

Teacher perceptions of integrating EFL into primary-level Multidisciplinary Learning Modules

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<p>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</p> <p>Suomalaisen koulureformin myötä vuoden 2014 perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelma (POPS 2014) esitteli monialaiset oppimiskokonaisuudet (MOK), jotka määritettiin osaksi jokaisen peruskoulun jokavuotista opetusta. Monialaisten oppimiskokonaisuuksien tarkoituksena on olla keino toteuttaa eheyttävää opetusta, jonka opetussuunnitelmassa kuvataan olevan osa perusopetuksen yhtenäisyyttä tukevaa toimintakulttuuria. Käytännössä tarkoituksena on toteuttaa teemapohjaista opetusta tai ns. ilmiöopetusta, joka yhdistää usean oppiaineen sisältöjä, tavoitteenaan opettaa oppiainekohtaisten sisältöjen lisäksi myös laaja-alaisia opetussuunnitelmaan merkittäviä tavoitteita, kuten monilukutaitoa ja ryhmässä työskentelyn taitoja. Monialaisten oppimiskokonaisuuksien keskeisin tavoite on auttaa oppilaita yhdistämään eri tiedonalojen tietoja ja taitoja hahmottaakseen mielekkäitä kokonaisuuksia, jotka kuvastavat todellisessa maailmassa ja ympäristössä ilmeneviä ilmiöitä. Lisäksi niiden tarkoituksena on auttaa oppilaita vastaamaan todellista maailmaa ja heidän arkielämää koskeviin kysymyksiin. Tutkimusten mukaan eheyttävä opetus lisää motivaatiota oppimista kohtaan sekä oppimisen mielekkyyttä, mutta itse monialaisia oppimiskokonaisuuksia ei ole vielä uutuudessaan kunnolla tutkittu.</p> <p>Alakouluissa on Suomessa toteutettu integroivaa opetusta pitkään myös ennen edellä kuvattua uudistusta, mutta englannin kielen oppiaine on harvoin osana integroivaa opetusta. Etenkin monet alakoulun englannin aineenopettajat ovat tottuneet suunnittelemaan opetustaan ja opettamaan yksin, sillä aineenopettajan koulutus ei ole perehdyttänyt heitä integroivaan opetukseen samalla tavoin kuin luokanopettajia. Koska monet englannin opettajat olivat monialaisten oppimiskokonaisuuksien saapuessa uuden edessä, tämän ProGradu -tutkielman tarkoituksena oli teemahaastatteluiden avulla kartoittaa alakoulun englannin opettajien näkemyksiä ja kokemuksia englannin oppiaineen integroimisesta monialaisiin oppimiskokonaisuuksiin kolmen ensimmäisen lukuvuoden ajalta niiden voimaantulosta (2016-2019). Tutkielmaa varten haastateltiin neljää englannin oppiainetta monialaisiin oppimiskokonaisuuksiin integroinutta alakoulun englannin opettajaa alkuvuodesta 2019.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat, että alakoulun englannin opettajat kokivat monialaisten oppimiskokonaisuuksien mahdollistavan englannin opettamisen tavalla, joka poikkeaa perinteisestä ja tavanomaisesta, oppikirjaan nojaavasta englannin opetuksesta. Teemapohjainen opetus mahdollistaa englannin oppiaineessa opittujen taitojen soveltamisen monialaisen teeman käsittelyyn, sekä rohkaisee vapaampaan kielelliseen ilmaisuun englanniksi. Tulokset jaettiin kolmeen kategoriaan, joiden mukaan englannin oppiaineen integrointi monialaisiin oppimiskokonaisuuksiin oli joko oppisisällöllistä, esittävää tai kokemuksellista. Haastavaksi koettiin mm. englannin oppiaineen integrointi opetustilanteisiin, joissa opetusryhmät olivat kooltaan suuria. Oppilaat eivät myöskään vielä päässeet vaikuttamaan monialaisten teemojen valintaan, mikä toteutuessaan mahdollisesti vaikuttaisi monialaisten oppimiskokonaisuuksien ja englannin oppimiseen koettuun mielekkyyteen sekä siten parantaisi implisiittistä englannin omaksumista ja englannin oppimistuloksia entisestään.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

Ever since 2014, the Finnish school system has undergone a reform as the state authorities in Finland revised the *National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2014* (NCC 2016) (Sahlberg 2019). Discussions regarding the demands for the school system to change have always existed and resulted to changes in the curriculum numerous times before; however, the educational reform taking place since 2016 in Finnish comprehensive schools is particularly justified by notable digital and societal developments and changes. Especially in the recent years, educators have recognised that comprehensive education has stagnated while the world around it develops constantly (Norrena 2015: 8-10) and in order to keep with the demands of the changing world around the school system, a stronger focus is set on creating links between schoolwork and the learning of skills needed in today's society and in the future (Cantell 2015: 11-15, Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 19). Furthermore, according to Norrena (2015: 7-8), what is notable is that educators today may face challenges in keeping up with the world the learners live in, and thus educators may not always know what truly motivates and interests the learners in their everyday life. This may lead to a notable gap between the everyday life of the learners and education itself.

Diminishing the gap between education and the everyday life of the learners is proposed to be done by highlighting integrative elements in instruction. One of these elements involves the teaching of cross-curricular, everyday life -skills needed in today's society and in the future (i.e. skills that cross subject-specific borders) (Norrena 2015: 7-8, 17-19). Another element is to help learners discover links between education and everyday life (Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 23). Especially the latter is seen as a solution to increasing both learner motivation and meaningfulness towards schoolwork (Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 23). Therefore, the NCC (2016: 32-34), as well as Halinen and Jääskeläinen (2015: 23) state that increasing *integrative instruction* in comprehensive schools, i.e. instruction that involves teaching several school subjects in an integrated manner by crossing the borders of the fragmented subject-specific instruction, allows these aims to be actualised. Opportunities for more authentic, group-oriented and activity-based lessons are thus also created (Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 25, 32-33). Furthermore, according to Halinen and Jääskeläinen (2015: 23), meaningfulness and motivation towards learning are both further increased if teachers take up the challenge to provide learners with opportunities to express their own inquiries and ideas for the instruction, thus allowing the learners to contribute to the planning of the instruction and to feel more involved in their

learning community. When learners are more involved in the planning process, teachers may then take the learners' everyday life inquiries, interests and hobbies into account in the planning of the instruction.

In order to make integrative instruction more accessible in Finnish comprehensive schools, new educational ideas have been presented. Most notably, integrative instruction is now a compulsory element in basic education: ever since 2016, every comprehensive school in Finland has organised one or several *Multidisciplinary Learning Modules* (MLs) ('monialaiset oppimiskokonaisuudet', MOK) every school year (NCC 2016: 33). The purpose of Multidisciplinary Learning Modules in the new NCC (2016) is to have comprehensive schools organise learning periods where several school subjects are brought together to teach a wider theme that is linked to the world beyond the school building – and which may also be linked to the learners' everyday life and their interests (NCC 2016: 33-34, Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 31). Moving from learning factual information towards learning skills needed in the present as well as in the future is what these modules especially highlight (Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 35). This emphasis on learning skills answers the demands of today's world of abundant information, and it sets an appropriate counterbalance for the otherwise fragmented subject-specific instruction in Finnish schools that generally has set more emphasis on learning and memorising factual information (Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 35).

However, this type of integrated instruction has not been too common in most Finnish schools until 2016, and new pedagogical methods regarding integrative instruction have risen ever since, most notably *Phenomenon-Based Learning* (PhBL) ('ilmiölähtöinen oppiminen'). Phenomenon-Based Learning specifically bears similarities to other, global pedagogical methods – such as Project-Based Learning, Problem-Based Learning, Inquiry-Based Learning and Theme-Based Instruction – which have not been overly common, though not completely unknown or absent, in the Finnish school system previously, leaving many Finnish educators slightly puzzled in regards to what Phenomenon-Based Learning and Multidisciplinary Learning Modules are and how they are to be implemented. In regards to Phenomenon-Based Learning in Finland, according to a Master's thesis by Naik (2019: 47), there is not only a need for a common definition for educators and the general public, but also a need to fill a resource and training gap. Due to this, especially many subject teachers in the primary and secondary levels may be confused due to not receiving similar training in integrative instruction to primary-level classroom teachers. This also applies to many foreign language teachers in the primary and secondary levels, specifically those who do not have an educational background

of a classroom teacher. When it comes to foreign language learning and teaching, changes have also been made in the curriculum (NCC 2016: 211), with an even further stress on communicative skills in the foreign language, as well as multilingualism, than before (Kantelinen 2017). This may perhaps be due to communicative skills and multilingualism both being integrative by nature as learning objectives, thus echoing the guidelines set also for integrative instruction.

Instruction in the subject of EFL (English as a foreign language) is, therefore, set to be different when it comes to integrative instruction in basic education, compared to traditional EFL lessons common in Finnish comprehensive schools thus far (NCC 2016: 211). In order to meet the guidelines set for integrative instruction, there is an even stronger shift from a traditional form-focused view on language learning (such as grammar and vocabulary; comparable to the factual information learnt in other school subjects) towards a focus on communicative skills and on using the language as a tool in activities that encourage communicative language use, in problem-solving as well as in searching information and learning content from other school subjects or wider themes (comparable to the cross-curricular skills highlighted in integrative instruction). As stated by Kantelinen (2017), the focus of the lessons is to learn the language for communicative real-life purposes and the aim is especially to also strengthen the learner's identity as a language user and language learner. A challenge, therefore, is set for EFL teachers when planning integrative units; according to Mäntylä (2017), due to the stronger emphasis on communicative skills, EFL teachers need to adapt their thinking about language learning and teaching from a form-focused one towards a thinking that focuses on language use and that encourages the learners to use the target language as a tool in action-oriented and communicative situations.

Since Multidisciplinary Learning Modules (MLs) have been compulsory for only a few years in Finnish comprehensive schools, there are little to no studies regarding how Finnish subject teachers have perceived the planning and organising of these modules. The present thesis will thus look into primary school EFL teachers' perspectives on the phenomenon, from the point of view of integrating the subject of EFL into the modules. Multidisciplinary Learning Modules, as well as Phenomenon-Based Learning, have already gained attention in the Finnish media due to being criticised by educational scholars in terms of possibly being ineffective in terms of learning outcomes (Valtavaara 2018); however, instead of focusing on educational results, this paper is interested in primary level EFL teachers' experiences regarding how EFL has been

integrated to the modules in the first place, and how EFL has been taught during Multidisciplinary Learning Modules thus far.

Firstly, the present study focuses on how EFL has been integrated into Multidisciplinary Learning Modules and, secondly, it focuses on the teachers' perceptions regarding what kind of opportunities and challenges Multidisciplinary Learning Modules set for the instruction in the subject of EFL. As earlier mentioned, since Multidisciplinary Learning Modules as a concept is still new to basic education and to many teachers, studying learning results more accurately may be better to be left for a later time. Instead, the focus in this paper is on looking at *how EFL has been integrated* into the modules thus far and *how EFL is taught* in them. The study concentrates on the process of planning and organising modules in the primary school level that have also had the subject of EFL present in them, in order to gain an understanding on how primary school EFL teachers have grasped the thinking regarding how language learning and teaching is being viewed during integrative instruction and Multidisciplinary Learning Modules in the primary-level.

This paper will firstly draw upon Multidisciplinary Learning Modules as a part of integrative instruction in the current Finnish school system, presenting its principles for learning and teaching as well as different approaches to how integrative units can be planned (Chapter 2). Then, a foreign language teaching perspective will be taken, by looking at how EFL can be taught in Multidisciplinary Learning Modules using a theme-based approach to language instruction (Chapter 3). This theoretical part of the paper will be followed by the aims of the present study, a description of its data collection as well as the method of analysing the data (Chapter 4), after which the data will be presented and analysed (Chapter 5). Then, finally, the paper will conclude with a discussion on the findings of the study in the final section reserved for discussion/conclusion (Chapter 6).

2 MULTIDISCIPLINARY LEARNING MODULES IN INTEGRATIVE INSTRUCTION

After the most recent educational reform in Finland, the new National Core Curriculum (NCC 2016) highlights the importance of implementing more *integrative instruction* ('eheyttävä opetus') in Finnish comprehensive schools; i.e. instruction where several school subjects (or disciplines) form a mutual understanding on a specified topic or theme (Cantell 2015: 14). Integrative instruction is set to accompany the traditional subject-specific instruction in order to have education meet the demands for change by society (Cantell 2015: 12-14). Essential to integrative instruction is also the inclusion of cross-curricular skills (i.e. skills that cross subject-specific borders) which are set to support the collaboration between school subjects; the objective being to allow learners to structure their worldview by building meaningful wholes from the subject-specific learning content (NCC 2016: 20, Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 19). The notion of combining school subjects with each other itself encourages teachers to work in cooperation and possibly to co-teach, as well as to shift attention towards society; to also work in cooperation with different environments and partnerships outside of the school building and to promote building new knowledge through cooperation (NCC 2016: 33, Cantell 2015: 14-15). According to Hunter, Scheirer and Kananoja (1992: 67), many teachers in the primary levels think that integrative instruction is an effective method for fulfilling the requirements of the curriculum, providing a good opportunity for the learners to also apply their already learnt subject-specific knowledge and skills in new contexts – this also being what the current NCC promotes with integrative instruction (NCC 2016: 32).

The importance of integrative instruction as well as the teaching of cross-curricular skills were emphasised in the previous Finnish curriculum as well (Norrena 2015: 19-21), but contrary to previous curricula integrative instruction is now a compulsory element in basic education: comprehensive schools are now to organise at least one *Multidisciplinary Learning Module* (ML) every school year (NCC 2016: 33). This chapter will, firstly, further define what Multidisciplinary Learning Modules are (Chapter 2.1), followed by a theoretical background and studies on the planning of integrative instruction (Chapter 2.2), which will further lead to exploring previous studies on how teachers in Finnish comprehensive schools have perceived the planning and organising of MLs (Chapter 2.3).

2.1 Defining Multidisciplinary Learning Modules (MLs)

Multidisciplinary Learning Modules (MLs) are pedagogical learning periods that were introduced in the Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2014 (NCC 2016) for the first time. Starting from the year 2016, MLs have been a compulsory part of basic education, requiring educators in all Finnish comprehensive schools to organise them at least once every school year (NCC 2016: 33). MLs were introduced by the NCC for the purpose of reinforcing integrative instruction; that is, instruction that crosses over the borders of different school subjects through cross-curricula activities (NCC 2016: 33). Central to MLs is that a wider theme, topic or phenomenon is chosen for each ML, and this theme is being studied and learnt through cross-curricular means by linking different school subjects (i.e. the knowledge and skills learnt in each school subject) with each other as well as with cross-curricular skill areas (i.e. ‘transversal competences’).

Since MLs are set to be a counterweight to the rather fragmented subject-specific instruction (Norrena 2015: 25), transversal competences are set to be an important part of MLs (NCC 2016: 33). The purpose is to involve important skill areas in the instruction that cannot be strictly categorised by school subjects, as well as to use these skill areas in the process of linking the school subjects with each other (Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 28). *Transversal competences* are a set of seven cross-curricular skills areas - ‘thinking and learning to learn’ (T1); ‘cultural competence, interaction and self-expression’ (T2); ‘taking care of oneself and managing daily life’ (T3); ‘multiliteracy’ (T4); ‘ICT competence’ (T5); ‘working life competence and entrepreneurship’ (T6) and ‘participation, involvement and building a sustainable future’ (T7) (for more information, see NCC 2016: 21-26) – which are similar to OECD 2005 and Partnership for 21st Century Skills internationally (Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 27). The competences themselves are stated to be important to learn when it comes to skills needed in the future (Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 28). The linking of school subjects with one another may also be more natural when linked with one or several transversal competences, and this linking may be done in different ways, which will be explored further in Chapter 2.2.

The choice on how separate school subjects are linked with one another, with transversal competences and with the chosen theme of each ML depends on the learning goals set by the teachers in each school. The learning goals may include e.g. learning content from several school subjects from the syllabus, one or several of the transversal competences listed above and/or learner questions (NCC 2016: 33, Cantell 2015: 12-14), which all contribute to the

learning of the chosen theme of the ML. The purpose of all this linking is to have the learners gain an understanding on much wider learning areas and phenomena in the world compared to the fragmented content in subject-specific instruction, as well as to possibly notice links between what they learn during instruction and their own experiences in their everyday life – this is essentially the main aim for MLs (NCC 2016: 33, Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 23).

Teachers may then take into account other, more specific aims for the instruction and include them in the activities and tasks involved in each ML. Such aims presented for MLs are e.g. *supporting the learners' intellectual curiosity and creativity through learner-centred instruction* that challenge learners to take part in *a variety of interactions and collaborative groupwork situations* (NCC 2016: 33, Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 33). *Activity-based, action-oriented* activities ('toiminnallinen opetus') that involve groupwork and interaction (NCC 2016: 33, Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 32) in possible *authentic learning situations* (Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 25) are a good way to include these aforementioned elements, as are various learning approaches and methods for integrative instruction that are introduced further in Chapter 2.2.

MLs also set further opportunities for supporting *learner agency* (i.e. learners gaining skills in decision making and in gradually taking responsibility for their own learning) (NCC 2016: 33) as well as for the linking of formal learning with informal learning (NCC 2016: 33; Kangas, Kopisto and Krokfors 2015: 41). Atjonen (1992: 19) states that the most important aim in integrative instruction is to recognise *how the learners' own interests lead them to inquiry*. Inquiry, then, may lead to learner motivation that is intrinsic by nature; thus, motivation towards taking part in societal issues may also increase due to the learners feeling that their ideas and efforts are taken into account (Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 23). Therefore, *involving the learners in the planning process* of MLs, such as in the brainstorming process, is a prerequisite for MLs (NCC 2016: 33; Holappa, Engelholm, Packalen and Saukko-Rauta 2017: 13); if the theme was chosen together with the learners, it may be more likely for the learners to link what they learn to their everyday life, increasing overall *meaningfulness towards the learning process* (Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 23, 30).

This opportunity to rather freely make decisions in terms of the aims and learning goals for each ML is due to the NCC encouraging each school to realise the values and principles of its school culture ('perusopetuksen toimintakulttuuri') when planning and organising MLs (NCC 2016: 33; Cantell 2015: 12; Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 30-32). Decisions regarding

timetabling and organisation are also decided by each school in their local curriculum (NCC 2016: 33). This leads to a variety of differences between the MLs organised in different schools, making it an interesting research topic. The foundation for these school-specific differences can be noted from the following figure found in the NCC, which illustrates the structure of an ML by dividing into sections of ‘Foundation’, ‘Instruments’ and ‘Goals’:

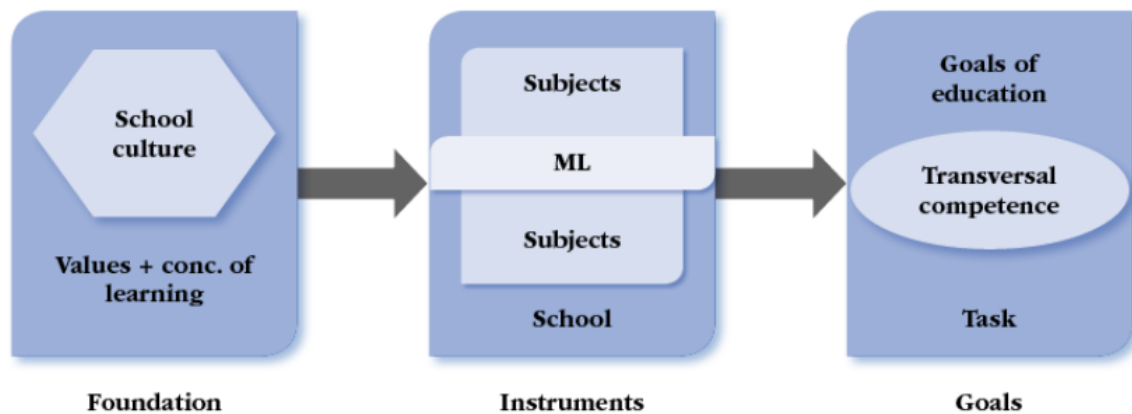


Figure 1: The elements of a Multidisciplinary Learning Module (ML), as depicted by the National Core Curriculum (NCC 2016: 34)

The figure above shows how the principles and values of education along with the school-specific differences (‘Foundation’) serve as a base for the choice of the themes, the school subjects involved as well as the methods of instruction for each ML (‘Instruments’). The chosen theme, school subjects and the methods of instruction thus further serve to realise the learning goals set for each ML (‘Goals’).

Essentially, MLs are a platform for carrying out integrative instruction of various sorts, allowing schools to realise the principles of their own school culture in their teaching and learning practices. Holappa et al. (2017: 12) also stress that MLs are considered to be part of normal schoolwork that is evaluated, not an extra element. Theory on integrative instruction shows that there are several ways to plan and carry out integrative lessons and units, and thus alternatives for teachers to choose from. The following chapter examines some alternatives to planning MLs by presenting approaches and methods to integrative instruction.

2.2 Approaches and methods to planning MLs

The roles of both the school subjects and the transversal competences involved in an ML are dependent on the pedagogical approach chosen during the planning process. The NCC (2016: 33) states that integration *between* school subjects (as opposed to *within* one school subject) may be done e.g. by ‘sequencing’ subject-specific lessons one after another to form a coherent whole of the theme of the lessons, or by teaching several school subjects simultaneously in a lesson through ‘parallel study’ – essentially using either *vertical integration* (‘sequencing’) or *horizontal integration* (‘parallel study’) (see e.g. Koppinen and Pasanen 1991: 8). Furthermore, since the NCC (2016: 33) allows schools to freely choose the approaches to planning MLs as well as the pedagogical methods used in them, other possibilities for planning the structure of the modules, especially ones that also take cross-curricular skills into account, can be utilised. Ever since the theories on integration by John Dewey (1957), methods regarding integrative instruction have been created to support the idea of learning skills for everyday life (Kangas et al. 2015: 37) and one source for ideas can be found from the field of curriculum integration (e.g. Drake and Burns 2004, Beane 1997). Curriculum integration presents different alternatives to structuring integrative units such as MLs.

In curriculum integration, according to Drake and Burns (2004: 8), three basic approaches to integration have been identified. These approaches are *the Multidisciplinary Approach*, *the Interdisciplinary Approach* and *the Transdisciplinary Approach* and they present three fundamentally different structures and starting points for integration. These three approaches are presented in the following chapters (Chapters 2.3.1, 2.3.2 and 2.3.3), while linking them to pedagogical methods for integrative instruction, including some of the Finnish methods for planning MLs that have been presented by Finnish scholars as a response to the most recent NCC (2016). Despite the methods being categorised under each approach according to their descriptions, it should be noted that this categorisation is not absolute and the methods presented may ultimately be adapted and combined with any of the three approaches.

2.2.1 The Multidisciplinary Approach and Discipline-Based Integration

The Multidisciplinary Approach to integration, in comparison to the other approaches to planning integrative units in the following chapters, focuses more on *disciplines*, i.e. on the individual school subjects, instead of other areas in the integrative unit (such as cross-curricular skills). The planning process essentially focuses more on setting goals for the individual

disciplines, while linking the disciplines as individual entities to the chosen theme of the integrative unit (Drake and Burns 2004: 8, Beane 1997: 10). The following figure illustrates how the individual disciplines are placed in relation to each other around the chosen theme:

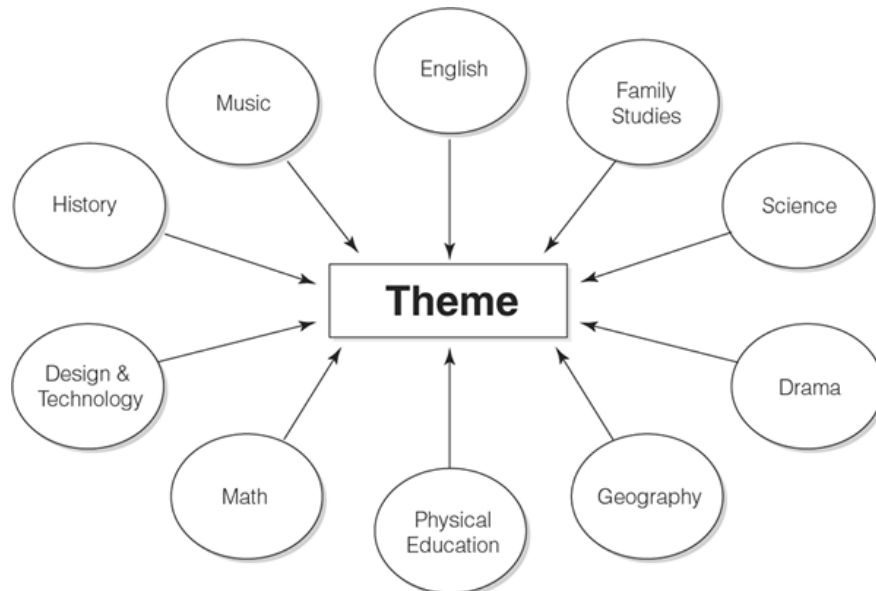


Figure 2: The Multidisciplinary Approach (Drake and Burns 2004: 9)

The figure shows that, in the Multidisciplinary Approach, the chosen theme for the instruction is linked to the individual disciplines (school subjects) in a way that keeps them separate from one another, keeping their separate identities retained. Consequently, this leads to the theme being discussed from the perspective of each of the school subject involved in the integrative unit, its overriding purpose still being the learning of discipline-specific content over cross-curricular skills, which are left as a secondary matter, and it may be argued that this type of integrative instruction is not very far removed from the traditional subject-specific instruction (Beane 1997: 10-11).

As a response to the Finnish NCC (2016), *Discipline-Based Integration* ('tiedonalälähtöinen eheyttäminen') was introduced as a model for planning MLs (Juuti, Kairavuori and Tani 2015), and it is similar to the Multidisciplinary Approach in regards to how the chosen theme is linked to the individual disciplines. Discipline-Based Integration sets a stronger focus on the individual roles of the disciplines when approaching the learning of the theme; understanding the basic concepts of each discipline is set as the starting point of the instruction, after which these concepts are used to find an understanding on the chosen theme, i.e. the bigger entity or phenomenon in the world (Juuti et al. 2015: 79). The fundamental idea behind Discipline-Based

Integration is to have each discipline contribute to the discussion of the theme, thus having learners realise how differently the same phenomenon can be viewed from different points of view, and how each discipline can offer different tools and skills for examining and understanding the theme (Juuti et al. 2015: 82). The aim, then, is to find a common understanding on the theme with the help of the disciplines involved (Juuti et al. 2015: 82-83, Lonka et al. 2015: 53).

It is worth noting, however, that the Multidisciplinary Approach may not be as integrative as some other approaches to integrative instruction. According to Beane (1997: 9), the Multidisciplinary Approach is not as integrative as the theory of curriculum integration implies; rather similarly to subject-specific instruction, the Multidisciplinary Approach begins and ends with *subject-based* content and skills, while a more integrative approach begins and ends with a *problem-based* centre (Bellack and Kliebard 1971, as quoted by Beane 1997: 11). Essentially, he states that if a stronger focus is set on cross-curricular skills rather than on the concepts learnt in traditional subject-specific instruction, the starting and ending points of the instruction would be more problem-based, drawing together concepts and skills from several individual disciplines in a more natural way. Juuti et al. (2015: 79) also note, that once a stronger focus is set on interaction and groupwork, disciplines and their learning content are more likely to take the role of setting the context for the interactions. Learner questions may also not be straightforwardly linked to discipline-based concepts (Juuti et al. 2015: 83). However, they point out that the Finnish understanding does not set subject-specific instruction and integrative instruction as strict opposites to one another, allowing them, therefore, to be combined and to have them support one another (Juuti et al. 2015: 81, Atjonen 1992). Thus, they stress the importance of what discipline-based concepts provide for integration; the theme will then be understood from many diverse perspectives (Juuti et al. 2015: 83).

Yet, Beane (1997: 10-12) further stresses that calling approaches ‘multidisciplinary’ when referring to approaches to integrative instruction may mislead many educators and even result to losing potential in planning lessons that are truly integrative by nature. Therefore, according to Beane (1997: 10-12), it is important for educators to understand the widest range of alternatives when it comes to planning interdisciplinary, or cross-disciplinary, lessons and curricula. Hunter et al. (1992: 41-42) also state that if integrative instruction remains similar to the traditional subject-divisive model, it may have rather little to offer as a counterweight to traditional subject-specific instruction. Even if integrative instruction planned with the Multidisciplinary Approach increases learning motivation substantially, learning in a truly

integrative way may be hindered if too much focus is set upon separate disciplines and fragmented knowledge that are loosely connected to the theme. Hunter et al. (1992: 41-43) suggest that, instead, instruction may be built upon pedagogy that helps learners apply what they have learnt in new contexts; to connect their own experiences to thematic content (White 1986, as quoted by Hunter et al. 1992: 42). The focus will then be set upon cross-curricular skills in problem-solving and critical thinking, rather than subject-specific concepts from subject-specific instruction.

2.2.2 The Interdisciplinary Approach and Activity-Based Learning

In order to illustrate the difference between the Multidisciplinary Approach and a more integrative approach used in curriculum integration, Figure 2 can be compared to the following figure (Figure 3), formulated by Beane (1997: 11).

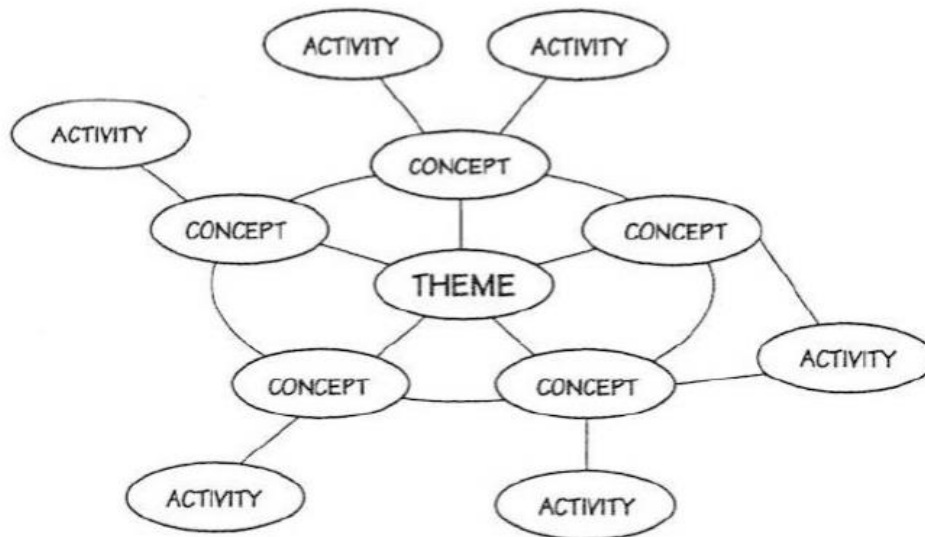


Figure 3: Schematic web for curriculum integration (Beane 1997: 11), illustrating how integrative instruction can be organised using a more integrative approach to planning

Contrary to the Multidisciplinary Approach, which uses subject-specific content and concepts as its starting point, a more integrative approach sequences content by relevance to the chosen theme-area in a more problem-based (or activity-based) manner. In order to plan for more integrative lessons, Beane (1997: 11) stresses that instead of having learners attend a round of discipline-specific lessons that all teach the chosen theme from each discipline's point of view, a more integrative experience may be to have learners attend problem-based activities; to move

from one activity or problem to another, each activity involving knowledge and skill areas from multiple school subjects combined with interdisciplinary skills (cross-curricular skills) into slightly bigger entities. This way, the subject-specific content and cross-curricular skills taught are *contextualised*; each contributing to the understanding of the chosen theme in the integrative unit (Beane 1997: 7). Drake and Burns (2004: 12) call this approach to integrative instruction *the Interdisciplinary Approach*. The following figure illustrates the central elements to this approach:

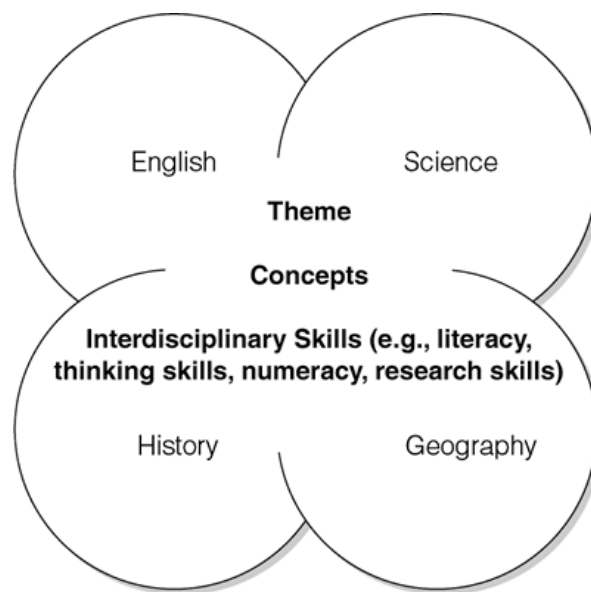


Figure 4: The Interdisciplinary Approach (Drake and Burns 2004: 12)

As the name implies, the Interdisciplinary Approach sets a slightly stronger focus on the learning of interdisciplinary skills over subject-specific knowledge. According to Drake and Burns (2004: 12), the focus in the interdisciplinary approach is to organise instruction around *common learning areas*, or common concepts, across separate school subjects (referred to as ‘*sub-themes*’ later in Chapter 3.2.3); to chunk these common concepts together and to emphasise interdisciplinary skills. These sub-disciplines are also illustrated by Beane (1997) in Figure 3 (as ‘concepts’), where they are placed around the chosen theme; then, one or several activities are linked to each, or more than one, concept/sub-discipline. These activities may then combine interdisciplinary skills with subject-specific content from one or several disciplines; the goal, therefore, being to create bigger learning entities out of the subject-specific content, while having an emphasis on the learning of interdisciplinary skills (Drake and Burns 2004: 12). In the context of the Finnish NCC, transversal competences (see Chapter 2.1) can be regarded as an equivalent to the interdisciplinary skills referred to in the interdisciplinary

approach and in Figure 4. The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture (2010: 38) specifically supports this type of learning by stating that when interdisciplinary skills are set as the starting point for the instruction, the content and the learning goals in each school subject can then be linked in a relatively coherent and meaningful way. It is also a good opportunity for involving action-oriented activities recommended by the NCC (2016: 33) that involve groupwork and interaction.

In terms of how individual disciplines are placed in the Interdisciplinary Approach, disciplines are more closely linked to one another (as seen in Figure 4 above, where the bubbles are slightly merging with each other, without losing their separate identities) compared to how they are placed in the Multidisciplinary Approach (as seen in Figure 2, where the disciplines are in their distinctly separate bubbles). Therefore, the division between the disciplines are slightly blurred, yet their separate identities are kept and identifiable (Drake and Burns 2004: 12). When the disciplines are more closely linked in this way, a focus is then naturally set on the content and skills that are shared by these disciplines involved, and a strict one-subject perspective on the chosen theme of the integrative unit may be avoided. Beane (1997: 10) agrees by stating that in a more integrative unit a stronger focus is set on learning about the theme itself over the learning of discipline-based content. As a consequence to stressing interdisciplinary skills over subject-specific concepts, there may then be more opportunities for implementing *activity-based tasks*, or action-oriented activities, echoing the principles set for MLs by the Finnish NCC in regards to supporting the active role of the learners (as discussed in Chapter 2.1).

Drake and Burns (2004: 12-13) present a few examples to how the Interdisciplinary Approach can be used in instruction. A learning situation may involve the learners making and building something concrete, such as wind and rain machines, while learning language skills (and thus learning the interdisciplinary skill of ‘communication’ – which may also be applicable in e.g. foreign language learning situations through implicit language learning). Another example is to learn math and science concepts through the arts (such as singing, painting, sculpting and dancing). They state that in both of these instances, learners learn skills and concepts beyond the immediate lesson and learners usually report these types of activities to be fun and engaging.

It is worth noting that this approach is not necessarily a “solution” to the Multidisciplinary Approach, or a “better” alternative for all instructions for that matter, but merely a different approach to planning, which may bring more variety to the rather discipline-focused instruction that the Multidisciplinary Approach tends to emulate. Bringing variety to planning also applies

to the third, and final, approach presented next. While the borders between different disciplines are blurred in the Interdisciplinary Approach, in the next approach the borders may disappear, which leaves room for setting a focus on other aspects during the instruction.

2.2.3 The Transdisciplinary Approach, Project-Based Learning and Phenomenon-Based Learning

In *the Transdisciplinary Approach* to integration, the focus is to organise lessons around the learners' questions and interests. Thus, it may be an especially good alternative to the suggestion presented by Hunter et al. (1992:41-41) in regards to helping learners connect their own experiences to what is being learnt.

When these learner inquiries are set as the starting point for instruction, it can be said that the instruction is naturally rather integrative, since, then, instruction does not emphasise some disciplines over the others as it does in the Multidisciplinary Approach, or interdisciplinary skills as in the Interdisciplinary Approach; rather, according to Drake and Burns (2004: 13), the main focus is set on the learners' questions and the goal is to find answers to these questions. During the instruction, learners may also develop life skills while applying disciplinary and interdisciplinary skills in real-life contexts. Consequently, traditional subject-specific borders are heavily diminished, if not abandoned completely. All this is illustrated in the following figure:

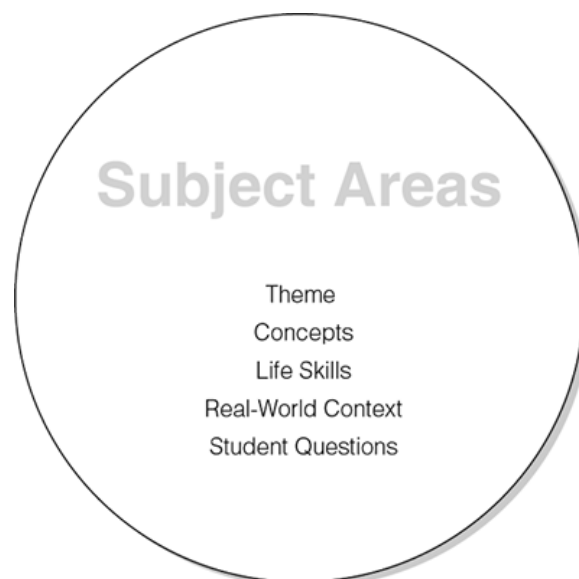


Figure 5: The Transdisciplinary Approach (Drake and Burns 2004: 14)

While disciplines are placed in their own separate bubbles in Figure 2 and the bubbles are slightly merging with each other in Figure 4, the figure above (Figure 5) illustrates how the lines between the separate disciplines ('subject areas') in the Transdisciplinary Approach have disappeared completely (or are at least heavily blurred) due to the disciplines having merged with one another, leaving room for a stronger focus on learner questions and towards inquiry on real-world issues that cannot necessarily strictly be divided into separate disciplines.

Due to a stronger focus on learner inquiries, the goal of this approach is, indeed, to teach the learners life skills while applying subject-specific as well as interdisciplinary skills in real-life situations and contexts (Drake and Burns 2004: 13). *Project-Based Learning (PBL)* may then be used – which may also be referred to as 'Problem-Based Learning' (Drake and Burns 2004: 13), although definitions vary (see e.g. Jones and Monco 2015, Hmelo-silver 2004: 236-239). Project-Based Learning, according to Chard (1998, as quoted by Drake and Burns 2004: 13-14), involves three steps:

1. Teachers and learners decide on a theme or a topic based on learner interests and curriculum standards.
2. The teacher considers what the learners already know in terms of content that may help them generate questions to explore further.
3. Learners share their work or findings with others, or present them to an audience. A review and evaluation of the project also follows.

Chard (1998: 18) states that in project work intrinsic motivation specifically may be high among the learners, due to the learners having opportunities to be more involved and active in making decisions on what to do and how to carry out the plan. Under these conditions they also tend to take more responsibility in their learning, echoing the NCC's (2016) principles (see Chapter 2.1).

Alternatively, if a more research-based approach is decided for the teaching of the chosen theme of the integrative unit, *Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL)* may also be used, in which case the three points presented above apply to it as well; only then, the main goal of the instruction is to find answers to the learners' inquiries by formulating them first into 'research questions' or into a problem to be solved with the help of the teacher (Blessinger, Carfora, and Andersen 2015: 7-8, 13-14; Hakkarainen, Lonka and Lipponen 2005: 300). An approach based on inquiry may also be high in intrinsic motivation, as stated by Atjonen (1992: 19, see Chapter 2.1).

In response to the recent Finnish NCC (2016), *Phenomenon-Based Learning (PhBL)* ('ilmiölähtöinen oppiminen') was introduced (e.g. Lonka et al. 2015) as a more integrative alternative to planning MLs compared to Discipline-Based Integration (discussed in Chapter 2.3.1). PhBL is not mentioned in the NCC itself, but has ever since also become a colloquial term (e.g. 'ilmiöviikko', i.e. 'phenomenon week') in the Finnish media discussions to refer to MLs in general, which may have led some to confuse the term to be synonymous to MLs. PhBL is after all just one out of several methods to plan MLs. Some may also confuse PhBL with Discipline-Based Integration, not realising that PhBL as a method differs quite significantly from Discipline-Based Integration.

Contrary to what one may initially think, PhBL shares much more similarities with the Transdisciplinary Approach to integrative instruction than to the Multidisciplinary Approach (discussed in Chapter 2.2.1). Lonka et al. (2015: 56-57) depict PhBL to closely resemble Inquiry-Based Learning due to it setting the learners' questions as the starting point of the instruction (Lonka et al. 2015: 53) in addition to there also being a lack of clear subject-specific borders. A difference between Inquiry-Based Learning and PhBL may be noted in how PhBL sets a stronger emphasis on the word 'phenomenon'; i.e. a bigger entity in the world, a type of opposite to the traditional subject-specific focus (Lonka et al. 2015: 49-50). Despite that, it is very similar to Inquiry-Based Learning, since PhBL allows the learners to use their background knowledge, to notice what inquires them in their environment (Lonka et al. 2015: 51-52) and to learn skills in searching for information, researching and working in groups (Lonka et al. 2015: 57). The difference to Discipline-Based Integration, then, is the fact that PhBL moves from a bigger phenomenon towards smaller pieces of understanding, whereas Discipline-Based Integration begins from smaller, fragmented discipline-based concepts and moves towards the understanding of bigger entities (Juuti et al. 2015: 82, Lonka et al. 2015: 53).

Teachers have, therefore, several alternatives to choose from when it comes to planning MLs. Choosing a method also depends on how each school wants to teach each chosen theme and how the learners' questions are approached (NCC 2016: 33, Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 31). In the next chapter, teacher perceptions regarding planning and organising MLs thus far are examined.

2.3 Teacher perceptions of organising MLs

Since MLs have only existed for about three to four years in the Finnish comprehensive education, studies regarding MLs have thus far been scarce. Two studies, however - one by Tarnanen, Kaukonen, Kostainen and Toikka (2019) and another by Koskinen-Sinisalo Reinikainen and Sinervo (2020) - have recently been conducted. The former examined what teachers and learners in a comprehensive school learned during an ML organised for grades 5-8 (ages 11 to 14) and the latter how primary-level classroom teachers at Tampere University Teacher Training School perceived organising MLs for grades 1-6 (ages 7 to 12) thus far (having organised around 3 to 4 MLs in total). This section examines what the studies have reported regarding the teachers' perceptions of organising MLs.

Despite the recentness of MLs, the teachers in the studies found that MLs did not introduce a lot of new elements when it came to integrative instruction. Some of the teachers in the study by Koskinen-Sinisalo et al. (2020: 42) reported that despite considering MLs interesting and essential, they perceived that similar integration has been done at their school for many years before the introduction of MLs, and thus MLs have not particularly presented many new elements to integrative instruction in the primary-level. The study (Koskinen-Sinisalo et al. 2020: 45) thus reported that while MLs are not considered a completely new invention to instruction, it is also important not to dismiss the new elements that they introduce to integrative instruction in order to not repeat old teaching habits. It especially states that it is central to focus on increasing learner-centredness and to consider the aim of making the learners feel that their thoughts and ideas are taken into account in the planning process, while also highlighting the importance of the teachers' ability to truly listen to the learners and to take their ideas into account without sacrificing their pedagogical role as an educator. The importance of the teachers learning new skills, such as working as a facilitator to learner groups with a variety of learners and cooperating with colleagues, were also noted to be important by the teachers in the study by Tarnanen et al. (2019: 38-39); despite some of the teachers being a bit unsure of their own competence in these new skills and finding this new role to be a challenge, the teachers in the study stated MLs providing good opportunities to improve on their competence while teaching (Tarnanen et al. 2019: 42). The study points out that it is a matter of change in pedagogical thinking rather than just a change in facilitating learner groups (Tarnanen 2019: 43).

Other teachers in the study by Koskinen-Sinisalo et al. (2020:42) remarked that while learner-centredness is important, it is not so simple to implement. Most notably, a learner-centred approach to choosing the themes for the MLs was implemented the least often – the themes thus far having been chosen by the teachers without the learners in the vast majority of cases (Koskinen-Sinisalo et al. 2020: 41-42). The study concluded that it was challenging to take all learners' interests into account in the planning of the instruction in general (Koskinen-Sinisalo et al. 2020: 44), which also had its effect on the process of choosing the theme. In the study by Tarnanen et al. (2019: 31), the theme of the study's ML ('Healthy Life') was also chosen without the influence of the learners. Despite this, learner-centredness was otherwise present in both of the studies' MLs, such as by giving the learners opportunities to take part in e.g. choosing the learning materials and in the forming of learning groups during the planning process (Koskinen-Sinisalo et al. 2020: 41-42). During instruction, learner-centredness also manifested itself in groupwork and in allowing the learners to take responsibility in their own learning (Tarnanen et al. 2019: 39).

Most of the challenges reported by the teachers in both studies thus mainly stemmed from the teachers acquiring a new role as a facilitator and from promoting learner-centred instruction. The planning of the MLs requires a lot of time according to the teachers in the study by Koskinen-Sinisalo et al. (2020: 42), which also stated this perception tending to contradict with the idea of allowing for spontaneity during the instruction along with the learners' inquiries. In the study by Tarnanen et al. (2019: 39, 42), the teachers noted that an inquiry-based approach in their ML required the teachers to be adaptive to changing situations during the instruction, to get used to new, non-traditional teaching materials, to have competence in guiding learners with differing motivation and skill levels as well as to have trust in the learners abilities to take responsibility in their tasks and to self-regulate. Furthermore, challenges regarding facilitating learner groups with mixed learners were noted, some of the learner groups having needed much more regulating by the teacher than others (Tarnanen et al. 2019: 39, 42). The teachers in the study by Koskinen-Sinisalo et al. (2020: 44-45) agreed by stating that the teachers need to especially make sure to support the learners who have yet to find their strengths and confidence in themselves as learners in this type of instruction. Their study depicted the teacher's new role being similar to juggling between several tasks, such as switching from managing one situation, or guiding a group of learners, to another (Koskinen-Sinisalo et al. 2020: 42, 44), which expresses how challenging the process of acquiring the role of a facilitator has been in the first years of organising MLs.

The teachers' perceptions on the roles of the school subjects and the interdisciplinary skills were similar in both studies. The ML in the study by Tarnanen et al. (2019: 26) was planned using the Interdisciplinary Approach (Chapter 2.2.2), which led to the learners reporting having learnt both interdisciplinary skills (such as research skills, working in groups, skills presenting information) and subject-specific content (in math, Finnish, literacy and health education). The teachers in the study by Koskinen-Sinisalo et al. (2020: 40) also reflected on the role of teaching interdisciplinary skills; since MLs set opportunities for the learner to learn important skills needed in their daily lives, such as working in groups and taking responsibility, this opportunity should be recognised and also allow some MLs to have them as the core of the ML instead of always concentrating on subject-specific goals. They also recognised that a project-based core may allow the learners who have difficulties with reading and writing to be more involved.

This practical experience in regards to MLs shows that teachers have recognised more interdisciplinary ways of planning MLs (Chapter 2.2.2 and 2.2.3), using project-based and inquiry-based cores, rather than just with the Multidisciplinary Approach (Chapter 2.2.1) with a subject-specific core. The learners in the study by Tarnanen et al. (2019: 34) reported having learnt both interdisciplinary skills and subject-specific content, while for others self-evaluation was still a bit challenging. The study by Koskinen-Sinisalo et al. (2020: 40) also reported interdisciplinary skills having taken a more prominent role in instruction than in subject-specific instruction; MLs thus having been described to allow opportunities for the learners to acquire important skills needed in everyday life, and also to allow learners with lower skill levels in reading and writing to shine in project-based learning.

In terms of the role of school subjects in MLs, especially notable is that in the study by Koskinen-Sinisalo et al. (2020: 38-39) all school subjects had been present in at least one ML in the school, with the exception of all the foreign language subjects (English, German, French) as well as the national language Swedish, keeping all the MLs monolingually Finnish. The study stated that the challenge to their inclusion lies in the fact that since the learner groups in MLs are mixed with learners from several grades, it requires much more cooperation from the teachers' part, noting that means for including the language subjects need to be considered in the future. These challenges may thus stem from having learners from different skill levels work with one another. With this significant absence of languages other than Finnish in these MLs in mind, this paper looks further into the phenomenon. The next chapter (Chapter 3) examines how a foreign language subject (in this case EFL) can be included in integrative units such as ML, after which the present study is introduced (Chapter 4).

3 THEME-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING IN INTEGRATIVE INSTRUCTION

Context is what generally makes language learning effective, and thus language teachers globally (especially second language teachers) have naturally preferred to present language through meaningful content, i.e. by *contextualising* language in meaningful ways (Brinton, Snow and Wesche 2003: 1). In regards to contextualising foreign language learning specifically, the Finnish NCC (2016: 211) now stresses that learners are also to be given opportunities to use their skills in foreign languages, even if it is limited, in a variety of situations, including in the learning of other school subjects. The cooperation between foreign languages and other school subjects is stated in the NCC to be a precondition for the type of language learning that both strengthens the learners' trust in their own language learning abilities and supports their identities as fluent language users. Skills in various areas regarding languages, such as *language awareness* and *multiliteracy* are thus also developed, the latter also being one of the transversal competences described in Chapter 2.1. Therefore, integrative instruction in particular plays an important role in supporting this cooperation between foreign languages and the other school subjects.

These principles by the NCC have led to some changes in foreign language instruction in Finnish schools, especially when it comes to MLs. When a school subject in a foreign language is involved in integrative units such as MLs, the language teacher may want to focus on integrating the language in a way that has the language occur naturally and meaningfully in context alongside possible other school subjects (Cameron 2001: 181-182). Contextualising is thus key to integrating a foreign language also to cross-curricular themes; and contextualised language learning may thus also be applied in the approaches to integrative instruction described in Chapter 2.2, most notably in the Interdisciplinary Approach (Chapter 2.2.2). Since the NCC (2016: 34) advises that teaching approaches and methods from each school subject be utilised in MLs, it is now relevant to look further into some of the approaches and methods used for teaching EFL in integrative situations.

This chapter begins with the definition for Theme-based teaching (or Theme-based CBI), which is a model for language instruction through the teaching of a theme (Chapter 3.1), after which the principles to foreign language instruction in the NCC are linked to Theme-based CBI while also presenting concrete examples to how EFL can be integrated into a theme (Chapter 3.2).

The chapter concludes with a previous study regarding teacher and learner perceptions on an ESL course that used Theme-based CBI for the learning of English through the teaching of a theme (Chapter 3.3).

3.1 Defining Theme-based teaching (Theme-based CBI)

Theme-based teaching is a model for language teaching usually found in EFL contexts (Davies 2003). According to Cameron (2001: 181-182), its origins lie in the UK, where theme-based teaching has been used in the primary (non-language learning) classrooms since the 1960's. In these lessons, different areas of the curriculum are taught in an integrated manner, without the separation of different school subjects. An interest towards theme-based teaching eventually spread to EFL classrooms globally (Davies 2003), after it was discovered that theme-based teaching offers opportunities for both communicative language teaching and content teaching at the same time (Cameron 2001: 182). Cameron (2001: 181-182) adds that since teaching that is integrated around a theme is claimed to suit the way that children naturally learn, language teachers at the primary level eventually recognised the potential of theme-based teaching in creating realistic and motivating situations for language use with meaning and purpose, leading to language learning situations that counterbalance traditional foreign language instruction.

Theme-based teaching is now considered to be one of several language teaching models under a broader approach to language teaching called *Content-Based Instruction* (CBI) (Wesche and Skehan 2002: 220, as quoted by Yang 2009: 162), which is also known as *Content-Based Language Learning/Teaching* (CBLT) in some contexts (Crandall 2012: 149). Because of these origins, Theme-based teaching is also referred to as *Theme-based CBI* (Davies 2003), and it will also be referred to by this term in the rest of this paper. CBI, as a wider approach to second language learning, aims to the complete integration of language learning and content learning (Stryker and Leaver 1997: 5). It emerged from the Canadian-French immersion programs in the 1960's and took place in the field of language teaching in the 1980's (Dueñas 2004: 76, Cenoz 2015: 10), originating in the evolution of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Dueñas 2004: 73). It then continued to become popular and was widely implemented in various contexts across North America during the 1990's as well as the beginning of the 21st century (Dueñas 2004: 76).

In CBI, the main focus of the instruction is shifted strictly from the language itself towards the learning of language through the learning of meaningful content (Stryker and Leaver 1997: 5).

The learning of language is thus organised around the content or a subject matter (Richards and Rodgers 2014: 116, Lyster 2007: 1). CBI encourages learners to focus on *using* the language (i.e. to listen, speak, read and write in the target language) in order to understand the learning content, rather than setting a focus on learning primarily *about* the language (i.e. its form and structures), which traditional language lessons tend to do (Richards and Rodgers 2014: 118). Another difference to traditional language instruction is that the language items in CBI lessons are determined by the theme or content of the instruction, rather than only the linguistic or other type of syllabus (Richards and Rodgers 2014: 116, 118). Lessons can thus extend teaching and learning beyond using the target language textbook (Cameron 2001: 184) and even in the primary level content from various subjects, such as science and social studies, can be integrated (Crandall 2012: 149-150).

Theme-based CBI, and CBI in general, share many similarities with other language learning approaches that also integrate content and language, especially with those concerning bilingual education and immersion (Coyle, Hood and Marsh 2010: 1, Thompson and McKinley 2018: 1). Most notably, *Content and Language Integrated Learning* (CLIL), similarly to CBI, is also an approach to integrating content and language teaching together. CLIL fosters additive bilingualism through a dual focus on both content and language learning (Coyle et al. 2010: 3, Thompson and McKinley 2018: 2), which is typical for some CBI models as well, while other CBI models may have a stronger focus on one over the other (Brinton et al. 2003: 14-25, Richards and Rodgers 2014: 129-131, Met 1998: 40-41). CLIL is a European approach to content and language learning used since the late 1990's, while CBI is a term used in North America since the 1980's (Richards and Rodgers 2014: 116, 132), and according to an analysis by Cenoz (2015: 12) the two terms may be used interchangeably in some sources while others consider them very different, which in itself may serve as a source of confusion.

CBI is chosen for this paper over CLIL due to Theme-based CBI being now widely used by EFL subject teachers globally (Davies 2003), while CLIL is, in most cases, primarily depicted to be an approach for the content teacher (such as a classroom teacher) to teach their content subject(s) in another language (Dalton-Puffer, Llinares, Lorenzo and Nikula 2014: 215). Due to its adaptability, Theme-based CBI can thus be aimed for EFL classrooms at any level and it is generally accessible for any EFL teacher in Finnish primary schools, both EFL subject teachers and classroom teachers teaching EFL. That is, the teacher in a Theme-based CBI classroom can either be an ESL or an EFL teacher teaching a class alone or while teamed up with a content specialist, such as a classroom teacher, in co-teaching situations (Richards and

Rodgers 2014: 129-130, Crandall 2012: 150). Thus, it is also a suitable model to be used in integrative instruction with goals for both content and language learning, such as MLs in Finnish comprehensive schools. Theme-based CBI integrates language skills with the learning of a theme, such as ‘natural wonders of the world’, or a broad topic such as ‘change’ (Oxford 2001: 4), which are similar to themes chosen for MLs in Finnish schools. Themes provide the content for language-learning activities, and language skills are practiced in the service of communicating about the theme (Oxford 2001: 4). In terms of adaptability, according to Met (1998: 40-41), CBI lessons may be set to be more content-driven, more language-driven or balanced. In lessons with a stronger focus on content, content-specific learning goals are emphasised over language-learning goals, which has language functioning mostly as a tool for learning content. While in lessons with a language-learning focus, content functions as a supporting element for achieving language learning goals.

Since CBI is an approach to second language teaching specifically, its other models are designed for ESL (English as a Second Language) classrooms, Theme-based CBI being the only model found in EFL classrooms (Davies 2003). The other models of CBI are the *Sheltered model*, the *Adjunct model* (see e.g. Brinton et al. 2003: 14-25, Richards and Rodgers 2014: 129-130), and the *Skill-based model* (see Richards and Rodgers 2014: 130-131). Theme-based CBI, in particular, is depicted to be the most useful and widespread form of content-based instruction, also used in many ESL and EFL textbooks globally (Oxford 2001: 4). Theme-based CBI may thus also be an alternative to teach EFL similarly to how ESL is taught, highlighting the immersive way to learning a language through the learning of thematic content.

3.2 Using Theme-based CBI in primary-level integrative instruction

Theme-based CBI used in primary-level foreign language teaching is likely to have the language learning of children revolve around a variety of situations for language use to carry out and/or learn about the content of the chosen theme. According to Cameron (2001: 191), the learners are likely to work with chunks of discourse from different contexts, such as discussions, stories and songs. Vocabulary development and some aspects of mostly implicit, grammatical knowledge, are also linked together with elementary literacy skills. He adds that a theme-based approach can contribute to integrative instruction by building links and connections to the networks of children's language resources, which is also what the NCC (2016: 211, 236-238)

highlights as important for foreign language learning during integrative instruction e.g. through promoting the teaching of multiliteracy and language awareness.

This section connects the principles and aims of Theme-based CBI with the Finnish NCC. Firstly, in Chapter 3.2.1, it aims to justify the relevance of the language learning principles in Theme-based CBI in regards to the NCC for integrative instruction, and MLs specifically (NCC 2016: 32-34). Then, in Chapter 3.2.2, the potential of Theme-based CBI for language education (NCC 2016: 211) and for learning EFL (NCC 2016: 236-240), such as in regards to the learning of different language elements, is examined. The section concludes with Chapter 3.2.3 which looks further into how the language elements in EFL can be integrated into the activities and learning goals planned for integrative instruction in the primary-level.

3.2.1 The relevance of Theme-based CBI to integrative instruction

Using CBI in an effective way for language instruction involves several principles also shared by the Finnish NCC in regards to integrative instruction and MLs (NCC 2016: 32-34). In regards to MLs specifically, Chapter 2.1 in this paper already presented the following principles which all are also shared by the principles to Theme-based CBI: *involving content that is meaningful and relevant for the learners, learner centredness, learner agency and authentic materials/learning situations*. Furthermore, *multiliteracy* is one of the transversal competences (NCC 2016: 23-24) which is also part of teaching in CBI. This section takes a language learning perspective to examining these shared principles between CBI and those in MLs presented in Chapter 2.1.

When choosing the content for language learning, CBI, similarly to the principles for MLs (NCC 2016: 32-34), stresses that there should be a focus on the type of content for language learning that is *meaningful and relevant* to the learners (Crandall 2012: 152, Brinton et al. 2003: 3). In order for the instruction to find its focus on the themes and topics that are relevant and meaningful, the importance of supporting *learners centredness* in the instruction is stressed (Cameron 2001: 191), as it is with the NCC (2016: 32-34). Cameron (2001: 185) proposes that this is done by allowing the learners' hobbies, interests and the current topics in their everyday lives to be taken into account in the process of choosing the content and the themes for instruction, which also supports the notion of allowing room for learner inquiry by the NCC (2016: 32-34). The learners' language learning needs in regards to everyday life and academic skills are also taken into account in CBI (Richards and Rodgers 2014: 118). Richards and

Rodgers (2014: 122) as well as Brinton et al. (2003: 3) also add that taking note of the learners' background knowledge regarding the content along with their previously learnt (language) skills is common for CBI. Both taking into account learner interests and background knowledge are also relevant in e.g. project-based learning, inquiry-based learning as well as phenomenon-based learning (as described in Chapter 2.2.3), which are also recommended to be used by the NCC (2016: 32-34).

Classroom tasks and activities may thus focus on content that are relatively easily linked to the learners' everyday lives, in order to motivate for language learning that occurs beyond the classroom. Stryker and Leaver (1997: 3) state that learner-centredness specifically highlights the most important points of CBI; the purpose is to *encourage learners to becoming independent language learners and to take responsibility in their own language learning*, and part of this is to encourage learners to continue their language learning journey in their free time. Allowing learners to gradually take more responsibility in their learning is also part of integrative instruction (NCC 2016: 32-34), as well as language education (NCC 2016: 237). A focus may then be set on taking the learners' informal language use and language learning needs and opportunities that occur beyond the school environment (language learning affordances) into account and thus on further *encouraging learners to practice using their communicative skills while supporting the learners in gaining confidence in their skills* (Kantelinen 2017, NCC 2016: 236-237), which may, consequently, encourage them to also use their language skills outside the classroom in their daily life, leading to the learners eventually continuing their language learning independently (Stryker and Leaver 1997: 3). In essence, the aim is to support the learners in gaining a plurilingual identity by taking the learners' daily multicultural and multilingual environments into account (within the school environment and beyond) during instruction (Kantelinen 2017, NCC 2016: 236). Part of this is to provide the learners the tools that help them develop their language skills and room for activities to practice them. It is also important to note that CBI stresses it to be essential when setting activities for language use that there is *a focus on language development* through clear language learning goals (Crandall 2012: 152).

The process of setting clear language learning goals is especially important when *authentic learning materials and learning situations* are involved, being an important part of CBI (Cameron 2001: 189), as well as language education in the NCC (2016: 236). Instruction may thus involve appropriate authentic and adapted materials, such as texts, videos and other visual and audio materials from authentic sources that were not originally aimed for language learning

purposes, or even pedagogical purposes in general (Richards 2001: 252, Crandall 2012: 152). Other learning materials that do not focus specifically on language learning can also be used for language learning purposes and still be considered authentic material (Crandall 2012: 152). Authenticity naturally goes hand-in-hand with meaningfulness, and thus increased learner motivation (Richards 2001: 252), since authenticity in the learning situations usually provides opportunities to practice everyday skills in situations that are closer to those outside of the classroom. Therefore, when learners are encouraged to use their language skills in more authentic situations, it is more likely for them to be encouraged to continue their learning journey independently also outside of the classroom. The next section highlights further the important language learning principles aimed for language lessons with Theme-based CBI, which aim to help learners acquire communicative competences for language use situations outside the classroom.

3.2.2 The potential of Theme-based CBI for language education

As previously discussed, Theme-based CBI generally offers variety to traditional foreign language instruction due to it focusing on language use instead of its form and structures. Therefore, CBI's emphasis on meaningfulness, authenticity and learner-centredness, which are all also integral to integrative instruction depicted by the NCC (2016: 32-34), set a different, more communicative language learning environment that sets potential for the type of language learning that especially emphasises incidental acquisition of the language features that the content of the instruction presents (Brinton et al. 2003: 2). Form-focused language instruction is not always forgotten, however; according to Brinton et.al. (2003: 2), CBI also often combines form-focused language instruction with experiential techniques (i.e. learning problem-solving while actively practicing real-life skills). Moreover, an important part of incidental learning is *multiliteracy* (NCC 2016: 23-24), which naturally goes hand in hand with *language awareness* highlighted in the NCC (2016: 211) for language education. Theme-based CBI essentially involves many typical aspects for language instruction, but from a meaning-focused perspective with the aim to allow learners practice using the language in different situations, also highlighted by the NCC (2016: 211). This section examines the most prominent aspects of what Theme-based CBI offers for foreign language education in Finnish schools; that is, on incidental language acquisition, multiliteracy and language awareness.

The most important aim of Theme-based CBI is essentially to have learners acquire language incidentally (Brinton et al. 2003: 3). *Incidental language acquisition*, according to Shintani

(2016: 34, 36-37), refers to the ‘picking up’ of language features from the input learners are exposed to, which occurs without conscious effort. Rather than paying conscious attention to the language’s features themselves, learning the language may occur without intention in situations where the target language is used as a tool, such as while concentrating on solving a problem or while performing a task in the target language. In order for the process of ‘picking up’ target language items as a by-product to occur, the learning materials and learning situations are modified to fit the learners’ level of proficiency (Richards and Rodgers 2014: 121). In accordance to the Monitor Model and the i+1 theory on language acquisition by Stephen Krashen (1982, 1985), *comprehensible input* is a requirement for the incidental ‘picking up’ process to occur; since comprehension is necessary for language learning to occur, essential in CBI is to make sure that the learners understand the content of the instruction while they are using the target language (Brinton et al. 2003: 3, Richards and Rodgers 2014: 121).

Richards and Rodgers (2014: 122-123) thus further stress the importance of *scaffolding* in CBI. Scaffolding refers to the teacher’s temporary assistance, by which the teacher helps the learner in completing the task in order for the learner to be able to complete a similar task alone, allowing the learner to gradually learn to take more responsibility in their own language learning. According to Richards and Rodgers (2014: 122-123), scaffolding is even more important in CBI than many other types of language teaching; in situations of incidental language learning, the language teacher’s assistance is needed in helping learners process and express rather complex ideas in a foreign language (Llinares et al. 2012: 91, as quoted by Richards and Rodgers 2014: 123). Scaffolding may then occur in interaction between two or more people as they carry out a classroom activity and where one person (usually the teacher, but can also be another learner, allowing learners from different proficiency levels to work together) has more advance knowledge than the other (Swain, Kinnear and Steinman 2010, as quoted by Richards and Rodgers 2014: 122). Therefore, classroom situations such as these set up situations that lead the learners through Lev Vygotsky’s (1980) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), as well as Stephen Krashen’s (1982, 1985) Monitor Model and his i+1 theory on language acquisition.

In addition to scaffolding learning environments, CBI involves the teacher adapting the learning materials to meet the learners’ skill levels. When it comes to authentic materials, it is important for the teacher to consider the language demands of the materials, and to simplify and adapt the material in ways that meet the learners’ cognitive and language proficiency levels, e.g. with bridging activities (i.e. activities that help in decreasing the complexity of the content

information of the material with the help of aids such as visuals, charts and vocabulary lists which break down the information into smaller chunks) (Crandall 2012: 152). Simplifying material is important when it comes to involving multiliteracy in language education (NCC 2016: 211). *Multiliteracy* is developed by involving a variety of texts and discourses, which are to be chosen according to the learners' interests and how the learners use languages in their free time (NCC 2016: 236). Brinton et al. (2003: 1-2) especially stress that the use of authentic texts that are relevant to the learners' language learning needs specifically promotes incidental language acquisition of the language features that are set so be learnt, along with content.

As earlier stated, in order to allow opportunities for incidental language acquisition to occur, CBI stresses that both the learning environment (Richards and Rodgers 2014: 121-123) and the materials (Crandall 2012: 152) need to be adapted to have enough language input (especially input that is comprehensible to the learners), which itself helps the learners develop their own skills in *language awareness* (Richards and Rodgers 2014: 121-122). Language awareness, which refers to both taking active notice of the language items in one's immediate environment (Carter 2003: 64) and consequently to using these language resources in communication or for learning in general (NCC 2016: 211), is especially developed through direction and corrective feedback from the teacher (Richards and Rodgers 2014: 121-122). The NCC (2016: 211, 236-238) now stresses language awareness to be part of the aims for foreign language education, as well as for integrative instruction (NCC 2016: 32-34), making it especially important for the language teacher to involve. In order to develop the learners' skills in language awareness, Cameron (2001: 191) states that the language teacher is required to, first, predict language use in advance and, second, to make use of a variety of opportunities for language use when it comes to planning language learning activities for the learners.

During the instruction, when important and beneficial language items occur, the language teacher needs to be able to take the opportunity and help the learners notice the language and use their language skills in the situation. The purpose of language awareness is, therefore, to support learners in developing their ability in noticing language input and, whenever possible, to produce language output. The role of output, in particular, is to help the learners move from semantic processing to syntactic processing (Swain 1985, as quoted by Brinton et al. 2003: 4). Part of it is to recognise the kind of language input they would need to use to survive in their immediate environment. Young learners especially may need support in understanding the most important content when it comes to noticing language items (Cameron 2001: 191); the teacher thus provides this support by simplifying the language in the surroundings.

Theme-based CBI especially is also likely to introduce new vocabulary in addition to allowing the learners to use their previously learnt vocabulary items. Cameron (2001: 191-192) states that the process of *learning new vocabulary through a theme may even be more effective*. This is due to the thematic content functioning as support for understanding new vocabulary items from context, which also helps recalling the new learnt words much more easily once they are learnt along with the theme, forming stronger links in the brain for word recovery. Previously learnt vocabulary are also further strengthened, the theme-based learning situation further reinforcing the memory trace on much older vocabulary items while also adding most recently learnt new meaning aspects to them. Once vocabulary items are presented in contexts and in associative ways, the learning of vocabulary will be in agreement with how the human brain organizes and retains information; and when it comes to the human mental lexicon, words are organized semantically (McCarthy, 1990: 40). Theme-based CBI in general offers more opportunities for acquiring vocabulary incidentally compared to traditional foreign language teaching, since the learning in Theme-based CBI occurs mostly through classroom activities that encourage using the language for carrying out thematic content. The next section presents examples of how the language subject of EFL can be integrated, in an incidental manner, into integrative instruction that centres around a theme and involves other school subjects.

3.2.3 From choosing a theme to setting language learning goals in EFL

Since Theme-based CBI is considered a method of language instruction, there are some guidelines for planning lessons that utilise it. Cameron (2001: 184-190), which is a known source for integrating EFL into cross-curricular theme-based instruction, introduces the following steps to planning integrative, theme-based units – presenting a clear path from choosing the theme towards setting language learning goals:

1. Finding and choosing a theme.
2. Planning content for the theme through brainstorming or using webs, then adding discourse.
3. Planning tasks for language use to the discourse types, and setting language learning goals.

In **Step 1**, the theme is chosen and the language teacher may start to think of opportunities to link the language subject to the theme. As stated in Chapter 2.1, involving the learners in the planning process is important, since then the learners may voice some of their interests regarding (language) learning in their daily lives, thus also making it clearer for the language teacher what the learners' language learning needs are. Ideas for a theme may also be found from current everyday topics, from local events or from topics being learnt in other lessons (Cameron 2001: 185), and thus the target language may be a natural part of them by default.

The chosen theme determines how the language subject can be linked with other school subjects. Ideas for cross-curricular activities emerge from the chosen theme itself. Halliwell (1992: 133) presents that, in the primary level, the linking of a foreign language subject with other school subjects, and thus also with the theme, can be done in three different ways:

- Other subject areas (e.g. maths or art) can provide content, teaching techniques and ideas for activities that can be used in the foreign language classroom.
- Language lessons can provide content and ideas for lessons in other subject areas.
- Whole subject lessons can be taught in the foreign language through immersion.

Teachers thus have several alternatives to link school subjects together with language learning, depending on the chosen theme. Regarding teaching whole subject lessons in a foreign language, it may be done similarly to partial immersion programmes in some European schools that aim for plurilingual education (Cameron 2001: 182). All three alternatives bring good opportunities for taking the NCC's (2016: 29) aims regarding multilingualism into account.

After choosing the theme, **Step 2** is to plan the content itself for the chosen theme. According to Cameron (2001: 186-188), mind-maps or webs can be used in gathering ideas, and it can be done together with the learners. She presents that the ideas on the mind-map lead to *the creation of sub-themes*. She also adds that in order to help the brainstorming process, a theme may be divided into categories, such as: 'people', 'objects', 'actions', 'typical events' and 'places'; ideas are then written under each of them.

Sub-themes (equivalent to 'common learning areas' discussed in Chapter 2.2.2) are then formed, which also allows the adding of discourse to each sub-theme - and thus, adding multiliteracy, as highlighted by the NCC (2016:23-24). Different discourse types add the element of practicing language use in different situations. For example, a theme such as

'Potatoes/Vegetables' may result in sub-themes such as 'Growing Potatoes', 'Using Potatoes' and 'The History of Potatoes'. These sub-themes can then be sequenced around the theme, similarly to the activities grouped around the theme in the Interdisciplinary Approach (Figure 3 in Chapter 2.2.2). Sub-themes may then make it easier to decide which school subjects are involved in each activity linked to each sub-theme. They also provide opportunities to add language activities through various discourse types; ranging from e.g. menus, instructions, recipes, historical information to newspaper reports. According to Richards and Rodgers (2014: 120), teaching how meaning and information are constructed and communicated through text and discourse is central to CBI, aiming to familiarise the learners with a core set of text-types that are found in different academic disciplines. Thus, each discourse type comes not only with an opportunity to link EFL with other disciplines but with an opportunity for language use, along with the opportunity for the language teacher to implement authentic materials in the target language.

Alternatively, a more inquiry-based approach may be taken and the brainstorming process may have a goal of *forming guiding questions* (in place of sub-themes), each guiding question working similarly to a sub-theme that links school subjects together through an activity or several activities (Cameron 2001: 189). Guiding questions are similar to 'study questions' in Inquiry-Based Learning (see Chapter 2.2.3); these study questions are formed together with the learners based on learner inquiries. Such questions may be e.g. "Where do the potatoes we eat come from?" or "How many kilos of chips does the class eat in a year?" (Cameron 2001: 189). These types of questions may thus guide the content, activities and their order in the instruction; and they may give ideas to which school subjects are involved in each activity.

Step 3 is for the language teacher to add a language perspective to the activities, as well as to set clear language learning goals (Cameron 2001: 189-190). That is, after having identified the sub-themes and/or guiding questions for the chosen theme, a language teacher may now add tasks for practicing language use to the activities created for each sub-theme/guiding question. Thus, the planning moves from content activities and goals towards EFL classroom activities and goals. The following figure (Figure 6) illustrates how a language learning perspective can be added to each subject-related activity involved in the instruction:

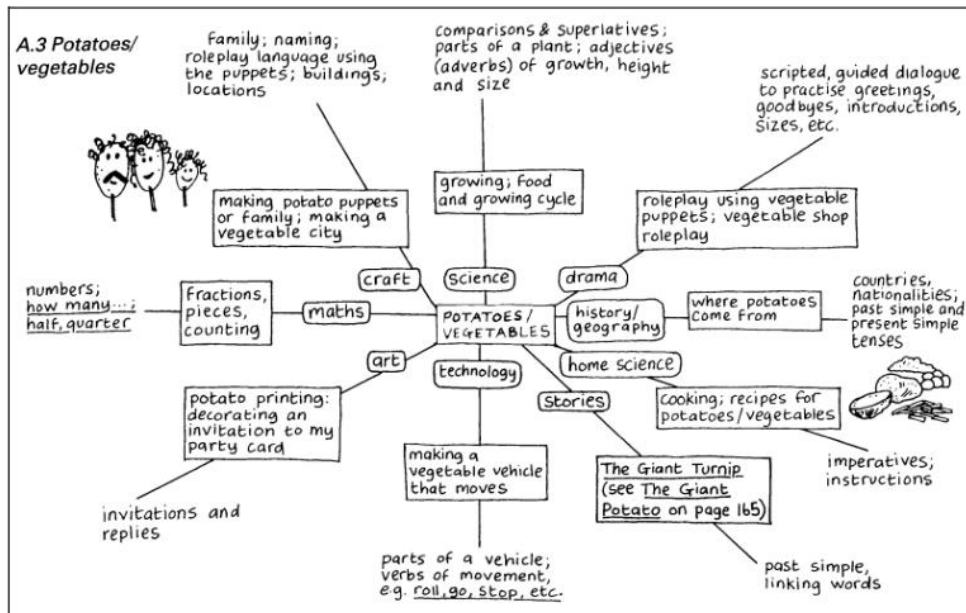


Figure 6: Topic web for a theme ('Potatoes/Vegetables') and integrating language learning into content activities linked to other school subjects (Vale and Feunteun 1995: 236)

Figure 6, therefore, illustrates how language learning is generally integrated into sub-themes with other school subjects. Furthermore, the following figure (Figure 7) illustrates a plan where tasks that implement target language use in a slightly more implicit way (based on ideas gained from discourse types) can also be formed under a guiding question:

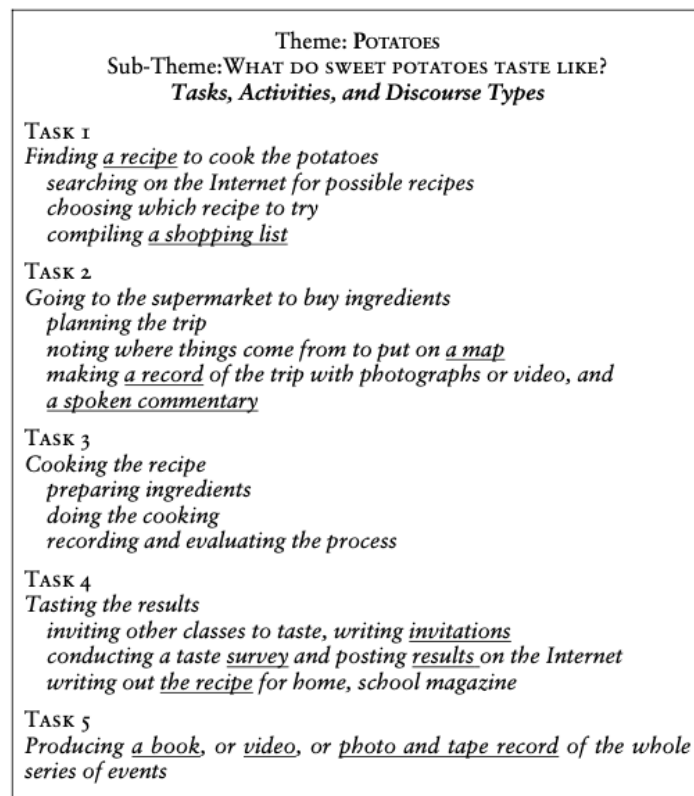


Figure 7: A plan for tasks with discourse types (underlined) for a sub-theme, or a learner question ('guiding question') (Cameron 2001: 190)

As it can be noted in the two plans above (Figure 6 and Figure 7), activities can largely be designed to include skills needed outside of the classroom and thus to involve such opportunities whenever possible. Vale and Feunteun (1995: 3) call this the *activity-based approach*, which involves the linking of thematic content with the learning of language by having learners participate in a range of activities regarding the theme, such as sorting, measuring and playing games, and many of the activities may come from other curriculum areas. This is very similar to the Interdisciplinary Approach's emphasis on activity-based learning (as described in Chapter 2.2.2), making thus an activity-based approach in Theme-based CBI easily adaptable to activity-based units. Furthermore, it complies with the NCC's principles for activity-based instruction ('toiminnallinen opetus'), both in general (NCC 2016: 31) and during MLs (NCC 2016: 33). The support for integrative instruction is relevant, since, according to Vale and Feunteun (1995: 28), the activity-based approach allows opportunities for *whole language learning experiences*; i.e. language-rich learning environments with plenty of language input and where language is learnt as part of a whole learning experience along with context and other school subjects, rather than merely through form-focused language instruction that concentrates on pre-determined chunks of language. This supports the overall educational and social development of the child, and not merely for developing skills in the target language, which is also highlighted by the NCC (2016: 211). It is also well applicable in the approaches for integrative instruction presented in Chapter 2.2.

Whole language work and an activity-based approach may thus construct learning situations that are meaningful for young learners and help them concentrate on creating and being active with the target language. Cameron (2001: 194) states that since theme-based work often leads to creating products that can be presented (such as posters, presentation slides, a speech, a video or other type of displays and performances), this in itself also motivates the learners to work on the product more due to expecting it to have an audience. The tasks may also focus more on situations that encourage natural language use, and thus methods of teaching foreign languages, such as Task-Based Learning (TBL), may also give further ideas for planning tasks and activities for different discourses. Cameron (2001 183-184) adds that language learning goals may either focus on form (with lessons that implement activities with focused attention to form, such as grammar and vocabulary) or on encouraging learners towards practicing foreign language use needed in their everyday lives (with lessons that impellent activity-based tasks that promote whole learning). It can be said that both a whole language approach as well as

focused attention are essential for good language learning, and lessons may switch from one to the other depending on the theme of the lesson.

To conclude, Cameron (2001: 185, 197) states that this type of teaching is challenging to any teacher and can take years of practice and experience also from the EFL teacher. He adds that careful planning in preparing sub-themes, tasks and materials, as well as identifying and setting language learning goals for each activity, need to be done well in advance even by very experienced teachers. This type of teaching can thus be demanding, but very rewarding for both the learners and the teachers. In addition to choosing a theme that is close to the learners' everyday life, choosing to implement activity-based tasks that promote whole language learning seem to all have an impact on how meaningful the learners perceive the instruction and their language learning journey. The following chapter explores a previous study regarding the meaningfulness of Theme-based CBI and what aspects in instruction specifically influence it.

3.3 Teacher and learner perceptions of Theme-based CBI

Research on Theme-based language Instruction in the EFL or ESL contexts is relatively limited. This is due to the overall research on CBI, especially on the effectiveness of CBI, also being scarce, but research in this field has been somewhat growing in recent years (Crandall 2012: 151). Butler (2005: 229) also adds that despite the growing popularity of CBI in the primary and secondary school levels in the EFL contexts, the scarcity in regards to the empirical studies on CBI in these areas is particularly evident. More research is certainly needed in the field, in order to understand the pros and cons of teaching ESL or EFL using CBI's approaches and models in comprehensive education.

Despite the scarcity in the conducted research, there are a few case studies that focus on describing how CBI has been implemented in different educational settings. This section presents a study conducted by Yang (2009) in Hong Kong, China, which mainly focused on investigating primary school learners' perception on an ESL course that used the Theme-based method in its instruction. Since the ESL course aimed to provide an environment for learning and practicing using English without the fear of making mistakes, the aim of the study was to investigate the learners' evaluations of how fun and meaningful the Theme-based ESL course was for their learning of English. The study then evaluated the Theme-based method's affective factor on the learners' attitudes towards learning English, and English as a language in general. The course tutors' perceptions towards the course were also investigated.

The major finding of the study was that Theme-based teaching did not increase learner interest towards learning English, unless the tutors managed to plan activities that met the learners' learning needs by choosing themes that are closer to the learners' interests and the topics that occur in their everyday life. The learning materials had an effect on the interest towards English and Theme-based teaching as well; instruction was naturally perceived more interesting when materials were suitable for the learners' level(s) of proficiency. Setting the target level may thus pose a challenge to teachers when learner groups involve learners with different levels of proficiency (as it was noted in Chapter 2.3). It may be concluded that involving the learners' inquiries and/or their background knowledge in the process of choosing of the theme (as stated in Chapters 2.2.3 and 3.2.1), as well as planning language learning activities according to the steps in Chapter 3.2.3, the learners' interest towards learning English may be increased. Similarly to the results in the studies concerning MLs (Chapter 2.3), language teachers are challenged by learner groups with different levels of proficiency, perhaps calling for more cooperation and co-teaching between language teachers.

Other results show that the theme itself has a big role in determining how meaningful the learners found the learning of English. Learning English through a theme (such as 'Fun places in Hong Kong', 'Food', 'The Olympics') was perceived to be much more fun and meaningful compared to traditional language teaching; the learners enjoyed learning English in a different way, alongside a theme that was close to their daily lives and they enjoyed the theme-based games and activities that were involved. Thus, a theme that the learners found to be interesting also made the learning of English itself more interesting and enjoyable. Authenticity and the relevance of the theme to the learners' daily lives had their impact in increasing a theme's popularity among the learners (as stated in Chapter 2.1 and Chapter 3.2). Furthermore, it was stated that the English input in Theme-based teaching was more understandable to the learners and the learning of vocabulary was perceived to be easier due to it being learnt along with a theme (as stated in Chapter 3.2.3).

The course tutors noted that it was challenging to plan the instruction to meet the proficiency levels of all learners, since the instruction was either too easy or too difficult to some learners. The themes were chosen beforehand without the learners, and the tutors noted that it would have increased intrinsic motivation in the learners if they were involved in the choice of the themes and in the planning of the activities (i.e. if they were allowed to have an influence on their learning) (as was also stated on Chapter 2.1). One tutor noted that authenticity in the learning activities increased both meaningfulness and motivation towards the learning of

English, and concrete activities, such as cooking, helped in providing comprehensible language input to the learners. It can be further concluded that intrinsic motivation towards learning English is enhanced if the learners are also motivated to complete the type of learning tasks that are authentic and resemble situations that the learners are likely to encounter in real-life. The learning of English itself is then more authentic when it occurs in situations that resemble real-life language use situations.

Despite it being possible to connect the findings of the study with what may occur in MLs where EFL is taught in a theme-based way, it still is a study conducted in China, with a very different educational setting to the one in Finland. Therefore, studies in Finnish schools should also be conducted in the area of theme-based foreign language teaching in order to understand how a theme-based way to learn languages fits different educational systems. Furthermore, since foreign language learning in MLs is seemingly scarce thus far (see Chapter 2.3), and since EFL instruction in MLs has not been studied to date, the present study aims to fill this gap by looking more into the phenomenon in the next chapters.

4 THE PRESENT STUDY

This chapter presents the methodology of the present study. Firstly, the aim of the study, along with its research questions is introduced (Chapter 4.1), followed by the study's framework and a description of the data gathering process (Chapter 4.2). The chapter ends with a description of the method of analysing the gathered data (Chapter 4.3).

4.1 The aim of the study

The aim of this study is to gain an understanding on how EFL instruction has been present in Multidisciplinary Learning Modules (MLs) that involve the subject of EFL as one of the school subjects included, planned in Finnish primary schools since 2016. The focus of the study is to examine how primary school EFL teachers perceive the planning process and what their experiences are regarding implementing EFL into the modules. The study will conclude on what similarities and differences there are between the teachers' perceptions.

The research questions are as follows:

1. *How do EFL teachers perceive the process of integrating EFL with the thematic content chosen for Multidisciplinary Learning Modules planned for primary-level grades 4-6?*
2. *What opportunities and challenges do EFL teachers identify in regards to learning EFL during Multidisciplinary Learning Modules?*

The first study question aims to describe how EFL teachers have perceived both the process of integrating EFL into the themes of the MLs organised for grades 4-6 (ages 10 to 12) and the process of linking EFL with the other school subjects. The question will also include the teachers' views on the approaches presented in Chapter 2.2, and whether they recognise them in their own plans for MLs. In regards to how EFL is integrated, the study will draw comparisons to the theme-based model of CBI presented in Chapter 3.

The second question aims to examine the teachers' perceptions of what opportunities MLs set for the learning of EFL, but also their perceptions on what challenges there are in taking advantage of the opportunities. Similarities and differences between the teachers' perceptions are then examined and the results are linked to the theory on Theme-based CBI and the previous study in Chapter 3.3.

4.2 Data and methods

Since this study examines teacher perceptions, a qualitative approach is taken. A qualitative approach is a theoretically driven enterprise that focuses on understanding meaning, experience and it answers questions related to e.g. ‘how’ (Silverman 2016: 3); the study questions are thus answered by presenting first the teachers’ perceptions and then the implications that can be drawn from them. The aim is to gain a deeper understanding of individual teacher perceptions and experiences regarding integrating EFL into MLs.

Therefore, individual semi-structured *theme interviews* were chosen as the data gathering method. Interviews were chosen instead of questionnaires, for example, due to the possibility to both ask the interview questions in an order that best suited the situation (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018: 88) and to ask further questions (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018: 87).

Four participants took part in the study, presented in the following table. The participants are primary school EFL teachers from cities and municipalities of various sizes in the central, western and southern parts of Finland, who have organised MLs to 4-6 graders (ages 10 to 12) and have experiences in integrating EFL into MLs. The participants were given codenames in order to maintain their anonymity.

Table 1: The participants of the study

Participant (codename)	Teaching experience	Duration of the interview	Method of holding the interview
Sara	1 ½ years as an EFL subject teacher.	56 min	Skype
Laura	8 years as an EFL subject teacher.	39 min	Meeting at the school
Hanne	10 years as a classroom teacher with a speciality to teach EFL. 12 years exclusively as an EFL subject teacher.	-	E-mail
Antti	12 years as a classroom teacher with a speciality to teach EFL after the first 3 years. 15 years exclusively as an EFL subject teacher.	1 h 15 min	Phone call

The interview questions (available in Appendix 1) were formed based on background readings, after which they were sorted into five general themes (A-E). Yet, some of the interview situations also had characteristics of open interviews; the participants were given room to express their views and experiences rather freely if they so wished, without a strict order in regards to the questions. The interviewer only made sure that all the themes were discussed, and that at least one question from each theme were discussed if time was running out. The figures in Chapter 2.2 were also shown to the participants while discussing the interview questions 5 and 6 in theme A, in order to help them reflect on their plans made in regards to MLs. The language of the interviews was Finnish, since it was the native language of the participants; due to this, the interview question sheet (available in Appendix 1) as well as the interview extracts presented in Chapter 5 were translated into English for this paper. The original interview extracts in Finnish are found in Appendix 2.

Since the purpose of the interview was to gain as much information as possible on the study topic, short descriptions of the five themes of the interview (A-E) were sent to the participants by e-mail beforehand. This allowed the participants to spend some time to recall their experiences and thus to prepare for the interview; the idea was to make it easier for the participants to share their experiences during the interview, and therefore to provide as much information for the study as possible (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018: 85). The interview questions themselves were not sent beforehand, allowing the participants to react to the actual questions during the interview (Hyvärinen et al. 2017: 38). One of the participants, however, only managed to participate by e-mail, in which case the interview questions themselves were sent to the participant and after receiving the answers to the interview questions from the participant, further questions were asked in another e-mail.

The interview was piloted in February 2019, after which additions and minor adjustments were made to the interview questions. Participants (EFL teachers who had integrated EFL into MLs) were then sought by randomly choosing primary schools in Finland and sending an e-mail to the EFL teachers of these schools. Due to the recentness of the NCC (2016) and MLs having been organised since 2016, as well as the challenges in integrating language subjects into MLs (as stated in Chapter 2.3), it was also challenging to find suitable participants for the study. One of the participants was eventually found through a contact, while the rest were found through the process described above. The data itself were collected when the interviews were held within a time period of one month; from the beginning of March 2019 to the beginning of April 2019.

4.3 Method of analysis

Since the data were gathered using theme interviews, *content analysis* was chosen as the method for analysing the data. Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018: 103) generally define two types of qualitative content analysis - a data-driven and theory-driven variety - out of which the data-driven approach was chosen for this study. While in theory-driven content analysis the analysis is based upon a previous theory, model or ideas presented by scholars which heavily guides the analysing process of the data (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018: 110), data-driven content analysis emphasises the significance of the gathered data over the presented theory, while also making it possible to adjust previous theory to the gathered data (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018: 103). Thus, the data-driven approach was more suitable for analysing teacher perceptions and experiences when it comes to the topic of the present study.

Data-driven content analysis focuses on moving from the empirical data towards a more conceptual idea of the study topic (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018: 127). Since the analysis begins from the basis of the data itself, the aims of the study along with the study questions define the targets within the data chosen for the analysis instead of being predetermined by theory (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018: 108). For the present study, the data itself has a more significant importance for the study questions than the theory does; since the aim is to understand the individual perceptions of each participant and to compare the differences between them, the analysis should be data-based and not too much reliant on letting the theoretical framework determine the formation of the conceptual ideas formed as a result of the analysis. The data will only be linked to theory after determining the targets for the analysis based upon the data itself; i.e. what phenomena are most prevalent in the teachers' perceptions.

The goal for the analysis is, therefore, to form a theoretical understanding of the gathered data (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018: 108); i.e. a theoretical understanding of integrating EFL into MLs. A natural result of the analysing process is to form themes out of the phenomena that most frequently occurred in the teachers' perceptions and experiences. The themes aim to describe what the participants felt were the most important aspects in terms of the study topic; the purpose is to understand the participants from each of their own point of view (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018: 127). Theoretical concepts are also created in order to conceptualise the results (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018: 127).

The analysing process consisted of three stages: reducing the data, clustering the data and data abstraction. The analysis began by first listening to the interview recordings once to form a general understanding of the answers given to the interview questions. Each interview was then transcribed and important points relating to answering the study questions were colour-coded, while the rest of the data were left out. Then, the data were reduced into simplified phrases, essentially chopping the data into smaller pieces. These simplified phrases were then clustered into ‘sub-themes’ by gathering the phrases describing the same phenomenon under the same category, resulting to forming more general concepts. In the clustering process, a basis for the study’s main structure was formed, along with more simplified descriptions of the target phenomena (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018: 124). The clustering process was repeated by combining the sub-themes into two even wider ‘main themes’ (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018: 124-125). The forming of sub-themes, which then were further arranged into main themes is presented in the following table:

Table 2: Clustering the data from sub-themes into two main themes

Sub-themes	Main theme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The process of connecting EFL to the themes of the MLs - EFL in relation to other school subjects during MLs - EFL’s perspective on the themes of the MLs 	The planning process of integrating EFL into MLs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EFL instruction during MLs in relation to traditional language teaching - The teaching of receptive language skills in EFL during MLs - The teaching of productive language skills in EFL during MLs 	The teaching of EFL during MLs

Therefore, the clustering process resulted in the formation of six sub-themes, which were grouped under the two main themes presented above; three sub-themes under each main theme. All these themes are presented and explored in Chapter 5 of this paper. Then, finally, in the stage of data abstraction, theoretical concepts were formed from the selected information to form a theoretical description of the present study’s phenomena (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2018: 127), which are presented in the conclusion of this paper in Chapter 6.

5 TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF INTEGRATING EFL WITH THE THEMATIC CONTENT OF MLS

This chapter presents the results of the interviews and the analysis under two themes: ‘The planning process of integrating EFL into MLs’ (Chapter 5.1) and ‘The teaching of EFL during MLs’ (Chapter 5.2). The focus of the analysis is on the participating teachers’ views and experiences on integrating the subject of EFL to the plans for MLs. Chapter 5.1 focuses on how EFL is integrated with the chosen theme of the ML as well as the other school subjects involved, while Chapter 5.2 explores how EFL is taught during MLs and what opportunities and challenges MLs set for the learning of EFL in comparison to traditional language lessons.

5.1 The planning process of integrating EFL into MLs

This section explores the process of integrating EFL first with the chosen themes of the participants’ MLs (Chapter 5.1.1) and then with the other school subjects involved (Chapter 5.1.2). Thirdly, it also explores how the choices made during the planning process result in what type of perspective the subject of EFL adds to the instruction and to the theme of the ML (Chapter 5.1.3).

5.1.1 The process of connecting EFL to the themes of the MLs

The four participants’ schools were rather similar when it came to deciding on how to integrate EFL with each theme of the MLs, with only slight differences between them, while notable differences were noted in how the EFL teachers approached co-planning.

A similarity is noted in who initiates the planning of an ML (whether the ML includes EFL or not): three out of four participants (Sara, Laura, Hanne) stated that the choosing of the theme for the MLs was mostly initiated by the classroom teachers, only one out of four participants stating that it was also common for the EFL teacher (Antti) to make initiations. Nevertheless, three out of four participants (Laura, Hanne, Antti) stated that all teachers had the opportunity to bring ideas for a theme if any of the teachers came up with ideas, at least one of the themes in the MLs organised in their school already having been about a theme that came from the EFL teacher. In these cases, when an idea for a theme came from the EFL teacher – such as ‘The United Kingdom’ (Hanne), ‘Mozart’, ‘Impressionism’ (Laura) ‘My Dream Society’ and

‘Agriculture’ (Antti) – the EFL teacher already had an idea on how to integrate EFL in a theme-based way. Otherwise, when a theme was chosen by another teacher, EFL had to be either integrated afterwards or it was left out altogether. Integrating EFL afterwards was mostly the case with one participant (Sara), who stated having managed to integrate EFL into nearly all the MLs in her school, despite having had difficulties in finding ways to initiating cooperation with her colleagues, due to a shortage in time and being busy with just having started working in her school. She also stated that the other teachers were not as initiative with co-planning with her as she would have hoped them to be in order to be better included in the plans with the classroom teachers.

When it came to involving the learners in choosing the themes, all of the participants stated that the learners were not given opportunities for presenting ideas for possible themes, or even involved in choosing the theme. This goes against what the NCC (2016) recommends (as stated in Chapter 2.1), but it is not too surprising a result, however, since it corresponds with the results in the studies by Koskinen-Sinisalo et al. (2020) and Tarnanen et al. (2019), which stated that learners were yet to be involved in presenting ideas and inquiries for the themes chosen for MLs. It may thus also be explained by the teachers simply needing time to get used to changes in guidelines for teaching and in acquiring new ways to think about teaching in general. One of the participants (Sara) also stated that in the case of some of the MLs in her school, the learners were given an opportunity to choose a theme out of several alternatives already decided by the teachers that they found most interesting. However, as Atjonen (1992: 19) established, learner inquiry is what creates intrinsic motivation in the learners, and this is also why the NCC (2016) recommends including learners in the planning process and in choosing the themes for the MLs. This was also noted by the tutors in the study by Yang (2009), who also did not use inquiry-based approaches, but intended to in the future. Nevertheless, the classroom teachers in Sara’s school came up with engaging and relevant themes such as ‘Finland’s 100th Anniversary’, ‘Halloween’ and ‘Ancient Egypt’, which still required the EFL teacher to be rather innovative in coming up with ways to link EFL with the chosen theme and the plans decided by the classroom teachers within a specific time frame, without having pre-existing ideas on how to do it. Laura also stated it to have been challenging to invent new themes that truly interests the learners after the first few MLs in her school were organised. Running out of ideas may perhaps then prompt teachers to involve the learners in suggesting ideas for new themes, thus allowing the learners to voice what truly interests them and what is relevant to them in their daily lives.

The fact that the themes that involved the subject of EFL were much less commonly initiated by a classroom teacher may show how important it is for the EFL teacher to have the readiness for finding ways to involve EFL in as many MLs and their themes as possible. It may also indicate that it may have been rather challenging for the EFL teachers to integrate EFL into the themes that were not chosen by the EFL teachers themselves; after all, this requires the EFL teacher to be rather inventive to be able to integrate EFL into plans already made by other teachers, or to the ideas presented by learners. Otherwise, the inclusion of EFL depends mostly on the EFL teacher taking initiative in contacting colleagues and suggesting for integrating EFL with other school subjects: especially Antti expressed it to be important for teachers to have working pairs for integrative instruction in order to make it easier for the EFL teacher (or any teacher) to be active and to initiate co-planning and co-teaching especially with said working pair, but also with the other teachers. He states that it also makes it easier for each teacher to have their own areas of responsibility during instruction.

(1) Antti: Yes, I have just boldly taken initiatives, it's completely up to the teacher, one should just find a colleague whom to work with and form working pairs and boldly try co-teaching... and then ask what they [the classroom teacher's group] have been doing in the classroom. That makes things easier, and then one can link [EFL] to all sorts, so I encourage-it's worth to do it, it's fun. [...] Fun but demanding. But [instruction should be] well-thought, one should plan and make preparations in advance, otherwise it won't work. If one doesn't know exactly what to do or the goals for the activities... then it usually won't go well.

In particular, Antti stated that it helps if the EFL teacher is able to notice when the content or learning goals in EFL are shared with another school subject (such as geography, since many EFL textbooks deal with e.g. travelling); thus, this mutual topic can easily be set to be the theme of the instruction, or an ML. His statements thus agree with Halliwell's (1992: 133) first two suggestions to linking the content in EFL and other school subjects with each other in order to create integrative lessons: i.e. by both using ideas and content from other school subject areas in integration and, secondly, taking ideas from foreign language lessons. This linking of similar content, then, creates opportunities to teach these areas in the subject of EFL in an integrated manner, as well as with co-teaching, perhaps essentially having the learners learn more syllabus-related content in a shorter time period. It also offers opportunities to add variety in the learning of EFL. This was the case with the themes 'My Dream Society' and 'Agriculture' (Antti), which involved learning goals from social studies, biology and EFL, similarly to what Crandall (2012: 149-150) stated to occur in the primary level. In doing so, Antti states that the

EFL teacher, too, can then actively make suggestions in regards to themes for MLs, or for other co-teaching situations.

(2) Antti: it usually sets opportunities for cooperation or for teaching a suitable section at specific points. There's no need to go through the textbook's chapters in order. No one has required to do so anywhere. So then we combine them [the content of the two subjects] together. For example, if one has taught this one whole Africa section in an old EFL textbook for years, and at the same time Africa is a topic in geography or biology [...] in environmental studies... then the sections [in both school subjects] can be combined together. [...] I'm usually the one who makes suggestions such as 'might we have any such [mutual] topic, I have this [topic], would it fit with any of your classroom topics' [...] and for example, once the 4th grade classroom teacher shared the lesson's materials with me and asked whether there is a suitable time for us to tackle the topic together.

Authentic materials and other resources available for the EFL teachers also played an important role in finding ways to linking EFL with the themes. Sara stated having found ideas and materials online that had helped her in the linking of EFL with the themes decided by the classroom teacher. For 'Finland's 100th Anniversary' she found a ready lesson plan for integrating EFL with the theme on a social media channel shared by Finnish EFL teachers. For the rest of the MLs ('Halloween' and 'Ancient Egypt') she said that she had to use a lot of time to also research about the theme in order to have an idea how to link EFL with the theme, and opted to searching for online resources for teaching ESL regarding the chosen themes at her school, whenever she found any. Laura stated having used her own authentic materials she had gathered from her travels, such as books intended for children or young learners and other materials. The skill of innovatively being able to link EFL with a variety of themes while taking into account the learners language learning needs is indeed an important skill for the EFL teacher especially when the learners are involved in choosing the theme by expressing their inquiries and interests for several topics (as discussed in Chapter 3.2.3). Like Cameron (2001: 184-190) presented, using authentic materials to add a variety of discourse types for language use allows integrating EFL into the theme to be more natural.

Linking EFL with the theme of the MLs naturally also requires skills in co-planning from the EFL teacher. The participants had a rather wide variety of ways to approach co-planning in particular as well, showing that both their educational background and their experiences in working as a teacher determined how well they had adjusted in the co-planning situations during the planning of MLs. The teachers who had an educational background and experience working

as a classroom teacher (Hanne, Antti), and especially Antti tended to be more ready for initiating and taking part in co-planning and co-teaching in comparison to the teachers without an educational background as a classroom teacher (Sara, Laura). Teaching experience had its role too, Laura having been much more included in making decisions with the school's other teachers, while Sara stated having had difficulties in being included due to a lack of time among her own, ordinary teaching, having had no time to think about planning upcoming MLs well ahead of time. Thus, she stated having planned her teaching for MLs independently and separately from the rest of the plans by the classroom teachers.

(3) Sara: the classroom teachers had decided on it around... the beginning of autumn I think. And then I just added my own [subject's content] into the mix as much as I could in that time frame. [...] [When the learners had chosen a suitable theme from several given alternatives together with the teacher] the [classroom] teacher had informed me then that 'this is our theme [for the upcoming ML], would you like to do something in regards to It' and then I started thinking that 'well, what do I know about Ancient Egypt and how could EFL be linked to this theme.' [...] A theme like Ancient Egypt, sure I too had learnt about it at school but now I really had to read a bit about it online and look at what sort of things it entails and what are the relevant things to consider and then... [a theme like] Halloween was a similar case, like 'ok, it's a holiday that is celebrated in October-' but I really had to read about it like 'ok, where does this originate from and how is this related to-... and could it be linked to EFL and what are the most relevant things to consider.'

However, teaching experience did not indicate how often EFL was included in MLs; Sara had included EFL in nearly all (3 out of 4) of the MLs organised at her school, despite having done it rather separately from the rest of the plans and by simply having vocabulary exercises relating to the theme in her lessons, if she did not have any more time for planning. Challenges in the linking process may also appear, which resulted to EFL being completely absent from some of the ML by all the participants; e.g. Sara stated that due to not having ideas for integrating EFL with a specific theme readily for her to use as well as not having enough time for planning and for finding the ideas and resources for integrating EFL with a specific theme, she had no choice but to leave EFL out of this ML completely.

(4) Sara: While [the theme] Physical Education was a sort of complete blackout... I couldn't come up with anything for it at this point. Perhaps some time later it may occur to me that 'oh I could've had carried it out in this specific way' but... [the theme] Physical Education for me really was a case of 'oh no, I can't think of anything.'

Due to being a new teacher and being busy with newly working at her school, Sara was faced with a lot of stress when it came to MLs, especially since teacher education did not prepare her enough when it came to planning MLs. Since the classroom teachers were already used to doing the work of choosing the theme for each ML and planning the rest of the module, Sara could only add EFL as a rather separate entity to the module and its theme, since most of the planning was already done by the classroom teachers beforehand. In addition, it was challenging for Sara to come up with ideas sufficiently and quickly enough in the rather short time span that she was given, due to tight schedules and Sara just having started working at her school, but perhaps also due to a lack of readiness of a newly graduated teacher in coming up with ideas on how to integrate EFL with the themes. In addition, her not being included with the rest of the plans alongside with the classroom teachers may have set challenges to her. She said having to put a lot of time and effort in researching the chosen theme and on figuring out how EFL could be integrated into the theme in a way that would be suitable to her pupils. An additional challenge came with her not yet having gotten to know her pupils to know what their learning needs and interests are and what level of proficiency would be most suitable to each group of learners.

The other participants having more experience as teachers had time to consider opportunities on how to teach EFL in non-traditional ways during MLs. While Laura and Hanne, too, (similarly to Sara) tended to stay strictly as an EFL teacher who mostly took care to teaching her own subject, Laura and Antti, in particular, both noted that breaking traditions in teaching is important when it comes to MLs. According to them, MLs offer opportunities for approaching EFL instruction in a much broader, non-traditional way; i.e. by looking beyond the borders of EFL as a school subject and to implement EFL learning and language use in wider and more authentic contexts. Antti especially stressed it being important for the EFL teacher to be able to look at phenomena from a wider perspective, which includes the ability to stray from the traditional thinking about teaching languages and to embrace new ways of wider thinking about how language can be linked to situations that resemble real-life language use situations; referring to creating opportunities for whole language learning experiences (as presented by Vale and Feunteun 1995: 28, see Chapter 3.2.3).

Abandoning the textbook for a while was noted by both Laura and Antti to be especially important, referring to it being extremely common that the language teachers are very much used to following the textbook rather subserviently, which, if continued in MLs as well, may lead to unoriginal and stagnant ideas for instruction. Instead, a focus for MLs should be set on taking advantage of the opportunities to both collaborate with colleagues and to creating

something new together with the school community and with the learners, much like Cantell (2015: 14-15) stated.

(5) Antti: I should be able to look at things from a wider perspective [...] because like in the case of many of my own teachers, one would just obediently carry out old teaching tactics like a slave. [...] So, one should be able to look at things open-mindedly and... to assess all possible things and... to look at things from a broader perspective [...] it's like being stuck staring at one specific detail and not considering looking at the whole picture. Or when one keeps holding onto a specific way of thinking about how to give lessons so... there you have it then, it's the same old thing [that one keeps repeating].

Laura agreed, stating that her objective first and foremost was to break the stereotype of the language teacher who only follows the textbook; instead, she opted to be more creative in her teaching, especially through using authentic materials. She also invited colleagues to join her lessons, although co-teaching involving other school subjects and big learner groups, according to her, was not possible in EFL due to big differences in the learners' language skills and levels of proficiency. Nevertheless, MLs, to them, was indeed a good opportunity for the EFL teacher to get creative with ideas and to collaborate with others, which brings variety to the EFL teacher's rather solitary work routine of planning and teaching separate EFL lessons.

5.1.2 EFL in relation to other school subjects during MLs

Despite two of the participants (Laura, Antti) stating that they opt to break traditions and to embrace new, integrative ways of teaching EFL, for most of the participants it proved to be challenging to acquire broader, more integrative ways to teach EFL.

For three of the participants (Sara, Laura, Hanne), integrating the subject of EFL with other school subjects resembled traditional, fragmented subject-specific instruction. These participants described having mostly taught EFL and the theme of the MLs similarly to how they teach in subject-specific instruction; i.e. rather separately from other school subjects, as "normal EFL lessons". Integration was carried out rather loosely in these cases, since the different school subjects involved were linked with EFL only by sharing the same theme chosen for the ML.

(6) Sara: In practice, the classroom teachers do their own work and I concentrate on EFL then. [...] Yes, so [I give separate] EFL lessons about these themes.

(7) *Laura: We cannot carry it out in a way that would allow us to have anything... mutual [lessons that combine EFL with other school subjects]. Because if we have 6th graders with 4th graders, it may not work. But we do teach in our own [individual lessons] separately, yes.*

(8) *Hanne: In MLs where the main language has been Finnish, the extent of my involvement has been dependent on the classroom teacher's plans. So it may vary quite a lot. Now and then we [the EFL teacher with the learners] have just made a mind map [in the EFL lesson] about the topic that they [in the classroom teacher's lesson] had been learning about, other times we've had short videos in English. Each time we decide on things in advance [with the classroom teacher]. [...] I have not co-taught, I've only taken care of my own lessons.*

In these MLs organised, only the chosen theme of the ML was linked to the subject of EFL and EFL was not directly linked to the other school subjects. Sara, Laura and Hanne could all identify the Multidisciplinary Approach introduced by Drake and Burns (2004: 12, see Chapter 2.2.1) as the base for their planning of all of their MLs. Especially Laura depicted their school having organised some MLs where most, if not all school subjects, were described to have been taught in their own respective lessons, within their own so-called 'bubbles', and EFL was linked to the other school subjects only by sharing the same theme as each of the other separate subject-specific lessons. While Sara and Hanne stated the classroom teachers having integrated other school subjects more with one another.

Despite the fragmented nature of the instruction, especially Laura ('Mozart' and 'Impressionism') stated that the Multidisciplinary Approach, due to setting a theme as its centre, creates a sense of unity to the whole module; since the theme stays the same, the learners feel that they gain a more whole, wider understanding of the theme by taking part in the subject-specific lessons one at a time – thus building a more comprehensive understanding of the theme from the different perspectives gained from the separate lessons.

(9) *Laura: It [the continuity from one lesson to the other] creates a lot of motivation [among the learners] and then they are much more interested about the topic [when they have already discussed the topic on the other, preceding subject lessons]. For example, if they had the theme 'Mozart' in music, I would give a lesson about the same theme. [...] When they are having an exam in music, they can answer the questions broadly, because they have learnt about the theme in EFL, then when they are in my colleague's music lesson, it supports my school subject.*

According to Laura, using this type of vertical integration (or 'sequencing' in the NCC, see Chapter 2.2), where the subject-specific lessons are sequenced to occur one after another in

order to form a coherent whole, increases meaningfulness from the learners' perspective as well as learner motivation towards the learning process, the school subjects involved and the theme itself. It can thus be said that despite the theme having been chosen without the learners, learner motivation is increased with good planning and organisation, thus also possibly being a good and successful example to what Juuti et al. (2015) state regarding Discipline-Based Integration (see Chapter 2.2.1), despite it keeping the process of integration more fragmented than other approaches and methods for integration. Laura also stated that deviating from traditional teaching routines that use the textbook once in a while already motivates the learners, since old routines tend to get boring to them. Motivation, however, may be more intrinsic if the learners have more opportunities to have an impact in the decisions, e.g. in choosing the theme, as pointed out by the NCC (2016: 33) and Atjonen (1992: 19). A further benefit from this approach, according to Laura, is how the sequenced, separate lessons also support each other; e.g. what is learnt her EFL lesson supports the learning in the following lesson in another school subject, and vice versa, since they share the same theme, adding further relevance to Discipline-Based Integration.

Horizontal integration (or 'parallel study' in the NCC, see Chapter 2.2), on the other hand, was perceived to be much more challenging for integrating EFL with other school subjects by these three participants (Sara, Laura, Hanne), since teaching foreign languages along with one or several other school subjects simultaneously in the same lessons, and especially in open learning spaces, was seen to be too demanding. This may be one of the reasons why the variety brought by more interdisciplinary ways of instruction (as pointed out by Beane 1997: 9 and Hunter et al. 1992: 41-42) have not been more widely utilised when it comes to foreign language teaching. On this note, Sara, Laura and Hanne stated horizontal integration being common in their schools, just not when it came to involving EFL in this type of integrative instruction. Laura (extract 7) noted this to be the case due to the challenges of involving learner groups with various proficiency levels in English, e.g. in groups with learners from grades 4 and 6. This is similar to what the teachers in Koskinen-Sinisalo's study (2020) stated and to what Yang (2009) reported, requiring several teachers to cooperate when it comes to learner groups with mixed skill levels. Antti stressed that in order to make this work, learner groups need to be small enough in order for the teacher(s) to have enough time to make sure the learners are working with the language according to the language learning goals set for the instruction. Perhaps due to this challenge, or demand to have groups small enough to have EFL included in the instruction, Sara also stated that EFL tended to be left out of instruction that uses horizontal

integration already due to the classroom teachers having been so used to co-planning and co-teaching with each other from earlier experiences, continuing their teaching practices in integrative instruction in a way that has thus far been natural to them. Consequently, this keeps EFL separate from the rest of the instruction.

(10) Sara: The classroom teachers' lessons may have had the element of combining several school subjects more together... but when it came to my part it was clearly that (refers to Figure 2: The Multidisciplinary Approach by Drake and Burns 2004: 9, see Chapter 2.2.1). I added EFL's perspective to the theme in my own EFL lesson and that's it.

When it came to Hanne and Antti, the manner they integrated EFL in at least one of the MLs in their schools was not limited to being loosely connected to other school subjects in a fragmented way through the chosen theme. They integrated EFL more closely with the other subjects in some of their MLs, either through co-teaching content from several school subjects in the syllabus (Antti 'My Dream Society', 'Agriculture') (as already described in Chapter 5.1.1) or by having EFL be the language of instruction in the whole ML, including the lessons in other school subjects (Hanne 'The United Kingdom'). EFL was then present in the lessons of other school subjects either as a school subject among the others while sharing learning content that are taught in the same lesson (Antti 'My Dream Society', 'Agriculture') or through partial immersion as a language of content instruction (Hanne 'the United Kingdom'). All three suggestions by Halliwell (1992: 133) (i.e. ideas and content for integrative instruction can be taken both from subject-specific lessons, foreign language -specific lessons as well as by teaching whole subject lessons in the foreign language) are evident in these results; Antti with the first two and Hanne with the third.

Both Hanne and Antti have a background as classroom teachers, and stated having organised integrative instruction in their schools many times previously as well, the experience helping them in approaching MLs also in other ways than the Multidisciplinary Approach. It may thus be assumed that they are more prepared for integrative instruction due to their educational background and their overall teaching experience as classroom teachers also dealing with school subjects other than EFL, and thus being able to expand their thinking also to other school subjects. EFL in their modules was present alongside other school subjects in a much more noticeable way.

(11) Hanne: From my suggestion the theme chosen was the United Kingdom [...] We spoke English for the whole week, each from one's own skill level. [...] We proceeded with the topics chosen by the teachers/learners in each school subject's lesson. (history, religion, music

etc.) Within each school subject lesson, the learners chose a topic that interested them the most in order to investigate and learn about it further.

According to Hanne's description, the ML seemed to have involved sub-themes, described by Cameron (2001: 184-190), which were decided according to learner interests in each lesson they attended, while the language of instruction was English, having both the elements of learner-centredness in choosing the topics according to learner interests as well as language immersion. While Hanne stated that the Multidisciplinary Approach was closest to the MLs organised in their school, including the ML taught in English ('the United Kingdom') – since despite English being the language of instruction, lessons were still subject-specific, including the EFL lessons, which were separate and "normal" EFL lessons – Antti also identified both the Interdisciplinary Approach (Chapter 2.2.2) and the Transdisciplinary Approach (Chapter 2.2.3) in addition to the Multidisciplinary Approach and described having planned his teaching by combining all three approaches in different ways depending on the integrative unit or module in question. Antti stated that he especially prefers to use mind maps in planning the modules and to combine the Interdisciplinary Approach with the Transdisciplinary Approach, the former used for the purpose of blurring the lines between school subjects during instruction if possible, and the latter more so in the planning of the units and modules, since it highlights the importance of learner inquiry and the learners' point of view being central for instruction. Even if the ML in Hanne's school followed closely the Multidisciplinary Approach, EFL being present through partial immersion also allowed the learning of EFL occur more as a by-product, as it is the case in Theme-based CBI (see Chapter 3.2).

When it came to the school subjects most often integrated with EFL, the school subjects that were stated to be the easiest to integrate EFL with are e.g. history, geography, biology, physical education as well as music and the arts, since integration in these subjects already occurs within the subject of EFL and is present in EFL textbooks. Antti and Laura also especially mentioned music and the arts being used to teach EFL in integrative instruction. However, both also noted that the subjects of music and the arts tended to be in a supportive role during instruction; more often than not merely being used as tools for achieving the language learning objectives in EFL, rather than them being separate school subjects alongside EFL with learning objectives of their own. Similar examinations have been made by Atjonen (1992: 19) as well: there may be a risk that some subjects take a more significant role in terms of the goals for learning, and others may function solely as supportive subjects or as tools for learning about content of another subject, which is important for the teachers to recognise and consider.

5.1.3 EFL's perspective on the themes of the MLs

EFL's perspective on the themes varied slightly among the participants, depending on how EFL was linked to the theme of the ML and the other school subjects involved. EFL's overall perspective on the theme was generally determined by the approach to integrative instruction taken in the planning process: a Multidisciplinary Approach (Chapter 2.2.1) to planning usually resulted in a highlighted cultural perspective, or on a perspective concerning travelling and communicating with foreigners. A more Interdisciplinary (Chapter 2.2.2) or especially Transdisciplinary Approach (Chapter 2.2.3), on the other hand, resulted in highlighting the aim for the learners to build their identities as everyday language users and for encouraging practicing their language skills in expressing themselves; to practice using their language skills with their peers and to express themselves and their opinions regarding the content (or theme) and their own opinions and experiences. The stress on both communicative language skills and developing the learners' plurilingual identities specifically support the aim presented by Kantelinen (2017) (i.e. in setting a focus on encouraging learners to practice using their communicative skills while supporting the learners in gaining confidence in their plurilingual skills and identity).

Having EFL occur separately from other school subjects as it occurs in the Multidisciplinary Approach (Sara, Laura, Hanne) may have some further implications regarding the role the foreign language takes in our surroundings. Especially if the rest of the ML is organised to include school subjects being taught through horizontal integration (see Chapter 2.2), EFL being separately in its own 'bubble' may imply that English, as a foreign language, is not as much part of the learners' everyday life as the other subjects are – which, in reality, may not be the case. In other words, it may give the impression that the language skills learnt in EFL are not among the skills needed in the learners' immediate mostly Finnish-speaking environment, but something only needed when e.g. foreigners are present, foreign topics are discussed (such as foreign cultures, festivities or artists/authors) or travelling abroad is taking place, which are most often the topics EFL is involved in when integrated with content from other school subjects. Many Finns do, however, face English in their daily lives (Leppänen et al. 2009: 15), and even some of the young learners may use English even among their Finnish-speaking peers.

Many of the participants (Sara, Hanne, Antti) agreed that EFL tended to add a cultural perspective to the modules, very often having something to do with travelling from the learners' point of view. Hanne's EFL lessons especially (in the ML 'the United Kingdom') revolved

around culture and travelling, concentrating on getting to know a new culture, and getting to learn to communicate within this culture (leaving other aspects, such as history and geography to other subject lessons), while Sara's lesson (in the ML 'Finland's 100th Anniversary') gave the learners an opportunity to learn to present their own culture to foreigners.

(12) Sara: when it came to the ML about Finland, culture had a rather relevant role, because ultimately you present your native country from your own perspective and the sort of things that interest you, which in itself had language awareness when one starts to consider how to express specific things in English.

Consequently, instead of supporting the notion that the school community, as well as the learners' daily lives beyond the classroom, is increasingly multilingual (as stated by the NCC as well as by Kantelinen 2017, see Chapter 3.2.1), keeping EFL notably separated from the rest of the subjects may still imply that the learners' world is rather monolingual. Like the NCC recommends and like Cameron (2001) states, it may be worth considering how the language can occur as naturally as possible alongside the content being taught in other subjects, which may be done through activity-based instruction (see Chapters 2.2.2 and 2.2.3) while using an Interdisciplinary Approach (see Chapter 2.2.2) or through Inquiry-Based or Project-Based Learning while using a Transdisciplinary Approach (see Chapter 2.2.3).

However, as the study by Koskinen-Sinisalo et al. (2020) revealed (and how it was discussed in Chapter 5.1.2), teachers have perceived there to be many challenges in integrating foreign language subjects naturally with other school subjects due to learner groups with different levels of proficiencies. Laura (extract 7) particularly mentioned this challenge. However, EFL in these MLs were as separated in its own bubble as the other school subjects were, not having a similar effect of separateness while the other school subjects were more integrated with each other. Laura stated that integrating all the school subjects involved vertically worked very well and she found the MLs that included EFL in her school ('Mozart', 'Impressionism') to have been very successful as a whole due to them having been coherent, meaningful packages for the learners. Even if the MLs in Laura's school had slightly less to do with cultural topics, they, too, focused on practicing language skills such as reading comprehension and answering the teacher's questions, similarly to traditional language lessons. The theme of the ML in these EFL lessons functioned as the topic for practicing these language skills, while also being the element connecting the non-language content of the lesson to the other subject lessons preceding and/or following it.

The plus-side of having EFL lessons separated from the rest of the instruction, however, may be that the objectives in EFL are given more room and they are highlighted much more noticeably. Sara ('Finland's 100th Anniversary'), Hanne ('The United Kingdom') and Antti ('My Hobbies') stated to have tried to integrate EFL in a way that involves giving the learners opportunities to produce language rather freely and as much as possible, which is an opportunity that MLs specifically set due to its theme-based and non-traditional nature. The room to do so may thus be more easily provided by having separate EFL lessons during the MLs, with tasks that specifically aim to increase the learners' skills in using the language for communication, similarly to the tasks presented in Figure 7 by Cameron (2001: 190). Sara and Antti stated to have aimed to include EFL at least on a word-level, if not on a sentence-level, or on an orally communicative level.

(13) Sara: I myself have started off from vocabulary... I'd rather focus on vocabulary than present a topic like... the past tense or the present tense so... it would probably be better to take something from the textbook and do exercises and play games and such. And to involve activities that allow more room for producing and showing one's own skills more freely.

Sara's EFL lessons in most of her MLs ('Halloween', 'Ancient Egypt') focused on various written vocabulary exercises and activities which the learners filled individually, but also her lesson in 'Finland's 100th Anniversary' involved the learners working in pairs creating travelling advertisements; she highlighted the importance of allowing her learners to express their interests, and thus their identities and to show their language skills more freely in addition to allowing them to make decisions together with a peer on what aspects of Finland's culture they would present in their advertisement to visiting foreigners. This naturally had the learners work from their own skill level: some produced language on a word-level and others on more communicative levels. She was especially satisfied about this lesson due to having allowed the learners to have the room to produce language about what interests them the most and each from their own skill level.

Antti also highlighted the importance of proceeding further from vocabulary activities, which may originate even from the textbook itself, towards using the language in broader concepts; to give the learners opportunities to use their language skills also for means of communication. He stated that, to him, it was important to connect EFL into what the learners already are learning in their lessons with their classroom teacher, which consequently had led him to planning and teaching a few lessons with the classroom teacher also outside of MLs. Antti further highlighted the importance of starting the planning process (with the learners whenever

possible) by using mind maps or similar brainstorming methods, in order to maintain a wider, interdisciplinary nature in thinking while brainstorming about a topic or a theme. This way, the process of discussing a theme proceeds from a word-level towards sentence and more communicative levels when the learners begin working on products such as presentations or speeches.

(14) Antti: regarding to what I have said about these topic-specific things, similarly to them, we aim to combine and broaden things in a way that topic-based thinking would be interdisciplinary. So that... at the very least we would work from a word-level or preferably we would manage to go further. So that we could focus on and teach about other language structures than just... vocabulary-specific (--). But that is usually where we start off, with smaller things such as writing captions, like I mentioned... and then we could proceed to things like saving one's work, like a video performance, electronically in a file, or whatever it is that we create, or then it can be things like giving a speech.

It can be said that, in Antti's case, the subject of EFL is seen more as an integral part of our everyday life and part of the skills needed in the learners' daily lives, thus also as a language that is part of their plurilingual identities and used with their Finnish-speaking peers, which is also what Kantelinen (2017) highlighted with the current language education (as discussed in Chapter 3.2.1). This way, EFL was connected to the other school subject in a way that supported both subject's learning goals; in social studies or biology, the goal was to learn the content and in EFL the goal was to learn the vocabulary and skills to communicate about the same content learnt in social studies/biology. Consequently, EFL's perspective is one that highlights the learning of how to use English to discuss and present the same learning content of another subject that was previously learnt in Finnish. In accordance to Cameron (2001: 191-194), the learning of vocabulary here may be more effective, since it is heavily connected to the learning content that was previously familiar to the learners (see Chapter 3.2.2).

The participants also recognised the importance of allowing room for the learners' point of view. Rather than focusing solely on the perspectives of each school subject, Sara (extract 12) had allowed her learners to express themselves in English according to their own interest and skill level ('Finland's 100th Anniversary'), and especially Antti also pointed out that integrative instruction and MLs set opportunities for involving the focus of allowing the learners to express their views and opinions, including in English. This would essentially mean taking a rather Transdisciplinary Approach to instruction and favouring inquiry-based and project-based methods that allow the learners more room to express themselves (see Chapter 2.2.3).

According to him, this depends a lot on which stage in development in terms of cognitive and thinking skills the learners are; implementing Transdisciplinary Approach, or using an inquiry-based approach in lessons may especially pose challenges for the youngest learners in terms of cognitive thinking skills and self-reflection. However, he states that despite it being a rather challenging approach for primary-level learners, some of the learners still are able to function at this stage. The main objective, ultimately, is to link the content of the ML to the real world, as well as to either discover new information or to come up with a mutual opinion about the theme discussed, which resonates with the aims for MLs presented by the NCC (2016: 33, Cantell 2015: 14-15). Antti stresses that, essentially, it is important to convey to the learners that what is done in integrative instruction is not solely to survive through a class or a presentation, but to learn skills needed in the real world and to learn life skills.

Laura and Hanne also had EFL linked to the theme by having English work as a tool used for searching for information about the theme and also further for presenting the found information or answering questions given by the teacher. English was also used as a tool for learning, being made the primary language in the classroom (Hanne 'The United Kingdom'). EFL's perspective may thus be one that opens wider possibilities for searching for information, thus adding an international feel to the theme of the module.

The next chapter further explores what the participants' EFL lessons involved, i.e. it examines what type of activities were included and what content and language learning goals they involved.

5.2 The teaching of EFL during MLs

This section explores what EFL instruction was like during the participants' MLs. Firstly, the EFL teachers' perceptions on how EFL instruction in MLs compares to traditional language teaching is presented (Chapter 5.2.1). Then, a closer look on the learning on receptive language skills is taken (Chapter 5.2.2), after which the learning of productive language skills is similarly examined (Chapter 5.2.3).

5.2.1 EFL instruction during MLs in relation to traditional language teaching

All four participants stated the instruction in EFL to have been different during MLs compared to more traditional EFL lessons outside of MLs. While traditional language lessons outside of

MLs tend to involve e.g. instruction that is teacher-centred, form-focused language teaching (which focuses more on language structures, grammar and vocabulary), content that is determined by the syllabus as well as using the textbook (as stated in Chapters 3.1), the participants stated to have instead used alternative ways to approach instruction in their EFL lessons. This is due to the theme of each ML determining the content of the language lessons.

Learning content from the textbook and the syllabus were utilised differently by the participants. Because the theme of each ML set the content for language learning, three participants (Sara, Laura, Hanne) abandoned textbooks, which instead led them to looking for ideas and teaching and learning materials online (Sara, Laura) as well as to using readily available authentic materials (Laura). As already explored in Chapter 5.1.1, one participant (Antti) also opted to use the learning content and topics from the syllabus and textbooks whenever possible, which also led to opportunities for co-teaching once several school subjects shared similar learning content that could be integrated. Sara also recognised many possibilities to teaching EFL during the modules, and noted that it is up to the teacher to decide how EFL can be added into them. In this regard, both Sara and Antti pointed out that knowing one's pupils is essential in choosing the activities and setting the right level for each learner in order to challenge learners of different levels of proficiency.

(15) Sara: Considering that MLs set opportunities to teach in versatile ways such as through drama or (--), or we could make posters or play games, sing, whatever one wants to include in the lessons. [...] One only needs to decide what kind of opportunities one wants to include and one needs to consider what sort of things the learners are able to do.

Typically to Theme-based CBI (as explored in Chapters 3.1 and 3.2), the focus of the lessons was set much more on practicing written (Sara, Laura, Hanne, Antti) and spoken (Hanne, Antti) communicative skills in EFL instead of the form and structures of the language. The learning of vocabulary was theme-determined (Sara 'Halloween' 'Ancient Egypt', Antti 'My Dream Society' 'Agriculture'), and tended to either involve various activities for learning vocabulary, such as crossword puzzles (Sara) or forming of word-lists which led to communicative activities later on, such as giving a presentation (Hanne 'The United Kingdom', Antti 'My Hobbies'), filming a video (Antti 'My Hobbies') or creating a quiz (Antti 'Agriculture'). Moreover, cross-curricular skills, such as skills in searching for information (Hanne 'The United Kingdom'), groupwork skills and peer interaction (Sara 'Finland's 100th Anniversary', Hanne 'The United Kingdom', Antti 'My Dream Society' 'Agriculture') as well as skills in giving a presentation

or a speech (Hanne 'The United Kingdom', Antti 'My Hobbies') had a much stronger role during MLs.

Learner-centredness is thus enhanced, and especially so if the learners had freedom to choose what topics interests them (Sara, Hanne, Antti) most and thus on which content they wanted to work on. Nevertheless, both teacher-centred (Sara 'Halloween', 'Ancient Egypt', Laura 'Mozart', 'Impressionism') and learner-centred (Sara 'Finland's 100th Anniversary', Hanne 'The United Kingdom', Antti 'My Hobbies') approaches were used and opportunities for co-teaching were utilised whenever possible (Antti 'My Dream Society', 'Agriculture'). Despite the themes of the MLs generally having all been selected by the teachers, learners were also given much more room to express their opinions, interests, experiences and their creativity (Sara 'Finland's 100th Anniversary', Antti 'My Hobbies') as well as to practice their language skills more freely according to their own level of proficiency in EFL (Sara 'Finland's 100th Anniversary', Hanne 'The United Kingdom', Antti 'My Hobbies'). A focus on creativity is especially something that the NCC (2016: 33) highlights to be the aim of MLs, and in the instruction by the participants it was usually manifested in activities where learners were encouraged to use their language skills freely while creating a product, such as an advertisement, a presentation or a video.

Despite describing the EFL lessons during MLs being similar to "normal EFL lessons" in terms of how EFL lessons still are kept rather separate from other school subjects (Sara, Laura, Hanne) (as explored in Chapter 5.1.2), the instruction in EFL was also described to be something "extra" and something unusual to ordinary language lessons, and which may take, even valuable, time from teaching the compulsory content in the syllabus (Sara, Laura). This is against what the NCC recommends (Chapter 2.1); however, this is only natural due to teachers only getting used to reforming their teaching. Sara described these lessons to be more "unrestricted", i.e. involving less absolute learning objectives. Instead, she opted to focus more on letting and encouraging the learners to use their language skills from their own level of proficiency, which is something Hanne and Antti also stated to be one of the aims for MLs. However, meeting the demands of the learning goals in the textbook and syllabus was seen more important, which the lessons during ML took away from, and the learning during the more vocabulary-specific MLs ('Halloween', 'Ancient Egypt') was evaluated by Sara to have remained on a superficial level; i.e. she estimated that not a lot of learning occurred in these vocabulary-specific EFL lessons during MLs, since she believed that the time reserved for MLs was not sufficient enough to meet learning goals for learning new vocabulary. Since Antti also

focused to include content from the syllabus in his MLs (e.g. ‘My Dream Society’, ‘Agriculture’), all of the four participants may consider that lessons focusing on learning content outside of the syllabus to be “extra”.

(16) Sara: while the [EFL-specific lessons regarding] Ancient Egypt and Halloween themes sort of remained as a scratch on the surface and... I didn't really get the feeling that it was beneficial or useful or that the children really learnt a whole lot, rather it was a bit like... 'let's have a slightly different lesson and with a different theme. But then we'll continue again with our normal topic in our next lesson.' [...] And sometimes I myself have thought that, well, there are other more important things to teach [from the textbook and syllabus], so I'll just use this one lesson to teach this theme but we won't go too deep into it [due to a lack of time].

Laura also perceived the EFL lessons during MLs to be something extra amongst her normal, syllabus- and textbook-based lessons, but from the point of view of an opportunity to have variety in teaching EFL in a non-traditional way and to motivating her learners – while also being mindful that there was enough time left for all the necessary content in the syllabus to eventually be covered. She pointed out that since the learners grow bored of the textbook-based lessons now and then, these “extra” lessons were perceived to be different from the syllabus and textbook-based instruction and thus more exciting from what is normal form her lessons. According to her, the choice in the themes for MLs have all succeeded and given her opportunities to plan EFL lessons that support learners from different levels of proficiencies in using their skills in EFL. She also stated that she made sure that they delve deep enough into the themes they discuss in lesson, and not to leave it on a superficial level. Her lessons thus far for MLs (‘Mozart’, ‘Impressionism’) have involved using authentic materials such as videos found online, books and other short texts from authentic sources, out of which she created written exercises done individually by the learners, such as searching for answers to questions formed by the teacher and writing answers to them. Despite instruction being mainly rather teacher-centred, she stressed that, in terms of adding variety to the lessons, it is good to try new ways of teaching too, whenever possible, and to see if they work or not with each learner group. Such variety, such as more learner-centred approaches where lessons were also given outside of the classroom, she had used with learner groups that were both small enough and easier to manage, and she had yet to use them during MLs. Using these smaller groups the teacher can try non-traditional ways of language teaching without fearing too much of them not working with all learner groups; rather, the teacher can try and see whether they work with each group of learners or not.

Taking the EFL lessons outside the classroom, or modifying the classroom environment into one that aims to emulate real-life situations were also considered non-traditional and they were used by two participants (Hanne, Antti). Hanne had an activity-based EFL lesson (for the theme ‘The United Kingdom’), using partial immersion in a kitchen; the learners learnt English experientially by baking scones, after which a tea-time session was held in which the learners practiced using the language appropriate for that specific situation. Authenticity in learning the target language was increased, and as presented in the results in the study by Yang (2009), cooking with the learners helps increase intrinsic motivation as well as meaningfulness in the learners due to the activity being close to a situation outside the classroom. Antti also highlighted the importance of using the learning content from the syllabus and textbooks and adapting them in wider contexts made to resemble real-life situations for language use, creating authenticity in the learning process as a consequence. He stated opting to create the feeling in the learners that they are using their language skills in EFL in more life-like situations which require more authentic language use and, similarly to Hanne, opting to using a whole language learning approach described by Vale and Feunteun (1995: 28, see Chapter 3.2.3), which supports the overall educational and social development of the learners. Antti had done this e.g. by taking a theme-based word list and tasks related to the list in the EFL textbook for 5th graders (age 11) based on food and restaurant vocabulary, and expanded it into a restaurant project for his 5th graders.

(17) Antti: when traditionally in the primary-level it is customary to have these sorts of menu-type of ‘create your own menu’ sort of tasks, and then different types of food, dishes, drinks and other things are discussed... so... I thought that we could carry out a more contemporary version out of this system, and so we made it into a bigger project with 5th graders.

Teaching experiences such as these (which resemble Project-Based Learning, see Chapter 2.2.3) have helped him grasp a wider, interdisciplinary, or transdisciplinary, way of thinking to planning and organising projects with his learners, an important skill needed in MLs as well. The project involved the learners working in pairs creating a menu to their own, imaginary restaurant, after which they filmed a commercial (while using a greenscreen) in which they introduce the restaurant and its menu in English. Projects such as these both utilise the content and learning goals in the syllabus, but also allow for Project-Based Learning to be utilised, in which room for the learners to be a little more in charge of their own learning and to make decisions regarding the shared final project that they are creating is allowed (see Chapter 2.1).

Antti also stated that MLs offer opportunities to allow the learners to practice the skills and knowledge they have already acquired in instruction and in their hobbies; and therefore, room was naturally given for the learners to use their individual or creative skills during the project. For example, some learners used their drawing skills in making different and creative menus during the project. As stated in Chapter 5.1.1, teaching experiences such as these have made it easier for Antti to find ways to combine content and learning goals in different school subjects with each other, making it easier to also initiate co-planning and co-teaching with colleagues.

In addition to broadening the instruction from the textbook towards more authentic classroom situations, Antti expressed it to be beneficial to also link the instruction to the world outside of the classroom as much as possible, echoing the NCC's recommendations (see Chapter 2.1). He presented an example of a performance done once for the school's Christmas celebrations called 'a journey around the world', in which the content already learnt in EFL (in addition to other language subjects) was used in the performance by the learners, and thus the learning content was taken out of the classroom to a more authentic situation for using EFL; i.e. in an event where in addition to learners from all grades, also the parents took part in the event as the audience. That way, language use is also possible to shift from within the classroom borders towards more authentic and relevant language use situations.

As it can be noted from this section, MLs set many opportunities for allowing the learners to practice both their receptive skills (reading and listening) and productive skills (writing and speaking) in non-traditional ways. The next two sections look more into all four language skills and how the participants included them in their EFL instruction during the modules. The challenges in teaching them are also addressed in the following sections.

5.2.2 The teaching of receptive language skills

Receptive language skills in EFL, i.e. reading and listening, were widely practiced during the participants' MLs in a variety of ways. Theme-based instruction led to offering learners e.g. exercises on theme-based vocabulary (Sara 'Halloween' 'Ancient Egypt'), acquiring words from mind-maps created in class, videos to watch, comprehend and discuss in class (Sara, Laura), scaffolded authentic texts to read and look for information from (Laura 'Mozart'), simplified language input both from the teacher(s) through partial immersion (Hanne 'The United Kingdom') and from peers while taking part in classroom discussions and while listening to presentations and speeches (Hanne 'The United Kingdom', Antti 'My Hobbies').

Vocabulary lists and mind-maps functioned as introduction to the theme of the ML in the EFL classroom and, like earlier stated, also later led towards other instances for language use for practicing both receptive and productive language skills (Hanne, Antti). These could include watching videos, reading texts or creating a product like a poster or advertisement, a presentation or speech (live or on a video) about the theme of the ML. Sara noted this too; however, she stated that the amount of lessons for EFL in each ML were in most cases (in the themes ‘Halloween’ and ‘Ancient Egypt’) not enough in allowing to proceed from word-level towards sentence- and communicative levels; thus stating that the learning of the theme in EFL lessons tended to stay on a rather superficial level without having many chances to go deeper in the discussion of the theme or getting the chance to produce language more openly.

(18) Sara: what I did in the beginning of the Halloween and Ancient Egypt lessons was that we watched a YouTube video aimed for children and we picked out the things that were discussed in it and... then I gave them a crossword puzzle and we played word bingo and so forth so... rather vocabulary-heavy things... so they didn't really get to do and produce a lot more freely. Rather, it was sort of... a targeted covering of this one theme.

In the lessons working on world-level language use, Sara had her pupils concentrate on understanding language and picking up new words while receiving language input. Despite being mostly vocabulary-specific, these lessons already had many aspects of Theme-based CBI (see Chapter 3.2.2). In several of these lessons on several different MLs, she had her pupils watch a video at the beginning of the lesson, having the learners pick up essential parts about the video so that they could explain in their own words in Finnish what the video was about; essentially developing the learners skills in e.g. language awareness. After the learners received sufficient language input in EFL regarding the theme of the ML, theme-based vocabulary activities followed. The main objective was to introduce new vocabulary to the learners and to broaden the learners' vocabulary regarding the theme of the ML. As it was seen in the results by Yang (2009), despite it being perceived to be easier to learn vocabulary in theme-based instruction by learners, Sara stated that there is a challenge in introducing a new content area to the learners in EFL, since they need several lessons to properly learn the new vocabulary introduced and to build upon what is learnt in the first lesson, in order for the learners to be able to produce more language regarding the theme of the module. Sara concluded that since the learning of the language items were left on to a very superficial level, the lessons felt rather unconnected from the rest of the ML.

Like Sara, Laura also used videos found online to begin her lesson, to have the learners listen to a story and to pick up information from the video, after which she presented the learners a text on the theme along with questions regarding the text.

(19) Laura: And we usually first have a biography, which we go through and discuss together, then I always have a video [...] which has a story in English, and then we have some exercises, and then for example I even have a book about Mozart which has many questions and answers [to the questions], then I present them questions and they look for the answers by themselves, so a couple of exercises.

Laura stated that, to her, it was important not to leave the learning of the thematic content on a superficial level, thus putting the content in a slightly more important role than Sara did, but essentially the goal was to learn more about the theme while receiving the information in English. Therefore, the goal was not so much to learn new vocabulary per se, but to get used to dealing with foreign language input while searching for information about the theme of the ML. The texts (such as on Mozart's life story) were also translated in Finnish by the learners to help in comprehension and answering the questions provided by the teacher. Her lessons ('Mozart' and 'Impressionism') also mostly focused on learning about the thematic content while using EFL as a tool for acquiring information, and thus learning about the theme itself from a perspective that the lessons in other subjects did not take (content-wise). For example, in 'Mozart' the EFL lessons touched upon topics such as biography, life and relationships, requiring the learners to receive a variety of input in English from different areas when discussing a person's life, the focus of the lessons being in understanding the content in English. The learners did the exercises in their notebooks; Laura had a custom of having her learners create their own learning material in their notebooks, which therefore also had the content learnt in MLs be part of what is learnt ordinarily outside of MLs.

(20) Laura: so everything was in English [...] so the language was present in situations where they had to answer the questions in English, but they wrote everything in their notebooks, so everything they do stays there as material for them [...] But English was always present.

Creating mind-maps is similarly working on a word-level; Hanne stated it being usual to have EFL linked to the themes discussed in the classroom teachers' lessons by creating a mind-map in English in EFL lessons. Antti also used mind-maps, especially during co-teaching with a classroom teacher ('My Dream Society'); in this co-teaching session for 4th graders, the teachers first created a mind-map in Finnish together with the learners, after which task cards were created in Finnish, and some also in English. The learners also created picture cards

electronically on slides, with short captions in English. By the end of the ML, an English mind-map was created and compared to the mind-map in the beginning that was created in Finnish. Antti stated the learning objective to have been for the learners to be able to understand the same content learnt in the classroom teacher's lessons in English.

In terms of listening skills, the lessons in Hanne's ML ('The United Kingdom') all involved abundant input in EFL throughout the time period of a week, and not merely in EFL lessons, since the whole ML was taught in English using partial immersion. Because of this, the learners got a week-worth of instruction of rather typical CBI or CLIL. The learning objectives in this module were separate within each school subject, but since EFL was present in each subject-specific lesson as the language of instruction, the goal was also to have the learners acquire English incidentally as a by-product while learning about the theme of the ML ('The United Kingdom'), being very typical CBI (see Chapters 3.1 and 3.2). The lessons by the classroom teachers involved small teaching sessions in English as well as the learners making small presentations regarding a chosen topic within the theme; using the division presented by Met (1998: 40-41) in Chapter 3.1, the instruction thus being slightly more content-driven and EFL was the tool for learning. In Hanne's EFL lessons, on the other hand, the learning of EFL was a primary objective, making the instruction more language-driven, and the theme of the ML functioned as the content used for language learning. In the EFL lessons, the learners also chose a topic regarding the UK in pairs or smaller groups, and searched for information regarding this topic, out of which they made small presentations in English. The process of already listening to the teacher's input and instructions brought a lot of input as well as the process of gathering the information for their task.

In Antti's modules, receptive skills were practiced very closely to productive skills as well, since the lessons worked very often on an interactive level. For example, the beginning of the instruction in the theme 'Agriculture', for 4th graders, involved forming vocabulary lists, which led to forming questions regarding the theme and creating a quiz on an online platform, thus working from a word-level to a sentence-level, with a focus on form and producing grammatically correct language.

(21) Antti: first we compiled a vocabulary list. [...] out of the same things that they had done [in the classroom teacher's lesson], so they compiled an agriculture-vocabulary. From Finnish to English. And... sort of a core- or key vocabulary list... and then they made quizzes on Kahoot so that half of the questions they made were in Finnish and half had to be in English. And then we guided them to form questions correctly, and made sure that the answers matched

the questions. [...] And then we guided them to practice the content that they had studied [in the classroom teacher's previous lesson] with each other... so they sort of studied that [same content] now in English, but then they also... thought about it a little more deeply because they had to figure out how to form questions to others and to consider what type of answers are applicable for each question.

What followed was the learners answering each other's questions by choosing the right answer to each question, in English. The learners got to practice their skills in understanding the English input concerning the theme of the ML, and then choosing the right answer to the question from the given alternatives.

(22) Antti: the final product in it was of course since we made it on Kahoot that we play the game [i.e. the quizzes that the learners created] and see how well the learners have learnt the content and since they also had to understand the input in English... [then we can see how well the learners have learnt] to understand about the topic-area that they had studied previously. And it is entirely relevant that the work is somehow put on display. So that when something is created it won't remain hidden and not be shown anywhere.

The goal was to have the learners understand in English the same learning content previously learnt in biology in the classroom teacher's lessons. This required the learners to first understand the given language input and then to reply to it according to the right information regarding the content in question. Therefore, it required both concentration on learning about the content and receptivity to learning the skills in EFL to be able to communicate about the same content already discussed in Finnish in a previous lesson. The focus on learning communicational skills in EFL may thus have the learners acquire language items in EFL slightly more as a by-product than ordinarily. Similarly to 'My Dream Society', here, too, a whole language learning situation was created (Vale and Feunteun 1995: 28), the quiz game combining activity-based learning with (form-)focused language learning when it came to forming written questions in English and answering the questions, supporting the overall educational development of the learners.

Antti stated, however, that it is also important not to leave the learning process to just receiving language input, and instead to allow the learners to bring forward what they have learnt; such as through the quiz activity mentioned above, allowing the learners to show their language skills by producing language output. In order to do this, it is relevant to have the learners create a product during the lessons, such as a presentation, a speech or the quiz above, which adds a

communicative element to language use during the lessons. The next section explores further how productive language skills have been present during MLs.

5.2.3 The teaching of productive language skills

Productive skills in EFL, i.e. writing and speaking, were usually practiced as a follow-up to an introduction to the theme of an ML through language activities described in the previous section. These activities had the learners activate their receptive skills in EFL by receiving language input from the teacher(s) or authentic materials such as videos. Language output in EFL, then, was produced by e.g. making posters or travel advertisements (Sara ‘Finland’s 100th Anniversary’), answering the questions made by the EFL teacher (Laura ‘Mozart’), forming questions for a quiz (Antti ‘Agriculture’), creating picture cards with captions (Antti ‘My Dream Society’), giving a short presentation or speech in small groups (Hanne ‘The United Kingdom’, Antti ‘My Hobbies’) and by involving the learners in immersive language learning situations, such as baking scones and taking part in a British tea session (Hanne ‘The United Kingdom’).

Three of the participants (Sara, Hanne, Antti) specifically stated that MLs brought excellent opportunities for allowing the learner to express themselves and specifically their interests in English with less restrictions. Sara’s lessons for the theme ‘Finland’s 100th Anniversary’ had the learners work in pairs making travel advertisements aimed for foreigners visiting Finland. Sara perceived that the lessons were successful due to having allowed the learners to use their skills in EFL freely without as many restrictions or corrections as normally, and allowing them to use language according to their own interests and skill level. Thus, by CBI standards the focus was less on language form and more on producing, or using, the language (see Chapter 3.1). Since the activity did not have specific requirements on how much language output was to be produced, it allowed learners from all levels to produce as much language as they could and to show their language skills; especially allowing “the talented ones to shine” while those who needed more help received help from the teacher(s) and other sources of support. Due to this, Sara stated that it was a motivating activity for the learners. Furthermore, it was a good opportunity for the teacher to see what the learners were able to do.

(23) Sara: The children got to be active and they got to approach the theme from their own interests. For example, if one was interested in the Finnish nature then one can focus on presenting that more. Whereas if one was interested in... um, sports then one can focus on presenting that. I think this specifically is what was great about it, that is, the children were

given room to really approach the theme each from their own perspective and... I could carry out more of this in the future.

Sara also mentioned that the theme of the module was something that was close to the learners' life, making them more interested in creating the posters. Meaningfulness and relevance for learning is thus well added in the instruction (see Chapters 2.1 and 3.2.1). Sara stated that what may affect their motivation for creating the posters is the fact that they may face a situation in real life where they would get to present their home country to a foreigner, and therefore they would feel motivated to practice their skills in doing that very thing. Sara stated that the most successful part of this module was that the learners got excited and creative, which was thanks to them liking the theme of the module and finding it relevant.

(24) Sara: since the focus was on producing [language output] in groups, one could really notice how they concentrated on it and how they performed in it and... the theme was also something that clearly interested them considering that if for example one goes abroad and one wants to present Finland, then... one could receive a basis to that here. [...] What was successful was that the children were excited while making the posters and they liked the theme, and they got to present Finland, and they also sort of got guidance on how to present Finland to somebody else.

Both Hanne and Antti also stated that the main focus and goal of MLs is in encouraging the learners to produce language output and to present their work to their peers in the classroom, either in pairs, in smaller groups or to the whole classroom, with the help of written aids such as notes or presentation slides. Antti stated that in order for this to work, it is important to make the classroom atmosphere into one of trust, where the threshold to practice using a foreign language is low enough for the learners to start producing language output, similarly to the aim in the course in the study by Yang (2009). When considering what makes language learning meaningful for the learners, presenting one's opinions, interests and/or work done during the module is what should be strived to do during the module, since for the learners what creates meaningfulness is the act of presenting and sharing their work, instead of keeping it to themselves. Antti stated the production part having been an essential skill for the learners to learn at an early stage too.

(25) Antti: then when the learners present these [final products] we begin for example with the learners presenting what they have to say to one or two peers. The learners can first present to their own small group. And only as a final thing does one- and usually in grade 6, when we have reached a situation where each and every learner is comfortable enough to for

example present in English, be it a hobby-related thing or... another topic that has been studied and combined with... social studies and topics from other school subjects, so that... one would have the courage to give a small presentation in English. So I think this is the sort of aim that I usually set for my instruction, that these types of projects would have... the goal for the learners to have the courage to give a small presentation in English at the final stage of grade 5, or more likely in grade 6.

As stated in the previous section, Antti stated that before getting to the stage of language production, it is essential for the learners to understand the language input in English in regards to the theme that is being discussed, and therefore, to understand the taught content also in English. When it comes to producing language, he states that it is important for the teacher to also check whether the learners understand the output that they produce, placing some importance on form-focused language teaching also during MLs. This is especially important when giving presentations; the teacher need to check that the learners understand their own language output when they are giving a presentation and using notes for support.

(26) Antti: That is, to get through a sort of difficult situation [...] often the learners also read from their notes what they had written. The goal always being that of making sure that everything that the learners have written, be it on Sway, PowerPoint or on paper, is something that the learners can comprehend themselves. So this is an essential part of this task; that the learners also understand what they utter [in English], what they are expected to do and the reasons why specifically they are doing the task at hand.

Antti stated that a lot has been done from EFL's perspective in terms of a successful module, if the learners get to the stage of feeling confident in presenting and speaking in English in front of the classroom. Antti stressed this being a type of learning process for the learner that requires a lot of instructing and support from the teacher. Through co-teaching a teacher's help can thus also be more easily available when there is more than one teacher in the classroom. He adds that sometimes the learning process itself may be more important for the learner's development than the final product, such as a presentation, is.

In addition to the importance of the learners understanding their own language output and highlighting the importance of the learning process more than the final product, both Antti and Hanne stressed it to be important to communicate the learning goals clearly to the learners and to make sure that they are aware of them during the instruction, agreeing with the notions by Crandall (2012: 152). Hanne had her learners be part of setting the learning goals, allowing room for learner agency. Antti stated that the goals ought to be clear and informed to both the

teachers and the learners; in particular, making it clear why the learners are engaging with the given activities and what they want to achieve by the end of it increases the learners' motivation towards learning and keeps them on track. Similarly to what Sara noticed in 'Finland's 100th Anniversary', meaningfulness towards learning is present when the learners are able to find a link between what is practiced in the classroom and what skills they actually need in activities in their everyday life that already has meaning for them, echoing a lot of what the NCC highlights in regards to creating links to the learners' everyday life and thus in creating meaningfulness towards learning (see Chapter 2.1).

An essential part of creating this feeling of meaningfulness is by allowing the learners to show their creativity while using their communicative language skills; and, therefore, to express their individuality. Antti's most successful module ('My Hobbies') in his opinion was one which was organised for sixth grader and which had even the most reserved learners in the classroom, as well as the learners with a lower skill level, speak in English. The module made a point in giving the learners options to choose how they want to express themselves, their hobbies and interests, and thus to choose between different methods to present their work, the chosen method being part of their self-expression. This allowed them to take more responsibility and be more in charge of their own learning, such as it is set in the NCC (2016: 33). Many learners chose to do a slide-presentation, but some also chose to make a video diary about their hobby. This module stressed both the objectives of having the learners comprehend their own language output as well as having meaningfulness during the process of creating their product – and an awareness to why they are doing what they are doing (i.e. to express who they are, what they think, what they like, and expressing this to their peers in English). These results agree with Yang's (2009) findings regarding increasing meaningfulness towards learning, which is done by having a theme that engages the learners and that is interesting to them.

To conclude the analysis, despite EFL, in most cases, having been integrated into MLs rather separately from other school subjects and mostly with the Multidisciplinary Approach, Theme-based CBI was used in versatile ways by the EFL teachers when they approached teaching the chosen theme of each ML. Similarly to what Cameron (2001: 185) stated, Antti also noted that this type of teaching can be challenging but fun and rewarding for both the learners and the teachers, which is a noteworthy point to consider when teachers tackle the challenges of planning MLs. The next chapter will wrap up the present thesis with a recap of the most important results of the study as well as discussion on both the results and implications for further studies.

6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to form an understanding of how EFL teachers have perceived the process of integrating the subject of EFL into Multidisciplinary Learning Modules (MLs) ever since the Finnish NCC (2016) introduced them as a new and compulsory element for basic education. It also aimed to explore how primary-level EFL teachers in Finland have taught EFL during the modules. Since the phenomenon is new and there is still a significant lack in research regarding MLs, when choosing the topic for the study it was seen as more relevant to first form a more comprehensive view on the phenomenon, before narrowing down and delving deeper into more specific phenomena regarding foreign language learning during MLs in following, upcoming studies; after all, it is important to first gain an understanding on how EFL is present in MLs in the first place and how it is taught thus far. Thus, the present study aimed to answer the following research questions: 1. *How do EFL teachers perceive the process of integrating EFL with the thematic content chosen for Multidisciplinary Learning Modules planned for primary-level grades 4-6?* and 2. *What opportunities and challenges do EFL teachers identify in regards to learning EFL during Multidisciplinary Learning Modules?*

The study's results showed that the process of integrating EFL into MLs occurred mostly through vertical integration and through a Multidisciplinary Approach to integrative instruction, with either subject-specific or project-based cores. This manner of integration was perceived by the participants to be the easiest and most simple way to integrate EFL in a way that ensures that all learners, regardless of skill level, are involved, supported and allowed to practice their language skills needed while learning about the theme chosen for the ML in the theme-based instruction. The teachers are also generally busy, leaving rather little room for them to consider newer, different and/or more challenging ways to approach integrative instruction, thus preferring to teach in ways that are already familiar to them.

Horizontal integration of EFL with one or several other school subject in the same lesson or learning situation, on the other hand, was perceived as much more challenging to implement and requiring some experience from the teachers. Similarly to Yang's (2009) findings, the biggest challenge regarding horizontal integration was stated to be big learner groups that involve learners with significant gaps in skill levels, e.g. in learning situations where learners from several grades take part in the same learning situation. The present study found that integrating a foreign language subject was seen to require learner groups that are small enough

and to have several teachers co-teaching, each teacher having their own areas of responsibility in supporting each of the learners' learning. Ensuring that both teachers and learners knew the goals for instruction was seen as important for making this type of instruction successful. Horizontal integration generally sets more opportunities for Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Approaches to integrative instruction with an inquiry-based core; however, the results showed that here, too, a project-based core was more often taken with subject-specific aims by involving the learning goals in several school subjects from the syllabus taught in parallel, leaving less room for learner inquiry. Integration such as this was perceived to be fun for teachers to plan and organise, despite it being rather demanding and requiring some experience. The results also showed that this type of integration required specific competences for co-planning and co-teaching, in which classroom teachers have an advantage over EFL subject teachers due to their educational background, leaving the EFL subject teachers at some cases out of the planning process occurring between classroom teachers – the subject teachers thus still planning their part alone and individually as per usual in subject-specific instruction.

The results showed that the participants find that involving the subject-specific learning goals from the syllabus is important for MLs, too, and instruction that is more open-minded, with less subject-specific learning goals from the syllabus and more space for learner inquiry and openness to be seen as “extra” and as valuable time away from teaching important subject-specific learning goals from the syllabus. Notable was also that none of the participants mentioned to have used Phenomenon-Based Learning (PhBL) during MLs, which goes along with the findings in a Master's thesis by Naik (2019: 47); teachers not yet being too familiar with it and how to implement it during MLs, despite PhBL aiming to be the Finnish take on an inquiry-based and a more open approach to integrative instruction. This may be due to the method being new to Finnish teachers, however, and merely time may simply be needed for teachers to familiarise themselves with the method and what new it brings to counterbalance traditional, subject-specific teaching before it is more widely implemented in Finnish comprehensive schools.

Nevertheless, it is worth suggesting that ensuring in-service training on PhBL and MLs in general may help a lot of teachers both in gaining an understanding on what PhBL aims to change in instruction and in acquiring methods and ideas for implementing PhBL to help them adapt the method to suit their respective school cultures and the chosen themes for their schools' MLs. Foreign language teachers may also need to be familiarised in gaining a more open perspective to incidental language acquisition during theme-based instruction (i.e. Theme-

based CBI), in order to be able to view foreign language instruction from a more inquiry-based and/or problem-based cores with a focus on practicing functioning in life-like and authentic language use situations in experiential ways. However, despite planning lessons with less learner inquiry than what the NCC (2016) requires, the participants gave lessons with a lot of variety that supported learner-centredness and the learners' creativity in expressing themselves and in creating products that show their skills and knowledge learnt both in content and language. In terms of learning EFL, the focus was mostly on gaining language input from a variety of authentic sources and in practicing language use in a variety of ways as both a tool for learning content and for communication with peers and the teacher(s).

The present study gathered these results from the lessons into three theoretical concepts based on how the learning of EFL was integrated into the participants' MLs, which are: content integration, presentative integration and experiential integration. None of them are necessarily better or worse than the others; they merely depict different ways of teaching EFL in an integrated manner, thus bringing variety to instruction and they can be adapted to teaching different themes and learner groups. *Content integration* aims to describe the type of integration that focuses heavily on learning content, be it more content-driven such as gaining knowledge about the theme of the ML while using EFL as a tool (e.g. 'Mozart' by Laura) or language-driven such as the main aim being the learning of theme-specific vocabulary regarding the theme of the ML (e.g. 'Halloween' by Sara), or balanced ('My Dream Society' by Antti). *Presentative integration*, then, takes this a step further and involves the learners presenting the knowledge they have found and learnt, either in education or in general from their experiences, into a product, such as a poster, an advertisement (e.g. 'Finland's 100th Anniversary' by Sara), or a presentation (e.g. 'The United Kingdom' by Hanne). It may also involve a lot of freedom for the learners to express their creativity, individuality, interests and opinions in addition to their language skills in the product they present to an audience, such as peers and the teacher (e.g. 'My Hobbies' by Antti), but sometimes also to an even wider audience that extends the school building's borders. Cross-curricular skills, such as working in groups and creating presentations, are also practiced. Characteristic to it is that communication is mostly one-sided; i.e. one-way presenting of information.

Finally, *experiential integration* takes a truly immersive language learning approach to integrating a foreign language subject with MLs, involving not just a communicative level for language use through presenting information, but an interactive level with a problem-solving core by using the foreign language to solve problems through interaction with peers, teachers

or other interactive sources such as digital/computer games. The language learning situations aim to be simple but as realistic and life-like as possible, aiming to simulate situations such as going shopping; i.e. choosing the products you want to buy, interacting with the salesperson (e.g. in choosing the right size or model of the product) and paying for your purchase (with fake, practice money), and thus integrating e.g. EFL and math together. Hanne involved immersive EFL learning situations such as this in her school's ML (in the theme 'The United Kingdom') in which incidental learning of EFL occurred in a kitchen where the learners baked scones and had a traditional English tea-time session afterwards; thus, baking especially involving a problem-based element (preparing the scones) while using EFL as a tool for solving the "problem" in an activity-based manner. Antti also had his learners create an interactive quiz game on an online platform (in the theme 'Agriculture'), and playing the game had the learners interact in a simple way with each other through presenting self-made questions in English to their peers and these peers then choosing the right answer to each question – thus continuously solving small problems with EFL while learning about the content itself. Contrary to presentative integration described above, communication is two-sided instead of one-sided, creating interaction between two or more communicators.

Due to the small size of this study, generalisations cannot be made, and thus more studies on this topic are encouraged to be conducted, perhaps even several times after certain time periods have passed, or through a longitudinal study, to gauge whether change has occurred in regards to MLs and EFL instruction in them in Finnish comprehensive schools. As there were some difficulties in finding the right participants (since very few EFL teachers had yet integrated EFL into MLs by the time this study was conducted), the numbers of participants taking part remained small. Moreover, since some of the participants had less time for the interview than others, another downside was having some of the interviews much shorter than the others, giving more room for some of participants to voice their experiences and share information for the study over the others. Being a qualitative study, the analysis also requires the researcher's interpretation of the data (Saldaña 2011: 97), which may involve a risk of understanding the participants' descriptions differently to what they intended to communicate. There was an attempt to minimise the risk before and during the analysis by reading the data several times.

Several topics for further studies emerged from conducting this study. As it can be seen from above, there are notable differences between classroom teacher competences and EFL subject teacher competences in regards to both taking part in co-planning and co-teaching as well as in the methods in integrating and teaching EFL in MLs due to their educational background;

classroom teachers tending to have more experiences in integrative and experiential techniques for integrating EFL, while EFL subject teachers remain slightly more language-focused in setting learning goals in MLs and subject-specific in integrating EFL with the theme of an ML. However, this may be due to teaching experience, too (i.e. those with more teaching experience having more ideas for integrative instruction), thus this result cannot be generalised. Studies that look deeper into the differences in teachers' proficiencies and how e.g. the EFL subject teacher and regular classroom teachers can fill in in each other's competences in co-planning and co-teaching MLs may be a very useful study in terms of how teachers can be educated in in-service training regarding MLs. Another important topic is the gap between the learners' skill levels in EFL and what challenges (and perhaps also opportunities) this sets to integrating and teaching EFL during MLs. The teachers' methods for differentiation is worth looking more into, especially when it comes to incidental foreign language learning situations during MLs. Thirdly, expanding more on the reasons why it is so rare for EFL and other language subjects other than Finnish to be involved in MLs in the first place is important to look further into, perhaps also finding solutions to how foreign language teachers can approach the integration process with more ease and confidence, instead of leaving their foreign language subject out completely.

To conclude, the participants perceived MLs to set many opportunities for integrating EFL into the themes of the MLs in ways that differ even significantly from more traditional and textbook-based foreign language instruction, especially in a way that encourages learners of different skill levels to use their language skills in a more unrestricted manner. The learners may thus find new and more authentic ways to learn language outside of the context of the textbook, which may also promote implicit learning of the target language. In addition to learning and acquiring language-specific skills, cross-curricular skills such as working in groups, creating presentations and giving a speech are also learnt and the creativity of the learners is also supported. The themes of the MLs were still all chosen primarily by the teachers, setting further considerable questions regarding how instruction may change if the learners were given more room to be listened to in terms of their interests and inquiries in their daily lives and thus freedom in choosing the theme with the teachers, as it is required by the NCC (2016: 33) (Halinen and Jääskeläinen 2015: 23, Holappa et al. 2017: 13) and as it was noted in the results by Yang (2009). The studies by Koskinen-Sinisalo et al. (2020) and Tarnanen et al. (2019) also noted it to be important for the teachers to grasp new skills for integrative instruction and a specific pedagogical thinking for MLs in order to benefit from the opportunities MLs provide

for learning and teaching. If the themes of the MLs were chosen by the learners, perhaps the foreign language learning situations during MLs are then also closer to the foreign language use situations the learners already face in their daily lives beyond the school building, thus giving the learners more meaning, motivation and relevance to practice these real-life and authentic language skills that they would already need in the situations they face in their daily lives. Moreover, as highlighted by Kantelinen (2017), this may also further support their identities as confident, plurilingual language users and language learners.

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Appendix 1: The interview sheet (translated into English)

Introductory questions, e.g. (approx. 5 min)

- Would you describe, in your own words: what kind of experiences have you had regarding Multidisciplinary Learning Modules (MLs)?
- How many MLs have been organised at your school so far?
- What is the general view regarding MLs at your school and how successfully do you think you have organised them?
- Has similar integrative instruction to MLs been usual at your school before the current NCC (2016)?
- In your opinion, which ML organised at your school has been the most successful? Why this specific ML?

Think back to the most successful ML organised for grades 4 to 6 at your school which also included EFL. The next questions deal with this specific ML. (Other MLs that involved EFL can also be discussed if time remains.)

A) The planning and organising of the ML

1. How was this specific ML planned at your school?
2. How was the ML organised? (E.g. as a week-long learning period or as singular days set to occur within a longer time frame?)
3. What was the theme or phenomenon chosen for this ML? How was the theme chosen? How was the theme studied during the ML? How much time and how extensively was the theme discussed during instruction?
4. Who decided on the focus and the goals for the ML? Were the goals decided by the teachers together or by singular teachers? Did the learners have opportunities to be involved in the decision-making process – to what extent?
5. How was the choice regarding pedagogical methods done? (e.g. was Phenomenon-Based Learning, Discipline-Based Integration or any other method chosen) How could the teacher influence the choice regarding the pedagogical method?
6. How strongly were the school subjects involved integrated with each other; did subject-specific borders remain and to what extent?
7. How did the teachers cooperate during the planning and organising of the ML? Did teachers co-teach?

B) The role of the aims by the NCC (2016) in the planning process

1. Which pedagogical aims from the NCC (2016) were included in the ML? (e.g. from transversal competences and subject-specific aims)
2. In your opinion, how well have you been able to include the aims from the NCC (2016) in the ML? (e.g. transversal competences, subject-specific aims, goals set for the chosen theme, goals set by the learners etc.)
3. In what ways were the aims of the NCC (2016) present during the ML?
4. In your opinion, how well have you been able to achieve the aims set for the ML?

C) The role of EFL in the planning and organising of the ML

1. How was EFL integrated into the ML? In what ways was EFL present during instruction?
 - a. How was EFL linked to the theme of the ML? How did the learners use English for learning about the thematic content of the ML?
 - b. What EFL-specific content and skill areas were included in the ML? (e.g. language awareness, culture, communicative skills etc.)
2. Were any clear EFL-specific goals set for the learners to achieve during the ML? What kind of goals?
3. How many of the learners got to use their skills in EFL during the ML? In what kind of situations was English used?
4. What pedagogical methods were used to integrate EFL into the ML?
5. In what kind of learning environments was the ML organised – was EFL involved in these learning environments as well?
6. Did the school's other (non-EFL) teachers get to teach content areas specific to EFL during the ML? Did the EFL teacher have other teaching-related responsibilities in other areas than EFL?
7. Did the learners express any goals, themes, questions and learning needs related to EFL for the ML?
8. In regards to teaching and learning EFL, why was this specific ML the most successful?

Next, we will discuss MLs *generally*.

D) Opportunities for EFL instruction set by MLs

1. In your opinion, what kind of opportunities do MLs set for teaching content from the subject of EFL?
2. How about regarding using language skills? And for adapting already learnt language skills in new situations? Do the learners get opportunities to show their language skills? In what ways?
3. Do you think that learners can learn new regarding both content and skills in the subject of EFL during MLs? What kind of content/skills? How well?
4. What type of language learning do MLs support in regards to EFL? Does the instruction differ from traditional foreign language lessons in some ways?

E) Challenges for EFL instruction set by MLs

1. What kind of challenges do you think MLs set for integrating EFL as well as for the learning of EFL?
2. In what kind of situations do these challenges occur? (E.g. while integrating EFL to the chosen theme, while making decisions during the planning process, in possible lack of resources etc.)
3. In what ways have you opted to face these challenges?

An overview and evaluation regarding organising MLs

1. In your opinion, how has your school succeeded in teaching the chosen themes of the MLs; how deeply did you manage to examine the themes?
2. How diversely have the learners had opportunities for using their language skills in EFL and in learning new language skills?
3. All in all, where have you succeeded? In which area could improvements be made?

The interview ends here. Is there anything you would like to add before we finish?

Appendix 2: Original interview extracts in Finnish

(1) Antti: Joo mä oon rohkeesti vaan menny, se on aivan opettajasta kiinni, pitää vaan ottaa ja löytää ne työparit sieltä joiden kanssa tehdä ja rohkeesti- ja just samanaikaisopetusta... ja kysellä mitä ne luokassa siellä tekee. Se auttaa ihan hirveesti siihen... ja sit sä pystyt yhdistään kaikkeen, et kannustan- kannattaa tehdä, se on hauskaa. [...] Hauskaa mutta raskasta. Mutta mietitty- pitää miettiä valmiiks, muuten se ei suju. Jos sä et tiedä mitä sä teet tai mitä varten tekee, niin silloin se yleensä menee pieleen.

(2) Antti: niin se antaa aina sellasia mahdollisuuksia, että voidaan sitten tehdä yhteistyötä siinä kohtaa tai käydä sopiva jakso läpi. Ei niitä tarvii järjestyksessä sitten käydä niitä kirjan kappaleita. Ei kukaan oo sanonu missään että sun tarvii niin niitä tehdä. Niin lyödään ne yhteen. Et esimerkkinä justiin et jos on [--] että on jo vuosia vuosia sitten jossain jotain vanhaa kirjasarjaa missä on ollu aivan kokonainen Afrikka-jakso enkun kirjassa, ja samaan aikaan Afrikka jakso sitten jossain... maantiedossa, biologiassa... [...] ympäristö ja luonnontieteenä niin... [...] lyödään niitten kokonaisuus yhteen. [...] Mä oon yleensä se joka ehdottaa aina että 'oisko meillä jotain sellasta aihepiiriä, mul ois tämmönen. Että sopisko se teidän aihepiireihin', eli jos se luokanopettaja [...] esimerkiks tuli niinpäin että... että, mulle nelosluokanopettaja jako tuon matskun ja mietti että millonko me otetaan se.

(3) Sara: luokanopettajat sen oli päättäny silloin joskus alkusyksystä varmaan. Ja minä sitten omani toin siihen mukaan, minkä nyt pystyin sillä aikataululla. [...] [Kun oppilaat olivat opettajan kanssa yhdessä valinneen teeman usean vaihtoehdon joukosta] opettaja ilmotti mulle sitten että 'tällanen teema, haluaisitko siihen liittyen tehdä jotain' ja sitten rupesin miettiin että 'noh, mitäs mä ite tiedän muinaisesta Egyptistä ja mitenkä tähän vois englantia liittää.' [...] Just muinainen Egypti, oonhan mä itekin sitä koulussa käynny mutta piti oikeesti vähän lukee internetistä et mitäs kaikkee tähän liittyy ja mitkä on siihen oleellisia asioita ja sitten... just Halloween vähän sama juttu, et 'okei tää on tämmönen juhlapyhä jota lokakuussa juhllitaan'. Mut piti oikeesti lukee että 'noni mistäs tää on lähtösin ja miten tää liittyy nyt ja... miten tän vois enkuun liittää ja mitkä täällä on niitä oleellisia juttuja.'

(4) Sara: Kun taas se liikunta oli semmonen täydellinen blackout... emmää niinku tässä vaiheessa mitään keksi tähän. Että joskus myöhemmin voi tulla just mieleen 'no oishan sen tuosta voinu tehdä' ja näin mutta... se liikunta nyt oli mulle oikeesti semmonen 'apua ei, ei lähe millään'.

(5) Antti: Mun pitää osata kattoo asioita vähän laajemmin [...] mulla on esimerkiks jotkut mun opettajat tehny, kun se on ollut usealla opettajalla että... että sittenhän sä oot aivan orjallisesti sen vanhan opetuksen... niinkun, orja. [...] Et kyllä avoimesti pitää pystyä kattomaan ja arvioimaan kaikkea ja laajemmin pitää kattoo [...] se on just sitä että... sitä, (--) vaan tuijotat että... et yritä nähdäkään sitä kokonaisuutta. Tai pidät kiinni jostain omasta tietystä oppituntiajattelusta niin... siinähän sitä sulla on, se on ihan sitä samaa vanhaa.

(6) Sara: Käytännössä ne luokanopettajat tekee omansa ja mä keskityn siihen englanttiin sitten... [...] Kyllä, et ihan englannin tunnit näistä aiheista.

(7) Laura: Me emme voi sitä tehdä tavallaan että meillä ei ole sellaista... yhteistä [opetusta/muut aineet englannin oppiaineen kanssa]. Koska jos kuudes luokka vaikka neljännen luokan kanssa, ei se ehkä onnistu. Mutta me tehdään tavallaan omissa, erikseen joo.

(8) Hanne: Monialaisissa, kun pääkieli on ollut suomi, olen ollut mukana luokanopettajan haluamalla laajuudella. Se siis vaihtelee hyvinkin paljon. Välillä olemme [englannin opettaja oppilaiden kanssa englannin tunnilla] tehneet, vaikka vain käsitekartan heidän [luokanopettajan tunnilla] opiskeltavasta aiheesta, välillä pieniä videoita englanniksi. Joka kerta siis sovimme asian etukäteen. [...] En ole pitänyt yhteisiä tunteja, vaan huolehtinut vain omasta tontistani.

(9) Laura: Se [jatkuvuus tunnilta toiselle] antaa paljon motivaatiota [oppilaille], ja sitten heitä kiinnostaa heti asiat [heti kun aihetta on jo käsitelty muilla, edeltävillä tunneilla]. Jos vaikka musiikissa on Mozart, minulla on heti samasta teemasta tunti. [...] Kun heillä on musiikissa koe, he voivat vastata kysymykseen laajasti, koska he ovat oppineet englannista asiasta, sit kun he ovat kollegan musiikin tunnilla, se tukee taas minun oppiainetta.”

(10) Sara: Luokanopettajilla voi niinku olla niissä omissa sitten semmosia et ne enemmän sekottuu keskenään ne aineet mut mun osalta se oli selvästi toi (viittaa kaavioon *Figure 2: The Multidisciplinary Approach, Drake and Burns 2004: 9*). Että... mä toin siellä omalla enkun tunnilla sen englannin näkemyksen asiaan ja that's it.

(11) Hanne: Minun ehdotuksestani aiheeksi valikoitu Iso-Britannia [...] Puhuimme koko viikon englantia, jokainen omalla tasollaan. [...] Menimme opettajien/oppilaiden valitsemilla aiheilla juuri heidän oppiaineisiin liittyen (historia, uskonto, musiikki jne.) Oppiaineen sisältä oppilaat valitsivat kiinnostuksen kohteen mukaan lähemmin tutkittavan alueen.

(12) Sara: siinä Suomi-MOK:ssa se kulttuuri oli nyt aika oleellisessa asiassa, et sä kuitenkin sitä omaa kotimaatas esittelet siitä sun omasta perspektiivistä lähtien, ja semmosia asioita jotka sua ittees kiinnostaa. Siitä sitten tuli just tällasta kielitietosuutta tai ehkä kun mietit että 'mitenkäs mä nyt kerron tästä asiasta englanniksi'.

(13) Sara: ite oon just ehkä sen sanaston kautta lähtenyt liikkeelle, että mieluummin just jonkun sanaston otan kun rupeen jotain... imperfektiä tai yleispreesenssiä esittämään siellä, että... no ehkä mukavampi ottaa sieltä kirjan kautta ja tehä tehtäviä ja pelata ja näin. Ja just tämmöstä vapaampaa tekemistä, tuottamista ja oman osaamisen esille tuomista.

(14) Antti: mitä mä oon täs kertonu näitä... aihepiirisidonnaisia asioita niin ne on vastavanlaista, millä pyritään yhdistämään ja laajentamaan sitä, että siinä aihepiiri-ajattelu olis monialasta. Että siinä vähintäänkin mentäs sitten sanastotasolla, tai mieluummin justiin se että siinä päästäs pidemmällekin. Että tulis myös muita rakenteita. Kuin pelkästään... sanastollista (--). Mutta se on niinku sellanen mistä me lähdetään yleensä, et ne olis pienempiä justiin tuolla kuvatekstiä ja ajatuskarttaa niinku mä oon tässä puhunu. Ja siitä sitten voidaan edetä justiin tällaseen... että se on joko sähköisesti tallennettu sinne boxiin esimerkiksi, videoesitys tai... mitä se milloinkin on. Tai sitten justiin... julkinen puhe.

(15) Sara: No kyllähän kun tää monialaset mahdollistaa just tämmösen hyvin monipuolisen työskentelyn että voidaan vaikka tehdä draamaa, tai (--) tai just näitä postereita tai... leikkiä, laulaa, mitä siellä nyt haluaakaan tehdä. [...] sitä pitää vaan ite jotenkin päättää et minkälaisia mahdollisuuksia mä haluan ja mihin nää meidän oppilaat pystyy.

(16) Sara: kun taas tää Egypti Halloween homma [Egypti ja Halloween teemat englannin tunnilla] oli semmonen pintaraapasu että siitä ei oikeen tullu semmonen olo että 'tää nyt oli hyödyllinen ja tarpeellinen ja lapset on oikeesti oppinu jotain' vaan nyt oli vähän että... 'pidetään nyt vähän tämmönen erilainen tunti ja vähän eri teemalla. Mutta sitte jatketaan taas heti seuraavalla tunnilla normaalia asiaa.' [...] Ja joskus mä oon itte ollu sitä mieltä että, no, meillä on nyt niinku tärkeempääkin asiaa käsiteltävänä [oppikirjasta ja opetussuunnitelmasta] niin mä nyt tällä yhdellä tunnilla vähän käyn tätä mutta ei nyt ruveta mitenkään hirmu syvästi siihen paneutumaan.

(17) Antti: kun perinteisesti tehdään- jos ajatellaan että jos ollaan alakoulussa että siellä on... justiin tällaset nää menu-tyyppiset että 'tee ruokalista' -työ, ja sitten tehdään, tutkitaan eri ruokia, ruokalajeja, juomia ja muuta... muuta niin... mä ajattelin että voisko siitä tehdä nykyaikaisen version siitä systeemistä. Me tehtiin siitä oikeen isompi projekti sitten viidesluokkalaisten kanssa.

(18) Sara: näitten Halloweenien ja Egyptien kanssa taisin tehdä niin että tunnin alkuun katottiin YouTubesta joku lapsille suunnattu video ja siellä vähän poimittiin asioita että mitä siellä kerrottiin ja... sit mä ehkä jonkun sanaristikon annoin niille ja pelattiin jotain sanabingoa ja tällasta että... aika semmosta niinku... sanastopainotteista oli että... eivät päässeet ite tuottamaan hirveesti tai tekemään vapaasti. Vaan semmonen... täsmäisku siihen yhteen asiaan.

(19) Laura: Ja ne aina ensiksi (---) biography. Sit me käydään se läpi, sitten minulla on aina video [...] ja siellä ihan tarina englanniksi, ja sit tehtäviä, ja sit mulla esimerkiksi kirja, siellä ihan Mozartista on monta kysymystä ja vastauksia, sit mä otan niille kysymyksiä ja ne etsivät itse, eli ihan muutama tehtävä.

(20) Laura: eli kaikki oli englanniksi ja me taas kävimme läpi, eli kieli oli siinä että heidän piti vastata kysymykseen englanniksi, mutta kaikki oli vihkoihin, että kaikki jäi sinne materiaaliksi [...] Mutta Englanti oli aina mukana.

(21) Antti: ensin koottiin tämmönen sanasto. [...] niistä samoista asioista mitä ne on tehny niin ne teki maatalous-sanastot. Suomesta enkuun. Ja ikään kuin sellasen... voisko sanoa keskeisen sanaston tai avainsanaston... ja sitten ne teki Kahootit niin että puolet kysymyksistä oli suomeksi ja puolet piti olla enkuksi. Ja sitten ohjattiin että ne kysymykset tulee oikein tehtyä, ja myös että ne vastaukset on järkeviä ja niihin ne vaihtoehdot. [...] Ja ne ohjattiin niin että ne harjoitteli kes- siinä sekä itse asiaa mistä ne oli jo opiskellu... niin ne opiskeli sen ikään kuin englanniksi, mut sitten ne vielä... mietti sitä syvemmin, koska ne joutu miettimään sitä että mitenkä tehdään kysymyksiä toisille ja mitkä on oikeanlaisia vastauksia tiettyyn kysymykseen.

(22) Antti: siinä tuotos tietysti oli kun Kahoottia oli että 'pelataan' ja katotaan että kuinka me osataan vielä se... asia ja siinä piti ymmärtää myös sitä Englantia... [katsotaan kuinka oppilaat

osaavat] ymmärtää englanniksi sitä aihepiiriä mitä oli opiskeltu. Ja et se on aivan oleellista et se tuodaan jollain tavalla julki. Että se ei jää siihen et on tehty joku ja sitä ei millään tavalla esitetä.

(23) Sara: Lapset pääsi itte tekemään ja niitten omien mielenkiinnon kohteiden kautta lähesty sitä asiaa. Jos joku oli vaikka kiinnostunu Suomen luonnosta niin hän enemmän esittelee sitä. Jos taas toinen oli jostain... urheilusta kiinnostunut hän esittelee sitä. Se oli se, mun mielestä siinä se parasta että ne lapset pysty oikeesti sen oman kautta lähestymään sitä asiaa ja... ehkä, enemmänkin voisin tän tyylistä toteuttaa sitten.

(24) Sara: tosiaan ku se oli sellanen oman tuottamiseen keskittyvä ja ryhmässä tapahtuva niin siinä näki oikeesti että miten ne paneutu siihen ja tekivät sitä ja... aihekin oli selvästi semmonen josta ne kiinnostu kun ajattelee että jos vaikka lähtee ulkomaille ja haluavat Suomesta kertoa niin... sitten siitä saisi semmosta pohjaa siihen. [...] Mielestäni onnistuimme siinä että lapset tekivät innoissaan, ne tykkäsivät teemasta, ja ne saivat Suomea esiteltyä ja tällasta niinkun ohjaa siihen itellensä että miten he voisivat jollekin muulle sitten Suomesta kertoa.

(25) Antti: sit kun niitä tuodaan julki niin alotetaan siitä että esimerkiksi toiselle parille, tai omalle parille, esitetään se asia. Ensin sitten voi olla että siinä omassa ryhmässä. Ja vasta viimeisenä on sellanen että sä, ja usein on ollu niin että kutosella on päästy tuota ryhmien kanssa sellaseen että... joku uskaltaa esimerkiks puhua englanniksi jonkun tällasen... on se sitten ollu tämmönen joku harrastus-juttu tai... muu mitä on tehty ja yhdistetty johonkin näihin... yhteiskunnan ja muun oppiaineiden juttuun niin että... uskaltaa sellasen, pienen esitelmän puhua englanniksi. Eli mun mielestä se on sellanen tavote mikä mulla yleensä... yleisesti ottaen on, että tällaisessa projekteissa olis se että uskaltaa sitten viimesessä vaiheessa [...] kun alakoulusta puhutaan niin vitosella... todennäköisesti vasta kutosella on se, että uskaltaa ikään kuin pitää pienen esitelmän englanniksi.

(26) Antti: Eli selviämään sellasesta vaikeesta tilanteesta [...] usein se on myös sitä että... ne lukee sieltä mitä he on kirjottanu. Tavotteena aina se että kaikki mitä laittaa on, on se sitten Sway, PowerPoint, on se paperille tehty, niin oppilaan täytyy ymmärtää se mitä hän on kirjoittanut siihen. Eli se on aivan oleellinen osa sitä työtä että ymmärrät myös mitä sä sanot, mitä sä teet ja mitä varten sä teet sitä työtä.