UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL IDENTITY:

Finns who have been through English Immersion Education

A Pro-Gradu Thesis

by

Laura McCambridge

Department of Languages

2007

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES; Department of Languages

Laura McCambridge
LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL IDENTITY:
Finns who have been through English immersion education

Pro-Gradu Thesis   105 pages + one appendix

The aim of the study was to investigate the influence of English immersion education on the linguistic and cultural identities of Finns, with a view to understanding the interaction between English second language acquisition and identity. In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven graduates from the English School in Helsinki, all of whom have Finnish parents and studied through English for most of their childhoods. The study addresses the question of whether acquiring and speaking English as children causes Finns to identify with non-Finnish linguistic and cultural communities, such as native English speaking communities. This is particularly relevant considering the growing use of English in Finland and the role of English as an international language.

The study found that English had an important place in the lives of the English School graduates: it emerged as a 'thought language', a community language, and a means for accessing certain roles within the Finnish community. However, the graduates did not identify with native English speakers either linguistically or culturally. They considered English an international language, they considered themselves speakers of international English, and they considered English to be a transcultural influence rather than the influence of any native speaking culture. Although they viewed themselves as more internationally orientated than other Finns due to their English School background, they strongly reaffirmed their Finnish cultural identity, expressing their identification with Finnish cultural values and communicative norms.

Key words: Immersion education, identity, speech community, cultural identity.

Contents

1 INTRODUCTION

To point out that the globalisation of English has become an important issue in recent years would be rather a cliché. The use of English in international business and politics, its impact on other languages, its worldwide variations and its acquisition have become hotly debated topics both from a linguistic point of view and politically. Taavitsainen and Pahta (2003: 4) describe how languages all over the world are losing ground to English not only in international communication - business, politics etc - but even in intranational communication in domains such as the sciences, research and technology. Within Finland, although there are only 6000 native speakers of English, the language is encountered on a daily basis through popular culture, media, technology, and education (Taavitsainen and Pahta 2003: 4). Even within everyday speech, code-switching between Finnish and English is becoming increasingly common - for example, in the slang expressions and 'street talk' of youths. English is also gaining ground in Finland at the expense of Swedish (an official language of Finland) both within the educational curriculum and as a lingua franca between Nordic nations (Taavitsainen and Pahta 2003: 8).

Unsurprisingly, therefore, the demand to learn English in Finland is extremely high. As Finnish is spoken by only five and a half million people in the world (Branch 2000), knowledge of English provides the opportunity to avoid isolation in a globalising world. In an online survey reported by Taavitsainen and Pahta (2003: 6), 97% of Finns viewed English as the most important language to learn. Although traditionally Finnish children begin to learn English from their third year at school, it is becoming increasingly common to begin earlier, even from preschool age. Furthermore, English immersion programs - from content through English classes, to English kindergartens, to actual English language schools - are becoming more and more popular, as parents seek to take advantage of the 'language acquisition period' in childhood and give their children the advantage of a high level of English proficiency. Taavitsainen and Pahta (2003: 6) claim that there are as many as 251 schools, including ten IB schools, which offer some instruction through English. Five schools now exist where teaching is conducted mostly

through English, from primary to secondary level (Brady 2001). The English School, the focus of my study, is the oldest example of these.

The relationship between language and identity, especially cultural identity, has also been a highly discussed issue recently, for example, among sociolinguists, sociopscyhologists, and cultural anthropologists. Traditional research has tended to focus on the importance of language in maintaining cultural heritage or nationalistic coherence, and has been of relevance, for example, to ethnic minorities and the policies of governments towards ethnic minorities. From this point of view, the relationship between language and identity is assumed to be practically inseparable. A study, for example, conducted in French/English bilingual Canada, identified language as having a stronger correlation to identity than residence, religion, or ancestry (Pool 1979: 19). And according to Anthony (2002: 2), when it comes to language 'identity is never far away'. Furthermore, advocates of multicultural education have seemed to assume that bilingual identity and bicultural identity are synonymous, claiming that learning a new language is tantamount to opening a window into a new way of 'understanding and experiencing the world' (Parekh 1986: 22).

The unique position of English in world communication reveals an interesting complication in regards to these language and identity issues. The face of English is changing; no other language in history has been spoken by such a variety of nationalities either as a native, second or foreign language (Brumfit 2002: 4). In fact, English now has more non-native speakers than native speakers and is most often used as a lingua franca between non-native speakers (Jenkins 2006: 161). The connection between the language and any one particular culture, some claim, is therefore wearing thin. House (2001: 2) goes as far as claiming that English is now 'stateless language', 'devoid of identities', used solely for communication rather than for identification. Similarly, De Lotbinière (2001:1) compares the identity of English to a 'business suit' that is slipped in and out of simply for functional occasions. When examined closely, these are radical claims, suggesting that English no longer has any power even as a subjective symbol of cultural identity, whether it be a sense of identification with English speaking cultures or

a sense of belonging to a European or even an international community. It also implies that English, in its 'stateless' form, is devoid of any of the cultural aspects that many linguists claim to be inherent in language (e.g. Sapir 1921, Kramsch 1988) and that English language teaching today ignores issues of native-speaking cultural competence.

What then is the position of English, if it has one, in the linguistic and cultural identities of ESL/EFL learners in countries such as Finland? Finns who have been through their education in English provide a unique opportunity to examine this issue more closely. Although they have acquired the language from an early age and have presumably used it at school on a daily basis, their parentage and national background is primarily Finnish. Through my study, I shall interview graduates of the English School about how they themselves experience these identity questions. How has their use of English and their experiences in an immersion school impacted their linguistic and cultural identities? Is there a connection, in their case, between bilingualism and biculturalism? These questions shall form the main focus of my study.

2 IMMERSION EDUCATION

As immersion education shall be the main variable of this investigation, it is first necessary to clarify what I mean by the term as opposed to other forms of education that it may be confused with. Laitinen (2001: 19) describes immersion education as being a subdivision of bilingual education, where bilingual education simply refers to 'a situation where two languages are used in a school'. Bilingual education is generally associated with the integration of linguistic minority groups into mainstream education. For example, in many states of America, ethnic minorities have the opportunity to take classes in their mother tongue at the same time as gradually developing their English skills through mainstream English language classes. Immersion, however, is unique among bilingual education methods as it is traditionally a foreign or second language learning method for speakers of the majority language.

One form of bilingual education that is often confused with immersion education is 'submersion', a method with a notoriously bad reputation due to its use in dealing with ethnic minorities and immigrants in American society. Reyhner (2007) describes submersion as situations where linguistic minority children are placed in mainstream language schools where they are, in keeping with the imagery, forced to 'sink or swim' - either to acquire the majority language or to face isolation. Submersion education has been the culprit in controversies surrounding ethnic minorities and their cultural identity. The argument is that in the process of integration into the mainstream by this method, children of ethnic minorities are in danger of losing their own linguistic and cultural identities. Submersion is even referred to by Skutnabb-Kangas (2000: 324) as a linguistic oppression that in turn leads to linguistic genocide.

Immersion education, however, differs greatly from submersion. Whereas with submersion education, minority students find themselves at a disadvantage linguistically to the rest of the student body, immersion education caters to a relatively homogeneous body of students, who share a similar level of L2 proficiency. Rather than throwing the learners into the deep water of a new language, immersion usually involves support in both languages, with the aim of achieving 'additive bilingualism', i.e. where the students acquire the L2 without a reduction of their L1 proficiency. Submersion, on the other hand, is mostly 'subtractive' of the submerged students' L1 (Fazio and Lyster 1998). Moreover, in immersion programmes, both L2 native teachers and L1 native teachers are present, and the L2 teachers have a good understanding of the students' native culture. All of this contributes to a sort of communicative scaffolding in language learning, where the students are 'immersed in the new language within a controlled, caring and encouraging environment' (Laitinen 2001: 23).

2.1 Immersion Education Models

Immersion education is, as Laitinen (2001:31) puts it, an 'umbrella term', encompassing many different models. Generally, these models can be distinguished based upon two basic variables: the age at which the students begin the immersion and the amount of

teaching conducted through the second language. Age groups are divided into three categories: early immersion, middle/delayed immersion, and late immersion. Early immersion begins during early childhood, middle immersion begins ages eight to ten, and late immersion beings during teenage years (Baker 1996: 181). The amount of teaching conducted through the second language can be then divided into two groups: total immersion and partial immersion. Total immersion refers to education where over 50% of teaching is through the second language, whereas with partial immersion it is up to 50%. The trend within early total immersion education is to begin with 100% instruction in the second language and gradually decrease the percentage over time to 50% (Reyhner 2007).

Beyond these differences according to the age of students and the amount of L2 instruction, there remain four major categories of immersion education models. One category is named by Reyhner (2007) as 'heritage language immersion'. This is where the learners either wish to rekindle their cultural roots by acquiring the language of their immigrant ancestors or wish to revive an endangered language that once represented the majority culture, e.g. Irish in Ireland. The second category is 'double-immersion', where two non-native languages are used for instruction, generally during elementary grades (Laitinen 2001). A third category is 'dual immersion' or 'two-way immersion' (Howard, Sugarman and Christian 2003). Unlike other forms of immersion, this method was created as a way of dealing with linguistic minorities. It aims to avoid both the submersion and the segregation of linguistic minority students by forming classes of roughly 50% L1 speakers and 50% L2 speakers. The classes are then taught through both languages in order to integrate the students without alienating either group. Finally, and by far the most popular category of immersion education, are those methods grouped under the label 'content through a foreign language'. These methods include buzz terms such as 'content-based language teaching', 'language sensitive content teaching', 'content enhanced teaching' etc. Their aim is to promote language acquisition through authentic language use rather than inductive language teaching.

2.2 A Brief History of Immersion Education

Immersion education as a language learning method came to prominence during the 1960s - the first official example taking place in Lambert, Montreal in 1965 (Johnson 2007). The method was developed in Quebec, Canada, among the French speaking population. There, French was becoming the language of working life, and parents feared that their children were not achieving high enough skills in French in comparison to English. They therefore decided to begin French speaking schools with the aim of improving their children's bilingual abilities and job prospects. Interestingly for my own study, the schools were also aimed at promoting the French speaking culture and encouraging a bicultural identity among the students (Baker 1996: 180). From there, the immersion method spread to the point that it became most popular in contexts where the immersion language was not actually an official community language at all but rather a foreign language traditionally taught as a separate school subject. According to de Mejia (2002: 4), this tends to happen when the foreign language is a language of power or prestige. De Mejia therefore labels it 'elite bilingual education', explaining that it typically caters to upper-middle class families who wish their children to acquire a 'prestige language' that will improve their symbolic or economic capital within the community.

In practical terms, however, education through a foreign language is not a new phenomenon. In past centuries, education in colonised countries or in countries of low cultural status typically took place through the language of dominant powers. In Ireland, with the introduction of the national education system in 1831, Irish speaking children were immersed in the English language through English medium schools (Nic Craith 2002). Many view this as having had an Anglicising effect – 'an attempt to colonise the mind and the people' (Morrison 1998). In Finland, of course, it was only in 1858 that a school first began to teach Finnish speaking children through Finnish rather than Swedish (PISA 2006). This form of language education, therefore, can be traced historically to imbalanced power relations, along with colonization and cultural

assimilation. There is no question that L2 education in this context influenced the linguistic and cultural identities of L1 speaking children.

That being said, however, there are several obvious differences between modern immersion education as a language learning method and L2 education as a method used in the past for cultural assimilation. Firstly, immersion education is chosen voluntarily from within the community. L2 education historically was imposed by outside, dominant powers. Secondly, immersion education caters to a relatively small proportion of the L1 society. As a method of cultural assimilation, however, it was aimed at the whole population. Finally, immersion education, as stated above, aims at developing additive bilingualism within a supportive environment, whereas L2 schools in the past were subtractive of the pupils' L1, and in that sense closer to a submersion model. These important factors aside, however, the simple fact that schooling through a second language was expected to have an acculturating result remains interesting. I am therefore curious to discover the cultural implications of second language schooling in such a changed context as immersion education today.

As we have seen, submersion and other traditional forms of bilingual education usually involve governments making decisions in regards to the educational language of minority groups. It is in this capacity that the connection between bilingual education and identity has most often been researched. Few studies exist, however, concerning a connection between bilingual education and identity in other contexts. Furthermore, it seems to me that the pedagogical aspects of language learning in immersion education have been investigated at great length: how well students acquire the second language, how their language level compares to that of other language learners, whether the second language subtracts from the students' native language etc. Although many of these programs claim to promote multiculturalism and decrease ethnocentrism, issues of multiculturalism and identity within immersion education have not been investigated to a significant extent. These are hot topics in education recently and it seems surprising that this unique phenomenon of language use has not been investigated more from psychosocial and sociocultural perspectives.

3 IDENTITY

The concept of 'identity' has produced an avalanche of research over recent decades across a wide range of fields from psychology to sociology to linguistics. As a result, the term has taken on diverse applications. From a psychological viewpoint, identity is strongly associated with the concepts of self and personality. From a sociocultural viewpoint, it is more frequently used in understanding the roles and categorization of individuals in society. Research within linguistics, however, has mainly focused on how identity is expressed and constructed through discourse. The term has therefore been defined and redefined in so many different contexts that some accuse it of having no meaning as a unified concept at all (see Bosma et al 1994). As Hall (1996:1) points out, however, more suitable concepts have yet to take the place of identity in academic research. Moreover, although the various fields emphasise different aspects of the concept, broad themes and issues do reoccur across identity theory in general. Through this review, I shall explore these themes in order to achieve a comprehensive picture of what identity is and how it is formed. I shall then both apply this picture to my own investigation and, hopefully, contribute to it through my investigation.

One of the main arguments in the theory of identity revolves around two opposing extremes: the idea that identity is an essentialist possession - a natural, unchanging essence that characterises a person or a collective - and the idea that identity is, on the contrary, a dynamic, fluid and malleable construction. It is this debate that I shall discuss first.

Essentialism is the idea of identity that is often portrayed in popular discourse, demonstrated aptly by talk shows such as 'Dr Phil', in which participants are advised to discover their 'authentic selves'. From an essentialist viewpoint, an individual's identity is a concrete entity which can be lost or found, denied or understood, but which cannot be changed. Similarly, the Concise Oxford Dictionary (1999: 705) defines identity as being 'the facts of who or what a person is'. If identity is a factual attribute, it is only a person's sense of identity that can vary and that can become confused or weakened if it differs from his/her natural and objective circumstances. Take, for example, an

individual whose sense of cultural identity has changed through interaction with members of 'outside' cultures; under a purely essentialist lens, the individual would be said to be in confusion, denying who he/she truly is.

Within the field of psychology, the essentialist view seems particularly prevalent. Van der Werff, for example, (as quoted by Grotevant et al 1994: 8) defines identity as 'the combination of essential psychic qualities which characterize and differentiate the person' and as a person's 'absolute sameness'. Here, the adjective 'essential' emphasises that these qualities do not vary with the circumstances but are somehow natural, underlying characteristics. Throughout our lives these characteristics remain the same. Within the sociological approach to identity, Mendoza-Denzon (2002: 477) describes essentialism as the idea that we can define who a person is by means of predefined labels or categories. A person's identity in society is therefore limited to the fixed categories he/she is born into, e.g. female, working-class, Caucasian, and so on. There is very little room for maneuver from one category to another. Bausinger (1999: 13), from the field of cultural studies, likens this to the idea of an identity card – a firm, unchangeable attachment that defines who or what a person is.

In opposition to this, however, both social constructivists and postmodernists view an individual's identity as being a dynamic and negotiable construction. In a globalizing world, the sociocultural context under which identities are constructed has changed. Whereas some years ago people 'knew their place', people's place in the world is now more ambiguous due to international mobility, media and politics (Selmer 1998: 48). Encounters with outsiders and outside influences have increased. Therefore, contemporary theories of identity must take into account the context of globalization. As Hall (1996: 4) elaborates:

> We need to situate the debates about identity within all those historically specific developments and practices which have disturbed the relatively 'settled' nature of populations and cultures, above all in relation to the processes of globalization.

Rather than a weakening or confusion of identity that would earlier have been supposed, the concept of identity is rather being redefined (Kellner 1995: 246). An individual's or

even a group's identity is no longer being seen as a collection of factual labels or essential characteristics, but rather as a flexible, malleable and ongoing construction, varying from one context to another, and formed through the complexities of life experiences.

As opposed to the essentialist supposition that identity is based on objective or historical fact, for social constructivists and postmodernists, identity becomes rather a matter of 'imagined communities' and 'myths' of common origin (Hall 1997: 258), a cultural creation. Take for example, the idea of national identity. An essentialist point of view would claim that the nation is based upon a deeply rooted and culturally homogeneous history: an underlying 'one true self'. In reality, however, the nation-state is a relatively recent historical phenomena and national identity a modern sociocultural construction (see Anderson 1991). Preston (1997: 33) claims:

> It is clear that the familiar image of long-established, historically deep-rooted, culturally homogeneous nation-state is both narrowly based upon the Western European case and distinctly misleading… the idea of the nation-state is a cultural one

Group identities are constructed, therefore, through the creation of myths and perceived similarities, which are then communicated through discourse. This shall be discussed in more depth later in the review.

The two extreme viewpoints on the nature of identity also differ greatly as to the degree of agency they attribute to individuals in their own identity construction. Obviously, within the essentialist viewpoint there is very little room for an individual to alter his or her identity. It would rather be the individual's sense of identity that would be altered in denial of true self. From a postmodern viewpoint, however, a high degree of agency can be involved; in fact, identity 'admits of making and remaking as the agent desires' (Preston 1997: 5). Today's world not only offers individuals more opportunities for interaction with 'outsiders', but also offers more lifestyle options and hence identity choices. Preston even claims that people are now positively invited to make 'voluntaristic affirmation of chosen lifestyles and thus identities' (p.5). Moreover, individuals may not only alter their own identities but they can also influence the

cultural and social circumstances in which they are positioned: they both absorb their cultural/social environments and are actively involved in its creation (Cohen 1994).

The final major difference between essentialist and postmodern conceptualizations of identity is in how unified and harmoniously it is said to exist within each individual or collective. Essentialist viewpoints tend to picture identity as being either a singular possession or a harmoniously unified group of possessions – as Mendoza-Denton (2002: 476) describes it, a system of categories (e.g. class, gender, race etc) "linked together in a horizontal sequence, joined by neighborliness". Postmodernists would claim, however, that far from being a harmonious entity, it is rather formed from a whole series of interacting and potentially conflicting identifications, allegiances and roles. Bruck (1988: 77) points out "in the individual, the total experience of personality is influenced by a whole series of different affiliations with different groups or categories". It is possible for an individual to identify with a particular cultural group to a certain extent without that group essentially defining who the individual is. It is possible also for a person to assume one role or identity in one context but assume even a contradictory identity in a different context.

Having presented these extreme opposing viewpoints on identity, however, I should state that my own viewpoint is rather middle-way. I certainly consider identity to be socially and culturally constructed, and therefore variable and negotiable in nature. In fact, if identity were actually an underlying, factual essence, acquiring a second language would do little to alter that essence and my study would be obsolete. However, to state that identities can simply be adopted and discarded at will seems rather an exaggeration. As social beings, individuals are necessarily limited to the choices that are socially available to them and to the resources that they possess for their expression. Whilst the alternatives available for constructing one's identity have increased in today's globalizing world, they are not limitless. Names and labels are still of social importance and some labels are particularly difficult if not impossible to manipulate - age group and gender being clear examples. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2003: 27) support this point,

explaining that some identity options are negotiable, whereas others are assumed (and therefore not negotiated) or even imposed (and therefore non-negotiable).

Furthermore, it seems obvious that if identity formation is based on lived experiences rather than underlying categories, those lived experiences cannot simply be erased or discarded at the discretion of the individual. In my view, a very useful picture of the nature of identity is Griffiths' 'patchwork self', in which each patch represents a different life experience and potential identification (Griffiths 1998: 9). Unlike the essentialist picture of categories being linked side by side in a sequence, the 'patchwork self' illustrates how each piece of meaningful experience interacts with and builds on all the others. Each new experience, each new identification or role, interweaves with previous experiences to form a unique and complicated overall pattern.

3.1 Constructing Identity

Having concluded through the above discussion that identity is a construction rather than simply an essential property, the question remains as to how it may be constructed. In understanding how identity is formed, I will be better able to investigate the role of English language acquisition in my informants' identity construction.

Rather than being constructed in isolation, a person's identity is constructed through interaction with others. The main component of this construction is comparison: identification and differentiation (Petkova 2005: 21). To identify with someone is to feel that one shares similarities with that person (Concise Oxford Dictionary 1999). In a world where people are no longer sure of their place, identifications with others, although perhaps of a more fragmented nature than in former times, become all the more important; as Bauman states, 'one thinks of identity when one is not sure where one belongs' (1996: 19). The key word here is 'belongs'. Rather than an assembly of labels and categories, identity can be discerned as an individual's sense of belonging to, allegiance to and affiliation with actual people and communities. This can be a subjective and affective process, entailing an 'emotional commitment' to the groups

with which one identifies (Burr 1995: 145). In fact, according to Preston (1997: 15), people typically identify themselves not with abstract categories, but with the values, beliefs and morals they connect to those categories.

If people construct their identities through comparison, it follows that they draw not only from similarities but also from differences. Bruck (1988: 79) writes that "every principle of identification is built upon the fact that there exists an opposite". A female identity, for example, only has meaning because men exist. In constructing their identities, people become aware both of who they are and of who they are not (Petkova 2005: 23). A process of 'othering' therefore comes into play (see Hall 1996 :4), where people distinguish those who are 'outsiders'. In distinguishing outsiders, a group's sense of belonging and cohesion is heightened. Dubbeldam (1984) nicely summarizes this idea in the title of his article, 'we are we, and they are different'.

I have described identification as a subjective feeling. One feels an allegiance to certain groups of people. However, the construction of identity does not end with the individual's own sense of belonging. Rather, identity is based on both the individual's perception and on the perceptions of others - what Bruck (1988) calls feedback. An identity cannot in fact be established unless it is acknowledged by others (Blommaert 2005: 205). This limits the identity options available to each individual. Whether the individual can construct a particular group identity depends on the degree to which his/her behavior and characteristics are accepted as normal within that group. Selmer (1988), for example, describes an attempt by a group of working-class people to integrate into the middle-class. Despite their financial resources, they were excluded from middle-class identity due to their inability to modify their language and behavior to suit middle-class norms. Identification is therefore a two-way negotiation between the individual and others. An individual's identity could be described as the meeting point between these two perspectives.

Finally, the semiotic nature of identity construction has been emphasized in recent times, especially within the fields of linguistics and communications. Not only is identity

constructed in relation to others, but it is also constructed through communicative interaction with others (Heinz 2002: 87). Blommaert (2005: 203), in fact, describes identity as 'a semiotic process of representation': it is communicated through symbols, practices, expressed values, and features which Lee (2002: 4) calls 'markers'. These markers form the basis of comparison with others – people who share similar markers form a group identity, which in turn gives rise to behavior and signals that are in keeping with group norms. There is a degree of agency involved; individuals may purposely represent themselves through these markers to others and others respond, confirming or contradicting their representations. Linguists describe this process as 'performativity' (see Pennycook 2007). Central to performativity is the idea that individuals do not simply perform their essential identities, but rather that their identities are produced and constructed through the performance. Each individual has a unique semiotic potential: a compilation of resources for identity performance, which Blommaert (2005: 207) refers to as an 'identity repertoire'. It is from this repertoire that people communicate who they are and who they are not.

3.1.1 Constructing Imagined Communities

As mentioned earlier, however, the idea that identities are based purely on factual similarities with others is misleading. Rather, allegiances can be constructed on the basis of imaginary or even mythically shared traits, behavior, and history. 'Imagined communities' are therefore as important for identity construction as communities that can be objectively categorized: "though imagined, they trigger specific behaviors and generate groups" (Blommaert 2005: 75).

In constructing these imagined communities, generalizations and stereotypes play important roles. Lehtonen (2005: 82) explains that "stereotypes of self and others are essential constituents of collective identity, what we are and what we are not". In describing their identities, individuals frequently refer to stereotypical generalizations both of their own groups and of the groups from which they differentiate themselves. These generalizations can be viewed as imaginary, as they tend to ignore individual

differences in order to create a coherent picture or narrative. They help people to simplify and ascribe meaning to a complicated social reality. Blommaert (2005: 206) reiterates this:

> As one moves around through various social and spatial environments, group and categorical identities change and become less clear cut or less well understood by those involved in acts of categorization. That is why we tend to produce stereotypes about our country of origin abroad, thus providing narratives of identity…

These generalizations may not be important within the group itself, but when one is confronted with different environments and questions of identity arise, they become the ingredients of identity narratives.

Lehtonen (2005: 69) divides stereotypical generalizations into two categories, which are in turn sub-divided into two types. The first category includes 'auto-stereotypes', i.e. stereotypes of one's own group. These include 'simple auto-stereotypes', images that the in-group has of itself, and 'projected auto-stereotypes', images that the in-group feels outsiders have of itself. 'Simple auto-stereotypes' are often positive: the in-group perceives its own culture as being normal and correct. They are also prescriptive in nature as they create expectations of how in-group members should behave, envisioning idealized models of in-group behavior or imaginary possible selves (Grotevant 1994: 15). Stereotypes of out-groups, on the other hand, Lehtonen (2005: 69) calls 'hetero-stereotypes'. These in turn are divided into 'simple hetero-stereotypes', images that the in-group has of the out-group, and 'projected hetero-stereotypes', images that the in-group thinks the out-group has of itself. Simple hetero-stereotypes often form the in-groups whole perception of the out-group and they are very often negative.

For my own study, I will pay most attention to simple auto-stereotypes and hetero-stereotypes. I would like to see if the graduates, despite their acquisition of English language and experiences in the English school, still perceive British or American culture to be 'other', and if that in turn corresponds to Lehtonen's description where Finnish in-group culture is perceived normally and the 'other' perceived negatively. Do

they position themselves in opposition to their perceptions of British or American cultural traits and values?

3.2 Language and Identity

I come now to the most important issue around which my investigation revolves: the relationship between language and identity construction. Language is an important or even a central component of identification. Unlike other signals of identity, its impact is two-fold: speaking a certain language in a certain way is a marker of group-identity, but language is also a medium through which identity can be communicated and performed. In other words, identity is not only reflected by language use, it is communicated through words: what we say as well as how we say it (Pennycook 2007: 71).

Language use is an "affective, symbolic and political matter" (Phipps 2003: 9). A language in and of itself has a symbolic significance that is culturally determined. Regardless of what is said, the simple fact of using a particular language or language variety signals a meaning (Seargeant 2005: 328). Part of this meaning concerns group membership. Historically, we can see this in the promotion of language as both a source and symbol of national identity. For example, the Finnish language became a powerful symbolic marker of Finnish peoplehood during the Romantic Nationalist Movement, along with the ideology of 'one nation, one language' (Ollila 1998: 132). Moreover, we can see this in the association of particular language varieties with specific regional or social communities. Josselson (1994: 98) explains that "we speak from our place in society": our language places us as part of certain cultures, our accent identifies us as coming from certain regions and belonging to particular social groups, and our dialect connects us to certain communities of practice. Every time a person speaks with a certain dialect or accent, in fact, he or she is in fact performing an 'act of identification', signaling the regional or social group that is associated with that variety (Philipsen 1989: 83).

However, a concept of language as discourse - communication through words - takes us beyond the perspective of language and identity as being simply a matter of variety or dialect. Through discourse people tell others, usually implicitly, who they are and how they wish to be seen. They adopt a style of speaking, choice of vocabulary, choice of conversation topic and so on that is in keeping with the role or identity they wish to perform. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2003: 29) even call discourse an 'identity kit', which includes "instructions on how to act, talk, and often write so as to take on a particular social role that others will recognize". Moreover, through discourse people position themselves in relation to others in the interaction and in relation to categories of people (Blommaert 2005): they communicate their status relationship and they signal rapport or dissent - whether they are alike or different.

As with all aspects of identity construction, discourse is an interactional negotiation: it involves both the individual's performance and the reception that this performance receives. With spoken discourse, this reception is labeled 'audibility' (Miller 2003: 312). Audibility is the degree to which others believe your performance. The need to be believed limits the choice that is available to individuals in manipulating their discourse. Especially in representing oneself as a member of a prestigious community, one has to work hard to be believable. Even the tiniest elements of language use or speech style can have significant consequences for identity performance (Blommaert 2005: 208).

3.2.1 Second Language Learning and Identity

Having concluded that language use is both a marker of identity and a medium through which to position ourselves in relation to others, I turn now to foreign and second language use in particular. Previously, where identity was considered an essentialist property, one's identity was simply a matter of one's native-tongue and learning another language would not alter that essence. In terms of language learning theory, this meant that speech communities were seen as exclusive to native speakers; their language was 'authentic', and it was the task of foreign language teachers to impart this authentic language to their students. Native speakers therefore owned the language in question and

non-native speakers were simply learning to imitate them as closely as possible – usually managing only what language acquisition theorists labeled 'interlanguage', a simplified and deficient version of the 'real thing'. A focus on discourse and language in practice has challenged this preconception, however. Non-native speakers are no longer being seen as deficient, but rather as legitimate owners of the second language, who use the language for their own purposes, creating their own language norms and signaling their own identities (Ros I Sole 2004: 2).

Moreover, learning in itself is no longer conceived of as simply an acquisition of skills or knowledge. Rather, it is nowadays conceptualized as a process of socialization or acculturation into communities of practice, which may be professionally, socially or culturally defined (see Marx 2002: 267). Through learning, we acquire the skills needed to function successfully within those communities. Hence, in learning a language, a speaker learns how to function successfully within certain speech communities. These communities, however, are not necessarily native speaking, but rather depend on the communicative context in which the language will be used.

For immigrants learning a second language, becoming part of the mainstream, native-speaking community is indeed the great challenge. Here, issues such as accent reduction become important: the message for immigrants, as Lippi Green (1997: 50) puts it, "sound like us and success will be yours. Doors will open; barriers will disappear". Miller (2003) describes how school-age immigrants in Australia try to adjust to a new language community and attempt to access a mainstream identity. She observes that accent can be even more important as an identification marker for immigrants than more commonly associated markers such as race and religion. She explains, "(migrant) students who use Australian-sounding discourses are generally observed by recently arrived migrant and refugee students as 'mainstream', regardless of appearance" (p.310). In turn, when an immigrant student is heard by Australian peers to speak English with a non-standard accent, that student may be perceived as an outsider.

In learning a foreign language within one's own cultural group, however, the target communities may be more ambiguous. Especially in the case of English, the issue of speech community is complicated. Many researchers now place great emphasis on the fact that an overwhelming majority of English speakers are ELF (English as a Lingua Franca) users. This has led to a general rejection of the term 'English' as a unified language and its replacement with the plural 'Englishes' (e.g. Jenkins 2006). These 'Englishes' refer to transnational speech communities, which according to Jenkins (2006: 167) have developed their own sets of English language norms. Rather than aspiring to native English as authentic, many ESL researchers now claim that target English norms for ESL teaching should rather be developed from genuine transnational English usage (e.g. Jenkins 2006, Foley 2007, Brumfit 2002). Jenkins, Modiano and Seidlhofer (2001) for example, describe a fledgling Euro-English that takes its norms not from how the language is used within native English speaking communities, but rather from how it is used as a European lingua franca:

> We are at the beginning of a process heading towards the formation and acceptance of a new concept of English – not that one has served as the default so far, i.e. native-speaker English, but that of English as a lingua-franca in its own right, with its own description and codification. That is to say, we are witnessing the emergence of an endonormative model of lingua franca English which will increasingly derive its norms of correctness and appropriacy from its own usage rather than that of the UK or the US, or any other 'native speaker' country.

They go on to predict in fact that in the future native English speakers will have to learn Euro-English in order to participate in Europe, rather than vice-versa.

Furthermore, ESL researchers also emphasize the fact that English is now extensively used at a local level even within countries where it is not an official language. Brumfit (2002: 11) asserts that the goal of English language learners today is not necessarily to participate within an external culture of native speakers or even English lingua franca users, but rather to use the language within the immediate local environment. Pennycook (2007: 126) describes how English is used to construct, for example, subcultural identities. He discusses in particular the use of English in rap culture worldwide: rather than marking Americanism, he claims, English is mixed with local languages to create

new local speech communities, marking local identities. Moreover, Taavitsainen and Pahta (2003: 4) suggest that there is a pull within many countries from using English as a foreign language toward using it as a second language: a matter, they suggest, of a community's identity. As a language is used more within a community, it becomes more a part of that community's identity, with its own specific norms of English use. This pull, they suggest, is manifesting within Finland.

Whether these 'Englishes' are truly speech communities that the average ESL user would identify with or rather part of an ideology that these theorists aspire to, I am not convinced. In much of the writing that discusses this shift in English language authenticity, more emphasis is placed on statistics of English use worldwide than on the perceptions and aspirations of ESL users themselves. In fact, many of these writers also point out that grassroots ideas on English target language are far more traditional than they would like, and they therefore take it as their mission to alter the discourse of English language teaching and learning worldwide, in turn changing how ESL users perceive and identify themselves (e.g. Jenkins 2006, Seargeant 2005, Seidlhofer 2005).

The cult of the native teacher is still very much alive within ESL teaching worldwide. In many countries, in fact, it is difficult to obtain work as an ESL teacher if you are not a native-speaker. The long lists of jobs advertised on ESL websites are testimony to this, as most state explicitly that only native speakers may apply and many state that no other qualification is necessary (see e.g. Dave's ESL Café 2007). A visa information website for South Korea, for example, states "if you are not a native speaker of English, you can't work even if you have a Masters in English" (World English Service 2007). In fact, another information site for on English teaching in Korea makes clear the particular English speech community that is aspired to: "teachers with a North American accent are preferred and they get the better jobs… North American teachers usually hold many management positions as well. If you are from a non-North American-speaking country you can expect to be politely asked to use a North American accent or told to lie to your students to tell them you are American" (Korea.Wikia 2007). Judging by this example, variation in English language norms is still considered a deficit. The idea of international

English, let alone local English, as a legitimate speech community is far from the language ideology. Seargeant (2005) describes a similar situation in Japan, and explains that these language ideologies are formidable obstacles to the construction of international English or local English as authentic target speech communities - as communities that ESL users would be proud to identify with.

Discussions of EFL target communities appear to be in response to threats of and debates on English language imperialism. In claiming ownership and autonomy within the language, the threat of imbalanced power relations between native and non-native speaking communities in international communication is deflected. Seidlhofer (2005: 170), for example, explains that at the level of grassroots practice, there is regrettably still an "(unquestioning) submission to native-speaker norms". That she would describe this as a submission betrays that it is indeed perceived as a power struggle; in fact, this line of ELF discussion has been called 'liberation linguistics' (Quirk 1990). In my own investigation, I will be interested in how ESL speakers themselves define their English – do they consider themselves part of a particular English speech community and if so is that community international, local, or a native English speech community? Do they consider themselves to speak 'Euro-English' or are native English speaking norms their aim?

This discussion of power relations and language ideologies brings me to another crucial factor in language and identity issues: namely, social status and inequality. Not all identities are of equal status. Likewise, the resources for performing high status identities are not equally distributed (Blommaert 2005: 69). A major reason why some may choose to learn a foreign language is that speaking and using that language is a prestigious resource and will therefore provide access to higher status and possibly economic success within the community. De Mejia (2002: 36) describes English as one such 'prestige language' internationally. Acquiring English from an early age through, as de Mejia terms it 'elite bilingual education', not only allows students to access certain speech communities but also enables them to 'get ahead' within their own communities. She cites the situation in Hong Kong as an example of this:

> Bilingual or English medium schools are in high demand by parents who consider English as the language of educational and socioeconomic advancement. The majority believe that mastery of this valued resource will enable their children to participate in the 'Hong Kong dream' of social prestige and economic advancement. (p.4)

This idea is confirmed by Dagenais (2003), although in this case with the French language. He found that some immigrants in Canada send their children to French speaking schools hoping that they will benefit both economically and symbolically in accessing higher status social groups through their language skills.

3.2.2 Bilingualism and Identity

Like many of the concepts dealt with here, bilingualism is a term for which "everyone knows what the word is but no one can give a satisfactory definition" (Baetens Beardsmore 1986: 2). The main difficulty seems to be a lack of agreement as to the degree of proficiency a speaker ought to have in two languages in order to merit the label. Definitions range from the view that any foreign language learner is bilingual if he or she can make 'meaningful utterances' in both languages, to the view that only those who can use both languages with equal proficiency are true bilinguals. I am mostly interested, however, in whether my informants see themselves as bilingual, what this label implies to them and what this reveals about the importance of English in their identity repertoires. I am not intending to judge whether they fulfill a prescribed category.

The main theoretical ideas exploring the connection between bilingualism and identity are very much along the same lines as for foreign language learning and identity. However, studying proficient bilinguals and their identities provides some very interesting examples of the connection between language and identity. Those who have acquired two languages proficiently, especially from childhood, often have a more pronounced division of identities, especially where the two languages correspond to clearly distinguishable collective identities or roles. In fact, from a psychotherapeutic point of view, de Zulueta (1995: 170) claims that treatment of psychiatric conditions can

be greatly complicated for proficient bilinguals. Her explanation is that one's identity is so intertwined with language use, that one's personality, behavior, and even memory associations can be different when using one language as opposed to the other. She even advises psychotherapists to remember that patients can detach themselves more easily from unpleasant memories and problems when using a different language to the one in which those problems were encountered.

Recently, two key focuses of theory on identity negotiation in bilinguals have been language choice and code-mixing/switching. If every choice in language is an "identity projection" (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 9), then the range of identity options available for bilinguals/multilinguals is obviously wider than for monolinguals. Bilingual individuals can position themselves not only with various speech communities, but also within one or more language communities. Given that languages in themselves carry symbolic significance for group identification, choosing to use a language for particular functions, choosing to mix two languages together, or simply favoring one language over the other can be strong expressions of identity. Heinz (2002: 88) argues that a bilingual's preference for one language over the other is "a manifestation of desired convergence or divergence"; i.e. speaking one community's language can be interpreted as convergence with that community, whereas preferring to speak another language can signal the opposite. Caldas and Caron-Caldas (2002), for example, recorded the home speech of their three French/English bilingual children over a period of six years. They found that their children spoke more English even within the home environment while they were trying to integrate with an English-speaking peer group at school. They even describe an incident where their adolescent son expressed embarrassment that his father would speak to him in French within hearing of his peers, as it could set him apart from his friends. Similarly, the children spoke French more often at home while attending French-speaking summer schools and wishing to adapt to a French peer group.

4 CULTURAL IDENTITY

I turn now to a categorization of identity that my investigation shall focus on - namely cultural identity. Based on the above discussion of identity as being constructed through an individual's relation to the society around him/her, it would follow that cultural identity refers to an individual's relation to cultural groups. This explanation, however, raises more questions and cannot be complete without a discussion of what is meant by a 'cultural group', as opposed to other collectives, and what is meant by the term 'culture' in the first place. Over the following paragraphs, my aim is first to define 'culture', as I shall be using the term in this study, and then to define what I mean by 'cultural group'.

The term culture, like identity, has been used across many different fields and has taken on various meanings. The result is that it has been applied to almost any aspect of human life. It has been said, in fact, culture is to a community what the goldfish bowl is to a goldfish (Cools 2003): it is the environment we live in, the world we are presented with and the means by which we relate to the world. Unfortunately, however, this definition is rather too abstract and all-encompassing to be useful. Drawing, therefore, from a number of sources, I shall attempt to form a more concrete picture of the aspects of life that can be described as cultural.

In examining definitions of the concept of culture, one finds that a number of very similar metaphors are repeated. These include nouns such as pattern, design, scheme and programme. Examples of this are NASP's (2003) definition where culture is 'an integrated pattern of human behaviour', Kluckhohn and Kelly's (1945: 98) definition where culture is a 'design for living', Lederach's (1995: 9) 'shared knowledge and schemes', and Hofstede and Hofstede's (2004: 4) 'collective programming of the mind'. All of these descriptions are similar in that they picture culture as being a kind of system: a procedure that is shared across a collective for processing and understanding the social world around us. Through acculturation into a society, this system is programmed into our minds, so to speak, and acts as a guide for how to behave and how

to interpret the behavior of others. As a result, we can expect to see a similar design and pattern of behavior emerging from members of a shared culture.

This cultural system is programmed into the minds of individuals and therefore applies to both inward values or beliefs and their resultant outward behavior or practices. Fennes and Hapgood (1997: 14) model this distinction according to an iceberg diagram below. Behavioral aspects of culture are visible above the surface – i.e. arts, dance, dress, and food. Below the surface are understandings and suppositions.
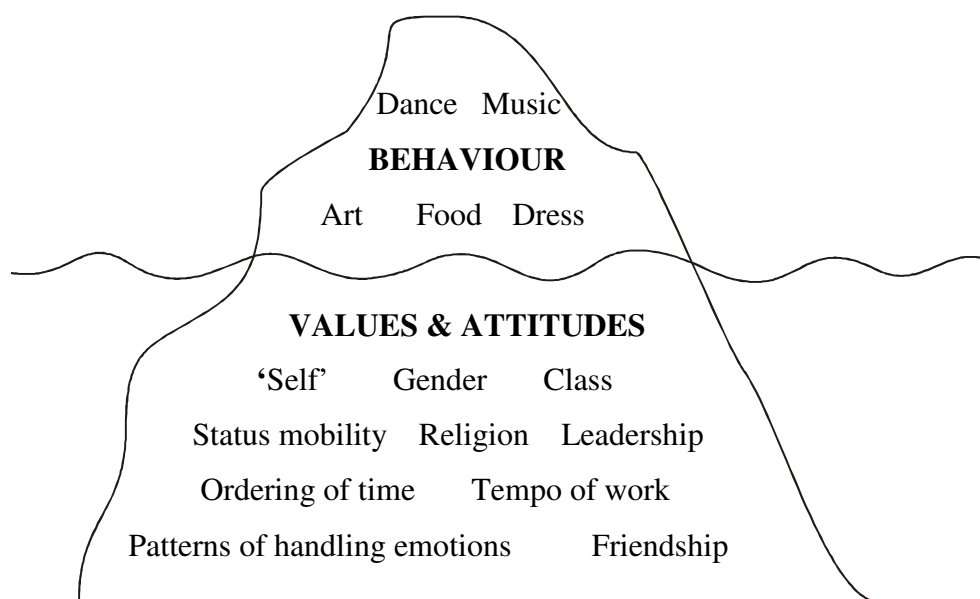

Dance   Music

BEHAVIOUR

Art   Food   Dress

VALUES & ATTITUDES

'Self'   Gender   Class

Status mobility   Religion   Leadership

Ordering of time   Tempo of work

Patterns of handling emotions   Friendship

FIGURE 1 Iceberg Model of Culture (Adapted from Fennes and Hapgood 1997: 14)

In interviewing my graduates about their cultural identities, I shall pay attention, of course, to outward cultural practices and symbols. I shall also place importance, however, on the values they express, along with their perception of whether those values are shared by certain groups.

In recent times, the communicative aspect of culture has received most attention from researchers in the fields of anthropology and cultural studies (Selmer 1988: 53). Communication is a transmission of information or meanings, both verbal and non-

verbal. That transmission, however, is encoded according to certain rules. A collective's culture is its "fellowship of code" (Daun 1976: 154), i.e. its system of rules for encoding and decoding meanings. There are rules for what to say, when to say it, and how to say it, and there are rules for how to interpret what others say (Selmer 1988: 53). In order to communicate effectively within a culture, one has to learn and apply those rules. In second language teaching, teachers are increasingly concerned not only with learners' fluency and grammatical correctness in the language, but also with their communicative competence - their ability to use the language to communicate appropriately in its native culture. This is made more complicated, however, in the case of English language, which is spoken across a wide range of cultures, and, in fact, is more often spoken between non-native speakers than between native speakers.

I have to point out two uses of the term culture that I do not consider appropriate for my investigation. The first is where culture is considered social cultivation. This views culture as an elitist possession – a combination of 'higher' arts, fashion, literature, music and so on which only developed and highly progressed communities achieve. Collectives and individuals are, from this perspective, divided into those who are cultured and those who are uncultured. More prestige is accorded, of course, to the cultured. The second use of the term considers culture as synonymous with civilization. This is what historians often refer to in discussing cultures – namely, tribes, kingdoms and nations throughout history and their systems of technology, legislation and arts. Again, this typically places culture along a value continuum of progress, where the most recent and developed societies are supposedly also the most civilized. Although both of these concepts, social cultivation and civilization, refer to elements of life that are influenced by a society's culture, they are too narrow to constitute definitions of culture in themselves. They tend to ignore internal cultural patterns, such as values, communicative codes and so on.

The reader may note that my definition of culture is very similar to my description of markers for identity construction, i.e. shared practices, symbols, values, communicative norms etc. It is therefore easy to claim, as Cohen (1993) does, that culture is in fact

identity. However, there are also non-cultural traits that mark identity, e.g. age group, appearance etc. Petkova (2005: 16) distinguishes between a cultural group and a social group according to the marker that is of most importance in defining the group. Take, for example, a collective whose identity is based on social class. It may also be said to have a culture that signals its identity, but social class is its most important marker, and it is therefore labeled a social group. Similarly, a collective whose identity is based on a shared profession is labeled a professional group, although its members may also share a culture of sorts. On the other hand, groups that are formed primarily due to cultural similarities can be defined as cultural groups rather than social or professional groups. It must be acknowledged, however, that culture is a major component of any group identity, and that the line between cultural groups and other group identities is therefore rather faint.

4.1 Cultural Levels and Multiculturalism

There are also, of course, identifiable cultural collectives that exist on different levels to ethnicities or nationalities. On a local level, these can be subcultures. A subculture is a cultural group within a cultural group (Concise Oxford Dictionary 1999). It may share many of the markers of the larger group, but is nonetheless specified and distinguished by its own norms and behaviors. Examples of subcultures include groups formed around certain lifestyle choices, musical tastes, sports practice and so on. Other examples include regional groups within a nation that develop their own distinctive and distinguishing markers. It is impossible that any national cultural group can be without subcultures.

Another level of cultural identification that has received a great deal of attention over recent years is one that "transcends cultural boundaries" (Phipps 2003: 6). The globalization of corporations has led to an increasingly mobile work force, where employees may be expected to relocate to other parts of the world. Their children are thus raised within international and multilingual environments, and are used to frequently interacting with people from other cultures (de Mejia 2002: 4). Similarly,

within education and media, globalization has led to increased international mobility and encounters with other cultural groups. Hence, professional, social and even cultural networks or communities can develop on a transnational level. For some this transnationalization is perceived as Americanization or Westernization. A transnational identity would therefore be decidedly American in its markers. For others, however, this is rather a cultural hybrid identity, where multiple various cultural elements are combined and refashioned into "transidiomatic practices" signaling "new shared identities" (Jacquemet 2005: 675). Pennycook (2007) even suggests that American culture is becoming increasingly isolated from this transnationalization to its own detriment. Whereas most cultures in the world experience and are enriched by these 'transcultural flows', America itself remains outside the loop, so to speak: its contribution is one way.

Like other identities, cultural identity is not an underlying essence or an immovable category. It is possible to identify with multiple cultural groups to varying extents, both on sub-national, national, and transnational levels. The terms bicultural or multicultural are frequently used to categorize those who identify with more than one cultural group. The term 'bicultural' has been used to describe individuals who feel they belong to two distinct cultures (Mills 2001: 389). According to Petkova (2005: 55), these individuals either divide their allegiances equally between the two cultural groups, or develop a primary allegiance towards one group over the other. Petkova's comment, however, seems to perceive identity as a stable and harmonious entity. On the contrary, belonging to two cultural groups and operating within two groups' values and norms can be a contradictory and conflicted negotiation that is continually in flux.

The term 'multicultural' can be used in two senses. The first is where the individual functions within several cultural groups or as part of a transcultural community, developing a cultural pluralistic or hybrid identity, where no single national identity is favored. The second sense is where the multiculturalism is 'additive', meaning that the individual functions within one group but is interculturally competent, with an appreciation for and ability to interact with other cultural groups (Modgil 1986: 7).

Additive multiculturalism is perhaps the most commonly referred to phenomena; within education, for example, multiculturalism is promoted as a means to combat racism, ethnocentrism and sectarianism. In interviewing the English School graduates, I shall be interested in both senses of multiculturalism.

4.2 Language and Cultural Identity

As we have seen, language and identity are closely entwined concepts. Language is both a marker of identity and a medium through which to perform and communicate identity. It would follow therefore that language and cultural identity in particular are closely connected.

Firstly, languages can be seen to be symbols of the cultural groups that use them. As mentioned, this has certainly been the case with the Finnish language and Finnish cultural identity. Moreover, Gudykunst (1989: 221) found that ethnic identity is a direct function of ethnolinguistic vitality: in order to maintain a cohesive ethnic community, knowledge and use of the language that symbolizes and distinguishes that community is important. Secondly, language is, of course, a medium through which cultural norms are communicated. Values, beliefs, 'ways of doing things' and so on, that are integral to the group's identity, are communicated and negotiated in the community through language. Thirdly, there are communicative norms for how a language is used within a given cultural group: norms for what to say and how to say it that are culturally determined. Indeed, some claim that learning a foreign language is not complete before these communicative rules have also been learned, e.g. how to be polite in different situations. Kramsch (1988: 63), for example states "one cannot learn a language without learning something about the culture of the people who speak that language". A trend within foreign language teaching in recent decades has been to focus on communicative competence for using the language within its native speaking culture.

Finally, there is also a sense in which language and culture are entwined on a more profound level; this issue, however, is less clear-cut. Some would argue that languages,

having evolved historically under cultural influences, have been marked and shaped by the cultures who speak them. Culture is therefore intrinsically part of the language. According to the theory of linguistic relativity, even the grammatical structure of a language is a form of cultural programming, delineating how the world is perceived and classified - as Sapir famously put it "language does not exist apart from culture" (1921: 207). Some researchers therefore deduce that a change in linguistic identity is necessarily also accompanied by a fundamental change in world view or cultural understanding (e.g. Marx 2002: 264). Adler (1977: 11) concludes, "I cannot repeat often enough that the knowledge of another language changes the cultural background of the individual permanently; he is a different person from what he was before he acquired the other language".

This leaves us, therefore, with the question of whether learning a language always includes learning its native-speaking culture: either due to using the language to interact with natives, due to language teaching that promotes native communicative competence, or simply due to the cultural nature of the language itself. Much of the literature on bilingual and bicultural identity seems to consider the two terms to be mutually dependent: i.e. bilingual individuals also have a bicultural identity. Marx (2002: 277), for example, remarks that bilinguals navigate between two cultural systems. This literature, however, tends to assume a rather traditional view of bilingualism where the individual has become a proficient bilingual in the process of extensive exposure to two cultures, e.g. through living within both cultures. Moreover, the literature is prescriptive in determining bilingual or a bicultural identity. The labels are predefined and individuals are measured as to whether they fulfill the definitions. Baetens Beardsmore (1986: 23), for example, defines bilingualism as both language proficiency and competence within the culture of the language's native community. In my view, assuming or prescribing identity is ignoring the speaker's own sense of belonging – as discussed, an important component of identity construction.

The English language especially has been at the centre of debates on language learning and culture. If a language cannot be separated from its native culture, as Sapir asserted,

which native English speaking culture do non-native speakers implicitly learn? Moreover, if language learning is not complete before communicative competence is acquired, which culture should be taught? Some suggest that these questions, especially as applied to English, are naïve (e.g. Tanaka 2006: 48). English has been used by and marked by so many different cultures, both native and non-native, that any intrinsic cultural influence has surely been diluted and diversified. In fact, Baugh and Cable (1993:6) claim that it is English's "propensity for acquiring new identities" that has led to its use worldwide. As explained, some writers now claim that native speakers are no longer the focus of English norms, but rather non-native speakers within their own English speaking environments; the same claim is made of cultural norms within English communication. Again, however, this seems to ignore a reality where English native speakers are sought after as ESL teachers, due to their supposed 'authentic language use' and knowledge of English speaking cultural norms. Moreover, it ignores the fact that the English language is also encountered worldwide through globalizing cultural influences such as music, television and cinema, the source of which is predominantly American.

I hope to be able to contribute to this debate further through discovering how English language users who do not come from native speaking environments and yet have acquired English as children define the English that they use and the cultural groups they identify with. Is English still a symbolic marker of native speaking cultures for the graduates, and do they themselves identify with those cultures as a result of acquiring English? How do they see the relationship between language and culture, and how do they relate this to their own use of English?

5 THE PRESENT STUDY

In order to explain the methodology behind this study, a few theoretical conclusions are important. Firstly, identities are not essentialist possessions. I cannot measure the graduates' identities in order to discover absolutes. Rather, my aim is to investigate the interviewees' expression of identity within the context of the interview, as communicated both by what they say and by how they say it. It is also acknowledged that identities are not coherent, harmonious entities, but rather complex and often conflicting negotiations. I cannot simplify the interviewees' identities into neatly packaged boxes. Rather, I can look for broad themes within their self-portrayals and try to examine their positions within those themes.

Secondly, identity is constructed in relation to others, through a process of comparison: identification and differentiation (Petkova 2005: 21). I shall therefore be asking my interviewees to compare themselves and position themselves in relation to linguistic and cultural groups on various levels. Identity, of course, is also a matter of how others perceive them and identify them. Although I cannot ask others for their perceptions of the graduates, I shall ask the graduates about 'feedback' they have received on their language use and culture, and their reactions to that feedback. Furthermore, identity is also a matter of generalizations and ideologies; 'this is what we are like, this is what they are like, and this is how I feel about it'. I shall therefore look at the generalizations that the graduates use to describe various linguistic and cultural groups and the attitudes that those generalizations reveal.

Finally, identity is formed through the complexities of life experiences and the meanings that people attach to those experiences. I shall therefore also give the graduates the opportunity to relate stories of their experiences in the school, their experiences using English and their experiences interacting with other cultures. I shall be interested in how they portray themselves within their stories, especially in relation to linguistic and cultural groups.

5.1 Research Aims

The purpose of the study can be broken down into two aims, which are in turn divided into sub-questions.

1) The first aim is to investigate the influence of English immersion education on linguistic identity. In other words, how do the English School graduates identify themselves linguistically? This aim can be broken into the following questions:

What place does English have in the graduates' language repertoires?

One indication of bilinguals' linguistic identifications is their attitude towards the various languages they speak. A Finnish friend, for example, who excelled in English at school, told me that English is her 'heart's language'. I am therefore interested in whether the graduates consider English to be a first, a second or a foreign language, and the significance that they themselves give to those terms (without pre-given definitions). This should reveal something of their attitude towards English and the importance that they themselves attach to English as part of their language repertoires. Also, as earlier discussed, one basic way in which bilinguals signal their identities is through language choice. Discovering where, when and how the graduates use English should therefore reveal something about the role and function of English in their lives. It is acknowledged, however, that my investigation will be limited to the informants' own account of their English use.

How do the graduates see themselves as English speakers?

Having stated earlier that language learning can be seen as an acculturation or socialization into speech communities, my aim is to discover which speech communities my subjects identify with or consider themselves to belong to. The main process in acquiring a group identity is through comparison – identification and differentiation. I am therefore interested in how the graduates compare themselves to other English

speakers, e.g. native English speakers, international English speakers, other Finns and so on, and in whether they consider themselves to have acquired a particular variety of English. I am also interested in how the graduates view their own English abilities: e.g. do they consider themselves bilingual and what does the term 'bilingual' mean to them?

2) The second purpose of the study is to discover the effects of English language immersion on the cultural identifications of the graduates.

In pursuing this aim, I shall first investigate how the graduates relate to the English School as a cultural environment. Besides the language differences, do the graduates perceive the culture of the school to have been different to other schools, and if so how do they feel it has influenced their lives? Secondly, I shall look at whether the graduates consider themselves to be 'multicultural' or 'bicultural', and the meanings they attribute to those labels. Which cultures do they identify with and what has influenced those identifications? Thirdly, as generalizations and images of 'us and others' are such important factors in constructing identity, I shall ask the graduates to describe Finnish and English speaking cultures, and relate themselves to their descriptions. I am particularly interested in the attitudes that their descriptions convey. Finally, it should also be revealing to discover whether the graduates themselves consider language and culture to be interdependent, in what ways, and how they relate this to their own experiences with English. Do they, despite the globalization of English, still identify the language with particular cultural groups?

5.2 Implications

My study touches on a number of issues that are in fact relevant for a number of fields. The most obvious issue is the relationship between language and identity, which has been studied within the fields of linguistics, psychology, sociology and anthropology, to name just a few. The significance of language as a marker of cultural identity has mostly been evoked in debates concerning the bilingual education of ethnic minorities. These investigations generally assume that childhood bilinguals have had close contact with

two or more cultural groups. The role of language as an identity marker has not, however, been applied to childhood language acquisition in which the individuals' national identity is unambiguous and their ethnicity is that of the mainstream population. Language immersion of this kind produces an interesting twist on questions of childhood bilingualism and identity. It seems an excellent opportunity to investigate the connection between identity and language further.

Secondly, the study should contribute to an understanding of the nature of global English/ Englishes. If it turns out that speaking English for a good part of each day during childhood has had no effect on the informants' identities whatsoever, then perhaps I shall come to the same conclusion as House (2001:2) that English is indeed "no longer a language for identification". On the other hand, it will be interesting to see if the graduates themselves identify English as an international language and if they no longer equate the language to the Anglo-Saxon world as many ESL researchers suggest.

Finally, the study should have implications as an investigation of multiculturalism and multilingualism within Finland today: how English use is perceived within Finnish society and how intercultural experience affects perceptions of and attitudes towards Finnish identity. What does extensive use of English and interaction with other cultural groups mean for a small, relatively homogenous country in which language has been such a significant identity marker? Do the graduates, for example, perceive English as part of their Finnish cultural identities in some way?

5.3 Methods

I conducted semi-structured interviews with graduates from Helsinki's English School in order to investigate their linguistic and cultural identifications. One advantage was that I could direct the conversation to cover the issues that I wanted to address and at the same time leave room for issues that I was not expecting. Another advantage was that I could analyze both the content of the interviewee's responses – what they said about their identities – and the discourse of the responses – how they positioned themselves in

relation to the groups we discussed and how they portrayed themselves. I expected interviewing to be particularly relevant for this, as in interviews people tend to tell stories of who they are, constructing their realities and placing themselves within those realities: as Pavlenko and Blackledge (2003: 19) put it "to answer the question "who?"… is to tell a story of life".

The interviews were semi-structured, with a fixed framework (see appendix) to which questions were added or modified, depending on how the interview progressed. Firstly, the interviewees were asked about the English School environment and their memories from school life. This was to determine how they perceived and related to the English School as a cultural environment, and to allow them to relate memories of their school life that they felt to be significant. Secondly, they were asked how they place English in their language repertoire and how often they use English. Thirdly, they were asked whether they speak a particular variety of English and how they compare themselves to 'English native speakers', as well as to other Finns speaking English. Next, they were asked about their experiences with other cultures, particularly English speaking cultures. They were then asked to describe Finnish culture and an English speaking culture (depending on which English variety was more emphasized in the graduates descriptions and which culture they appeared to have had most contact with) and to relate themselves to these descriptions. Finally, they were asked how they themselves viewed the interaction between language and culture, and how they related this to their own acquisition of English.

The interviews took place on different days, in different locations in Finland. They lasted on average one and a half hours each. Each interview was recorded and transcribed. The responses were then categorized according to topic and analyzed for patterns and themes. The themes that stood out as being repeated across most of interviews, receiving similar responses, and having the most relevance for my research aims are discussed below.

5.4 The English School

The English School in Helsinki is an early immersion program that caters to both Finnish and international children from kindergarten through to high school level. The percentage of Finnish to international students is currently about 90% to 10%, although this ratio has varied over the 60 years that the school has been running. The school follows the Finnish national curriculum, leading up to the Finnish Matriculation Examination, as well as the SAT and AP exams in High School. As with most immersion programmes, classes are taught both through English and through Finnish, with a percentage of roughly 60% English to 40% Finnish depending on the grade. Its website states that the Finnish government has entrusted the school to promote both the English and Finnish languages, and, interestingly, Anglo-Saxon and Finnish cultures (The English School 2007). The naming of 'Anglo-Saxon culture' as a specific feature of the school could have important implications for my study of the graduates' cultural identities. I shall be interested to discover whether the graduates themselves feel that a particular English speaking culture was promoted and how they related to it.

The English School describes itself as a 'pioneer of bilingual education in Finland'. It has a long history spanning 60 years, a history that the school describes as 'greatly valued and alive' within its community. The school was originally founded by Catholic Sisters during the 1945 and in fact is known by many as the 'Sisters' school'. Although the Catholic Sisters left the school in 1995, it nevertheless defines itself as being based on Christian principles (The English School 2007). Other principles or ideals that the school claims to promote are 'humanity, tolerance, multiculturalism, and disciplined work habits'. It is also a close-knit community, in which parents are actively involved.

5.5 Informants

The informants for my interviews are graduates of the English School who attended the school from an early age and for most of their childhood. Graduate interviewees were chosen rather than current students on the assumption that they, as adults, could better

articulate their experiences and interpretations. After all, people construct their identities most vividly when confronted with other ways of life; without a degree of distance from the school, the informants may therefore have been less able to attribute meaning to their school experiences in comparison to other experiences. Moreover, it has been suggested that identity is under a state of fluctuation and struggle during adolescence (e.g. Caldas and Caldas 2002: 419). I thus preferred to interview adults who have already gone through those crucial stages of adolescent identity development.

In order to find the graduates, I sent a formal letter to the English School presenting my research topic and contact information, which was forwarded to a randomly selected group of former students from different years. In total, nine graduates responded to the letter. Four of these graduates had to be excluded, however, because they each had a non-Finnish parent, leaving me with only five interviewees. I then contacted a retired teacher from the school, who gave me the contact information of another five former English School students who satisfied my criteria. Of these five, two graduates were available for interview, resulting with seven interviewees in total. As the interviews were to be very extensive, this was enough for my purposes. The aim was to investigate in-depth the experiences, views and interpretations of the interviewees, rather than to objectively prove a hypothesis.

I tried to control several variables as far as possible in selecting my interviewees. The most obvious one was the extent of their schooling in English. I wanted to find informants who had been through their entire comprehensive education in English, since English schooling is the focus of my investigation. It was also important that the informants had Finnish parents and had spent most of their lives in Finland. This was to isolate the influence of English immersion as much as possible – although, as stated, it is impossible to separate it completely from other influences of English language and culture, and it would be futile to attempt this.

After the prolonged search, I came as close as possible to my ideal informant group. All of the interviewees had parents who were both Finnish and all of them had been

schooled through English for their entire comprehensive education. Five of them had lived in Finland throughout their childhoods. Two of them, however, had lived abroad as children for periods of four and three years, in Spain and Hong Kong respectively. They both had attended English-speaking schools while abroad and Helsinki's English School while in Finland. They were both Finnish by birth and had acquired the Finnish language before English. I decided therefore to include them in my investigation, but to keep in mind during the interviews and my discussion that their time abroad would also be of significance.

The graduates ranged in age from 23 to 56 years, and included four men and three women. Although age and gender variables are not factors in my research questions, I consider it enriching that my informants were at different stages in their lives and therefore viewed their experiences and identities through different lenses. It also ensures that any themes arising from my interviews are not limited to one particular age group or gender.

The graduates were each given questionnaires before the interviews asking basic background information: age, profession, length of time spent in the English School, time lived abroad. Profiles of this information are listed below. To respect their anonymity, they have all been given pseudonyms, which shall also be used during the analysis.

Antti

Age/Gender:	23 years old/ male
Occupation:	Studying International Business at a University of Applied Sciences
English School:	Attended the English School from age 13 to 19.
Time abroad:	Lived in England age 6, and Spain age 8 to 12.
	(where he attended English medium schools)

Mari

Age/Gender:	24 years old/ female
Occupation:	Project assistant in a university language faculty.
English School:	Attended the English School from kindergarten to senior high school.
Time abroad:	Has never lived abroad

Sami

Age/Gender:	24 years old/ male
Occupation:	Architect
English School:	Attended the English School from kindergarten to senior high school.
Time abroad:	France for six months, age 18
	Germany for eight months, age 22

Timo

Age/Gender:	25 years old/ male
Occupation:	Working as a project manager for a graphics design company
English School:	Attended the English School from kindergarten to junior high
	(subsequently attended an International Baccalaureate program)
Time abroad:	Has never lived abroad.

Virpi

Age/ Gender:	56 years old/ female
Occupation:	IT analyst
English School:	Attended the English School from elementary to junior high
	(there was no kindergarten or high school at the time)
Time abroad:	Has never lived abroad

Heikki

Age/Gender:	24 years old/ male
Occupation:	Studying Advertising in an English University
English School:	Attended the English School from kindergarten to senior high
	(apart from years spent abroad)
Time abroad:	Lived in the U.S.A. age 9, and in Hong Kong age 14-16
	(where he attended English language schools)

Anne

Age/Gender:	43 years old/ female
Occupation:	Secretary
English School:	Attended the English School from elementary to junior high
	(there was no kindergarten or high school at the time)
Time abroad:	Has never lived abroad

FIGURE 2 Interviewee Profiles

6 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The results are organized according to the study's research questions and sub-questions, under which themes that emerged from the interviews are discussed.

6.1 Linguistic Identity

6.1.1 The Place of English

It came across in all the interviews that English has an integral place in the graduates' language repertoires. Although most named Finnish as their first language, English was named either also as a first or as a very close second. None of the graduates identified English as a foreign language, and by no means was English 'foreign' to them. Rather, English was described as a natural language and a thought language; a language that is part of themselves, rather than simply a tool. Moreover nearly all the graduates described themselves as being bilingual in English and Finnish, as they felt that they could function sufficiently through both languages without favouring one over the other.

A Natural Language

In distinguishing English from the foreign languages they spoke, nearly all of the graduates at some point used the adjective 'natural'. Take, for example, the following extract from Mari's interview:

> There's definitely an ease to speaking English. It just comes from somewhere. I don't
> have to think about it that much, maybe I have to think about some words now and then,
> but it feels very natural and I like to do it… it's really nice…

For Mari, English is natural and therefore easy and enjoyable. This sentiment is echoed by many of the other interviewees. Virpi, for example, explained that she chooses to read a great deal in English because it 'comes naturally' and is therefore easy. She contrasts this to Swedish, which she sees as a foreign language and therefore uses less.

Several of the interviewees described the naturalness of English as being specifically the result of their early immersion education. They did not have to study English or struggle in any way to learn it. When asked how he felt about the English language environment as a child, Sami explained:

> Well actually I remember quite well but nothing special about it really. I've thought about this, I've thought did I feel different, did I feel that it was a foreign language I was studying, trying to learn… but I've never like really felt anything special about it, it's quite natural…
> - *How would you define a foreign language?*
> It would be something I had actually studied… a language I wouldn't naturally think in, I wouldn't like... like in French, I wouldn't dream in French
> - *So why isn't English a foreign language?*
> Because I never actually studied it.

As Sami describes, English is not a language that he has had to formally study. It is therefore a natural language – a natural part of his thought life and even his dreams – in contrast to his foreign language French. Virpi similarly referred to early language immersion as making English a 'natural' language for her rather than a foreign language. She has an intuitive knowledge English and has not had to study its grammar. She explained, "I couldn't really study the grammar. The Finnish schools teach the grammar so that… if I started reading the grammar I just really, I freaked out, I couldn't understand it. Because it just all came to me".

A Thought Language

A factor that nearly all the graduates felt to be significant in explaining the importance of English in their lives in comparison to foreign languages was its place in their thought lives. Take, for example, the following comment by Antti:

> If I hear Spanish, I listen for a while and then I can understand it. But with English, it's just like I'm hearing people talk and I can understand it. It doesn't translate as a language in my… it just translates as thoughts and things coming through cos I can understand it

The phrase "it doesn't translate as language… it just translates as thoughts" seems to me to be particularly telling. English is not perceived by the graduates as just 'language' –

codes to be deciphered and used – rather it is part of their thought life and even part of their psychological make-up. In fact, when asked how important English is to her as a language, Mari replied "very important, just because I think in English sometimes, so if they took that away, I don't know what would happen. I'm not much of a psychologist, so I can't say". It is clear that for Mari, English is so important that she sees it as having a psychological significance and not simply a functional one. In contrast to de Lotbinière's (2001: 1) description of English language identity as a 'business suit' to be worn only for functional purposes and House's (2001) description of English as a 'tool', Mari sees English as a continual part of herself and her thought life.

As discussed earlier, current theory on language and identity emphasizes the importance of language in the performance of identity. It is through language that identity is communicated and negotiated between a speaker and a listener. With this in mind, it seems interesting that in explaining the importance of English in their linguistic identities, six out of the seven interviewees referred to English being a 'thought language', rather than simply referring to the communicative functions that it fulfils in their lives. It is this internal position of English for the graduates that makes it subjectively such a significant part of themselves in comparison to other languages. Mari remarked, for example, "it's actually strange because sometimes I find myself thinking in English and talking to myself in English, and that's when I think it's almost like a first language". And Antti, who was one of only two graduates who placed English ahead of Finnish in his linguistic repertoire, explained:

> Sometimes I'm in an English mood so I sit there and I think in English …
> - *Is there any particular reason why you get into an English mood?*
> Yeah… I tend to think in Finnish when I'm with Finnish people, but when I'm
> alone, I think in English mostly because… I dunno, I guess I identify with it
> more.

Here, Antti clearly relates thinking in a language to identifying with that language. Moreover, when asked whether he tries to find opportunities to use English, he explained that since the language part of his thought life, it would seem strange to practise it as though it were a foreign language.

Finnish/English Bilinguals

The graduates almost unanimously described themselves as bilingual between Finnish and English, which they all defined as being able to speak two languages equally well or without particular preference. Timo, for example, stated:

> I'd say that if you are able to express the same thing in both languages, without favouring. I don't really care if I'm speaking in Finnish or in English. I don't think that I'm not able to say something in English than I'm able to say in Finnish. I might say it neater or nicer or better in Finnish but there's not such a big difference. So I think that's how I would define bilingual.

Although Timo does see his Finnish as being slightly 'nicer' than his English, he sees himself as having a communicative command of both languages to the extent that he can speak them both 'without favouring'. He later also referred to others' perceptions of himself in confirming his bilingual identity. He explained that he had achieved a place on an International Baccalaureate program because "they considered my background enough to be bilingual". As the perceptions of others play a crucial role in identity construction, this rather official acknowledgement of his bilingualism was important for him in assuming the label.

Sami had a similar definition of bilingualism to Timo: bilinguals should be able to use both languages without preference:

> I think the kind that you don't make a difference. I mean if there is an expression or way to say in some language, you use that. Because it's more specific.. they have it in the language.. like in Finnish they have jaksaa... I always use it, even though I speak English, I always say jaksaa… it's such a nice word and there are English words that don't exist in Finnish and there are expressions

In Sami's explanation there is also a sense in which code-mixing is a sign of bilingualism, where you pick and choose expressions from both languages depending on which are 'more specific'. As we shall see later, code-mixing was something that the graduates referred to quite frequently. They have two language systems to choose from and they mix these two systems from time to time because they 'don't make a

difference' and both languages are natural. In a sense then, bilingualism for Sami is simply an extension of vocabulary and code options. This is very similar to Brumfit's (2002:12) description of second language acquisition as "a process of extending repertoires", which he in turn describes as 'an extension of identities'.

The one graduate who did not consider herself to be bilingual, although she considered herself to be 'almost' bilingual, was Anne. She too defined bilingualism as being able to speak two languages equally well, but did not consider her language skills to fulfil this definition sufficiently:

> *- Ok, do you consider yourself to be bilingual?*
> Almost. I'm bragging, almost I'm saying
> *- You can brag. Feel free*
> No, no
> *- Ok. So how would you define bilingual?*
> Well, for example most of the Finnish-Swedes who live in Helsinki are bilingual. They have their mother-tongue but they speak equally well Finnish
> *- So it should be equally well?*
> Yes
> *- So you don't feel like that with English, that it's equally good?*
> There's nothing wrong with my English as such. I dunno. The answer is I don't know

It is interesting in this discussion that she could not explain why her English is not on an equal level to her Finnish, even though she feels that there is 'nothing wrong' with her English. Indeed, at an earlier point in the interview she explained that she has an intuitive knowledge of English. She did not want to 'brag' by claiming to be bilingual, which would suggest that she sees being bilingual as something prestigious or perhaps reserved only for those who are bicultural – such as the Swedish-Finns.

6.1.2 The Functions of English

According to Taavitsainen and Pahta (2003: 4), if a language is spoken within the community rather than simply used for cross-cultural purposes, it is becoming part of that community's linguistic identity; the language is moving away from being a foreign language and towards second language status. From the graduates' descriptions of the frequency with which they used English, it has certainly become a local community

language for them. Many functions in their lives are performed through English and many use English on a daily basis. The graduates described this as a result of their immersion education, as they find it natural to speak English with other English School graduates, but they also mentioned that they sometimes use English within the Finnish Community in general. Their English proficiency has in fact translated as capital in Finnish society, widening their social and professional opportunities and allowing them roles as language authorities and cross-cultural communicators.

English as an Immersion Community Language

The graduates described the frequency of their English use mostly as a result of their immersion education. English comes naturally to them due to their background and they therefore use it often. Some remarked that because of their education, they prefer to use English rather than Finnish for certain functions. Mari gave an example of this:

> Actually because I learnt to count in English, sometimes I count in English in my head if I need to do subtraction and so on… and so it's, it's part of me to sometimes function in English, so that's why I said it's somewhere in between the first and second language

For Mari, there simply are some functions that she has learnt first through English and for which she therefore continues to use English even now, e.g. counting. This practice is clearly a marker of identity to Mari herself, as she concludes 'it's part of me to sometimes function in English'. This would support Taavitsainen and Pahta's (2003: 4) claim that the difference between a second and foreign language largely concerns identity – a matter of subjective judgement. The graduates distinguished a first or second language from foreign languages not on account of language ability, but on account of its importance and its place in their identity repertoire. Antti's remark, 'with English it's a part of myself, but with for example with my second language, Spanish, it's not that important', further supports this idea.

The 'community' in which the graduates use English includes other former English School students. They explained that they frequently code-mix English and Finnish with other graduates - a language practice that they acquired as children in the school. Sami

called it 'Finglish', a language with a Finnish base, he explained, where you "like kind of put the Finnish verbs into English". Mari elaborated:

> I don't think it's very helpful but it's really much fun having like this sort of Finglish type of communication with my friends where we'll talk about things in Finnish and then we'll just insert English words spontaneously and we we use the same one.. and it's fun to have this type of connection or this way of communicating with certain people.

Pennycook (2007: 127) claims that code-switching or code-mixing between two languages is not necessarily an expression of identification with either linguistic community, but is rather a construction and expression of an entirely new, remixed identity. It is particularly interesting therefore that Mari describes this way of communicating as creating a 'type of connection'. Mixing codes in this way can only be shared by proficient English/Finnish bilinguals, and hence it enhances a sense of togetherness and similarity between them. It is a remixed identity, consisting not of Finnish or English speaking monolingual norms, but rather English School norms.

This English/Finnish code-mixing is something that the English School graduates share. In their view, it sets them apart somewhat within the Finnish community. As Baker (1996: 88) observes, code-mixing creates distance from those it excludes, at the same time as it communicates togetherness with those it includes. Heikki, for instance, remarked that when he meets his English School friends, they often speak English:

> English has always been really natural.. I mean most of them, when I still see them, we speak English amongst ourselves. You keep with the language you started with… People still think we're foreign when I meet my other friends from back in the high-school days.

Speaking English between Finns in this way is described by Heikki as something unusal: it is a sign of non-Finnishness and causes other Finns to identify them as foreigners. Mari further described how English/Finnish code-mixing sometimes irritates other Finns:

> If I think of something and I can't, I can't think of the word in Finnish, I use the one in English and sometimes it irritates people and I can understand why because it's a little bit snobby… but it's just something I've always done.

Calling this code-mixing 'snobby' would suggest that Mari sees English as a prestigious skill, which is therefore perceived as showing off. On the other hand, Mari asserts it as part of her identity, "it's something I've always done".

English as a Finnish Community Language

Intriguingly, however, many graduates mentioned that they sometimes use English with Finns who are not necessarily proficient bilinguals. The main explanation for this was that English is simply easier or more appropriate for some purposes, even within the Finnish community. Antti explained that he writes role-playing adventure games in English, even though the games' participants are all Finnish speakers:

> Most of my adventures I write in English so I actually have to do it.. the group is
> Finnish, so I have to speak in Finnish and then do the adventures actually in Finnish, but
> I feel it's, it's the way it's supposed to be done is in English... So I write them in English
> and prepare and all the names are in English

It is Antti's evaluation that English is 'the way it's supposed to be done' for role-play games. He chooses to use English because he considers the language more authentic for this context. This reflects Leppänen's (2007) analysis of fan-fiction in Finland, where English is used in order to create "a sense of authenticity" (p.162) and in turn a "sense of belonging" (p.167) to a wider community of practice. For similar reasons, Antti also expressed a general preference for reading English original texts rather than Finnish translations, as did many of the other graduates. He put it, "It's the original language, come on. Translations are so feeble... I mean, uhh! They can't hold a candle to the original".

Timo also remarked that speaking English is necessary for some functions. He had quite the opposite response to this necessity, however, than Antti. He explained that his preference would be to use Finnish where possible:

> And sometimes when we're doing a lot of technology related things so the terminology
> is often in English and even though I personally love the fact that Finnish language has
> succeeded in translating a lot of computer related terminology and I try to use those

> words because most languages have not succeeded to translate, and I appreciate that fact.. but sometimes it feels easier to talk in English about certain things

Timo explains that he is proud of Finnish and tries to use Finnish terminology where possible, but the fact that much of the terminology in his field is in English makes it easier to speak English even within Finland. Transnational trends within his field have promoted English in his working life, although contrary to his will. Having proficient English skills has therefore given him an advantage – a point that I shall return to later.

Antti's and Timo's remarks indicate that English is becoming either a requisite or a benefit in order to operate efficiently within certain fields or to perform certain functions within Finland: for Antti this is role-play gaming, for Timo this is the computer industry. This would suggest that English is indeed becoming part of Finland's linguistic identity in general, although this is of course a very limited sample group from which to judge.

Taavitsainen and Pahta (2003) also remark that the next stage in a continuum from identifying English as a second to a first language is a matter of home language. They point out that in Nordic societies, some upper-middle class, bilingual individuals are choosing to speak English in the home, thus producing first language English speakers under rather untraditional circumstances. Antti, who indeed considered English to be his first language, stated the following:

> I'm gonna be speaking English a lot more soon. I mean when, not necessarily soon but at some point we're gonna, when we're gonna have a child, we're going to do this sort of thing that I'll speak English all the time. I'll speak nothing but English in the house.
> *- Ok, that's interesting!*
> Yeah, yeah, it's a language immersion thing, sort of. Cos having, then cos if I speak English consistently, the child will learn English well and not have to be put into an immersion kindergarten or anything like this. He or she will learn it because I speak it.

Antti's parents and fiancé were all Finnish speaking Finns, so it is remarkable that he would choose to have a bilingual household within Finland and choose to speak English rather than Finnish with his Finnish children. His motivation, as he explains, is that his children would acquire English without having to go through immersion education.

English would rather be their father's language. This is an undeniably strong expression of the importance of English in Antti's linguistic identity.

English as Capital

All of the graduates referred to English as having opened opportunities for them and given them an advantage both within the Finnish community and transculturally. There was a definite sense that English proficiency has, as de Mejia (2002: 36) suggested, translated as capital. Antti, for example, studies international business in Finland through English. He explained:

> I tried to get into law school originally because I believed I had the qualifications to get in… but I couldn't, I tried three times, failed… I just, for some reason my memory just doesn't function the way it is required in law school... But then, next thing that I fell back on was international business and I got in straight away, no problem. It was I mean, a really easy fall back, and yes definitely that's because I was so fluent. I mean that's one of the reasons I was picked. After speaking with the people who picked us, later, I discovered.

Antti sees international business as "an easy fall back" because of his English language proficiency. His fluency gave him an advantage over other applicants in his own eyes and in the eyes of those who dealt with his application. It has allowed him to find an easy study option that could possibly form his career path.

Timo, although he did not complete his university studies through English, also sees English as opening opportunities within the Finnish community in general. He remarked:

> I think in the future, I will probably even more experience the fact that I have good English skills. It opens a lot of doors. I don't have a large palette of language skills in general, but having good English skills is probably the most important thing in practical life and in work life

Timo views English skills as capital more than any other language. Although he does not have 'a large palette of language skills', as he puts it, he sees English as being the most important language to have in working life. In fact, many graduates remarked that the

reason their parents sent them to the English School in the first place was to 'get ahead' within Finnish society. Mari, for example, explained that her parents sent her to the school "to learn a language that would help me later in life, in getting a job and so on. And perhaps because it was something special". Bilingual skills for Mari, as well as for her parents, are 'special' or prestigious; they not only translate as economic capital but also as symbolic capital. She later reiterates this feeling, commenting "I'm a bit proud when I'm talking English. It's still after so many years, it's still cool to be able to speak a language quite freely".

Nearly all the informants described themselves as having achieved certain roles within the Finnish community as a result of their English proficiency. Those who had entered working life stated that they are valued as proficient English speakers/writers at work and given certain duties as a result. Timo stated, "people often ask me to translate something and I often know how to translate it, so some people do consider me an expert", and Anne stated:

> Ah… at work people come to me and ask is this correctly written or how would you translate this or does this give a nice, proper nuance… about this research..
> *- Do you consider yourself an English language professional?*
> Yes that I am. I am not, I don't have a teaching degree or anything, or a translator's degree, but I do that for a living. And our essays get published in --- without corrections.

As both Timo's and Anne's comments suggest, these identities are ascribed to them by others due to their English proficiency. People perceive them as authorities on issues of English language correctness. This is in turn adopted by the graduates themselves as part of their self-identities. There is also a sense of pride in Anne's explanation, as she gives evidence to support this identity. She explains that the essays at her work place do not require more corrections after she has edited them before being accepted for publication. This official feedback – or lack of negative feedback – also adds to her self-perception as an English language authority within her community.

Mari herself volunteered the term language professional in describing her role in the Finnish community. She explained:

> I consider myself a language professional. I have to have some authority because of
> what I do
> *- And what is a language professional?*
> Well someone who you can turn to in terms of when you need to produce a text in
> another language either for translation or for proofreading

Mari justifies her identity as a language professional by the fact that she does indeed work with language (she is a project assistant). It is the definition of the job she is doing that she should have 'some authority' about the language, rather than necessarily an ability she has as a result of her English language schooling. Sami, Timo, and Virpi, however, do not work specifically as language professionals, but they all describe having similar roles due to their language proficiency.

Several graduates also gave examples of being language consultants in their personal lives. Antti explained that even his fiancé who has studied to be an English/Finnish translator consults him on issues of English language correctness:

> My fiancé who has learnt her English through the Finnish school system and she is now
> studying English translation… she's studied English a lot, all her life, but she still has to
> ask… if she doesn't know a word, she asks me and I can usually tell her

Antti here clearly positions himself as being in a place of authority with English in comparison to his fiancé, despite, as he explains, her already extensive knowledge of the language. The fact that he can usually answer her questions has contributed to an awareness of his own ability in English and he presents this as evidence for his role as an English language consultant. Heikki similarly described how his father asks him to check his English writing for his work.

Cross-Cultural Communicators

In addition, most of the graduates referred to being mediators and contact persons within their work place for foreign clients or customers. Due to their English proficiency, they are also cross-cultural communicators: another valued and prestigious skill within a globalizing economy. Sami, for example, mentioned that he functions as a sort of go-between for his colleagues in dealing with contacts abroad:

> My English is much better than anyone else in the working environment. You get more power in the sense that you're communicating, you're like the mediator. You're put in that position that you have to be the one between two persons to communicate.

It is significant that Sami actually refers to his English ability and subsequent ability to communicate where others cannot as giving him 'power'. As a mediator, he has more responsibility in his work place and a more central role than he might otherwise have had.

Almost all the graduates described similar roles at work as contacts within the Finnish culture for outsiders. Mari is another example:

> It has been a huge asset at work, also in keeping contact with people abroad. We have in the translation centre where I work now, we have many contacts abroad and so on, and keeping in touch with them, correspondence and on the phone and so on. It's just, it's just great

In Mari's description especially, there is a sense of pride and enjoyment that this role allows her to participate in an international network. Again, therefore, there is a sense in which English has provided a symbolic as well as economic capital. Internationalism is something that Mari values, rather than something that simply pays.

Finally, the graduates considered English to have opened opportunities transnationally, as well as with in Finland. Heikki, for example, studies in an English university. He stated:

> It's helped me. Given me the option that I can go to just about anywhere English speaking and get along perfectly and not have to worry. I can study whatever I'm gonna study and not have to worry about getting it in English first. I think a lot of people have twice the work to do, first to understand what's going on language-wise and then to understand what's being taught.
> *- So it's kindof made things more accessible*
> It's opened up the world. I can pretty much do what I want.

Here, Heikki portrays English as a key to being able to do whatever you want to do on a transnational level. Without English, you have "twice the work", but with English there are no limits: "I can pretty much do what I want". It is interesting that he sees language

as a key to "getting along perfectly" in any English speaking country at least. He does not envisage other barriers such as cultural differences getting in his way - language is the main obstacle.

6.1.3 Speech Communities

As explained above, people form group identities through comparison with others, identifying and differentiating themselves from other individuals and groups (Petkova 2005: 21). In determining the speech communities that the graduates identified themselves as part of in English, I therefore asked them to compare themselves to various linguistic groups.

Different to other Finns Speaking English

In comparing their English to that of other Finns ('other' being Finns who learned their English through the mainstream school system), most of the graduates saw a clear difference: both with respect to their proficiency and with respect to their pronunciation. Virpi stated emphatically that her English is "vastly better, absolutely vastly better". Timo further explained:

> Compared to a Finnish person I have a much stronger vocabulary and also I think I have a very good sense of the expressions in English. And it's interesting to look at translations in movies where I know what the saying means but it's been translated directly into Finnish. I think my strengths are there. I've been using English more than the people on the street. Also I think with written language you can always tell if a person has learned in a Finnish school, English class. You can always tell it from the written language.

Here, Timo clearly differentiates between English School English and Finnish School English especially in written language, asserting that "you can always tell". Moreover, he portrays himself as an authority with the language in comparison to other Finns, in that he can pick out mistakes that they have made in translations and explain why they made them. Anne also described herself as an authority due to her 'inside' knowledge of English: "I feel that I am in the culture and I understand the sayings, and well I proof-read all the letters that leave our department and all the essays". I find it particularly

intriguing that she feels herself to be 'in the culture' of the language, whereas other Finns, she implies, are not.

For most of the graduates, pronunciation and dialect were major points that distinguished their English from that of other Finns. Virpi, for example, described a trip to Canada as a teenager, where her English accent marked her as being different to the other Finns:

> The problem was that the Canadians noticed that I speak different from the Finns, from the other Finns. And they were always asking that where do I come from. And they thought that I was French-Canadian. So that was a problem really because we were sitting in a Taxi and I was always the one saying ok let's go there and there, and they were asking where did I come from. And the Finns were always listening: ok well she tells again that she comes from Finland… My dialect is such that they feel that I must have been living in some place that's an English speaking place

Here, Virpi describes her English 'dialect' - presumably meaning accent and way of speaking - as setting her apart from the other Finns both to the Canadians and to the Finns themselves. She seems to regret this, calling it a 'problem' and implying that it was somehow irritating for the other Finns. She is taken by the Canadians as a native-speaker, although not quite one of them – "they thought I was French-Canadian". Heikki similarly explained that his accent in English differentiates him from other Finns. Unlike Virpi, however, he approved of the difference: "thank God I don't have that accent, which I think is hideous". He also strongly differentiated himself from Finns in other respects, which I shall come to later, so this attitude towards Finnish markers in his speech fits into his overall orientation towards Finnish identity.

I should note here, however, that Mari was one graduate who did have trouble in distinguishing a picture other Finns speaking English to which she could compare herself – a clear sign that she did not, in fact, perceive them as a separate speech community in terms of their English use. She remarked:

> Some people have a really pronounced Finnish accent when they speak English and others really have none that I can see, so it's really, the differences are so great here that I can't really say that I see any or I can't really think of a standard Finnish person talking English because actually some people pick it up as children from TV and they

> pronounce excellently definitely and some have very hard consonants and long vowels and so on

Her answer would suggest that she believes some Finns can reach the same standard of Finnish/English bilingualism without having been through special schooling. Interestingly, she sees one reason for this as being that the amount of English in Finland in general can lead to a natural form of language acquisition: "some people pick it up as children from TV". If she is correct, it would suggest that being English/Finnish bilingual is becoming a natural part of Finland's linguistic identity. Mari was the only graduate, however, who portrayed the English language level in Finland quite in this light. Anne in fact remarked quite the contrary, stating about her English that "it's not the kind that people learn from TV".

English School English Speakers

Most of the graduates did not regard themselves as speaking a native variety of English such as British, American etc. They either described themselves as having no variety or a mix of varieties, which they explained as a sum of the influences they encountered during childhood. Mari puts this in a particularly interesting way:

> Oh my goodness… that I can't really say because I don't remember where my teachers came from… so it's a mix definitely. I remember I had one English teacher here at the university but she said she would place my English somewhere in the West Indies or something, so I don't really know. But an American teacher I had also I had here and she said that it's different, it's American English… I don't think I sound like an American I think… perhaps a bit somewhere there. It's an English School accent

What is interesting here is that in negotiating a definition of 'her English', Mari goes through all the feedback that she has received from others, but consciously rejects it, declaring "I don't think I sound like an American… It's an English School accent". Essentially, Mari is positioning herself not within an American or other native speech community, but rather as part of the English School as a speech community in itself. She has acquired her English in the English School environment, and she therefore speaks English School English.

Antti also referred to his English as a blend, stating "in my opinion I don't really have an accent, I mean I've learnt and heard a lot of different accents in my time but I don't really think I have an accent". He went on to express his surprise at Finns who imitate certain English accents or dialects after only living in a country for a short period of time:

> a friend of mine here speaks ozzy, like total ozzy , it's scary.. she sounds like she's Australian, I mean she was there for a year and now she's like all… I mean what happens to those people down there, it's like like they drill holes in their head.

There is a sense, therefore, in which imitating an accent is something that he sees little need for. He has acquired his English through childhood and his English is a natural product of his background and the accents he has encountered.

Sami expressed this sentiment more explicitly. He does not have a native variety of English and does not see a need to have a native variety:

> Well first of all I really avoid dialect of any kind. I do it very consciously. I avoid it. I kindof even want to keep cos I don't want to be a native. I don't want to blend in. But I have the feeling I could if I wanted to, it wouldn't be that difficult

Sami consciously avoids picking up a dialect that would identify him as part of a native linguistic community. He does not identify with 'natives' and therefore does not "want to blend in" with them in his English use. He makes it clear that he does not see this not a lack of linguistic ability or a weakness in his pronunciation. He could learn an accent if he wanted to, "it wouldn't be that difficult", but he consciously chooses not to.

These comments would support the claims of ESL theorists such as Jenkins (2006), Seidlhofer (2005) and Foley (2007) that communities of international English speakers are emerging where non-native speakers are legitimate users of English in their own right. The graduates' explanations demonstrate tolerance for variations in English use: they see their English as being a blend of influences and they do not see a problem in this. They regard their English as 'natural', as I explained earlier: a language that has been naturally acquired during their childhood rather than studied. They therefore

consider themselves to be speakers of English in their own right, without having to refer to native speaking norms. Moreover, they do not typically use English with Brits or Americans etc., but rather within the Finnish community itself with other bilingual Finns and within transnational circles. In the words of Graddol (1997: 3), "English is now their language, through which they can express their own values and identities".

Three of the graduates did identify themselves as having American varieties of English - Heikki, Virpi and Anne. However, there was no sense that sounding American is their aim or something that they appreciate; rather they described it as a natural product of their English School background and a general prevalence of American English in Finland. The following excerpt from Heikki's interview is an example of this:

> Unfortunately I get a lot of the American thing, which I donno right now I don't wanna sound American anyway, especially not in England. So I have to sort of put my hand up and say sorry I'm not American. I get that just about daily… Three years in high school with a sort of American English, being taught again by Americans... and TV in Finland, you see it everywhere and hear it. It's American English mostly here.

It is clear that Heikki does not want to sound American and does not consider it an asset, especially in England. He receives this feedback so often, however, that he has had come to accept that he speaks American English, although he is eager to inform people that they are mistaken. These comments, although they imply that international English is primarily American in nature, still suggest that they consider themselves authentic users of the language; they do not experience a language ideology that places American English as its target speech community.

It is interesting that of all the graduates, only Timo mentioned being identified as Finnish through his English use. Although he also regarded his English as a blend of different varieties, at one point he made the following statement:

> I've wondered myself but I think it's clear that I'm a Finnish person. You can hear it in my English. But also some people have told me that they can hear both British and American tones in my language. So I'm sure that's because of the teachers. And I've never lived abroad. If I would have lived in Britain or America, I would have taken the accent from there.

It would be worth noting that Timo expressed a very strong appreciation and preference for the Finnish language throughout the interview and a strong sense of identity as a Finnish speaker. He pointed out, "I think my vocabulary, skills in language when it comes to some details in the language, is better in Finnish. And actually I've always loved the Finnish language. The more I study other languages, the more I love the Finnish language". That he would choose to reiterate his Finnish language identity even when describing his English variety fits well into the general pattern of Timo's linguistic identity performance in this interview.

Different to English Native-Speakers

The label 'native speaker' for most of the graduates meant specifically people who come from officially native speaking English countries. As they mostly did not consider their English varieties to be that of any native speaking community, few applied the label native speaker to themselves. When asked to compare herself to native speakers, Mari for example answered "my pronunciation is different…. I'm not really up to date with English slang words". Her answer reflects the majority of the graduates' responses: they do not know local native vocabulary and do not use a native accent. Timo's response, for example, is similar:

> well accent is one thing… maybe I use some vocabulary that people wouldn't use in their daily speaking because I've learned them from written language or from books. Also I don't use the same kind of fill in words that some Americans do for example. So I'm sure any English speaker can tell that I'm a Finnish guy speaking in English. Even though when I write, you might probably not be able to tell the difference between a written text of mine and that of an English speaker

Timo clearly differentiates the English he uses from the English that natives use. He uses vocabulary that they do not and they use vocabulary that he does not. It is also interesting that he defines himself as "a Finnish guy speaking in English". It suggests that he feels the term 'native speaker' would identify him as part of a native cultural community. His English therefore differs from that of native speakers simply because he is Finnish.

Interestingly, Timo went on to further distinguish his English from that of native speakers on the basis of the people with whom he uses English and from whom his English norms therefore derive. He remarked: "I tend to speak simple English because of my friends not being native English speakers, but international English speakers". He specifically uses the label 'international English speakers' in contrast to 'native English speakers', and identifies with the former label due to his 'simple English' style. Many of the other graduates also explained that they use English with non-native speakers from many different countries and rarely with native speakers. Commenting on this, Sami stated "especially in Europe, we speak English everywhere". Although none of the graduates went further in describing or codifying this international or this European English other than calling it 'simple', their comments do echo the buzz phrase of ELF research: there are many communities of English users and hence there are many Englishes, including non-native varieties.

Both of the graduates who had also spent time in English schools abroad as children, however, did define themselves as native English speakers. They based this assertion on their proficiency in English, however, rather than a sense of belonging to a native speech community. Heikki, who remarked that he is tempted to state English as his mother tongue on applications, even saw his English as more proficient than that of some natives:

> I sound really cocky... I mean I probably have better English than most Americans do, especially since you've got the plus side of having been taught English, so your writing and your vocabulary is very, something you really practice at, so it's probably even better than someone who just picks it up on the side.

Heikki sees his background in language schools as having given him an even greater resource in English than those who 'just pick it up on the side' within their native communities. There is the implication that a native community - in particular an American native community - is limiting. Unlike other natives, as he sees it, he has consciously studied to enrich his vocabulary and writing skills. In his own view, therefore, his status as an English speaker is or at least should be higher.

Antti also described himself as at least as good as native speakers, but explained that he has some trouble in supporting this identity when interacting with traditional native speakers. He feels that native speakers patronise him, as the following excerpt illustrates:

> When I'm within a group who knows each other because usually they look down on me, in my opinion, because they don't. For example, I thought it was really funny that they tried to explain words to me when they said it. I was like yeah, yeah, yeah… and you see that means this and this… and I was like, yeah I know!

Despite this feedback to the contrary, however, Antti continues to assert and negotiate his native speaker identity. He later commented that native speakers do treat him more equally when they are both 'on equal ground' – by which he meant not in Finland or in a native English speaking country. This is perhaps not surprising considering the social status given to natives in their own native environment. On more international territory, they are no longer 'natives' as such themselves.

6.1.4 Finnish Speaking Identity

Excellent Finnish Speakers

When asked to compare their Finnish to that of other Finns, most of the graduates either explained that there was no difference or explained that they were very good speakers of Finnish, perhaps even better than the average Finnish person. Sami was the first to express this:

> I think it's actually much better. Probably because of my family, my background. And I really have an interest in Finnish language and in language matters. Always when I hear something, I'm like no you can't say that!
> *- So there's no difference due to having studied in English?*
> No. I think our teaching was... we had a very good Finnish teacher
> *- And no one who can tell in your Finnish that you have…*
> No. I've always been the one who comments

Here, Sami presents himself as being an authority in 'language matters', including Finnish. He is "the one who comments" on issues of correctness in Finnish when interacting with other Finns. He explains this as a result of his family background, who

he had described earlier as being interested in languages, and as a result of having a good Finnish teacher at the English School. In Anne's responses, there was also a sense of authority with the Finnish language. When asked if her Finnish is different in any way to that of other Finns, she remarked that she also proofreads Finnish texts at work and elaborated, "I was very proud to have the highest degree in the ylioppliastutkinto".

Several of the other graduates also stressed that the Finnish teaching at the school was very good. Timo remarked:

> In the English school the Finnish language is emphasised quite a lot so… I consider myself a good Finnish speaker. I think that was something good about the school that even though everything was mostly in English, the Finnish teaching was emphasised to make sure that people who are Finnish get good language skills in their mother-tongue.

The last remark especially suggests that school policy, at least as interpreted by Timo, regards the Finnish language as an important symbol of Finnish identity – something that Timo approves of. "People who are Finnish", as he puts it, should "get good skills in their mother-tongue". Finnish therefore remains as a strong symbol of Finnish peoplehood for these graduates, despite their use of English.

It seems that attending the English School has led to a heightened sense of identity as Finnish speakers among the graduates. This may be in response to a perceived threat to their Finnish speaking identities in the eyes of other Finns due to their bilingual background, and the subsequent threat to their status and qualifications within the Finnish job market. For many of the students having good Finnish skills therefore seemed to be something that they wished to prove to other Finns. Timo explained:

> I also took the Finnish examination of the Finnish language, and I got the highest score there. I wanted that paper to be able to show that even though I have a background in language schools, I still have skills in Finnish. And I think I've always had also, or for pretty long, some kind of writing work, journalism for example, so that's why I've always considered it very important to have language skill.

Timo considers his language school background to be a possible threat to how he is perceived as a Finnish speaker by possible employers. As a writer, having good Finnish

skills is an important resource, and it is important that he can demonstrate this skill to others. Having a linguistic repertoire where English is an additive rather than subtractive skill is therefore important for status within the Finnish community. These graduates at least have managed to maintain that status.

For Timo, this identity as a strong Finnish speaker is also reflected in his attitudes towards Finnish as a language. From the beginning of the interview, he emphasised his appreciation for Finnish:

> Actually I've always loved the Finnish language. The more I study other languages, the more I love the Finnish language; its verbs and its flexibility. I've always loved Finnish and I've always loved to write in Finnish and read in Finnish. I don't really read book in English, unless study or work related books, but I don't, if I choose to read something in my pass-time, it's in Finnish.

Timo expressed his preference for Finnish over English more strongly than any of the other graduates. He sees his multilingual experience as having strengthened his pride in the Finnish language, and he therefore 'chooses' to use Finnish more in his pass-time.

Two of the graduates, however, did consider their Finnish to be inferior in some way to that of other Finns. These were Antti and Heikki who both had lived abroad at some point in their childhoods and who both defined themselves as English native speakers. Both remarked that they speak Finnish as well as other Finns, but explained that they had weaker writing skills. Heikki stated:

> Not very good apparently. The spoken Finnish is so different from the written, so my grammar is terrible I've been told. All the way through high school I had a special tutor trying to help me get my grammar right so that I could pass the tests. Spoken I think is alright, but when it comes to writing it's not quite up to that level. And even in my speech nowadays, I catch myself saying things that I've translated from English into Finnish.

Neither seemed to regard this as regrettable, as they have chosen to study through English at higher education level and rather referred to the wider options that being able to study through English has afforded them. As students, however, neither of them was

in a position to judge whether poorer Finnish writing skills would affect them within a Finnish working environment.

6.2 Cultural Identity

6.2.1 The English School as a Cultural Environment

I discussed the English School's cultural environment in general with the graduates as I considered it to be potentially an important influence on their cultural identity, as well as its language environment. The graduates described the school as being a very different cultural environment to that of other Finnish schools, which made it a rather distinct, though small, community. They consistently brought up the same elements that they felt contributed to this difference, although they were not so consistent in how they related to these elements. The main features they described were the school's international student body, American teachers (although of course many of the teachers were Finnish), Catholic values, and tight-knit community spirit.

International/ American Influences

The international influence of the school was emphasized mainly in regards to the student body. Although the majority of the students were Finnish, Mari explained that there were always a few students from other cultures in every class:

> Perhaps two or three per year but they exchanged a lot because they were the children of people who came from abroad to work in Finland for a couple or years or a year and so on and then they moved again… if we were in a group, there was one person who didn't understand Finnish

The graduates portrayed this international element in very positive light. As I shall discuss later, it has led the students to perceive themselves as being more internationally orientated than other Finns. They explained that there was no racism or segregation in the school at all, and in fact the international students were not seen as being different in any way, primarily because there was no language barrier.

Sami commented that although the students were international, they were primarily European in culture:

> Well there were quite a lot of Asians, but they were more like Europeans because they were probably like born in Europe and educated in English schools all their life. They weren't very Asian. It was mostly European, like I don't really have a specific idea of where they came from. I really have to think about it.

It is interesting here that Sami considers English schools, whether in Finland or elsewhere, to be European influences or at least symbols of European culture – enough for him to identify these students as being European on that basis.

As for the teachers, the graduates explained that they were mainly Finnish and American. However, they viewed the American cultural influence in the school as being subtle. It was present, for example, in the celebration of holidays such as Halloween and Valentine's Day, and it was observable in the behaviour of the teachers. At no stage were they explicitly taught American practices or ideas, and, according to the graduates, 'Anglo-Saxon culture' was not promoted in the school, contrary to the claim of the English School website (see The English School 2007). Sami elaborated:

> there was very little customs or like cultural teaching, I think everything just came from the teachers - how they acted and kind of associated them, stereotyping sort of thing. Of course they weren't very stereotype at all.

According to Sami, the students formed their image of American culture on the basis of their teachers' behaviour, rather than on the basis of the school's teaching. He positions the American teachers in this remark as being 'other': they are somewhat removed from himself and the students. They were people with different behaviour whom the students would observe and stereotype.

The graduates who attended the school during the 1970/1980s remarked that the American culture was also implicit within the teaching materials, as many of them came

from the USA. However, Anne described that the Finnish children viewed these materials as foreign:

> And of course, the text books also conveyed… a bit old-fashioned ideals, to us it felt old-fashioned. These ideals about mother stays at home and father being a bread winner. I still, we Finns feel that Americans are extremely old-fashioned… Sorry!

Anne clearly aligns herself and her Finnish classmates in opposition to the cultural values that these textbooks conveyed, seeing them as old-fashioned. She makes a general declaration of Finnish identity, speaking as a collective, representing what she considers to be a Finnish view of American values "we Finns feel that Americans are extremely old-fashioned, sorry". Her apology also suggests that she was positioning herself in contrast to myself as the interviewer, as she mistook me for an American (despite several statements to the contrary). Based on these remarks, the American teachers remained foreign for the students, unlike their international classmates who were not seen as being different.

Catholic Values

Rather than emphasising the American nationality of the teachers, the graduates more frequently referred to how Catholicism affected the school environment. Many of the students viewed it as a positive influence, as the following descriptions demonstrate:

Virpi:

> Of course well the nuns were there and then of course we did have prayers. But they had the prayers in Finnish schools at that time, so that's not so different, at least they used to have in my time. Then of course we had a… statue of the Virgin Mary and it was exotic for us because the Lutherans don't have. But most probably we were so used to them and I think that for me, I can understand different religions more because of that... I don't understand Islam but anyway I can understand the difference between Roman Catholic and then Orthodox Catholic and Lutherans etc

Anne:

> It has also been very interesting to understand Catholics, what that means… being a Catholic.
> - *Did they have specifically catholic practices in the school?*
> Ahh… no but I think when we were small we had a morning prayer or philosophical thought or something like that in the morning. But nothing was pressured on the kids, absolutely nothing… So it was not a big deal. And, as most of the kids, also I learned to

> love the former bishop. He was a nice figure. And also the catholic nuns taught us what it means to, what charity means and things like that… the teachers showed their faith in everyday practices but they did not say this is faith because… in a nice way.

Both Anne and Virpi downplay the importance of Catholicism in the school, perhaps in response to possible negative connotations. They rather stress the positive aspects of it: the value of charity and the understanding they now have of Catholic and orthodox religions. There is no question for either Virpi or Anne that Catholicism in the school would have challenged their own religious identities: they understand what it means to be a Catholic and they identify with certain Catholic values, but they do not describe themselves as Catholic. In these descriptions at least, both Virpi and Anne perceive the religion from an outside perspective.

Timo, on the other hand, had a very strong reaction in opposition to the Catholicism of the school:

> *- Do you think those were cultural features in the school?*
> Practical, cultural, I donno. But also the role of religion. Philosophy students kindof have to look at that nature and it's a catholic school
> *- Was it a catholic school or was it just that there were nuns in the school?*
> I donno. I'd say it was a catholic school because it was natural for everything in the school to have something to do with the religion. Nobody offered the option of not participating in religious activities so. I donno how to describe it, but there was this religious tension in the school... And in a way, if there were some problems in the school they were not resolved by argumentation but rather but judgement that this is the way this school operates, without explanations of why that's the case.

Here, he explicitly rejects the Catholic influence and asserts his identity as a philosophy student, which he sees as being in opposition to religious thinking, valuing instead, as he puts it, 'argumentation' and 'explanation'. Whereas Virpi and Anne described the environment as tolerant, Timo describes a religious tension, suggesting that he did perceive a conflict of values. He went on to suggest that the Catholicism did influence some students' identities, as some students became and remained Catholic: "actually some of my friends at the time are now probably staying catholic; people who had something to do with the school and I met them when I was at school".

Most of the students, however, had more neutral reactions to the Catholic nature of the school, leaning more towards Virpi and Anne's explanations that it was rather a positive influence. Sami in fact explained that the Catholic element was of more importance for outsiders than it was for the students themselves. There were, as he put it, 'myths' about the school being overly religious: "people had very odd ideas about it, of course there were very peculiar questions and so at that time I was of course very confused". His view of these ideas as being 'very odd' obviously indicates that he feels they were misguided.

A Tight-Knit Community Spirit

Another aspect that all the graduates emphasized about the English School environment in comparison to other Finnish schools was its tight-knit community. The school is rather small, with each grade consisting of only 20 to 30 students. According to Mari, this means that a core group of students of the same age is together every year from the beginning of their education to the end. They therefore know each other extremely well. Most of the graduates considered this both a positive and negative influence. Mari's description demonstrates this:

> Sometimes that was a good thing. I made a lot of friends and I still keep in touch with like half of my class. But then again, sometimes I thought it wasn't such a good thing because we didn't get to know that many other people... I remember having friends from school and then just like a handful of friends outside school and later when I thought about that it started to seem a bit weird. It's good to have small classes and a tight community, you get to know people and you get to understand them better but then again… it's kind of a segregated place then.

For Mari, being a tight-knit group meant that they knew each other well and developed long-standing friendships. On the other hand, it also meant that they were a rather segregated group. A strong sense of belonging to this small community therefore went hand in hand with a sense of separation from the larger community. Her comment "it started to seem a bit weird" suggests that she does see this as something remarkable in comparison to other children's experiences.

Timo similarly discussed the tight-knit community spirit of the school from both positive and negative perspectives. He described how he had difficulty fitting into a Finnish high school, as the English School's atmosphere was so different:

> After the English School, I never felt the kind of class spirit that we had where everyone had been together for 10 years and knew each other… in the bigger school there were groups of people who were spending all their time together and I had difficulties to make friends.

Although he enjoyed the class spirit of the school and he enjoyed the fact that he knew everyone, he went on to call it a "closed" and "quite detached" environment. For him as well as several other graduates this sense of being detached was also because they did not attend a school that was in their immediate local community. They therefore did not form social networks within their local communities as much as they felt they might have in attending a local school.

This detachment meant that the graduates did not feel as children that their school was different to other schools. It was only on visiting other schools later that they realized the difference, which Sami described as "a real culture shock". Virpi explained how, on leaving the English School to attend a Finnish 'Lukio' (there were no upper-secondary grades in the English School at the time), she and the other English School students stood out. She explained:

> Sometimes the teachers … they felt we were different. I've always felt that I've been different because I'm not really a Finnish person… but that's because of my temperament you know. In the English school nobody noticed me but in the Finnish school they noticed me

In the English School, Virpi felt that she belonged due to her non-Finnish temperament (which she attributed to having some Russian ancestry), whereas in the Finnish school she felt different. The intercultural environment of the English School suited her more.

The sense of community in the school also applied to the teachers and their teaching philosophy. All of the graduates explained that the teachers worked as a team, took a

personal interest in each child, and maintained strict discipline. Again, the graduates portrayed this in both positive and negative light. Anne explained:

> I know that it differed in the way that the teachers really cared and if they felt that one of the students was not feeling well or something like that, they immediately contacted the home. And they worked as a team… And they asked the parents to come to the school twice a year. It was hard for the ambassadors and CEOs and so on, but everyone had to come because if they said we are not interested, they said then sorry we cannot keep your kid. This, this is different from the Finnish schools.

Here, Anne perceives the teaching philosophy very positively; the teachers 'really cared' and they required that the parents be involved in the school, regardless of their status or profession. There is a clear sense of pride in her description of ambassadors and CEOs having to attend school meetings. The teachers, by this description, obviously prioritized the children's interests above accommodating their parents' schedules.

The strict discipline of the school was also mostly appreciated. The graduates contrasted the order of the English School to their perception of disorder in Finnish schools. Sami stated:

> In general, like in class people were quiet.. they asked their turn if they wanted to say something. Everytime the teacher came… those were old-fashioned. It wasn't old-fashioned in an academic sense in that it had no reason to it. It wasn't a formula. There was kind of a reason to it. But I mean like this was compared to like Finnish class where like basically teachers can't like maintain any kind of control over the class.

Sami presents rather a negative image of Finnish schools in comparison to the English School. In an English School class, people were quiet and waited their turn, whereas in a Finnish school class, teachers have no control whatsoever. Nearly all the graduates said that they would send their own children to the school for its discipline and teaching philosophy, as well as for its language teaching.

There were negative connotations, however, in the graduates' depiction of the teaching philosophy and discipline in the school. Some children, they explained, did not fit in and did not adapt easily. Sami described how when new students arrived, they often broke

school rules and shocked the other students, "it was kind of outrageous if someone new came in and he or she did something. It was like 'oh my god!''. Timo elaborated:

> I remember there were some students who didn't, just didn't fit in. And they stayed one year and then they were gone. I thought of course, well there are always students who don't adapt so well, but I don't think that in every school they just disappear

Again in these descriptions there is the sense that the English School environment was definitely very different to typical Finnish school environments. Its identity was quite distinct within the Finnish culture; it was not the Finnish norm. Whether it can in itself be described as a subculture is of course doubtful, due to its small size. However, it was a tight-knit community to which most of the graduates felt they belonged, and which promoted values that most of the graduates identified with. Many of them remained friends with their classmates later in life and explained that they have sent or would send their own children to the school due to its multicultural identity and community spirit, as well as due to its use of English.

6.2.2 Multicultural and Bicultural Labels

International Finns

All of the graduates defined themselves as being multicultural or international Finns, according to the definition of additive multiculturalism, i.e having an understanding of other cultures, appreciation for other cultures, and intercultural competence (Modgil 1986: 7). Timo explained:

> I think my experience with different cultures, different types of people has given me the sense that what is the Finnish way of doing something is just one option in a group of many... If I'm used to doing something in a certain way, I'm always thinking that is that the best way to do it, and I'm ready to change. There are a lot of Finnish people who are very stuck into their typical routine and maybe that's something where I would at least hope to be different

This is what Nelson-Jones (2002: 135) states is the essence of multiculturalism as opposed to monoculturalism: the sense that there is more than one way of life and one way of thinking, and that the way of one's own group is not necessarily superior. It is

also a very postmodern viewpoint of cultural identity, where individuals pick from a variety of cultures in constructing their own identity and need not align themselves completely with any one culture (Bauman 1996). Like many of the graduates, Timo also expressed a general appreciation for the value of multiculturalism: "I think multicultural things are the best things in the world today – learning from others, appreciating other cultures". As stated in chapters 3 and 4, values are an important component of both culture and identity (Preston 1997, Fennes and Hapgood 1997). Multiculturalism is one value that the graduates felt differentiated them from the majority of Finns.

A factor that contributed to the graduates' self-perceptions as international Finns was their families' intercultural traditions. Some explained that their parents enrolled them in the English School in the first place due to their own intercultural experiences. Heikki remarked "I think my dad always wanted to go abroad later on, so I think he wanted to have me prepared for that". Interestingly, Heikki did not name any specific country that his father wished him to have access to through his English School preparation. He refers simply to going 'abroad'; rather than aiming at acquiring the skills to participate in another national culture, Heikki was prepared for participation in a general transnational environment and for mobility within imagined future non-Finnish communities. This matches closely to Dageneis's (2003) explanation that immigrants in Canada send their children to foreign language schools in order for them to gain access in the future to 'imagined communities' on a transnational level and in order for them to become internationally mobile.

Even those graduates who had not lived abroad at any point in their childhoods, reported that their families travelled more extensively than the norm. Timo explained:

> Even though we didn't live abroad, we travelled quite a lot with my parents went I was younger and not the sort of tourism travel, going to resorts, but using the car and going around Europe for a month or two every year. So in a way, being in a different language environment was very natural to me. And also that's one reason why my parents thought it was important to have an English speaking School.

In this excerpt, Timo places himself within a different category to those who travel simply as tourists. He aligns himself more with those who have actually lived abroad, starting his explanation with "even though we didn't live abroad…". He himself later described this travelling as a 'tradition' on his family's part. As with Heikki, this tradition of travelling was one reason why his parents sent him to an English speaking school.

Another factor that contributed to the graduates' self-perceptions as international Finns was the intercultural environment of the English School itself. They all remarked on the fact that the international students in the school were never seen as being different in any way. They were never differentiated on the basis of typical identity markers such as beliefs, practices or race. Mari remarked "it was totally never an issue in that way. You didn't even take notice really. Like these basic things like colour, skin colour or whatever, their accents or... we didn't really pay attention to them". It is also interesting here that Mari specifically lists differences in 'accents' as something that she never paid attention to. This could, perhaps, have contributed to the graduates' not viewing one particular accent or dialect as 'correct'. They were used to a variety of accents at school, and, at least according to their own perceptions, they did not discriminate on the basis of accent.

This openness and lack of prejudice in interacting with other cultures was portrayed by the students as something exceptional in comparison to other Finns. Antti related the following story in evidence for this:

> I remember actually walking into class the first day, that was scary and I met a Russian
> guy called Dmitri, who was also new and he came to out class. And that's that's, we met
> and we talked, and both of out parents were there looking crossly at us.
> - *Because you met and talked?*
> Well it was a standoffish situation, it wasn't very, it wasn't very comfortable for them. I
> mean me and Dimitri we got on, we got on fine, he became my friend for the entire time

Here, Antti positions himself and his friend Dmitri in opposition to their parents, who he perceives as less tolerant or open than himself and his friend. He went on to attribute his

parents' reaction to the negative perception of Russian culture in Finland, which he is less prone to due to his multicultural childhood.

This same sense of openness translated from the school environment to life in the Finnish community in general. Anne related the following story:

> I especially remember Korean boys, there were three of them, they lived close to us and they were very, they tried to keep separate... And anyway my brother and I went once and rode around and asked for them to play, but this was not really to play but to talk or whatever… but it was a strange happening to them because no one else had called before and we did not, we had not realised this.. and then we found out that the father was some kind of official, not an ambassador but something like that.. and then it was nice, and then they were suddenly very, very friendly towards us..

Anne presents her and her brother's behaviour here in contrast to the behaviour of other Finns in the community. No one had visited this Korean family before and Anne portrays them as being rather segregated. For Anne and her brother, who also attended the English School, it was natural to interact with this family despite their cultural difference, as natural perhaps as interacting with any other children in the community. They did not perceive any barrier to communicating and associating with them, and she perceives herself as having therefore made a connection with them – they were "suddenly very, very friendly".

Finally, several graduates also attributed their multiculturalism to the education they received at the English School, rather than simply its environment or language. Antti explained that subjects were taught from a global perspective rather than a national perspective, which 'broadened his horizons'. Heikki also felt that his education gave him more general knowledge on a global level rather than simply on a national level. In comparing himself to the British people he interacts with, he remarked:

> I think even with them that I do have a broader outlook on everything, especially with the sort of education I've had. English people, American people everywhere you tend to see that they know their issues but not so broadly outside of their own country which I think is something that I sort of… I think I know a far bit about… I find myself not knowing that much about England but then when it comes to outside England, things I thought everyone knew, they don't.

Heikki therefore differentiates himself from Brits, Americans and Finns alike on the grounds of his multiculturalism. He views his own cultural outlook as differing from monocultural individuals or individuals with little intercultural experience in general, from any nation.

Biculturalism: the Other Culture?

The label 'bicultural' was much more problematic for the graduates than multicultural. Most did not identify with the label, as they could not distinguish a particular cultural group other than Finnish with which they could define themselves. Heikki's explanation is a good example of this:

> Bicultural I donno, cos I donno what the second culture would be then. Let's say sort of multicultural or something, I have my own mix. I mean culturally I'm not Finnish but then I can't pick out any other sort if cultural
> - *Not British or American?*
> Definitely not British, definitely not American, but not particularly Finnish either so it's sort of hard to define
> - *Yeah. But anyway a mixture of different cultures?*
> A mixture of everything, everywhere I've been and what I've picked up along the way

This is a very postmodern view of identity. He does not identify with a certain cultural group, but rather with all the cultures that he has encountered. He is a mixture of cultures: a mixture of everything he has 'picked up' through his travels.

Sami had trouble with the bicultural label for similar reasons to Heikki. He could not identify another distinct cultural group that he is part of:

> I don't think I have a culture.... the term demands someone to share it with – you can't have a culture of your own... I haven't met so many people who would share my kind of culture… so I don't really know how to say bicultural, maybe more like multicultural… tricultural because I have a lot of things which are very unFinnish.
> - *So do you consider yourself tricultural?*
> Well I would have the Finnish culture and then the Swedish and then international.

Sami acknowledges here that the Finnish culture is not the sum of his cultural identity, but explains that he does not feel there is a collective that shares his 'kind of culture'.

Later, however, through discussing this internationalism, Sami does negotiate a group of people with whom he can identify:

> I have added, kind of invented this pan-European culture... I think which is evolving right now… we have these people who are not so specifically part of any kind of culture just a general culture… you meet these kind of people who travel a lot, who are not so bothered where they live... so they have shared interests or a kind of culture.

The group that Sami identifies with is clearly a transcultural community - a community of people beyond national culture who are marked by their intercultural outlook and interests. It is also interesting that Sami himself describes this as a 'kind of invented' part of his identity, rather than as something that is necessarily based on facts.

There was therefore a sense throughout the graduates' discussions that the label 'bicultural' is inadequate to describe cultural identity in a multicultural world, as it assumes an equal division of allegiance across two clearly distinguishable cultural groups. Indeed, even those who had lived abroad - Antti, Heikki, and Sami - had trouble identifying themselves with the specific countries they lived in. Even within those countries, their lives contained such a substantial intercultural element that they could not identify its cultural influence singularly. Their descriptions are reminiscent of what Bauman (1996: 24-32) describes as a postmodern pilgrim identity – where individuals do not wish to define themselves by anyone place, but rather perceive themselves as voyagers, with an unlimited range of lifestyle and culture options to choose from.

6.2.3 Relation to Finnish and English speaking Cultures

When it came to actually describing and relating to Finnish culture, and in turn to British or American culture (depending on which one was emphasized more in description of the English School environment and English language variety), a much stronger sense of belonging and difference came across than through discussion of the labels bicultural and multicultural. The most significant feature through all of the interviews, except one, was a strong identification with Finnish cultural values and communicative norms, and a strong appreciation for Finnish society in general. On the other hand, the graduates

strongly differentiated themselves from what they perceived to be British or American culture, and in general had rather negative perceptions of British or American values and norms. Despite their self-descriptions as being tolerant and understanding of other cultures, this was entirely in keeping with the trend described by Lehtonen (2005), where people paint positive stereotypes to describe their own group and negative stereotypes to describe out-groups. It could be perceived as a reaffirmation of their Finnish cultural identity in response to their cross-cultural and multilingual experiences. This would confirm the results of a quantitative study by Kosmitzki's (1996) which showed that individuals who have extensive cross-cultural experience tend to reaffirm their native cultural identity by perceiving themselves as similar to their native groups and in turn by perceiving those groups to have very positive traits. It would suggest that despite fears of English language being a threat to Finnish cultural identity are unfounded, as these graduates who speak English as a community language and describe English as an important part of themselves, also have a very strong sense of Finnish identity.

Appreciating Finland

The following excerpt, from Timo's interview, is one example of how the graduates positively portrayed and aligned themselves with Finnish values and behaviours:

> I've written books about Finnish culture that I've written to foreigners, and there I usually tend to agree, agree with the details, the way that Finnish people are not the same as other European people. We rather decide not to say something than to say something dumb and talk about things that are not relevant. Small talk is something that is difficult for me and most of the books I've read about Finnish culture emphasise that Finnish people are not small talkers. I think basic honesty is something that I appreciate a lot in Finnish people, sometimes it becomes impoliteness, but I'd rather chose impoliteness than chose the superficial style that you experience with some other nationalities.

Here, Timo presents himself as being an authority on Finnish culture for outsiders – as he puts it, he has written books on Finnish culture for foreigners (either figuratively or literally). He clearly distinguishes Finns as a group within Europe, saying "Finnish people are not the same as other European people", an assertion which he bases on

Finnish communicative culture. Finnish communication, in his view, is honest and direct, and lacks the 'superficial style' that characterises some other nations. Aspects that could be presented as negative – a lack of small-talk for instance – he defends and paints in a positive way: people would "rather not say something dumb". He explicitly expresses his preference for the Finnish way of communicating: "I'd rather chose impoliteness than chose the superficial style". I should also note here that almost exactly the same phrase comparing Finns to Europeans was reiterated by Mari. She stated: "it's great to be a little different from… well I was going to say the rest of the Europeans". It would suggest that they value their difference and uniqueness as a culture within Europe. They do not wish to blend into Europe.

Antti similarly presents Finnish culture in very positive terms:

> Directness, integrity, work-ethic and integrity, in my opinion. Mainly Lutheran heritage. Then punctuality is a big thing, things get done when they say it's gonna get done, trains run on time - that's quite a thing, but so do the British trains… but, those I think are the four qualities. Maybe, slightly even a darkness, a pessimism. The thing the winter brings out in people.
> *- How about communication-wise?*
> Amm… directness and familiarity. It's funny how in a country where people keep each other at arms length, I would never consider coming any closer to you for example than this but, for example, my British teacher, he, when he talks to me, he touches me, and that scares me.

Antti uses strong positive adjectives to describe Finnish culture, such as 'integrity' and 'work-ethic', and explains that "things get done when they say it's gonna get done". Despite defining himself as bicultural between Finnish and British culture earlier in the interview, here he clearly aligns himself with Finnish culture in opposition to British culture, describing his British teacher's way of communicating as awkward for him: "when he talks to me, he touches me, and that scares me".

There was also a strong sense of pride in Finland through the graduates' descriptions in general. The following excerpt from Anne is a strong example of this. Following her very positive description of Finnish culture, she was asked if she was proud to be a Finn, to which she replied:

> Absolutely! Hitler did not walk down Aleksanteri Street here, as he did in Paris. And…
> we all have somebody who fought in the war. I'm proud of the status of the Finnish
> woman. I'm proud of our school system and the educational system and I'm proud of
> our medical system and our health system. And I think that the Nordic way of paying a
> lot of taxes but also getting a lot in return is very good. Yes I'm proud of being a Finn.

Her repetition of the phrase 'I'm proud' throughout her explanation is a very strong performance of her Finnish identity. She lists many perceived markers of Finnish national identity here: its war history, its female gender identity and equality, its school system, and its tax system. These she sees as the positive symbols of Finland as a nation and as a culture, and she identifies strongly with those symbols.

In keeping with their portrayal of themselves as multicultural, the graduates described Finland and Finnish culture as being an informed choice, rather than simply being the culture they have always known. Having travelled a great deal, seen other cultures, and interacted with different people, they appreciated Finland all the more. When asked if he would ever move abroad, Timo remarked:

> I'd probably live abroad in order to come back someday, not with the idea that I would
> stay away forever… I think when I was younger, I was expecting to go abroad as soon
> as possible, but now I love this city. The more I travel, the more I like Finland

Timo's statement "the more I travel, the more I love Finland", is a mirror of his earlier statement "the more I study languages, the more I love Finnish". His multilingual and multicultural background has only served to increase his appreciation for and identification with the Finnish culture.

To take another example, Antti, despite his experiences living abroad and despite identifying himself as a bicultural native speaker of English, stated that he would not want to move away from Finland permanently. He explained:

> After seeing what's out there, in my opinion, I've come to realise that this is the best
> place to be. I mean I like visiting or even for a year or two to study like that, no
> problem, but live there forever? No. I like this place, this is my kind of land, my kind of
> weather, my kind of people, so..
> *- What would you miss about Finland if you moved?*
> The security and everything.. I mean walking down the streets I'm not afraid all the
> time. I mean of course there are problems here aswell, but I'm more scared for example

> of foreign people who are on the street here, than Finnish people… because I know that Finnish people have been taught the Finnish way and know the Finnish rules.

Again, Finland is portrayed as an informed choice. After seeing what is out there, Antti has realised that Finland is 'the best place to be' and therefore he would not move away permanently. He repeats the phrase 'this is my kind…' in a very strong performance of his Finnish identity. His point that Finland is a safe country was part of nearly all the graduates' discourse. It is particularly interesting that Antti feels safer in Finland because Finns know the 'Finnish way'. This does not quite fit the graduates' self-perceptions of being confident with other cultures. It does however show an awareness of how cultural differences affect behaviour: he prefers to be in Finland because he can predict Finnish behaviour.

Typical Finns

After describing Finnish culture, most of the graduates went on to identify themselves with their descriptions almost unreservedly, to the point of actually applying the label 'typical Finn' to themselves. This was surprising as one of my main concerns in asking the interviewees to relate themselves to Finnish culture was that they would emphasize their individuality and difference to the 'norm' as a natural reaction. On the contrary, however, the general feeling from the interviews was, as Timo stated "I am quite a typical Finn and I see no problem in being so". My impression was that these expressions of Finnishness were actually stronger than might be the average Finnish response. Sami, for instance, actually volunteered himself as an example of a 'typical Finn' before being asked to compare himself. In describing Finnish culture, he explained:

> People are not so outward orientated, and they tend to be kind of ahhh keep a distance. Be friendly, polite but never exaggerate things, be genuine, and you don't really have to know any customs.. they are totally made up.. because any thing really goes almost here. You don't look at people, oh how strange that is. Of course there are things… maybe kissing on the cheek wouldn't go down too well. But I think generally almost anything goes here, nothing's formal here, everything is quite easy-going… I'm quite a typical Finnish person.

Again here, it is quite a positive picture of Finnishness that he is identifying with - friendly, polite, genuine, and easy-going - and he volunteers himself as an example of Finnishness "I'm quite a typical Finnish person".

Of course in presenting Finnish culture in such a positive light, there may also be an element in which they were defending Finnish culture to myself as a foreigner. Although I emphasised that I am half Finnish, in a few of the interviews the graduates seemed to position themselves in their speech in contrast to me. Especially Anne mistook me several times for an American, and referred to American norms as being my norms several times in the interview, e.g. "I love Opera and our Opera is a very high standard, and I understand you don't even have an opera house in every city? Not even in the big ones". It is possible or perhaps even likely that the graduates would give different responses on Finnishness if they were discussing either with Finns in general or with other Finns who share their multicultural experiences. This does not, however, negate the importance of how they chose to present Finland to me in this instance. The fact that they would choose to defend their Finnishness and Finnish identity to outsiders, rather than downplay it, is important in itself. And the fact that they viewed me as an outsider, despite my own bicultural background, is also relevant.

'Nothing Against Americans'

In describing British or American culture (depending on which was more emphasised in the earlier parts of the interviews), the graduates gave much more negative portrayals than in describing Finnishness and they strongly differentiated themselves from these descriptions. Both British and American cultures were said to be marked by an indirect, superficial style of communicating, along with a 'noisy' use of language:

> Antti:
> what would be hardest I think would be getting in touch with the real, the way of the English people because they tend to not mean what they say and not say what they mean… that would be the main problem because I'm trying to be a direct person

> Sami:
> I just can't take that, you know, going on, over social, kind of fake things. I really have trouble to tolerate it at first. Like if someone gets too personal or too overfriendly or…

because I'm probably Finnish I expect some kind of, like it's supposed to be genuine if you say something

Timo:
A lot of very noisy kindof use of language. Here in Finland, we are very quiet, unless we are intoxicated. And I think there's a difference in the way of using the language. It's difficult for me to be playful with the language, a lot of jokes and laughter. I like peaceful, peaceful language

These are just three examples of very similar discourse describing British or American speech culture that occurred across almost all the interviews. In all of the examples, the interviewees clearly position themselves as different to the norms they describe. Antti explains that British communication is 'indirect', whereas he is trying to be 'direct'. Sami describes American communication as 'fake', whereas he is Finnish and therefore expects people to be 'genuine'. Timo pictures British use of language as 'noisy', whereas he prefers 'peaceful' language. It is also clear from all three examples, that the graduates do not see themselves as having learnt an English way of communicating despite having learnt the English language. They use the language differently in comparison to Brits or Americans – they use it, in their own perceptions at least, according to Finnish communicative norms.

In describing the British or American cultures in general, aside from communicative culture, the graduates also gave negative portrayals, in juxtaposition to their positive descriptions of Finland. Anne's explanations were perhaps the strongest of these. She particularly differentiated Finnish culture from American culture on grounds of female identity. She stated that in America:

The women are not independent and their husbands rule them and order them around and they don't have their own money. Well watch Dr.Phil on the television! You can see the cultural differences there. And… also someone dictates also how they should look, things like that.

In comparison, she asserted her Scandinavian female identity:

As a Scandinavian woman I am very well off, being independent and I can do what I want and nobody calls at me… and I managed my own stuff, and I am not considered an outcast or a failure because I don't have a husband, children and a picket fence.

Anne's most negative depiction of American culture, however, came in contrasting American identity to European identity:

> We were in Paris in February and no French thought that we were American because we were not fat and we were not rude and we did not have back-packs... and then they were all around. I'm not lying, all around Paris in February, it was incredible. I have never seen so many fat people in my life! And they all spoke in English and they pushed and they all had back-packs and ugly clothes. And people try to dress up there - it's the capital of France after all. And I donno, they just stood out for who they were. I have nothing against Americans.

I found this excerpt remarkable due to her end comment "I have nothing against Americans", despite her extremely negative description. She also described herself at another point in the interview as being bicultural between Finnish and American cultures and claimed to understand the American culture 'from the inside'. It would seem therefore that the graduates' perception of themselves as being open to and understanding of other cultures is not completely supported by their actual values and views. It would also suggest that they can identify themselves one way according to labels, but in a contradictory way according to values and attitudes. As I earlier explained, however, identity is not a coherent picture, but rather a complicated and sometimes conflicting dynamic. The graduates' expressions of cultural identity are clear examples of this.

Whereas the rest of the interviewees portrayed Finnish culture quite positively and British or American culture rather negatively, Heikki expressed the exact reverse. As with the other interviewees, this was a reflection of his own identification, as he declared from the beginning of the interview, "I don't even consider myself that Finnish anymore". He gave the following picture of Finland:

> I sound almost discriminating against Finns if I say it, but in I mean everything… sort of music, art, culture, whatever. I'm not into fixing my car and still listening to eighties music… you'll get this terrible picture of me now saying that but I try to follow a bit more. I'm not a big ice-hockey fan and these things. Not a big beer drinker.

This comment and Anne's comments demonstrate effectively that identity is not a matter of facts, but rather, as I earlier commented, a matter of imagined communities, myths

and attitudes (see Anderson 1991, Hall 1997). The idea that Finland is marked by people who fix their cars, drink beer and listen to eighties music would be rather difficult to show objectively, as would the idea that Americans are marked by ugly clothes, backpacks and rude behaviour. These are images that the graduates produced in constructing and defending who they are and who they are not, and they convey a real sense of emotion and affect. It supports the premise that identity is not a matter of labels and categories, to be measured objectively, but rather an emotional sense of belonging – fitting in or not fitting in. Their explanations demonstrate, as Burr (1995: 145) put it, an emotional commitment to the categories of people they identify with.

Heikki also differentiated himself from other Finns on the basis of his communicative culture. Unlike the other graduates, he portrayed Finnish communication norms in quite a negative light. He described Finns in general as being impolite – "in Finland people really look at you weird when you're polite. They don't expect it" – and inhibited – "Finnish people have a wall you have to break through". He elaborated, however, that after you have broken through the wall he described, Finns are likely to be friendlier than they had seemed. In comparing himself to his image of Finnish culture, he mostly emphasised the differences:

> I don't think I have such sort of inhibitions. I'm, I think much more easily approachable. I don't actually wait to be approached like the general Finn would wait to be asked a question and they'll answer and that will be that. I do sort of exert myself a bit more. A bit more open and talkative I guess.
> *- And do you think that's a result of the English school and your time abroad?*
> Definitely

Unlike Virpi, he sees his differences to other Finns as being a direct result of his background, rather than simply a genetic characteristic.

Although Heikki had a reverse pattern to the other graduates in relating to Finnish culture, his answers follow the pattern of positive markers for in-group identity versus negative markers for out-group identity. It is perhaps unfortunate that this trend should be the case, despite the multicultural background of the graduates, but it may also be a natural tendency to value the group that one identifies with over other groups. It would

seem strange in fact if the graduates had identified themselves as typical Finns and presented Finnishness in a negative light. They have strong positive self-images as Finns, despite and perhaps even due to their participation in transcultural communities and their extensive use of the English language. Again, this is in confirmation of Kosmitzki's study (1996) which found not only that people with cross-cultural experience view themselves as similar to their native cultural group but also have more positive attitudes towards that native group than monocultural people. In general, therefore, the graduates have responded to internationalism by reaffirming their Finnishness. Although they consider the English language be an important part of their identities, they remain proud of Finnish culture. Antti exemplified this idea nicely. Throughout his interview, he stressed how important English is for him, explaining that he considers himself to be a native English speaker and he thinks in English when he is alone. He also emphasized, however, the importance of Finnish culture in his life. He strongly identified with what he perceived to be Finnish values and communicative norms – including, for example, the value of silence. He summarised this contrast between his linguistic and cultural identities aptly, with the phrase: "when I'm alone, I think in English and enjoy the sound of nothing".

6.2.4 Relating English and Culture

English a Universal Language

When it came to directly discussing the relationship between language and culture, and then relating that to their acquisition of English, the graduates' responses were intriguing, and at the same time they fitted well into the description of how they use English. In principle, they explained, language and culture are inseparable. Virpi commented that in speaking a different language, "your thought processes are different". And Timo explained that:

> A lot of culture is stuck within the language. So when you learn a new language, you have to understand to a certain degree the culture that created the language, and a lot of culture comes down to the language.

Virpi's and Timo's responses were echoed by the other graduates: culture is 'stuck within the language', so when you learn a new language you have to learn a new way of thinking. In other words, the graduates described what Sapir (1921) labelled linguistic relativism. However, their explanations remained at quite an abstract and theoretical level. Mari, for example, backed up her assertion that language and culture are inseparable by referring to Chomsky and the number of words for snow in the Finnish language compared to other languages.

The graduates had some difficulty in relating the theory to their own acquisition of English. From many came the idea that English, as a language, is somehow different to other languages in regards to its relationship to culture. Timo explained:

> Well English is in a way different because of the international... I've learned English but I haven't learned an English culture. If you compare it to French, there's a very distinct French culture, it's very tied up in the language. Even though there are lots of French speaking countries, there's something more deeply cultural about the language than English.

The fact that he considers English, because of its international use, to be less 'deeply cultural' than other languages is intriguing. He clearly differentiates between the importance of French for cultural identity – "its very tied up in the language" – and the importance of English for cultural identity. Heikki similarly compared English to Italian:

> When it's learning English, I don't think you can really then define what the culture would be. I think if you learned Italian or something, then I think it would be obvious that the new culture would have something to do with that. But with English, it's such a widespread language.
> *- So you don't have any leaning towards a particular English speaking culture? Like American culture or British culture?*
> I don't really identify that strongly with either as one particular culture. I sort of try and pick the best attributes from wherever and just go with that.. make them my own.

Here, Heikki explicitly states that in learning English, he has not learned an English speaking culture. Rather, it has enabled him to pick and chose strengths from 'wherever' and make these part of his identity. Again this is a strong expression of postmodern identity, but this time the use of English as an international language is linked to postmodern identity.

The concept that English is not a cultural language in itself, but rather a 'universal language', was repeated many times in the graduates' discussions. When asked whether in learning English, he has learned a certain culture, Sami commented:

> Well of course it's a very practical tool… because it's so usable. In that sense it's very important to know English, to know other things through English.
> *So it's something to use?*
> Yes. I don't really feel I've got to know English culture because you don't have any more… there are so many cultures, English speaking cultures, that you can't really ever get into there are so many already and there are so many subcultures that I don't feel I've gotten so much in English but if I wanted to…

Especially the last comment, 'but if I wanted to', suggests that English is a means to widening one's options. If he chose to acquire the culture of an English speaking community, he could through the language. English is important as it gives him access to other cultures, but it does not in itself cause him to identify with those cultures.

Just as they have learned a mixture of English varieties, therefore, the graduates also feel that they have learned a mixture of cultures. English has given them a cultural perspective beyond that of the Finnish culture, but it is not a British or an American perspective. Rather it is the sum of the cultural communities in which they have used English. For most of the graduates, these communities are European or generally transcultural. Returning to the concept that languages in themselves have symbolic significance as cultural markers, English does not appear to have any significance for the graduates as an Anglo-Saxon symbol. For them, it is an international language symbolizing internationalism or perhaps symbolizing a general European/Western culture as Timo sees it:

> It is learning a culture, but in the case of English, it's a bit different. You're learning a mix of cultures, but it's a Western culture – that's something to be emphasized. Especially, I haven't been aborad, been out of European culture… But with English, I've learned a Western culture that is beyond the Finnish culture, but not a specific culture of a certain country

Although English within Japan is reported by Seargeant (2005) as having an association with English speaking cultures, to the extent that English language theme parks would

advertise themselves as 'more English than England itself', it does not seem to have such an association within Finland: at least in so far as these English School graduates are concerned.

7 CONCLUSION

Through the English School, as well as many other English immersion programmes, Finns are acquiring English as children within a community that is not traditionally English speaking. This phenomena provided a unique opportunity to investigate how language, culture and identity are interrelated: whether speaking a language on a daily basis as a child causes one to identify with other speakers of that language across national borders, and whether learning that language also entails learning its native speaking culture to some extent. These questions are particularly relevant with regards to English. When ESL/EFL learners most often use English with other non-native speakers within cross-cultural communication, do they still associate the language with native English speech and cultural communities? Jenkins (2006) suggests that they do not, and the findings of this study seem to agree.

The study found that these Finnish English speakers perceived themselves to be legitimate users of English in their own right. They considered English to be an important part of their linguistic identities: a language that they think in sometimes and that they find natural. Rather than identifying themselves with 'native English', however, they identified their speech communities as the English School itself and as a general transnational English speaking community. Some even explicitly stated that they wished to avoid using 'native' English, in terms pronunciation and vocabulary, as they did not wish to identify with a native English community.

In the beginning of this study, I also discussed the increasing importance of English within Finnish society. One important finding of my study was that being a proficient English/Finnish bilingual has certain rewards within the Finnish community. The English School graduates described how having superior English skills to other Finns in general has given them roles within their work communities as English language authorities and cross-cultural communicators. English has therefore given them access to economic and symbolic capital within the Finnish community, as well as access to transnational communities in general. This confirmed the observations of Dagenais

(2003) and de Mejia (2002), on the association between language learning and social capital in general.

Another question that I aimed to answer was whether attending the English School has impacted the graduates' cultural identities. I found that a combination of the English School community itself, multicultural traditions within the graduates' families and the acquisition of English have all had some effect on the graduates' cultural identities, in their own estimation. Primarily, they considered themselves to be more multiculturally and internationally orientated than other Finns. They felt that the English School and their ability to use English had made them more open towards and understanding of other cultures. They considered English to be a universal language rather than a 'cultural language', and therefore considered it to have little cultural impact in and of itself. However, they felt that they had used the language in order to acquire a wider cultural perspective in general. Some even considered themselves to have a culturally pluralistic identity as a result.

When it came to actually describing and relating to Finnish culture, however, the graduates emphatically reaffirmed their Finnish identities. They expressed strong identifications with and preferences for Finland and Finnish values – a confirmation of Kosmitzki's (1996) study. This finding indicates that bilingualism and multiculturalism are not threats to Finnish identity. It is possible to participate in transnational communities and use English extensively within the Finnish community, and at the same time value Finnish culture above others. In fact, these findings suggest that those with such bilingual and multicultural experience may even have greater appreciation for their native culture.

The English School graduates' perspectives on English language and identity issues can only be applied to Finnish society as a whole in a speculative way. English immersion schooling is only one context of English use in Finnish society and the graduates themselves drew a distinction between English School Finns and Finns who have been through mainstream Finnish schooling. Nevertheless, I would speculate that they are

extreme examples of a general trend in English use within Finland. As I stated in the beginning of this study, Finnish children in general are learning English from an earlier age and using English on a more frequent basis than ever before. Moreover, the amount of English medium education is increasing. The English School graduates may indeed represent the future in terms of their early English acquisition. From their experiences, it may be predicted that English will become a community language within Finland as a whole and no longer be viewed as a foreign language.

More concrete conclusions from these findings may be drawn about the role that English plays within cultural identity and multiculturalism in Finnish society. English, as we have seen, can be a tool for acquiring intercultural experiences, intercultural competence, and access to transcultural communities. It does not, however, chip away at Finnish cultural identity or appreciation of Finnish society, and – if these findings are correct – it does not represent the cultural influence of a particular native English community for its Finnish speakers. For the English School graduates at least, English does not represent Americanization. Their descriptions demonstrate, in fact, how English can be adapted at a local level in such a way that it becomes a local identifier. A sense of local community and belonging can be created through a new mix of English and Finnish codes, and through the development of a local English variety – in the graduates' case, 'English School English'.

One major limitation of the study, of course, is that it dealt only with the graduates' subjective accounts of their English use rather than actual observations and recordings. Although I was mostly interested in the graduates' subjective identities and own sense of belonging, it would nevertheless be important to study the graduates' perceived speech communities in more depth and more objectively. For example, what characterizes 'English School English', if such a variety exists? It would be interesting to analyze the nature and purpose of the graduates English/Finnish code-mixing from recorded examples of their conversations.

Another limitation is that among the graduates I interviewed, only Heikki was actually living abroad. It could be natural that those Finns who have chosen to remain in Finland – and who were therefore available for interviewing – have positive images of Finland. For future study, it would be beneficial to find a more proportional balance of Finnish English School graduates who have remained in Finland and graduates who have moved abroad. It would also be useful to interview more graduates in general, in order to obtain a broader picture than these seven interviewees could provide.

Finally, in order to draw more confident conclusions about English as a universal rather than cultural language, it would be necessary to compare the comments of English School graduates to those who have acquired a somewhat less widely spoken language through immersion schooling. Within Finland, there would certainly be the possibility to do this, as there are also Russian, French, and German immersion schools within the Helsinki area. This is an avenue for further investigation that I would like to pursue in the future.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adler, K. 1977. *Collective and individual bilingualism: a socio-linguistic study.*
    Hamburg: Helmut Buske Hamburg.

Anderson, B. 1991. *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso Books.

Anthony, T. 2002. Fears of cultural imperialism spread along with English. Associated
    Press [online]. (01.09.2003)
    http://wire.ap.org/APpackages/english/imperialism.html.

Baugh, A. C. and T. Cable 1993 (1935). *A history of the English Language*. London:
    Routledge.

Bauman, Z. 1996. From pilgrim to tourist. In S. Hall and P. Du Gay (eds) *Questions of
    cultural identity*. London: Sage Publications Ltd, 18-36.

Bausinger, H.1999. Intercultural demands and cultural identity. In T. Vestergaard (ed.)
    Language, Culture and Identity. Aalborg: Alberg University Press, 11-23.

Baetens Beardsmore, H. 1986. *Bilingualism: basic principles*. Clevedon: Multilingual
    Matters Ltd.

Baker, C. 1996. *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism*. Clevedon:
    Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Blommaert, J. 2005. *Discourse: a critical introduction.* Cambridge: Cambridge
    University Press.

Brady, J. 2001. International Schooling in Finland. Virtual Finland. [Online]
    (10.11.2003) http://virtual.finland.fi/finfo/english/intsch.html.

Branch, H. 2000. Virtual Finland: Finnish Language. [Online] (15.12.2003)
    http://virtual.finland.fi/finfo/english/finnlang.html.

Bruck, U. 1988. Identity, local community and local identity. In Honko L. (ed.)
    Tradition and cultural identity. Turku: Nordic Institute of Folklore, 77-92.

Brumfit, C. 2002. *Global English and language teaching in the twenty-first century*.
    Southampton: Centre for Language Education, University of Southampton.

Burr, V. 1995. *An introduction to social constructionism.* London and New York:
    Routledge.

Caldas, S. J. and S. Caldas 1999. Language immersion and cultural identity: conflicting

influences and values. *Language, Culture and Curriculum,* 12 (1), 42-58.

Caldas, S. J. and S. Caldas 2002. A sociolinguistic analysis of the language preferences of adolescent bilinguals: shifting allegiances and developing identities. *Applied Linguistics,* 23 (4), 490-514.

CARLA, 2006 What is Culture? Culture and Language Learning. [Online] (21.04.2007) http://www.carla.umn.edu/culture/definitions.html.

Chen, Y. 2006. The influence of partial English immersion programs in Taiwan on kindergartners' perceptions of Chinese and English languages and cultures. *The Asian EFL Journal*, 8(1), 7-40.

Cohen, A.P. 1993. Culture as identity: an anthropologist's viewpoint. *New Literary History,* 24 (1), 195-209.

Cohen, A.P. 1994. *Self-Consciousness.* London: Routledge

Concise Oxford English dictionary 1999. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cools, C. 2003. An Introduction to Intercultural Communication. Lecture. University of Jyväskylä, Communications Department.

Dagenais, D. 2003. Accessing imagined communities through multilingualism and immersion education. *Journal of Language, Identity and Education*, 2(4), 269-283.

Dagenais, D. and C. B. Dagenais 2001. Promoting multilingualism through French immersion and language maintenance in three immigrant families. *Language, Culture, and Curriculum*, 14(2), 142-155.

Daun, A. 1976. *Strategi för gemenskap. Essäer om boendets och samvarons villkor.* Stockholm: Tiden.

Dave's ESL Café 2007: International Job Board (09.09.07) http://www.eslcafe.com/joblist/

de Lotbinière, M. 2001. Global English: The European Lessons. *Guardian Unlimited.* [Online] (01.09.05) http://www.guardian.co.uk/Archive/Article/0,4273,4162990,00.html.

de Mejia, A. 2002. *Power, prestige and bilingualism: international perspectives on elite bilingual education*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

de Zulueta, F. 1995. Bilingualism, culture and identity. *Group Analysis*, 28(2), 170-180

Downes, S. 2001. Sense of Japanese cultural identity within an English partial immersion program: should parents worry? *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism,* 4(3), 165-180.

Dubbeldam, L.F.B. 1984. We are we and they are different: cultural identity. In K. Epskamp (ed.) *Education and the development of cultural identity.* The Hague: CESO, 12-19.

Fazio L. and R. Lyster 1998. Immersion and submersion classrooms: a comparison of instructional practices in language arts. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development,* 19 (4), 303-317.

Fennes, H. and K. Hapgood 1997. *Intercultural learning in the classroom.* London, Council of Europe: Cassell.

Foley, J.A. 2007. English as a global language: my two Satangs' worth, *RELC Journal,* 38(1), 7-17.

Gudykunst, W. B. 1989. Cultural variability in ethnolinguistic identity. In S. Ting-Toomey and F. Korzenny (eds.) *Language, communication and culture: Current Directions.* Newbury Park California: Sage Publications Ltd, 222-243.

Graddol, D. 1997. *Future of English?* London: The British Council.

Griffiths, M. 1998. *Being naughty: A play for justice?* (Inaugural Lecture).

Grotevant, H.D., H.A. Bosma, D.L. de Leista, T.L.F. Graafsma, 1994. Introduction. In H.A. Bosma, T.L.G. Graafsma, H.D. Grotevant, & D.J. de Levita (eds.) (ed) 1994. *Identity and Development: an Interdisciplinary Approach.* Thousand Oaks California: Sage Publications Ltd, 1-20.

Hall, S. 1996. Introduction: who needs identity? In S. Hall and P. Du Gay (eds.) *Questions of cultural identity.* London: Sage Publications Ltd, 1-18.

Hall S. 1997. The spectacle of the 'other'. In S. Hall (ed.) *Representation: cultural representations and signifying practices.* London: Sage Publications Ltd, 223-291.

Harper College 2006. Components of Culture. [Online]. (12.06.2006) http://www.harpercollege.edu/mhealy/g101ilec/intro/clt/cltclt/cltaaa.htm.

Heinz, B. 2002. 'Fish in the river': experiences of bicultural bilingual speakers. *Multilingua,* (20)1, 85-108.

Hofstede, G. and G.J. Hofstede 2004. *Cultures and organizations. Software of the mind*. New York: McGraw-Hill Professional.

Honko, L. (ed.) 1988. *Tradition and cultural identity*. Turku: Nordic Institute of Folklore.

House, J. 2001. A stateless language that Europe must embrace. *Guardian Unlimited*. [Online] (01.06.2005)
http://www.guardian.co.uk/GWeekly/Story/0,3939,475288,00.html

Howard, E.R, J. Sugarman and D. Christian 2003. *Trends in two-way immersion education: a review of the research*. Center for Applied Linguistics 63. The Johns Hopkins University.

Jacquemet, M. 2005. Transidiomatic practices, language and power in the age of globalization. Language and Communication, 25, 257-277

Jenkins, J. 2006. Current perspectives on teaching World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca. *TESOL Quarterly*, 40 (1), 157-181

Jenkins, J., M. Modiano and B. Seidlhofer 2001. Euro-English. *English Today* (17)4, 13-19.

Johnson, M. P. 2007. Immersion language education: a model for English education in Japan. 5, 41-47.

Johnson, J. C. and S. C. Weller, S. C. 2002. Elicitation techniques for interviewing. In J. F. Gubrium and J. A. Holstein (eds.) *Handbook of Interview Research*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications, 491-514.

Johnstone, B. and T. Vestergaard 1999. *Language, culture, identity. Communication in multicultural settings*. Aalborg: Aalberg University Press

Josselson, R.L., 1994. Identity and relatedness in the life cycle. In H.A. Bosma, T.L.G. Graafsma, H.D. Grotevant, & D.J. de Levita (eds.) (ed) 1994. *Identity and Development: an Interdisciplinary Approach*. Thousand Oaks California: Sage Publications Ltd, 81-102.

Kellner, D. 1995. *Media culture: cultural studies, identity and politics between the modern and the postmodern*. New York: Routledge.

Kinginger C. 2004. Alice doesn't live here anymore: foreign language learning and identity reconstruction. In A. Pavlenko & A. Blackledge (eds.) *Negotiation*

of identities in multilingual contexts. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 219-242.

Kluckhohn, C. and W.H. Kelly 1945. The concept of culture. In R. Linton (ed.). *The science of man in the world culture*. New York, 78-105.

Korea.Wikia 2007. Facts about the ESL Industry in Korea. [Online] (05.08.2007) http://korea.wikia.com/wiki/Facts_about_the_ESL_industry_in_Korea

Kosmitzki C. 1996. The reaffirmation of cultural identity in cross-cultural encounters. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 22, 238-48.

Kramsch, C. 1988. The cultural discourse of foreign language textbooks. In A. Singerman (ed.) *Towards a new integration of language and culture.* Middlebury, VT: Northeast Conference, 63-68.

Kramsch, C. 1993. Language study as border study: Experiencing difference. *European Journal of Education*, 28 (3), 349-58.

Laitinen, J. 2001. *English immersion in Finland, dreams or reality*. Unpublished Licentiate Thesis. University of Jyväskylä, Centre for Applied Language Studies.

Lederach, J.P. 1995. *Preparing for peace: Conflict transformation across cultures.* Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Lehtonen, J. 2005. Stereotypes and collective identification. In Petkova, D. and J. Lehtonen (eds.) *Cultural identity in an intercultural context*. Jyväskylä: Publications of the Department of Communication 27, University of Jyväskylä, 67-94.

Lee, J. S. 2002. The Korean language in America: the role of cultural identity in heritage language learning. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, (15) 2, 117-133.

Le Page, R. B. And A. Tabouret-Keller 1985. *Acts of identity. Creole-based approaches to language and ethnicity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Leppänen, S. 2007. Youth language in media contexts: insights into the functions of English in Finland. *World Englishes*, (26) 2, 149-169.

Lippi-Green, R. 1997. *English with an accent. Language, ideology, and discrimination in the United States*. New York: Routledge.

Lintunen, M. 2001. *Cultural identity: a case study of seventh and eighth graders in*

an international school. Unpublished Pro-Gradu Thesis. University of Helsinki, Department of Teacher Education.

Marx, N. L. 2002. Never quite a 'native speaker': accent and identity in the L2 and the L. *Canadian Modern Language Review,* (59)2, 264-281.

Macdonald, S. 1997. *Reimagining Culture: Histories, Identities and the Gaelic Renaissance*. Oxford: Berg.

Mendoza-Denton, N. 2002. Language and identity. In Chambers, J.K., P. Trudgill and N. Schilling-Estes (eds.) *The Handbook of Language Variation and Change*. Oxford: Blackwell, 475-499.

Miller, J. 2003. Identity and language use: The politics of speaking in schools. In A. Pavlenko and A. Blackledge (eds) *Negotiation of identities in multilingual contexts*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd, 290-315.

Mills, J. 2001. Being bilingual: perspectives of third generation Asian children on Language. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism.* (4)6, 383-402.

Modgil, S., G. Verma, K. Mellick, and C. Modgil 1986. Multicultural education: the interminable debate. In S. Modgil, G. Verma, K. Mallick and C. Modgil (eds) *The Concept of Multicultural Education*. Philidelphia: The Farmer Press, 1-18.

Morrison, A. 1998. The historical and colonial context of Brian Friel's Translations. [Online] (01.08.2007) http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofEnglish/imperial/ireland/trans.htm

NASP 2003: Defining culture. (01.08.06) www.nasponline.org.

Nelson-Jones, R. 2002. Diverse goals for multicultural counselling. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly.* (15)2, 133-143.

Nic Craith, M. 2002. *Plural identities – singular narratives. The case of Northern Ireland.* Oxford: Begrhahn Books.

Ollila, A. 1998. Perspectives to Finnish Identity. *Scandinavian Journal of History*, (23)3, 127-137.

Parekh, B. 1986. The concept of multicultural education. In S. Modgil, G.K. Verma, K. Mallick, and C. Modgil (eds.), *Multicultural Education: The interminable Debate*. Philadelphia: Falmer, 19-32.

Pavlenko, A. and A. Blackledge 2003. *Negotiation of identities in multilingual contexts*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Pennycook, A. 2007. *Global Englishes and transcultural flows*. London: Routledge

Petkova, D. 2005. Cultural identity in a pluralistic world. In D. Petkova and J. Lehtonen (eds.) *Cultural identity in an intercultural context*. Jyväskylä: Publications of the Department of Communication 27, University of Jyväskylä, 11-66.

Phipps, A. 2003. Languages, identities, agencies: intercultural lessons from Harry Potter. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, (3)1, 6-19.

Philipsen, G. 1989. Speech and the communal function in four cultures, within language, communication and culture. In S. Ting-Toomey and F. Korzenny (eds.) *Language, Communication and Culture: Current Directions*. Newbury Park California: Sage Publications Ltd, 79-92.

Phillipson R. 2001. *English is taking over Europe*. Guardian.

PISA 2006. Timeline of the Finnish Educational Highlights. (21.04.2007) http://www.pisa2006.helsinki.fi/finnish_school/timeline/timeline.htm

Pool, J 1979. Language planning and identity planning. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 20, 5-21.

Preston, P.W. 1997. *Political/cultural identity: citizens and nations in a global era*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Quirk, R. 1990. Language varieties and standard language. *English Today, 21,* 3–10.

Reyhner, J. 2007. What is immersion education? [Online] (20.04.2007) http://www.uatuahine.hawaii.edu/hana/si98/jar/vocab.html.

Ros I Sole, C. 2004. Autobiographical accounts of L2 identity construction in Chicano literature. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, (4)4, 229-241.

Sapir, E. 1921. *Language: an introduction to the study of speech*. New York: Harcourt, Brace.

Seargeant, P. 2005. 'More English than England itself': The simulation of authenticity in foreign language practice in Japan. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 15, 326-345.

Seidlhofer, B. 2005. Standard future or half-baked quackery? In C. Gnutzmann & F. Intemann (eds.) *The globalisation of English and the English language*

Classroom. Tübingen, Germany: Narr, (159–173).

Selmer, J. 1998. Cultural groups and the study of lifestyles and cultural identity. In L. Honko (ed.), *Tradition and Cultural Identity*. Turku: Nordic Institute of Folklore, 47-76.

Skutnabb-Kangas, T. 2000. *Linguistic genocide in education -- or worldwide diversity and human rights?* London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Taavitsainen, I. and P. Pahta 2003. English in Finland: globalisation, language awareness and questions of identity. *English Today* 19 (4), 3–15.

Tanaka, S. 2006. English and multiculturalism- from the language user's perspective. *Sage Publications*, 37(1), 47-66.

Tang R. 2004. The place of culture in the foreign language classroom, a reflection. *The Internet TESL Journal.* [Online] http://www.homestead.com/ramonatang/home.html

The English School 2007. (01.04.2007) *http://www.eschool.edu.hel.fi*

University of Manitoba 2006. The Culture Concept 2006. (10.08.2006) http://www.umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/anthropology/courses/122/module1/symbolic.html

Ting-Toomey S. and F. Korzenny (eds.) 1989. *Language communication and culture: current directions*, Newbury Park California, Sage.

Tornikoski, M. 1999. *The cultural identity of bilinguals in Finland.* Unpublished ProGradu Thesis. University of Jyväskylä, Department of English Language.

World English Service Ltd. 2007: Information on types of Korean Visas. (05.08.2007) *http://www.teachkoreanz.com/terms/immigrat.htm*

APPENDIX: Interview Questions

<u>Questions about School-Life</u>

At what age did you start attending the English School?

Did you attend the English kindergarten?

Did you attend the comprehensive school and high school?

Why do you think your parents decided to send you to an English school?

Can you remember your first experiences of the school

– how did you feel about the different language in the school?

How did you feel about going to a different type of school to other kids?

Outside school-life, how did other kids react to you attending an English Language school?

Were the teachers in the school Finnish? Were they mostly English natives?

Did you like your teachers?

What language did you speak with your classmates outside classes?

Apart from the English language, how do you think the school differed from mainstream Finnish schools?

Were you explicitly taught English cultural practices in the school?

Aside from the explicit teaching, were there culturally English elements in the school? How?

Were the students mostly of Finnish backgrounds or were there children of different cultural backgrounds in the school? Can you remember what cultures?

How did you relate to the international students? Did you consider them to be different from you?

How do you think it affected you to attend school with students from others cultures?

What other languages were taught in the school? How did you feel about these languages in comparison to English?

Questions about English Use

Do you consider English to be a foreign language, a second language or a first language?
- what do you mean by foreign language etc. ?
- why do you consider English to be a second/foreign language etc. ?

How would you compare your English to that of English native speakers?
- what are your strengths and weaknesses in English?

Do you think that you have learnt a particular variety of English?
- e.g. do you speak with a particular accent/dialect?

How would you compare your English to that of a Finn who has learnt English in a Finnish speaking school?

When do you use English now? With whom?
- do you read English? What type of things do you read? Why would you choose to read in English rather than in Finnish?
- do you write in English?
- do you watch English TV programmes or listen to English radio?

        - do you read the subtitles?

        - do you prefer watching Finnish or English programmes?

Do you try to find opportunities to use English? Why/why not?

Do you consider yourself to be bilingual?

- Could you define what you think bilingual means?
- Why do you think you are/are not bilingual?

What benefits has being bilingual (or acquiring English) brought you?

Do you think you would make a good English/Finnish interpreter? Why/why not?

Do you feel that your Finnish is different in any way to the Finnish of those who went through Finnish school?

Are there any other areas of knowledge that you think are different to those who have been through Finnish school?

Questions about Culture

Do you travel abroad often? Where have you travelled to?

Which countries have you enjoyed the most?

Do you think that attending the English school has influenced how much you travel abroad?

Do you feel at home in English speaking countries? Which?

Have you lived abroad (more than 2 months)? Where?

Have you lived in an English speaking country?

Do you feel at home in English speaking countries?

What do you think would be difficult in trying to adapt to life in an English speaking culture?
What do you think would be easy?

Would you consider moving away from Finland permanently?
What would you miss about Finland?

Have you interacted with groups of English native speakers?
Have you felt comfortable in such groups?
Have you found it easy to communicate with them?

How do you define yourself when you are abroad?
Do you explain that you have been to an English school?

Do you get mistaken for being a native when you are in English speaking countries?
Are people surprised when you tell them that you are Finnish?

Do you think that you behave differently when you are speaking English to when you are speaking Finnish?

Could you describe what you think is Finnish culture? How about Finnish communication?
How do you think you compare to this picture of Finnish culture?

Could you describe what you think is English/American culture?
How would you compare to this description of English culture?
Do you consider yourself to be bicultural?

Could you explain what you mean by bicultural?

Why do you feel that you are/are not bicultural?

'Learning a language is like opening a window into a new way of viewing the world'

Do you agree and why?

Do you think that learning a new language is learning a new culture? Why?

Do you think that you acquired a particular English speaking culture as well as the English language at the school? Which one?

How do you think that attending the English School has affected your life afterwards?

Would you send your own children to an English speaking school?