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ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

A survey study for Finnish teachers of English
language

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Tämän tutkielman tarkoitus on selvittää miten suomalaiset englannin kielen opettajat käsittelevät englantia lingua francana oppilaidensa ja opiskelijoidensa kanssa. Tutkimus toteutettiin internet-kyselynä, jonka kohderyhmään kuuluivat englannin kielen opettajat yläkouluissa ja lukioissa. Kohderyhmät valittiin peruskoulun ylimpien luokkien sekä lukion opetussuunnitelmien pohjalta, joissa käsitellään englantia lingua francana ja siihen perustuvaa pedagogiikkaa. Esimerkkejä lingua franca tietoisesta opetuksesta ovat muun muassa rakentavan vuorovaikutuksen harjoittelu, toisten ja itsensä arvostaminen puhujina, erilaisten varianttien tuntemus sekä merkityksien neuvottelu.

Tutkimuskyselyyn osallistui yhteensä 35 englannin opettajaa. Kysely sisälsi aiheeseen liittyviä väitteitä, monivalintakysymyksiä sekä avokysymyksiä. Saatu aineisto sisälsi määrällistä ja laadullista dataa, jolloin analyysissä käytettiin määrällisiä ja laadullisia menetelmiä.

Tutkielman tuloksista selvisi, että suomalaiset englannin kielen opettajat keskustelevat englantia lingua francana -pedagogiikkaan liittyvistä aiheista pääosin siten kuin opetussuunnitelmassakin ohjataan, ja kuten myös aihealueen teoriassa suositellaan. Muutamien kysymysten kohdalla opettajien vastaukset erosivat toisistaan. Opettajat olivat erimielisiä englannin opetuksen tavoitteista ääntämisen suhteen, natiivien ja ei-natiivien puhujien suosimisesta omissa materiaaleissa, sekä puhuessaan suomalaisille ominaisesta aksentista oppilaidensa tai opiskelijoidensa kanssa. Myös jotkin vastaajien taustatekijät vaikuttivat muutaman kysymyksen kohdalla ja aiheuttivat hieman variaatiota vastauksissa.

Tutkimuksen vastaajien määrän takia laajempia yleistyksiä ei voida tehdä, mutta tutkimustulokset tarjoavat silti ensikatsauksen englannin kielen oppitunneille lingua franca näkökulmasta, sekä opettajien käyttämiin metodeihin englantia lingua francana englannin opetuksessa. Aihetta ei ole juuri tutkittu Suomessa aikaisemmin käytännön toimien tasolla. Tulokset antavat myös suuntaa jatkotutkimuksille, jotka voivat keskittyä tarkemmin yhteen osa-alueeseen, kuten ääntämiseen, tai tutkimus voitaisiin toteuttaa muutamana tarkempaan teemahaastatteluna laajemman kyselytutkimuksen sijaan. Tutkimustuloksista hyötyvät sekä opetussuunnitelmien tekijät että yksittäiset opettajat.

Avainsanat: Englanti lingua francana, englannin opetus, kieltenopetus, oppiminen, kommunikointi.

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ABSTRACT

Akseli Haverinen: English as a lingua franca in English language teaching: A survey study for Finnish teachers of English language

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The purpose of this thesis is to ascertain to what extent Finnish teachers of English language incorporate English as a lingua franca (ELF) awareness in their classes. The data of this study was gathered using an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was meant for teachers who work in secondary schools and upper secondary schools. Teachers in these institutions were the target audience of this study because the Finnish curricula for secondary and upper secondary schools includes topics that are based on ELF pedagogy. Some examples of ELF aware teaching are constructive interaction, respecting one another and yourself as English language users, understanding different varieties of English, and negotiating meaning.

In total, 35 teachers took part in the research. The questionnaire included statements, multiple-choice questions, and open-ended questions about ELF in English language teaching. The data was both quantitative and qualitative: different methods of analysis were used for different types of data.

The results of this study reveal that Finnish teachers of English language discuss ELF related issues with their students as the curricula and ELF research suggest. However, the respondents were divided on some of the questions. The teachers disagreed with one another with topics such as the learners' goals regarding pronunciation, Finnish English accent and how to discuss it with students, and whether they should prefer native or non-native speakers in their own materials and audio recordings and why. Some pieces of demographic information caused variation on some individual questions.

Since the number of respondents is only 35 due to the rather qualitative nature of this study, generalizations cannot be made. Still, this research provided an opportunity to analyze how ELF awareness is present in practice in classrooms. The results of this study also lay the foundations for future research in the same field. Based on the results, follow-up studies could focus on one area of ELF in English language teaching more, or they could be conducted with semi-structured interviews for more of an in-depth analysis. To conclude, results of this study can be used either by curricula designers or individual English language teachers who might need help with the incorporation of ELF awareness.

Keywords: English as a lingua franca, English language teaching, language teaching, learning, communication.

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

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1 INTRODUCTION

English is a remarkable language for two reasons: it has spread around the globe like no other language before, and it has more non-native speakers (henceforth NNS) than native speakers (henceforth NS). Under these conditions, English has become unusually heterogeneous and variable (Mauranen 2018: 7). Such a spread means that people from different linguistic backgrounds are in contact with one another more and more, and English fills the linguistic void between interlocutors more often than any other language. The number of non-native speakers of English is estimated to be around 1.5 billion, which is four and a half times more than its 335 million native speakers. (Panero 2018: 558-559). Undoubtedly, English is today's global lingua franca, a tool that is used in intercultural communication. Sifakis (2017, 289) concisely defines ELF in the following way: 'In its simplest form, ELF can be defined as the discourse produced in interactions involving speakers of different first languages.'

ELF literature and research have become more popular during the last 20 years, but the ideas of ELF researchers have not been uncritically accepted. There are many who challenge the legitimacy of non-native English accents produced by speakers of ELF, for example, and promote Received Pronunciation (RP), or General American (GA) accent, as a goal for non-natives (Jenkins 2009: 10). Such critics of spoken ELF have claimed that RP and GA are not only more appropriate, even if there are no native interlocutors in a conversation, but also more intelligible. However, both RP and GA have been empirically found to be less intelligible to NNSs than other NNS accents (ibid: 12).

As it stands, RP and GA are two of the most widely taught English accents even if they are not the most intelligible ones, which raises the question whether the

attitudes towards the target accent for NNS in English language teaching (henceforth ELT) should be reconsidered (Jenkins 2009: 12). Traditionally ELT has been heavily focusing on NS norms and accents and has considered them a goal for NNSs. However, there have been studies recently about the integration of ELF into ELT, and a multitude of researchers agree on the notion that ELF should indeed be integrated in ELT. It is argued that a NS model of English alone does not serve ELT well enough in a globalized world where English is a tool of communication between different cultures (Sifakis et al. 2018: 158).

If ELF is to be integrated in ELT, several changes must take place: curriculum must be updated to include ELF, evaluation procedures and teaching resources should be re-evaluated, and the new ELF-aware approach should be adopted (Sifakis et al. 2018: 162). Curricula is the first place that should be revisited, as everything in ELT is based on them: teaching methods, evaluation, what is or is not included in English classes, and course books, for example. ELT is heavily based on standard forms and ELF has not been integrated in ELT yet.

Changes are underway however, and Finland, for example, is one of the first countries in the world to integrate ELF into their national curricula. The curricula suggest that ELF-awareness should be incorporated in secondary schools in the Basic education curriculum 2014 (POPS 2014) and in high schools, as is stated in the latest High school curriculum 2019 (LOPS 2019). ELF was also mentioned in the previous High school curriculum in 2015. Even now when ELF-awareness is included in these curricula, changes in classroom practices might take some time. In fact, many English language teachers do not seek or have opportunity for further training in linguistics or pedagogy

after they have attained the initial qualification and graduated – there might not simply be enough time in their busy professional lives (Dewey & Patsko 2018: 442).

Previous studies have revealed the attitudes of Finnish teachers of English towards ELF in ELT, and the findings have been promising: most teachers were familiar with the notion of ELF in 2019 (Reko 2019). Now, instead, that ELF is in the Finnish curricula and attitudes have been studied, the question should change from ‘what do you think about ELF’ to ‘how do you apply ELF’, as the curriculum mandates teachers to introduce ideas of ELF-awareness or to teach communication strategies to their students.

For the reasons above, the purpose of this thesis is to establish a state-of-the-art view about how Finnish teachers of English language integrate ELF into their day-to-day classes and courses. The data of this study was collected via online questionnaire, which included demographic information, multiple-choice questions, Likert-scale statements, and open-ended questions. The purpose of the demographic information was to ascertain whether some specific factors, such as work experience as an English teacher, or English as a major or a minor subject, are related to respondents’ methods. Other questions focused on teachers’ thoughts about ELF, teacher’s own language models, their course books, other course materials, and how they introduce ELF related ideas to their students. The research questions of this study are as follows:

1. How do teachers incorporate ELF awareness in their classes?
2. If teachers incorporate ELF awareness less than the curriculum suggests, why?
3. Does age, work experience, or some other factors affect teachers’ implementation of ELF in their classes?

On a larger scale, the results of this study could provide useful information for curriculum designers in Finland about how well the suggestions of the curriculum translate into day-to-day practice. Language policies often take time to have an effect in the classroom since they are often based on the most recent research, which teachers might lack the time to read. If the teachers have not read ELF literature and only learn about ELF by reading about ELF related additions in the curriculum, this could result in heterogenous changes in teaching. This could also occur if the objectives of ELF related additions are expressed too ambiguously in the curriculum. Thus, the results are of great importance for those in charge of curriculum development in Finland. On a smaller scale, the results of this research might be beneficial for individual English language teachers who might need help with the incorporation of ELF awareness.

My hypothesis is that the way ELF is incorporated in classrooms by English language teachers in Finland varies, and that the variation might be affected by respondents' background. Since ELF was included in Basic education curriculum as recently as in 2014, and High school curriculum in 2015 and 2019, it could be assumed that the age or the working experience of the teacher is a significant variable. This might be the case simply because the younger, more recently graduated, teachers at the beginning of their professional lives are familiar only with the most recent curricula, whereas older teachers might be accustomed to older curricula that might have emphasized different topics and language policies more. The second reason why age or working experience might be a significant variable is the fact that 20 years ago, for example, ELF research was not as common or popular as it is now, meaning that there were fewer courses, if any, about ELF. Those who finished their degree some 20 years ago might not have gotten the chance to familiarize themselves with ELF during their

language studies or pedagogical studies. It should be noted that older teachers are more experienced, and might be able to apply new ideas, much like ELF, based on the guidelines from the curricula more efficiently. Other important factor might be whether English language is the respondent's major or minor language. In any case, the findings should provide important insight and perspectives about the status of ELF in ELT in Finland.

This thesis consists of six different Chapters. The introduction in Chapter 1 is followed by theoretical framework in Chapter 2. The theory includes definitions of ELF, ELF pedagogy, ELF teacher models, ELF teaching materials, challenges of ELF in ELT, and the status of ELF in Finland. Next, Chapter 3 introduces data collection and methods of analysis. Then, Chapter 4 reports and analyzes the results, while Chapter 5 interprets these results: what did the respondents say and why. Lastly, Chapter 6 concludes this thesis, discusses its importance, and provides suggestions for further research. Appendix 1 at the end introduces the questionnaire used in the collection of the data.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section introduces the most important ideas and results in ELF research. The backbone of this section is the English language teaching section of The Routledge Handbook of English as a Lingua Franca (2018), and a collection of articles from the 10th Anniversary Conference of English as a Lingua Franca in 2017, both of which provide a good overview of the most recent ELF in ELT research. Section 2.1 introduces and defines ELF and its features in general. Then, section 2.2 discusses ELF pedagogy and the goals of ELT. Section 2.3 focuses on teachers and role models. Section 2.4 discusses ELF teaching materials and current materials in ELT. Then, section 2.5 explains the challenges of incorporating ELF in ELT, and lastly section 2.6 presents the status of ELF in ELT in Finland and Finnish curricula.

2.1 Definitions of ELF communication and language norms

2.1.1 ELF definitions

ELF has been researched and defined during its history in numerous different ways. In the early 2000s, Elder and Davies listed four different ways in which ELF interaction may be understood:

ELF 1. The use of English in an interaction where at least some of the participants are non-native speakers (NNS) of English

ELF 2. The use of English in an interaction where all the participants are NNSs and do not share the same first language

ELF 3. The use of English in an interaction where all the participants are NNSs and all share the same (or similar) first language

ELF 4. A (new) code used for interaction among NNSs, not standard English but based on standard English (Elder & Davies 2006: 282-283)

According to Elder & Davies, the first three interpretations of ELF are dependent on British or American English, unlike the fourth one. Seidlhofer states that ELF in the fourth sense is influenced by ‘the lingua-cultural background of its speakers and the rules of use that characterize the domain within which the interventions take place’ (in Elder & Davies 2006: 283). This definition comes closest to what we have today, though today NSs of English are included in the interaction as well, as the exclusion of natives from an ELF interaction has been seriously questioned in ELF research (Mauranen 2018: 8).

Inclusion of native speakers provides a more comprehensive definition of interaction, and it reflects English today better than ELF1-3: English is spoken in a variety of situations by people from different linguistic backgrounds. In short, when at least one of the speakers uses English as a second language, English is considered a contact language. (Mauranen 2018: 8). This view is adopted in this thesis as well, since it best represents the situation in Finnish schools. Most of the students in Finland share the same first language (henceforth L1), Finnish, while some might have different L1s, and some even English as L1.

Still, some definitions of ELF have excluded native speakers from ELF communication and argue that a native speaker’s spoken language cannot be considered as ‘foreign language’, unlike the one which ELF users produce according to those definitions. However, most ELF research makes a distinction between English as a Foreign Language (henceforth EFL) and ELF. It is argued that users of ELF should not only be compared to the NS benchmark but evaluated differently, and that ELF is part of Global Englishes (Jenkins et al. 2011: 283-284). On the contrary, EFL assumes that most

NNSs use English mostly with NSs of English, rather than other NNSs, and that NNSs should pursue or approximate native variety (ibid. 283-284).

EFL further makes a presumption that deviating from native norms are signs of incompetence, whereas ELF does not see deviations as deficient, but rather as different (ibid. 284). In addition, from an ELF point of view these differences are explored as emerging or potential features of ELF, and not as errors that deviate from standard norms. A defining feature of ELF is also its linguistic, pragmatic, and cultural flexibility and that the focus is on the context of the interaction, not the language itself (Sifakis 2017: 290).

2.1.2 Phonological and lexicogrammatical features of ELF

There are several features of English pronunciation that contribute significantly to the intelligibility of communication according to Jenkins et al. (2011: 287). In ELF research, these crucial features are labelled as the ‘Lingua Franca Core’, and they were first defined by Jennifer Jenkins in 2000. These important features are consonant sounds apart from dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/, initial consonant clusters, vowel length distinctions and nuclear stress. If the speaker is not able to pronounce one or more of these features correctly, mutual intelligibility of communication can easily suffer. These features could be focused on in English language classrooms, for example. Moreover, Jenkins has named some features ‘non-crucial’ or ‘non-core’, which are not as important to communicate successfully: weak forms, elisions, and assimilations. Users of ELF should focus on the core features, rather than non-core, in addition to accommodation strategies if they want to enhance their communication skills. (Jenkins et al. 2011: 287)

Several features of ELF lexicogrammar has been identified by Jenkins et al. (2011: 289-290). These features include dropping of the third person present tense's -s, 'confusing' of who and which, omission of definite and indefinite articles, 'failing' to use correct tag questions, inserting 'redundant' prepositions such as 'discuss *about*', overusing some general verbs such as do and have. Then, sometimes infinite constructions in that-clauses are replaced, or explicitness is overdone: *black color* instead of just *black* (Jenkins et al. 2011: 289-290). While these constructions deviate from Standard English (henceforth StE), it could be argued that the intelligibility of the utterances is not reduced (ibid. 290).

2.1.3 What is English? Standard English Norms

Traditionally, the center of English has been characterized by, for example, American English, British English, and Australian English occupying the Inner circle in Kachru's model of three circles of English. These countries are considered 'norm-providing' in that the norms of English language are produced there according to the model. The outer circle consists of countries in which English is not the native language but is still a major linguistic asset and is used in communication in countries such as India and Singapore. The expanding circle on the other hand includes the rest of the world and its English speakers. It is mentioned that in these countries, English is taught as a foreign language (EFL) and in traditional EFL teaching learners should pursue some native variety of English. (Crystal 2003: 60-61)

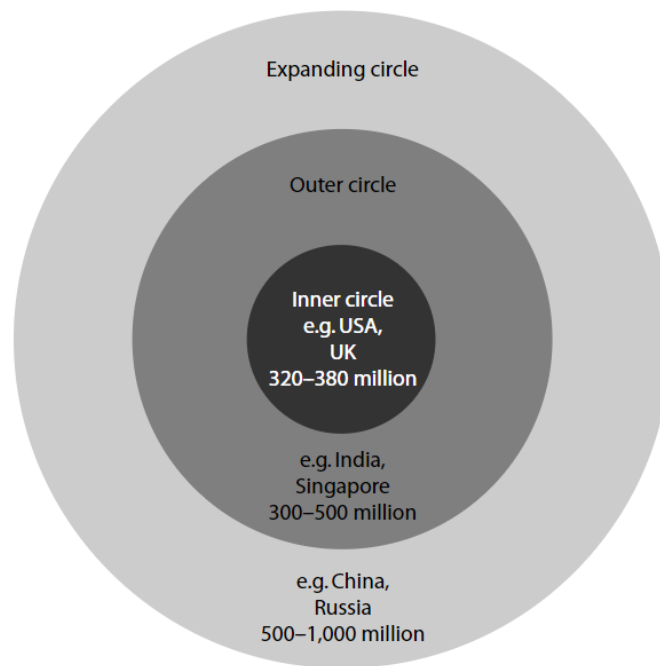


Figure 1: Kachru's three circles of English (Crystal 2003, 61)

The concept of ELF does not fit well in traditional models, such as the one provided by Kachru: the concept of 'norm-providing' inner circle is problematic since ELF communication should not rely solely on NS varieties. The conceptualization of ELF in relation to StE has been much discussed during ELF's brief history. Since the start of ELF research, many basic assumptions about languages have been under reconsideration, such as the assumptions about languages' stability and distinctiveness, monolingual norms, and native speaker competence, which all are very closely related to the notion of a standard language. (Seidlhofer 2018: 85). According to Seidlhofer, standardization is often done to increase the stability of the language and establish means for effective communication (2018: 86). However, this motivation is starting to become increasingly outdated when discussing English today, due to the abundance of different varieties of English that exist. English has no one authority that would undertake this standardization:

the number of non-native speakers all around the world is huge, and even native varieties are different to one another. (ibid. 2018: 87)

Seidlhofer demonstrates how the notion of StE is taken for granted. She cites some well-known English language reference books such as *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners* and the *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English*, the *Cambridge Grammar of English*, the *Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English*, and *Practical English Usage*, pointing out that while these books present themselves as general guidelines for anyone using English, they only denote StE (ibid. 2018, 89). She further highlights the issues of this line of thinking:

The fact that neither publishers nor authors/compiler of reference works such as the ones mentioned above regard it as necessary to specify that they are equating ‘English’ with ‘Standard English’ indicates just how deeply engrained and taken for granted the prevalence and assumed general, global relevance of StE is. *In this line of thinking, then, StE is English, and what is not StE therefore is not English.* (Seidlhofer 2018: 89)

ELF does not even exist in such comments, even though ELF research has displayed countless successful ELF interactions, which do not strictly follow StE standards. This is also the case for NSs too – they do not strictly follow StE forms in spoken language either (Seidlhofer 2018: 89).

2.2 ELF pedagogy

2.2.1 Double standards of ELT regarding spoken English

Traditionally ELT for NNSs has been based on StE norms, both in spoken and written language. In recent years, this viewpoint has been challenged. The change much welcomed, and especially important for spoken language, which was promoting NS

norms as the goal for English language learners. Only 5-15% of foreign language learners reach a level close to a native on a phonological level, even if learners would have lived in a ‘target language country’ for several years (Ranta 2013: 21). If the number of learners who reach near-native level in English is that low, every ELT professional who promotes native-like speech as an end-goal for their students might want to reconsider their ideas about the purpose of ELT, and focus more on effective communication, for example.

StE has indeed been represented as ‘proper’ English for decades in modern ELT. However, sociolinguists have been trying to point out that StE is a dialect that has its own varieties too (Seidlhofer 2018: 89), meaning that there is no such thing as a standard accent according to Seidlhofer. Moreover, one English accent spoken by a minority of native speakers in Britain, Received Pronunciation (RP), is the standard for foreign students of English in Britain. At the same time, Received Pronunciation is not the model of English pronunciation in British schools, because native speakers should be proud of their own regional pronunciation that is part of their identity (Seidlhofer 2018: 89). Seidlhofer further highlights the double standards that have been prevalent in ELT: NSs are allowed to be proud of their accents, while NNSs should pursue RP. On top of this, RP is not even the most intelligible accent for NNSs (Jenkins 2009: 12), which implies that there indeed are underlying attitudes towards StE in the ELT world.

2.2.2 ELF in ELT: how and why?

The attempt to make ELF teachable is not a simple one. ELF is not one distinct variety that can be described like other varieties of English. According to Seidlhofer (2017: 294) it is not a question whether ELF will replace EFL, as it should not, but rather how much

of ELF and what aspects of ELF go into ELT. The way ELF is to be incorporated in ELT is via ‘ELF-aware’ teaching, which, for example, presents NNSs as role models, and teaches certain communication strategies to achieve mutual understanding between interlocutors. Culture is presented fluidly instead of through fixed native English cultures. Galloway (2018, 472) discusses The Global Englishes for Language Teaching (GELT) framework, which is illustrated in Table 1.

	Traditional ELT	GELT
Target interlocutor	Native English speakers	Native English speakers and non-native English speakers
Owners	Native English speakers	Native English speakers and non-native English speakers
Target culture	Fixed native English culture	Fluid cultures
Target culture teachers	Non-native English speaking teachers (same L1) and native English speaking teachers	Non-native English speaking teachers (same L1 and different L1) and native English speaking teachers
Norms	Native English and concept of Standard English	Diversity, flexibility and multiple forms of competence
Role model	Native English speakers	Successful ELF users
Materials	Native English and native English speakers	Native English, non-native English, ELF and ELF communities and contexts
First language and culture	Seen as a hindrance and source of interference	Seen as a resource

Table 1: Global Englishes for language teaching (GELT) (Galloway 2018: 472)

Instead of the monolingual bias that is present in the traditional ELT, GELT includes the ELF perspective of English language. Target interlocutors and owners of the language can either be native or non-native. Lingua-cultural norms are negotiated, as interlocutors in a real-world conversation might be from anywhere in the world. The role model for students is a successful ELF user, whose main goal and objective is mutual intelligibility and understanding, not necessarily NS proficiency in pronunciation or a native accent. Mutual intelligibility can be achieved by different accommodation or communication

strategies, and even code-switching is seen as a resource instead of hindrance unlike in traditional ELT (Galloway 2018: 472).

In another study, Blair (2017) interviewed language teachers about language models and lingua francas. In this study, teachers described their ideas about language models, the benefits, and challenges of ELF. The closing thoughts by one of the participants of that study summarize the need for ELF in ELT, as the respondent states that native speakers of English are no longer the focal point of English-speaking world, and instead of only gazing at NSs like before, ELT should prepare learners to become multilingual users of English. Mimicking NSs is not encouraged by the respondent, and teachers, learners and educators should all access the insights offered by ELF research (Blair 2017: 363).

Shohamy (2018: 588) discusses the English of today's world in a similar manner:

Language is dynamic, energetic, diverse, fluid and constantly evolving; no fixed boundaries, creative, but rather open, resulting in fusions, hybrids and 'non-native' varieties.

Language is not static, rather it is negotiated, interacted and mediated in attempts to make meanings, to communicate, to create contact.

She then adds that language is also uniquely personal – two persons do not speak the same even within the same language. These ideas should be discussed in classroom to produce English language users who are confident and proud of their own language and are willing to use it without being afraid of deviating from one or two StE norms.

2.3 Teacher models from ELF perspective

Dewey and Patsko (2018, 441) claim that communicative language teaching and teacher education have had a strong monolingual orientation to the English language in the classroom: translation and code-switching might even be prohibited. In contrast in a more plurilingual approach, language is considered multilingual by nature. The plurilingual line of thinking claims that teachers who are NNSs of English, can be as good as NS teachers of English. In fact, NNSs have certain advantages to NSs: NNSs have been language learners themselves and might understand some difficulties the students face more easily. Highlighting the benefits of NNS teachers by no means undermines skilled NS teachers, but rather attempts to discard the monolingual bias that has been prevalent in ELT - a good ELF aware teacher can have any linguistic background.

ELF aware teachers should become aware of the current reality of the global status of English and appreciate English as a medium of communication used by different people, including learners, highlighting the potential strengths of NNSs in general. Non-native ELF-aware teachers should focus on themselves as users of English language – they should not feel helpless if they feel they are not allowed to ‘own’ the language they teach. Emphasis is put on what learners *can do* and what they already know about language: learners should also be considered as *users* of language, and they should be encouraged to be proud of their own skills, linguistic background, and accent. (Sifakis & Bayuurt 2018: 462-463)

Research about teacher’s own confidence and insecurities as English language users have been studied recently in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) contexts, where some subject is taught in English in a school where the L1 of the students is not English. While CLIL teachers are not always language teachers, they are

still competent English language users in a classroom context and studying them should reveal attitudes towards the use of English language. Hüttner (2018: 485) reports that many non-native English language CLIL teachers felt that their skills were inadequate, and some even felt ‘paralyzed’ at the beginning of their CLIL courses. After gaining some experience, their confidence as an English speaker had increased and their native speaker ideology had weakened – they were no longer afraid of every single deviation from StE when speaking English.

2.4 Teaching materials and strategies from ELF perspective

Teaching materials are a central part of teaching and learning processes – they serve as a major source of courses’ language input. Based on evidence from ELF corpora, the way speakers interact and adapt language resources in communication differs from the way ‘target’ language structures and lexis are presented in teaching materials (Dewey & Patsko 2018: 441). The lack of materials that incorporate Global Englishes perspective in ELT is indeed concerning, as ELT materials are oriented towards StE (Galloway 2018: 468). ELT materials, and ELT in general, should move away from StE towards ELF-aware approach as is explained by Sifakis et al. (2017: 180). They explain that ELF-aware materials would help learners to familiarize them with the contexts in which English is used and will be used by the learners in the future, instead of presenting how it is used in current ELT materials, some of which can be considered outdated. Furthermore, this approach would help learners cope with the complexities of communicating in today’s world (Sifakis et al. 2018: 180). In short, since ELF communication, or English in general,

is not tied to the cultures of the 'inner-circle' countries anymore, ELT materials should also represent the diverse reality in which spoken English is used (Galloway 2018: 473).

An illuminating example of the lack of ELF materials in ELT was discussed by Mauranen (2012: 234). Mauranen reports that a Finnish IT expert was in contact with his or her clients from India. The IT expert reported that he or she would rather be in contact with their clients via email, as 'we didn't always understand what they said in their Indian accent'. The expert in Mauranen's work seemed to be fine with his or her own English but had problems understanding other L2 English speakers. The IT expert's education had most likely given him good English language skills in many areas, but it seems Finnish education system had not prepared him for intercultural communication and different accents that one encounters in the real world (ibid). This is an issue that could be avoided by not relying solely on StE materials in ELT, and recently ELF pedagogy has gained more and more attention.

Different tools and frameworks have been developed to support ELT practitioners to assess their teaching materials and course books. There are several themes that must be evaluated in the first stage. For example, it must be evaluated whether their course book assumes native speaker ownership, whether the role models the book introduces are relevant in ELF contexts, how culture is presented, and is the student's own language presented as a hindrance or as a resource in the book (Galloway 2018: 475).

After the first stage of evaluation, the content should be examined more carefully, with the help of a following checklist that proposes what ELF-aware materials should include:

1. expose the learners to language in authentic use;
 2. help learners to pay attention to features of authentic input;
 3. provide the learners with opportunities to use the target language to achieve communicative purposes;
 4. provide opportunities for outcome feedback;
 5. achieve impact in the sense that they arouse and sustain the learners' curiosity and attention;
 6. stimulate intellectual, aesthetic and emotional involvement.
- (Galloway 2018: 475-476)

The materials used in classrooms should expose learners to authentic language. Authentic language can mean authentic audio recordings of ELF exchanges, for example, as it is important for English learners to be exposed to the kind of language they will encounter (Galloway 2018: 476). Next, emphasis must be put on teaching communication strategies since ELF research has shown that in order to achieve successful communication one must not depend only on native norms. Instead, different accommodation strategies are used in ELF conversation. These strategies could be included in English course books. Exercises should be measured according to how successful the communication was, instead of having to follow every single StE norm (Galloway 2018: 477).

Sato et al. (2019: 29) provide a list of different communication strategies that could be emphasized in ELF contexts with low-proficiency students based on their research. They identified the following strategies to be successful: student's direct appeal for help, asking for repetition, repeating a response, circumlocution, lexical anticipation, non-linguistic strategies, and echoing. It was reported that direct appeal for help and simply repeating a response were sometimes, but not always effective, so other strategies should be encouraged more. Course book authors could include exercises based on these

communication strategies in their course books, at least for learners with lower proficiency in English language.

2.5 Challenges of incorporating ELF in ELT

One of the greater challenges of incorporating ELF in ELT is opposition to ELF and the misconceptions of ELF. At the beginning of ELF research, ELF was ironically criticized for two opposing positions. World English scholars argued that ELF was promoting a monolithic kind of English, while ELT professionals had the idea that ELF was promoting abandoning standards and ‘letting everything go’ (Jenkins 2018: 2). Misunderstandings of such caliber are long gone, but the opposition remains. Another reason for opposing ELF and its implementation in ELT is the fact that its opposition, even today, simply does not bother to read ELF literature.

In addition to dismissive attitudes or ignorance against ELF, some teachers in the study by Wright and Zheng (2018: 514) reported that they lack the time to incorporate ELF in their courses: ‘Unfortunately, no. We do not have time to develop skills of accommodation or negotiation’ and ‘Unfortunately not. We do not have any time for extra activities outside the syllabus’. Time aside, they also called ELF an extra activity outside the syllabus, and ELF not being included in a syllabus is another problem in itself.

Moreover, Blair (2017: 354) reports more concerns by teachers in his study: some respondents are confused about ELF – they do not know what ELF’s model is or who defines it. One respondent talks about the comfort zone of StE and how ‘the ELF monster seems huge’. Again, individual teachers are forced to incorporate and think about

ELF themselves when they should be given guidelines and materials by curricula and other stakeholders.

2.6 ELF in the Finnish curricula

General guidelines for Finnish secondary school and upper secondary school teachers are provided by the two national curricula provided by the Finnish National Agency for Education (Opetushallitus). Secondary schools are included in the most recent basic education curriculum (POPS 2014) that includes grades 1-6 in primary and 7-9 in secondary schools. Since the focus of this research is secondary school and upper secondary school teachers, only the section about secondary schools, or grades 7-9, is taken into consideration. In that section, different school subjects are covered one by one and the section about foreign languages and English language is covered there. The latest curriculum for upper secondary schools was published in 2019 (LOPS 2019). Similarly to the basic education curriculum, LOPS 2019 has a section designated to foreign languages and English. Only those sections are taken into consideration in this research.

The curricula in Finland are designed in a way which gives teachers a lot of freedom and flexibility when designing their classes. In the curricula, there are mostly definitions of which skills the learners should have at the end of the year instead of suggestions or orders about exact exercises or materials that should be used during the courses. Since the documents are available only in Finnish and Swedish, any quotations are translated by the researcher.

POPS 2014 is the first one that will be considered from an ELF point of view. POPS provides a list of skills that should be attained by the learners. The first item

on the list is 'helping learners to understand the status of English in relation to its different varieties and providing learners skills needed in intercultural communication' (POPS 2014, T1: 349) - ELF pedagogy focuses directly on this issue. Then, it is mentioned that teachers should help their learners develop different communication skills needed in situation where communication breakdowns might occur: negotiating meaning is considered important (POPS 2014 T7: 349). Moreover, teachers should help their learners to recognize features of intercultural communication and help learners to achieve skills needed in constructive intercultural communication (POPS 2014, T8: 349). And most importantly, being able to convey a message is emphasized in communication over anything else (POPS 2014, T5: 349). ELF is also explicitly mentioned in POPS, and it is stated that 'English language's path to its position as the global lingua franca should be examined' (POPS 2014: 349).

LOPS 2019 has an English section of its own but before that, there are goals of learning any foreign language. It is explicitly stated that 'students should be encouraged to use languages in a global world, in which the goal is not necessarily to achieve skills of a native speaker of the target language, but rather being able to communicate constructively and understanding one another' (LOPS 2019, 175). This applies to any foreign language in LOPS 2019, including English of course.

The next section in LOPS 2019 is dedicated to the English language and different courses, or modules, in upper secondary schools. The first module ENA1 covers learning skills and the identity as a learner, and its purpose is to 'develop understanding of language awareness and multilingualism' among other things, and one of the central contents of this module is using multilingualism as a resource (LOPS 2019: 180-181). The second module ENA2 literally translates to 'English as a global language'. The focal

point of this module is to discuss English as a lingua franca: the use of English in situations where English might not be the native tongue of any interlocutors. The goal of this module is to help students to recognize different communication strategies in order to achieve successful communication and strengthen one's confidence as a language user (LOPS 2019: 181). Lastly, the eighth module ENA8 should strengthen students' ability to understand different varieties of English, practice negotiation, and to respect one another in communication (LOPS 2019: 184).

Parts of these modules explicitly represent ideas of ELF pedagogy in the upper secondary school curriculum. The basic education curriculum was not as explicit, but the contents of ELF pedagogy are evident there as well based on previous sections of the Theoretical Framework. These are not the only goals and guidelines for teachers in the two curricula, but the extracts highlighted here are vital for one's skills and confidence as a non-native language user.

3 DATA AND METHODS

Chapter 3 introduces the type of data and methods of analysis used in this research. First, section 3.1 explains how the data was collected using an online questionnaire. Second, section 3.2 introduces the contents of the questionnaire and its structure, in addition to a description of the process of refining the questionnaire. Third, the background information of the 35 respondents will be discussed in section 3.3. Finally, section 3.4 explains the methods used for analysis of the data in Chapters 4 and 5.

3.1 Data collection

An online questionnaire, found in Appendix 1, was chosen for the collection of the data. Questionnaires are a type of method that can produce quantitative, as well as qualitative data. Since ELF has made its way to the curricula very recently, state-of-the-art research with a questionnaire could yield up-to-date information about how the suggestions of ELF pedagogy have made their way to the classrooms in practice.

The target audience of this research was secondary school teachers of grades 7-9 and upper secondary school teachers. The data was gathered with an online questionnaire which was published in two social media groups of language teaching professionals in Facebook. All the members of these groups should be language teachers as the groups are closed, meaning that each member must be individually accepted after a few questions. Moreover, the groups are moderated, and all the discussion is about language teaching. First group was designated for secondary school language teachers of

any language, and the second one for upper secondary school English language teachers. The groups had roughly 2700 and 1300 members respectively.

3.2 Contents of the questionnaire

The questionnaire itself consists of four different sections. First section was Demographic information that gathered some background information about the respondents. The purpose of the data gathered in this section was to ascertain if some specific factor, such as work experience, is correlated with the amount of ELF related exercises and materials that is used in respondents' English lessons. Section 3.3 discusses Demographic information in greater detail.

The rest of the questionnaire was designed to gather the data itself and there were 16 questions or statements in total. The questionnaire was based on the theory about ELF pedagogy and literature discussed in Chapter 2, as well as the Finnish national curricula that mentions ELF related topics and goals for the learners. The questionnaire included open-ended questions, multiple-choice questions, and statements that can be answered with a Likert-scale 1-4: 'I strongly disagree', 'I somewhat disagree', 'I somewhat agree', and 'I strongly agree' respectively.

The second section of the questionnaire is called Language models. The purpose of this section was to ascertain if teachers used any specific variety of English and whether they recommend their own variety or some other variety for their students. Other questions discussed how the teachers talk about Finnish English accent and English as a tool of communication with their students.

The third section of the questionnaire aimed to ascertain whether the materials used in classrooms are culturally and phonologically diverse. Additionally, teachers were asked to describe all the varieties of English that their students are exposed to, because the students should be familiarized with different varieties of English by NSs and NNSs. Their own preference and the reasons for it were also asked.

Exercises about communication were the topic of the last section in the questionnaire. This section had one multiple-choice question about the type of communication strategies that teacher had been practicing with their students. This question is based on the research by Sato et al. 2019, who identified effective, somewhat effective, and ineffective communication strategies for situations where ambiguities or communication breakdowns might occur in conversations. In the follow-up question, the respondents were asked to explain which strategies they think are the most effective and why. Then, teachers were asked whether they have used some other methods that were not mentioned in previous question that would help their students to communicate in situations where ambiguities might occur.

Before the questionnaire was published, it was peer-reviewed by a colleague with a good understanding of ELF theory and pedagogy. Some small changes were made to the questionnaire after the feedback. Then, a pilot survey was conducted and a colleague who had been working as an English language teacher for 0-5 years submitted an answer and feedback. The participant was asked to elaborate some of the answers. Based on this feedback, some questions were removed, some modified, and a few specific terms were either explained or changed altogether to a more generic term that was easier to understand. A suggested size of a pilot survey is around 5-10% of the target sample size of the final survey (Wrench et al. 2008: 223) which would be only 2-4

participants in this research. However, there was just one participant in the pilot survey, but his or her answers confirmed that most of the questions worked as intended and the questionnaire was finalized after the improvements mentioned above.

3.3 Demographic information of the respondents

In total, 35 teachers answered the online questionnaire. A requirement for participation was that the respondent should work as an English language teacher in secondary schools or upper secondary schools. Two respondents had a different workplace currently, but they had had experience from secondary schools and upper secondary schools and are thus included in the analysis of the data. The current workplace of the respondents is shown in Figure 2, while the institutions in which the respondents have worked before is shown in Figure 3.

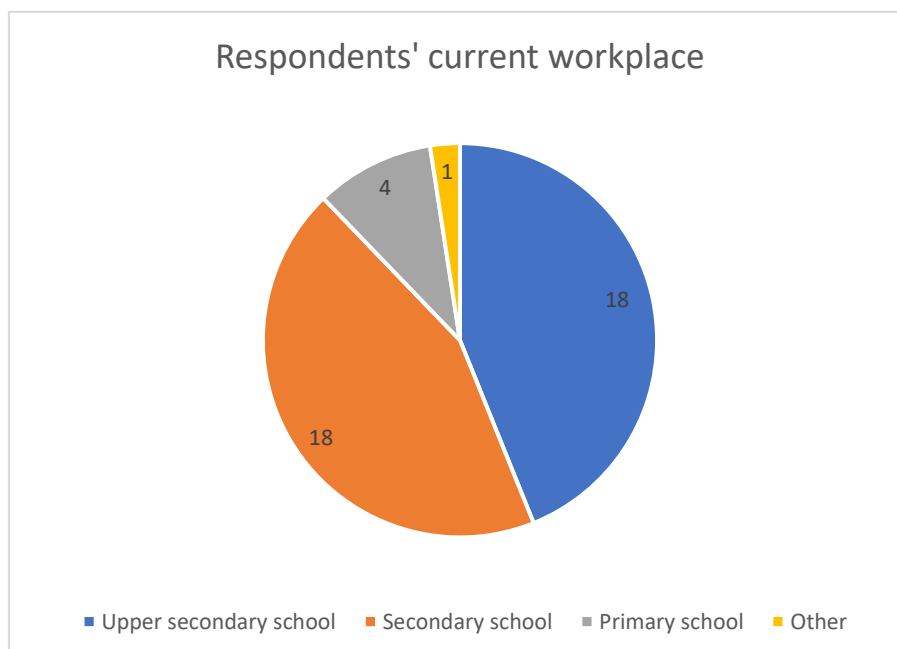


Figure 2: Respondents' current workplace.

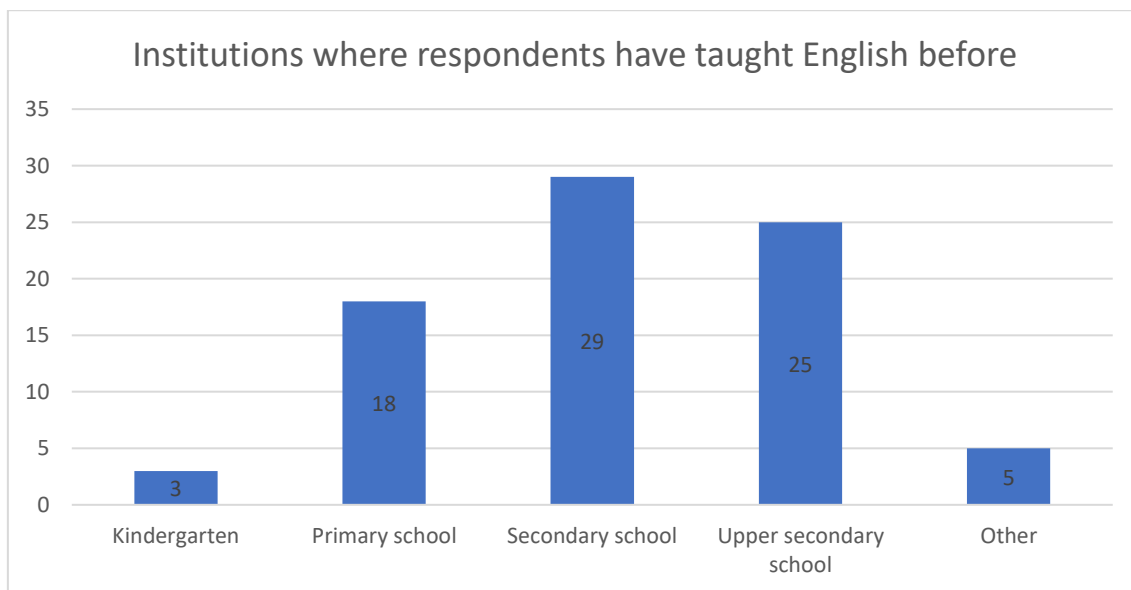


Figure 3: Respondents' previous workplaces.

Some respondents worked both at secondary schools and upper secondary schools, or primary schools and secondary schools, which is why the total number of institutions in Figure 2 exceeds the number of respondents. Similarly in Figure 3, many respondents had work experience from multiple different institutions as well. In total, the split between secondary and upper secondary schools was almost equal and they can be compared to one another in the analysis of the data. All the respondents identified as female. However, 78% of the teachers in basic education were female in 2019 (Opetushallitus 2020), which is why respondents should still represent language teachers well. Having male respondents as well would be more ideal of course. The first language of each respondent was Finnish, which was somewhat expected.

Almost half of the respondents, 16 out of 35, belonged to the age group of 40-49 years. Eight respondents were in the age group of 30-39 years, seven in the age group of 50-59, and only a few were younger than 30 or older than 60 (Figure 4). The age of the respondent will not be used as a variable when comparing the results since almost

half of the respondents are in the average age group, while other age groups at the opposite ends of the scale are rather small.

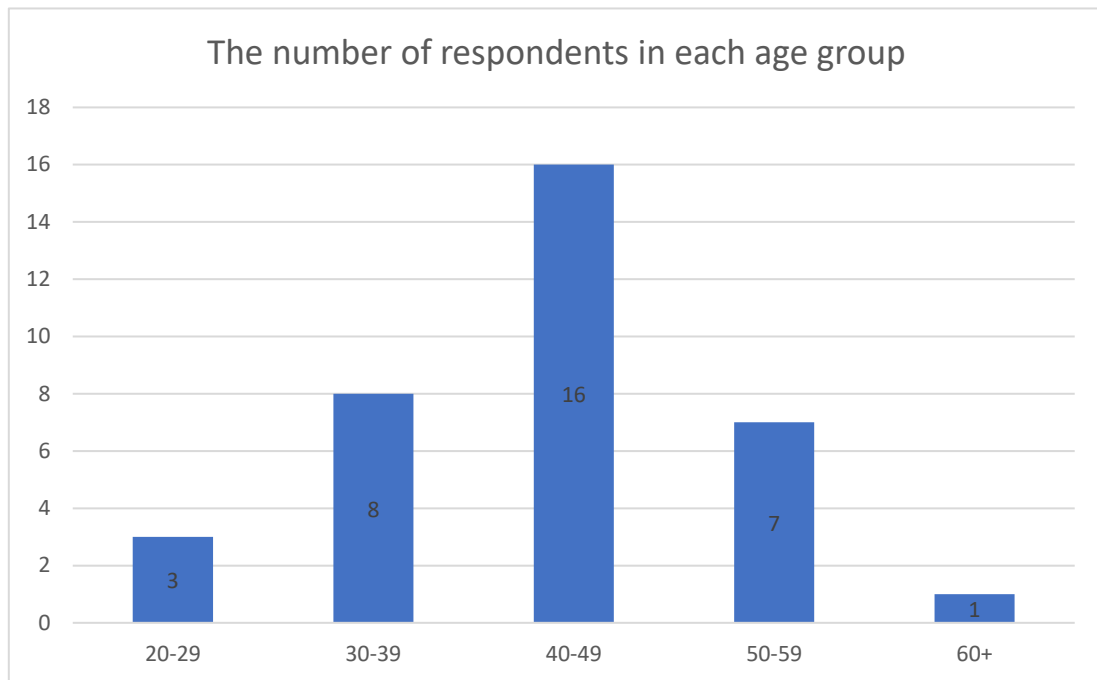


Figure 4: The number of respondents in each age group.

The work experience of the respondent is shown in Figure 5. It seems that some teachers have acquired the qualification of an English language teacher after their studies, and they might have taught some other subject or worked as a primary school teacher before acquiring their English language degree. The work experience as an English teacher might be a significant variable when comparing the results of ELF's implementation in classrooms, and there are enough respondents who are at the beginning of their careers, as well those who have more experience.

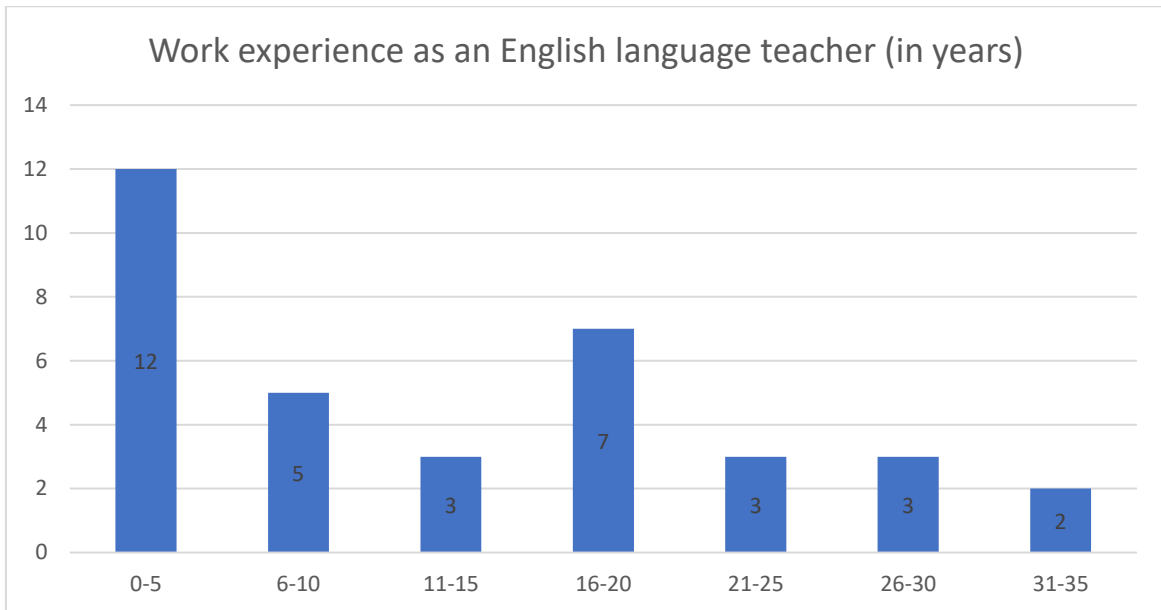


Figure 5: Respondents' work experience as an English language teacher.

The distribution of universities in which the respondents finished their English language degree is shown in Figure 6. If respondents from certain a university provide similar answers, it could indicate that ELF is prevalent in that specific university and most of the students there acquire ELF related skills during their studies.

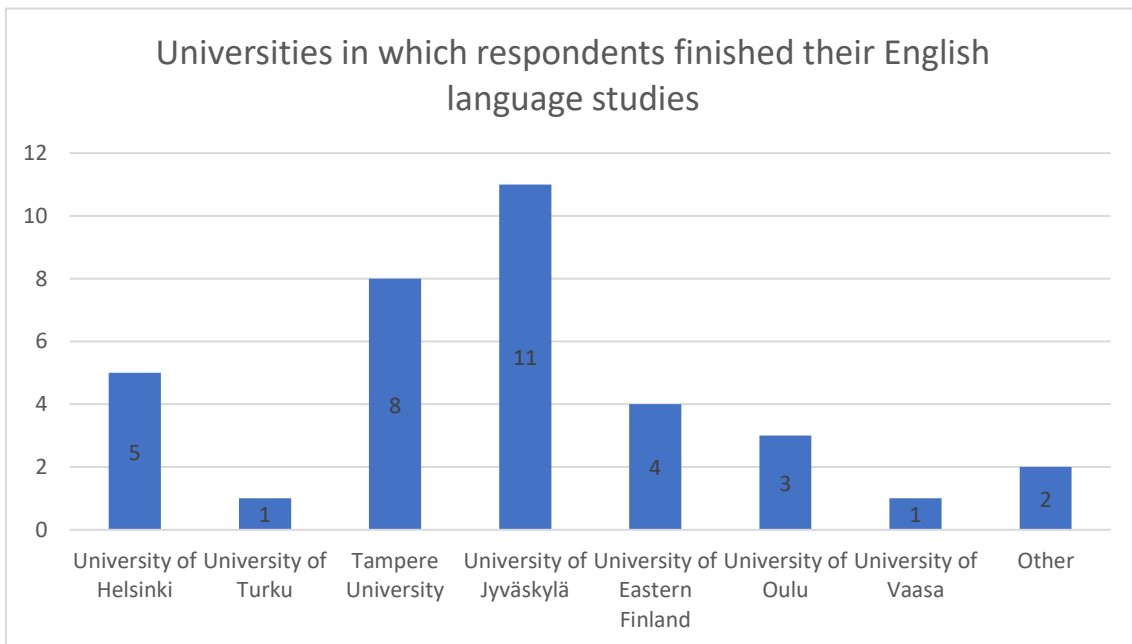


Figure 6: Universities in which respondents finished English language studies.

Additionally, another significant variable could be whether the respondent majored or minored in English language. In total, 22 respondents majored in English language in university while 12 respondents had English as a minor subject. One respondent reported that she had not studied English at all in university but was still working as an English teacher.

Respondents' previous knowledge of ELF was the last part of the demographic information. In total, 31 of the 35 respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that they are familiar with ELF, only one respondent somewhat disagreed and three strongly disagreed. Then, 27 of the 35 respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that ELF was introduced to them during their studies, and eight somewhat disagreed while none strongly disagreed with this statement.

3.4 Methodology: qualitative and quantitative data

The data produced by the questionnaire is very qualitative by nature, as half of the 16 questions were open-ended ones. The other half of the questions included multiple-choice questions and Likert-scale statements that produced more quantitative information. As the data is both quantitative and qualitative, methods of analysis for different types of data are considered separately.

The qualitative data produced by the open-ended questions will be analyzed using a theory that has been featured in qualitative research for over fifty years: Grounded theory. Grounded theory can be summarized into four features (Flick 2018, 1-2). The first feature is that in grounded theory, there are minimal preconceptions about the issues under study – all the answers are in the data and will be revealed during the analysis. The

second feature is simultaneous data collection and analysis. However, in this research, the data was gathered roughly in a week and there was not much time to analyze the data during the data collection period, but it was still revised even during the collection. The third feature is ‘using various interpretations for data’. And finally, grounded theory aims to construct theories as the outcome of the research. In short, in grounded theory, theory is created through the analysis without preconceptions about the results. While the data is analyzed, new categories are created whenever new elements arise from the data as the analysis progresses.

Quantitative data will be analyzed based on the method by Eddington (2015: 8) who introduces quantitative research methods for linguists. According to Eddington, quantitative research is interested in the relationship between variables and in the context of this research, the interest lies in what kind of an effect independent variables, significant variables based on demographic information in this case, have on dependent variables, which are teachers’ opinions and methods related to ELF.

4 ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This Chapter presents the results of the questionnaire's parts two, three and four. Each part of the questionnaire will be discussed in its own section as each section discusses a certain topic. The results are presented in Figures and examples from the data. The goal of the study was to provide an overview about how Finnish English language teachers include ELF related ideas and talk about ELF related issues in class in general. However, some independent variables are taken into consideration when presenting the data if the variable caused variation in the respondent's ELF related methods. The independent variables are work experience, whether the respondent majored or minored in English language, and whether the respondent works in secondary school or upper secondary school.

First, section 4.1 introduces the results of Language models section of the questionnaire, while section 4.2 discusses the results of Materials section. Section 4.3 presents the results from Exercises section of the questionnaire. Each section of the questionnaire has multiple-choice questions and open-ended questions, which will be analyzed using quantitative and qualitative methods respectively. The survey itself is found in Appendix 1.

4.1 Results of Language models

4.1.1 Multiple-choice questions of Language models

First, questions number 13-18 were related to language models and will be discussed here. The multiple-choice questions and Likert-scale statements aimed to elicit information

about teachers' spoken discourse: whether they think their own spoken language is a viable model for their students, what they think about their students' goal as learners regarding pronunciation, and whether they recommend any variety of English for their own students. The open-ended questions were related to the English language as a tool for communication, Finnish English accent, and defining a successful non-native language user. Most of the questions were concerned with something practical, such as conversations teachers might have had with their students, while some questions were concerned with opinions about ideal language users.

First, teachers were asked which variety of English they are using while speaking, if any (Figure 7). Teacher's spoken discourse is a major part of the language output in classrooms.

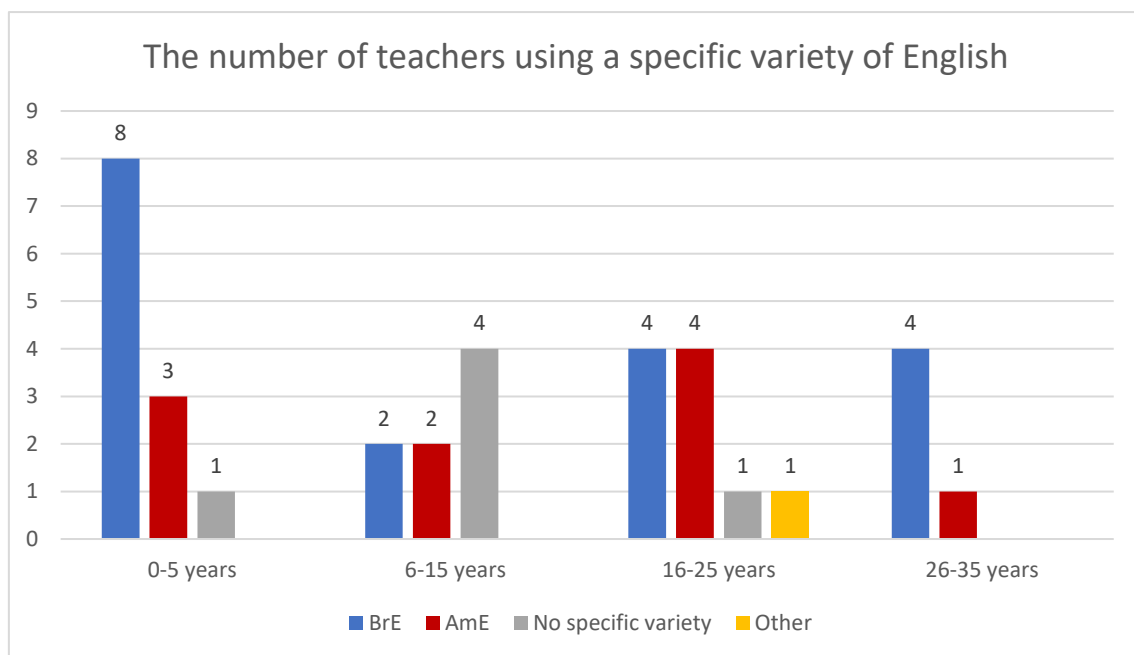


Figure 7: The varieties of English the respondents use themselves based on their work experience.

British English was used by 18 out of the 35 respondents, or 51%, in spoken discourse, while American English was the second most common variety with almost 30% using it. Less experienced English teachers were more likely to use British English, but the number of respondents is not high enough for generalizations. Then, six out of 35 respondents, roughly every sixth respondent, stated that they do not use any specific variety of English when speaking English. Interestingly four teachers who did not use any specific variety had studied English as a minor language, only one had studied English as a major language, and one stated that she had not studied English in university. It seems that those who had majored in English are more likely to adopt a specific variety of English: they might be more invested into a British or American culture more than others as they have also studied the language further. The teachers who chose 'I do not speak any specific variety' did not clarify further what they thought about their own spoken language, for instance, if they felt like they had a strong Finnish accent.

Then, the next question was related to the teachers' self-confidence as language users regarding spoken language (Figure 8).

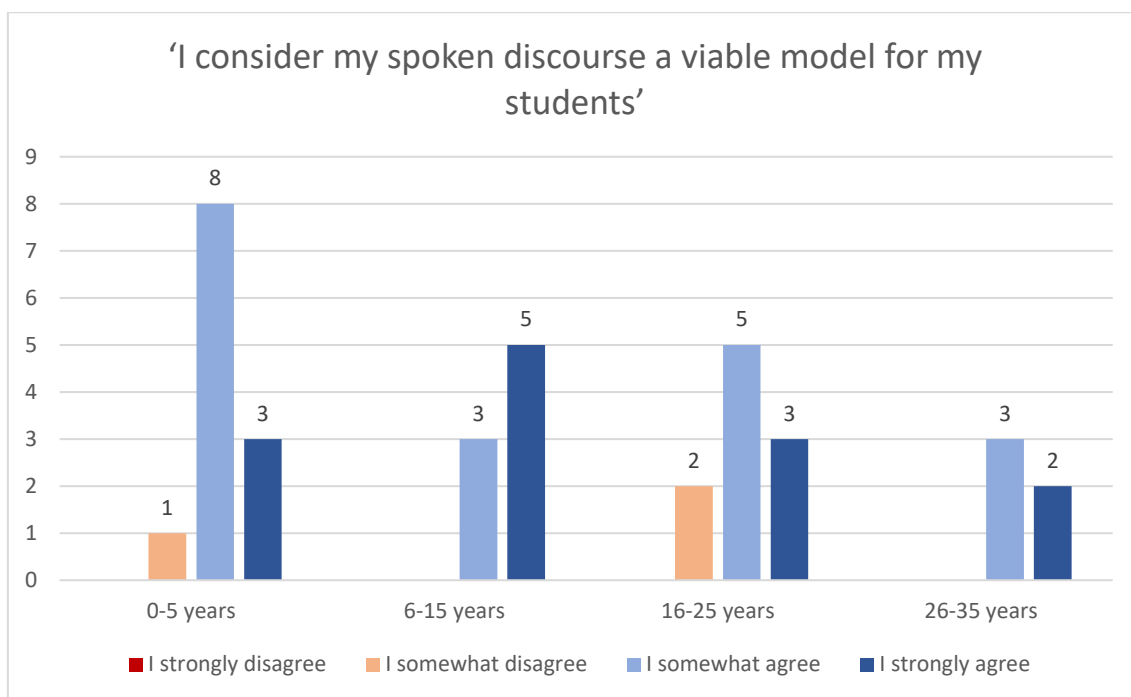


Figure 8: The responses to the statement 'I consider my spoken discourse a viable model for my students' based on the work experience of the respondents.

In experience groups 6-15 and 26-35 years every teacher either somewhat or strongly agreed that they feel like their spoken discourse is a viable model for their students. However, there were more answers given in category 'I somewhat agree' than 'I completely agree', indicating that not everyone was as confident as could be expected by English language teachers. Additionally, three teachers somewhat disagreed about their spoken language's viability as a model. Each respondent who disagreed with this statement had studied English as a minor language. According to previous studies about teachers and ELF research in general, some teachers might feel inferior to NSs since they might feel like natives 'own' the English language and could be discouraged to speak if they feel like they are not on a NS level phonologically. Perhaps someone who has minored in English language could feel this way even if they should not. This issue alone could be studied further. Interestingly, two teachers who were not confident about their

own spoken language as a model, later reported that they think English is mainly a tool of communication between different cultures and that having an accent and not sounding perfectly native is okay – they just did not seem to apply that to themselves.

Next, teachers were asked about their thoughts about their students’ goal as English language learners regarding pronunciation (Figure 9).

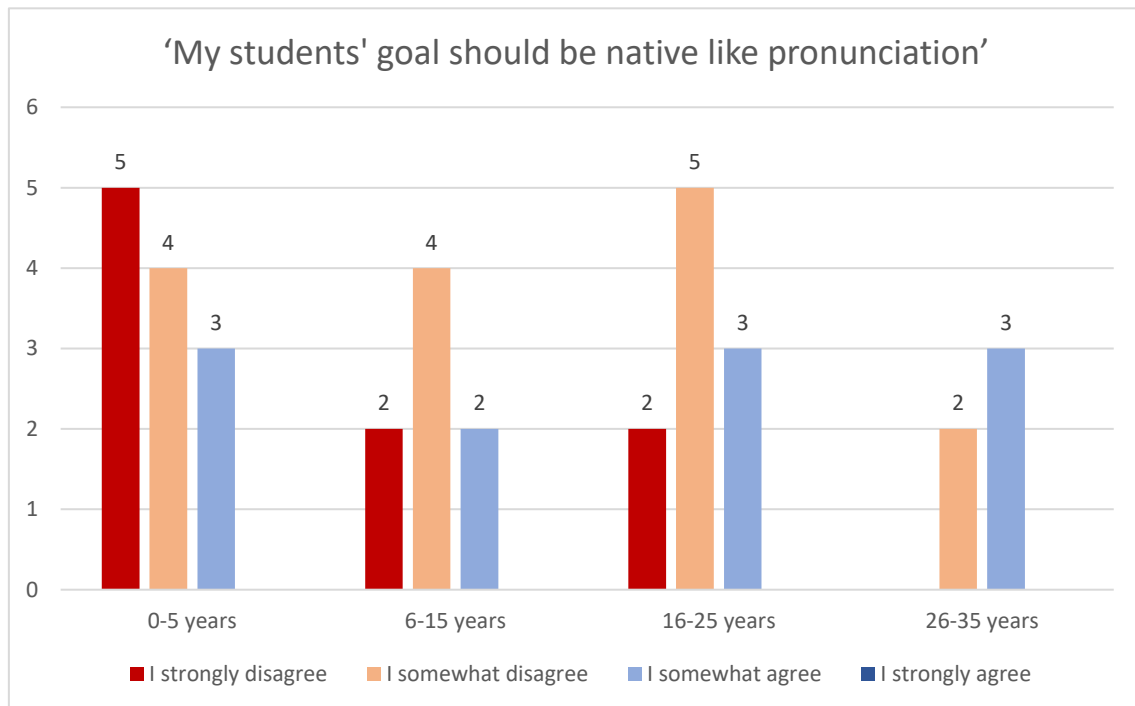


Figure 9: The responses to the statement ‘My students’ goal as learners should be native-like pronunciation’ based on the work experience of the respondents.

Majority of the respondents in the three work experience groups disagreed with this statement. English teachers of the work experience group of 26-35 years were the only group who agreed than disagreed more often with the statement about native pronunciation being a goal for their students. The difference might stem from the fact that previously traditional ELT relied more on native speakers: materials were based on natives, role models were based on NSs, culture often revolved around British and

American cultures, and natives were considered to be the owners of English language (See section 2.2.2). Of course, the sample size of experienced teachers here is rather tiny, and the difference is between ‘somewhat agreeing’ and ‘somewhat disagreeing’, but then again results align with suggestions in older curricula and similar results could be expected even with a larger sample size. More experienced teachers have also finished their language studies longer time ago, when ELF pedagogy was less prevalent or even non-existent.

Interestingly, different variables in the respondents’ background caused variation, such whether the teacher had majored or minored in English language (Figure 10).

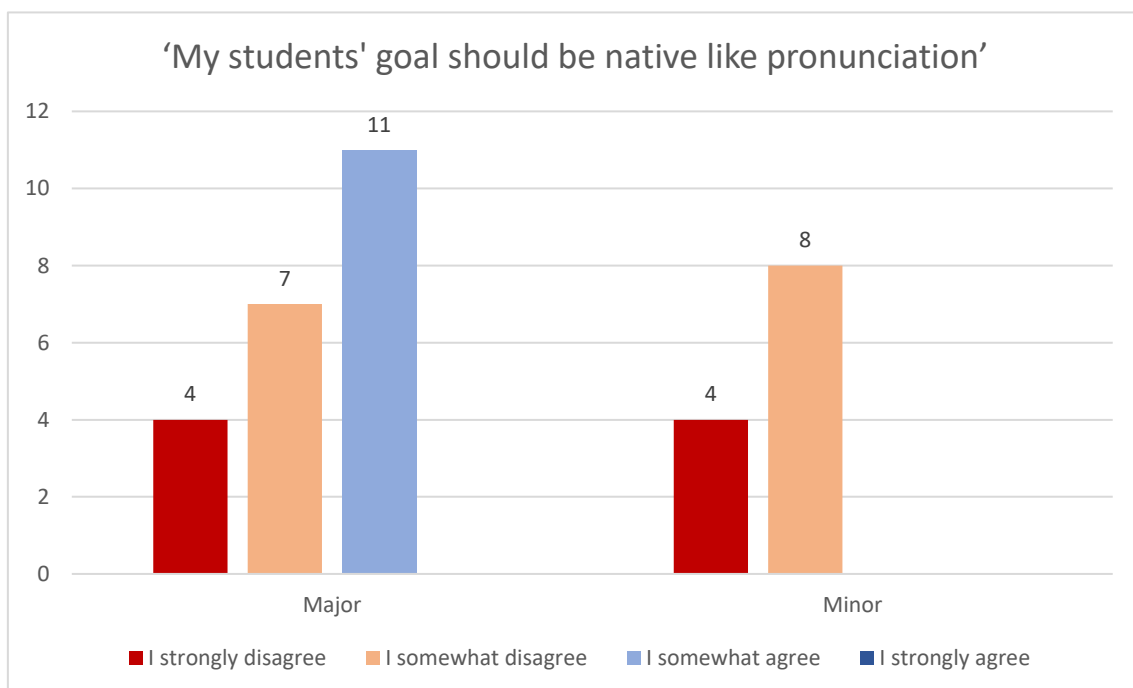


Figure 10: The responses to the statement ‘My students’ goal as learners should be native-like pronunciation’ based on whether the respondent had English as a major or a minor subject.

Those who majored in English language were very divided: 50% of English majors somewhat agreed that native-like pronunciation should be the goal of learning English, and 50% strongly disagreed or somewhat disagreed with that statement. In contrast, not even one respondent who had studied English as a minor language thought that native like pronunciation should be a goal for their students. It seems that there could be some bias towards native-speakerism among those who majored in English language.

In addition, respondents' current workplace can partially explain this difference, as is shown in Figure 11, where the difference between secondary schools and upper secondary schools is presented.

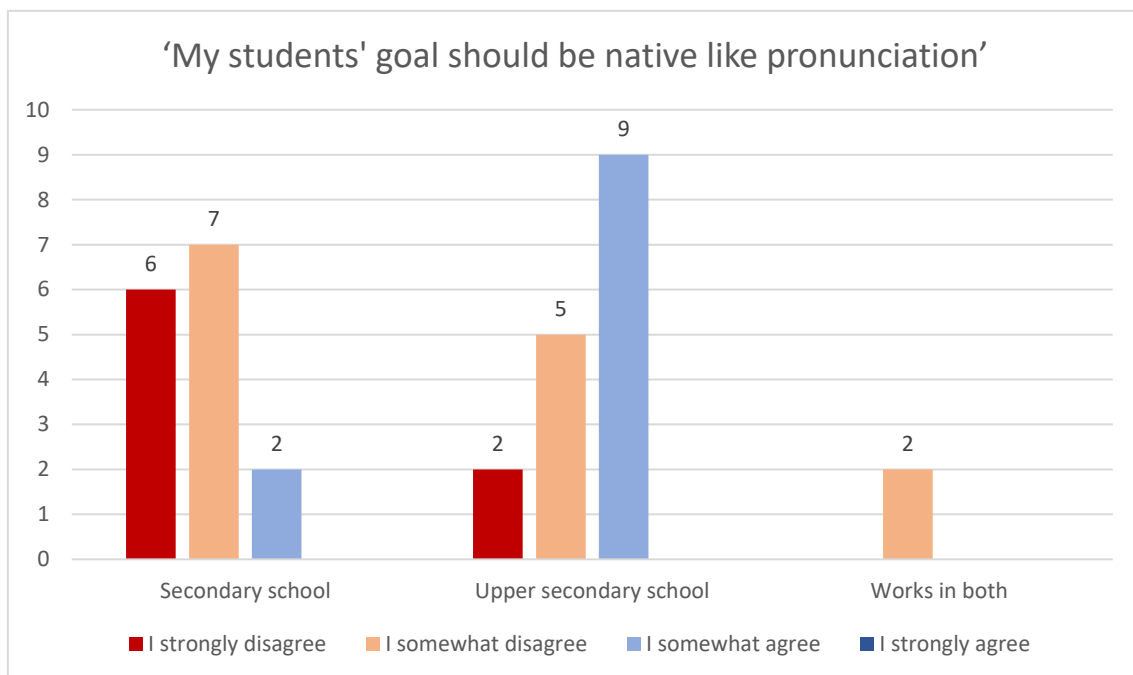


Figure 11: The responses to the statement 'My students' goal as learners should be native-like pronunciation' based on the current workplace of the respondents.

In secondary schools, almost everyone answered that native-like pronunciation should not be the goal of learning English. In contrast, over 50% teachers in upper secondary schools somewhat agreed that native-like pronunciation could be pursued. However,

based on the Figure 10 about major and minor subjects, every upper secondary school teacher who agreed with this statement was an English major. These respondents might consider the language skills of upper secondary school students high enough that the respondents might consider native likeness in pronunciation to be an attainable goal.

To conclude, teachers who had studied English as a minor subject seem to agree with ELF pedagogy more regarding pronunciation goals but were more uncertain of their own skills regarding pronunciation in three cases. Also, English majors who suggested native likeness a goal for their students, mostly worked at upper secondary schools where the level of English produced by the students is higher. While some teachers considered native-like pronunciation an attainable goal, no one recommended any specific variety to their learners. Next section (4.4.1) discusses open-ended questions related to communication and goals of learning English.

4.1.2 Open-ended questions of Language models

Questions 16, 17, and 18 were related to English language as a tool of communication, Finnish English accent, and definition of a successful non-native user respectively. All in all, most of the teachers had emphasized the importance of English in communication in different ways, Finnish speakers of English were mostly encouraged to speak despite any accents. Nearly every teacher also emphasized communication when defining a successful non-native English language user.

To the question number 16, 'Have you talked about the status of English as a tool for communication with your students? If yes, how?', majority of the respondents reported that they have discussed this topic with their students. Only three teachers simply

stated that they have not talked about it at all. Additionally, three upper secondary school teachers reported that they have not talked about it particularly, but they do think their students consider English as an important tool.

Rest of the teachers, 29 in total, reported that they have explicitly discussed English language's role in today's world in some way. Two responses are shown in examples (1) and (2).

- (1) I try to tell my students that language is a communication tool, and that English is a global language. I always try to emphasize that the most important thing in communication is trying to be understood, it doesn't matter so much if everything is 'correct'. (Respondent 30)
- (2) Yes, often. The main thing I emphasize is that they should see communication as an attitude question: be willing to communicate and try their best, it doesn't matter if it doesn't always go 'perfectly'. (Respondent 20)

Respondents 20 and 30 concisely describe the purpose of ELF pedagogy regarding communication in an exemplary manner – courage to express themselves without the fear of not following native correctness perfectly. In total, 14 out of 35 respondents gave an exemplary answer similarly to these examples. Additionally, 15 out of 35 respondents shortly reported that 'we have talked' or that all languages are tools, or they gave one example, such how students might need English when traveling for instance. All in all, most of the teachers had explicitly discussed this topic in classrooms and emphasized the importance of communication and many seemed to consider that the purpose of learning English language. This will be further discussed in question number 18 which will reveal whether the respondents gave consistent answers regarding this topic. Before that, question number 17 will reveal more attitudes about communication using Finnish accent specifically.

The question number 17, “Have you talked about Finnish English accent with your students? If yes, how?”, produced a greater variety of responses. Three respondents reported that they have not talked about Finnish English accent with their students at all, and one respondent said that they have not talked about it that much. Finnish English accent had been at least mentioned by rest of the teachers, 31 in total. There were three main types of ways in which the topic had been discussed: some teachers had discussed Finnish accent in a neutral manner, many in a positive manner encouraging anyone who might have it, and some answers were ambiguous or slightly negative. There were no significant variables that influenced how the respondents had discussed Finnish English accent with their students. There are two responses below, one from respondent number six and one from respondent number 5, whose students seemed to heavily dislike Finnish accent and even consider it as a joke. The way these two teachers responded to their students varied substantially.

- (3) For many students it is a joke if they use Finnish English accent. So I advise them to avoid it if they know how to pronounce correctly. Nobody wants to be a joke IRL. (Respondent 6)
- (4) Yes. Many of my students seem to think of ”Finglish” as a joke, and I try to make them understand that the Finnish English accent is actually well understood and as good as any other accent. We don’t need to sound like a native speaker. (Respondent 5)

Firstly, respondent number 6 in example 3 reports that her students seem to consider Finnish accent a joke and she herself suggests that it could be avoided. The wording in example 3 could imply that some students knowingly pronounce utterances ‘incorrectly’ and pronouncing something knowingly differently should be avoided. However, other interpretation of example 3 would be that students consider Finnish accent simply a joke. In any case, even if the accent was laughed at in a seemingly harmless way by skilled

English language users, it could be detrimental to some students. If a fellow student feels like they have the accent, the Finnish accent that is being laughed at in the classroom and at school, they could easily be discouraged to communicate in English after such jokes. According to the ELF research, one should not be ashamed of his or her accent, but rather be proud (Section 2.2.1). Though it must be noted that respondent 6 in example 3 also stated in the previous question that she encourages her students to use English even if they are uncertain about correct pronunciation, which indicates that the teacher herself wants to encourage her students to communicate as much as possible with or without any accent, which is what an ELF point of view suggests. This, however, could be emphasized even more by her due to the dismissive attitudes towards the Finnish accent in her classroom.

Secondly, respondent number 5 in example 4 also reported that her students avoid the Finnish accent and seem to think it is laughable as well. However, respondent 5 attempts to remove her student's prejudices towards the accent, and emphasizes the importance of communication, even highlighting the intelligibility of Finnish accent, in addition to not having to pursue native-speakerism in pronunciation. Respondent 5's answer was an example of how one can discuss one's native accent in a positive manner and encourage everyone to communicate the best they can. Someone with a strong Finnish accent might have the courage to keep on using English in respondent 5's class, whereas they might be discouraged in some other classrooms.

Then, 12 respondents had discussed the Finnish accent in a neutral manner. Some of these responses highlighted the 'issues' of pronunciation or the intelligibility of the discourse.

- (5) When practising pronunciation, I point out the things that we Finns find difficult or the things that make our speech difficult to understand. (Respondent 2)
- (6) I urge them to pronounce English as well as they can but especially among boys it is more popular to use rally English and say [vater pover] than to pronounce the words properly. (Respondent 28)
- (7) They actually want to talk about it more. Some of them ask me how to get rid of it. (Respondent 24)
- (8) Yes, especially regarding intonation. (Respondent 13)

In some responses, it was noted that their students might use a strong accent on purpose (example 6), but it was not reported that Finnish accent is looked down upon in these cases unlike in example 3 for instance. Then, in example 8, it was reported that they have discussed the issues regarding intonation in classroom, similarly to example 5, in which the possible issues of Finnish accent's intelligibility were highlighted. Lastly, respondent 24 in example 7 noted that her students want to get rid of their native accent and the teacher could help their students with this goal if that is what they desire. There were eight more similar responses to the ones above. The accent was also deemed neutral in these responses.

The Finnish English accent was discussed in a more positive manner in 18 out of the 35 responses, as is shown in examples 9 and 10.

- (9) I often talk about the Finnish accent to my students because they are very self conscious of it. I encourage them and tell them there is nothing wrong with having an accent and that a Finnish accent is no more "cringe" than any other accent. I also tell them not to mock anyone's accent because then you try to silence them. (Respondent 8)
- (10) Yes, it's one version among others. Not everyone speaks British English or American English or...There are countless accents out there! (Respondent 20)

Examples above by respondents 8 and 20 are what the ELF pedagogy in general suggests. As the Finnish English accent is often considered to be a very strong and distinguishable accent by many Finns, discussing it in classroom can be important for many learners and their confidence. To conclude, the question about Finnish English accent revealed a variety of different ways how students seem to understand the accent. Slightly over 50% had discussed the accent in a positive, encouraging manner, similarly to examples 9 and 10.

Finally, in the question number 18, ‘How would you define a successful non-native English language user?’, respondents provided similar answers to one another. Someone who can communicate in a variety of contexts effectively was considered a successful non-native English language user by majority of the respondents, and just being understood was also emphasized. Native-like pronunciation was not mentioned even by teachers who had considered it a goal for their students. It might be possible that while some teachers want to encourage their students to pursue native pronunciation models, they still value effective communication over it, and thus earlier meant that native pronunciation would be one of the goals, instead of being the only goal. This was mostly the case in upper secondary schools, where the level of English is higher, as was already mentioned in previous section. Respondent 11 answered the question about successful non-native users in a similar manner as most of the respondents:

(11) Don't try to hide that you are not native English speaker. Don't be afraid of making mistakes and not knowing it all. Learn together with your students so that they can adapt the same attitude. There are so many students who are afraid to speak because some teacher has corrected them rather much and because they fear for mistakes. This, and much more! (Respondent 10)

Some of them responded more briefly, such as ‘capable to understand and be understood’ (Respondent 17), but the message was virtually the same.

While many of the responses to the open-ended questions were in accordance with the ELF pedagogy, there were some exceptions. For instance, respondent 15 had not discussed the Finnish accent or English as a tool of communication at all and reported that a successful non-native language user is ‘someone who is understood easily and doesn't stand out as comical (vs. *rallienglanti* [a very strong stereotypical Finnish accent])’. While just being understood when speaking English can be an attainable goal based on the curricula, calling an accent of many non-native Finns comical undermines respondent 15's statement.

4.2 Results of Materials used in classrooms

4.2.1 Multiple-choice questions of Materials

This section discusses the results of the Materials section of the questionnaire that was based on the exposure to different varieties of English, both native and non-native, as well as different cultures and introducing them to the learners. The questions in this section are closely related, and in order to determine why individual respondent provided a specific answer to any of the statements or questions, their answers will be compared to one another. In a vacuum, one question from this section does not convey that much information but together they can explain what teachers think about classroom materials and why, in addition to their preferences regarding their own materials.

Course books should represent a variety of cultures instead of focusing only on American culture and American English or British culture and British English, for example. Question 19 included three statements Likert-scale statements. The results of the statement ‘Our course books are culturally diverse’ are in Figure 12.

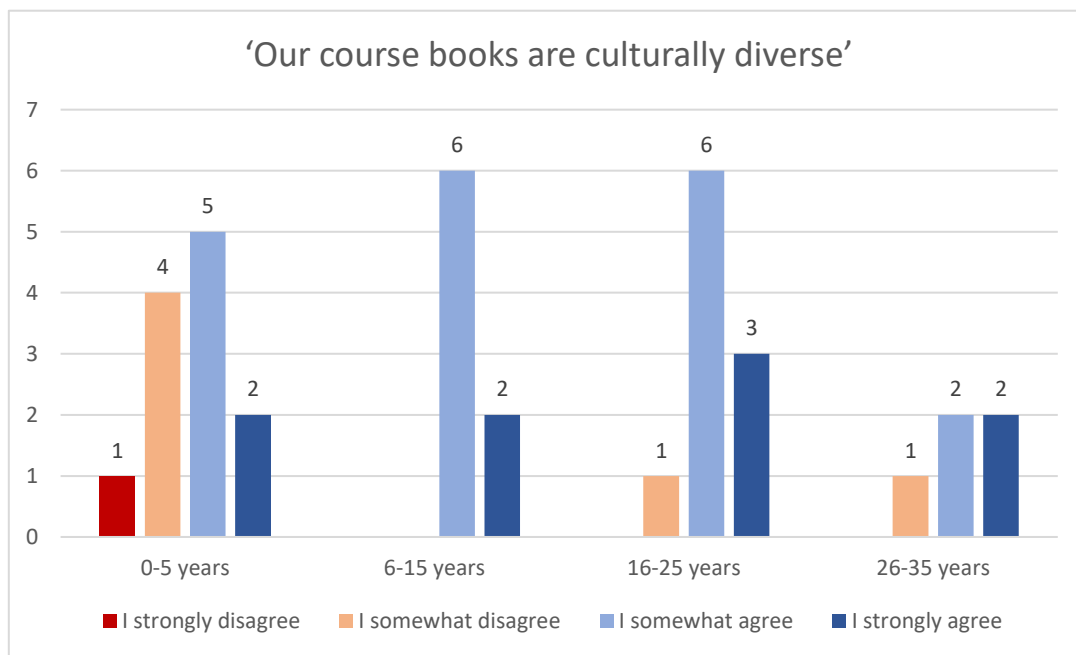


Figure 12: The responses to the statement ‘Our course books are culturally diverse’ based on the work experience of the respondents.

The least experienced group of English teachers disagreed the most with their course books’ cultural diversity out of all groups. In fact, only zero or one respondents in other groups were concerned about cultural diversity of their course books. Teachers who have been working as English language teachers for a shorter period might have been more recently introduced to a variety of cultures during their more recent English language studies and thus being more concerned about diversity.

Cultural diversity often goes side by side with different varieties of English in course books: if there is a chapter about India, for instance, the speakers in the chapter’s

audio recordings often have an Indian accent. The respondents seemed to think this way too, since the respondents who thought their books lacked cultural diversity often reported that there were not that many different varieties of English in their books either.

Next statement was related to authentic language extracts or the lack of them in the materials that are used in the classroom (Figure 13).

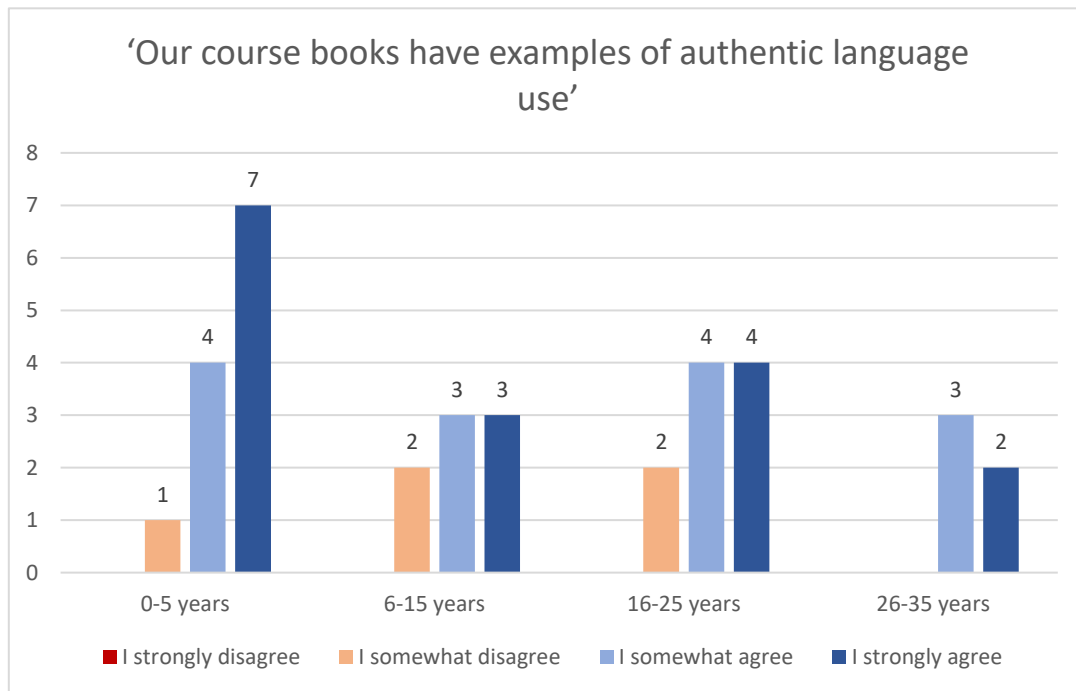


Figure 13: The responses to the statement 'Our books have examples of authentic language use' based on the work experience of the respondents.

As many as 86% of the respondents agreed that there are examples of authentic language use in their course books, while the rest somewhat disagreed.

The last statement of this section was 'I am happy with our current course books' audio recordings'. The results of this statement were compared to the answers to statements about cultural diversity and authentic language extracts. Unhappiness regarding the audio materials in course books was expressed by five teachers. Four out of these five respondents had disagreed with at least one of the previous statements about

cultural diversity of their books, or the statement regarding authentic language. It seems unhappiness to the books' audio recordings was mostly caused either by lack of cultural diversity or lack of different varieties of English.

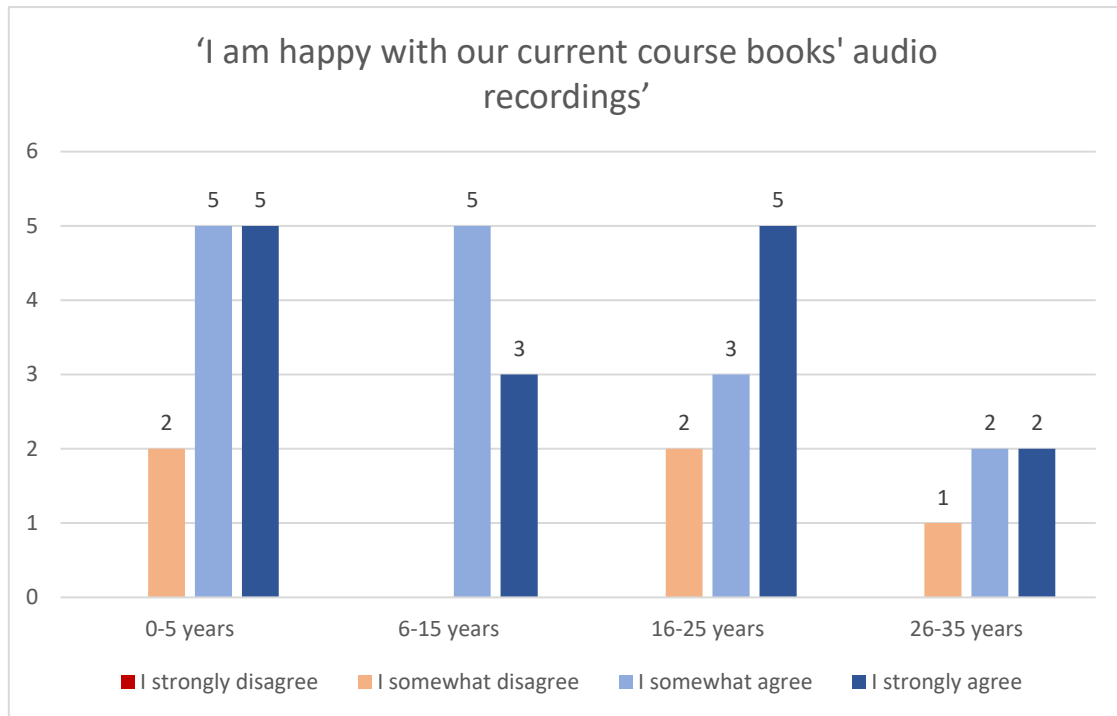


Figure 14: The responses to the statement 'I am happy with our course book's audio recordings' based on the work experience of the respondents.

4.2.2 Open-ended questions of Materials

Question number 20 'From which native varieties of English do your course books have speakers? (e.g. British English, American English, Australian English, other)' explains some results of the statements in the previous section. The teachers who had worked 0-5 years, 12 teachers in total, considered their books the least culturally diverse. Four teachers in this group reported that their workbooks have mostly British English and American English, but nothing more and were displeased with that. Additionally, two

teachers of this group said that there is only British and American English in addition to one or two additional varieties, such as Indian or Australian varieties. These respondents were the ones who disagreed with the statement about their books' cultural diversity. Often when a spoken variety is introduced, some aspects of the local culture are also presented in the course books, which is why these respondents most likely felt that only British or American culture, which are the most common choices in course books, is not enough.

However, 25 respondents reported at least six different native varieties of English in their books' audio recordings. Moreover, most of these respondents had reported that they think their books are culturally diverse too. The following varieties were mentioned at least once by the respondents: *British, American, Australian, Indian, Jamaican, Caribbean, South African, Nigerian, African, Canadian, Scottish, Irish, Welsh, New Zealander, Hong Kong, 'South-America', and Philippine English.*

Respondent 10 was the only respondent who did not provide an answer to the question number 20, but instead asked the researcher if 'authentic and native are understood here [in this section] as meaning the same thing' and she also stated that she strongly disagrees with that alleged assumption. Authentic and native do not mean the same thing in this research, and the questions and statements were not intended to imply that either. Other respondents were not concerned about the terms 'native' and 'authentic' in this section and based on their answers, it seemed that many assumed that they meant different things – as they do. Respondent 10 was correct when she disagreed with the alleged assumption though and her concerns regarding these terms just highlight her awareness of ELF related issues more than anything.

Question number 21 ‘Are there speakers that have a different first language than English in your course books? If yes, name some of the languages.’ revealed a shortage of NNSs in many course books. It was reported by 17 out of the 35 respondents that there are no NNSs in the course books or they cannot recognize them if there are any. A lack of cultural variety in the school’s ‘cheap online materials’ was emphasized by respondent 11. Next, ten respondents remembered one or two different NNSs from their books’ audio recordings. Three or more different varieties by NNSs of English were reported by seven respondents as is illustrated in example 12 by respondent 20.

(12) I've only taught some of these course books (new curriculum), but there have been eg speakers from Lithuania, Poland, Sweden etc (Respondent 20)

Finally, question number 22 ‘Do you prefer native English speakers or non-native speakers if you create your own materials and exercises based on videos or audio recordings, for example? Or does the speaker's background matter at all? Why?’ was designed to reveal respondents’ preferences regarding speakers in their own teaching materials. This question produced a variety of answers. From an ELF point of view, learners should be exposed to different varieties of English by both non-native and native speakers. Preference alone does not reveal what is happening in the classrooms, which is why this question will be compared to other answers of each respondent in the Materials section. If a respondent reports that their course books only have native speakers in them, then teachers should provide their students a chance to hear NNSs in other exercises. On the other hand, if some course books would only have included NNSs, then the teacher should prefer NSs in his or her own materials to expose their students to native varieties which the students would not otherwise hear in the classroom.

Nine respondents briefly reported that they prefer native speakers more than non-natives in their own materials. Many of them responded in a brief manner, but one of them elaborated further by stating that ‘I guess I trust their pronunciation and vocabulary more’ (Respondent 24). Additionally, RP was mentioned twice, and it was explained how it gives ‘the correct’ model for the learners. Six respondents of this group stated previously that there are only 0-1 NNSs in their course books’ audio recordings. Learners are not exposed to many different varieties of English in such cases.

Then, there were some respondents who preferred non-natives, such as respondents 8 and 17. Respondent 8 also felt that there are not enough NNSs in the books they are using. Similarly, respondent 17 did not list any NNSs in the previous question, which might be one of the reasons she prefers NNSs in her own material.

(13) In those materials I prefer non-native speakers because our textbooks have a wide variety of native speakers and it's good for the students to hear non-native accents as well. I feel it makes them feel less conscious about their own accents. (Respondent 8)

(14) It doesn't matter. It's good to hear different Englishes and get used to hearing different accents. (Respondent 17)

Next, the content of the audio or the videos was emphasized over native or non-native speakers by three respondents, and seven respondents stated that they do not have a preference but did not elaborate further. Not having a preference could also result in exposing students to a multitude of varieties, but that depends on the contents of the course’s materials and whether the teachers happen to choose NSs or NNSs more during a certain course. One respondent reported ‘[it] does not matter, I don't see why it should. However, the matriculation examination requires you to be familiar with different accents’ (Respondent 3). She understood the requirements of becoming a successful

language user, which is how you perform well in the matriculation exam in this case, but she still stated that she does not see why the background of the speaker should matter.

Additionally, 16 respondents, or 46%, reported that they do not have a clear preference because they want to provide a variety of accents to their students. Respondent 30, for example, preferred both equally: she uses NSs in exercises that have to do with pronunciation or intonation specifically. For exercises that are about communication, she does not have strong preferences, or she might even prefer non-native speakers if they are clear enough in their speech for students to understand. She argues that most English mediated communication her students will encounter will be non-native to non-native, thus non-native speakers are needed in classroom contexts as well. It is also worth noting that respondent 30 reported that their course books lacked non-native speakers, and she was not particularly happy with that. She seems to have recognized the void of NNSs as she uses them in her own exercises.

4.3 Results of Exercises

Exercises section had three questions which all revolved around the first question of this section: question number 23. The respondents were asked to select all communication strategies from a list of 10 which they have practiced in the classroom with their students at least once. These communication strategies were: Message abandonment, Letting it pass (letting an unknown utterance pass), Direct appeal for help, Asking for repetition, Repeating the word or phrase that caused the ambiguity, Code switching L1, Circumlocution (explaining a forgotten word with a longer phrase), Lexical anticipation, Non-linguistic strategies (e.g. gestures, onomatopoeia: creating sounds that are similar to

the noises the words refer to), and Echoing (repeating what the other person has just said) (Appendix 1). This question was inspired in the study by Sato et al (2019), which detected that five of these communication strategies were effective, and these five were Asking for repetition, Circumlocution, Lexical anticipation, Non-linguistic strategies, and Echoing. Then, two of the strategies were sometimes effective in the previous research: Direct appeal for help and Response repeat. Finally, three communication strategies were detected to be ineffective and should be avoided, which were Message abandonment, letting an unknown utterance pass, and code-switching. In the research by Sato et al., it was speculated that lower proficiency learners had not learned to use code-switching effectively which is why it was discouraged in their results even if multilingual resources are often encouraged in ELF research. The results by all the respondents are in the Figure 15. Each respondent could select as many strategies as they had used in the class. The maximum number of answers in one category is 35 – the number of the respondents.



Figure 15: Different communication strategies that have been practiced in classrooms.

In Figure 15, orange indicates that the strategy was not effective, lighter blue indicates that the strategy was sometimes effective, and darker blue that the strategy was effective in the research by Sato et al. (2019) whose categorization is also used here. In total, 34 out of 35, or 97% of the teachers had used either Asking for repetition or Circumlocution which had been deemed successful previously. The third most use strategy was also a successful one: Non-linguistic strategies with 31 answers (89%). Echoing and Lexical anticipation were also quite popular with 65% and 60% of the teachers using them respectively. Somewhat effective strategies were also popular among the respondents.

The least used ineffective strategy was abandoning a message completely – one should at least try other strategies instead. Code-switching was somewhat popular with 54% of the respondents using it. While ELF supports using multilingual resources, in the previous research code-switching resulted in a communicative breakdown often

than not, and code-switching could be avoided until learners know when and where to use it. For instance, circumlocution could be used instead of L1 if the purpose of the exercise is to use English specifically, but that strategy might not work as well with lower proficiency learners. Letting it pass, meaning that the speaker just lets an unknown utterance pass, was the most popular ineffective strategy that was used by 23 teachers. Instead of using Letting it pass, learners should be encouraged to ask for repetition, clarification, or confirmation for example. Of course, if some word or a phrase is unknown to the listener, but they understand what the other person is trying to say or understand the unknown word from the context, then the unknown word could be ignored. However, there is always a risk of misunderstanding in such cases.

Question number 24 ‘In your opinion, what are the most effective communication strategies that you chose above and why?’ offered the respondents a chance to elaborate their choices further. The question should help to reveal if individual respondent’s choices were random or whether they had recognized the effective strategies. Six respondents, or 17%, did not provide an answer to this question or could not name any that they preferred. These six respondents had all selected a variety of strategies and there was no clear indicator why they would not explain their choices. One responded reported that they think Letting it pass was their favorite but did not explain why.

One of the most popular communication strategies was circumlocution as examples 15 and 16 illustrate.

(15) Circumlocution because if you can use euphemisms and/ or explanations there won't be communication breakdowns. (Respondent 6)

(16) Circumlocution because it keeps the speaker grounded in the English language the whole time, and repetition from both student and myself when needed. I believe this brings clarity to understanding as well as to communication. (11)

Upper secondary school teachers mentioned circumlocution slightly more often than secondary school teachers. Learners' skills must be on a decent level so that they are able to explain a forgotten word with phrases or euphemisms, so it is understandable why that would be more popular with more proficient language users in upper secondary schools.

Code-switching was mentioned by many, but it was still not encouraged over the other strategies. The strategies that were preferred were lexical anticipation or circumlocution. Non-linguistic strategies were highlighted by Respondent 30, who explained that they can be used regardless of the language background of the interlocutor.

The last question of this section, and the whole questionnaire, was question number 25: 'Have you practiced something else that was not mentioned above to prepare your students to communicate in situations where ambiguities or communicative breakdowns occur in conversations?'. It seems that the list of different communication strategies in previous question was comprehensive, since 77 % of respondents said that they have not used any other strategies with their students. Rest of the respondents, 23 %, or 8 out of 25, had mentioned some strategies in addition to the ones found in question 23.

Two teachers said that they have used Google Translator with their students but did not specify how and when. Technically, it could be possible to use Translator's 'translate by voice' function to translate phrases when speaking English. For example, if the speaker forgot a word or a phrase, they could stop for a second, start the translation process and then say the word or a phrase in Finnish, which would then be translated in

real time. The translation might or might not be accurate, but this would be one way to use Google Translator during oral exercises. If the respondents had used it only to translate words by typing, it would be basically the same as using a dictionary. It would have been enlightening to hear more details about this method, as the example mentioned here was a speculation. However, the translator could indeed be a useful tool to help in communication breakdowns.

Then, one respondent said that they have practiced ‘use of all-purpose words’ (Respondent 32). The respondent did not elaborate further, but it could mean using umbrella terms, such as ‘a small bird’, instead of something specific, such as ‘a nightingale’. This method should help interlocutors to get their message through even if some details were lost. Moreover, Respondent 36 reported that they have been using pauses, fillers, and intonation to show emotions, and practiced how to interpret others using this method as well. Fillers were also used by Respondent 29. Then, writing something down to the other person and showing it to them was mentioned by respondent 8, and lastly, writing down key terms for speeches was mentioned by respondent 11.

To conclude, majority of the teachers used a multitude of different communication strategies. However, most respondents did not use any other strategies than the ones mentioned in the multiple-choice question, but it seems that there is still room for creativity since eight teachers mentioned some extra activities. The answers that introduced new strategies were very brief without any elaboration, so some aspects of them were left open for interpretation.

5 DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The first research question was ‘How do teachers incorporate ELF awareness in their classes?’ and will be discussed first. Every single respondent had discussed ELF related issues with their students as the ELF research and Finnish curricula suggest, or they had practiced at least some communication strategies that have been found useful in previous ELF research (Sato et al. 2019) to help their students if communication breakdowns occur. Teachers were the most uniform in their answers on open-ended questions about English as a tool of communication and when asked to define a successful non-native language user. Communication was emphasized virtually by everyone and ‘being understood’ was the one the most common answers.

In contrast, when asked how the respondents had discussed the Finnish accent, more variation occurred. Different categories were created as the responses were analyzed. Half of the respondents had discussed the issue in accordance with the Global Englishes for language teaching framework (GELT) (Galloway 2018: 472), where NNSs are considered target interlocutors along with NSs and successful ELF users in the model. The other half of the respondents was more divided. Some had not discussed the accent at all, some were rather neutral, but in a few classes the Finnish accent was being laughed at. This could cause anxiety for some students, especially if someone feels like their accent is strong. In such cases, it is the teacher's responsibility to change the dismissive attitudes, and explain that there are different varieties of English, and the Finnish accent is an accent among many others. This was done only in some classes where the atmosphere was dismissive towards the Finnish accent. Seidlhofer explained how there are double standards of having an accent for natives and non-natives, emphasizing how

illogical it is to make NNSs pursue RP instead of letting them be proud of their background (2018: 89). One way to help NNSs to become successful English language users would be to focus on the ELF-core and the four most important aspects of phonology mentioned in the core (Jenkins et al. 2011: 287), instead of focusing on RP for instance, or trying to hide the learner's accent.

Next, teachers' opinions regarding ELF, conceptions of language users, and the goals of language learners will be discussed. Quantitative analysis revealed how some independent variables caused variation in teachers' thoughts regarding learners' pronunciation goals: Some English majors, mostly those who worked in upper secondary schools, were the ones who considered a native-like pronunciation a goal for their students. Other goals such as negotiating meaning are emphasized in ELF research, such as in the Global Englishes for language teaching (GELT) framework, and in the Finnish curricula. Moreover, regarding teachers' own language, three (25%) English minors somewhat disagreed about their own spoken language's model and its viability for their students. NNS teacher's spoken language model can be as good as NS teacher's model, there is no preference in the GELT framework. Also, non-natives should also be proud of their own linguistic background, and they do have some advantages to NSs, such as the fact that they have been language learners themselves (Sifakis & Bayuurt 2018: 462-463) and could thus understand the issues of learning languages more easily. These three teachers did not elaborate further why they felt this way, but it could easily be possible that they only lacked confidence instead of skills that are needed in spoken discourse.

In the materials section, many teachers explained how they expose their students to different varieties of English if their own course books lacked variation regarding spoken Englishes. Quantitative data of this section highlighted that some

teachers were displeased with their course books' audio recordings. Those who were displeased had reported that their books lacked authentic language extracts or cultural diversity. Work experience of the respondents was identified as a significant variable that affected respondents' perceptions of culture. The work experience group of 0-5 years was most displeased with their course books' cultural diversity. Perhaps their more recent English language, literature and cultural studies have made them more aware of diversity than others, but generalizing would require more details which they did not provide.

Not everyone in the Materials section was aware of the importance of exposure to different varieties of English. When asked about the preferences when choosing NSs or NNSs in their own materials, RP was preferred by two respondents due to its 'correct' model for English. However, language is not considered static, but rather negotiated (Shomamy 2018: 588) and curricula focuses on other aspects of learning languages than native models as well.

Discussion about the final section of the questionnaire concludes the first research question. In the Exercises section, the most used communication strategies used by the respondents had been deemed successful by Sato et al. (2019), namely circumlocution, asking for repetition and non-linguistic strategies. Every teacher was using at least some of the successful strategies. Additionally, the less successful communication strategies were less popular among the respondents. Only less than a quarter of the respondents had been using some extra strategies such as translators, all-purpose words, and pauses, to name a few. No significant variables were recognized in this section.

The second research question was 'If teachers incorporate ELF awareness less than the curriculum suggests, why?'. First, defining what exactly is enough ELF

awareness can be a difficult task, as the curricula provides rather general advice and guidance. Second, many teachers would probably define this exact amount differently since the curricula and the issues at hand can be interpreted and perceived differently. Trying to make distinction between someone who is very ELF aware and someone who is quite ELF aware should not be the goal here, because it is easier to define what is not definitely enough. If someone mostly or completely disagreed with the suggestions of the curricula and ELF research on some question, then that is considered less than enough here. Every respondent was ELF aware at least in some ways though, but on a few occasions, some disagreed with the guidelines. Some reasons for disagreement could be tendency to emphasize NSs too much when discussing pronunciation - some teachers did mention RP as ‘the model’, for instance. Also, it could be possible that the curricula are not as explicit as they should be regarding the exposure to different varieties of English and regarding one’s own accent, Finnish accent in this case. Curricula might be interpreted differently by each teacher too. Additionally, not being aware of suggestions of ELF literature can be a factor – teachers might not have the time to read it which could have been the case with the respondents who lacked confidence regarding their own spoken language, for example.

The third and final research question was ‘Does age, work experience, previous attitudes, or some other factors affect teachers’ implementation of ELF in their classes?’. This was already discussed briefly with the first research question. To conclude, teacher’s current workplace affected responses to some questions, namely learners’ pronunciation goals in upper secondary schools. English as a major or a minor subject was also a significant variable: English majors were the ones who emphasized native pronunciation more, somewhat disagreeing with Global Englishes for language teaching

(GELT) framework. They also preferred NSs slightly more in their own materials than English minors, which would reduce the exposure to different varieties of English if their course books lacked NNSs. Then, English minors were more concerned about the viability of their own spoken discourse. Finally, based on the results it seemed that work experience group of 0-5 years was most concerned about cultural diversity.

Overall, the methods and opinions of English language teachers who participated in this study mostly aligned with the ELF pedagogy and Finnish curricula. However, there still seems to be some aspects of ELF in ELT where work needs to be done. Perhaps the curricula should be more explicit, or perhaps these issues should be discussed already during the pedagogical training of language teachers. As the number of the respondents was 35, more research should be conducted if generalizations are to be made.

6 CONCLUSION

To conclude, this study was designed to ascertain to what extent Finnish teachers of English language discuss issues related to ELF awareness, incorporate ELF aware exercises, and focus on ELF aware materials in their classrooms. Some opinions about themselves and their students as non-native users of English language were also asked, in order to have additional information about the respondents themselves and to understand their answers and decisions better. This research was based on the responses to an online questionnaire. In total, 35 English language teachers from around the Finland provided an answer.

The general thoughts and methods of ELF related activities that were reported were mostly in accordance with the suggestions of ELF research and the Finnish curricula. Communication and the courage to use English language with or without any accent were the key elements of the answers. While there was some disagreement with the guidelines of the curricula, and thus ELF awareness based on the ELF research, such cases were irregular, and everyone was ELF aware in at least some way. The hypothesis was that there would be variation among the respondents and some piece of demographic information would have caused it. However, respondents were divided only on some questions rather irregularly, and only some significant variables were identified only on specific questions.

The inclusion of ELF in the Finnish curricula is a relatively new addition – it was added to the basic education curriculum in 2014 and in the upper secondary school curriculum in 2015 and 2019. The results of this thesis provide insights about what teachers think about issues around ELF awareness, what communication strategies they

use, and how they discuss ELF awareness in classrooms. While the number of participants was not high enough for generalizations, the results lay foundations for any future research. The future research could focus on some specific area of ELF pedagogy more. For instance, phonology could be expanded to include more specific questions about lingua franca core and what teachers emphasize when practicing some phonological features, if any. Also, lexicogrammatical features of ELF in ELT could be researched further. Semi-structured interviews for the collection of the data are also worth mentioning since they can provide more of an in-depth view of the issues than an online questionnaire. However, if interviews are used for data collection, then the number of the participants would most likely be lower than when using online questionnaires. This study could not include all these topics, and rather focused on an overview about language models, materials and communication strategies used in English language classrooms. The results of this study can prove to be useful for curricula designers or individual teachers who need help with the incorporation of ELF awareness.

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APPENDIX 1

Questionnaire used in the collection of the data (adapted from the online version)

English as a lingua franca in English language teaching

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data for a Master's thesis at Tampere University. The goal of my research is to ascertain to what extent English as a lingua franca is present in English language classrooms.

This questionnaire is meant for English language teachers in Finland who work in secondary schools or upper secondary schools.

Participation is voluntary but appreciated. All the information gathered will be handled confidentially and anonymously.

There are 8 multiple-choice questions and 8 open-ended questions in the questionnaire after Part 1: Demographic information. Please provide an answer based on your own methods and opinions.

Answering to the questionnaire should take about 15-25 minutes

Thank you for your contribution!

If you have any questions, you can contact the researcher via email:
akseli.haverinen@tuni.fi

Part 1/4: Demographic information

1. Gender:

Male Female Other Prefer not to say

2. Age:

20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 +60

3. First language:

Finnish Swedish English Other

4. Was English your major or minor subject in university?

Major Minor I have not studied English in university

5. In which university did you complete your English language studies?

University of Helsinki University of Turku
 Tampere University University of Jyväskylä
 University of Eastern Finland University of Oulu
 University of Lapland Åbo Akademi University
 University of Vaasa I studied abroad
 Other

6. Other languages that you have studied and are eligible to teach:

Swedish German French Spanish Russian Other

7. Other languages that you have studied: _____

8. How long have you worked as an English language teacher? (in years)

0-5 6-10 11-15 16-20 21-25
 26-30 31-35 +35

9: Have you studied or worked abroad? _____

10: I have taught English in the following institutes:

Kindergarten Primary school
 Secondary school Upper secondary school Other

11. Now I teach A1-English in:

Primary school Secondary school Upper secondary school
 Other

12. Answer the following statements: (where 1 = I strongly disagree, 2 = I somewhat disagree, 3 = I somewhat agree, 4 = I strongly agree)

I am familiar with the concept of English as a lingua franca.

1 2 3 4

English as a lingua franca was introduced to me during my studies.

1 2 3 4

Part 2/4: Language models

13. Which variety of English do you use when speaking English?

American English British English Other
 I do not use any specific variety

14. Answer the following statements: (where 1 = I strongly disagree, 2 = I somewhat disagree, 3 = I somewhat agree, 4 = I strongly agree)

I consider my spoken discourse a viable model for my students.

1 2 3 4

My students' goal as learners should be native-like pronunciation.

1 2 3 4

15. Which spoken variety of English do you recommend to your students?

American English British English Other variety

I do not recommend any specific variety

16. Have you talked about the status of English as a tool for communication with your students? If yes, how?

17. Have you talked about Finnish English accent with your students? If yes, how?

18. How would you define a successful non-native English language user?

Part 3/4: Materials

19. Answer the following statements: (where 1 = I strongly disagree, 2 = I somewhat disagree, 3 = I somewhat agree, 4 = I strongly agree)

Our course books are culturally diverse

1 2 3 4

Our course books' audio recordings have examples of authentic language use.

1 2 3 4

I am happy with our current course books' audio recordings.

1 2 3 4

20. From which native varieties of English do your course books have speakers? (e.g. British English, American English, Australian English, other)

21. Are there speakers that have a different first language than English in your course books? If yes, name some of the languages.

22. Do you prefer native English speakers or non-native speakers if you create your own materials and exercises based on videos or audio recordings, for example? Or does the speakers background matter at all? Why?

Part 4/4: Exercises

23. I have practiced the following communications strategies at least once with my students to help them in situation where ambiguities or communication breakdowns might occur in a conversation.

Message abandonment

Letting it pass (letting an unknown utterance pass)

Direct appeal for help

Asking for repetition

Repeating the word or a phrase that cause the ambiguity

Code switching L1 (e.g. using a Finnish word)

Circumlocution (e.g. explaining a forgotten word with longer phrase(s))

Lexical anticipation (anticipating what an interlocutor wants to say and providing words to complete his or her utterance)

Non-linguistic strategies (e.g. gestures, onomatopoeia: creating sounds that are similar to the noises the words refer to)

Echoing (repeating what the other person has just said)

24. In your opinion, what are the most effective communication strategies that you chose above and why?

25. Have you practiced something else that was not mentioned above to prepare your students to communicate in situations where ambiguities or communicative breakdowns occur in conversations?
