constitutes a community of practise? The term was originally coined by Wenger (2006) and his colleague Lave, who defined communities of practise as "groups who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly", that is, a community of practise consists of people who "engage in a process of collective learning" either intentionally or incidentally. Wenger (2006) further points out that there are three crucial characteristics that a community has to fulfil in order to be regarded as a community of practise in the first place. Firstly, a shared domain of interest that members have committed to and are differentiated by is required. Secondly,

members take part in joint activities which enable them to learn from one another. Thirdly and most importantly, together the members develop a shared practise, "a repertoire of resources", which they rely on to carry out different functions in the community. While different communities of practise share the aforementioned qualities, they are not by any means uniform in nature: some are, for example, formally recognized while others are informal, even invisible (Wenger 2006). The present study recognizes and operates on the basis of Wenger's (2006) classification of a community of practise but also uses the term to essentially cover Finnish society as a whole as the individuals concerned with it are seen to fulfil the criteria discussed above. After all, inhabitants of any country can be considered to be a part of a shared practise which not only regulates their lives but to which they also have an interest in sustaining in order to maintain order.

Consequently, it can be argued that people behave in the way they do because the community of practise expects them to follow certain norms but the norms themselves are not set in stone - they can be altered or deviated from if the individual finds them unsuitable. It all sounds rather straightforward particularly when these ideas are applied to people who have grown to be a part of certain society from childhood and have lived in that society more or less their entire lives. The next logical question is how these concepts can be applied to people such as migrants who have either voluntarily or under compulsion moved to a new cultural environment. If we accept the idea that an individual's activity is a shift from the environment to the individual (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 79), we can reason that being able to act successfully, i.e. in ways that are accepted by the larger society, in a new setting means accepting and living according to the norms of the new community of practise at least to some degree. Of course, for the process to be successful, the surrounding community has to facilitate for the newcomers: it is not a unidirectional process but rather a two-way process. What is more, as language is possibly the most important tool humans use to regulate their own and each other's actions, learning the language forms a fundamental part of the integration process, especially as access to the new culture without it is difficult, if not nearly impossible. Therefore, it is imperative that the linguistic world of migrants be studied in order to come up with new strategies to help and ease integration. Interestingly, activity theory in this respect follows the guidelines set by acculturation theorists (acculturation is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4).

3.2 Activity

Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 210) note that activity theory "addresses the sociogenesis of human consciousness and the practises that contribute to its ongoing formation". In this respect, activity theory follows the general sociocultural framework as it understands the human consciousness to be "a product of society" (Leontjev as cited by Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 211), denoting that the human mind is mediated. The theory supports the idea that mental processes, carried out with the help of material and symbolic artefacts, of an individual and that of society, are intertwined, completed according to the social and material conditions of everyday practise (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 213). Subsequently, the question is how exactly activity ties into all of this. What activity theory assumes is that human activity, behaviour, is the core of all human thinking, awareness, and conceptualization (Engeström 1983: 90).

In the view of Nikiforov (1990: 28) and Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 215), activity has two major functions that merge together. First, to affect and alter the material world, and "second, it is a means of expressing and developing a person's knowledge, skills and abilities" (Nikiforov 1990: 28). Activity is specifically a human form of activeness which aims to transform the reality, the material world (Nikiforov 1990: 23). What separates human activity from animals is primarily the fact that human functions are goal-oriented, and that humans deploy artefacts in accomplishing them (Engeström 1983: 90, Nikiforov 1990: 23). Nikiforov (1990: 23) states that "aimless activeness is not activity": thus a distinction has to be made between action and activity. For example, a person yawning displays activeness, but not activity. Nikiforov (1990: 23) and Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 218) say that, on the one hand, a condition of activity is that it is motivated by a goal, and that it is thought out in advance to some degree. On the other hand, to carry out the activity, the goal has to be executed in accordance with the situation in which the person has to act - it defines the ways and means to reach the goal. An individual has to rely on cultural knowledge and practices that characterize the situation (and the goal itself) as well as his/her higher mental functions.

Nikiforov (1990: 24) explains that achieving a goal may actually include several activities, but individual actions are only considered to be activity if they indeed are aimed at the same single goal. What is more, he argues that activity is impersonal in nature, that is, the performer of the activity is inconsequential, as the activity is defined

by the goal and the situation, and not by the performer's personal characteristics. He also states that as humans try to alter the material world, they at the same time reveal their actual perceptions and attitudes of the surrounding environment. As a consequence, "activeness has the personal imprint of an individual belonging to a particular historical era, of a representative of a particular culture" (Nikiforov 1990: 28). It is important to note here that activity does not necessarily mean a successful implementation of a goal, rather activity is always directed towards one even though the result may be unsuccessful or unexpected (Nikiforov 1990: 25).

Essentially what we can deduce here is that carrying out a successful activity means being able to perform in a culturally set way or the activity is considered unsuccessful, that is, not an activity at all. This notion is somewhat problematic as it is clear to anyone who has been abroad that one can act successfully in an unfamiliar culture without knowing the correct and preferred ways of doing something - granted that the locals, the cultural experts, might consider one a bit rude for it. Perhaps we can, therefore, reason that an activity can be successful without the knowledge of the ways of the community of practise, but if one truly wants to become a member of the community, one has to acquire this information in order to be accepted by the larger society. In this regard, Nikiforov's (1990: 24) argument of activity being impersonal by nature seems rather odd. Certainly in the case of migrants it is exactly the performer's personal characteristics that influence the success of the activity as they do not necessarily possess the cultural knowledge needed to carry it out in the expected way.

Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 216) recognize three hierarchical levels of human behaviour: 1) the activity level motivated by biological or social needs, 2) an action "that instantiates the motive in the form of goal-directed behaviour", 3) operations which are automatized or habituated actions responding to immediate social-material conditions in the situation at hand. These three levels can be distinguished as different perspectives of the same event, or as embedded levels (Wells 1999: 117-118). As already proposed by Nikiforov (1990: 23-24), activity is the broadest level process connected to a biologically or culturally shaped motive, a goal, which guides the actions of the individual. Lantolf and Thorne's (2006: 219) definition of actions does, however, slightly differ from that of Nikiforov's presented above. Actions in this three-level hierarchical categorization refer to goal-directed actions that are autonomous from the activity: the same "action can serve a variety of activities" (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 219). Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 219) illustrate this by an example of bike-riding which

can potentially serve various high-level activities such as recreation (e.g. a child playing), or work (e.g. a bike messenger). An action is, therefore, according to this definition, more concrete than an activity, but it can still be an intentional or a strategic move unlike Nikiforov (1990: 23) suggested. Operations, as described by Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 219), are "the real-time in-process means by which an action is carried out". Operations will serve the same action even if the conditions change, unlike actions which are "plastic in response to actualizing an activity". A human being has the capacity to regulate and control activity by adapting to the local conditions of actions and operations, thus, the activity-action-operation schemata is plastic, accommodating and malleable by nature (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 220).

With regards to migrants, Lantolf and Thorne's (2006) perception of activity is without a doubt more applicable. Humans are able to construct their own activeness according to the setting, and hence, if the setting changes, one can still find meaningful ways of being. Indeed, when faced with a change of environment, which can occur without physically moving anywhere, for example, due to a war, one is able to adjust to the new environment and shape one's goals, that is, one's activeness to suit the new environment. As activity, in the view of Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 216), comprises of mouldable (actions) and not mouldable (operations) elements, humans might not have control over some of their (initial) reactions to change, but the plastic nature of human behaviour should allow for modifications if the person chooses to do so.

3.3 Agency

Drawing on the previous two sections, what we can conclude thus far is that activity "is a unit of analysis for understanding and illuminating the historical, mediated, and emergent qualities of human change", and that human practices are mediated and constrained by symbolic and physical artefacts which always carry with them historical and cultural elements (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 233-234). According to Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 234), the common feature that connects different kinds of human activity, which is by nature unstable, is human agency which is defined as the "mediated capacity to act". As has already been mentioned, human agency is both facilitated and restrained by "cultural-institutional factors developed over time" and by the particular situation in which the activity takes place (ibid). The concept of agency,

however, is not coherent, but next we will attempt to describe some common features, especially the ones illustrated by Lantolf and Thorne (2006).

First, agency affects activity. Coughlan and Duff (1994: 174-175) thought it necessary to differentiate between the terms *task* and *activity*. They described a task as a "behavioural blue-print", enforced by researchers/teachers to obtain certain kind of data, when an activity was described as the actions that participants in reality carry out during a communicative process, that is, a task. Activity thus encompasses, on the one hand, the cognitive/communicative performance of the individual, and on the other, the social-institutional context in which the individual acts. The argument in other words is that human agents occupy a certain role such as a teacher or a student in an L2 setting, and the object of the activity "is always implicitly or explicitly negotiated, shifting, or potentially subverted over the bound period of interaction" (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 234). Human agents involved in the same task are in actuality participating in different activities owing to each person's personal history, goals and current abilities (Roebuck 2000: 79). Essentially, human agent's performance either can or cannot be prefigured: certain kinds of behaviour might be expected due to, for example, cultural and societal factors shared by the participants, but the individual's actions might in reality be entirely different from the expected (see Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 234-236 for a useful illustration).

Second, agency alone does not determine activity. Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 237) emphasize the fact that while agency does have an effect on the activity, "agency does not equate with free will or ultimate control of one's actions or destiny". Agency is tied to material and symbolic resources available to the individual: it is restrained by social groupings, the situation and the individual's own competence. What Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 238) propose is that agency is always attached to "a given time and space", according to which "certain actions are probable, others possible, and yet others impossible": agency is "socioculturally mediated and dialectically enacted". Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 237-238) state that researchers should take these two aforementioned factors into account and not remain blind to the ostensible fact that learners behave in unpredictable ways, and might not follow the set guidelines of the researcher.

Third, agency is plastic by nature. Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 239) stress that agency is never the property of the agent. As has already been mentioned, agency is better described as a relationship between the individual and the society at large, one that is under constant co-construction and renegotiation. This continuous process of

development is, according to newer configurations of activity theory, best illustrated as the individual not only as mediated by material and symbolic artefacts, but also as mediated by social formations in the immediate, distant or even imagined community of practise (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 148). To illustrate, "when an individual produces an utterance, this instance of a communicative gesture consists of drawing on from prior voices and articulations emerging from that community, tailoring the utterance so that it may achieve the speaker's goals, and anticipating the potential responses from the interlocutor or community to the utterance in question" (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 239). Therefore, in an L2 setting, sensitivity towards the learner's history and motivation for studying the language is an important aspect of teaching. Furthermore, it should be taken into account that not all learners, particularly migrant learners, necessarily identify with the immediate community as suggested by Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 239).

Fourth, agency is linked to motivation. Agency implies that individuals, learners, are actively involved in constructing their own learning, and thus, agency is linked to motivation: the more significance an activity has to the individual, the more motivated they are to carry through with it (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 145-146). Applied to an L2 setting, as agency is always connected to a community of practise, learning is always affected by the agent's personal history as a language learner as well as by language ideologies consummated, for instance, at an institutional level (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 239). What is suggested is that the leaner's personal history influences his/her learning strategies and motivation, but as has already been discussed, agency is not rigid insinuating that the leaner is capable of transforming their agency (ibid). In fact, Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 240) argue that teaching and learning ought to be planned in a way that supports an individual's sense of agency, that is to say, their development as persons, in addition to growing expertise at the level of communicative performance. In other words, learners ought to be approached on an individual level instead of as a group to enhance their learner autonomy (Benson 2012). It should be taken into consideration, that as individuals have different histories, they will similarly have different motives in the classroom - meaning they are not, in fact, participating in the same activity on a cognitive level: the significance of the activity for the individual is what shapes orientation to learning (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 146).

Fifth, engaging in agency thinking is redundant without pathways thinking. The two previous terms are a part of Snyder et al's (2002: 1) hope theory model, which

is based on the idea that hope is not merely "a passive emotional phenomenon" but "a process through which individuals actively pursue their goals". The model consists of three components: 1) goals (hoped-for ends) are pursued through 2) pathways thinking and 3) agency thinking. Snyder et al (2002: 1) explain that a person engaging in pathways thinking essentially "constructs routes or plans for achieving goals" and as such also tries to predict possible obstacles in the way. Pathways thinking will not, however, lead to goal attainment without agency thinking which Snyder et al (2002: 1) have defined as "the thoughts that people have regarding their ability to begin and continue movement on selected pathways towards those goals". In other words, Snyder et al (2002: 1) define agency thinking as the determination to set goals, and pathways thinking as the ability to come up with different ways and routes to meet those goals. "It is through mobilizing agency thoughts that a person is sufficiently motivated to initiate and sustain movement along pathways toward desired ends": pathways and agency thinking are "functionally inseparable". What is meant by this is that if an individual is able to engage in agency thinking but not able to develop pathways to carry out the necessary actions, agency thinking, and thus, reaching the set goal, becomes redundant (Snyder et al 2002: 1). Therefore, in order to meet a goal, an individual must actively produce several pathways, that is, plans "to circumvent possible obstacles to goal accomplishment".

As has become clear, agency is a complex concept and while I have tried to explain some common features of it, there still is no consensus as to what exactly human agency is. Particularly the relationship between human autonomy and socially constrained behaviour has been under debate from this point of view. Benson (2012) explains that if we accept a strong social view, one's actions cannot really ever be truly self-determined, which in turn would make the entire concept of agency rather pointless. Benson (2012) suggests that some sort of a middle ground has to be found - agency has to be understood as simultaneously socially-conditioned and self-determined. Perhaps taking a closer look at migrant learners offers a way to find that elusive middle ground: migrants, or other people removed from their original social setting, essentially have to construct their "social-self" in the host community all over again. At the beginning of this process they can be thought of as empty canvases as they have not as of yet been preconditioned to the norms of the community of practise. They certainly still are socially-conditioned but as the norms they are used to following do not necessarily apply in the new community, they have to reconstruct their agency. This requires a

certain degree of independence and self-determination from the individual. Hence, the view we adopt here is that while agency is influenced by the social surroundings in which we live, it is still in the ultimate possession of the learner and it is self-determined by nature. Individuality is a precondition for one's agency if one truly wants to become a fully-functioning member of the community of practise.

3.4 Adaptations to second and foreign language learning and teaching

The purpose of this section is to put the different aspects and qualities of the activity theoretical framework into the context of the present study, that is, teaching and learning a foreign or a second language. One of the key aspects defining activity theory is the complex and intriguing relationship between the individual and the environment. As put by Lantolf and Pavlenko (2001: 143), humans are shaped and defined by their cultural history, and not by biology. What they are saying is that activity theory operates within the principle that the social environment is "the very source out of which specifically human kinds of mind develop", and not merely a context in which the human mind is formed (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 144). As follows, when examining human mental activity, research must be carried out in its "natural environment", in other words, taking sociocultural factors into account: 1) how the person is acting (i.e., in relation to artefacts and other people), 2) where the person is acting (e.g., the classroom, the public domain), and 3) why the person is acting (i.e., the motives and goals underlying the activity) (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 144; Snyder et al 2002: 1). Thus, in terms of foreign and second language learning and teaching, it is not enough to investigate the individual alone but attention must also be placed on the environment in which the individual acts as it provides the individual the necessary means (i.e., mediational tools, learning strategies) to learn a language. Moreover, language learning is shaped by the individual's personal history and as such people have different reasons, that is, motives to learn a language: "without such a perspective, the actions of all those involved in the behaviour we call language learning in a given classroom are frequently assumed to be directed at the same goal – learning the language" (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 146).

According to Lantolf and Pavlenko (2001: 145), an important aspect of activity theory is that it perceives learners as people, which means that researchers in particular "need to appreciate their human agency" instead of seeing learners as meagre

"processing devices": learners actively take part in "constructing the terms and conditions of their own learning". Agency is the connection between motivation and action, and consequently, everything that goes into getting from point A to point B, that is to say, the pathways taken by the individual (Taylor 1985: 16-17; Snyder et al 2002: 1). Lantolf and Pavlenko (2001: 146) explain this idea further: agency is tied to the significance languages and learning a language have in the life of an individual. Thus, people sitting in a classroom seemingly engaging in the same activity of learning a language have, in fact, an array of different reasons to be there.

Lantolf and Genung (2002) have illustrated how the significance of the activity affects the learning and motivation of a learner. In their study (2002: 189) they examined a PhD student of linguistics, PG, who entered a Chinese class hoping to not only to fulfil a degree requirement, but also out of personal interest and desire. That is to say, PG had been a successful language learner in the past, and thus, language learning had personal significance to her. The methods used during the intensive Chinese course, however, were not to the student's liking as the instructors had adopted a more grammatically oriented approach to teaching, which deviated from the communicative approach supported by the department. Following PG's unsuccessful efforts to change the rules of interaction in the course, her previous motives and language learning practises had to be abandoned in order to survive: the initial motive of learning Chinese gave way to the secondary motive of fulfilling a degree requirement. PG adapted to the new setting so well that when given a communicative task at the end of the course, she felt robbed of a comfortable routine and did not succeed in the given task. Lantolf and Thorne (2006: 243) explain this phenomenon as a shift in lower and higher cognitive motives. "Higher cognitive motives are dialectically formed through intensive and recurring activity and invoke an intrinsic interest on the part of the agent", whereas "lower cognitive functions may involve rote of learning of isolated facts to meet an immediate, short-term goal". To sum up, not only do learners have different and occasionally multiple reasons for studying a language, they can also change their motives for sitting in the classroom if/when necessary.

"It is not necessarily the case that all of the people in language classes have the goal of learning the language and the reason for this is because they have different motives for being in the class, because in turn they have different histories (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2002: 148)." The point we are making here in terms of foreign and second language learning and teaching is that teachers ought to account for the fact that learners

are affected by their personal history as language learners and they sit in the classroom for a variety of reasons. Subsequently, learners need to be regarded as individuals and not as a solitary mass. Furthermore, paying increasing attention to teaching language learning techniques is especially important from this perspective. What has worked in the past might not work anymore, and therefore, teaching learners to learn is of particular significance. Hence, it is partly up to teachers to confirm useful behaviour and scaffold agency and pathways thinking (Murphey and Carpenter 2008: 17-18). In other words, the more students learn to recognize the effects of their agency, the more effectively they learn in and out of the classroom (ibid). From the standpoint of migrant learners, the teacher has to be even more attentive and aware of the aforementioned matters than normally as even though it is of utmost importance for the migrant to learn the language in order to survive in the new society, the migrant's reasons for being in the class might be entirely different, as has become apparent. Moreover, motives for language learning are not invariant but often they change during the learning process as the process is tightly linked to the surrounding environment, which we shall next discuss more thoroughly.

While the distinct ways of human thinking arise from the individual's sociocultural background, the higher functions of human mental behaviour are still in the control of the individual (Lantolf and Thorne 2009: 59). The most important tool to regulate this behaviour is quite naturally language, which does not only serve the function of self-regulation, but also of social interaction as it is an arbitrator of socially elaborated meanings embedded in the language practises of the community (Lantolf and Thorne 2006: 216). In this respect, foreign and second language learning "is about developing, or failing to develop, new ways of mediating ourselves and our relationships to others and ourselves" as the sociocultural environment changes (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 145). In the case of migrant learners this factor is emphasized as it is not only their mental capacity which has to give way to new ways of thinking and acting, but it is also their physical environment that changes. Thus, on the one hand, learning the language of the community functions as a way in, but on the other hand, the community has to adjust as well. Lantolf and Pavlenko (2001: 149) talk of "legitimate peripheral participation", the relationship between the newcomers and the old-timers in a community of practise.

As we have already mentioned, agency is not as such a property of the individual but rather "it is a relationship that is constantly co-constructed and

renegotiated with those around the individual and with the society at large" (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 148; Benson 2012; Snyder et al 2002: 1). Therefore, in particular in the case of migrant learners acting in a new sociocultural environment, it is important to examine the role of the community of practise. The community and the individual are engaged in a dialogue on the basis of which the position and identity of the individual in that particular community of practise is defined (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 149; Wenger 2006). It is essential to remember that community of practise can refer to an entire culture or a society, or just to a particular language classroom (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 149; Wenger 2006). Lantolf and Pavlenko (2001: 148-155) describe the aspects that influence peripheral and full participation in a community of practise and they came to the conclusion that it is as much affected by the community as well as the individual. They (2001: 152) summarize that some individuals are positioned at the outskirts (periphery) of a community because they choose marginal participation in the community or because their histories as language learners do not justify an investment in the language in question. Migrant learners, however, do not have the luxury to choose marginality but rather they have to make some kind of an attempt to integrate into society (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 152), and thus, the role of the environment is emphasized in connection to full participation in the community. Thus the question becomes whether full and legitimate participation is made available or not. Learners may remain on the margins if their attempts to participate are rejected by the hosts, and similarly if their attempts are viewed positively, they have a chance to become full members of that community. (See Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001 for detailed examples.)

According to Lantolf and Pavlenko (2001: 153), the acceptance of the community of practise enables the newcomer to construct a new voice as the newcomer's social history no longer serves the new community. This process means that the individual has to seek new artefacts, mediational tools and other resources to mediate the integration into the community and of the community into the individual. The success of the process should not be taken for granted as not all individuals are able to construe themselves again in this manner. In this regard, activity theory may be compared to acculturation theories, in which an individual in a new environment may accept an integration, assimilation, separation, or marginalization strategy (discussed in Chapter 4). Therefore, it is important in terms of foreign and second language teaching that teachers, who form one of the initial contacts migrants have with full members of

the community, help their students to find ways to "have access to full participation and with it develop to their fullest potential" (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 157).

When applying the concepts of activity theory to second language learning it becomes evident that "the co-constructed nature of agency is always present in the successful cases of second language learning and discursive assimilation" (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 153). Furthermore, second language learners ought to be perceived as individuals whose learning derives from their specific histories as language learners and as members of the communities of practise which they belong to or desire to belong to (Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001: 155), which in turn affects what language learning tools and resources are made available for the learners. As Benson (2012) has suggested, one's agency becomes more prominent and apparent the more they are socioculturally engaged with the second language and culture, and thus, the present study had embarked to investigate the relationship between the participants and their interactions in the new surroundings: what communities of practise and mediational tools have the learners gained access to?

4 THE LINGUISTIC WORLD OF A MIGRANT LEARNER IN FINLAND

Leaving one's home and starting all over again in a new country is no easy task – especially if one did not have any other choice. Migrants face many challenges in the new host country, many of which in some form or another deal with language. As we have already discussed, language is in many respects a way in to the host culture, and therefore, it is important to examine the environment to which migrants arrive: how do migrants react to the new surroundings and how does society react to them? Subsequently, the purpose of this chapter is to describe the linguistic world of migrants from three different perspectives: from the legislative, the educational and the societal perspective. Firstly, the legislative perspective aims to specify what the Finnish law says about migrants' rights and obligations in Finland, and secondly, the educational perspective describes the environment which migrant learners have to come to terms with when entering the Finnish school system. It should be noted that the first two perspectives are interrelated as the educational system operates on the basis of what the law states. Thirdly, the societal perspective seeks to explain the adaptation process and how it is affected by the native population's attitudes, in addition to illustrating the role of English in Finland, that is, why it is important for migrant learners to not only to learn Finnish or Swedish but also English in order to succeed in Finnish society.

4.1 The legislative perspective

The Finnish Immigration Policy was not introduced until the end of the 1990s, partly as a reaction to the growing number of migrants and the internationalization of Finnish society, and partly due to the ratification of the Council of Europe's skeletal agreement for the protection of national minorities and the European charter of regional and minority languages (for further information see L 11/1998; L 493/1999). By ratifying the pacts, Finland agreed to advance conditions in which the members of national minorities are able to express, maintain and develop their culture and identity, namely their language, religion and cultural heritage (Latomaa 2002: 63). Finland did not, however, specifically identify which groups are included into the national minorities: the law (L11/1998) mentions the agreement to concern at least the Sami, Romany, Jewish, Tatars and so called old Russians (vanhavenäläinen) as well as Finnish Swedes. Latomaa (2002: 65) points out that while the so called new minorities are left out of the

ratified treaties per se, obliging to follow the pacts and regular supervision of the implementation of the rights, has a positive influence on the conditions and circumstances of other minority groups as well.

In the eyes of the law, the new group of migrants, however, is in a different standing than the members of the national minorities. When we speak of national minorities, we refer to specific ethnic groups which have been present in the country for decades or centuries but who in some way (e.g. language, customs, traditions, or way of life) are seen to differ from the majority (Latomaa 2003: 16-26). Essentially, members of national minorities are citizens of the country, and consequently, have the exact same rights as members of the majority: for example, Finnish Swedes and the Sami have the right to receive service in their mother tongue if the municipality of residence is defined to be bilingual (i.e. 8% of its residents are members of that specific national minority) (Language Act 432/2003). In other words, national minorities are established groups, whereas migrants are not and this affects their rights in Finland. In this section, the focus is first on what the Finnish law says about migrants in general, namely in the form of the Integration Policy. Second, as adult migrants' and adolescent migrants' rights and obligations differ from each other greatly, they will be discussed separately in more detail. Third, we will examine what the government's plans are in terms of improving the education of migrants.

4.1.1 Integration policy

The Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers (493/1999) states that its objective is to advance migrants' integration, equality and freedom of choice by actions that support attainment of necessary information, knowledge and skills needed in Finnish society, and to secure essential livelihood and care by organizing the reception of asylum-seekers as well as assist victims of human trafficking. The Act (493/1999) defines integration as "the personal development of immigrants, aimed at participation in working life and society while preserving their own language and culture". Furthermore, integration is also defined to include the measures and actions taken, and the resources and services supplied by government officials. Moreover, when planning for actions that support integration, government officials are enjoined to consider the actual needs of the migrants. In essence, these actions are the responsibility of the municipality in which the migrant resides: they are

in charge of the implementation of the Integration Policy. A central part of the Integration Policy is education (Työ- ja elinkeinotoimisto 2005: 11).

The municipality is obliged by the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers (493/1999) to formulate an integration plan in co-operation with employment authorities, other officials, KELA - the Social Insurance Institution of Finland, and of course with the migrant himself/herself. The law says the plan ought to contain goals, actions, resources, and co-operative measures to be taken in order for the integration process to be successful. A migrant is entitled to take part in the integration programme when s/he has been assigned a home municipality, or if s/he receives income support: the programme lasts for a maximum of three years unless there are special circumstances, such as the migrant is analphabetic, handicapped or a stay-at-home-mom, in which cases the plan can be continued for two additional years (Työ- ja elinkeinotoimisto 2005: 11). The Ministry of the Interior (Sisäasiainministeriö 2010b) expresses that the overall goal of the Integration Policy is to guarantee that migrants are able to function in Finnish society in the same way as anyone else living in the country. To achieve this goal, learning the language and familiarization with Finnish culture are considered key objectives.

Latomaa (2002: 64) describes the integration process defined in Finnish legislation by the principle of reciprocity. On the one hand, society is obliged to provide measures such as language courses to enhance integration, and on the other, the migrant is obliged to actively acquire knowledge and skills, such as the language, needed in Finland. Latomaa (2002: 67) calls attention to the fact that at first Finnish legislation divided migrants into specific groups on the basis of their status. That is to say, in the beginning, the Integration Policy was only implemented to people who had either a refugee or a returnee status, while others were left out. It was not until the end of the 1990s that the policy was extended to include all migrants.

Finland has clearly adopted an integrationist rather than an assimilationist view to dealing with migrants. To be precise, while the government pushes migrants to adapt into Finnish society, they still recognize the fact that preserving one's mother tongue and culture are important for an individual's identity. This ideology is also present in the other rights, such as interpreting and translation services, that migrants are entitled to in Finland; there is evidence of wanting to establish a connection between the migrant and the majority even before the migrant has learned the language. The

government has acknowledged that integration is a two-way process - at least in theory, as in practice the implementation of the law does not always go according to plan.

4.1.2 Adult migrants' linguistic rights

The Ministry of the Interior (Sisäasiainministeriö 2010b) states that the aim of working-age migrants is to find employment. As a result, integration training in also organized in the form of labour market training, which gives the migrant a chance not only to learn the language but also to get information about society and working life in Finland. In other words, the goal in the case of adult migrants is to incorporate them into the labour force, and harness their skills and education for the benefit of society. Tyynelä (2001) has criticized this by articulating that employment officials emphasize migrants' labour training at the expense of developing sufficient language skills: learning the language of the vocation at work is only possible if one already possesses basic skills in the language, and of learning a language in general. Migrants' language training and labour training should not be pitted against each other as they support one another. Tyynelä (2001) adds that research has indicated that the difficulty of finding work has passivized some migrants into a course vortex, in which learning the language is seen as an absolute value and employment is not even sought. Thus, from this perspective, an active approach that stresses employment is justified. According to the Ministry of Employment and the Economy (Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö 2008: 51), in 2008, 29.3 million euros were targeted to the education of migrants, and 25% of all people taking part in labour market training were migrants, when in 1999 that number was only 9.5%. In fact, the number of migrants in labour market training has steadily increased in the 21st century (Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö 2008: 51; 2007: 68; 2006: 33).

Although the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers (493/1999) declares that the Integration Policy should be applied to all migrants, as Latomaa (2002: 67,68) points out, the old division mentioned in 4.1.1 is still intact. Adult migrants, who do not have refugee or returnee status, and their rights, are to this day tied to regional resources, meaning that they can, for example, only attend language courses if there is room. What is more, it is worrying that migrants, who have resided in the country for years, are still signing up for beginner language courses. Latomaa (2002: 68) concludes that in practice the implementation of the Integration Policy is questionable. The head of the Helsinki Immigration Department

Päivi Parkkinen quoted in the article by Tyynelä (2001), stresses that municipalities feel cheated by the government, as when the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers (493/1999) was prepared, there was no talk of the government offloading the responsibility of educating migrants to municipalities. Consequently, at the moment developing education aimed at migrants, especially for adult migrants, is seen difficult, as there is a constant uncertainty of responsibilities and funding between the government and the municipalities. To summarize, adult migrants - regardless of their status - are entitled by law to take part in the integration program, which offers migrants language and labour market training. In addition, adult migrants are entitled to interpreting and translation services, the purpose of which is to guarantee easy access to Finnish services (more on this topic in Section 4.1.4).

4.1.3 Adolescent migrants' linguistic rights

Adolescent migrants' linguistic rights differ from those of adult migrants as adolescents are entitled and obliged to take part in compulsory education similarly to native Finns regardless of their status (Opetusministeriö 2009: 16), although this was not always the case. Thus, in practise adolescent migrants are in a much better standing than adult migrants. In general, the teaching of adolescent migrants is organized as part of general education, during which they should receive additional support according to their needs (Opetusministeriö 2009: 16). The Ministry of Education (2009:18) lists supporting the organization of Finnish or Swedish as second language teaching and mother tongue teaching from a legislative and financial perspective, supporting the development of multicultural skills in all schools, untangling matters concerning migrants' teachers' qualifications, investigating the overall situation concerning the teaching of minority religions, and the possible blind spots of the schooling of asylum seekers' children as its main objectives for all-round education.

The language of instruction, according to the Basic Education Act (628/1998: 5), is either Finnish or Swedish, and hence, it is vital that the migrant, who does not necessarily have adequate language skills to survive in the Finnish education system, is offered different kinds of linguistic measures of support. The municipalities are accountable for organizing preparatory teaching, Finnish or Swedish as a second language instruction, and mother tongue teaching, to which they receive government subsidies if the time of the migrant's entry to the country has not exceeded three years

(Opetusministeriö 2009: 16). All these measures of support will be discussed in more detail in 4.2 from an educational perspective.

4.1.4 Interpreting and translation services

Ever since the first migrants came to Finland, there has been a need for interpretation and translation services to help communication and guarantee mutual understanding. The Ministry of the Interior (Sisäasiainministeriö 2010b) articulates that the aim of these services is to guarantee that migrants "are able to use Finnish services on an equal footing with native Finns and is intended for use in the initial stages of entry into Finland", as the goal is for the migrant to learn Finnish or Swedish as quickly as possible. The Aliens Act (301/2004: 4) and the Employment and Economic Development Office (Työ- ja elinkeinotoimisto 2005: 2) state that migrants are entitled to interpreting and translation services when they do not have sufficient skills in Finnish or Swedish and the official does not speak the migrants' mother tongue, and they are to be used particularly when the matter in question deals with the migrant's rights or obligations or with other matters that require the use of language services. The Aliens Act (301/2004: 4) stipulates that the interpreter or translator provided by officials must be a professional and not, for instance, a relative of the migrant who speaks the language, as this jeopardizes impartiality. Interpreting usually happens on the spot or through remote interpreting via telephone or video (Sisäasiainministeriö 2010b). Additionally, linguistic equality can also be enhanced by translating and producing forms and brochures as well as by hiring employees who have skills in the languages concerned (Sisäasiainministeriö 2010b).

Latomaa (2002: 69) says that in the beginning the first interpreters were migrants who had lived in Finland for a long time, who spoke the majority language, and had sufficient knowledge of Finnish culture. Language services aimed at migrants have since then developed into an organized system, and now there are eight regional interpreter centres throughout Finland, in addition to a private Helsinki-based nationwide interpreter centre (Sisäasiainministeriö 2010b). At the moment, however, interpretation and translation services funded by the government are only available to migrants with refugee status. In essence, it is the municipality's responsibility to offer language services, but as the government only funds refugees' or returnees' services, offering such services to other migrants is up to the municipality's discretionary budget

(Latomaa 2002: 69). If, however, the matter in question is initiated by the official, an interpreter will be provided no matter what the status of the migrant is (Aliens Act 301/2004: 4; Latomaa 2002: 69-70; Työministeriö 2005: 6). Migrants may of course use an interpreter or a translator in administrative or on other matters at their own expense (Aliens Act 301/2004: 4).

As mentioned above, the Finnish government has adopted an integrationist view to migration, and the fact that interpreting and translation services or mother tongue teaching are provided (even if they are not always granted for *all* migrants) is a sign that the Finnish government aims to promote diversity in Finnish society. Perhaps it would be easier to ignore such matters but history exemplifies that ignorance can be compared to a ticking time bomb: people who are prohibited from expressing themselves and who are forced to deny a part of who they are (i.e. loss of identity) will eventually protest. To a certain extent, Finland still treats migrants as a resource - what they can give to us, and not what we can give to them.

4.1.5 The Finnish government's development plan

The Finnish government along with the Ministry of Education (2008: 5) produces a plan every four years to enhance education and university research for both the current and five next calendar years. The development plan supports the implementation of the government's current educational policy. Now we will examine what the Government-approved Development Plan for Education and Research 2007–2012 says about the education of migrants, and particularly of their linguistic rights.

The Ministry of Education (2008: 46) lists that its objective is to develop an active, comprehensive and coherent migration policy, which takes the diverse nature of migrants as well as international obligations into account. The development plan (Ministry of Education 2008: 13) acknowledges that migrants form a polymorphic group. On the one hand, some migrants need language and culture training as well as some initial vocational studies, and on the other hand, the migrant group also contains highly educated people, experts, whose needs for education in Finland are very specific. In addition, the Ministry of Education (2008: 24) recognizes that the population structure in Finland is under change as large groups of people are about to leave the work force. In this respect, "care must be taken to put the talent reserves of immigrants to full use" and that "the employment reserves among the unemployed, the inactive and

immigrants must be utilised better" (Ministry of Education 2008: 19,24). In other words, the government aims to patch the labour shortage by training and utilising the existing competence and education of migrants already residing in the country as well as by promoting work-motivated migration (Ministry of Education 2008: 46-47).

The development plan (Ministry of Education 2008: 47) states that as schools have a great impact on the integration of migrants, it is especially important that migrant learners receive ample support in order for a foundation to be created for further education. Moreover, the plan admits that, for example, preparatory instruction differs to a great extent from one municipality to the next, putting migrants in an unequal footing. Good skills in Finnish or Swedish are, however, essential for successful integration, and the Ministry of Education (2008: 47) avows that "measures will be taken to support the equal provision of instruction preparing for basic education, the teaching in the mother tongue and the teaching of Finnish or Swedish as a second language". In order for the plan to work, actions need to be taken with regards to promotion of secondary and tertiary education. Hence, the plan is to remove barriers in student selection and studies for migrant learners, which in part will be done by sufficient language training as mentioned above, and in part by organizing preparatory training, for example, for vocational schools and polytechnics. The Ministry of Education (2008: 47) states that the aim is for "the share of immigrants among students in higher education to correspond to their share of the entire population".

Naturally reaching these goals requires training teachers to be better equipped to teach and meet the needs of migrant learners. The Ministry of Education (2008: 70) declares that "actions will be taken to meet the need for teachers required by teaching children, young people and adults with immigrant backgrounds". The plan also expresses that the need for "teachers for linguistics minorities" has to be kept in mind when distributing resources for teacher education and in selection of students to teacher education: students with a migrant background are to be encouraged to become teachers (ibid). The government's development plan (Ministry of Education 2008) lists some ambitious goals and objectives for the educational system. But as the plan is implemented "within the Government decision on spending limits", the goals are unlikely to happen by 2012 as the resources in education has been cut every year. The Ministry of Education (2008: 5) has said that the development plan is to be evaluated in 2010 and thus, it is not as of now known how successful the government deems its plan

to be. One dares to claim that the development plan would have more of a standing if it actually listed "the actions and measures to be taken" concretely.

4.2 The educational perspective

Education aimed at migrants is part of the general educational system funded by government subsidies and grants (Opetusministeriö 2009: 14). The Ministry of Education (Opetusministeriö 2009: 14) articulates that the aim of migrant education in Finland is to support migrants to become equal members of society and to support their own cultural identity. Moreover, developing sufficient language skills (functional bilingualism) is seen as an integral part of teaching aimed at migrants as language proficiency increases employment opportunities, nurtures integration into Finnish society, and enables the pursuit of further education. Since 2008, the Ministry of the Interior (Sisäasiainministeriö 2010b), under which the Finnish Immigration Service operates, has been in charge of migration, international protection and migrant integration.

The purpose of this section is to take a more detailed look of how migrants' linguistic rights delineated in Finnish legislation are enforced, and what a migrant learner has to go through in the Finnish school system. As has already been discussed, legislation and education go hand in hand, and thus, there will be some overlap with the previous section. Furthermore, migrants are in a much weaker educational standing than national minorities, but it should also be taken into account that there is much variation inside the heterogeneous migrant group itself. Namely, some migrant groups, such as Russian speakers, are in a better position than other groups due to the large numbers of speakers residing in the country.

4.2.1 Preparatory teaching

The Basic Education Act (628/1998: 4) expresses that municipalities can organize instruction preparing migrants for basic education for a twelve-month-period. Prior to the law reform in 2009, the duration of preparatory teaching was six months (Opetusministeriö 2009: 16). Latomaa (2002: 72) draws attention to the fact that the law does not actually obligate municipalities to organize such instruction, meaning that the municipality can place the migrant directly into general education. These days,

however, that is very rarely the case, and most migrants are placed in preparatory teaching before entering a Finnish classroom. The aim of preparatory teaching is to give the migrant the necessary skills and information to be able to move onto general education as well as to enhance their integration and personal development (Opetusministeriö 2009: 16; Opetushallitus 2009: 6). According to the Finnish National Board of Education (Opetushallitus 2009: 4-5), preparatory teaching is intended for migrants who do not have the necessary language skills either in Finnish or in Swedish to take part in preschool or compulsory education. Instruction is given for at least 900 hours for 6-10 year-old children, and at least a 1000 hours for children over the age of ten. Of course, the migrant can transfer to general education before completing the aforementioned hours if they are able to follow instruction. At the moment, the organizer of the instruction is in charge of designing a syllabus for preparatory teaching as it has not been defined at a national level (ibid). In 2008, 1663 migrants took part in preparatory teaching before entering general education (Opetushallitus 2010).

The Finnish National Board of Education (Opetushallitus 2009: 6,8) states that preparatory teaching ought to comprise of all the core subjects taught in Finnish schools in relation to the National Core Curriculum for basic education (NCC 2004) when applicable, in addition to language teaching in Finnish or Swedish, and if possible in the migrant's mother tongue. Most importantly, teaching should accommodate for the fact that the learners in question form an extremely heterogeneous group by age, learning abilities and background. Analphabetic students, for example, need to be set entirely different kinds of goals than students with literacy skills. Furthermore, the migrant's studies can be supported by providing teaching in his/her mother tongue, which can enhance the digestion of the contents of different subjects, learning abilities and cultural identity. Thus, the learner is also able to advance in subject studies even though his/her language skills in Finnish or Swedish were developing slower than other skills. As put by the Board of Education (Opetushallitus 2009: 7), the starting point in preparatory teaching is based on the migrant's previous studies and cultural background, that is, the instruction utilizes the learner's knowledge of nature, way of life, history, society, languages and culture of his/her native region.

Attaining the necessary language skills to be able to attend general education is a daunting task - both for the teacher as well as for the learner. According to the Finnish National Board of Education (Opetushallitus 2009: 6), at the end of preparatory instruction, the migrant's language skills in Finnish or in Swedish should be somewhere

between levels A1.3-A2.1 in the proficiency levels described in the Common European Framework for Reference for Languages (for more information see CEF 2003: 24,26,29), which simply is not sufficient to survive in a Finnish classroom. The language used in classrooms is abstract in nature and it often deals with cultural concepts, which might or might not be unfamiliar to the learner depending on their background. In other words, for a learner at the A-level to be able to handle vast amounts of complex linguistic data during one school day is quite a challenge indeed: it is no wonder that many migrant learners feel overwhelmed. What we are saying here is that it is evident to anyone who has ever studied a foreign language that while there might not be any problems using the language in everyday matters, diving into the school system after a year of studying the language is very much a sink or swim experience. Although adolescent migrant learners' language skills in Finnish or Swedish might develop at a fast pace compared to time they have been in the country due to the input they receive and plenty of opportunities for output, their language skills and school performance will still be in many respects compared to that of natives to which they simply do not measure up.

In regards to other languages than Finnish or Swedish, the syllabus of preparatory teaching does include the teaching of foreign languages organized according to the municipality's language programme: the learners' linguistic readiness determines to what degree foreign languages can be integrated into his/her study programme during preparatory teaching (Opetushallitus 2009: 7). During recent years, more English teaching has been incorporated into preparatory teaching, but the fact is that many migrants have had little or no English teaching prior to coming to Finland, and therefore, catching up to the level of the native population is difficult (see 4.2.4). The task is made even harder for the migrant learner as English in Finland is most often taught in Finnish meaning that the learner has to study a foreign language through a second language.

4.2.2 Finnish as a second language teaching

In addition to the intensive instruction period in the beginning, a migrant learner needs constant measures of support to be able to succeed in the Finnish school system. One such very important measure of support is Finnish or Swedish as a second language teaching which should be made available at all levels of education (Opetusministeriö

2009: 14). For the sake of clarity, this section refers only to Finnish as a second language (FSL) teaching as opposed to Finnish and Swedish as a second language teaching even though the same matters apply to both.

In the view of the NCC (2004: 95), FSL teaching can be organized "either entirely or partially in the place of the syllabus for mother tongue and literature when Finnish is the mother tongue". In other words, learners receive FSL teaching as part of the Finnish as a mother tongue and literature classes along with native speakers, or in completely separate classes with only other non-native speakers, or it can be a combination of the two. No matter how the instruction is arranged, the amount of instruction corresponds to that of Finnish as a mother tongue and literature instruction in both basic and secondary education although the syllabus differs in terms of objectives and content (NCC 2004: 95). The NCC (2004: 96) asserts that the starting point for FSL teaching should be the migrant's Finnish skills and not the grade in which they are studying. Moreover, it should be remembered that for a migrant, Finnish is both an object and a means of learning, meaning that language learning occurs in all school subjects and teaching Finnish is not, therefore, only the responsibility of the Finnish teacher, but of all of the teachers of the migrant. Thus, co-operation between teachers is essential and the learner's FSL status ought to be accounted for when assessing the pupil.

Both the NCC for basic (2004: 95) and for upper secondary education (2003: 64) acknowledge that the syllabus for FSL teaching ought to be based on the learning situation of the migrant, that is, they learn Finnish in a Finnish speaking environment. The migrant is expected to gradually develop the highest possible Finnish language proficiency in all areas of language learning comparable to native speakers in order to be able to study all school subjects, and to improve their chances for further education, as well as to "gain equal opportunities to function and exert influence in Finnish society" (NCC 2004: 95). The aim of FSL teaching along with the instruction in the migrant's mother tongue is to strengthen the migrant's multicultural identity and to build a lasting foundation for functional bilingualism and lifelong learning as announced in the NCC (2003: 64; 2004: 95). At the end of basic education, the migrant's Finnish language skills should be on levels B1.1-B1.2 to achieve grade 8 (NCC 2004: 98). The NCC for upper secondary schools (2003: 64-65) builds on the teaching of basic education, and thus, the students should be at levels B2.1-B2.2 upon completion of upper secondary education, which corresponds to the level at which

students who started studying English in 3rd grade (p.102) should have reached upon when graduating from upper secondary school. Consequently, as has already been discussed, one can ask if that really is an adequate level at which one can study all school subjects efficiently.

Instead of taking the Finnish as a mother tongue and literature exam in the matriculation examination, the final exams in upper secondary school, an FSL learner can opt for an FSL exam, in which the participants are not required of such deep analysis as in the mother tongue and literature exam. Mela (2007: 174) claims that many FSL learners still prefer to take the Finnish as a mother tongue and literature exam in addition to the FSL one, as they feel it is a much more practical exam to measure their Finnish skills, and it is not questioned by society in the same way as the FSL exam might be. Migrant learners feel that taking the FSL exam stigmatizes them as it reveals that Finnish is not their mother tongue, which is not necessarily perceived well in the job market. According to the Finnish National Board of Education's (Opetushallitus 2010) statistics, 14,742 students in compulsory education, and 233 in upper secondary education attended FSL classes in 2008.

4.2.3 Mother tongue teaching

Under section 12 of the Basic Education Act (628/1998: 5), it is stated that a learner may receive mother tongue instruction in Finnish, Swedish, Sami or Roma, or some other language that is the learner's native language. Mother tongue teaching in some other language is by no means comparable to that of any of the languages mentioned above and attendance is not mandatory (Latomaa 2002: 73,75). According to the Ministry of Education (2009: 16-17), if the municipality organizes mother tongue teaching or remedial instruction in the migrant's native tongue, they receive a government subsidy for 2.5 hours of instruction per week per group. Moreover, at the beginning of the semester, the group must have at least four participants, who can be from different grades or municipalities, or from government or privately funded schools, which makes the teaching easier to implement. The Finnish National Board of Education (Opetushallitus 2008) has comprised statistics of migrant education based on the information they have obtained from municipalities, and according to them, in the autumn term of 2008, some 12,245 migrants received mother tongue teaching in 54 languages, and in the spring term the number was 11,553 covering 50 languages. The

most common languages taught were in order Russian (3,300), Somali (2,030), Albanian (970), Arabic (837), Estonian (587), Vietnamese (572), Kurdish (546), Chinese (391) and Persian (374). There seems to be some variation in the numbers even during the same year, which most likely reflects the available resources and shifting of the student mass.

Latomaa (2002: 73) informs that the government had, in fact, proposed the amount of instruction be increased to 3-4 hours per week in 1997, but at this point this has not materialized. Nonetheless, it is clear that even though migrant learners have the opportunity to receive instruction in their native tongue and they probably speak it at home, their language skills in their mother tongue will most likely not reach the same level as those of a person who receives all instruction in their mother tongue, and lives in an environment in which they have plenty of chances to use the language. That is not to say that they are not necessarily sufficient users of their mother tongue, but that their language skills may not be as multifaceted. From this perspective, mother tongue instruction is especially important in addition to the development of skills in Finnish or Swedish. Indeed, the simultaneous development of both languages is likely to support the overall development of the other language as the linguistic awareness of the learner grows.

4.2.4 Foreign language education in Finland

From an early age on, it is obvious to most Finns that if one wants to be in contact with people from other cultures and languages, one has to be the one to learn other people's languages and not expect others to know Finnish. Thus, foreign language education has always been an essential part of the Finnish education system. In Finland one must study at least two other languages – one of which has to be the second national language Swedish - in addition to one's mother tongue. Generally foreign language education is divided into compulsory languages and elective languages. Essentially, the first compulsory foreign language, the A1-language, is usually begun during the 3rd year of compulsory education and the second, B1-language, during the 7th year (Kumpulainen 2009: 36). In effect, a learner can be exempted from studying one or both languages if some cogent reason, such as arriving into the country at a later age, exists. Exemption is not granted easily, however, as not studying a certain foreign language might hinder the learner's chances for continuing education or employment in the future. In addition to

the two compulsory languages, one can choose to begin to study additional, elective languages in the 4th or 5th year (A2-language), the 8th year (B2-language), and in upper secondary education (C-languages). According to Kumpulainen (2009: 26), in 2007 nearly 80% of 7-9th graders had studied at least two foreign languages. Kumpulainen also states that starting the first compulsory foreign language before the 3rd year has become increasingly popular in the 21st century: almost 23% of pupils in 2008 had begun their first foreign language studies either during the first or second year.

The compulsory languages begun (at the latest) in the 3rd year and in the 7th year are not as such defined with the exception of one of them having to be the second national language, that is, Swedish (or Finnish if your mother tongue is Swedish). The languages available for learners depend on the selection offered in the particular school, which puts learners in different standings: some get to choose from a varied selection of languages, while others do not have a choice at all. Kumpulainen (2009: 37) reports that English ranks as the number one choice of A1-language. For example, in 2008 over 90% of 3rd graders had chosen English, while Swedish was only chosen by roughly 1% and Finnish by 5% of pupils. Statistics also reveal that the popularity of French and German had decreased from 2004 to 2008; the popularity of French dropped from 0.9% to 0.8% and German's from 1.6% to 1.2% whilst Russian seems to have settled to 0.2% (Kumpulainen 2009: 37). Table 2 supports these findings.

Table 2. Language choices of comprehensive school pupils in 2009 (Statistics Finland 2010b).

Grades	Studied language	Compulsory language A1	Optional language A2	Compulsory language B1	Elective language B2	Total	Share of pupils in grades 1-6 %	Share of pupils in grades 7-9 %
Grades 1-6	English	221 473	13 214			234 687	67.6	
	Swedish	2 907	12 921			15 828	4.6	
	Finnish	14 164	1 127			15 291	4.4	
	French	2 075	4 298			6 373	1.8	
	German	3 113	9 633			12 746	3.7	
	Russian	755	828			1 583	0.5	
	Sami	1	235			236	0.1	
	Other	252	436			688	0.2	
Grades 7-9	English	174 252	15 569	333	75	190 229		99.2
	Swedish	2 239	12 393	161 550	8	176 190		91.9
	Finnish	10 447	1 032	200	2	11 681		6.1
	French	1 401	3 981	277	5 756	11 415		6.0
	German	2 103	10 304	350	8 760	21 517		11.2
	Russian	490	258		1 515	2 263		1.2
	Sami	4	35		12	51		0.0
	Latin	0	0		631	631		0.3
	Other	30	360		1 857	2 247		1.2

In other words, the status of English as the most popular first foreign language (A1) has remained stable in the 2000s, and other languages are mostly studied as A2-languages (Kumpulainen 2009: 37-39). In fact, the dominance of English is so overwhelming that some municipalities such as Tampere recommend that learners who want to begin studies in two foreign languages before the 7th year start some language other than English as their A1-language and study English as an A2-language from the 4th year onwards (Tampereen kaupunki 2010). The city of Tampere's (2010) recommendation is based on the fact that languages other than English are not as strongly present in the learners' everyday life, and therefore, more time and practise is needed to achieve good results. They do, nevertheless, advise that as far as future studies are concerned, it is important that English still be one of the first foreign languages studied (ibid).

The status of English is also reflected in Finland's national core curricula for basic and upper secondary education (NCC 2003; 2004). The requirements for English language learning and performance level at the end of basic and upper secondary education are significantly higher than for other languages as can be seen in Tables 3 and 4. The performance level in English as the A1-language at the end of compulsory education is between A2.2-B1.1, while for other languages it stays on levels A2.1-A2.2, defined on the European Frame of Reference for Languages commonly used in language assessment in Finland (for more information on the topic see The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages 2010). Similarly, at the end of upper secondary education English as an A1-language performance ought to be at level B2.1, whereas for other languages it is in levels B1.1-B1.2.

Table 3. Level of language performance in A1-language in the ninth grade (NCC 2004: 143).

	LISTENING COMPREHENSION	SPEECH	TEXT COMPREHENSION	WRITING
English	B1.1 Functional basic language proficiency	A2.2 Developing basic language proficiency	B1.1 Functional basic language proficiency	A2.2 Developing basic language proficiency
Other languages	A2.2 Developing basic language proficiency	A2.1 Initial phase of basic language proficiency	A2.2 Developing basic language proficiency	A2.1 Initial phase of basic language proficiency

Table 4. Level of language performance at the end of upper secondary school education (NCC 2003: 102).

Language and syllabus	Listening comprehension	Speaking	Reading comprehension	Writing
English, A	B2.1	B2.1	B2.1	B2.1
Other languages, A	B1.1–B1.2	B1.1	B1.2	B1.1–B1.2
English, B1	B1.2	B1.2	B1.2	B1.2
English, B2	B1.1	B1.1	B1.1	B1.1
Other languages, B2	A2.2	A2.1–A2.2	A2.2–B1.1	A2.1–A2.2
English, B3	B1.1	A2.2	B1.1	B1.1
Other languages, B3	A2.1–A2.2	A2.1	A2.1–A2.2	A1.3–A2.1

It is evident that expectations are high when it comes to English language proficiency in Finland. According to Statistics Finland (2008), nearly 98% of under 34 year-old Finns claim to speak at least one foreign language of which English was reported to be the most common one. Leppänen et al (2009: 47-48) reported similar figures and findings in their national survey on the English language in Finland: namely 90% of the respondents had studied foreign languages of which English was yet again the most common one. A further 80% also reported that they encounter English in their every day lives. Thus, for a person who arrives to Finland at a later age and who has had little or no English language teaching prior to entering the Finnish education system, the task of catching up and reaching the level of his/her peers is intimidating. In addition, as has already been discussed to some degree, English in Finland is mostly taught in Finnish, a second language to migrants. It is fair, therefore, to say that English skills in Finnish society are highly valued, and people who not possess sufficient skills in the language will face problems when trying to enter the labour force or educate themselves further. What is more, they will feel left out in some measure as English is also strongly present in the everyday lives of Finns. This will be discussed in more detail in 4.3.3.

4.3 The societal perspective

We have already discussed the linguistic world of a migrant from two perspectives, the legislative and the educational. Often the two are interrelated and go hand in hand, but they are also affected by Finnish society. That is to say, what is valued highly in a society will generally be reflected in legislation and emphasized in the educational

system. That being said, the purpose of this section is to take a closer look at the adaptation process, that is, acculturation and the stance Finland has taken towards the integration of migrants. In addition, the section will also explore the attitudes of the native population towards migrants as they have been found to affect the acculturation process. Finally, the focus will be on the role of English in Finnish society with the intention of illustrating that migrants coming into the country will not be arriving to a monolingual environment, in which it would be enough to just learn Finnish (or Swedish). In a word, the presence of English in Finland is such that without sufficient English skills, one's chances in the job market in addition to further education are considerably lessened.

4.3.1 Integration into Finnish society: acculturation

When different cultures come together, people have to adjust to changes, which, according to Liebkind (2000: 13), have consequently affected the development of mankind. The process of change caused by the convergence of two or more cultures involves both the minority adapting to the majority culture, and the majority's attitudes towards the minority: this process can be called the acculturation process (ibid). The concept of acculturation dates back to the 1930s when Redfield, Linton and Herskovits (1936: 149) defined acculturation in the following way:

> Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups. - - Under this definition acculturation is to be distinguished from culture change, of which it is but one aspect, and assimilation, which is at times a phase of acculturation. It is also to be differentiated from diffusion, which while occurring in all instances of acculturation, is not only a phenomenon which frequently takes place without the occurrence of the types of contact between peoples specified in the definition given above, but also constitutes only one aspect of the process of acculturation.

In other words, acculturation refers to phenomena created by the continuous contact between the representatives of different cultures, and the changes which take place in both the majority and the minority culture due to the encounters. According to Berry (1980: 11), acculturation can be viewed as a process or as a state. That is, it is a two-level phenomenon which can be examined at a group or at an individual level. Liebkind

(2000: 13-14) and Berry et al (1987: 492) explain this grouping in more detail. First, when viewed as a process, acculturation refers to the changes in people's beliefs, feelings, attitudes, values, and behaviour, as well as identification patterns as a result of being in contact with another culture. From this point of view, all factors preceding, mediating, remoulding and following the acculturation process must be taken into account for an all-around examination. Second, if acculturation is viewed as a state, it is conventional to measure its degree or quantity at a given time, and thus, the focus is on the individual's behaviour, feelings and attitudes. The latter is the more popular view.

There are several acculturation theories and for the most part they can be divided into two groups: assimilationist and pluralist ideologies. As pointed out by Liebkind (2000: 14), assimilationist theories adhere to the idea that acculturation does not differ from assimilation. Acculturation is, therefore, a one-dimensional process during which the individual accepts and adopts the values and behavioural patterns promoted by the majority. That is to say, the assumption behind assimilationist theories is that the process will eventually lead to the extinction of original ethnic or cultural identity. As expressed by Liebkind (2000: 14), pluralist theories alternatively emphasize multiculturalism and describe the acculturation process as two-dimensional. From this standpoint, minority groups more or less retain their original cultural features when adapting to the host culture, which in turn also reacts and adjusts to multiculturalism. In other words, pluralist theories are based on the idea that different cultural groups can live in harmony, and it is possible for a member of the minority to maintain their own culture while successfully engaging in activities in the host society. Studies have indicated that migrants living in countries whose governments are aligned with assimilationist ideologies (e.g. several European countries and the USA) experience difficulties in adapting, whereas migrants in countries whose governments support pluralist ideologies (e.g. Canada) feel less pressure to assimilate, and thus are able to maintain their own cultural heritage (Liebkind 2000: 19; Berry et al 1987: 494). What is suggested here is that migrants living in pluralist environments have a better chance of developing and maintaining a healthy identity, which in turn makes the adaptation process easier, and in the long run benefits society at large. Migrants living in assimilationist environments might struggle as they have to deny a part of themselves in order to succeed and be accepted by society.

Even though views on acculturation differ, several features and dimensions of the phenomenon in question can be identified. Berry (1980: 10) lists four features -

nature, course, level and measurement. First, the basic nature of acculturation compels at least two different cultural groups to be in contact, and as a result there must be change in either or both groups. Berry (1980: 10) highlights the fact that even though in theory change can come about in either of the groups in question, in practice, one group is usually dominant. Typically the dominant group is the majority by sheer numbers. Dominance over one group can naturally occur in more than one way (e.g. hostile take-over versus voluntary emigration), and it has been found that the variation in voluntariness, movement and permanence of contact greatly affects the acculturation process: for instance, refugees, who have not chosen to relocate, often experience more difficulty in adapting than those who have moved to a new country voluntarily, as their attitude might have been somewhat more positive from the start (Berry et al 1987: 494). In this respect, how the host society reacts and adapts to and for the newcomers is particularly important: asking migrants to assimilate fully when some have not even chosen to relocate, can be considered offensive and it does not send a positive message.

Second, Berry (1980: 11) suggests that there is a characteristic three-phase course of acculturation, which comprises of contact (necessary), conflict (probable) and adaptation (inevitable). As has already become evident, contact is a prerequisite - without it there is no acculturation - and several variables, such as the duration, permanence and purpose, influence how much acculturation results: when no purpose exists or the contact is short-lived (e.g. contact is accidental), not much acculturation is detected. Conflict also varies by degree as it is interdependent on how tightly the individual wants to hold on to their cultural heritage, and thus, it can be considered a general occurrence at some point of contact. In the end, some kind of adaption is bound to take place (reduce or stabilize contact), and this will be discussed in more detail later on. Third, Berry (1980: 11) underlines that the acculturation process is a two-level phenomenon which can be viewed at a group or individual level. Fourth, Berry (1980: 12) goes on to say that as a phenomenon, acculturation ought to be measured on all three phases at both group and individual levels in order to reach more profound results.

Next, we will take a closer look at Berry's (1980) famous acculturation model illustrated in Figure 3. The Figure is an example of a multidimensional, two-level acculturation model, which supports the idea that members of minorities can maintain their own cultural heritage, while still being able to adapt to and identify with the majority culture. The key variables in Berry's model are acculturation attitudes and acculturation strategies (Liebkind 2000: 19). As expressed by Berry (1980: 13),

different varieties of adaptation can be detected by answering two questions: "Is my cultural identity of value to be retained" and "are positive relations with the larger (dominant) society to be sought". Following this model four distinct varieties of adaptation, that is, acculturation can be discovered: *assimilation*, *integration*, *separation* and *marginalization*. The two latter types are more negative and the others more or less positive.
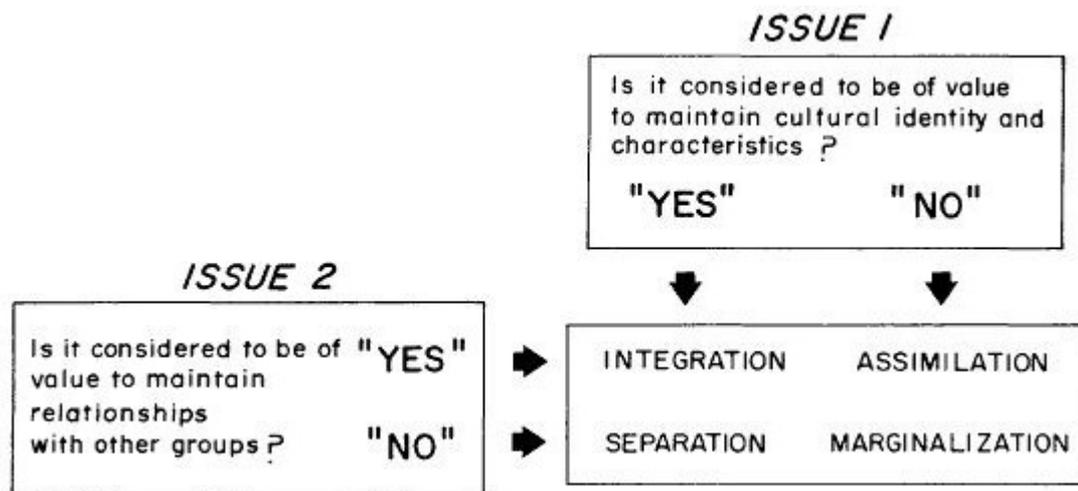

Figure 3. Berry's acculturation model (Berry et al 1987:496).

According to Berry (1980: 12-13) and Liebkind (2000: 20), if the individual has answered yes to both questions, s/he has chosen the *integration* strategy, which implies that the cultural heritage of the individual is kept intact, whilst the individual also pursues to be a part of the larger society. However, if the individual has said no to preserving one's own culture but yes to seeking contact with the host culture, s/he is implementing the *assimilationist* strategy, suggesting that the individual has no desire to sustain his/her own cultural identity but prefers to go native (Berry 1980: 13). Although both types of acculturation are considered positive, it is clear that integration is the desirable option here, as the latter type, assimilation, is more likely to lead to questions of identity especially if the majority rejects the individual. The two more negative strategies can also lead to similar results. If the individual has opted to say yes only to preserving one's own culture, s/he rejects the new host culture and does not wish to have anything to do with the majority by avoiding contact (Liebkind 2000: 20). Rejection is in other words a "self-imposed withdrawal from the larger society", that is, *separation* (Berry 1980: 13). If the individual has said no to both questions, s/he does

not have the opportunity or aspirations to retain either one's own culture or the host culture insinuating *marginalization* (Liebkind 2000: 20). Liebkind (2000: 20) stresses that acculturation can be uneven and can appear in different forms in different areas of life. For example, one individual can pursue a completely assimilationist view in the workplace, linguistic integration (bilingualism), and separation by marrying someone from their own ethnic group.

Berry (1980: 15) notes that if the individual has the right to choose, more varieties of acculturation become available. "The right to choose options relates to the degree of tolerance for cultural diversity which is present in a society, both at the individual (attitudinal) and group (community, institutional, and governmental) levels." As has already come to light, whether the larger society supports assimilationist or pluralist ideologies, i.e. how the majority views members of the minorities and what the social and political atmosphere in the country is like, has a strong effect on acculturation (Liebkind 2000: 19). Signs of a successful acculturation process have traditionally thought to include good physical and mental health, general satisfaction in life, healthy self-esteem, and in general coping in the new culture. If numerous problems occur during acculturation or if the process just is not successful, we can talk of acculturative stress. According to Berry et al (1987: 492-493), acculturative stress is stress in which the stressors arrive from the acculturation process, and it results in a reduction of health in physical, psychological and social aspects. Moreover, acculturation is by nature a stressful phenomenon, and migrants are likely to suffer from mental health issues (e.g. confusion, anxiety, depression) to some extent, as well as experience feelings of marginalization and alienation, heightened psychosomatic symptom levels, and identity confusion at some point of the acculturation process (ibid). Subsequently, it is desirable that the host culture introduces a variety of measures that support the migrant during the adaptation process for integration to take place.

As was already mentioned in Chapter 3, activity theory and acculturation share some common features. Both emphasize the fact that adaptation or (favourable) acculturation is a two-way process which requires both of the participants, the minority and the majority (the individual and the environment), to adapt. This section has largely emphasized the role of the hosts, the majority, in the implementation of integration but it is clear that it should also be taken into account that the success of the adaptation process depends on the migrant as well. Some migrants want to integrate, whereas some do not for a variety of reasons (e.g. wanting to return home as soon as possible).

Nonetheless, if the host culture has a negative attitude towards the newcomers and does not support the adaptation process in any way, migrants essentially have no say at all during the process: they have to assimilate or separate themselves from the host society.

4.3.2 Attitudes towards migrants in Finland

It is fair to say that Finland definitely does not fall into the assimilationist category, but whether Finland can be said to follow a pluralist ideology completely is debatable. Finland has certainly accommodated to migrants particularly on the educational level but it seems that Finns themselves are somewhat reluctant to accept change based on the discussion in the media (see for example Helsingin sanomat 2006). People seem to question the idea of acculturation: why do we need to change when they are the ones who came here? Furthermore, migrants are often seen as a mass, when they are in fact an extremely heterogeneous group. As discussed above, the acculturation process does not only cover the changes the migrant has to make, but it also deals with the changes in the majority. Hence, it is important to take a closer look at what kinds of attitudes Finns have towards the new minorities, that is, the migrants living in the country. In 2001, the Finnish business and policy forum EVA (2001a: 7-8) published a report which largely focused on Finns' attitudes towards migrants. Even though the report was published ten years ago, the findings are still relevant today as they correlate with a more recent study on the topic by Jaakkola (2009). In order to provide a more extensive view of the attitudes of Finns' towards the new minorities in the country both studies will be referred to in this section.

Both EVA (2001a: 83-84) as well as Jaakkola (2009: 24) inform that positive attitudes towards migrants were detected especially when it was presented in connection to possible benefit. EVA (2001a: 83-84) found that every fourth respondent regarded remedying the shortage of labour force caused by the aging of the population with foreign workers as a positive thing. Every other person, however, was set against this but some improvement has taken place as attitudes towards the matter were more negative a decade prior. Similarly, Jaakkola (2009: 24) reports that negative attitudes have diminished after the economic turmoil of the 1990s and in 2007 Finns' stance towards foreign labour was more positive than even before: 74% of respondents felt that Finland should accept more foreign workers into the country. EVA (2001a: 83-84) also asked the respondents whether they thought foreigners bring valuable international

influences to the country to which 45% of the respondents said yes. In addition, the majority (57%) reported that they felt that Finns' rather cautious attitude towards foreigners was only wise caution, not ignorance or racism. EVA (2001a: 84) felt necessary to test the intensity of Finns' attitudes in the form a more radical claim in which the respondents were asked whether they were concerned that the growing number of foreigners would lead to unfavourable mixing of races, and would weaken the vitality of the nation. In 1992, more people accepted this claim than rejected it, but now more people rejected it than endorsed it: 34% expressed concern. Also Jaakkola (2009: 64) found a similar change in attitude from the 1990s to the 2000s.

Furthermore, when asked to assess 23 different kinds of characterizations of migrants and migration policy, unanimity was expressed on two issues (EVA 2001a: 84-86). First, attacks against migrants were unquestionably condemned, and second, banishing all migrants was not thought to be just either. Moreover, it was found that Finns thought the standard of living and the social security system were the main reasons behind migration to Finland. In addition, EVA's (2001a: 86) report revealed that crime and restlessness were thought to increase along with growing numbers of migrants, however, just as many people considered migrants as a whole to be decent, sympathetic people who have a lot to give to Finnish society. Similarly, questions of integration caused division. On the one hand, the majority felt that migrants do not show enough respect towards Finnish culture and way of life, and more than one out of two people reacted disapprovingly to the idea of promoting other than the majority religious groups (EVA 2001a: 86; Jaakkola 2009: 62). On the other hand, most people did not feel migrants were taking over the job market to excess, and quite significantly retaining and passing on one's mother tongue was considered important even if teaching it in schools received a more reserved response (Jaakkola 2009: 70).

According to Jaakkola (2009: 28-29), as migration into Finland has increased since the 1990s and consequently contacts with migrants have grown in number, more and more Finns have formed personal relationships with foreigners which has in turn affected Finns' attitudes towards migration in a positive manner. Namely, the more contacts an individual had with migrants, the more positively they viewed migration in general. The observation made by Jaakkola (2009: 29) is supported by a so called contact theory, according to which prejudices diminish as contacts between the majority and the minorities multiply: multifaceted communication helps to establish more personal bonds - especially between people of the same status (Jaakkola 2000: 29).

Subsequently, it was also discovered that migrants from different ethnic groups were reacted to differently (Jaakkola 2009: 52). Jaakkola (2009: 52) found that Finns' attitudes were most positive towards migrants who came from nearby countries of high living standards and most negative towards migrants from poorer countries. Moreover, attitudes were more reserved towards people whose outward appearance or culture differed from the majority more substantially. In other words, Nordic people, Anglo-Saxons and Ingrian Finns were viewed more positively than migrants from other European countries or from Asian or African countries (Jaakkola 2009: 52).

All in all, what the findings presented by Jaakkola (2009) and EVA (2001a) tell us is that Finns' attitudes towards migrants are quite complex but that positive development has occurred during the last two decades. A common factor seems to be that highly educated and socioeconomically well established individuals (women more than men) who live in larger cities (particularly in southern Finland) had the most positive outlook on migrants (EVA 2001a: 87-90; Jaakkola 2009: 78-79). Having said that, how the current economic situation of Finland (and of the rest of the world) has affected the attitudes in the 2010s, gives cause for further research on this topic. Nonetheless, the focus is now on whether or not Finland can be thought of as a country that supports multiculturalism (operates on the basis of pluralists ideologies) and integration of migrants. As was already noted, the Finnish government has taken steps to facilitate for migrants, but on the basis of EVA's (2001a, 2001b) and Jaakkola's (2009) reports it would be fair to claim that contact between the native population and the newcomers varies greatly from one individual to the next (e.g. younger versus older), and the less contact there is, the more prejudices people have of each other. For example, Van Oudenhoven et al (1998) found that most natives promote integration over other varieties of acculturation, but still believe that most migrants choose separation, when it is in fact the least popular option chosen by migrants.

4.3.3 From EFL to ESL - the importance of English in Finland

During the 20th and 21st centuries the English language has become a lingua franca of the world, and this development can be seen in Finland as well. The presence of English in Finland is undeniably strong - whether people like or not. According to Statistics Finland (2008), nearly 85% of Finns in 2006 stated that they can speak at least one foreign language, and the number was even higher, 98%, among under 35-year-old

people. It probably does not come as a surprise that English was indeed reported as the most commonly spoken foreign language. English has essentially become an everyday phenomenon in Finns' lives, in particular with the youth. The purpose of this section is to first discuss the role of English in general and then in Finnish society, and second, how it affects the migrant population and in particular migrant learners living in Finland.

As described by Kachru and Nelson (2001: 13), the global situation of English has been described by three concentric circles: the inner circle, the outer circle and the expanding circle. The inner circle consists of countries where English is the first language of most of the inhabitants, or otherwise a dominant language. This category encompasses countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Obviously English is not the only language spoken in these countries but its role as the language of public discourse (e.g. media, government, education) is not called into question. The outer circle involves countries in which the English language "has a long history of institutionalized functions and standing as a language of wide and important roles" (Kachru and Nelson 2001: 13) in, for example, education, governance and popular culture. Such countries are for instance, India, Pakistan, Singapore, South Africa and Zambia.

Finally, Kachru and Nelson (2001: 13) explain that the last circle, the expanding circle, comprises of countries in which English has a range of different roles but in which it does not have any kind of official standing. Finland along with most European countries as well as much of the rest of the world's population falls into this category. Estimates for the number of speakers for each of the circles vary widely, as there is no consensus as to what counts as adequate knowledge of English for one to be regarded as an English speaker. The expanding circle is especially problematic in this sense as speakers' competence may vary from native-like proficiency to very poor knowledge of the language. Nevertheless, Kahcru and Nelson (2001: 14) conclude that there are at least three non-native speakers (outer and expanding circles) for every native speaker (inner circle). They also argue that the concepts of the inner, outer and expanding circles are roughly comparable to categories of native, English as a second language (ESL), and English as foreign language (EFL) speakers.

Taavitsainen and Pahta (2003: 4) have detected movement in the aforementioned categories of inner, outer and expanding circle: ESL speakers are shifting towards the inner circle, and consequently, EFL speakers are drawn towards the

outer circle. They report that the intranational use of English in the other Nordic countries of Denmark, Sweden and Norway, has increased significantly during recent years, for example, as the language of higher education and professional discourse. What is more, bilingual people especially from professional and middle classes prefer to adopt English as the language of the home rather than the majority language of the country; thus, new native speakers outside the tradition are born as reported by Taavitsainen and Pahta (2003: 4). Hence, it is justified to argue that the other Nordic countries are well on their way developing from EFL to ESL countries. Subsequently, it is necessary to ask if Finland is headed the same route. As has become evident from the previous description, Finland falls into the category of expanding circle in which English as such has no official standing. Yet it is apparent to anyone living in Finland that English has gained ground or nearly taken over several fields of life which used to be reserved for Finnish (or Swedish) only.

It is reasonable to argue that English is used as the lingua franca of international communication in Finland but as Taavitsainen and Pahta (2003: 5) point out, the language has "a strong presence in the life of those Finns who are not actively involved in international liaisons". In fact, avoiding English is nearly impossible as it has become the dominant language of audio-visual mass media, the Internet, popular culture and entertainment (Taavitsainen and Pahta 2003: 5, Leppänen et al 2009: 112-113). For example, as all foreign television programmes, which are for the most part American or from other English speaking countries, are subtitled and not dubbed, the average person receives a great deal of input in English in his/her everyday life. The vast amount of input in English has started to affect how people (especially the youth) speak: code-switching, that is, using English terms and jargon along with Finnish, is used frequently as a form of self-expression and style in speech, and it has started to appear in written discourse as well (Taavitsainen and Pahta 2003: 5, Leppänen et al 2009: 128). Moreover, English has become particularly immanent in youth culture as reported by Leppänen et al (2009: 72-73,111-112): to the young English is an everyday phenomenon and they feel the language has significance to them personally, whereas older people might show interest towards English, encounter it at work and in their free time but not actively use it in the same way.

According to a national large-scale survey on the English language in Finland (Leppänen et al 2009: 77), assiduous Finnish travellers consider English to be the most important language abroad, but on the other hand, English was also highly valued

domestically. The study showed that the respodents thought that especially young and working age people must have a good command of English (Leppänen et al 2009: 76). On the basis of these results it is also reasonable to assume that Finns are most likely to use English when dealing with foreigners inside Finland: Finns seem to assume that all foreigners including migrants are or should be able to communicate in English. In fact, Leppänen et al (2009: 138, 144, 324) found that with the exception of children and the elderly, the majority of Finns (78% or more) thought all population groups should know English in twenty years time as they estimated that English will then be needed almost as much as Finnish in all walks of life in Finland. In regards to migrants, the number was 78.5%, which was particularly interesting when compared to the results of the same question regarding the Finnish language. Namely, only 85.3% of the respodents felt it was necessary for migrants to know Finnish in twenty years time (Leppänen et al 2009: 135-136, 317). The difference between the percentages for English and Finnish in regards to migrants is quite small which might indicate that Finns expect there to be more occupational migration rather than involuntary migration (e.g. refugees). Perhaps this is also a reflection of Finns' attitudes towards migrants: occupational migration is viewed positively as opposed to other kinds of migration as it is felt that some migrants exploit the Finnish social security system as discussed in 4.3.2.

The role of English has set in motion a public discussion of where exactly Finland is headed and is there reason for concern. As Taavitsainen and Pahta (2003: 5) put it, Finns' have long been aware of the benefits of international and intercultural communication and skills in foreign languages are widely valued in Finnish society. Finns' seem to be eager to learn languages and that might be due to the fact that from a very early age Finns' are aware that if one wants to be in contact with people from other countries and languages, one must learn a more widely spoken language. Taavitsainen and Pahta (2003: 10) write that the general consensus appears to be that Finns' still regard Finnish as the language of the heart, whereas "knowledge of English is considered a skill like the ability to read". Accordingly, we can conclude that while English has become a dominant language in Finland in many walks of life, there is an attempt to cultivate the Finnish language, especially as the process of Finnish language standardization was time-consuming and the result of conscious policy and development (Taavitsainen and Pahta 2003: 12, Leppänen et al 2009: 129). All the same, clear signs of development from EFL to ESL can be seen.

The results of the national survey (Leppänen et al 2009) show that the young were the most active users of English, which in terms of this study is interesting. Do the migrant youth under investigation in the present study use and regard English in the same way as native-Finns, or do they feel left out, marginalized, similarly to some other groups such as the elderly? This is a question that we will try to find answers to in the present study. As has already been mentioned, not all migrants have knowledge of English, or their skills are not comparable to those of the native population, which makes integration into Finnish society much more difficult. It is evident that without sufficient English skills one will be at a disadvantage both at an educational level as well as in the job market in addition to becoming to a certain degree an outsider in Finnish society, in everyday life. In this respect, it is essential that more attention be paid to migrant learners' English teaching and learning from the very moment they enter the Finnish education system.

5 PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Previous research focusing on migrants in the Finnish and English classrooms does exist to some extent even though Finnish as a second language (F2) learners are a relatively recent phenomenon in Finnish society. The bulk of the research on migrants in Finland has, however, been conducted from the point of view of class teachers (Jauhiainen and Luostarinen 2004; Leducq 2006; Miettinen 2001), or it has centred around the adaptation process (Alitolppa-Niitamo 2004; Jaakkola et al 2004; Jasinskalaja-Lahti 2000; Jasinskaja-Lahti et al 2002), or on issues of multicultural education (Määttä 2008; Soilamo 2008; Suutari 2010). Research on migrants' language learning in Finland has largely focused on learning Finnish, which is not a surprise as Finnish skills are a vital part of the integration process. Studies on migrants as learners of foreign languages, specifically from the point of view of the learner and not the teacher, are still at the moment scarce, which in itself is a justification for the present study. Unfortunately this also means that reporting on similar studies is not possible. However, lately some EFL researchers have concentrated on learners' narratives of foreign language learning enabling us to put the current study into context. In this chapter we will first examine migrants' success in foreign language classrooms in Finland, and then we will move on to discussing studies that have utilized learner narratives or pictures to investigate, for example, learner's beliefs or attitudes towards the L2 or how learner agency is constructed.

5.1 Migrants' success in the Finnish school system

There has been some research on how migrant learners' success in school, attitudes towards schooling, and educational choices differ from those of Finnish-as-a-mother-tongue (F1) learners. One such study by Kuusela et al (2008: 97-98) was conducted by using assessments made of 5th and 6th graders in 2006-2007, and that of 9th graders during 2001-2005 as material: altogether 23,000 elementary pupils of whom 800, and 68,000 9th graders of whom 1,600, spoke some other language than Finnish or Swedish as their mother tongue participated in the study. The assessments were done in mathematics and sciences as well as in mother tongue and literature in addition to English. In this section the focus is for the most part on results concerning English and mother tongue and literature as they are the most relevant in terms of the present study.

Furthermore, unlike the present study, in the report by Kuusela (2008), the term migrant also refers to the second generation.

Kuusela et al (2008: 102) found that migrant learners in general performed somewhat weaker than other learners, although it is noteworthy that some migrant learners performed extremely well. It was suspected that the reason behind some migrants' excellent performance was most likely due to a long stay in Finland, but as these learners still reported some other language than Finnish to be their mother tongue, their cultural identity can be thought to have been preserved (ibid). The study (Kuusela et al 2008: 102,104) reports that in general circa 30-35% of migrant learners were placed in the very weakest 10% in mathematics, sciences and mother tongue and literature in all grades under assessment. This is more than could be expected by sheer chance. Additionally, 53% of migrants in 5th and 6th grades, and 32% in the 9th grade reported that they received remedial instruction in mother tongue and literature, but the numbers might seem higher than they actually are as the number of migrants overall in the study was small (Kuusela et al 2008: 106, 109). What can be concluded nonetheless is that migrant learners have received more remedial instruction than F1 speakers in relation to the level of performance (Kuusela et al 2008: 113).

Kuusela et al (2008: 142) discovered that speaking some other language than Finnish or Swedish as one's mother tongue had a clear effect on the learner's success at school. On average, an F1 speaker's grade mean value was 0.35 numbers higher in all school subjects, and 0.42 numbers higher in theoretical subjects (Finnish assessment is carried out on a scale of 1 to 10). However, they also discovered that second generation migrant learners were usually more successful than all other learners, while the weakest performers were first generation migrants who had arrived from outside the EU. Kuusela et al (2008: 143-144) also point out that as far as language studies are concerned, returnees' and second generation migrants' grades in relation to those of F1 speakers' grades were in fact better. Moreover, second generation migrants did particularly well in A1- and A2-languages, in which the difference to other learners was nearly a half a number. In B1-languages, returnees from EU-countries did better than other migrants, or F1 speakers, although the B1-language is often Swedish and as returnees includes Finns born in Sweden, this result is hardly surprising as pointed out by Kuusela et al (2008: 144). The result is also affected by the fact that some migrants have been exempt from studying a B1-language (ibid).

Kuusela et al (2008: 114-115) also took a closer look at how well migrant learners got on at school: 8% reported that they did not like being at school at all or very little, whereas 33% said they liked it very much, which more or less correlated with the numbers of F1 speakers. In spite of this, nearly double as many migrant learners (13%) said they had been bullied at school compared to other learners (6%). Kuusela et al (2009: 185) also reviewed migrants' further education after compulsory schooling. They found that as many migrants as F1 speakers continue on to vocational education but a much smaller number of migrants continue to upper secondary school - with the exception of second generation migrants and returnees from EU-countries. It is concerning that migrants are still twice as likely to be left out of secondary education, and the risk is three times as high with first generation migrants who come from non-EU-countries (ibid).

These results indicate that migrants as a group do not do as well in school in general as F1 speakers, with the exception of certain migrant groups in language studies. It should be noted that the success of second generation migrants and returnees in language studies such as English is not a surprise as their living environment in itself is multilingual, and thus, they may be better equipped to categorize and assort linguistic knowledge. This is not to say that members of other migrant groups do not live in such environments - they do, but the difference here is that second generation migrants and returnees have had more time to master the Finnish language before entering the educational system. Other migrants are in this respect worse off as English along with other foreign languages in Finland is taught in Finnish, with which this group of learners is most likely still struggling.

5.2 Visual narratives in EFL-research

Kalaja et al (2008: 186) used visual narratives, drawings, to map out the experiences of EFL learners, in this case Finnish university students majoring in English at the University of Jyväskylä (teacher-trainees and non-trainees), in a specific context within the sociocultural framework as a part of the Novice to expert -research project. The aim of the project was to examine how students' concepts of language and language learning and teaching alter and develop on the road to becoming a language expert (Dufva et al 2003: 313). The project employed several methods to collect data (e.g. questionnaires) but we will only examine the results concerning the drawings, that is, the self-portraits

titled "This is how I look as a learner of English" students were asked to draw of themselves (Kalaja et al 2008: 191). The students were also asked to write a short description of the picture to help out in the process of interpretation. The study aimed to find out what kinds of mediational means, artefacts, EFL learners use and how they use them in the learning process (ibid).

When analysing the self-portraits, Kalaja et al (2008: 191) focused on the presence (or lack thereof) of any other human figures and objects in addition to the learner. Interestingly, the results showed that most students had depicted themselves alone in the portrait without any other people present (Kalaja et al 2008: 196). The most common mediational artefacts in the portraits were books, which Kalaja et al (2008: 197) thought represented that the students considered themselves to be "Cartesian rationalist agents". These "individuals who rely on their own internal intellectual capacities when learning a new language" do not regard other people to be essential to their own learning process but rather value the tradition of literacy-based learning. Furthermore, the learners mostly described themselves as recipients rather than contributors of the language. When compared to the short written narrative, the description of the portrait, Kalaja et al (2008: 197) discovered some contradictions. For instance, the learners reported that they had in fact learned best when interacting in target language environment - yet they had not included this in the portrait. Moreover, the teacher was missing-in-action in the portraits but on the written narratives the teacher had a vital role as the gatekeeper or guardian of EFL learning. The researchers thought this phenomenon might have been a side effect of using drawing as a method as "in their written interpretations it was possible for them to describe matters that did not easily lend themselves to visualisation". However, it is likely that their findings were also affected by the instructions given. "This is how I look like as a learner of English" is bound to produce portraits focusing on the person himself/herself at the expense of everything else that had an effect on the learning process. Thus, the dissimilarities in the visual and written narratives of the learners were merely a reflection of following directions.

Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008: 171) have also studied foreign language learning through visual narratives, in this case, photographs. The study was a part of a larger research project at the University of Jyväskylä focusing on English in Finnish teenagers' everyday practises. Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta's (2008: 171) main goal was to examine what kinds of roles English had in the lives of the Finnish youth especially

in informal contexts, and what was their relation to formal learning contexts such as school. Informal learning here refers to "contacts with the language in everyday settings that arise from the needs and interests of the language user" (ibid). The seven participants were between 14 and 16 years of age and were advised to take photographs of situations, places and activities in which English had some significance to them (Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta 2008: 173-174). The participants also partook in discussions centred on the photos with the researchers, which offered deeper insights into the English language world of the teenagers. Thus, the study operated on two-levels: the first level focused on the "stories told by the photographs in their own right" indexing not only the participant's personal view but possibly more widely accepted views of English use in Finland, and the second-level concentrated on the stories told by the participants in the aforementioned discussions with the researchers.

As reported by Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008: 175), the photographs could be categorized into five groups in relation to their content. There were 1) photographs that related to the role of English in tourism and travelling, 2) photographs centred on the modern entertainment industry (e.g. TV, movies, music), 3) photos representing the print media (e.g. books and magazines), 4) pictures related to the entertainment industry or computers, and 5) photographs of hobbies (e.g. snowboarding and skateboarding). Most of the photos depicted contexts of informal learning but the school world was not entirely left out. It was most noticeably present in print media: English was also connected to "the tools of learning in formal education" via school textbooks and dictionaries (Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta 2008: 175). This was thought to signify that socially prevalent facts and values were identifiable in the photographs, indicating that the participants acknowledged "the importance granted to the formal learning of English in Finland" (ibid). When these results were examined in relation to the discussions, it was found that the participants made comparisons between informal and formal learning, told stories of intentional and unintentional learning in their everyday lives as well as stories of growing expertise as users of English (Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta 2008: 176).

The participants seemed to connect learning with formal education (e.g. normative and accurate use of English, written discourse), whereas informal contexts were more about making oneself understood (e.g. spoken discourse, "ending up speaking English") as pointed out by Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008: 177-178). Some school related activities such as using the dictionary, however, were also present

in more informal contexts suggesting that some aspects of school learning were found relevant during free time. Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008: 179) highlight the fact that "the boundaries between different domains and practises - and thus also between formal and informal learning - are not necessarily very clear-cut". Furthermore, the participants also reported stories of incidental or unintentional learning which were characterized as effortless and almost automatic (Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta 2008: 180). According to Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008: 170-171), these kinds of stories arose mostly in connection to hobbies or the media: the vast amount of input one receives in English was just seen as something that "sticks to your head". Lastly, and most interestingly, Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008:182-183) describe the last narrative type as the learner as the expert, which was characterized as something that could only be gained in informal contexts and it was often associated with special terminology of a specific hobby. For example, skateboarding terminology does not exist in Finnish, and therefore, the participants have to rely on English vocabulary. English was seen as a natural part of the skateboarding world, and an expert identity was not only adopted in terms of the language used in the particular community but also in terms of being a skateboarder, and thus, a skilful participant in the practises of that community. An expert role was also adopted as a viewer of television (criticizing bad translations) and as a student (criticizing for example teachers' and teacher trainees' bad pronunciation). All in all, it seems evident that the while the participants acknowledged that learning can take place in informal contexts, they still regarded proper learning to take place in formal educational contexts (Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta 2008: 184). Nonetheless, Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008: 184-185) conclude that the results show that "personal experience and participation in discursive practises both in and outside the school" form the foundations for English use and learning in these teenagers' lives.

The previous two studies described have used less conventional data, drawings or photographs, to research EFL learning. Murphey and Carpenter (2008) used a more conventional narrative type, that is, a written narrative. Even though the method is further away from the means used in the present study, the main goal of Murphey and Carpenter's (2008) study was to investigate learner agency similarly to the present study, and thus, it was thought worthy of closer examination. The study by Murphey and Carpenter (2008:21-22) analysed 20 written language learning histories (LLH) from Japanese university students majoring in English. The LLHs were examined in terms of "what works" for language learners, in other words, attention was paid to factors that

the students reported were useful, helpful or encouraging and particularly to those instances in which learner agency was evident. These factors were then analysed in four different ways: 1) is the item positive or negative, 2) what is the item's learning context, 3) what kinds of active factors (e.g. people, activities) were associated with the item, and 4) were any markers of agency apparent.

Murphey and Carpenter (2008: 28-29) noticed that even though all of the participants had gone through the Japanese educational system, and therefore, had shared experiences particularly as successful learners of English, the nature of learning described in the LLHs was extremely personalized. A common factor for all, however, was that more positive associations were connected to informal, out-of-school, contexts than to in-school contexts. Moreover, "more than half of what students attributed to their learning was not directly associated with learning in an academic context". Relationships with other people were seen as especially important in this respect (Murhey and Carpenter 2008: 30). In regards to agency, Murphey and Carperter (2008: 30-31) report that of all items coded 20% could be associated with learner agency. Agency was particularly apparent during the participants' time in university: agency thinking was used to help oneself progress in language learning. A reoccurring pattern in the LLHs analysed was that agency was often connected to networking with peers and other people, suggesting that "agency often originates through social capital" as clarified by Murphey and Carpenter (2008: 31). Sadly not much interaction had taken place in the target language before university studies, meaning there simply was not social and cultural capital in which SLA agency could grow prior to that. Murphey and Carpenter (2008: 32) point out that students often feel "unfulfilled in environments that don't encourage agency". In fact, they found that students who were active agents developed their abilities in the target language quicker than other students through increasing social capital (Murphey and Carpenter 2008: 31).

What all of the aforementioned studies suggest is that learning takes place in formal as well as informal contexts but often a connection between the two is lacking. It is evident that learners have a hard time connecting the two worlds, but it is also clear that teachers do not take enough advantage of informal ways of learning. Furthermore, what is common to all of the studies discussed is that rather than accepting the acquisition metaphor, which views the learner only as a processor of input and a negotiator of meaning, these studies have adopted the participation metaphor, in which "learning becomes a matter of the learner actively seeking learning opportunities and

being eventually socialised into the practises of a specific group or community and accepted as its member" (Kalaja et al 2008: 3). The active role of the learner in connection to "social and cultural capital" as put by Murphey and Carpenter (2008: 31), enables the learner to construct and develop one's agency as an EFL learner. Therefore, learning becomes personal in nature and experiences subjective (Kalaja et al 2008: 3). Furthermore, the teacher's role changes as the teacher now becomes "a provider of learning opportunities and a guide in the socialisation process" (ibid). In other words, all of the aforementioned studies have accepted the sociocultural view of language as well as of language learning and teaching similarly to the present study.

What the present study took and learned from the studies presented above is that first of all when dealing with data such as this, it is essential to let the data speak for itself and not to try to control it. Second, how the instructions for the narrative are formulated has an effect on how the narratives turn out, and consequently, greatly affect the results. Third, although using learner narratives can still be regarded as somewhat unconventional in the field of ESL and EFL research, they can offer deeper insights into socially prevalent issues and matters as well as tell stories of identity in a drastically different way from more conservative approaches giving the learner more control over their own voice. Fourth, even though learners seem to have shared experiences of learning a particular language in a particular context, the learning experience in itself is highly personalized. Fifth and most importantly, migrant learners' success in Finnish schools especially as language learners cannot be compared to that of native Finns which in itself is a justification for the present study as more research on the topic is urgently needed.

6 RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the research design of the present study. First, we will discuss the motivations for the present study in addition to the research questions. Second, the focus will be on the research methods chosen, and finally we will move our attention to the participants of the study as well as to the data processing procedures.

6.1 Aim of the study

As discussed in Chapter 2, the number of migrants in Finland has increased rapidly since 1980 and particularly from the 1990s onwards. Consequently, the Finnish education system has been under severe stress in trying to meet the demands and needs of the new group of learners. Adjustments have been made in the form of offering a number of supportive measures to help migrant learners to succeed in school, and thus, also in Finnish society. Yet, migrant learners seem to be struggling as shown by the study by Kuusela et al (2008: 102): in general migrants' school performance was found to be weaker than that of other learners. Moreover, studies on matters of multicultural education have shown that teachers often "feel burdened by the linguistic and cultural heterogeneity that comes with pupils of multicultural background" (Suutari 2010: 52), and feel they have not received enough additional training and information in regards to teaching migrants (Määttä 2008: 54-56; Soilamo 2008: 102-106). Hence, for these reasons alone more research on migrant learners is urgently needed.

The present study approaches the subject from a novel perspective, that is, much of the research on migrants in Finland hitherto has been conducted from the point of view of the teacher, specifically class teachers (Jauhiainen and Luostarinen 2004; Leducq 2006; Miettinen 2001). The educational experiences of migrants in grades 7-9 of compulsory education or in secondary education, where learners are being taught by multiple subject teachers instead of one class teacher, have essentially not been investigated much (see e.g. Hirvonen 2010). It is clear that migrants face an enormous challenge in studying traditional school subjects in Finnish due to their limited language skills and the complex and abstract language used in textbooks as well as in the classroom: preparatory teaching cannot guarantee that migrants reach a level at which they would be able to study in Finnish schools without facing serious linguistic

challenges. The challenges faced in foreign language classrooms then are an even bigger issue. Foreign languages in Finland are to a great extent taught in Finnish since the assumption is that it is the common language shared by everyone in the classroom. Thus, for someone who is still learning Finnish and is not able to function in Finnish at the same level as native speakers, the task of trying to learn yet another language through a still developing language is overwhelming. In essence, a migrant learner is studying a foreign language, in this case English, through their second language, that is, Finnish. The pressure is added by the fact that skills in English are highly valued in Finnish society and lack of them can lead to feelings of exclusion in addition to actual concrete obstacles, for example, in advancing to further education. What is more, this area of study is virtually untouched in the field of teaching and learning EFL.

Accordingly, the present study aims to shed light on the English and Finnish learning experiences migrants have had from the point of view of the learner, and provide much needed information for teachers to be able to better handle this new group of learners. The present study will address the following research questions:

1) How do migrants see and conceptualize themselves as learners of English and Finnish?

2) What kinds of mediational means are used by migrants in learning English and Finnish?

3) How do migrants perceive the relationship between formal and informal English and Finnish learning?

4) How do migrants construct their agency as learners of English and Finnish?

As has already been discussed in length in Chapter 3, the hypothesis behind the present study is that learning is socially and culturally constructed. The present study is especially interested in mapping out what happens when one is removed - either voluntarily or involuntarily - from one's initial cultural setting and has to adjust to the ways of the new community. What is of interest here are the effects this factor has in learner agency, and how well migrant learners are able to take advantage of different kinds of mediational means available to them to aid their language development. Subsequently, this also raises the question of the relationship between formal and informal learning, as the group under investigation lives in an environment in which they have plenty of opportunities to use both languages outside the classroom. In short,

the present study focuses on mapping out the relationship between the migrant and the environment. Examining all these aforementioned factors is expected to give insights into how migrants can be encouraged to exploit the resources available to them more efficiently and to develop into independent and resourceful foreign and second language learners. Of course, this information is also expected to aid teachers, particularly language teachers, in their work.

6.2 Methodology and data

The previous studies illustrated in Chapter 5 were qualitative in nature largely because visual narratives are a relatively new phenomenon in ESL and EFL research. According to Merriam (1998: 7), it is typical for qualitative research to employ inductive research methods and strategies as often the subject of research has not been previously explored. As research on migrants as learners of English and Finnish has thus far been scarce and as the goal of the present study is to examine the topic at hand from the point of view of the learner, adopting qualitative means was natural - in this case visual narratives in the form of learning portraits and themed interviews - to examine the subject matter of the present study. Next we will outline some important aspects of using visual narratives and interviews as a method as well as take a detailed look at the participants of the study.

6.2.1 Choice of research method: visual narratives and interviews

"Through telling stories, we say who we are and who we are not (Thornborrow and Coates 2005: 7-8)." According to Thornborrow and Coates (2008:7), narratives have important social functions in all human communities: they can be used for instance to entertain, to justify and explain, to instruct or to establish social norms. The most important function of the narrative, however, is that they define our social and cultural identity (ibid). Therefore, written and visual narratives have had a long history as a method in psychology, art therapy and education just to name a few (Kalaja et al 2008: 187). In the field of EFL, however, they are a rather new way of exploring language learning and teaching.

Language learning narratives have often been credited for being able to offer more insights into learning from the point of view of the learner (Murphey and Carpenter 2008: 20). Essentially, even though the topic of the narrative has been given by the researcher, the learner still has more "creative" freedom to express oneself than in more traditional methods such as questionnaires, which have a tendency to elicit "responses to the researcher's formulation of a belief" (Murphey and Carpenter 2008: 21). Naturally visual narratives, that is, pictures, drawings or photographs, differ from written narratives significantly. In the view of Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008: 172-173), applying the traditional concepts and criteria of a narrative to such data is not possible or even sensible for that matter. Visual narratives do not proceed in a sequence of narrative clauses, nor do they have beginnings, middles or endings in the same way as written narratives (Thornborrow and Coates 2005: 3-5).

In other words, while visual narratives may be considered a somewhat alternative way of exploring learners' beliefs, concepts and attitudes, they clearly have some advantages. Firstly, it is possible that visual narratives will bring out different kinds of themes than written or oral narratives (Dufva et al 2007: 316). Dufva et al (2007: 317) call attention to the fact that verbal and visual ways of portraying something differ from each other, and therefore, produce different kinds of representations. Secondly, visual narratives make it possible for one to convey ideas and concepts which are difficult to formulate verbally (Dufva et al 2007: 316). This is especially important in terms of the present study as the participants have limited skills in Finnish and might not be able to tell their stories fluently verbally or in a written form. Thirdly, visual narratives enable one to access experiences and situations defined as important and significant by the participant and not by the researcher (Dufva et al 2007: 316). Fourthly, drawing is a rather non-threatening method and the learner might feel safer to express matters they would not want to talk about, for example, in an interview: it is a less face threatening method. Again with respect to migrants, this aspect is of the essence as the learner might, for instance, feel insecure about one's language skills or be intimidated by the researcher, and thus, be unwilling to discuss negative experiences due to politeness.

Visual narratives were the main method used in the present study, but it was deemed important to interview a few of the participants as well in order to get more detailed information. Moreover, interviews offer a chance to ask for clarifications. As put by Dörnyei (2007: 135-136), interviews vary in structure ranging from very

structured to unstructured. The semi-structured interview, which is sometimes called a themed interview, offers a middle ground between the two extremes and that is why it was deemed the most suitable interview method for the purposes of the present study (Dörnyei 2007: 136). According to Dörnyie (2007: 136), the semi-structured interview is characterized by, on the one hand, a prepared interview frame (a set of questions around specific themes) to set the interview into a particular context, but on the other hand, it allows for freedom in the sense that the interview can take previously undetermined paths on the basis of what the interviewee says. Quintessentially, all interviewees are asked the same questions but the order and form in which there are asked may vary. The semi-structured interview is flexible in nature, and hence, it enables the interviewer to negotiate meanings together with the interviewee.

6.2.2 The participants of the study

In the present study the sample group was purposefully restricted to 15- to 35-year-old migrants who had arrived to the country after the age of four and who had at least some experience of the Finnish educational system. Some of the criteria initially demanded had to be loosened in order to acquire more data. Namely, the age of four was originally set because it was thought the first language of the participants had by that age developed further, they had memories of the country of departure, and the later the migrant arrives in the country, the more difficult it is to place him/her in the Finnish school system. Moreover, it was intended to specifically get more information on young migrants' English and Finnish learning, and thus, the target group was set to 15-30-year-old migrants who had experiences both from the Finnish school system as well as from Finnish society as a whole.

All in all, there were 52 participants of whom six had to be excluded either because they were born in Finland and therefore did not meet the criteria set or because they had not drawn a learning portrait. Of the remaining 46 participants, eight were minors of whom parental consent was not received for unknown reasons: these particular eight participants had been reached through a school in southern Finland where the teacher collected all the answer sheets and mailed them back to the researcher without the consent forms, and even though the teacher was then contacted again, no reply was received. After consulting with the department, these eight participants' learning portraits have only been included in the numerical analysis of the data by

which they cannot be identified. Their portraits will not be used as examples or discussed in more detail in the analysis for ethical reasons.

The participants were asked for some general background information on a short questionnaire before moving to the learning portraits. It should be noted that the study was conducted in Finnish and as the Finnish skills of the participants are still developing, not all questions were understood correctly or answered at all, which in turn affected the statistics presented here. In other words, some of the information is in some aspects distorted. The participants were of 13 to 35 years of age, of whom 20 were female and 26 male. Most of the participants were 15 to 17 years of age during data collection as can be seen in Figure 4.

Figure 4. The ages of the participants.
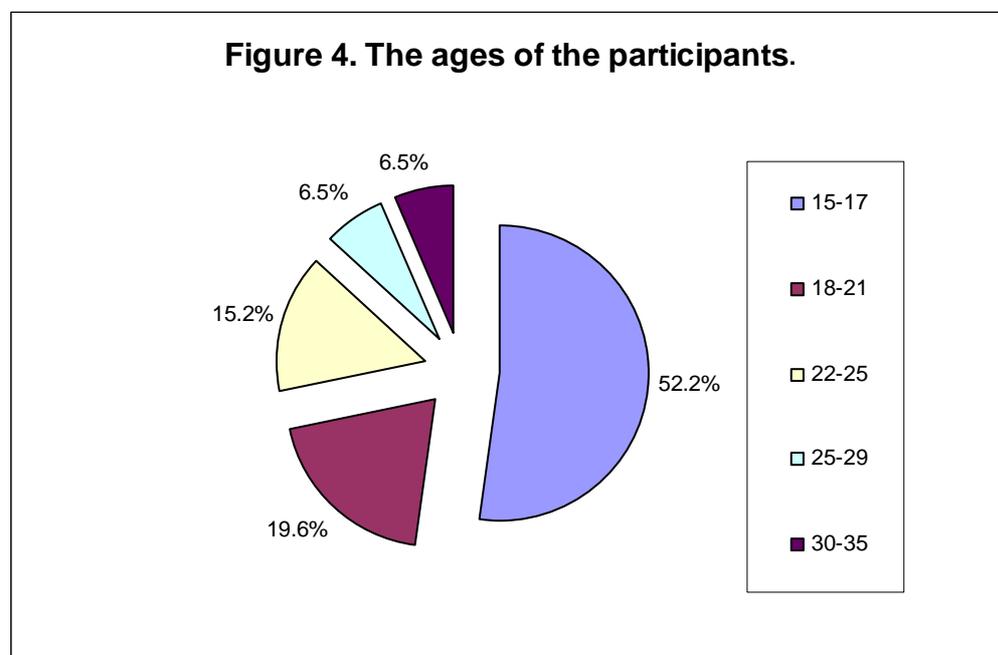
Linguistically the participants formed a very heterogeneous group reflecting the most commonly spoken foreign languages in Finland. The most common mother tongues reported were Somali (9), Russian (5), Dari (4), Kurdish (4), Vietnamese (3) and Burmanese (3) as presented in Figure 5. The following languages were only spoken by one or two people of the participants: Albanian (2), Estonian (2), Persian (2), Swahili (2), Arabic (2), Nepali (2), Kayan (1), Bengali (1), Bulgarian (1), Kinyarwanda (1), Czech (1), Chechen (1) and Chinese (1). Only one participant responded to be bilingual (Persian and Dari). Interestingly, no one reported that they considered Finnish to be their mother tongue, which indicates that either the question was formulated in such a

way that the participants felt expected to report some other language than Finnish to be their mother tongue, or they feel a stronger emotional connection to the first learned language even though their skills in Finnish might in fact be better.

Figure 5. The mother tongues of the partcipants.
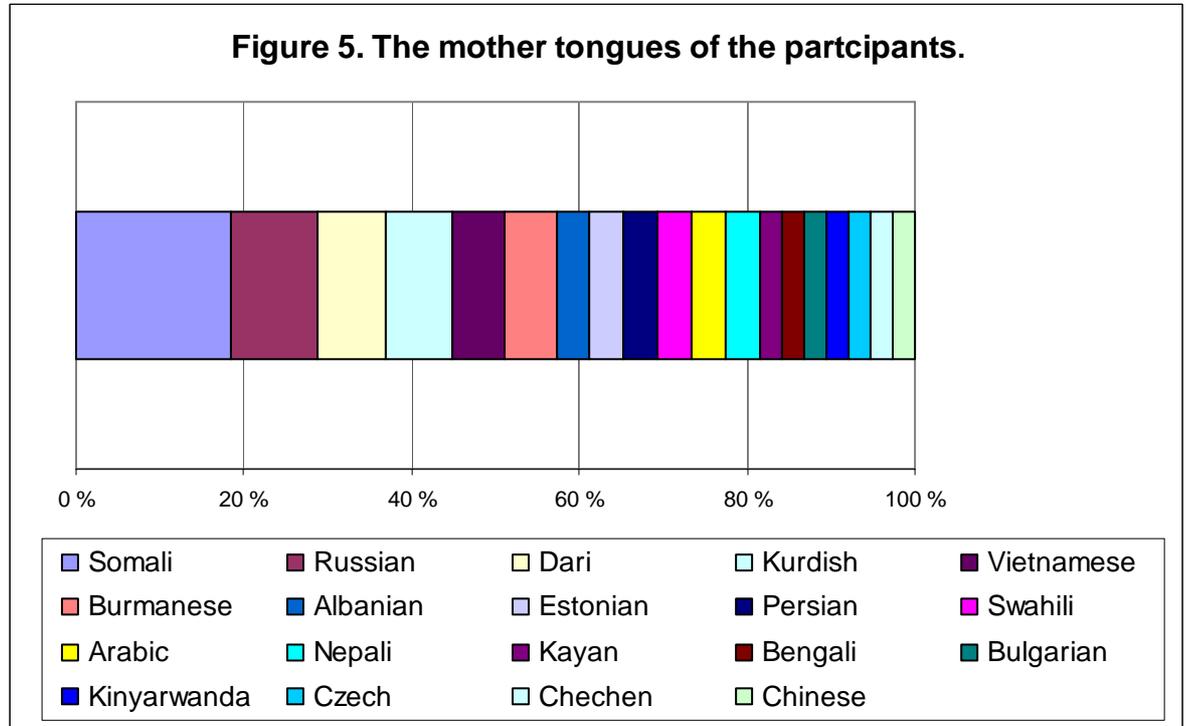
The participants were also asked what other languages they spoke. Not surprisingly, Finnish (42) and English (40) were the most common languages spoken by the participants, but Swedish (15), Arabic (6), Persian (5) and Hindi (4) were also represented in significant numbers. The participants who stated they had skills in Swedish had arrived to Finland prior to the age of 13, that is, before most native-Finns start their Swedish studies. The other languages mentioned above are widely spoken languages in very densely populated and multilingual areas of the world.

The next question dealt with the age of arrival to Finland. The age of arrival varied quite extensively from the age of 2 to 32 - yet the most common age was between 11 and 17 years of age as illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6. The participants' age of arrival.

24 %

28.3%

45.7%

Legend:
- 2-7
- 11-17
- 18-26
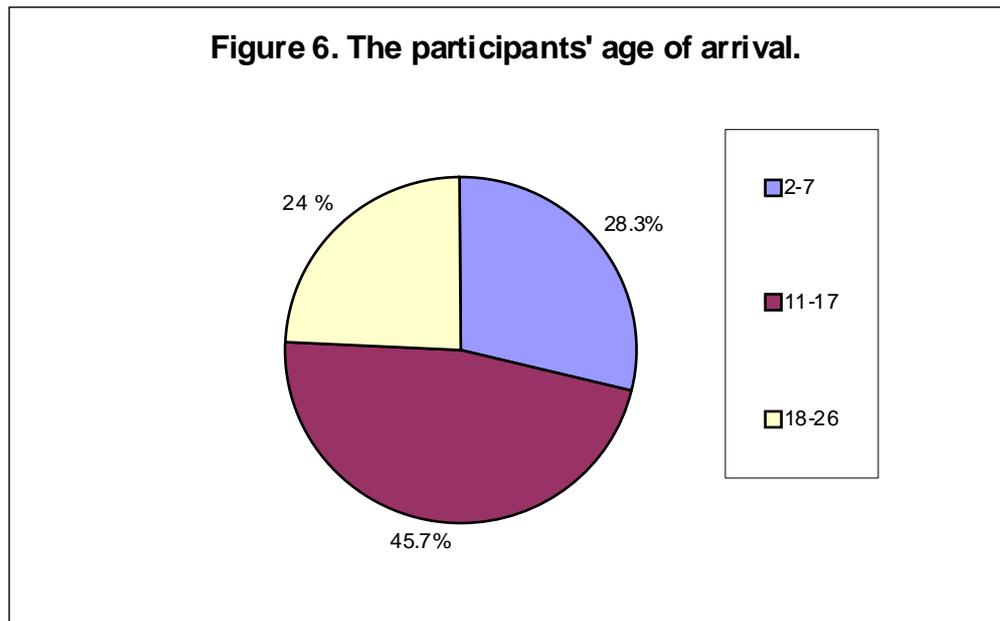
The next set of background questions dealt with studies in Finland and in the country of departure. Unlike in the first set of questions, not all of the participants answered these. First, the participants were asked what schools they had gone to in Finland including their present institution: the schools they had attended was interrelated with the age of arrival. Naturally, the participants who had arrived in Finland between the ages of 2 to 5 had attended school in the same way as native-Finns. The majority of the participants, however, had attended Finnish school from 6th or 7th grade onwards. 10 of the participants had also attended secondary education (upper secondary school, vocational school or both), and four had continued studies in tertiary education. It should be remembered that most of the participants of the present study were still in comprehensive school during data collection, which as one might expect affected the statistics. Second, the participants were asked what schools they had gone to before coming to Finland. This question proved to be trickier as different countries' educational systems vary from each other extensively, and quite a few people did not answer this question at all. What can be said is that some had not attended school at all prior to arrival as they came to Finland at an early age, whereas others had completed anywhere between four to twelve years of education in the country of departure.

The third question asked if the participants had received preparatory teaching and into what grade/school the participants had been placed after it. Only 16 participants said they had received preparatory teaching and that it had lasted at least 6-12 months or more. Most of them had been placed to 4-7th grades after the initial intensive teaching

period preparing them for Finnish school. In the last part the participants were asked whether they had received Finnish as a second language instruction and when they had begun their English studies. The vast majority of the participants (40) reported they had received Finnish as a second language instruction and most stated that it had been organized as separate instruction. As far as English studies were concerned, the participants who had arrived to Finland before the school starting age had begun their English studies just like everyone else during the 3rd year at the age of 9. Of the people who had arrived in Finland between the ages of 11-32, half had started their English studies at the ages 11-17, whereas the other half had started to study English before coming to Finland on 1st or 2nd grade, that is, at the age of 5-8. Only six people had not had any prior studies in English before arriving in Finland.

6.2.3 Learning portraits

The present study has adopted visual narratives, that is, learning portraits as the method to study the conceptions migrants have of learning English and Finnish. The learning portrait was developed on the basis of a pre-existing study by Kalaja et al (2008), who used self-portraits to study how university students conceptualized themselves as learners of English. Rather than wanting portraits of "This is how I look like as a learner of English", the present study wanted to get more information about the situations in which English and Finnish were learned inside and outside school, and thus, it was felt necessary to adapt the idea to better suit the needs of the present study.

The learning portrait was consequently defined as a picture of the situations and contexts in which the learner had learned or had contact with English and Finnish. The portrait could describe one or more successful or unsuccessful learning experiences inside or outside school, as it was felt that even seemingly unsuccessful experiences result in some kind of learning. The participants were asked to draw two separate portraits, one of learning English and another of learning Finnish, as both languages are under investigation here. A few options were given in carrying out the task: drawing the picture by hand or by computer, or cutting pictures and words out of newspapers and magazines and gluing them to the space allocated. To help out the creative process, the participants were given a few helpful questions.

- Where have you learned English/Finnish?

- In what kinds of situations have you learned English/Finnish?
- What am I like as a learner of English/Finnish?
- What is studying English/Finnish like?
- What kinds of aids have helped you in studying English/Finnish?

In other words, the participants had the chance to approach the portrait from an angle that best suited them. They were also asked to write a short description to help out in the interpretation process. This was felt important as drawing and art can be regarded as defined by the sociocultural context in which we live, and even though the researcher and the participants lived in the same cultural environment at the time of the study, most of the participants have lived in Finland for quite a short time.

The learning portraits were gathered in the spring of 2010 (March to May) from various sources. Several comprehensive and secondary schools in western and southern Finland were contacted via e-mail in addition to posting to the Finnish as a second language teachers' mailing list (Suomi toisena kielenä -opettajat ry 2010). Two secondary schools from western Finland and one comprehensive school from southern Finland agreed to ask their migrant students to participate in the study. Migrant learners were also contacted through the researcher's personal contacts (friends and acquaintances) as well as through different kinds of additional supportive measures, such as after-school clubs specifically aimed at migrants to help them succeed at school. Furthermore, a so called snowball sampling technique was used to gather data as the group under investigation was difficult to get a hold of through traditional means. The snowball sampling technique refers to asking existing study subjects to locate and recruit other members of the group (Babbie 2008: 205). This technique is often used to reach hidden populations which are difficult to get a hold of in large quantities through other methods (ibid). Permission to gather data was received from the principals of the schools, the teachers involved and of course from the participants as well as from their parents or representatives if they were minors.

In some cases the researcher was present when the answer sheets were filled and portraits drawn, but in most cases not. When the researcher was present, the purpose was to personally explain what the study was about, give instructions on how to create the portrait and to help with the language if there were difficulties in understanding the questions or directions. When the researcher was not present, the participants had help from their teachers (mostly Finnish teachers) or their language

skills in Finnish were good enough to understand the written directions. In these cases the answer sheets were mailed with a prepaid return envelope to a particular school or to the participant's home address. All the questions and directions were in Finnish as it was the common language shared by the researcher and the participants. On the whole, the present study consists of 46 English learning portraits and of 46 Finnish learning portraits.

6.2.4 Interview

Originally the goal was to interview three of the participants of the present study but due to schedule conflicts and a tight timeframe only one interview was conducted. The interviewee was chosen because of the content of the learning portrait as well as good command of Finnish and long stay in Finland. As most of the participants of the study had spend a relatively short time in Finland at the time of data collection, it was felt necessary to interview a learner who had had the opportunity to gain more experiences of the Finnish educational system and society. Adequate language skills in Finnish in this respect were also regarded important as to avoid problems of comprehension or output during the interview. Finnish was thought to be the natural choice of language for the interview as it was the common language shared by the researcher and the interviewee.

The interview was a one-on-one semi-structured interview that took place in a quiet, private location in July of 2010. At the beginning of the interview the purpose of the study was explained in addition to emphasizing anonymity. Before starting the actual interview, the researcher and the interviewee talked about other matters to make the interviewee feel more relaxed. The interview was centred on three themes: the background section, the interviewee as a learner of English and Finnish, and the challenges faced in learning English and Finnish (see Appendix 2). Some of the questions of the first section had already been asked in connection to making the learning portrait, and thus, the purpose of the first section was to mostly map out the linguistic environment of the interviewee's country of departure as well as to examine the relationship between his/her first and second language today. The second theme was largely based on the interviewee's learning portraits and language learning in general, that is to say, how they have learned Finnish and English. The third and final section

concentrated on language learning difficulties, supportive measures and the role of the teacher.

The interview was tape-recorded and transcribed word for word from the tape. It was not felt necessary to transcribe the interview in a very detailed manner as the emphasis here is on the content and not on discourse analysis. The interview lasted for 37 minutes and 46 seconds. In the chapters to come, the interviewee will be called Lisa to guarantee the interviewee's anonymity.

6.3 Data processing

Having looked at the research questions and choices behind choosing specific methods to study migrant learners, it is now time to present how the data was in actuality processed and interpreted. First, we will talk about the learning portraits, which form the bulk of the data and the main method for the present study. Second, the focus is on the interview, which was used as an additional support measure and which in the chapters to come will be discussed as a case study.

6.3.1 Learning portraits

As has already been mentioned, the concept of the learning portrait was designed specifically for the purposes of the present study, based on a pre-existing study by Kalaja et al (2008). Furthermore, as visual narratives are a rather new method of study in the field of EFL and ESL research, means of processing the content of this kind of data have varied significantly. As can be expected, analyzing visual data differs from that of written or oral data. What is common to analyzing qualitative data, however, is that the focus is most often on the content rather than on the form. In other words, the present study will operate within the framework of content analysis but some of the more traditional means of this type of analysis have to be adjusted to fit visual data. According to Krippendorff (2004: 18), "content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use". He emphasizes that material suitable for content analysis does not have to be in the form of texts but "other meaningful matter" can be thought to include, for example, pictures and other kinds visual data "provided they speak to someone about phenomena outside of what can be sensed or observed" (Krippendorf 2004: 19).

Content analysis can be viewed as a general framework or as a specific analysis tool (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2009: 91, 103), the latter of which is the view adopted in the present study. When viewed as a separate method, the aim is to find underlying, reoccurring patterns by analysing the data objectively and systematically as stated by Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2009: 103). Furthermore, rather than producing generalizations, the goal is to describe and examine the phenomena (ibid). For these reasons content analysis offers an excellent tool when working with unstructured data: the results rise from the data itself. When analysing the content of qualitative data, Dörnyie (2007: 246) says that the role of the researcher is emphasized as the researcher has firstly to be able to detect deeper patterns in the data (what is relevant and what is not), and secondly be able to interpret it. Moreover, the researcher should be careful not to look for what they want to find, but rather let the material speak for itself. Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2009: 109-110) say that the process of content analysis can be perceived as having three separate stages. First, they talk about transcribing the data, which in the present study can be thought of as examining what has concretely been drawn in the learning portraits. Secondly, they talk about clustering the data, in other words looking for possible differences and similarities. Finally, the researcher can draw conclusions and see how they fit within the theoretical framework of the study.

In practice the analysing process of the data began by closely examining each of the learning portraits and writing down what was portrayed. After this, the findings were put in the context of the present study, that is to say, they were analysed in terms of the sociocultural framework, and in particular activity theory. After the clustering procedures four themes were recognized: 1) communities of practise and the learner, 2) mediational tools used to aid learning, 3) the relationship between formal and informal learning, and 4) agency thinking. The aforementioned themes are naturally interrelated, each affecting one another but it is still essential to examine each category in its own right. In the following chapters each theme will be discussed in detail.

6.3.2 Interview: content analysis

Content analysis was also used to analyse the interview. First, the interview was transcribed word-for-word from the tape: a finer transcription was deemed unnecessary as the focus is on the content. Thus, only pauses, emphasis and incomprehensible words or speech were transcribed leaving out, for example, patters of overlapping speech.

During the second stage, three broader themes could be indentified: 1) the interviewee's conceptions of learning English, 2) the interviewee's conceptions of learning Finnish and 3) studying English and Finnish in the Finnish school system. In the following chapters the interview will be treated and discussed as a case study.

7 FINDINGS

This chapter reports the findings of the present study. After clustering procedures explained in detail in Chapter 6, four themes were identified from the data: 1) communities of practise and the learner, 2) mediational tools used to aid learning, 3) the relationship between formal and informal learning, and 4) agency thinking. The order in which the themes will be presented in this section has been given much thought as each theme builds on the next. That is to say, the communities of practise the participant considers to be a part of has an effect on the mediational tools available to them, which in turn makes it possible to examine the relationship between informal and formal learning. Subsequently, all of the aforementioned themes form a foundation for agency thinking, which is of special interest in the present study. Furthermore, each of the themes included various subcategories, which have been sequenced by their rate of recurrence. In summary, the organization of this chapter follows the order of the research questions of the present study. The findings are illustrated with the learning portraits, which have been numbered and English translations have been provided where necessary. The learning portraits were seen as constructed by two parts: the picture and the written explanation. Therefore, in the analysis the picture as well as the written illustration was treated as of equal value: if the written explanation included information that was not present in the picture itself, it was taken into account in the analysis and vice versa. Any differences between male and female participants were not detected, and therefore it has not been accounted for in the findings.

7.1 English learning portraits

The focus will first be on the English learning portraits, which will be discussed in the order mentioned above. Each section is illustrated with portraits.

7.1.1 Communities of practise

Activity theory operates within the principle that the human mind, and thus, all human actions are mediated by the social formations in the immediate, distant or even imagined communities of practise. In other words, while humans may operate on an individual level, their actions are still affected by the particular community in which

they live or with which they identify. Moreover, one should always bear in mind that the community in which you live is not necessarily the one with which you identify or want to be a part of. Essentially, the newcomer has to find new meaningful ways of being in the new community (a new voice) but in all cases this process is not successful. Becoming a part of a community has as much to do with the newcomer as well as with the old timers, that is, whether an individual is accepted into the community of practise is also depended on the environment. Thus, the present study has aimed to examine what communities of practise the participants have gained access to and what communities they consider to be a part of in Finland. In this case, the concept of a community of practise has been understood in the narrower sense of the word.

When looking at the English learning portraits, four different types of communities of practise were identified: 1) the professional community, 2) the media community, 3) the immediate community, and 4) the global community, all presented in Figure 7. The common nominator connecting the types of communities of practise - with the exception of the global community - was that they all somehow related to Finland, the participants' country of residence. In other words, the findings indicate that the participants operate within several communities in Finnish society. The majority of the participants reported to belong to more than one community. To be considered a part of a community in the analysis, the community had to be referred to either in the picture or in the written description of it. What counted as a reference for a particular community will be explained in detail when each of the aforementioned communities of practise is discussed.

Figure 7. English learning portraits: Communities of practice.
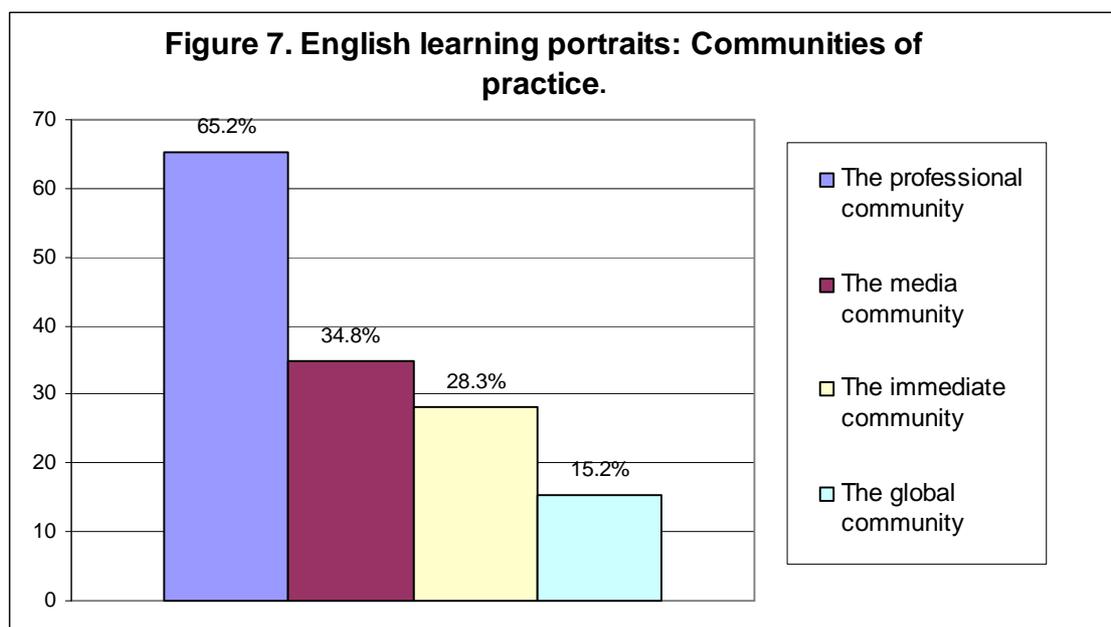
The professional community

The professional community refers to school or work communities and it was by far the most often mentioned community type by the participants. To be regarded as a reference to this community, the portrait had to depict either a school building, a classroom or a workplace, a teacher and/or a group of learners, a conventional learning tool (e.g. blackboard, books, pen), or the words *school*, *study*, *work*, *workplace*/*experience* or *practical training* (e.g. as a part of one's studies). The majority of the participants, 65.2%, reported that learning had occurred at school, as illustrated in Portraits 1 and 2. In Portrait 1, the learner states in English that he began his English studies in the country of departure, Russia, indicating that they had continued somewhere else. The school building suggests that English was not only used in the language classroom but throughout the day: the school in question was acknowledged by the participant as an Anglo-American school insinuating that English was the medium of all instruction. In this respect, Portrait 2 illustrates a more common scenario in which English usage is confined to a specific time and place, that is, the language classroom. This kind of evidence does not necessarily mean that English was not used at other times during the school day, but what is does imply is that in the minds of the participants, learning English at school is connected to the language classroom. Indeed, this is the norm as far as foreign language teaching is concerned in Finland: normative use of the language is confined to the language classroom. The latter type to portray the professional community was the most common one found in the learning portraits. Overall, the findings indicate that school had a vital part in the participants' English learning process.

As was mentioned, the professional community also refers to work. Only two of the participants (4.3%) mentioned work in regards to the English portraits, and even in these cases, work was connected to their studies in one form or another. For example, in Portrait 3, the participant has portrayed an elaborate tree explaining the path he has taken as a learner of English. He articulates that although he got a good foundation for learning English at school, he really benefitted from going abroad to take part in a language course in the target language environment as well as to do practical training for his degree. Again we can see a clear connection to school as a place of learning - especially in the beginner stages – but the evidence suggests that English does not have a role in the participants working life as such.
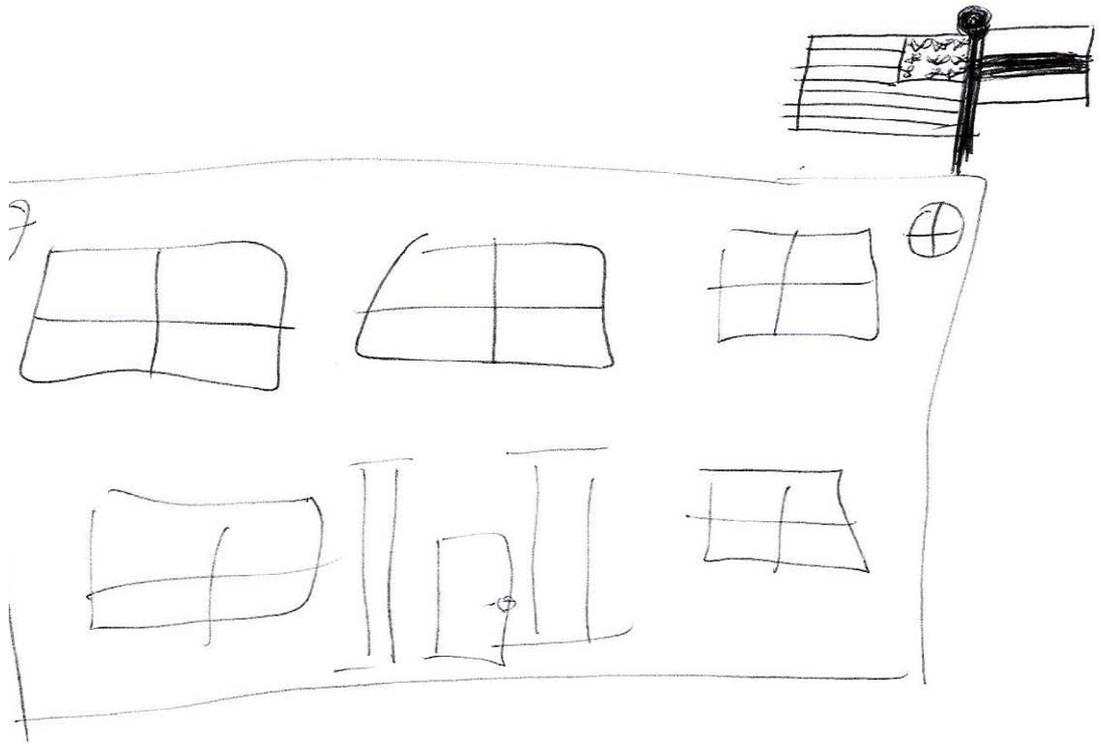
"I started learning English in an Anglo-American School of St. Petersburg, Russia."

Portrait 1. English learning portrait.

"Kouluussa ja puhuin kaveri kanssa."
(At school and talked with friend.')

Portrait 2. English learning portrait.

The British Council

2 Years

IMI

SWITZERLAND

HOTEL & TOURISM MANAGEMENT

3 years

käyttänyt paljon englantia

koska oli kallista

kuluttomut paljon rahaa

englantin opiskeleminen ei ole niin vaikeaa koska peruskoulussa on oppinut

on ollut mielo kurssi

oppinut paljon englantia british councilissa

jännittävä silloin työhârjoittelussa

paljon kokemusta marriott hotelista

Marriott

Hotels & Resorts

6 MONTHS TRAINING

Portrait 3. English learning portrait.

The media community

The second biggest community of practise dealt with the media - namely movies, television, music and books as well as computers and the Internet. One of the aforementioned media outlets had to be described for this category. All in all, 34.8% of the participants said that they had learned English from the media. The television (26.1%), as portrayed by one participant in Portrait 4, was the most often mentioned of these. In Portrait 4, the participant makes as bold a statement as one can learn a new language just by watching television. English does have a rather potent role in Finnish society particularly in the media. As most programs and series in Finnish television happen to be of Anglo-American origin equipped with subtitles rather than dubbing, this particular participant's statement does not seem as drastic. The presence of English language media offers an opportunity for input, and the findings suggest the participants know how to make use of it.

Portrait 5 offers an example of another media outlet, the computer (and the Internet), which was for the large part missing from the portraits. The world of the Internet and the computer has grown to have an immense effect on people's lives in the 21st century, especially those of the youth, and yet only 6.5% of the participants said they found computers or the Internet useful for English learning. Music in general and the radio (also presented in Portrait 5), however, were mentioned by 13%. What can be said in the light of the findings is that, on the one hand, the participants watch television in English and listen to at least some music in English. On the other hand, English is not the most commonly used language online but in fact the findings indicate it is not used nearly at all.
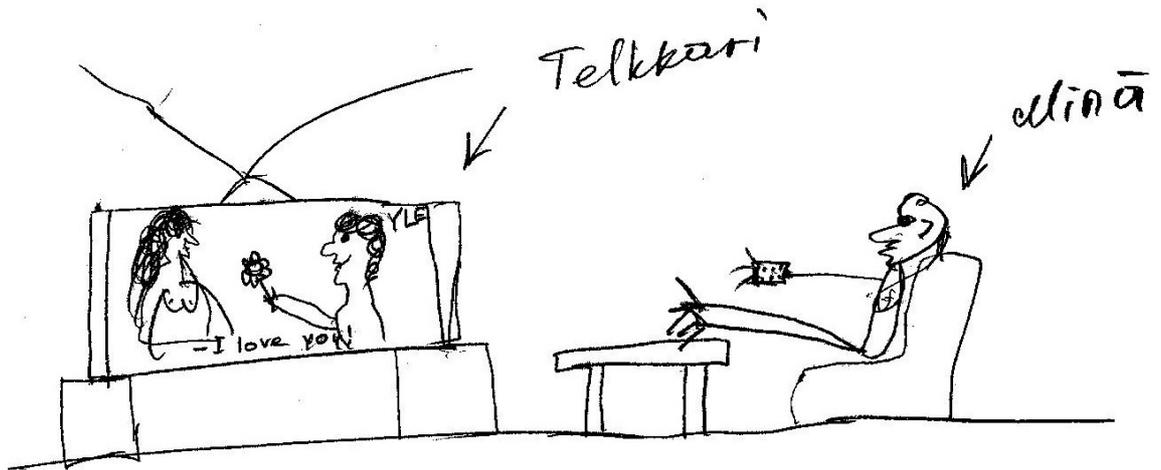
"Television katsominen auttaa kielen oppimisessa tosi paljon. Olen nuorena oppinut ukrainan kieltä pelkällä tv:n katsomisella."
('Watching television helps in language learning a lot. When I was young I learned Ukrainian just by watching TV.')

Portrait 4. English learning portrait.

Portrait 5. English learning portrait.

The immediate community

The immediate community of practise was the next most popular choice, that is, 28.3% reported that they interact with people in English in their everyday lives: friends, family, people in general or hobbies were found to be important in terms of learning and using English. To be regarded as a part of this community type, different kinds of words for friends (*kaveri*, *ystävä*), family members (*äiti*, *puoliso*, *vaimo*), home or hobbies (e.g. football) had to be used or depicted in the picture. While family members (a spouse, a parent) (4.3%) were mentioned by a rare few, the role of friends and other people, that is, people who live in the same environment as the participant, was more immanent as comes apparent in Portraits 6 and 7. 17.4% of the participants also mentioned books but whether they were referring to text books or leisure reading was not clear.

In Portrait 6, the participant states that while he learns English at school, he also uses English with his friends and as many as 19.6% of the participants had included their friends in their English learning portrait. In Portrait 7, the participant portrays a number of people speaking in English. It is not clear whether they are friends as no description was provided but the point is that 10.9% of the participants reported they have had interactions in English in their immediate community with people in general. The findings do not clearly indicate whether the need to speak English arose from it being the only common language of interaction, or whether they just liked to practise and speak English for fun. Nevertheless, the findings show that the participants use English with people in their immediate community of practise even though English is not the majority language of that particular community.
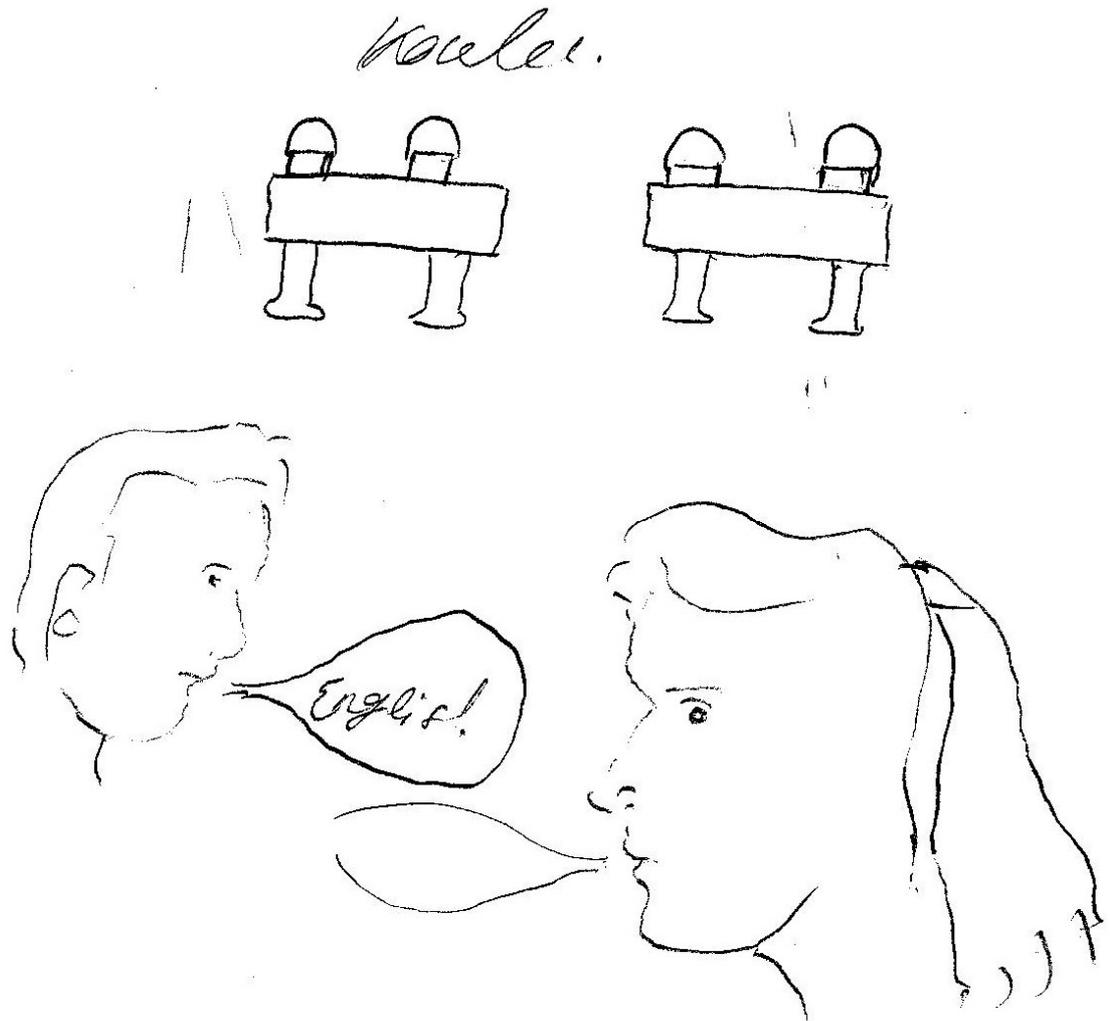
"Koulussa ollaan ylä kuvassa jossa englantia opiskellaan ja toisessa keskustelemalla kaverin kanssa."
('We are at school in the upper picture where English is being studied and in the other one talking to a friend.')

Portrait 6. English learning portrait.

Portrait 7. English learning portrait.

The global community

15.2% of the participants stated they have learned English best when travelling, speaking with native speakers or in situations where they had no choice but to use the language. The globe, an airplane, native speakers, countries' names and such counted as sufficient referrals to this community type. In Portraits 8 and 9, the participants have emphasized the importance of speaking English with "someone who really knows English", that is, native speakers. Both portraits also describe situations in which one has no other choice but to use English, and the learning is a result of essentially being forced to speak in the language. Moreover, in Portrait 9 the participant refers to school as a place where he learned satisfactory English but a good command of the language was not reached before moving abroad and interacting in the target language environment. In Portrait 10, the participant also stresses travelling explaining that he learns something new in English when he goes abroad. The findings tell us that some of the participants value travelling and especially native speaker varieties of English: they want to be a part of the global community of English (native and non-native) speakers. The findings also indicate that the majority of the participants use English in other connections in Finland rather than abroad or with native speakers, as the findings show that most of the participants are not as assiduous travellers as the three participants described above.
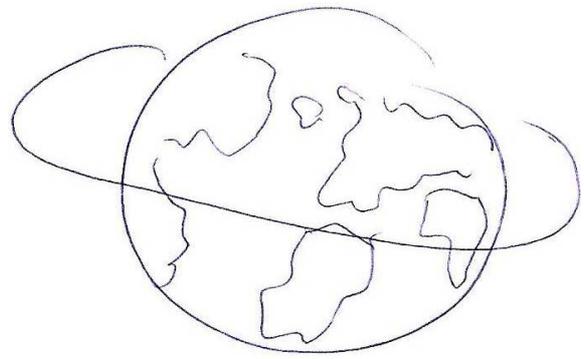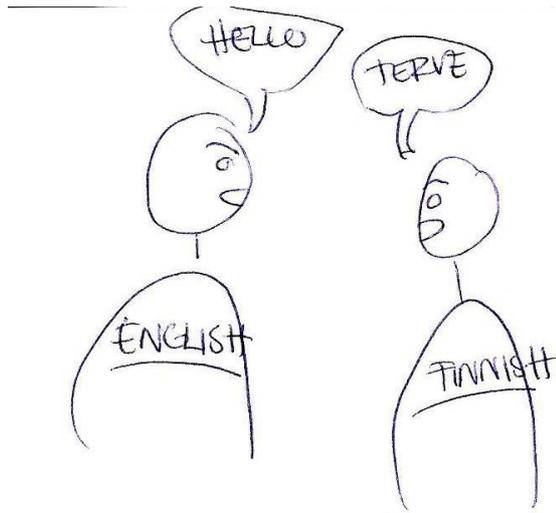
" - Puhuminen oikeasti englantia osaavan kanssa
  - matkustaminen
   - yleensäkin tilanne jossa pakko osata/puhua/käyttää englantia"
('- Speaking with somebody who really knows English
  - travelling
 - in general situation in which you have to know/speak/use English')

Portrait 8. English learning portrait.
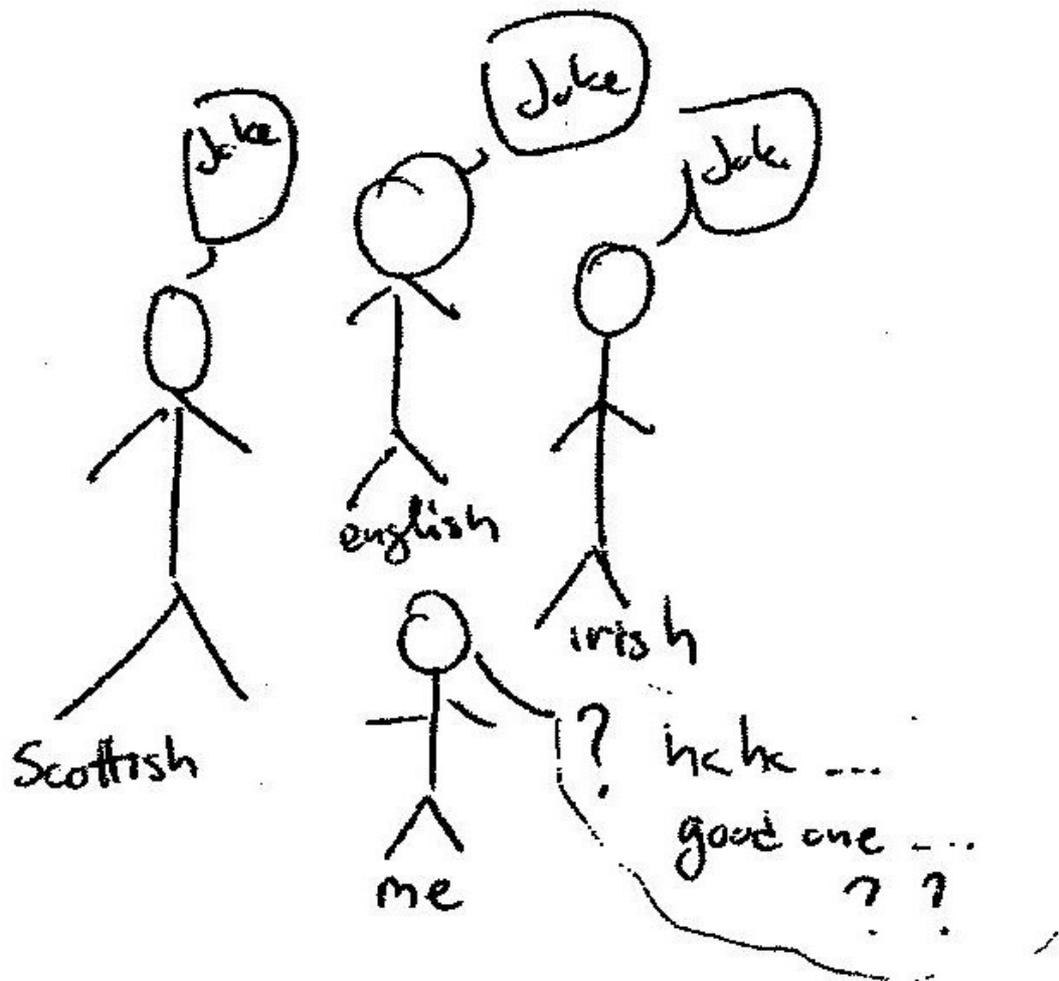
"Tyydyttävän englanninkielen opin jo koulussa, mutta sillä ei pärjännyt kuin jotenkuten ulkomailla. Hyvän englannin opin kuitenkin kuuntelemalla nopeita keskusteluja ja yrittämällä päästä keskusteluun mukaan. Nykyään englanti on kotikieli (vaimo englantilainen). Kuva on ajasta kun asuin ulkomailla ja parhaimmat ystäväni (skotti, engl. ja irkku[)] letkauttelivat vitsejä tiuhaan tahtiin, ja olihan mun pakko nauraa vaikka en oikein ymmärtänyt, sellainen tilanne harmitti paljon ja motivoi minut oppimaan nopeammin."

('I learned satisfactory English already at school but you couldn't really manage with it abroad. Good English however I learned by listening to fast pace conversations and trying to get in the conversation. Now English is my home language (wife is English). The picture is from the time I lived abroad and my best friends (a Scot, an Englishman and a Irishman[)] quipped jokes at a frequent rate , and I had to laugh of course even though I didn't really understand, that kind of a situations really bugged me and motivated me to learn faster.')

Portrait 9. English learning portrait.
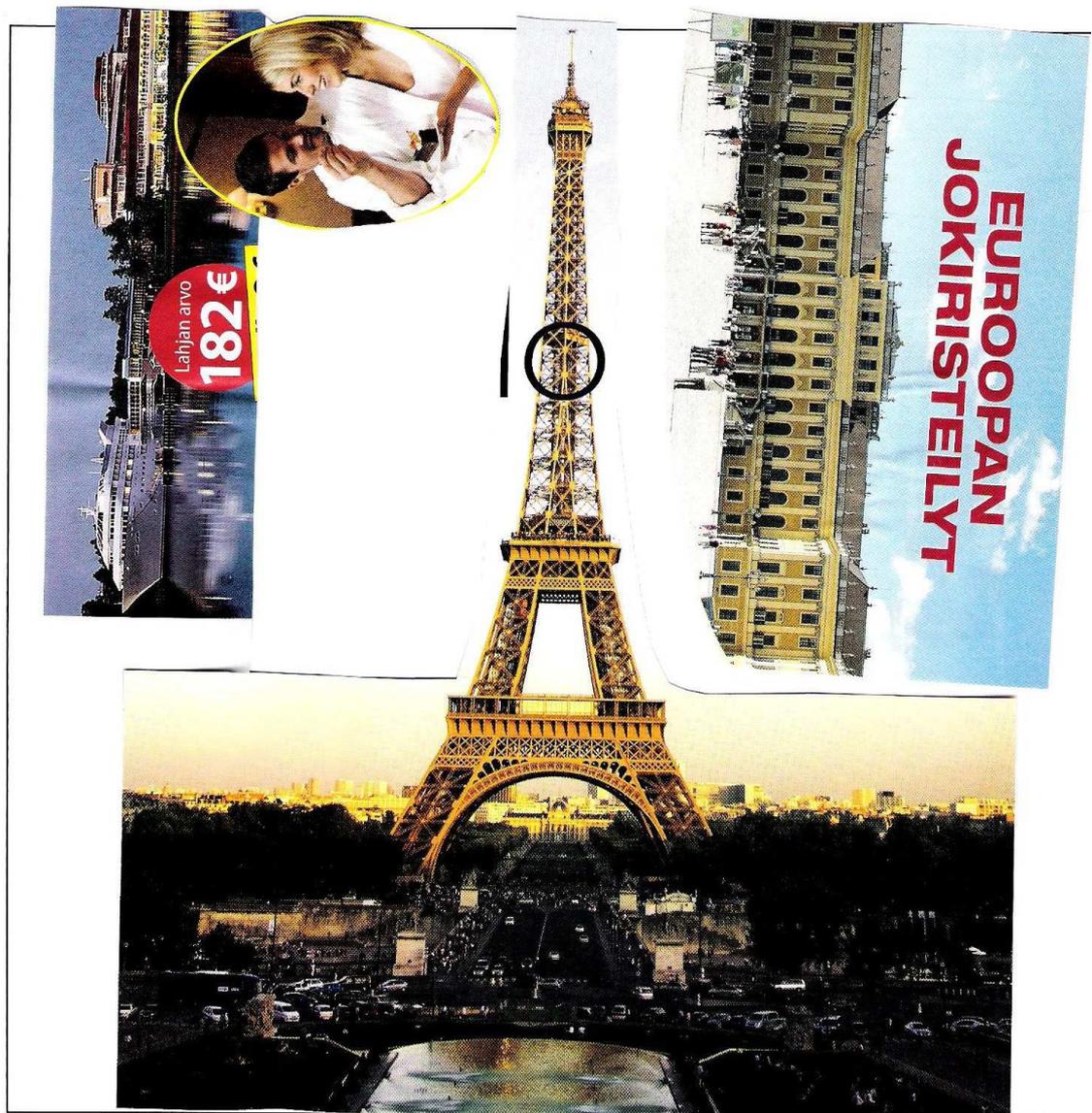
"tää kuva tarkoitettu matkustaminen kun mä meen josaini mualle mä oppi jotain englaniksi"
('this picture is meant travelling when I go somewhere else I learn something in English')

Portrait 10. English learning portrait.

7.1.2 Mediational tools

Mediational tools or artefacts are tools that help humans to control their actions. Language naturally is the most important tool since it can also be used for self-regulation. What is of interests here, however, are the tools that help humans learn a language and the social practises that go along with it in a particular community of practise. Essentially, the mediational tools available to a language learner are tied to the community of practise they are or want to be a part of.

In the analysis the attention was directed to people and objects of learning (books, media). The learner himself/herself was not present in the majority of the portraits, which was not unexpected as the direction was to draw a picture of the situations in which the language was learned, and not of how one looked like as a learner of the language. Therefore, the focus now is only in the mediational tools themselves and not on the learner per se. Most of the participants had depicted more than one mediational tool but some respondents had not mentioned any: most often people or objects were referred to in the description rather than in the picture. Usually these kinds of portraits focused more on describing the community of practise, or they depicted, for instance, what learning English was like. The findings concerning mediational tools have been summarized into Figure 8, which shows that the participants used a wide variety of tools to aid their learning.


Figure 8. English learning portraits: Mediational tools.
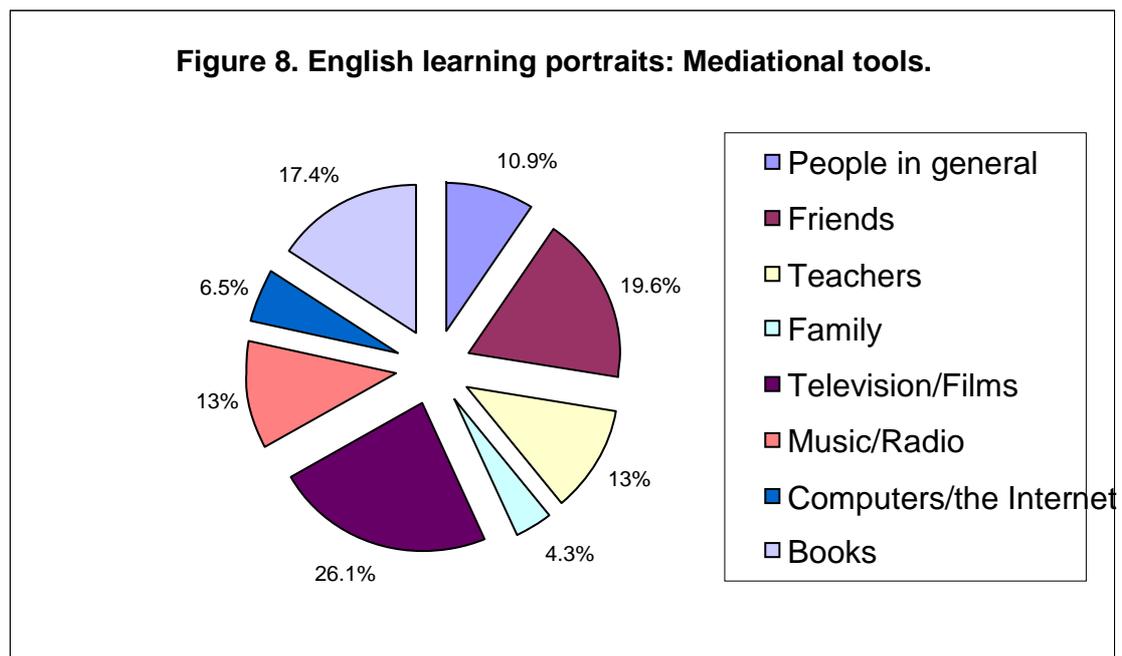
People

The findings indicate that people had a significant role when it came to the participants' English learning. All in all, 43.5% of the participants mentioned people in some form or another. Yet again friends (19.6%) were mentioned most often, but also teachers (13%) were present in the portraits, as illustrated in Portrait 11, in which the participant seems to think that learning is something controlled by the teacher: the teacher quite literally pours the information into the learner's head. Family members only received two nominations (4.3%), and one is presented in Portrait 12, in which the participant describes a situation where a girl asks her mother the name of an object in English. The rest of the participants did not specify exactly who they were portraying but just mentioned people in general (10.9%) as in Portrait 13. In Portrait 13, the participant explains that he has learned English by just speaking with people, some of whom were friends. Generally, however, whether the participants were referring to native speakers, or just in general to people who speak English in Finland and elsewhere, or how is it exactly that they used English with the undefined group of people (is it the sole medium of communication for instance) does not become apparent in all of the portraits. What can be said, however, is that the findings indicate that people had a strong influence on the participants' English learning and usage. Furthermore, the people who the participants recognized to be significant to their learning came from different communities of practise (e.g. friends – the immediate community, teachers – the professional community).

Portrait 11. English learning portrait.
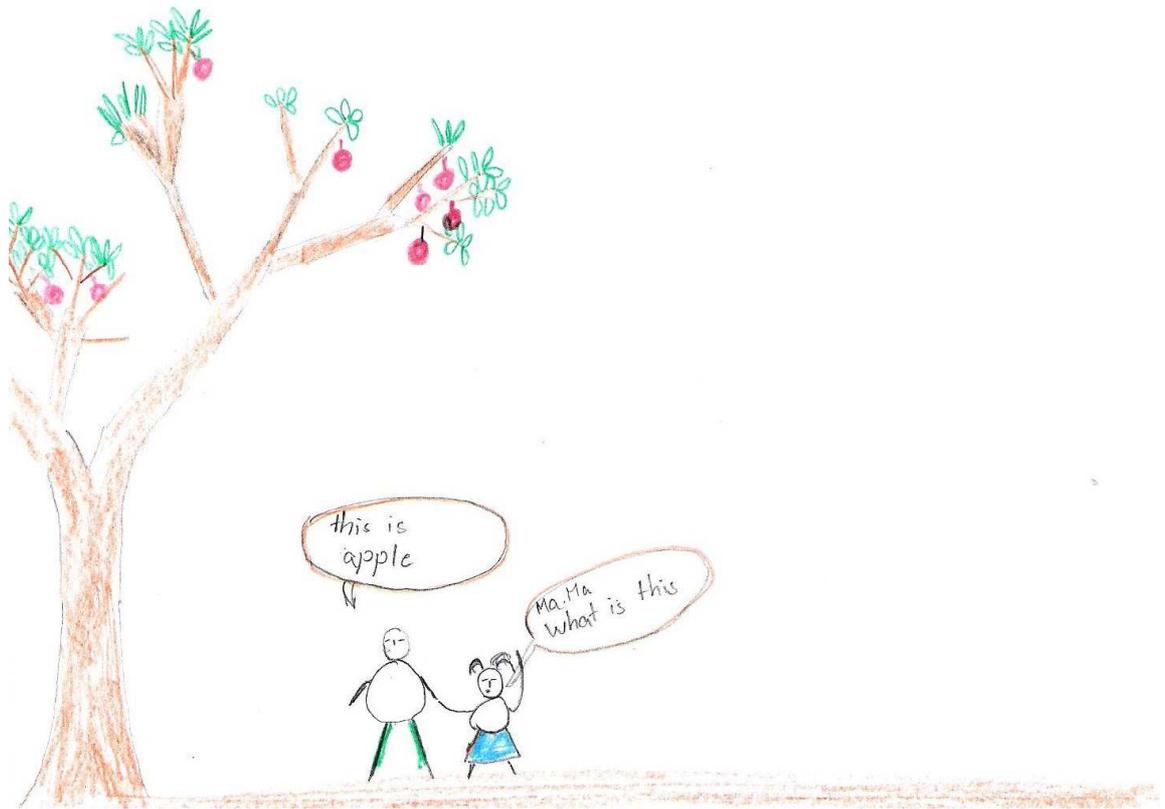
"ala astetta koulussa tyttö on kysyit äitiltä mikä tuo on"
(in elementary school girl has asked mom what that is')

Portrait 12. English learning portrait.

"Olen opiskellut englantti kieli keskustella ihmisen kansa. Kun olin somalissa. menin kaupunkiin. tapasin kaveri kansa."
('I have studied English language speaking with person. When I was in Somalia. I went to the city. met with a friend.')

Portrait 13. English learning portrait.

The media

The media also had a major role as 37% of the participants mentioned it in some form or another. The most commonly mentioned media outlets were television and films (26.1%) followed by music and radio (13%) as seen in Portrait 14, in which the participant explains that he started his English studies at school at an early age and even completed some of his studies in a school in which English was the language of instruction. His school years formed a foundation for English learning but now he also resorts to other means of learning, that is, television and music: "I started learning English language since I was 6 years old at school. And then after few months I went to Hong Kong and studied there in a comprehensive school for five years. I studied in an English medium school. And I learn more by watching T.V. listening to songs.". Whether the participants actively seek opportunities to use English in this way or whether this is just a reflection of the fact that most television shows and movies in Finnish television are of foreign, namely American, origin, is hard to say.

As was already mentioned, interestingly computers and the Internet were only mentioned by 6.5% of the participants. Nevertheless, in Portrait 15, the participant goes as far as to say that the best way for him to learn English is on the Internet. In general, however, computers were missing from the English learning portraits. Computers and the Internet were also present in Portrait 16, which in addition described books. All in all, books were mentioned by as many as 17.4% of the participants. Some had described books relating to the school world as in Portrait 16, but most had not clarified to exactly what kinds of books they were referring.
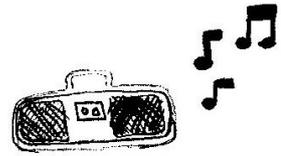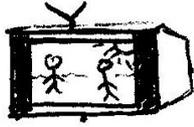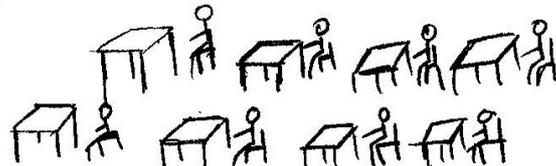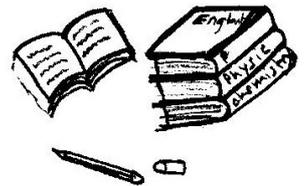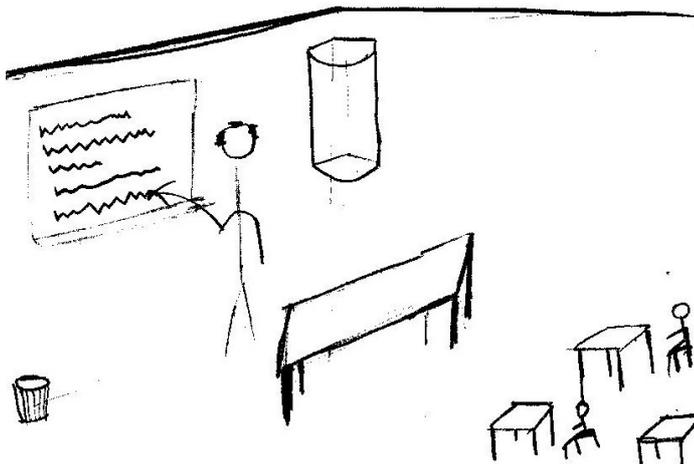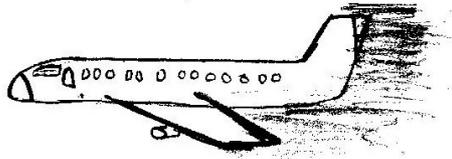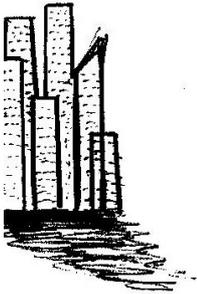
"I started learning English language since I was 6 years old at school. And then after few months I went to Hong Kong and studied there in a comprehensive school for five years. I studied in an English medium school. And I learn more by watching T.V. listening to songs."

Portrait 14. English learning portrait.

"Parhaiten opin englantia netissä."
('I learn English the best online.')

Portrait 15. English learning portrait.

Handwritten labels in image: "tietokone", "englanti somali Sanakirja", "Englanti suomi Sankirja", "Harmi kun minä en osaa piirtää"
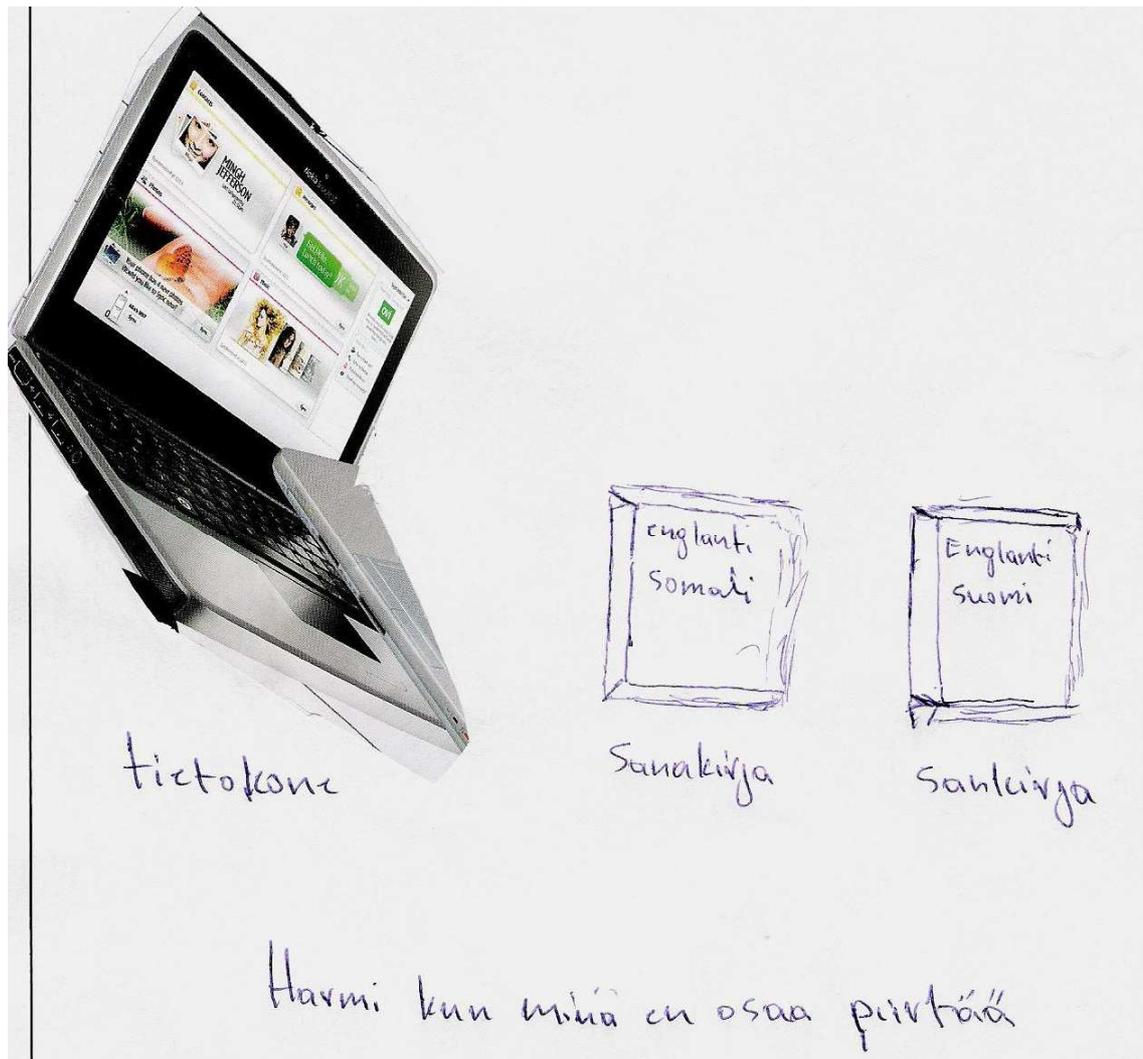
"Englannin kielen opin luokalla ja tietokoneella kun mä asun Suomessa ja Suomessa puhutaan suomen kieli ja se vähän vaikea opia mä en matkustaa kovin paljon muualle Minua kiinostaa kieli."
('The English language I learned in class and on the computer when I live in Finland and in Finland you speak the Finnish language and it somewhat difficult to learn I don't travel very much elsewhere I am interested of language.')

Portrait 16. English learning portrait.

7.1.3 Formal and informal learning

When all indicators (communities of practise and mediational tools) were examined together, it became evident that formal and informal contexts of learning were in fact quite balanced. When analysing the portraits, attention was not paid to the different types of mediational tools or communities of practise, but rather the focus was on whether there were any indications of formal or informal learning at all. In other words, whilst the participant might have mentioned several forms of informal learning, all of them combined formed only one reference to informal learning and the same applied to instances of formal learning. Altogether 65.2% mentioned formal contexts and 58.7% mentioned different kinds of informal contexts of learning. To be more specific, 37% of the participants had depicted both formal and informal contexts in the portrait, while 28.3% had mentioned only formal contexts and another 21.7% informal contexts only..

The findings indicate that a significant number of the participants use English in both formal and informal contexts as well as make use of both contexts to aid their learning as can be seen in Portrait 17. In Portrait 17, the participant explains that he has learned some English by speaking with friends and by watching movies (informal) but that his English skills are still very limited as he has only just begun to study the language at school (formal). Moreover, similar evidence can be found in, for example, Portraits 6, 9 and 14, which have already been referred to earlier. A common theme in the portraits that have depicted both formal and informal contexts seems to be that school offered a ground onto which build. Other participants, however, had only mentioned one or the other: some perhaps naturally connect learning to school only as in Portrait 18, whereas for others that was too self-evident and they rather depict other means of learning English, as in Portrait 19, in which English is used and learned in the football field. On the whole, the findings indicate a balance between the different contexts even though some participants had only mentioned one or the other. School is often the first learning context to come to mind but it is noteworthy that the participants also recognized informal contexts as they are frequently disregarded albeit their solid, genuine presence in people's lives.
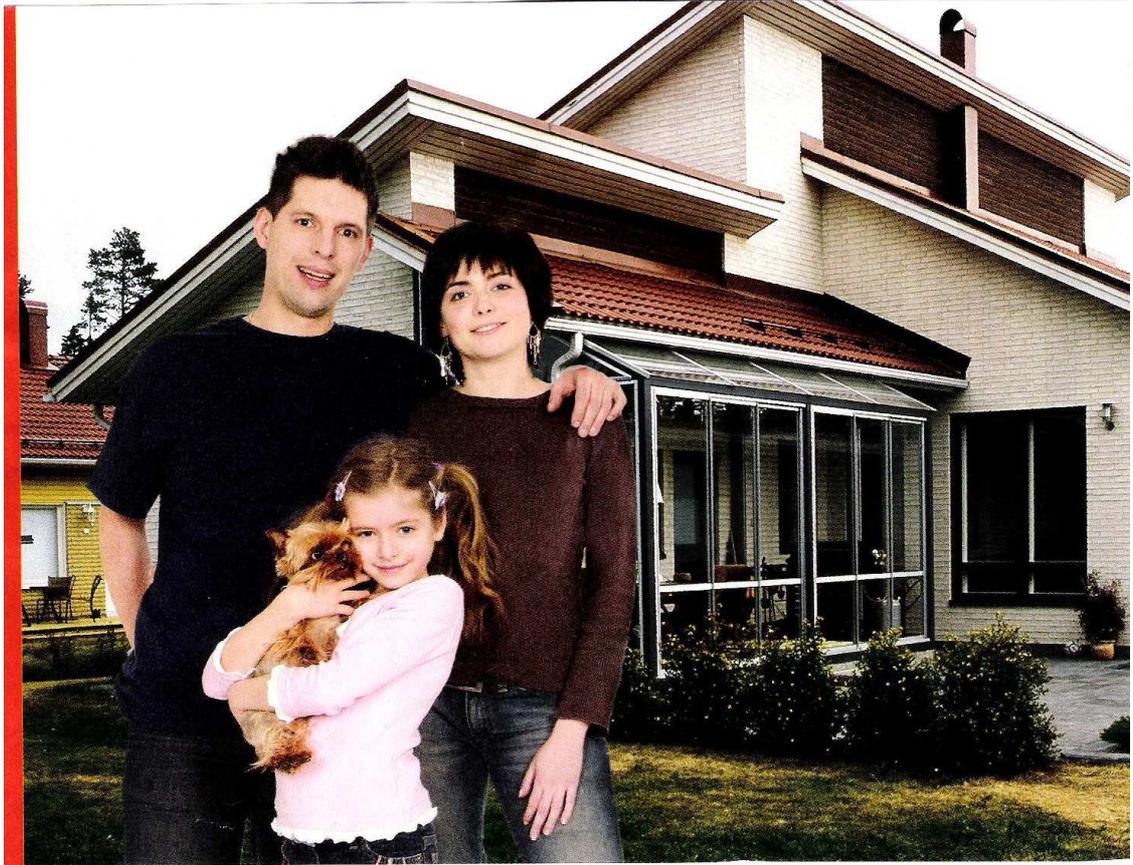
"II'v learned littil bit English bay speking with frends and watchin movies I mean actions movien becosa I liked very mouch. mutta osaan tosi vähään englanti koska koulussa vähää aikaa olen opiskela nyt."
('I've learned a little bit of English by speaking with friends and watching movies I mean action movies because I like very much. But I know very little English because at school a little while I have studied now')

Portrait 17. English learning portrait.
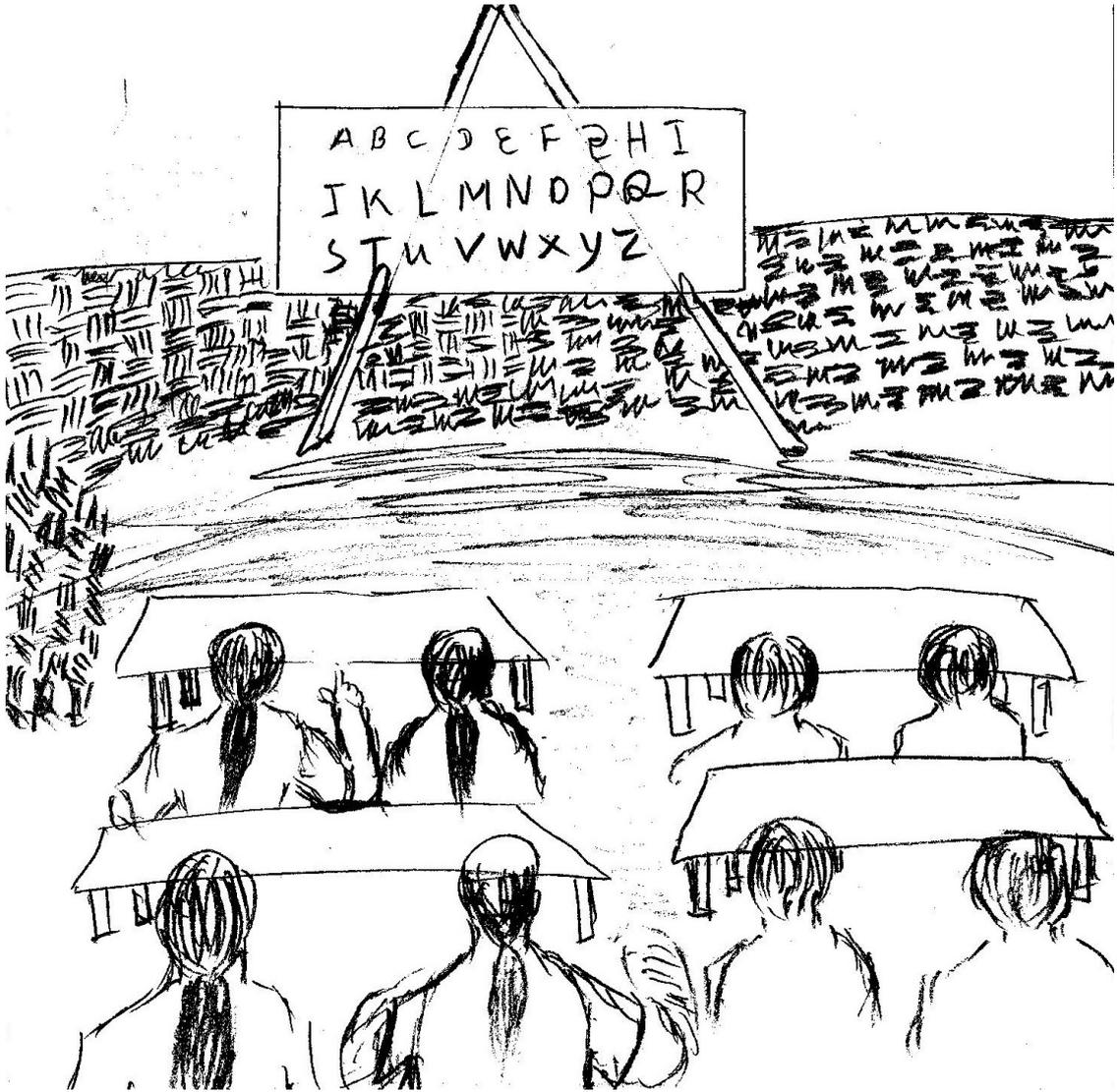
Portrait 18. English learning portrait.

"Jalka pallo kentää"
('Football field')

Portrait 19. English learning portrait.

7.1.4 Agency thinking

Agency thinking can be broadly defined as the individual taking responsibility of one's own learning. Taking control of one's learning at least to some degree, that is, creating goals and the determination and ability to meet them even when one encounters obstacles, gives an individual a sense of empowerment (Murphey and Carpenter 2000: 18). Often, however, learners find themselves in situations in which they have little or no control over what and how they learn, but a learner who has embodied agency thinking is able to take a reflective stance on the experience, thus, allowing the individual to have at least some kind of control over the situation (Benson 2012). A key notion of activity theory is that all learners are regarded as agents, who actively construct the conditions and terms of their learning, but to what degree learners are aware of their agency is another matter. Therefore, the present study has classified cases of reflectiveness over one's own learning process as evidence of agency thinking. In other words, all instances which indicated that the participant was aware of where and how they learned and used English were classified as cases of agency thinking. The present study did not aim to uncover different degrees of agency but rather the goal was to find out whether any existed at all.

When examining visual representations only, identifying agency thinking markers in the data proved to be almost impossible. If we consider, for example, all markers of informal learning as sings of agency thinking, as they do in some degree index reflectiveness (i.e. identifying mediational tools that have not been introduced at an institutional level as learning tools), 56.5% of the participants show some kinds of indicators of agency thinking. The problem was that the visual representations alone did not provide enough insight, and thus, the aforementioned finding did not reflect the true presence of agency in the data. For example, in Portrait 11, the participant has included music as source of English, which can be interpreted as a marker of agency thinking as presented above. The participant has, however, also portrayed a teacher pouring knowledge into his head, which does not reflect the individual taking responsibility for constructing his learning. For this reason, the decision was made to exclude this kind of evidence when examining learner agency. Instead, more attention was paid to the supportive written explanations of the portraits as they offered more information of the thought processes of the participants. In the end, both the visual portraits as well as the written part had to show some kinds of sings of reflectiveness towards language

learning even if the learner did not have much control over the learning situation. In other words, when looking at the portraits, there had to be some kind of evidence of deeper thought over one's learning process: a mere narration of where one encounters the particular language was not considered a marker of agency.

All in all, 26.1% of the participants demonstrated markers of agency thinking. For example, In Portrait 20 the participant has depicted an upside down smiley face explaining that she has not learned all that much English even though she finds the language interesting. She puts her unsuccessful learning experiences down to her own concentration problems as well as to how the language was taught, that is, the participant states that she learns better by talking. To sum up, what we can deduce here is that the participant was not able to affect how the language instruction was organized but instead of blaming the teacher/s for her failure, she also recognizes her own role in the learning process: she is able to look back at her journey as an English learner and reflect on what exactly happened. In another example, Portrait 21, the participant offers a different kind of an approach to agency. Namely, he says that learning English has not been all that easy for him but he still considers learning English to be important if one wants to be in contact with other people in the world. In other words, while language studies might be full of struggles and hard work, the motivation to study the language is there.

We have already referred to Portraits 9 and 15 earlier in the findings but these portraits offer yet other approaches to agency. In Portrait 9, while the description might be short in length, it does not lack in volume. The learner states that the best way for him to learn English is online. They key word here is "the best" as it indexes that he is aware of other ways of learning but after having reflected on it, he has deemed the Internet to be the most suitable form for him. In Portrait 15, the participant described his path as an English learner in length stating that he learned adequate English at school but a good command of the language was not reached until living and interacting in target language environment: fast paced conversations and a persistence to be a part of the community developed his English further. The participant in question offers an example of deeper analysis of what worked for him as a learner of English.
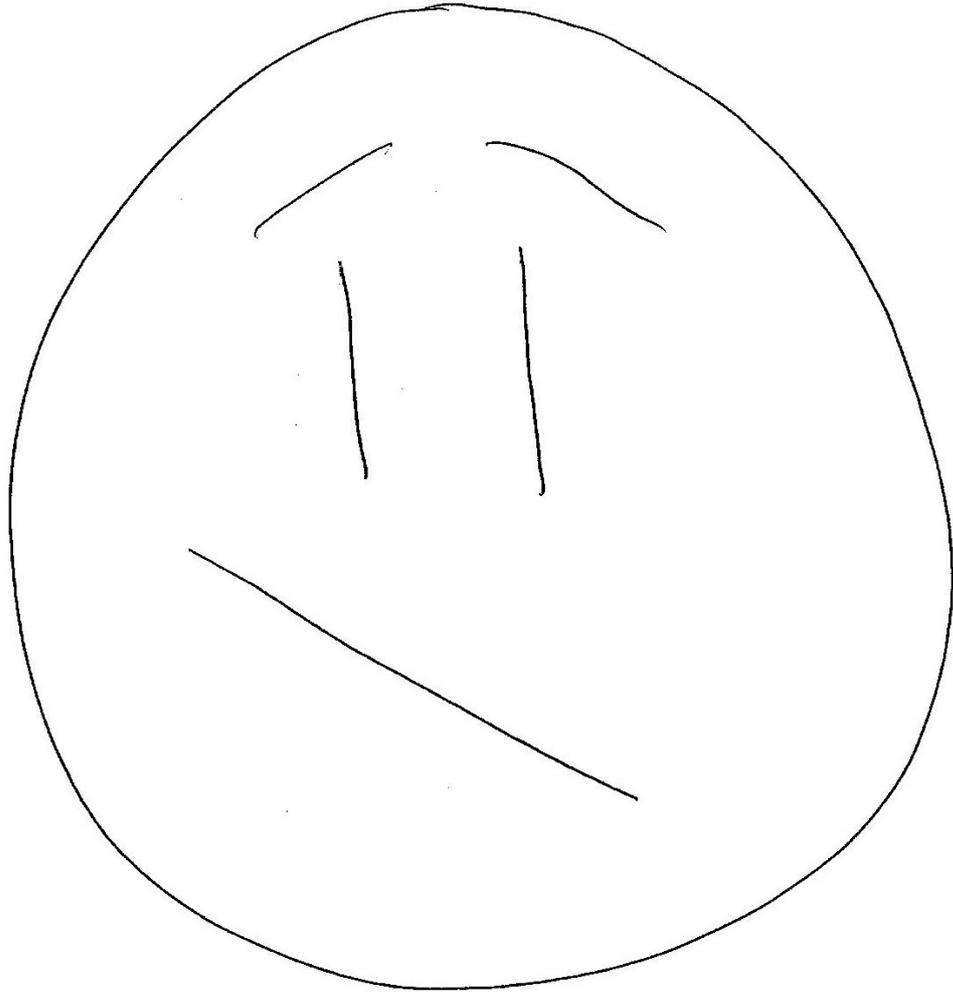
"Olen saanut englanninkielen opiskelua 3-luokalta asti. Kieli on mielenkiintoinen, mutta itselläni on todennäköisesti keskittymisongelmia, koska en ole kieltä oppinut juurikaan. Osaan vähän. Mielestäni opin kielen paremmin puhumalla."

" I've been given Englishlanguage studying from the 3rd grade. The language is interesting but I myself probably have concentration problems because I haven't really learned the language. I know a little. I think I learn better by speaking."

Portrait 20. English learning portrait.

Opiskelin koulussa eniten englannin kieli
('I studied English at school most')
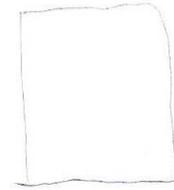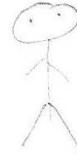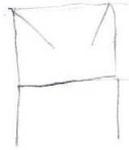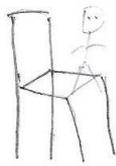
Erilaisia ihmisiä puhuvat englannin kieli jotka ymmärtävät toisian se tarkoittaa englannin kieli opimista on tärkeä jos halvat liityä mualla ihmisiä
('Different people speak English language who understand each other it means English language learning is important if you want to join other people)

Tämä on kova tarkoittaa että englanti ei ole helpo
('This is hard it means that English is not easy')

Portrait 21. English learning portrait.

The professional community

The biggest community of practise was the professional community, which refers to either school or work communities. In the Finnish learning portraits work communities were not mentioned even once but instead all the referrals pertained to school. A reference to this type of community of practise had to include either a school building, a classroom, a teacher and/or a group of learners, a conventional learning tool (e.g. the blackboard, books, pen), or the words *school*, *study* or *practise*. 56.5% of the participants had depicted the professional community in their Finnish learning portraits as can be seen in Portrait 22. In Portrait 22, the participant has chosen to depict the Finnish classroom only. As Finnish is the primary language of the participants' habitat, it was expected that portraits such as this would not surface so often as with the English learning portraits. It is impossible to say whether the participants who depicted portraits like this one use Finnish within other communities as well or whether this is the only major connection they have to the language, which could very well be the case if they have chosen to surround themselves with first language contacts only.

However, the majority of portraits depicting the professionally community also included other contexts of learning. For example, in Portrait 23, the participant has drawn a school building, indicating that Finnish was not only learned during Finnish classes but on other classes as well as with general interactions with people, in addition to mentioning friends. In Portrait 24, the participant has, similarly to Portrait 22, illustrated the language classroom but he goes on to mentioning the role of people in general. The participant of Portrait 25 then provides a more detailed description of the role of school in the learning process. The participant tells that one of the initial contacts in Finnish was established on the playground playing with the neighbours' children, but that the school also played a major role in the development of his Finnish language skills. Naturally Finnish is the primary language used at most Finnish schools and studying a wide variety of subjects in Finnish as well as interacting with peers and teachers in the language is bound to have an immense effect on one's language skills. Yet, as versatile as contacts and output in Finnish in the professional community may be, it might not be enough to develop a well rounded comprehension of the language.
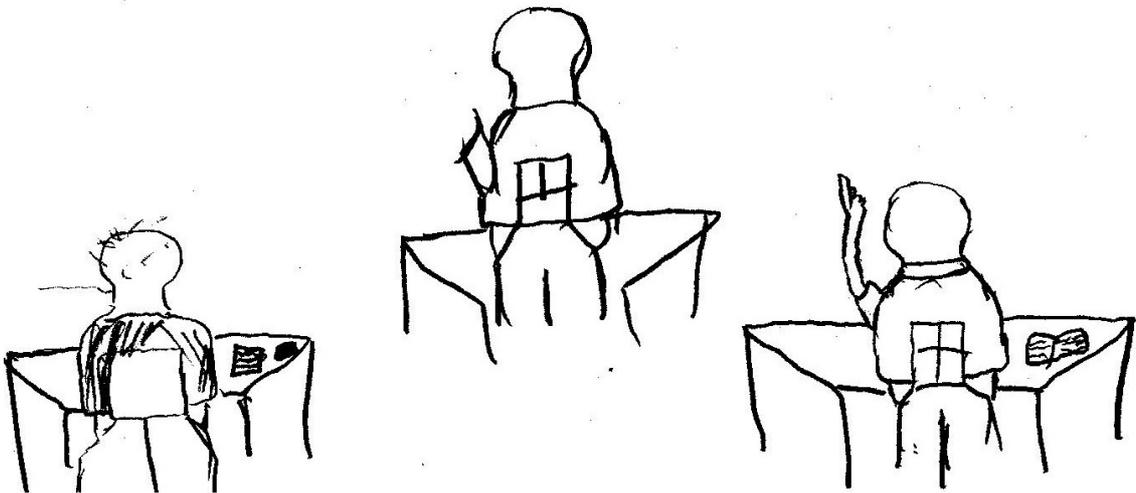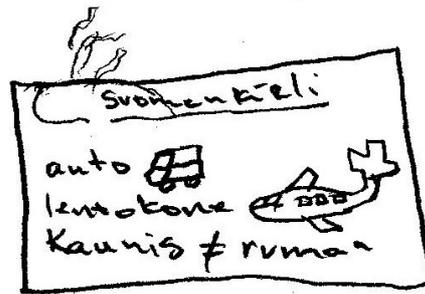
"Koulussa opiskelin suomi kiitos."
('At school I studied Finnish thank you.')

Portrait 22. Finnish learning portrait.
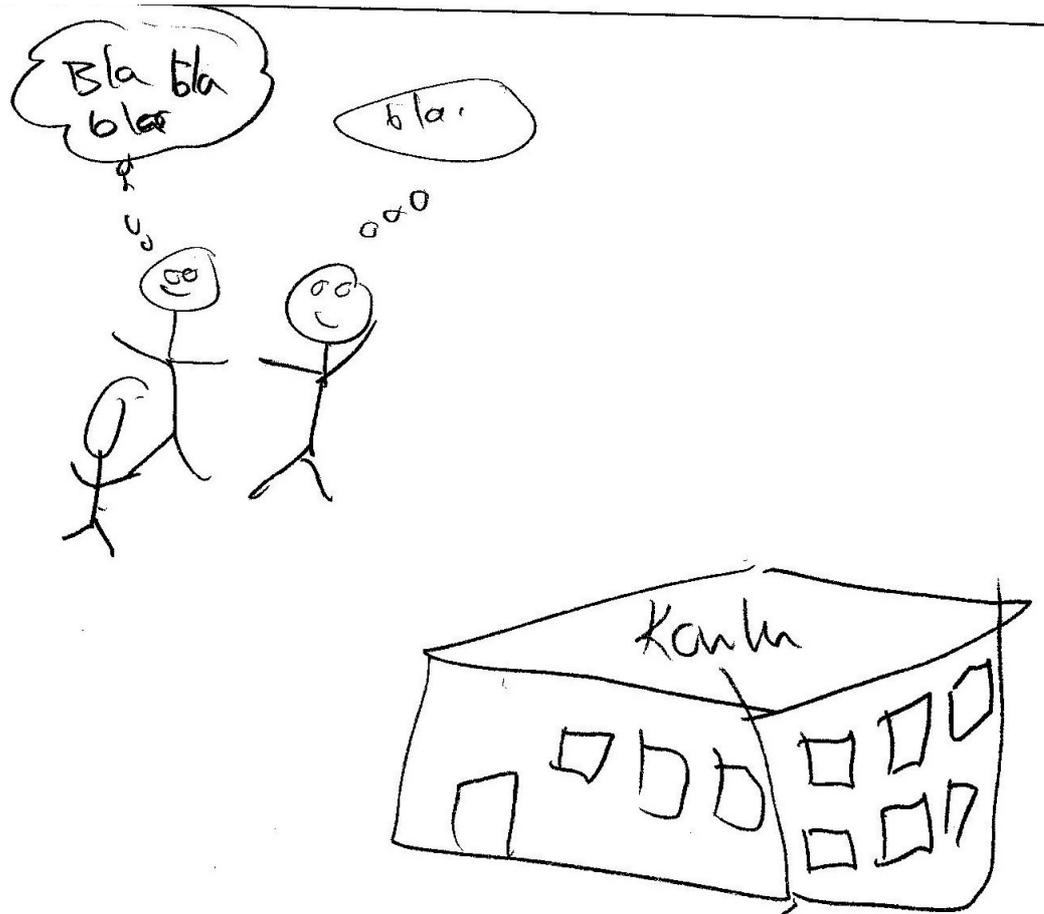
"- kaverit
- koulu"
('- friends
- school')

Portrait 23. Finnish learning portrait.
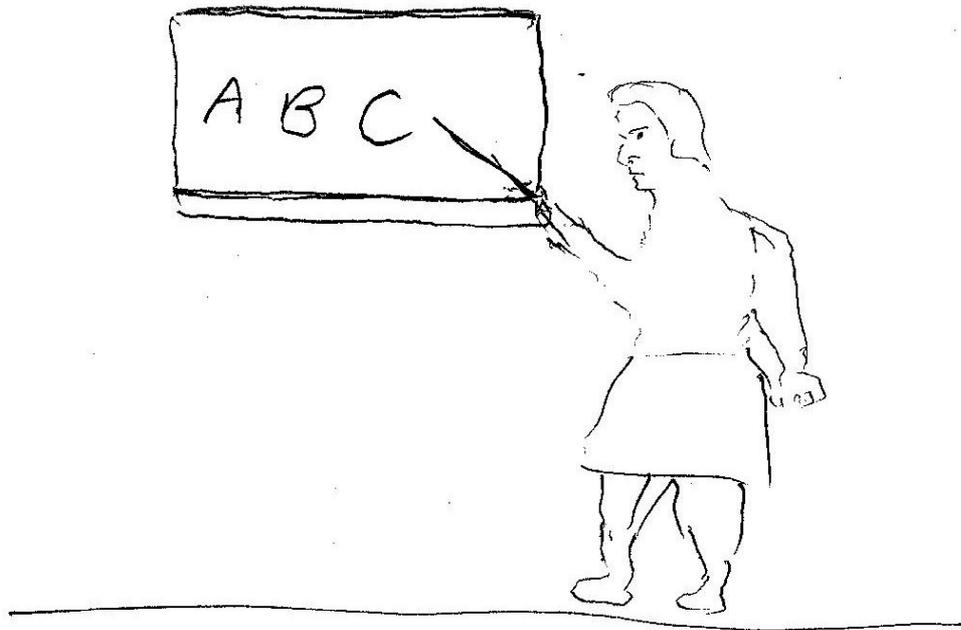
"keskustelu"
('conversation')

"Koulussa olemme opineet Suomea ja myös keskustelun kautta."
('At school we have learned Finnish and also through conversation.')

Portrait 24. Finnish learning portrait.
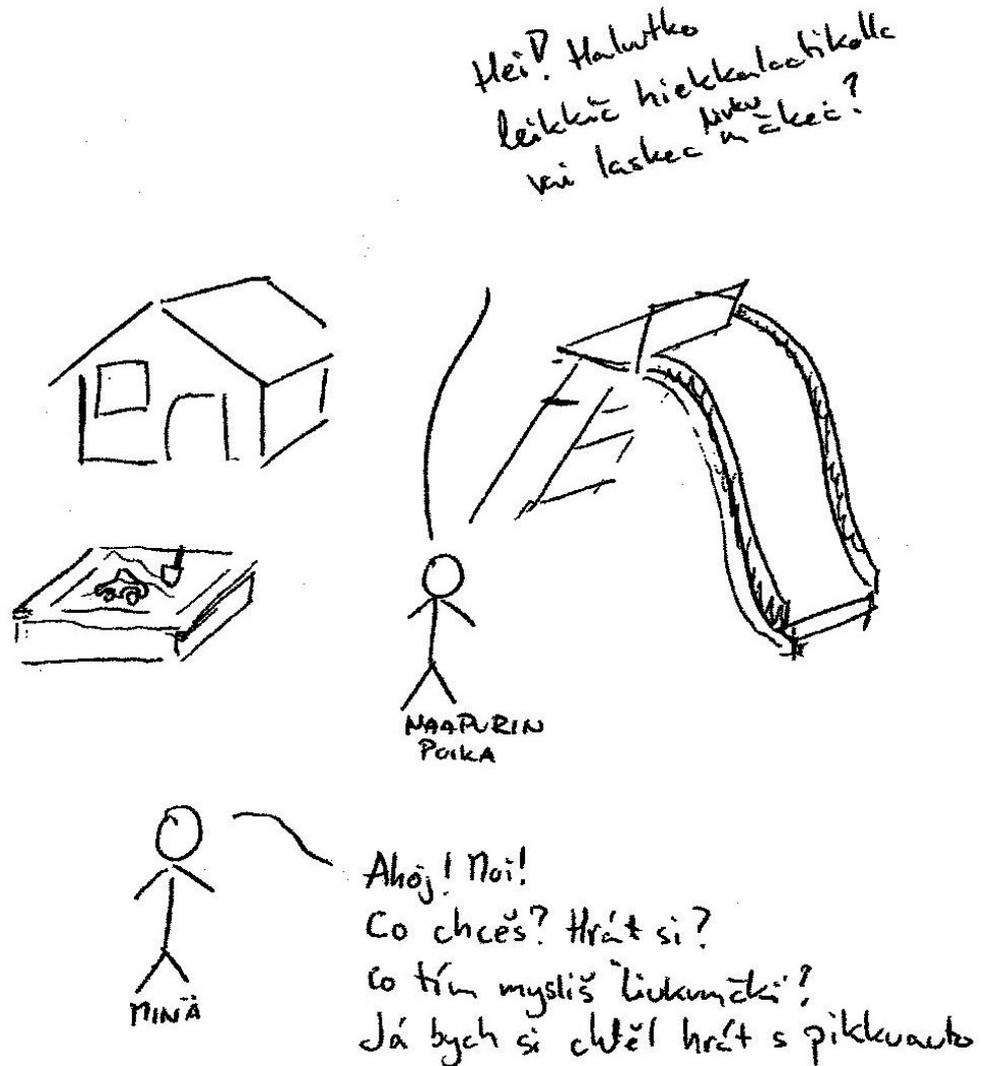
"Suomenkielen opin kaiketi leikkimällä takapihalla naapureiden kanssa. Alussa puhuin heille tsekkiä (ehkä muutama suomalainen sana sinne tänne) ja he puhuivat takaisin tietysti suomea, mutta kouluikään mennessä suomenkieleni oli jo tyydyttävä ja sanavarastoni laajempi (ei kuitenkaan vielä hyvä!) Koulussa sitten suomenkieleni parantui huomattavasti ja n. kolmannella – viidennellä luokalla suomen kieleni oli hyvä."

('I probably learned Finnish by playing with the neighbours at the backyard. In the beginning I spoke Czech to them [maybe a few Finnish words here and there] and they spoke back to me in Finnish of course but by the time I was in school age my Finnish was adequate and my vocabulary wider [not yet good though!] In school then my Finnish improved significantly and ca. third – fifth grade my Finnish was good.')

Portrait 25. Finnish learning portrait.

The immediate community

The immediate community of practise refers to friends, family and hobbies, as well as to interaction in the general surroundings in which the participant lives. A reference to this type of community of practise had to thus include one of the aforementioned subjects. All in all, 52.2% of the participants reported that the immediate surroundings in which they lived had contributed to their Finnish learning. Yet again friends (28.3%) rose to an important role followed by people in general (21.7%) and interactions in the surrounding environment (13%). The home (2.2%) and hobbies (4.3%) were only mentioned by a few participants.

In Portrait 26, the participant describes a situation in which she is on the beach with her friend. She also mentions that she does homework with her friend. It does not become apparent whether the friend is a native speaker or not, but what it does tell us is that the participant actively uses Finnish in her everyday life, thus implicating that she has been able to build meaningful contacts in the language. This portrait is a typical example of how vital a role friends have in the participants' lives in terms of adapting to the Finnish community. The results show that the home does not seem to be a place where Finnish is used by the participants, and therefore the role of other people becomes important. The same can be said of Portrait 27, in which the participant illustrates how he interacts with the surrounding environment by buying something at a kiosk. He goes on to explain that a language is learned best when one is surrounded by native speakers of that language: it makes learning the language easier and nicer. The findings suggest that Finnish is actively used and learned in the immediate community of practise, which is quite natural indeed as it is the majority language of Finnish society. Yet is should not be taken entirely for granted as it is possible that a migrant withdraws to dealing with people from the same origin only because of rejecting or rejection of the community of practise.
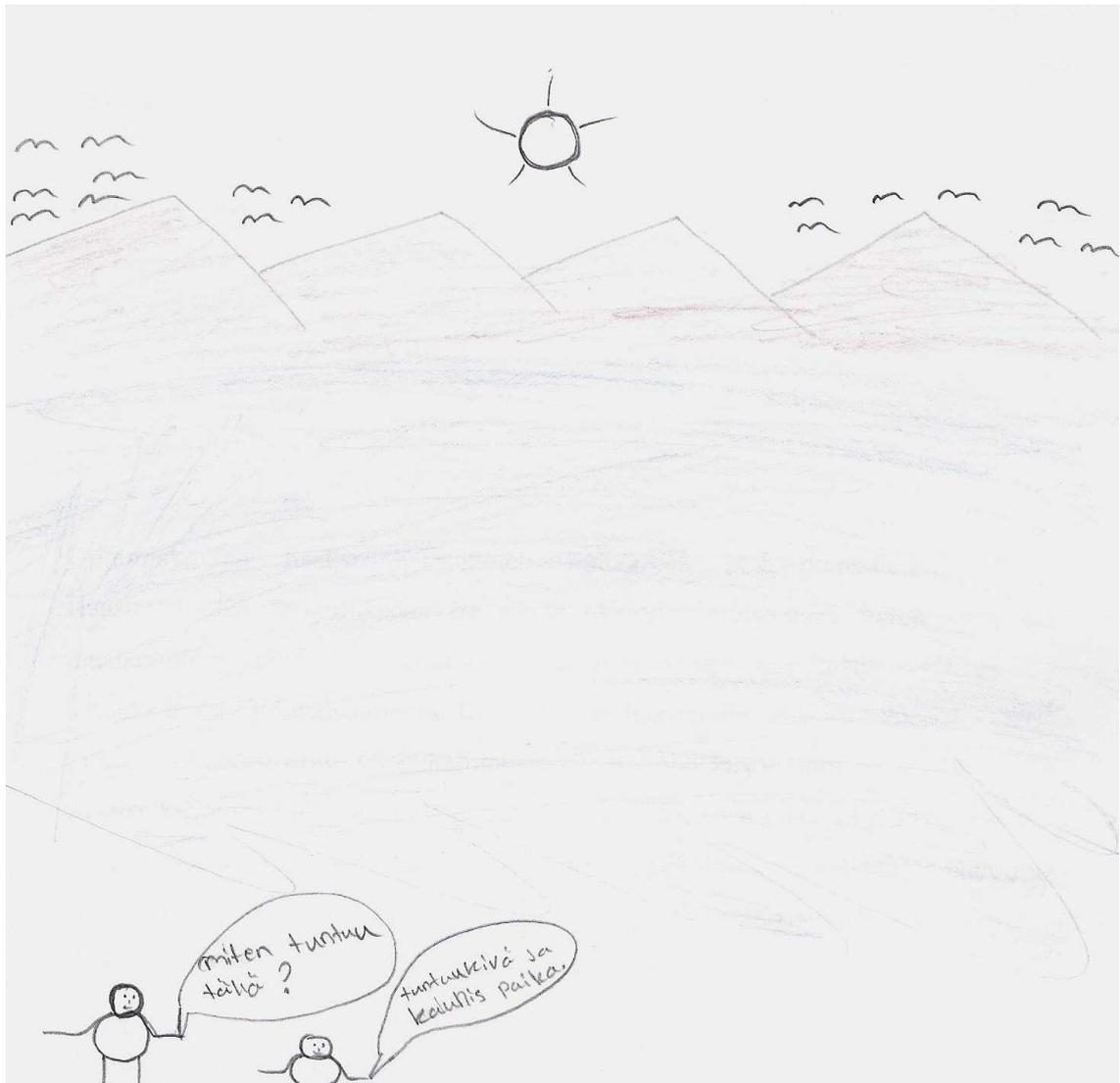
" Miten tuntuu tällä? Tuntuu kiva ja kaunis paika."
('What do you feel here? Feels nice and beautiful place.')

"Olen ranalla kaveri kanssa otta auringoa ja uima tee myös laksya kaveri kanssa."
('I'm at the beach with a friend sunbathe and swim also do homework with a friend.')

Portrait 26. Finnish learning portrait.
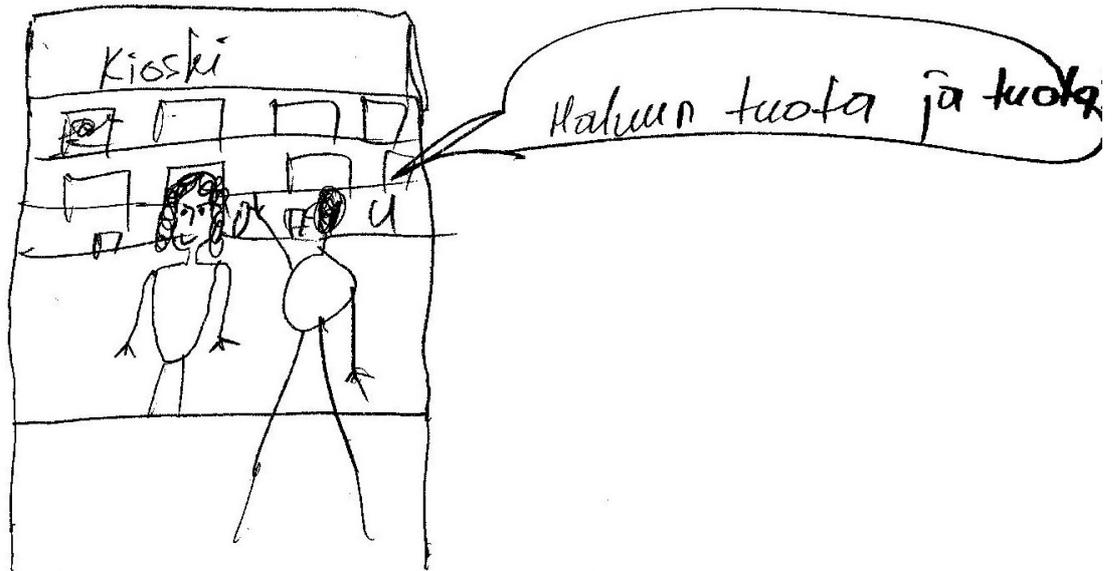
"Haluun tuota ja tuota."
('I want that and that.')

"Kuvassa olen ostamassa jotakin kioskista. Käyttämällä oppii kieltä parhaiten ja jos ympärillä on sen kielen natiivipuhujia, niin kielen opiskelusta tulee helppo ja mukava."
('In the picture I am buying something from a kiosk. One learns a language the best by using it and if there are native speakers of that language around, studying a language becomes easy and nice.')

Portrait 27. Finnish learning portrait.

The media community

The media community was referred to by 26.1% of the participants. As the name suggests, the media community includes television, films, music, computers, the Internet as well as books. One of the aforementioned media outlets had to described or mentioned in the portrait. Books (21.7%) and television and films (15.2%) were the most commonly mentioned media outlets by the participants as can be seen in Portrait 28. In Portrait 28, the participant says that he has learned Finnish by studying it but also by reading in the language as well as using the language online and by watching television. 10.9% of the participants reported to using Finnish online as well but as with the English learning portraits, the findings indicate that Finnish is not used on the Internet that much either. Music and radio were only mentioned by 4.3% of the participants, and thus, the findings show that participants use and learn Finnish from books and television but not so much from other media.

Aino-Kuutamo on tuttu näky Warnerilla. Toimittaja käy levy-yhtiössä usein päivittämässä tietonsa uutuuslevyistä.

"Olen opiskellut suomen kieli: lukeminen, kaveri kanssa. Kotsoin televisiota, elokuvia netissä, mesetin kaverin kanssa keskustelin kavereita."
('I have studied Finnish language: reading, with friend. I watched television, movies online, chatting with friend discussing friends.')

Portrait 28. Finnish learning portrait.

7.2.2 Mediational tools

The learners themselves were not present in the majority of the Finnish learning portraits, but once more the focus was on the people and objects of learning rather than on the learner. Some participants had not depicted any mediational tools in their portraits, whereas others had mentioned several. The findings concerning mediational tools have been summarized into Figure 10.

Figure 10. Finnish learning portraits: Mediational tools

Legend:
- People in general
- Friends
- Teachers
- Family
- Television/Films
- Music/Radio
- Computers/the Internet
- Books

Pie chart values: 21.7%, 21.7%, 28.3%, 8.7%, 2.8%, 15.2%, 4.3%, 10.9%
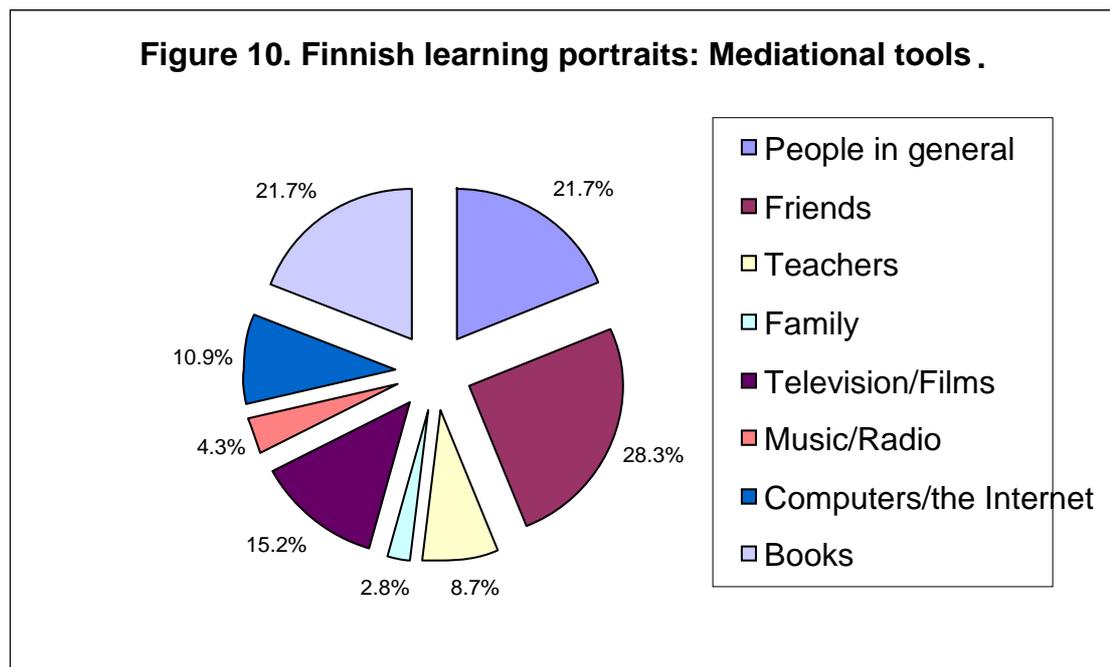
People

The results show that people had a key role in the participants' Finnish learning and usage as some 47.8% had mentioned people in different roles. Friends (28.3%) and people in general (21.7%) were mentioned the most often, while teachers (8.7%) and the family (2.1%) received fewer nominations. It seems that the participants think they can learn the most from other people living in the same community as illustrated in Portraits 29 and 30. In Portrait 29, the participant states that when one hears Finnish everywhere, one learns Finnish sort of by play, and in Portrait 30, the participant says he learns Finnish while playing outside with friends or with the teacher at school. As the findings index that Finnish is not used at home, the role of other people in regards to learning and interacting in Finnish becomes highlighted as seen in the Finnish learning portraits
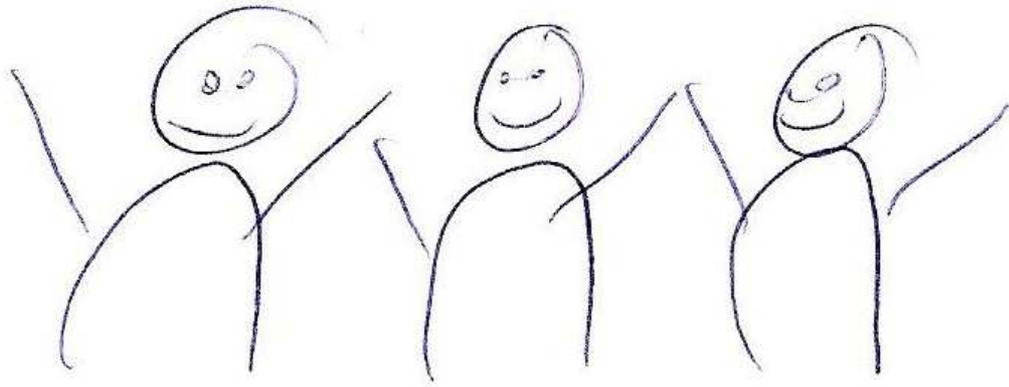
"Pienestä asti kun ympäristössä kuulee kokoajan suomea niin oppii suomea ns. leikkiessä. Pikkuhiljaa vuosien mittaan vaikeimmat asiat olivat monikot ja yksilöt ja sijamuodot!"
('When you hear Finnish all the time growing up you learn Finnish by playing. Little by little along the years the most difficult things were plurals and singulars and grammatical cases.'")

Portrait 29. Finnish learning portrait.

"ulkona pellan kaverinkanssa. menä retkellä tai kuolussa opetja kanssa."
('outside playing with a friend. go for a trip or at school with teacher.')

Portrait 30. Finnish learning portrait.

The media

The media, that is, television and films, radio and music, books as well as computers and the Internet were mentioned by 32.6% of the participants. In more detail, books (21.7%) and television and films (15.2%) were the most often mentioned media outlets, but computers (10.9%) and music (4.3%) were also mentioned by a few of the participants. For instance, in Portrait 31, the participant has depicted the computer, the radio and books to aid in her Finnish learning process in addition to general practise. 21.7% of the participants mentioned books to be important for their Finnish learning. The findings indicate that the participants do not shy away from reading in Finnish, which might at least in the beginning be time-consuming and overwhelming as the language is complex and intricate in nature. Most of the books in the Finnish portraits did not have any titles but some were connected to school, whereas others were clearly read for pleasure, as portrayed in Portrait 32. To sum up, the findings show that the participants mostly learn and hear Finnish from books as well as television and films but they do not listen to Finnish music that much and only a few use Finnish online.

"Harjoittelemassa, Tietokoneella, Lukemisesta, Radiosta"
('Practising, On the computer, Of reading, From the radio')

Portrait 31. Finnish learning portrait.

Kuvaus (voit jatkaa kuvaus...selle puolelle, jos tilaa ei riitä).

Portrait 32. Finnish learning portrait.

7.2.3 Formal and informal learning

All indicators of formal and informal learning (communities of practise and mediational tools) in one portrait were counted as one reference to either type of learning. On the whole, 58.7% of the participants referred to formal contexts of learning and 54.3% to informal contexts. 34.8% had depicted both formal and informal contexts in their portrait, whereas 23.9% referred only to formal and 21.7% only informal contexts.

The relationship between formal and informal learning appears to be in balance when examining the overall findings. It is noteworthy, however, that although informal contexts were mentioned often, one could have assumed their presence to be even stronger as the participants do live in Finland, and thus, have plenty of opportunities to use the language outside school. In fact, one could have assumed that most of the contacts the participants have in Finnish are informal in nature. Nonetheless, the findings show that a significant number of the participants know how to take advantage of informal learning tools in addition to the learning that occurs at school as illustrated in Portraits 33 and 34. In Portrait 33, the participant says that he learns Finnish in many ways and in many places: at school, in general by talking to people, by watching movies and via the computer. He goes on to emphasize the role of the environment and interaction by writing in the portrait that he hears and speaks Finnish when he is out and about. In Portrait 34 then, the participant states that he studies Finnish everywhere, for example, with friends, at school, from music and he even dreams in Finnish. In general, the findings index that both formal and informal contacts and contexts have a strong presence in the lives of the participants. It is not to be taken for granted that learners recognize and know how to take advantage of informal tools of learning in addition to learning taking place in formal contexts.

"Kaupunkilla kun paljon ihmista mä kuulen suomea ja puhun suomea"
('Out when a lot of people I hear Finnish and speak Finnish')
"Suomi kieli opin eri paikoja ensimerki omalla luokalla tai ihmisten kanssa elokuviat tekesti tieto konolle opin myös minä opin helposti puhuminen pidän puhumista. joka opin lisää vaika yhden sana Minua kiinostaa kiel"
('Finnish language I learn different places for example in my own class or with people movies subtitles on the computer I learn also I learn to talk easily I like talking. Every I learn for example one word I am interested in language')

Portrait 33. Finnish learning portrait.

132

musikkissa.

Suomeen kieli kurssi

kisassa.
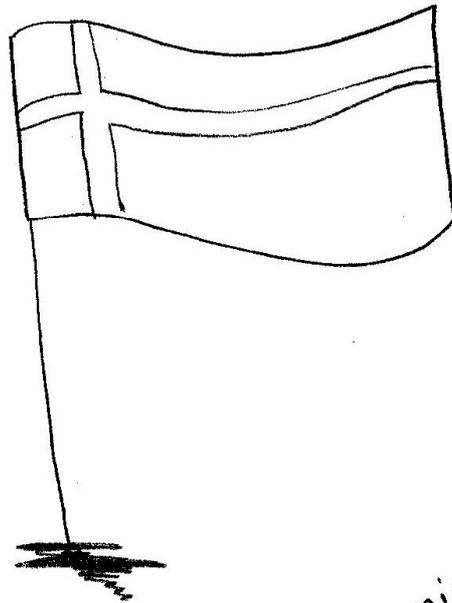
koulussa

Kaverit kanssa

Ja unissa.

"Kun mä tulin Suomeen, sitten minä oppiskelen kaikki paikassa. esim.- suomen kieli kurssi. kaverit kanssa."
('When I came to Finland, then I study everywhere. e.g. on a Finnish language course. with friends.')

Portrait 34. Finnish learning portrait.

7.2.4 Agency thinking

For a thorough explanation of the process of finding agency thinking markers in the data, see section 7.1.4, as the same procedures naturally apply to the Finnish learning portraits. In short, when examining the data, any proof of awareness of the Finnish learning process was considered a marker of agency thinking. On the whole, 21.7% of the participants showed sigs of agency.

For example, in Portrait 35, the participant explains that the Finnish language is important in his life because he wants to live and work in Finland. He also goes on saying that he puts a lot of effort into learning the language. While his motivations for learning may be more external than internal in nature, he still shows signs of reflection towards his current situation of which learning the language is a big part. In other words, he has become aware of the importance of learning the language of the community in order to be able to function fluently in it, and that pushes him forward in his studies even if he were to encounter difficulties. In Portrait 36, the participant described her relationship with Finnish, that is to say, she says Finnish is hard but as she has lived in Finland for such a long time, Finnish feels more like her mother tongue than her first language. She portrays an awareness towards the relationship between her first and second languages although she seems to not to have an ownership of Finnish in her opinion.

We have already referred to Portraits 25, 27 and 29 earlier in the findings but these portraits are worthy of discussing again. That is, in Portrait 27 the participant states that one learns a language the best just by using it and when surrounded by native speakers, which makes learning and using the language meaningful for him. The participant has, in other words, described what works for him the best as a language learner. In Portrait 25, the participant has pondered about when his Finnish skills had become good in his opinion: he had learned Finnish in the playground but his skills improved significantly at school. The participant in this portrait shows markers of agency in terms of his reflection on the past. The same statement can be made of Portrait 29, in which the participant states that for her learning Finnish occurred without too much conscious effort as a result of hearing and interacting in Finnish in the surrounding environment - although she goes on to name the grammatical issues that caused the most problems. In short, all of the participants described above showed certain awareness towards their Finnish learning process in some form. For some, this

meant a close examination of the past and describing what worked and what did not, whereas others told stories of motivation or examined the relationship they have with different languages.

"tama on kallis ja hyvä se tarkoittaa Suomen kieli on tärkeä minun elämäni siksi haluan Asua Suomessa ja tehdä työtä"
)'this is expensive and good it means Finnish language is important my life that's why I want to live on Finland and work')
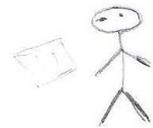
'hän on poika joka lukee kirje ja se tarkoitta minä opiskelin suomen kieltä teen paljon luk"
('he is a boy who reads letter and it mean I study Finnish language I do a lot rea')

Portrait 35. Finnish learning portrait.
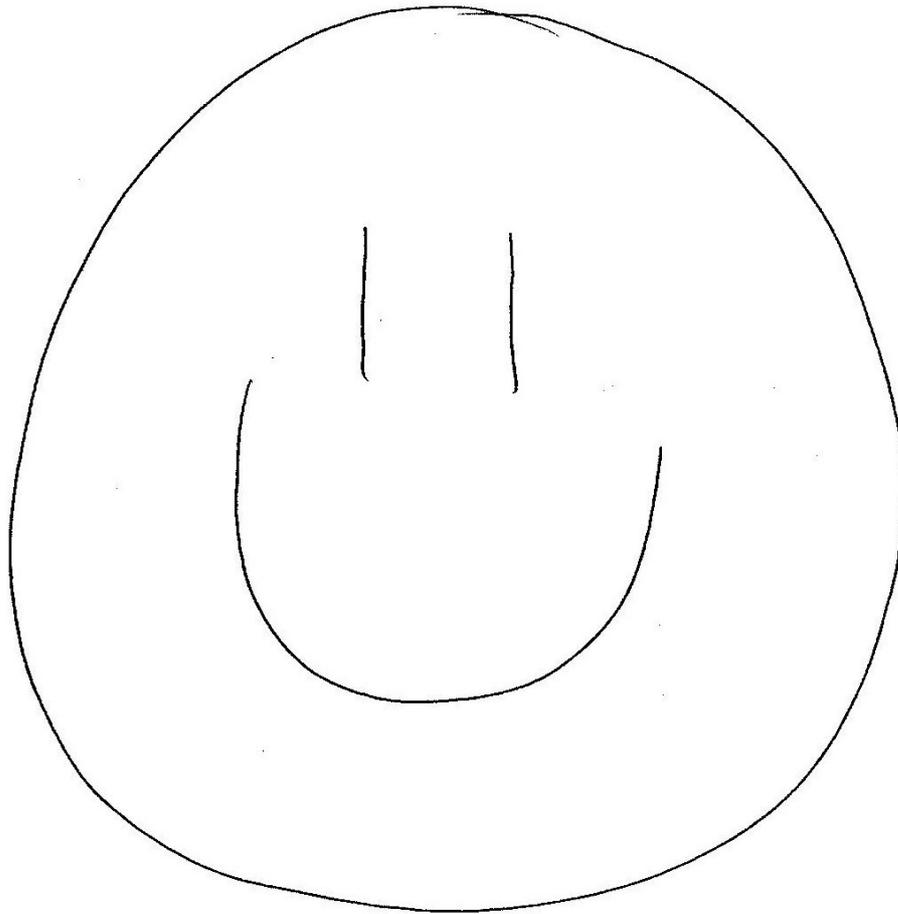
"Suomen kieli on vaikea, mutta kieltä olen oppinut päiväkodista asti, joten se tuntuu enemmän äidinkieleltä kuin oma kieli. Suomen kieltä opiskelen mielelläni."
('The Finnish language is difficult but as I have learned the language since kindergarten, it feels more of a mother tongue than my own language. I like studying Finnish.')

Portrait 36. Finnish learning portrait.

7.3 Interview

The initial purpose of the interview was to get more detailed information about the portraits and of the learners' experiences in the Finnish educational system, and particularly of language education. Indeed, the interview was found helpful in the process of analysing the learning portraits as it gave some idea of how to go about interpreting the relationship between different elements in the portraits (e.g. size of element in relation to importance conveyed by the learner). Later on, however, it was understood that the interview is best to be processed as a case study, thus offering a glimpse of one successful individual's English and Finnish learning experiences in Finnish society. The interview was centred on three different themes, and therefore, we shall follow the same guideline here. Theme one concentrates on the learner's background and it is followed by the learner's perceptions of herself as a learner of Finnish and English.

7.3.1 The learner's background

It was considered of utmost importance that the interviewee had lived in Finland for a longer period of time (i.e. years), and thus had experience of studying on multiple levels (i.e. compulsory education, secondary education, and possibly even tertiary education), and who had sufficient language skills in Finnish to avoid comprehension problems. On the basis of the aforementioned criteria, Lisa was chosen for an interview.

Lisa is a 25-year-old female who arrived in the country from Estonia at the age of eleven. Lisa had visited Finland a few times before arriving here permanently at the age of eleven. She did not, however, have much prior knowledge of the country - other than that such a country existed and that it was bigger in size than Estonia – or the language beyond a few common words such as *hello* and *goodbye*. While she had had some contact with Finnish on her brief visits, her first proper initial contact with the language happened with the help of the neighbour's child, and she learned some Finnish trough play before entering school as discussed in extract (1).

> (1) Lisa: -- *sillon sitte varsinaisesti ku suomeen oltiin jo muutettu ni siinä no naapurissa asui muutamaa vuotta nuorempi tyttö mut se tavallaan sen ekan kesän ni autto niinku kielellisesti että opetti pikkasen niinku leikkien kautta ja tolleen mut sit ihan lastenkirjoista*

> (' -- when we had actually moved to Finland well then well a girl who was a few years younger lived next door but it kind of the first summer like helped linguistically that she taught a little like through games and so but then just from childrens' books')

She was immediately placed on grade six in a normal Finnish classroom without any preparatory language instruction. She had completed grades 1-5 in Estonia. After finishing compulsory education, she continued her studies in upper secondary school followed by a degree in tourism (vocational school).

When asked about her mother tongue, Lisa replied that she considered Estonian to be her first language but she actually speaks better Finnish than Estonian these days as can be seen in extract (2). In other words, Estonian still has special meaning for her and her identity as a language speaker is very much tied to it even though her skills in Finnish succeed those of Estonian. She described Finnish as a language of the home, which she speaks with her spouse and children.

> (2) Lisa: *no äidinkielenä mä pidän yhä viroa koska onhan se mun äidinkieli se on mun synnyinkieli -- mut mä kyl puhun suomea paremmin -- et suomi on niinku kotikieli mut äidinkieli niinku viro*
> ('well I still consider Estonian to be my mother tongue because it is my mother tongue it is my first language – but I actually speak Finnish better – so Finnish is like a home language but mother tongue isn like Estonian')

As was already said, Lisa did not receive preparatory teaching before being placed into a Finnish speaking classroom. She was, however, supplied with additional Finnish lessons in the 6th grade but not after that. Lisa tells that under normal circumstances, she would have been required to repeat the 5th grade but as there was another Estonian girl, who had already been in the country for a couple of years and spoke Finnish fluently, it was thought best that Lisa benefit from the situation, and therefore, she was placed directly to grade six. In other words, during her first year of school in Finland, her Estonian peer acted as her interpreter. In addition to speaking Estonian and Finnish, Lisa reports that she also speaks English and Swedish. English was the only foreign language she had studied before arriving to Finland. She began her English studies in 3rd grade in Estonia and also received remedial instruction in the language in Finland during the 6th grade. Lisa is well settled into life in Finland and does not have plans to return to Estonia but rather to stay in Finland permanently.

7.3.2 Learning Finnish and English in Finland

This section is mostly based on the language portraits drawn by the learner and the ideas and questions raised by the portraits in question. It was imperative to get more detail on the ways in which the learner considers to have learned English and Finnish, where the learning has taken place and what kind of a role mediational tools have had in the process. We will first take a look at the learning portraits Lisa provided and then move on to discussing the interview in relation to each language.

The English learning curve

When we look at Lisa's English learning process presented in Portrait 37, it becomes apparent that she considers herself to be a part of four different communities of practice: the professional community (work and school), the global community (travelling and work), the media community as well as the immediate community. She refers to the professional community by mentioning the word *koulu* (school) and *matkailuala* (travel industry) in the portraits as well as in the written description. Equally, the global community is also referred to in both the portrait as well as in the description by mentioning *Italia* (Italy) and travelling in general. The media community is referred to by mentioning the radio and by providing a visual representation of a television. Lastly, the friends mentioned in the written description refer to the immediate community. Furthermore, she recognizes the value of different mediational tools not commonly used in the professional community, that is, television and music. Subsequently, what we can deduce is that she has found a balance between formal and informal contexts of learning. Lisa's portrait also includes markers of agency: not only does she list situations or things that have helped her English to develop but she specifies in which areas they have advanced. Although the terms she uses, *listening comprehension* and *verbal skills*, are most likely derived from her years at school, it still signifies that she is able to construe her learning in a deeper way than just mere reporting.

"Olen listannut vaan tähän asioita/tilanteita joissa/joiden avulla olen oppinut englantia. Ensimmäinen on tietysti koulu, myös media (TV ja radio) ovat auttaneet ainakin kuulluymmärtämisessä. Ulkomaan matkailu sekä työskentely matkailualalla ovat parantaneet verbaalista osaamista suunnattomasti. Kuin myös kavereiden kanssa juttelu."
('I have listed things /situations with the help if which I have learned English. The first thing is of course school, also the media (TV and radio) has helped me at least with listening comprehension. Travelling abroad and working in the tourism industry have improved my verbal skills immensely. As well as talking with friends.)

Portrait 37. Lisa's English learning portrait.

When asked about the process of learning English, Lisa says it all began at school as pointed out extract (3). As mentioned, Lisa started her English studies while still in Estonia, and thus, she had studied English for two years prior to arrival similarly to most of her Finnish peers. When asked about the presence of English in Estonia, Lisa replies that she cannot really say anything about the situation now but when she still lived in the country, the presence of the Soviet Union/Russia was still so strong that English was not in the picture so much. While school might have been where it all began, Lisa also gives credit to English language media, namely music and television.

Furthermore, Lisa places a high premium on friends, that is, friends with whom one has had to use English as no other common language existed. In addition, Lisa has worked in the tourism industry and as the majority of customers and colleagues were foreigners, it really put one's language skills to the test. Lisa also says that when travelling abroad, English is the language she would resort to using as it seems to be the most commonly known foreign language people speak.

(3) L: *no siis no koulustahan kaikki on alkanut et siellähän se alotettiin -- no radio ja telkkari just ku niinku englanninkielistä mediaa -- musiikkia niinku ainahan sitä tulee biisien tahdissa mukana laulettua ja kaikki frendit on nähty varmaan kymmeneen kertaa -- niin et kylhän sieltä pakostikin oppii et eihän sitä voi välttää niinku median kautta ja sitte niinku iän myötä koulujen myötä asuinpaikkakuntien myötä on tullu ulkomaalaisia kavereita keitten kaa puhunu englantii työ matkailualalla ollu ni meil yheksäkyt prosenttii asiakkaista oli ulkomaalasia*
('well it all began in school I mean there it all started – well radio and TV like English language media – music like you always sing along with songs and I've probably seen Friends for like ten times – so you kinds learn perforce you can't avoid it like through media and then along with schools and moving to different cities I've gotten foreign friends who I've spoken English with working in the tourism industry ninety per cent of customers were foreigners')

All in all, Lisa is of the opinion that she has learned English the best outside of the school rather than at school: studying English at school was focused on form rather than on real-life communicative situations as illustrated in extract (4). She gives an example of a successful, positive learning situation from her job in the tourism industry. Having successfully led a group of customers solely in English and after getting good feedback for it, made her realize that she really can speak the language and be understood. This is discussed in extract (5).

(4) Lisa: *kyllä ehkä enemmänkin sitä on niinku tai parhaiten sitä on just täällä niinku koulun ulkopuolella oppinu sitte -- et koulussa se oli jotenki semmosta pakkopullaa -- niin semmosta että opetellaan muotoja ja*
('yes well more it has like or the best I've learned it outside school -- I mean at school it was more forced – the kind that you learn forms')

(5) Lisa: *joo oikeestaa vähän ehkä sekä että onnistumistilanteita on varmasti just niinku tuolla työn puitteessa et ku on sen ensimmäisen asiakasryhmänsä vetänyt pelkästää englanniks ja saanu siitä sitte niinku hyvää palautetta ja niinku tajunnut et hei ne oikeesti ymmärs (nauraa) ymmärs mitä mä sanoin ja teki niinku mä käskin -- kaikki on elossa vielä päivän päätteeks ja näin*
(' yeah actually it's both and suffessful situation I've had at work I mean when you've led your first group of customers only in English and gotten like good feedback for it and kind of realized that hey they really understood what I said and did what I told -- everyone is still alive at the end of the day and so')

Using English is not, however, only something that takes place abroad or when dealing with tourists as Lisa explains in extract (6). Lisa says that knowing English in Finland is important as Finland has become quite a multicultural country and especially in bigger cities one is bound to face situations in which one is required to use English. Not being able to speak English might affect employment prospects, for instance.

(6) L: *no onhan se tärkeetä täällä suomessaki ku miettii et tääki on niin monikulttuurine maa ja varsinkin tämmösissä isoimmissa kaupungeissa ni ei sitä voi välttää etteikö niinku jossakin vaiheessa törmäis tilanteeseen että sulta vaaditaan sitä englannin kielen taitoo -- varmasti niinku kaikkein enitenhän se vaikuttaa työn saantiin -- kaupan kassallakin vaaaditaan englannin kieltä et sä pääse varmaan siivojaksikaa jos et osaa englantii*
('well it is important here in Finland as well when you think that this too is a multicultural country and especially in bigger cities like this you can't avoid not facing a situation in which you'd be demanded skills in English – surely it affects getting work the most – even a cashier is required to speak English ans you probably can't even clean if you don't know English')

Looking back at her English learning process, Lisa comes to the conclusion that learning English most certainly was not always easy but it, without a doubt, was not as difficult as learning Swedish either. Lisa thinks Estonian helped her to learn English as the languages share quite a few words. These points are made in extract (7).

(7) Lisa: *semmostaa ehkä keskivertoo mä luulisin ei se mitään kauheen helppoo ollu ainakaa kouluaikaa ei tuntunu siltä mut ei se nyt mitenkään niinku esimerkiks verrattuna johonkin ruotsiin niin kyllä se siihen verrattuna oli paljon helppompaa*
('like maybe average I think it wasn't all that easy at least at school it didn't feel like it but it wasn't like foe example compared to Swedish yeah compared to that it was a lot easier')

As presented in extract (8), she would have hoped that language teaching would have been more communicative in nature at school and that the target language would have been used throughout the class instead of jumping from one language to another. Lisa did not, however, find the use of Finnish in the English classroom demanding although she does say that in the beginning it was easier when she had to only deal with one foreign language at a time. At the very beginning of her English studies in Finland, Lisa was left alone by the teacher unless she showed she wanted to participate.

(8) Lisa: *just sen takii no siis joo totta kai suomes suomen kielellä ni tai suomen kielen tunneilla ni mul oli helppo ku oli vaan niinku yks yks kieli mihin piti tulkata mut englannissa ni siin piti ensin tulkata suomeks suomesta viroks sitte taas toisinpäin -- kyllä mut kylhän se sitte niinku ku suomen kielen sai selväks ni kylhän se sit helpotti sit niinku englannin kielen opiskeluu taas*
('exatcly because of that well yeah of course in Finnish in the Finnish language or in Finnish class I had it easy when I like only had to deal with one language to which to translate to but in English in that I had to first translate it to Finnish from Finnish to

Estonian and then the other way around – yes but then when I had cleared Finnish then it made it easier to study English')

Comparing Lisa's English learning portrait and her interview, the results are quite similar. School was merely the place where her journey as an English speaker began and most of the learning happened elsewhere, in informal contexts, according to Lisa. This is well represented in the portrait and she mentions this several times during the interview. She would have hoped teaching at school to have been more communicative in nature and states that she learned better when immersed in such situations, for instance, in her job in the tourism industry. English speaking media was in a more prominent role in the portrait, whereas in the interview she mentions the media as a learning tool one cannot really avoid learning from as it is so prominently immanent in Finnish society. Nevertheless, for Lisa it seems that people in general have been in the most vital role when learning English, whether that be at work or during free time.

The Finnish learning curve

When examining Lisa's Finnish portrait, one notices a striking resemblance to her English portrait, which she herself also notices. Three communities of practice can be indentified: the professional community (school), the media community (television) and the immediate community (everyday life, books, friends) as seen in Portrait 38. Similarly to Lisa's English learning portrait, informal contexts seem to overrun the formal ones as she states that Finnish is learned best merely by interacting within the surrounding environment. What is more, even though she mentions common media influenced meditational tools, books have played a bigger role in her Finnish learning process. Consequently, it is evident by examining the Finnish portrait that Lisa shows signs of agency as she once again lists how and in what way different learning tools have helped her to learn Finnish.

"Tässä pätee aikapitkälti sama kuin eng.kielen oppimisessa. Koulu ja media ovat vaikuttaneet paljon. Alkuaikoina luin hirveästi kirjoja, niistä opin kielioppia ja oikeinkirjoitusta. Mutta parhaiten olen oppinut suomea yksinkertaisesti vain käyttämällä sitä jokapäiväisessä arjessa, kaupassa, kavereiden kanssa, kotona jne."
('The same things apply here as with learning English. School and the media have had a big effect. In the beginning I read a lot of books, of them I learned grammar and spelling. But I've learned Finnish the best just by simply using it in everyday life, at the grocery store, with friends, at home etc')

Portrait 38. Lisa's Finnish learning portrait.

Lisa was asked to tell about her Finnish learning portrait and to specify why she had chosen these particular situations to be presented in it. Lisa emphasizes that even though the word *arki* (everyday life) is written in small letters in the portrait, it has in fact been the most beneficial factor in her Finnish learning as she explain in extract (9). Having to use Finnish everywhere and in every situation, pushed her to learn the language.

(9) Lisa: *-- no yleisesti ottaen arki toi arki on hirveen niinku pieni mä en vaan löytäny isompaa sanaa -- se oli niinku se ylipäätänsä kaikki mitä teki ni kaikessa niinku arjessa just kauppakoulu -- kaikki asioinnit kaikialla tuli käyttää suomee et se oli niinku peräti pakko oppia --*
(' well generally that everyday life is like so small I just couldn't find a bigger word – it is like in general everything you did so like everyday life like grocery shopping school – all

kinds of errands everywhere you had to use Finnish so that it was almost like you had to learn it')

Lisa continues describing the portrait by giving credit to books and reading. As illustrated in extract (10), she says books were an easy way to start as one can take one's own time figuring them out instead of having to interpret the message right there and then in a fraction of a second, which is very common to speech.

(10) Lisa: *ja silleen niinku no siis kirjoista se oli niinku helppo lähtee koska sä näet siitä sen niinku kirjotusasun ja se teksti ei karannu sulta mihinkään et sä sait niinku rauhassa miettiä et mitä siinä nyt niinku sanotaan -- et se ei ollut silleen niinku puhe kuitenki niinku saattaa joskus mennä niin nopeesti ohi et sä et ehi niinku yksinkertaisesti ymmärtämään sitä sä et ehi tajuamaan niitä sanoja ees siitä*
('and like from books it was like easy to start with those because you see like the written form and the text does not escape anywhere from you so that you had like time to figure out what it like says – so it wasn't like speech which like can go by very quickly so that you just simply don't have time to understand it you don't even get the words from it')

Another important learning tool was the media. Lisa acknowledges the role of television and radio in particular; watching Finnish television programs or reading the subtitles of the foreign ones as well as listening to Finnish music played a big part in the learning process. This is pointed out in extract (11).

(11) Lisa: *-- telkkarista kattoo niinku suomalaisia ohjelmii tai niinku mitä vaan tekstitykset -- joo no siis kyl niinku tuli kuunneltuu radioo ja suomenkielistä musiikkia -- ja niinku kyl sieltä just kuulunymmärtämistä*
('to watch like Finnish programs on TV or just like the subtitles – yeah well I did listen to the radio and to Finnish music – and it was like listening comprehension')

Computers and the Internet did not come along until later at school which was to be expected as such equipment was not as common then as they are now. At the beginning, Lisa used the Internet mostly for school work as she only had access to a computer at school as discussed in extract (12). Today she mostly uses Finnish online but says that finding information in other languages, namely Estonian or English, is not a problem if the situation so demanded.

(12) Lisa: *mut niinku koulussa mitä siellä oli noi atk-tunnit oli ni -- ja seki tuli ehkä enemmän niinku oikeastaa yläasteella et rupes sit hakee jotain tietoja netistä jotai -- koulutöitä varten ja tommosta mut ei se niinku ainakaa heti alusta asti ollut ollut semmone*
('but like in school what we had the computer classes – and that too came more like really in the upper levels of comprehensive school so that you began you search for information online for – school and such but it wasn't really like that from the very beginning')

When inquired about the different ways of learning Finnish, Lisa goes on once again to credit the role of the environment. Living and interacting within Finnish society has been the most efficient learning tool for her. Lisa has not found the difference between spoken and written Finnish too demanding or different and states that it has definitely never been an issue. Furthermore, she says that being a speaker of Estonian has been an advantage for her: as an Estonian it is easier to learn Finnish than for a Finn to learn Estonian as pointed out in extract (13). She puts this down to, for example, the Finnish pronunciation being easier than that of Estonian. In other words, the fact that Estonian is closely related to Finnish has not been an issue for Lisa with the exception of confusing similar words to one another.

(13) Lisa: *ei ei ku se on just nimenomaan niinpäin et virolaisena on helmpompi opetella suomee mut suomalaisen on han hankala opetella viroa -- koska no ensinnäkin koska ääntäminen on suomen kielessä paljon yksinkertasempaa paljon töksähtelevämpää -- mutta siis onhan siellä niitä tosi paljon niinku sama samoja niinku sanoja ainoo mikä ehkä oli niinku alkuun hankalaa että on niinku periaatteessa ihan sama sana mut ihan eri tarkotusperä*
(' no no but it actually the opposite so that as an Estonian it is easier to learn Finnish but a Finn learning Estonian is hard – because well first of all because pronunciation in the Finnish language is a lot simpler a lot more crisp – but I mean there a lot of words that are like the same the only thing which might have been difficult in the beginning is that they are like in principal the same work but they have totally different meanings')

In fact Lisa verbalizes that although arriving to a new linguistic and cultural environment was quite weird at first, she learned the spoken language in about a year – not perfectly of course but to a degree where she did not suffer from major linguistic difficulties. She compares her own case to that of her older sister's who had much more difficulty in learning Finnish and concludes the topic by exclaiming that the younger one is the easier it is to learn a language. According to Lisa, she is no longer perceived as a foreigner, whereas her sister has retained a foreign accent separating her from the native population. These matters are discussed in extract (14).

(14) Lisa: *joo siis mähän opin sen [suomen kielen] periaatteessa vuodessa silleen niinku no en virheettömästi mutta silleen että kuitenkin pärjäsin hyvin mulla ei ollu enää oikeestaan semmosia ongelmatilanteita ainakaa niinku puhuessa kirjotusasussahan siinähän meni nyt niinku muutama vuosi ennen ku sen sai niinku ihan täysin kohilleen mutta että puheessa no vuos siinä suunnillee meni ja just mitä et mitä nuorempi on sitä helpompi se on omaksua -- et se niinku just et esimerkiks -- ni ja just et jos vertaa esimerkiks mun siskoon niin siitä huomaa ihan täysin että se on ulkomaalainen ku musta taas ei nykyään*
(' yeah well I learned it [Finnish] in principal in a year like well not perfectly but in way that I could manage well I didn't really have any problematic situations at least like when speaking writing that took like a few years before I got it perfect but at speaking well it took about a year and the younger you are the easier it is to acquire – so that it like for

example – well and if you compare me to my sister you can definitely tell that she is a foreigner when you can't of me')

Moreover, Lisa says that sometimes her quickly improving Finnish skills got her in more trouble than anything else. For instance, Lisa talks about her Finnish teachers appraising her skills in the language, which, on the one hand, made her feel good about her progress, but on the other, awakened rather negative feelings in the native Finnish speaker peers resulting in bullying. By the time Lisa moved onto secondary education, her background as a foreigner was not catered to anymore, other than that it was taken into account in the evaluation of the Finnish as a mother tongue and literature exam in the matriculation examination. She did not opt to take the Finnish as a second language exam.

As already stated, Lisa considers her Finnish skills to be better than her Estonian skills and since she has a family here, she is determined to live her life in Finland. Given that the language of the home for Lisa is almost solely Finnish, her Estonian has deteriorated. According to Lisa, she really has to put her mind to it when speaking Estonian and some of her Estonian friends have gone on to jokingly say that she is not Estonian any more as she only remembers Finnish words. This has become an issue when being in contact with Estonian relatives who are not fluent in Finnish as can be seen in extract (15).

(15) L: *siis se on alkanut jo siis aivan tosissaan nykyään kun mä meen viroon mun miettii välillä oikeesti tosissaa et mikä se sana nyt on et se on just ku äidin ja siskon kaa ku puhuu ni vaik sä et muista suoraa heti jotakin sanaa ni ei se haittaa sä voit sanoo sen suomeks koska ne ymmärtää mut esimerkiks veli ku on aina asunu virossa ni sille pitää puhua sitä niinku ihan puhasta viroo ni se on vähän -- me ei hirveesti puhuta keskenään mitään (nauraa) me ei vaan ymmärretä yksinkertasesti -- ja kyl niinku kaikki kaverit siellä niinku huomauttaa et sillee et kuule sä et oo enää virolaine*
('well it has already begun for real today when I go to Estonia I really have to sometimes think about what is the word it's just that when I speak with my mom or sister even thought you don't immediately remember a word it doesn't matter you can say it in Finnish because they understand but for example my brother who's always lived in Estonia to him you have speak like the pure Estonian so that it's a little – we don't speak with each other much we just simply don't understand – and like all my friends there like comment that hey you're not Estonian any more')

Even though Lisa does not speak Estonian to her children due to it being 'silly' to speak it by yourself, she does believe that her children will learn at least some Estonian as she and her family keep close contact with the Estonian relatives. This is discussed in extract (16).

(16) L: *ja kyl niinku öö molemmat muksut tulee enssijasesti oppimaan suomen -- pakostikin ne tulee oppimaan viroakin enemmän tai vähemmän koska niinku siskolla on kolme muksuu ja me kuitenki käyään niinku siellä paljon et ne on keskenään tekemisissä ja noin mut et ensisijasesti koska ne menee täällä niinku tarhaan ja kouluun ja tälleen -- koska tälleen ku mä oon kotona yksin niitten kaa ni mä puhun suomee ku musta se jotenki tuntuu niin hölmöltä hölmöltä puhuu niille yksinäni viroo että se on paljon helpompaa ku siinä on joku toinen joka myöski puhuu niille viroo*

('and like uhm both kids will primarily learn Finnish – they will inevitably learn more or less Estonian too because my sister has three kids and we go over there a lot so they are in contact with each other and like primarily Finnish because they'll go to kindergarten and school here – because when I'm home alone like this I speak Finnish with them as I feel silly speaking Estonian to them so that it's easier when there's someone else there too who also speaks Estonian to them')

By far the most common theme in Lisa's interview and portrait is everyday life, in other words, normal interaction with the surrounding community. What comes apparent from Lisa's portrait and interview is that she seems very well adjusted to life in Finland and this is a result of her being able to take advantage of all linguistic material offered in the environment which she lives/lived in. This process has indeed been so successful that her Finnish skills have become dominant, which is something she only mentions in the interview. The most important mediational tools for Lisa seem to stem from more informal contexts: books (leisure), the media, friends, family and people in general. In this respect Lisa's portrait matches the things she thought important to talk about in the interview. On the basis of the information presented above, Lisa has successfully created a new voice for herself to suit her life in Finland. Consequently, she has gained access to different communities of practice in Finnish society, which did not reject her even though some resistance might have occurred during the early years in Finland.

7.3.3 Summary of the interview

Lisa offered us an example of a migrant who has found meaningful ways of being in the new community of practise – to the extent that she does not see returning to the country of departure (Estonia) as an option. Therefore, what can be said is that not only has she accepted her new surroundings but she has also been accepted by the larger community, thus making the integration process successful. After all, the process is not unidirectional but two-dimensional involving both the minority and the majority as explained in Chapter 3. As discussed in 4.3.2, studies show that Finns are more approbative towards migrants from countries which are culturally close to Finland,

which might have been a factor in the success of Lisa's integration process. However, Lisa herself also had a major role in it.

As a language learner of English and Finnish Lisa can be characterized as active. From the moment she arrived in Finland, has actively sought ways which suited her learning style the best. For example, at the beginning of her path as a Finnish learner she took advantage of books, which allowed her to examine the language at her own pace giving her all time in the world to figure out the message. As an English learner then, Lisa sought relationships with people with whom she had no choice but to use the language as no other common language existed. For this reason, the mediational means available to her were multiple – ranging from more traditional means of school and work to the modern entertainment industry. Moreover, she seems to have adopted a reflective stance towards her Finnish and English learning and has come to recognize what works for her as a language learner in general. In other words, Lisa shows clear signs of agency thinking.

Although Lisa is well adjusted to life in Finland, Lisa's relationship with the country of departure seems complex in the sense that she actively keeps in contact with her Estonian relatives and speaks the language with her family members but has chosen not to pass the language along to her children: speaking Estonian to them was considered "silly". Nevertheless, she is confident in that her children will learn at least some Estonian even if bilingualism is not the goal. Perhaps this decision is linked to the fact that Lisa seems to value "sounding like a native speaker" as she mentions that as far as her Finnish is concerned, she cannot be identified as a foreigner anymore as opposed to her older sister, who struggled with learning the language. She credits her accent to arriving in Finland at an early age. Having said all that, it is evident that Lisa's identity is still very much tied to the country of departure as she still regards Estonian as her mother tongue even though she says her Estonian has deteriorated significantly after moving to Finland, and thus she speaks better Finnish than Estonian these days.

All in all, considering that Lisa arrived in Finland at the age of eleven and had to quite literally jump into a whole new life, she has had a successful integration and adaptation process into Finnish society. The secret behind it seems to be Lisa's attitude, namely her own activeness in the process.

7.4 Summary of the results

The purpose of this section is to present a brief summary of the results concerning both the English and the Finnish learning portraits. The section will follow the previously set guideline of 1) communities of practise, 2) mediational tools, 3) formal and informal learning, and 4) agency thinking.

All in all, four different communities of practise were found: 1) the professional community, 2) the immediate community, 3) the media community and 4) the global community. The latter was only detected in relation to the English learning portraits: 15.2% of the participants reported they learned English best when travelling, speaking the language with native speakers or when faced with situations in which there was no choice but to use language as they no other common language existed. On the whole, the results indicate that the participants use English in some other connection inside Finland rather than abroad or with native speakers.

The first three types of communities of practise mentioned, on the other hand, appeared in both the English and the Finnish portraits but their popularity varied slightly. The professional community referred to school and work and it was the community referred to the most often in both learning portraits: 65.2% in the English portraits and 56.5% in the Finnish portraits had mentioned this community type. Despite the similarity in popularity, a few differences could be found. Namely, work was only mentioned with regard to the English portraits which also included more portrayals of classrooms only, whereas the Finnish portraits had focused on depicting school buildings instead. Thus, a difference in the uses of the languages within the professional community was detected: in the minds of the participants, the use of English was confined to a specific time and place, that is, the language classroom, more so than that of Finnish.

The immediate community referred to friends, family and hobbies as well as to general interactions in the language in one's surroundings. It was the second most popular choice in the Finnish portraits (52.2%) and third most popular choice in the English portraits (28.3%). A common nominator for both learning portraits was that the home or hobbies were mentioned by a rare few and the portraits mostly focused on depicting friends and people in general. It is, however, likely that the languages in questions were used very differently from one another even though they might have been used with the same group of people.

As the name suggests, the media community referred to movies, television, music, computers and the Internet as well as to books. It was mentioned by 34.8% of the participants in the English portraits and by 26.1% in the Finnish portraits. The results show that neither English nor Finnish was used online, which can be considered a surprising result from people of this age. English language media was faintly more popular among the participants but it can be said that Finnish language media held its own in relation to the amount of content produced in each language. As far as books were concerned, whether the participants were referring to books read for school or books read for pleasure cannot be said on the basis of the results but they were nonetheless a part of the participants' language learning processes.

Mediational tools refer to tools that help humans control their actions. What was of special interest in the present study was the mediational tools that the participants placed between themselves and the object of learning. The mediational tools detected in the portraits could be placed into two categories: people and objects (e.g. books, media). On the whole, people were found to have the most important role in the participants' lives in both the English (43.5%) and the Finnish (47.8%) portraits. The category of people included friends, people in general, teachers and family members, the first two of which were mentioned the most often. 37% of the participants in the English portraits and 32.6% in the Finnish portraits had mentioned different kinds of media, the role of which was already discussed in the previous paragraph.

Overall, the relationship between formal and informal learning was quite balanced in relation to both English and Finnish portraits. The classification of formal and informal contexts roughly corresponds to learning taking place inside and outside of school. In the English portraits formal contexts were mentioned by 65.2% and informal ones by 58.7% of the participants, while 58.7% had mentioned formal contexts and 54.3% informal ones in the Finnish portraits. Some participants had depicted both contexts, whilst others had only mentioned one or the other. What was considered significant, however, was that informal contexts of learning were recognized as helpful and beneficial by such a large percentage of the participants. Often learning is only associated with the school world and as such these results should not be taken for granted.

Finally, agency thinking proved to be most difficult of the four categories to detect and analyse in the learning portraits. Agency thinking was classified as taking control of one's own learning, in other words, creating learning goals and having the

determination to meet them even when encountering obstacles on the way. In short, some kind of evidence of the learner actively constructing the terms and conditions of his/her learning had to be found in order for it to be classified as agency thinking. All in all, markers of agency thinking were found in 26.1% of the English portraits and in 21.7% of the Finnish portraits. If all instances of visual representations of informal learning had been categorized as evidence of agency thinking, as they in some degree index reflectiveness towards one's own learning (i.e. recognizing unconventional learning tools), the numbers would have been much higher. The problem with this type of categorization was that the visual clues alone did not provide enough insight into the nature of agency thinking, and therefore they were disregarded. Instead, both the visual and the written part of the portrait had to have markers of agency in order for it to be taken into account in the analysis.

8 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present study set out to examine migrants' English and Finnish learning experiences by qualitative means. More specifically, it sought to answer the following questions: 1) How do migrant learners see and conceptualize themselves as learners of English and Finnish?, 2) What kinds of mediational means are used in the process?, 3) How do migrant learners perceive the relationship between formal and informal learning?, and 4) How do migrant learners construct their agency as learners of English and Finnish?. Since the present study aimed to study these questions from the point of view of the learner, it was decided that a visual narrative, a learning portrait, provided the best means to investigate the topic. In addition, it was thought crucial to also interview one of the learners in order to attain and provide more detailed information. Altogether, the data was constructed of 46 English and 46 Finnish learning portraits as well as one semi-instructed interview, and both types of data were analysed by the method of qualitative content analysis.

This chapter discusses the findings presented in Chapter 7 in the light of previous research on the topic. The discussion will follow the order of the research questions and it will take into account both English and Finnish learning portraits and where applicable, the interview, which was already discussed in more detail in the previous chapter. In other words, we will first discuss how the participants conceptualize themselves as learners of English and Finnish. This is followed by an examination of mediational tools and formal and informal learning, all while building up to agency thinking. The aforementioned themes are interrelated in intrinsic ways and as such similar subject matters will arise throughout the discussion. We will also talk about the possible implications and applications of the findings for teaching migrants in Finland. Finally, the focus is shifted towards the merits and limitations of the present study and suggestions for future research will be made.

8.1 Conceptualizations of learning English and Finnish

One of the key objectives of the present study was to examine the nature of the relationship between the participants and the environment. In this case, the environment refers to different communities of practise inside Finnish society, that is, the term *community of practise* was understood in a narrower sense of the word instead of a

broader definition, in which case the term could, for instance, refer to a whole society or culture. Investigating the communities of practise the participants had gained access to was thought to bring about information of how they conceptualized and saw themselves as learners of English and Finnish in Finland. In other words, activity theory operates within the principle that while humans may function on an individual level and actively construct the terms and conditions of their learning, their actions are, nonetheless, affected and controlled by the community of practise. This concept is especially interesting in regards to migrants whose histories as language learners no longer serve the new community, that is to say, they have to find a new voice that, on the one hand, enables them to find meaningful ways of being in the new community, and on the other, is accepted by the community of practise. Usually individuals have the luxury of choosing whether they want to remain on the periphery of a community or become full members but in the majority of cases, migrants do not have this option and have to make some kind of an effort to become integrated. For these reasons, examining communities of practise was thought to be of importance as they offer insight into migrants' adaptation and integration process into Finnish society.

After examining the English and Finnish learning portraits, four types of communities of practise were indentified. They were 1) the professional community, 2) the immediate community, 3) the media community, and 4) the global community. For quite natural reasons the latter type was only detected in regards to the English portraits as Finnish is not exactly a lingua franca of the world, albeit its prominence outside Finland's borders with respect to the number of its native speakers. The rate of occurrence of each community of practise listed above varied slightly between English and Finnish learning portraits. Next we will move on to discussing each of the communities individually.

The professional community, that is, the more formal contexts of school and work had a prominent role in both language portraits. It was depicted by 65.2% of the participants in the English portraits and by 56.5% in the Finnish portraits. Subsequently, the professional community was referred to as a place of learning by over half of the participants of the study. Its strong presence was partly explained by the fact that the majority of the participants were students at the time of data collection. For instance, 52.2% of the participants were under 17 years of age, and thus, still in comprehensive school and the rest were also in different stages of education. Only a small number of the participants had proceeded to working life. As a consequence of their lives still

revolving around school, it was quite naturally the first learning context to come to mind. However, as pointed out by Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008: 175), the strong presence of the world of school can also be interpreted as an indicator of the value and appreciation put on formal education in Finland. The findings of the present study certainly hint in this direction: the participants of the present study have to some extent adopted the Finnish view of the importance of education to their future.

The strong presence of the professional community in both language portraits can also be put down to the important role it plays on language development, particularly that of Finnish. Namely, the findings tell us that Finnish is not used at home by the participants, therefore allocating the use of Finnish (and English) to other areas of their lives. The participants receive ample amounts of input and opportunities for output in the language at school, as Finnish is not only an object of learning but also the medium of all instruction for the migrant. In other words, the school offers the linguistic playground needed to become a language user of Finnish (and English). It should, however, be noted that the abstract and complex language of the school is not an easy task to tackle for a migrant. Interestingly, almost all of the references to the professional community related to school, while work was only mentioned by 4.3% of the participants. As already mentioned, only a small fraction of the participants were active in the workforce but the factor could have also been influenced by the fact that learning in the workplace is tied to the procedures and actions of the job rather than to the language used.

In most cases the professional community was the only community of practise presented in the portrait or it was separated from other sources of learning, which indicated that the professional community was viewed as an entity of its own, isolated from other contexts of learning. In this respect, Lisa offered a clarification in her interview: to her school was a starting point which laid a foundation for English learning, and she actually informed that she considered to have learned more through informal means. This type of evidence was immanent in other learning portraits as well, particularly in those of older participants, whose world did not revolve around school anymore. What we are saying is that it might be the case that the majority of the participants have not yet come to realize how major a role English and Finnish have in other areas of their lives outside school – especially as the formal view of learning is often presented as the one and only proper way to learn in Finnish society, as supported by research (Luukka et al 2008; Luukka and Pöyhönen 2007). Studies have shown that

even though plenty of teaching material is attainable from informal sources, teachers are often either unaware or even unwilling to make use of this type of material preferring to rely on the text book instead. The trend seems to have started to change slowly but surely as a new generation of teachers has began to enter the workforce. This is not to say that the older generation of teachers would in some way be bad and the new generation better, but only to express that the newcomers have had more experience in dealing with, for example, computers, and thus they may be more ready to bring them into the classroom. In short, what the findings suggest is that the participants connect learning to school due to the prestige placed on education in Finnish society but also due to the fact that formal contexts have been presented as the correct place of learning and normative language use.

Fortunately, the findings indicate that the learning and use of English and Finnish is not restricted to the professional community. The immediate community of practise, which referred to everyday interactions in the language in the surrounding environment and with the people living in it, was depicted in 52.2% of the Finnish learning portraits and 28.3% of the English portraits. The findings suggest that the participants actively use both of the languages outside school, but we will first examine what the findings imply in regards to learning and using Finnish. In regards to Finnish, the findings imply that carrying out everyday practises such as popping in a kiosk to buy sweets, playing with the neighbour's children or just having a good time with your friends, all play a part in learning the language. Subsequently, from this perspective the immediate community was referred to almost as often as the professional community because, on the one hand, the participants have to use Finnish in order to be able to sufficiently interact in the target environment, and on the other hand, because they have established meaningful networks within it. Indeed, learning is most profitable when it has significance to the learner, as formulated by activity theorists.

The findings presented above indicate that the participants have a closer and more personal relationship with Finnish than with English. Having said that, 28.3% of the participants had referred to the immediate community in their English learning portraits, which is quite a high number considering the language has no official standing in Finland and as such its use is more restricted than that of Finnish. Nevertheless, the findings propose that English does indeed have a role in the participants' everyday lives despite the fact that using Finnish may be more natural. Using English seems to be a trendy, cool thing to do. The findings imply that English was most likely used in a

similar manner to native Finns (e.g. code-switching, borrowing etc for purposes of emphasis) and not, for example, as the language of all communication due to a lack of Finnish skills. In the study by Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008: 180-181), the youngsters reported that they "just end up speaking English" as Finnish did not provide adequate means to expressing oneself on the topic at hand. In this case, the use of English was related to special skateboarding and snowboarding vocabulary, but undoubtedly the same phenomenon is present in other areas of youngsters' lives these days. Hence, what the findings in regards to the English portraits imply is that English has to a certain extent become a natural part of some of the participants' normal language use. As mentioned by Lisa in the interview, English is no longer used only when travelling and dealing with foreigners, and most importantly lacking skills in the language can hinder, for example, one's prospects of employment.

The role of English was also immanent with respect to the media community as some 34.8% of the participants had depicted it in their English portraits, making it the second most common community of practise in regards to the English portraits. 26.1% of the participants had described the media community in the Finnish portraits. Television and films were referred to the most often in both portraits, which was a pleasant surprise. The media, particularly television and films, in Finland is largely dominated by an Anglo-American presence due to the fact that the United States dominates the industry, and production in Finland operates on a small scale due to financing and the availability of resources. Moreover, American series, movies and music seem to have a certain coolness factor – at least in the eyes of the youth. For that reason, the popularity of English language television and films did not come as a surprise but that of Finnish was not so expected. Therefore, it was pleasant to see that the participants have an appreciation for Finnish television and films, and that they comprehend their value for learning Finnish. Of course the same can be said about learning English. Not only do English and Finnish programmes offer a model of language use, but also of culture and way of life. The second most common source of English and Finnish came in the form of books. Now while the majority of the portraits did not specify to what kinds of books they were referring, i.e. school books or books read for pleasure, they seemed to have a more important role than other media besides television and films.

Interestingly, very few of the participants had mentioned listening to Finnish music or the radio, and the number was quite low concerning English as well. The

numbers were even lower in terms of computer or Internet usage, which was unexpected as people of this age are quite industrious Internet surfers. What the findings in other words suggest is that either the participants do not use this equipment, or perhaps more likely they use some other language in these connections, or they just do not regard them as learning tools. For example, the Internet could be used to stay in contact with the country of departure rather than to access English or Finnish language content. The probability of them being too self evident to mention is in the light of the other findings improbable, as the participants noticeably recognized other media as learning tools. In this respect, the findings of the present study are similar to those of Kalaja et al (2008: 195), who found that half of their respondents had drawn themselves with media, and the other half without. They made a point by saying that while for some students media plays a role in learning the language, for others it does not, but what is significant is that some of the respondents actively sought opportunities to use the language outside the classroom.

The final community of practise detected was the global community, which as already explained was only depicted in the English learning portraits by 15.2% of the participants. Overall, the participants of the present study do not seem to be all that active travellers but the accounts of the ones who did report using and learning English abroad mostly told stories of learning as a result of having to use the language as no other common language existed. These kinds of situations were often connected to native speakers or otherwise fluent speakers of the language. Several studies (e.g. Leppänen et al 2009: 55-59) have shown that people often value native speaker varieties of English more than non-native varieties, and in some respect the results of the present study support this view. The findings also show that similarly to young native Finns (Leppänen et al 2009: 34-35) some of the participants of this study regard themselves to be a part of the global international community much differently from older people.

If we examine the emerged communities of practise with the research question of how do migrant learners see and conceptualize themselves as learners of English and Finnish, we may conclude that the participants of the present study are quite multifaceted language learners, who efficiently use different resources available to them. Moreover, the findings illustrate an active dialog between the participants and different communities of practise in Finnish society. In essence, what can be said is that the participants have gained access to several communities of practise. The findings do not, however, reveal to what degree access had been obtained or how much resistance,

if any, was faced. Nevertheless, the participants have an awareness of what and how they learn English and Finnish and see themselves as active users and learners of the languages in multiple communities of practise.

8.2 Mediational means used in language learning

In the previous section we examined the relationship of the individual and the environment on a more general level, which now allows us to investigate the different mediational tools available to the participants of the present study. That is to say, what mediational tools individuals use is in correlation with gained access to a particular community of practise, as learning tools are considered to be culturally constructed. Mediational tools, as defined by activity theorists, are tools that help humans to control their actions, and as a result, also their learning. The most important mediational tool is of course language itself (symbolic tool), but the present study was more interested in examining material tools, that is, tools placed between human activity and the object of that activity. In other words, the goal was to gain information on the tools the participants used in the learning process. Two categories of mediational tools emerged from the data: people and the media.

According to the participants, people formed a considerable factor as far as language learning was concerned: 43.5% of the English portraits and 47.8% of the Finnish portraits depicted people in different roles. The findings of the present study in this respect differ considerably from the results of the Kalaja et al (2008: 192-193), who did not find people to have a significant role in EFL learning. The results of Kalaja et al (2008), however, were affected by the instructions given, that is, "How I look like as a learner of English" is bound to produce pictures that focus on the individual rather than on everything surrounding the individual. But who exactly were the people depicted in the portraits of the present study? In both the English (19.6%) and the Finnish (28.3%) portraits friends rose to a key position. In other words, the findings show that quite a few of the participants had formed friendships in the new community of practise. The languages were, however, probably used in very different ways with the friends as the findings illustrate that Finnish is the medium of the majority of interaction and English is for the most part used for purposes of emphasis, as discussed in the previous section. The presence of friends was somewhat anticipated as they form an important part of the lives of the young, and especially those of teenagers, as they are still in search of their

own identity apart from their family. Friends' opinions matter and what might also have affected the findings is that people of this age want to learn and use the same kind of language as their peers.

The portraits also included numerous other people in less substantial numbers. First, very few participants in relation to either of the language portraits (English 4.3%, Finnish 2.2%) had mentioned their family, which suggests that some other language was used at home. Second, teachers were referred to by a small percentage of the participants, that is, by 13% in the English and 8.7% in the Finnish portraits, even though the presence of the professional community was otherwise pertinent. Several of the portraits depicted an empty classroom, or a school building, and some had included students only. In this respect, the findings of the present study resemble those of Kalaja et al (2008: 197), who also noticed that "one very Significant Other" was missing in action, which was in contrast with results received from verbal narratives, in which the teacher was often portrayed as a crucial gatekeeper or guardian of language learning. Third, both English (10.9%) and Finnish (21.7%) portraits included a group of unspecified people, which were coincidentally named *people in general*. The number was higher with respect to the Finnish portraits, in which this group of people can be seen as a representation of interactions taking place in the immediate community of practise. The findings, in other words, suggest that Finnish is used with people the participants come to contact with, whether it be the cashier at the local supermarket or the next door neighbour. When examining the role of the unspecified group of people in relation to learning English, we are not quite certain who exactly is being referred to, as the findings otherwise suggest that Finnish and English are not used in similar ways by the participants. Are the participants, for example, referring to contacts they have had with native speakers of English, or in general with foreigners visiting Finland? Unfortunately, the findings do not reveal the answer to this question.

When comparing the previous findings to the study of Kalaja et al (2008), essential differences in the role of people originated, which as already mentioned was partly an effect of the different instructions given to creating the portraits. Whereas Kalaja et al (2008: 193, 196-197) found their students to depict themselves for the most part alone regarding others unimportant for the learning process, the findings of the present study suggest something different. The role of other people and specifically that of friends in the process of learning English and Finnish was crucial, which was also acknowledged by Murphey and Carpenter (2008: 30) in their study. For the participants

of the present study learning a language cannot be considered a lonely business, which by contrast was the case in the study by Kalaja et al (2008). In other aspects, however, the findings of both studies referenced above resembled each other, that is, media had an impact on language learning as well. To be exact, the media in the present study included books, television and films, music and the radio as well as computers and the Internet. All in all, the media was depicted by 37% of the participants in the English portraits and by 32.6% in the Finnish portraits.

Television and films were depicted more often with the English portraits (26.1%) than with the Finnish portraits (15.2%), in which books (21.7%) had snapped the leading role. Books were also mentioned by a quite a few of the participants, 17.4% to be exact, in the English portraits. The presence of English language television and films was expected as it is so prominently portrayed in Finland, as already mentioned when discussing the media community in the previous section. The percentage of Finnish television and films was thus in relation to the amount of production carried out in Finland. Nonetheless, both offer a valuable model of the language learned. The role of books, on the other hand, was slightly more unexpected. It did not always come apparent from the portraits whether the participants were referring to books used in studying or books read for pleasure. Most often books were referred to in the written explanation of the portrait rather than in the picture. Consequently, the findings imply that some of the participants do not shy away from reading in either language, which at least in the beginning might be time-consuming and even overwhelming. On the other hand, as put by Lisa in the interview, one has all the time in the world to go over the text to comprehend it as it is not going anywhere. Conversely, one only hears an utterance once and it has to be interpreted then and there. Overall, the findings partly reflect a literacy based tradition of language learning.

Other media portrayed in the portraits included music and the radio as well as computers and the Internet. 13% of the participants said they learned English through listening to music, while the number was 4.3% for Finnish. The findings indicate that either the participants do not really consider learning either language from music or that they listen to music in some other language. In addition, the lack of presence of computers and the Internet was quite staggering and certainly unexpected. People of this age are usually well equipped and adapted to dealing with computers, and moreover, a good command of them is demanded in various sectors of life today. The findings indicate that the participants do not use either of the languages online or at least they do

not regard the Internet as a learning tool – perhaps due to the kind of language used there.

To sum up, the mediational tools that arose from the English and Finnish learning portraits were largely connected to informal ways of learning. This tells us that the participants of the present study actively seek opportunities to learn and use the language outside of the classroom. Although this kind of learning has often been characterized as unintentional or incidental learning, as put by Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008: 180-181), it nonetheless lets us know that the participants are aware of the benefits of untraditional learning tools. Furthermore, the most prolific role was given to people rather than other objects of learning, which indexes that the participants are not alone in the learning process.

8.3 The relationship between formal and informal learning

The previous two sections now allow us to observe the intricate relationship between formal and informal learning as perceived by the participants of the present study. The attention was shifted away from the specifics to the general frequency of either type of learning, i.e. all references to formal or informal learning in one portrait counted as only one reference. The findings regarding the English and Finnish portraits in this respect were quite similar: the numbers for formal and informal learning were very close to one another, formal contexts barely beating informal ones. On the whole, 65.2% of the participants had depicted formal contexts and 58.7% informal contexts in regards to the English portraits, whereas the same numbers for Finnish portraits were 58.7% for formal and 54.3% for informal contexts. To be more specific, 37% of the participants had depicted both contexts, while 28.3% had only mentioned formal and 21.7% informal contexts only in the English portraits. In the Finnish portraits 34.8% of the participants referred to both contexts, and 23.9% only to formal and 21.7% to informal contexts only.

The findings index that the participants consider learning to take place in formal as well as informal contexts; the division between the two is in balance when reviewing the overall results. The findings do, however, also point towards a separation of the two worlds. That is to say, the participants do not seem to connect formal and informal ways of learning but instead treat them as isolated frameworks, when in fact one influences the other. For example, some participants resorted to discussing informal

ways of learning through formal means such as watching English language television series having helped in listening comprehension. Similar results were found in the study by Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008: 176-180). Moreover, the findings of the present study suggest that there is an ongoing dialog between formal and informal ways of learning even though the participants contrast the two, thus implying that they are not aware of the true nature of the relationship between the two worlds.

Nonetheless, it is clear on the basis of the findings that participation in both formal and informal ways of learning form a foundation for English and Finnish learning and usage in the participants' lives. The awareness over informal ways of learning is particularly significant as often learners do not regard informal contexts and tools as something to be learned from, which in part is a reflection of the importance put on education in Finnish society. Anything associated with voluntariness or one's free time, for example, is very rarely perceived as educational in the minds of the youth. Yet more than half of the things the participants attributed to their learning did not evolve around an academic context. Having said that, we argue that more instances of informal learning would have surfaced in different kind of data, for example, interviews in which learners have more time to ponder over their language learning process. This is supported by the interview of Lisa, who in fact reported that informal means of learning had had a more prominent role than formal ones especially after leaving school.

8.4 Developing agency

Activity theory proposes that all learners act as agents who have an active part in the language learning process. That is, learners are not mere devices that process linguistic data but human beings who construct the terms and conditions of their own learning. Subsequently, when the idea is applied to the language classroom and teaching, we can deduce that the success of teaching is not solely depended on the teacher but rather it largely rests on the shoulders of the learner and his/her involvement in the learning process. From this perspective, agency can be defined as learners creating long and short term goals for their own learning, learners having the determination and ability to meet the goals and as learners taking responsibility for their success or lack thereof. Often language learners do not, however, have much control over what and how they learn but even in a situation like this, an agent is able to adapt a reflective stance, which enables the learner to have some control over the seemingly poor situation. While

activity theorists assume all learners to have this quality within them, only some learners seem to show signs of it as presented by Murphey and Carpenter (2008). The present study has, therefore, adopted a stance according to which all learners possess agency but only some learners are aware of this characteristic.

Identifying agency markers proved to be the most challenging part of the present study. In the end, it was decided that markers which included signs of activeness or awareness over the language learning process were sufficient proof of agency thinking. To illustrate, a mere report of where one encountered the language was not considered a sign of agency but a portrait had to include reflectiveness ("what works") towards the learning process. Overall, using the set criteria, it was found that 26.1% of the participants portrayed evidence of agency thinking in their English portraits and 21.7% in their Finnish portraits.

In the study of Japanese students' language learning histories by Murphey and Carpenter (2008), 20% of the items coded were associated with agency. Evidence of agency thinking was not detected, however, before the students' time in university even though they had all been successful learners of English since the beginning. Murphey and Carpenter (2008: 31) point out that agency often originates through "social capital, that is, networking with peers and others", and if social and cultural capital does not exist, there is nowhere for agency thinking to grow. In other words, as not much interaction existed in the target language before university, the students were not able to act as agents. When we consider this factor in relation to the findings of the present study, in which there was an abundance of proof of social and cultural capital onto which to build, we have to ask why there were not more markers of agency thinking. As a result, what must be deduced is that agency would have been more prevalent in other types of data, such as verbal or written narratives, as used by Murphey and Carpenter (2008).

Fascinatingly, when taking a closer look of the participants who did show markers of agency, 83.3% were the same people in both the English and Finnish portraits. Essentially, these participants showed agency thinking in relation to learning both languages under investigation. At first, it was though that perhaps the older participants would have been more likely to demonstrate agency, as in the study by Murphey and Carpenter (2008), but the findings indicate otherwise. The age of the participants who were indentified as active agents was between 15 and 29, exactly half of which were under 18 years of age and the other half over. The findings illustrate that

agency is not necessarily dependent on age but rather on the individual characteristics of the learner. On the whole, the findings indicate that a quarter of the participants demonstrated signs of agency thinking, which was low compared to the amount of established and available social capital otherwise present in the portraits. For the majority of the participants, who succeeded in agency thinking, agency was constructed of reflectiveness and awareness over their past learning experiences and over what works for them as learners of English and Finnish. Nevertheless, we must conclude by saying that in regards to agency, the research method chosen in the present study was not able to produce more insightful answers to the research question imposed.

8.5 Implications of the findings to L2 teaching

Previous research has shown that overall migrant learners do not succeed in school as well as their native Finn counterparts (Kuusela et al 2008). Moreover, as language studies are notoriously among the subjects that cause learners in general the most anxiety, it is important to consider the findings of the present study for foreign and second language classrooms. For this reason, the purpose of this section is to discuss the findings from a more practical perspective and talk about the implications and applications they have in the language classroom. Although the findings are discussed specifically from the point of view of migrant learners, it is important to note that many of the ideas presented here also apply to foreign and second language learners in general.

First, one of the key findings of the present study was that while the participants report to having learned English and Finnish from other sources than the academic context, they seem to be of the opinion that informal and formal ways of learning are worlds apart. Furthermore, the findings indicate that while some participants had a fairly good grasp of their own learning, others did not. As it is of essence that migrant learners make use of all kinds of linguistic material available to them, especially in terms of learning Finnish, in order to develop into proficient language users, it would make sense for teachers to incorporate more untraditional material into the language classroom – particularly as such material is readily available in Finland. As the participants of the present study were active users of English and Finnish outside the academic context, discussing the ways in which they in actuality use the languages out and about would make them more aware of the roles they have

reserved for each language in their every day lives. Subsequently, this might encourage learners to take a more active role in terms of their own learning and prevent passivity. A teacher's role, after all, is not to pour information into the learner's head but to act as a guide on the road to fluency.

Second, activity theory has formulated the idea that the teacher alone does not have ultimate control over what is learned, but is indeed the learner's involvement that greatly affects the success of teaching. The point is that it is agency thinking that empowers and helps an individual to succeed in learning a language, or learning in general. Murphey and Carpenter (2008: 17-18) draw attention to the fact that teachers ought to confirm useful behaviours to facilitate the growth of agency thinking with the intention of getting learners to engage in such activities more effectively outside the classroom as well. "Like a self-fulfilling prophecy, if students expect to learn, they are more likely to do so, and if they recognise the effects of their own agency, they are more likely to exercise agency and pathways thinking in the future (Murphey and Carpenter 2008: 19)." In practise, encouraging this kind of behaviour in the classroom might be as simple as making learners to set goals for their learning, reflect over their learning process, taking responsibility for success or lack of it, self- or peer assessment, or as already proposed, discussing their language uses inside and outside the classroom. Furthermore, the concept of learning to learn, that is, finding the ways that work best for oneself as a language learner, also helps to develop a platform from which agency can rise. Empowering individuals in general in this way is important but is it emphasized with respect to migrants: it is of utmost importance that they find meaningful connections in Finnish and in English to gain access to different communities of practise. The environment plays an essential role in language learning and of fostering agency thinking, and as pointed out by Murphey and Carrpenter (2008: 32), even successful students may feel unfulfilled in a classroom that do not encourage agency.

Third, even though the findings of the present study index that the majority of the participants had in fact created a social and cultural capital platform onto which to build, some participants were lacking in this respect. Teachers often form one of the first contacts migrants, especially late arrivals, have with the host population and as such they should, on the one hand, be sensitive towards cultural issues, and on the other hand, help migrants to find suitable connections in the new community of practise. Murphey and Carpenter (2008: 31) suggest that one way for a teacher to do this is to understand "the power of creating good group dynamic", in other words, "a supportive

and interactive group climate". This is particularly important when dealing with migrant learners in general education, in which a class consists of both migrants and native Finns.

Fourth, when examining the learning portraits drawn by the participants, it is evident that even though they shared some experiences as learners of English and Finnish in Finnish society, they still formed an extremely heterogeneous group. This fact should be accounted for, and teachers should not treat migrant learners as a mass but as individuals who come from various backgrounds and who have very different kinds of needs. Moreover, this is especially important when teaching English as migrant learners do not only have to process linguistic data in English but also in Finnish making the process even more demanding. Naturally, the migrant status of a leaner should also be taken into consideration in matters of assessment and particularly when creating instructions for tasks.

8.6 Summary of the discussion

The principal findings of the present study reveal that first of all, while some of the participants were well aware of how and where they learn English and Finnish, others were not. Overall, however, the findings illustrated that in general the participants were multifaceted language learners, who took advantage of the resources available to them, and who constructed their identity as language learners in a continuous dialog with different communities of practise. Second, the participants used a variety of mediational tools in their learning process from formal and informal walks of life. The role of other people in particular was found prominent but media also played an important role. All in all, the participants were not alone in the learning process. Third, both formal and informal ways of learning formed a foundation for English and Finnish learning and use in the participants' lives; the participants actively sought opportunities to use the languages in informal contexts, not purely relying on the academic context. Fourth, a quarter of the participants demonstrated markers of agency thinking, which was lower than expected as other findings implied that there was an abundance of social and cultural capital from which agency could have transpired. This was thought to be an effect of the research method chosen and not of a lack of agency thinking in the participants.

When comparing the findings of the present study to previous research, some similarities as well as differences were found. Namely, Kalaja et al (2008: 193-195) studied the role of mediational tools in the lives of university students, and found that the students actively used the language outside of the classroom, for example, in the form of different media (including books) and that it contributed to the learning process. On the other hand, people were not mentioned in their narratives as often as with the present study. What was common to both studies, however, was the teacher was largely missing from the portraits. Moreover, the findings of the present study were comparable to those of Murphey and Carpenter (2008: 29), who uncovered that over half of what the participants attributed to their learning process was not tied to an academic context and that relationships with peers had a significant part in the language learning process. In addition, Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008: 184) reported of a division between formal and informal ways of learning in the minds of the learners although the two were often linked and intermingled in the learners' narratives, which correlated with the findings of the present study. On the whole, the findings of the present study compared to the studies discussed above, suggest that migrant learners are not all that far apart from their native Finnish speaker peers, which is perhaps a reflection of the general characteristics of young people. Yet the findings visibly manifest that migrants form an extremely heterogeneous group of learners with very different needs, which is a fact that has to be accounted for in foreign and second language teaching.

8.7 Reviewing the research method and ideas for future research

As very little previous research had been conducted on migrants as learners of English and Finnish in the context of Finland, and of migrants as foreign language learners in general, it is justified to state that there was an existing need for this type of research. The present study has succeeded in shedding light on the experiences migrants have had in both formal and informal contexts of learning in Finland, and what effect the environment had in the process. Investigating the topic at hand through visual narratives, that is, learning portraits, achieved to reveal what kinds of mediational tools play a part in the learning process and the variety of learning contexts learners are active participants in. Furthermore, it was discovered that learning English and Finnish was highly personalized in nature. Most importantly, the present study exposed that learners are actively involved with constructing the social and cultural framework in which they

live and consequently learn in. As a result, several practical implications could be drawn to help foreign and second language teachers with migrants in the classroom. For example, by recognizing the immanent role of informal learning in the lives of the migrant youth and bringing it to the classroom, raises awareness of the different roles reserved for English and Finnish. Subsequently, migrant learners are thus more capable of benefitting of the available resources, which makes learning and eventually integration more efficient, which in the long run profits Finnish society. Further, the school plays an integral role in the integration process, which should not be forgotten by teachers.

Choosing qualitative approaches to researching migrant learners in Finland was a natural choice as the subject group itself was so versatile and as previous research was scarce. The concept of the learning portrait was developed on the basis of a pre-existing study by Kalaja et al (2008). Although visual narratives may be a somewhat new and alternative way to explore learner's beliefs, concepts and attitudes, they clearly have advantages over some more traditional means of research. That is to say, they make it possible to access experiences and situations defined important by the learner and not by the researcher. Using learning portraits also assured the anonymity of the participants, thus allowing them to also bring up negative emotions and experiences. Furthermore, they enable learners to visualize and convey ideas and concepts even when the learner's language skills would not otherwise allow for further elaboration. The learning portraits as well as the semi-instructed interview offered the participants a great deal of flexibility in terms of expressing themselves. In general, qualitative means offered an excellent analysis tool when dealing with unstructured data, allowing patterns to emerge from the data itself.

Using qualitative methods, however, also had their downsides. Firstly, the results of the present study cannot be generalised to concern all migrant learners in Finland due to the methods used and the number of participants. Even though the findings might not be generalisable, the factors that merged from the data had a concrete effect on the participant's lives, and thus affected the myriad of paths they had taken as learners of English and Finnish. Further, the findings also give a general sense of what the linguistic world of a migrant learner in Finland is. Secondly, qualitative methods allow for results to result from the data itself but there is a possibility that the interpretations drawn by the researcher are affected by his/her preconceptions, i.e. subjectivity is a factor to which the researcher has to pay special attention (Tuomi and

Sarajärvi 2009: 103). According to McKay (2006: 13), the internal and external validity of qualitative research can be added by carefully recording and analyzing the data as well as by giving a detailed description of the participants and the context of the research, that is, how exactly the research process was carried out. Hirsjärvi et al (2009: 232-233) elaborate this by pointing out that providing authentic examples of the data supports the analysis and tells the reader how the researcher came to the conclusions presented. What is more, using multiple methods in collecting data has an affect on both the reliability and the validity of the study (Merriam 1998: 207).

In the present study, the reliability and validity of the research carried out was, therefore, ensured by relying on the means presented by Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2009), McKay (2006), Hirsjärvi et al (2009) as well as Merriam (1998). That is to say, the starting point for the analysis of the data was to operate on the basis of the broader themes that arose from the data, and although the researcher could not avoid subjectivity entirely, an awareness of this factor was thought to increase the objectivity of the present study – especially as the themes arising from the data nicely correlated with the research questions imposed. Validity and reliability could, however, been increased by getting a second opinion form another interpreter but unfortunately that was not possible. The reliability and validity was also enhanced by a comprehensive report of the participants, while still preserving their anonymity, as well as of the ways in which the data was gathered. In addition, the analysis was supported by ample examples and extracts from the data, which help readers to assess the analysis procedures. The interview frame can be seen in Appendix 2, and examples of learning portraits have been presented in Chapter 7. The present study also set out to improve the quality of the study by conducting additional interviews but unfortunately only one interview was received, and even though the interview provided necessary illustrations in order to interpret the data, more interviews would have been needed to get more insightful data.

The limitations aside, given that the present study did not aim to provide numerical data to be applied to all migrants in Finland but rather to describe how these particular language learners learn and use English and Finnish in their daily lives and of how they construct their identity as language learners, the choice of method and the research subject go hand in hand. Since not much research on migrants as foreign and second language learners in Finland has not been conducted hitherto, more information on the topic is definitely needed, particularly as the number of migrant learners is on the rise. Previous research has largely concentrated on examining migrants from the

perspective of the integration process or of (class) teachers instead of from the viewpoint of the learner. In other words, more research is necessary to confirm the findings of the present study. In order to access the complex and intrinsic nature of language learning by migrants, future research ought to employ several methods. That is, while visual narratives offer us new kinds of data, their value would put be supported by additional methods so as to get deeper insights of the learning process. This would allow for comparisons to be made with native Finns to see what kinds of similarities and differences can be found among a group of young learners. Moreover, it would be of interest to find out whether there are any significant differences between different migrant groups, cultural background, or the age of arrival in the attainment of English and Finnish. Yet another interesting topic would be to investigate migrants as learners of other foreign languages in Finland, as English is known to have a visible role in Finnish society, which other languages do not necessarily posses.

To sum up, when we look at the situation in other European countries, for example, it becomes apparent that they are struggling to deal with the growing migrant population inside and outside of the school. As Finland is in this respect a relative newcomer, there is still time to avoid such problems and improve ways of helping migrants integrate into Finnish society. What is being said here is that education is an exceptionally powerful tool in terms of that: schools, teachers and researchers in particular are in the forefront of positive development towards integration.

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APPENDIX 1: THE LEARNING PORTRAIT FORM

Hei!

Opiskelen englannin ja suomen kielen opettajaksi Jyväskylän yliopistossa. Teen nyt pro gradu -tutkielmaani ja tutkin maahanmuuttajanuoria englannin ja suomen kielen oppijoina. Käytän tutkimuksessani oppimiskuvia (ja joitakin haastatteluita). Kaikki vastaukset käsitellään ehdottoman luottamuksellisesti eikä yksittäistä vastaajaa pysty tunnistamaan tutkimuksesta. Vastauksia käytetään ainoastaan tutkimustarkoituksiin. Olisin todella iloinen, jos sinulla olisi aikaa vastata tähän kyselyyn. Vastaajien kesken arvotaan 10 kappaletta Finnkinon leffalippuja.

Tutkimukseen osanottajan tulee olla:

- 15-30-vuotias nuori, joka asuu tällä hetkellä Suomessa

- käynyt koulua Suomessa (voi olla peruskoulu/lukio/ammattikoulu jne.)

- saapunut Suomeen vasta 4-ikävuoden jälkeen

- jos olet alle 18-vuotias, tarvitse vanhemman suostumuksen osallistuaksesi

Työnohjaajani toimii

Anne Pitkänen-Huhta, anne.pitkanen-huhta@jyu.fi

Kielten laitos, Jyväskylän yliopisto

Jos sinulla on kysyttävää tutkimuksesta, vastaan mielelläni kysymyksiin. ☺

Terveisin

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SUOSTUMUSLOMAKE

Minä _____ annan luvan käyttää vastauksiani tutkimustarkoituksiin. Kaikki tutkimuksessa annettu henkilökohtainen tieto käsitellään ehdottoman luottamuksellisesti eikä yksittäisiä vastaajia pysty tunnistamaan tutkimuksesta. Vastauksia käytetään vain ja ainoastaan tutkimustarkoituksiin.

_____

Päivämäärä ja paikka   Allekirjoitus

HUOM! Jos olet alaikäinen (alle 18-vuotias), pyydä myös vanhemmiltasi lupa tutkimukseen osallistumisesta.

Suostun siihen, että alaikäinen lapseni _____ (nimi) osallistuu tutkimukseen. Kaikki tutkimuksessa annettu henkilökohtainen tieto käsitellään ehdottoman luottamuksellisesti eikä yksittäisiä vastaajia pysty tunnistamaan tutkimuksesta. Vastauksia käytetään ainoastaan tutkimustarkoituksiin.

_____

Päivämäärä ja paikka   Huoltajan allekirjoitus

VASTAUSLOMAKE

Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on selvittää, millaisia kokemuksia maahanmuuttajanuorilla on ollut suomen ja englannin kielen oppimisesta ja millaisina suomen ja englannin kielen oppijoina he näkevät itsensä. Tämä lomake koostuu kolmesta osasta: taustatiedoista, englannin oppimiskuvasta ja suomen oppimiskuvasta. Täydennä ensin taustatiedot ja lue sen jälkeen ohjeet oppimiskuville huolellisesti. Kun olet vastannut kaikkiin kysymyksiin, laita koko lomake vastauskuoreen ja postiin. Vastauskuoressa on postimerkki ja vastaanottajan tiedot valmiina.

TAUSTATIETOKYSYMYKSET

1. Ikä: _____ vuotta

2. Sukupuoli (rastita oikea vaihtoehto):   □ nainen   □ mies

3. Äidinkieli: _____

4. Mitä muita kieliä osaat: _____
_____

5. Minkä ikäisenä saavuit Suomeen? _____

6. Mitä kouluja olet käynyt Suomessa (rastita kaikki koulut, joista olet käynyt)?
□ esikoulu
□ alakoulu (1-6-luokat)
□ yläkoulu (7-9-luokat)
□ lukio
□ ammattikoulu
□ korkeakoulu (ammattikorkea/yliopisto)

7. Mitä koulua tai kouluja olet käynyt ennen Suomeen tuloa? Voit ohittaa tämän kysymyksen, jos olet käynyt koulua ainoastaan Suomessa.

_____

_____

_____

8. Olitko valmistavassa opetuksessa ennen suomalaiseen koululuokkaan siirtymistä? Valmistavassa opetuksessa opitaan tarvittavat suomen kielen taidot ennen suomalaiseen koululuokkaan siirtymistä.

□ ei

□ kyllä

Jos vastasit kyllä, vastaa myös näihin kysymyksiin. Jos vastasit ei, voit ohittaa nämä kysymykset.

a. Kuinka kauan olit valmistavassa opetuksessa? _____

b. Mille luokalle siirryit valmistavasta opetuksesta? _____

9. Milloin aloitit englannin kielen opiskelun (millä luokka-asteella/minkä ikäisenä)?

_____

10. Oletko saanut suomi toisena kielenä -opetusta koulussa (peruskoulu/lukio/ammattikoulu)?

□ kyllä

□ ei

Jos vastasit kyllä, vastaa myös seuraavaan kysymykseen. Jos vastasit ei, voit ohittaa seuraavan kysymyksen.

11. Millaista suomi toisena kielenä -opetusta olet saanut? Järjestettiinkö opetus esimerkiksi a) osana äidinkielen ja kirjallisuuden opetusta, b) erillisenä opetuksena tai c) osana molempia (osaksi erillistä opetusta, osaksi äidinkielen ja kirjallisuuden opetusta)?

_____

_____

OPPIMISKUVAT

Oppimiskuva on kuva niistä tilanteista ja yhteyksistä, joissa sinä olet oppinut suomea ja englantia. Oppimiskuva voi siis kuvata onnistuneen tai epäonnistuneen oppimistilanteen. Muista, että oppimiseksi lasketaan myös kaikki, mikä tapahtuu luokkahuoneen ulkopuolella.

Ohjeet:

Piirrä kaksi kuvaa: englannin ja suomen kielen oppimiskuvat. Sinun ei välttämättä tarvitse piirtää vaan voit myös leikata ja liimata esimerkiksi sanoma- ja aikakausilehdistä kuvia oppimiskuvaan. Voit myös käyttää tietokoneen piirtämisohjelmia (esimerkiksi Paint). Tällöin voit lähettää kuvat suoraan sähköpostiini liitteinä (tiina.hakkarainen@jyu.fi) tai tulostaa ne ja lähettää ne lomakkeen mukana. Voit olla niin luova kuin haluat! Voit käyttää niin paljon värejä kuin haluat ja kuvaan voi myös liittää sanoja. Voit piirtää kuvaan yhden tai useamman oppimistilanteen. Kirjoita oppimiskuvan viereen vielä lyhyt selostus kuvasta.

Apukysymyksiä:

Missä sinä olet oppinut englantia/suomea?

Millaisissa tilanteissa olet oppinut englantia/suomea?

Millainen minä olen englannin/suomen kielen oppijana?

Millaista englannin/suomen kielen opiskelu on?

Millaiset välineet ovat auttaneet englannin/suomen opiskelussa?

1. ENGLANNIN KIELEN OPPIMISKUVA
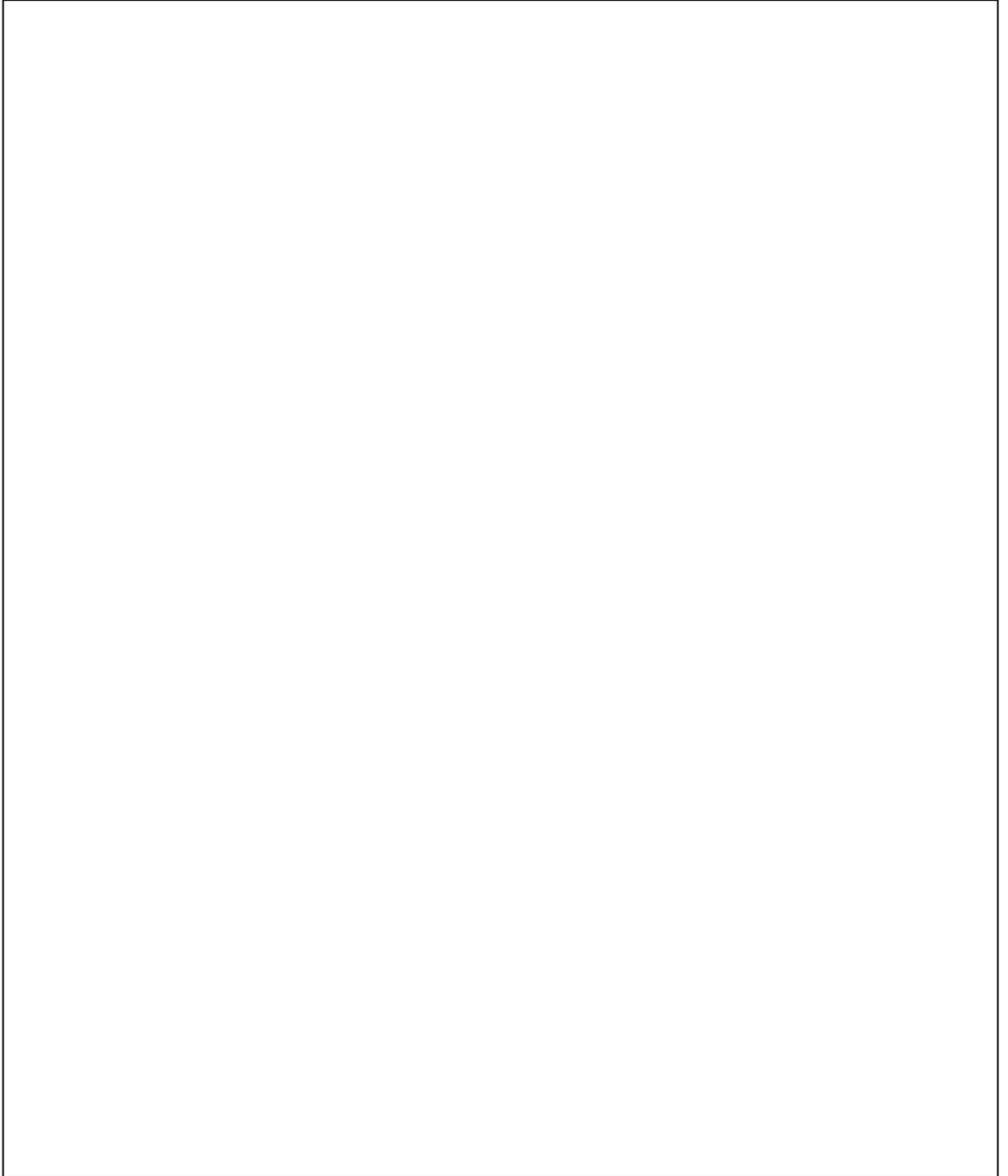
Kuvaus (voit jatkaa kuvausta paperin toiselle puolelle, jos tilaa ei riitä).

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. SUOMEN KIELEN OPPIMISKUVA
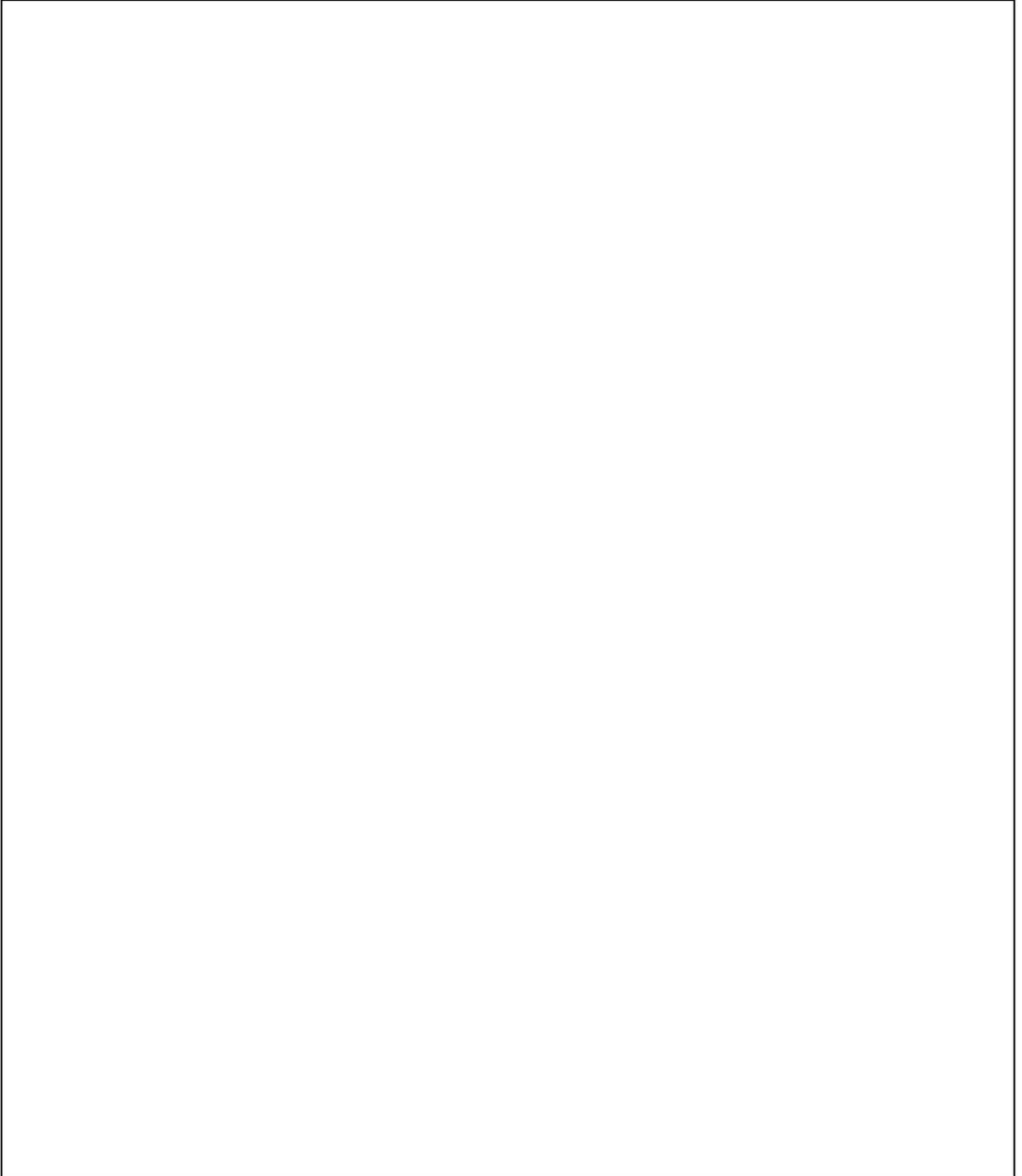
Kuvaus (voit jatkaa kuvausta paperin toiselle puolelle, jos tilaa ei riitä).

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Jos haluat osallistua Finnkinon leffalippujen (10 kpl) arvontaan, kirjoita tähän nimesi ja sähköpostiosoitteesi tai puhelinnumerosi. Voittajille ilmoitetaan henkilökohtaisesti toukokuun loppuun mennessä. Nämä tiedot eivät missään tapauksessa päädy tutkimukseen.

Haluan osallistua Finnkinon leffalippujen arvontaan.   □ kyllä   □ ei

Yhteystiedot:

_____

Oppimiskuvien lisäksi haastattelen muutamaa (4-6 kappaletta) vastaajaa. Haastatteluiden tarkoituksena on saada yksityiskohtaisempaa tietoa siitä, miten maahanmuuttajanuorten englannin ja suomen kielen oppimista voitaisiin tukea tehokkaammin tulevaisuudessa. Jos sinua saa haastatella, kirjoita tähän yhteystietosi (nimi, sähköpostiosoite tai puhelinnumero). Jos olet kirjoittanut ne jo ylle, ei sinun tarvitse kirjoittaa niitä tähän uudestaan. Nämä tiedot eivät missään tapauksessa päädy tutkimukseen. Haastattelussa annettuja tietoja käsitellään ehdottoman luottamuksellisesti eikä yksittäisiä vastaajia pysty tunnistamaan sen perusteella. Vastauksia käytetään ainoastaan tutkimustarkoituksiin.

Minua saa haastatella.   □ kyllä   □ ei

Yhteystiedot:

_____

_____

Kiitos paljon vastauksistasi! ☺

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. <u>Vastaajien taustatiedot</u>
Kuinka kauan olet ollut Suomessa? Minkä ikäisenä saavuit Suomeen?
Oletko ollut valmistavassa opetuksessa ennen normaaliin luokkaan siirtoa?
Mitä teet nyt (opiskelee/töissä)?
Mitä kieliä puhut? Mitä kieliä osasit/olit opiskellut ennen Suomeen tuloa?
Minkä/mitkä kielet koet itsellesi kaikkein läheisimmiksi?
Millainen kielellinen ympäristö oli lähtömaassa? Esim. englannin rooli, mitä tiesi
Suomesta tai suomen kielestä ennen maahan saapumista?

2. <u>Suomen kielen oppiminen</u>
Kerro piirtämästäsi kuvasta (kirjan/opettajan/ympäristön rooli oppimisessa). Miksi
päätit piirtää juuri nämä asiat?
Millä eri tavoilla olet mielestäsi oppinut suomea? (Miten kieliä ylipäätään opitaan?)
Miten kieliä on opetettu?
Onko oppiminen tapahtunut koulussa ja/vai koulun ulkopuolella? Esimerkkejä.
Miten media on tai ei ole vaikuttanut oppimiseen?
Miten tärkeää on mielestäsi oppia suomea? Mitä varten opiskelet suomea?
Miten/missä aiot tulevaisuudessa käyttää suomea? Onko kielestä hyötyä?
Miten hyvin mielestäsi osaat suomea?

3. <u>Englannin kielen oppiminen</u>
Kerro piirtämästäsi kuvasta (kirjan/opettajan/ympäristön rooli oppimisessa). Miksi
päätit piirtää juuri nämä asiat?
Millä eri tavoilla olet mielestäsi oppinut englantia? (Miten kieliä ylipäätään opitaan?)
Miten kieliä on opetettu?
Onko oppiminen tapahtunut koulussa ja/vai koulun ulkopuolella? Esimerkkejä.
Miten media on tai ei ole vaikuttanut oppimiseen?
Miten tärkeää on mielestäsi oppia englantia? Mitä varten opiskelet englantia?
Miten/missä aiot tulevaisuudessa käyttää englantia? Onko kielestä hyötyä?
Miten hyvin mielestäsi osaat englantia?

4. <u>Suomen ja englannin opiskelussa kohdatut haasteet.</u>
Onko suomen ja englannin oppiminen ollut helppoa/vaikeaa? Miksi?
Mitkä asiat ovat tehneet opiskelusta helppoa/vaikeaa?
Millaista vieraan kielen opiskelu on ollut Suomessa?
Onko suomen käyttäminen opetuksen apuna hyvä/huono juttu?
Miten opettajat ovat auttaneet kielten oppimisessa?
Tuntuuko, että olet saanut tukea opettajilta?
Millä eri tavoilla olet saanut tukea?
Miten englannin ja suomen opettajat ovat huomioineet sen, että suomi ei ole äidinkieli?
Minkälaista tukea olisit tarvinnut tai tarvitsisit tällä hetkellä?
Onko koulussa tarjottu S2-opetusta (osa äidinkielen opetusta vai erillinen ryhmä)?
Onko opetuksessa otettu esiin sinun kulttuuriasi tai kieltäsi?
Oletko saanut apua vieraiden kielten opiskeluun äidinkielelläsi?