

Learner beliefs on English language learning
among a group of junior secondary school CLIL pupils:
a case study

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Tutkimus keskittyi englannin kielellä annettavaan vieraskieliseen CLIL -opetukseen osallistuvien oppilaiden käsityksiin ja uskomuksiin englannin oppimisesta ja osaamisesta. Aihe koettiin tärkeäksi niiden havaintojen myötä, joita tutkija on tehnyt vieraskielistä opetusta seuratessaan sekä muussa opetustyössä toimiessaan. Havaintojen mukaan englanninkielistä opetusta seuraavilla oppilailla oli taipumus käyttää englannin kieltä puhuessaan luokkatovereiden kanssa myös englannin tunnilla annettujen tehtävien ulkopuolella, kun taas ns. tavallista opetusta seuraavat oppilaat eivät olleet yhtä taipuvaisia samaan. Kaikessa opetustyössä tulee usein vastaan oppilaiden omien henkilökohtaisten käsitysten ja uskomusten merkitys heidän oman oppimisprosessinsa ohjaajina, ja tämän vuoksi on tärkeää selvittää, mitä käsityksiä erilaisilla oppijoilla on heidän omasta vieraan kielen oppimisestaan ja osaamisestaan sekä vieraan kielen oppimisesta ja osaamisesta ylipäänsä.

Tutkimus on laadullinen vertaileva tapaustutkimus, jossa aineistonkeruun menetelmänä käytettiin teemahaastatteluja. Haastateltaviksi valikoitui erään tamperelaisen kansainvälisen koulun kahdeksannen luokan ryhmästä kahdeksan oppilasta, jotka puhuivat äidinkielenään suomea ja seurasivat englanninkielistä opetusta. Yksilöhaastattelut nauhoitettiin koulupäivän aikana ja nämä litteroidut haastattelut analysoitiin sisällönanalyysin avulla teemoittelemalla haastatteluissa esiin nousseita aihekokonaisuuksia, tarkastelemalla haastateltavien vastauksia arkikäsityksien tutkimuksessa käytetyn dialogisen ajattelun näkökulmasta. Näitä teemoja verrattiin Mari Aron Jyväskylän yliopistolle vuonna 2009 tekemään pitkittäistutkimukseen, jossa tutkittiin ns. tavallisessa opetuksessa olevan alakouluryhmän oppilaiden käsityksiä englannin oppimisesta ja osaamisesta.

Tämän tutkimuksen tuloksissa kävi ilmi, että vieraskielistä opetusta seuraavien oppilaiden käsitykset englannin kielen osaamisesta ja oppimisesta olivat monipuolisempia kuin tavallista opetusta seuraavien oppilaiden. Vieraskielistä opetusta seuraavat oppilaat mm. näkivät useampia eri tilanteita, missä ihmiset voisivat tarvita englannin kieltä, toivat esille useampia elämänalueita, joissa englannin osaaminen on heille itselleen tarpeellista sekä tällä hetkellä kuin myös tulevaisuudessa, kokivat puhutun kielen roolin merkityksellisempänä oppimisprosessissa sekä arvioivat koulun ja formaalin opetuksen roolin vähäisemmäksi ja vastaavasti vapaa-ajan aktiviteettien roolin merkittävämmäksi heidän omassa oppimisprosessissaan kuin tavallista opetusta seuraavat oppilaat Aron tutkimuksessa. Olennaista tuloksissa oli myös se, että vieraskielistä opetusta seuraavat kokivat itse olevansa asiantuntijoita englannin kielessä, kun taas Aron tutkimuksen oppilaat kokivat pääasiassa olevansa vielä englannin oppijoita.

Avainsanat: vieraskielinen opetus, englannin kieli, kielen oppiminen, CLIL, käsitykset

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1. Introduction

When people are learning new things, processing new information or developing their skills in a particular area, their ideas and preconceived notions on what to expect from the learning situation necessarily play a part in the learning process. These beliefs might influence a person's behaviour especially when they are learning a foreign language, where the learning situation includes not only information about new vocabulary and grammar rules but also non-verbal information, such as different cultural aspects and expectations of the communication situation. Therefore, learner beliefs and attitudes are an important topic of research in the field of education and second language learning in particular.

In this study, I will examine learner beliefs on the learning situation and learning process of the English language among Content and Language Integrated Learning (hereafter abbreviated CLIL) students in a Finnish junior secondary school. CLIL refers to a learning environment where a foreign language is used when teaching other school subjects, such as history, mathematics or the arts. My interest in learner beliefs was sparked by my time as an apprentice teacher which I carried out as a part of my pedagogical studies as well as by my experience as a teacher in an adult education center. My brief experience as an English teacher has drawn my attention to the importance of learners' attitudes, opinions, and everyday knowledge that seem to play a significant part in the language learning process. According to my experience, beliefs about language learning often seem to affect attitudes to learning as well as the learning strategies that learners use. For example, a learner of English might believe that knowing a foreign language well means being able to speak it fluently abroad. At the same time, the same learner might believe that good command of the language is best achieved through reading, which will direct their attention to literary activities.

The potential mismatch between the goals the learners have set themselves and the ways to reach this goal might cause difficulties in the learning process.

When observing a group of CLIL pupils in a classroom situation during my teacher apprenticeship, I noticed their willingness to use English with their classmates even in conversations that were not part of the classroom exercises during an English class. This seemed to happen more frequently with CLIL pupils than with pupils following regular English teaching. The latter group of pupils were more prone to using English only in the learning activities instructed by the teacher. My observations in a CLIL classroom and my impressions of the importance of learners' beliefs inspired me to conduct this study, the objective of which is to find out whether a group of CLIL learners hold similar or different beliefs about English language learning than a group of learners attending regular teaching, and in what kinds of topics these differences or similarities in their beliefs surface. To provide a comparative perspective, a similar study on learner beliefs is introduced: Mari Aro has studied learner beliefs in the University of Jyväskylä and her doctoral dissertation, *Speakers and Doers: Polyphony and agency in children's beliefs about language learning* (2009), was conducted as a part of the *Situated Metalinguistic Awareness and Foreign Language Learning* project. Her study contains longitudinal research that centers on a group of 15 Finnish elementary school children following regular English teaching (referred to as *the reference group* in this study) and their beliefs on English language learning during the course of five years.

The data for the present qualitative case study was collected with the help of semi-structured interviews. The group of informants consisted of eight pupils attending an international junior secondary school in Tampere. A qualitative case study of this kind, with a close look at a particular group of CLIL learners and their beliefs and experiences, is beneficial in order to add information to the general conception of the CLIL method (Järvinen 1999: 10). I will attempt to provide an answer to the following research questions in this study:

- 1) **What are the learners' beliefs about the knowledge of English language and the learning of English?** What kinds of themes do the learners following CLIL education associate to the topics of why and how English is studied? Do they differ from the themes articulated by the reference group?
- 2) **Whose voices can be heard in the learners' answers?** What kinds of voices do the learners use when talking about their beliefs? Do they talk about their beliefs in their own words or do their beliefs come from an outside source? How do the voices used differ from those in the reference group?

Based on my observations about CLIL pupils' readiness to use English in their learning process that contrasted with observations of pupils in regular English teaching, as well as on the results of Aro's study on learner beliefs among pupils following regular English teaching, my hypothesis is that CLIL pupils hold different beliefs about what constitutes learning and knowing English than pupils following regular teaching. The CLIL pupils' use of spoken English might indicate that the role of speech in a learning situation is different in their beliefs compared to pupils in regular English teaching.

I will introduce the educational setting of this study in chapter two, where details about the principles, background and diversity of CLIL will be presented. In chapter three, I will discuss the theoretical framework of this study, which includes an introduction to learner belief research. Here, I will also introduce the framework of dialogism and its concept of *voice*. Chapter four deals with the research methodology that was used in this study. In chapter five, I will introduce the particular research setting of this study in more detail with description of the informants and the exact process of the data collection. Then I will proceed to the analysis of the data in chapter six. In chapter seven, I will summarize the results that the data yielded and discuss their implications. Lastly, I will conclude the thesis with a recapitulation of the main points and some possible questions for further research on the matter in chapter eight.

2. CLIL

As mentioned in the introduction, CLIL is a teaching method where a foreign language is used to teach other content subjects. It has a dual focus: both the learning of content and the learning of a language are aimed at, although the emphasis on one or the other can be greater at a given time (Coyle et al. 2010: 1). Nowadays, applications of the CLIL method can be found in many parts of the world, but in this discussion we will limit ourselves to the European context. According to the CLIL survey conducted by Eurydice for the European Commission in 2006, CLIL is applied in one way or another in all European countries with the exception of Denmark, Greece, Lithuania, Portugal and Cyprus (Eurydice 2006). In section 2.1, I will introduce the background of the CLIL method. Here, the origins and influencing educational methods will be explained. In section 2.2, the practices of CLIL will be looked into.

2.1 Background of CLIL

The earliest seeds for the gradual development of CLIL education in the European context were sown in the 1950s, when discussion on economic unity was sparked among the countries that were to form the European Union. In 1958, the EEC (European Economic Community) determined the official languages of the newly forming union, defining the future EU as a plurilingual entity (Coyle et al. 2010: 8). As the development towards a more cohesive EU has progressed, language-learning objectives for the member countries have also evolved. A proposal from the European Commission in 1978 encouraged teaching in schools through more than one language (Coyle et al. 2010: 8). The popularity of teaching in a foreign language intensified in the 1990s with interest from both high-level political directions such as the EU's European Commission and the Council of Europe as well as from actors in the field (parents, teachers, schools), who saw foreign language skills as important

in the globalised post-industrial society. It was also during this time that the acronym CLIL started to become widely used. CLIL has thereafter been increasingly prioritised as a major educational initiative (Eurydice 2006: 7; Coyle et al. 2010: 3).

The EU's "unity in diversity principle" has promoted the learning of at least two foreign languages in addition to one's native language and in 2003, the European Commission explicitly stated that CLIL "has a major contribution to make to the Union's language learning goals" (Dalton-Puffer et al., 2010: 5). Also, CLIL is seen as a tool for facilitating the mobility of the workforce and for fostering "mediation and intercultural understanding" (European Commission 2011: 4). Therefore, all EU member states have implemented the CLIL method in their school systems in one form or another. Although any language can be used in the CLIL method, the most popular language that has come to be used in non-Anglophone countries is English because of its status as a *lingua franca* (Dalton-Puffer et al., 2010: 286–287).

It is worth mentioning that educational practices resembling those of CLIL have been going on in many countries even before the interest from European institutions, since teaching in a foreign language is as old as education itself and therefore, research about CLIL has followed practice to some extent (Coyle et al. 2010: 2 & 6). However, as research results became available from the 1990s onwards, three educational theories were seen to be important to research on the CLIL method: Canadian immersion education, bilingual education in general, and first and second language acquisition theories (Järvinen 1999: 10; Dalton-Puffer et al., 2010: 1). The Canadian immersion education has been especially influential on CLIL research (Järvinen 1999: 16), which is why I consider it helpful to introduce some points about the immersion method before embarking on a more ample description of the CLIL method (for more discussion about the immersion method in general, see Johnson & Swain, 1997; for discussion about immersion in Finland, see Björklund & Kastemaa, 2001 and Björklund, Mård-Miettinen & Turpeinen, 2007).

The immersion method started as a result of parental initiative in Canada in the 1960s (Cummins & Swain 1986: 37). The motivation for this method came from the English-speaking Canadian parents, who wanted their children to learn French, the country's second official language. The general idea of immersion education is that the learners are exposed to - or "immersed" in - the target language only. All teaching is given in a foreign language and learners are encouraged to start speaking the target language according to their abilities early on. Thus, communicative competence is very much stressed in this teaching method. The goal of immersion is to develop bilingualism, usually in bilingual areas. In Finland, the immersion method has been implemented and studied most of all in the education of Swedish, Finland's second official language, in the largely bilingual area in and around Vaasa since 1987 (Järvinen et al., 1999: 230–231).

Since the immersion method and the CLIL method are sometimes mistakenly taken to refer to the same kind of teaching, some differences in their practices and goals need to be pointed out. The CLIL method is often - although not uniquely - applied in monolingual areas, in comparison to the immersion method that is usually put into practice in bilingual areas. The goal of immersion education is to promote bilingualism and develop learners' second language skills (Cummins & Swain 1986: 31, 37–56), whereas the goal of CLIL is to develop learners' communicative abilities and to provide authentic language learning situations by teaching some school subjects through a foreign language. Although the goals of the two approaches might share some characteristics, the difference is in the ambition to foster bilingualism.

Dalton-Puffer et al. (2010: 1) illuminate the relationship between the learner's native language and the target language as follows: "CLIL is usually implemented once learners have already acquired literacy skills in their mother tongue [...]" so that students "can transfer already existing literacy skills *to* the foreign language". In CLIL, the teaching of the foreign language used in non-language subjects also continues as a subject "in its own right" (ibid.), so that the learners'

foreign language skills do not only rely on exposure to the foreign language during other school subjects. The difference in the importance of bilingualism is also apparent in the two methods' teacher requirements: immersion teachers are often required to be bilingual or to have a near-native proficiency in the immersion language (Järvinen 1999: 17) whereas CLIL teachers are not. More about teacher requirements in CLIL education can be found in the next section.

2.2 CLIL practices and their diversity

Although the main characteristics of the CLIL method have been described above, the field of CLIL practise is marked by diversity. Therefore, the CLIL method itself could be seen as an umbrella term under which are positioned different applications of this approach (Coyle et al. 2010: 14–26). However, a shared feature in all variations of CLIL is that an additional language that is often a foreign language for the learners is used in the teaching of other school subjects. The applications of CLIL vary according to the intensity of foreign language use during lessons, as well as the length or duration of the teaching programme. Therefore, schools might offer short-term CLIL programmes with low intensity, where perhaps only some vocabulary is given in the target language, or long-term CLIL programmes with high intensity, where only the target language is used during lessons. Between these two extremities, many different kinds of programmes can be contrived (Dalton-Puffer et al., 2010: 2). Also, some schools provide their students with more content education in a foreign language during the first years of school and then gradually increase the number of subjects taught in the learners' native language.

The CLIL method has been applied in Finland for decades now, both in schools that specialise in teaching in a foreign language and in regular schools that have foreign language classes in addition to regular classes where the language of instruction is Finnish. This development has been possible after the addition of a subsection to the Finnish legislation in 1991, according to which other languages than the language of elementary education can be used in teaching where

appropriate. A school can also provide education in another language for one or more groups, and the participation to these groups is voluntary (Rasinen 2006: 38; Finnish National Board of Education 1999: 7). A wide-ranging survey on CLIL in Finland was conducted in 1996 (Nikula & Marsh 1996), which showed that the CLIL method is applied in Finland in many different forms and areas, with variation from marginal application, such as using some foreign-language songs in teaching, to large scale application where a foreign language is used intensively in teaching, ultimately leading to a foreign-language matriculation examination at the end of secondary school (Rasinen 2006: 39).

An example of the CLIL method as applied in Finland can be found in the Finnish International School of Tampere, which was used as the research environment in the present study. The school offers teaching in English in Years 1–6 (elementary school) and then offers two alternatives when pupils go on to Years 7–9 (junior secondary school). One option is a teaching program with more English emphasis, where English, optional languages, maths, physics, chemistry, history and textiles/woodwork are taught in English and the remaining school subjects are taught in Finnish, with English being used when necessary. The other option is a program with more Finnish emphasis, where the only subjects taught entirely in English are history, English, and optional languages and the remaining subjects are taught in Finnish (Finnish International School of Tampere: "Teaching in English"). Thus, there are different ways of implementing the CLIL method, depending on the school curriculum and the teaching staff.

The teacher requirements for CLIL teachers are usually thought to be somewhat distinct from regular teacher requirements. However, since the objective of CLIL is not bilingualism, the CLIL teacher is not required to be bilingual. Dalton-Puffer et al. (2010: 1) give a rough definition for teacher requirements: "the teachers imparting CLIL lessons will normally not be native speakers of the target language" but rather "content-experts". The expertise on the content in question is more important than complete mastery of the target language or expertise in foreign-language

teaching. Met (1998: 56) points out the importance of the knowledge of content, too: “subject-matter knowledge is particularly important in content-driven programmes in which the second language teacher may be solely or primarily responsible for the teaching of content”. The idea here is that since foreign language teaching also continues in its own right, it is more important that the learners develop sufficient knowledge in the content of non-language subjects, as well.

As well as having received positive feedback, CLIL, along with other methods in the wider field of bilingual education, has sometimes faced misgivings as to its effect on the learners’ proficiency in their first (native) language or the learners’ proficiency in the content of the school subject. There are fears that bilingual education might be detrimental to the development of the learner’s native language as well as to the learning of the content matter, that concepts of other subjects will not be mastered in the native language, and even that it has a negative effect on the emotional development and identity of the learner (Järvinen 1999: 10; Lambert 1977: 15). In research conducted among the Canadian immersion pupils, these fears have been proven unfounded (Järvinen 1999: 18–20; Lambert 1977; Cummins & Swain 1986: 37–56, 79, 113–161). Certainly teaching in a foreign language does not suit the needs of all learners, but the fact that a variety of teaching methods exist is an advantage to different kinds of learners. Furthermore, the results of studies conducted in the domain of the CLIL method have shown that pupils who have used a foreign language integrated with meaningful content have benefitted from better intercultural awareness as well as deeper cognitive processing on subject matter (Dalton-Puffer et al., 2010: 6). Lambert (1977: 16–19) points out that, according to several studies conducted on bilingual education around the world, bilingual children showed definite advantages on measures of cognitive flexibility, creativity, and divergent thought compared to monolingual children.

3. Theoretical framework

In this chapter, I will introduce the theoretical framework used in this study. In section 3.1, I will start by defining the term *belief* and commenting on the reasons for choosing learner beliefs as the viewpoint from which I examine the data in this research. After this, I will move on to introducing the background of belief research. In section 3.2, I will concentrate on the framework of dialogism and its central concept of *voice* which is a suitable theoretical tool for analysing learner beliefs.

3.1 Learner beliefs: definition and background

In their edited volume *Beliefs about SLA: New Research Approaches* (2003), Paula Kalaja and Ana Maria Ferreira Barcelos present the background and new research approaches to belief research by compiling a selection of belief research conducted in a variety of countries. The present treatment of belief research is mostly indebted to the studies presented in the aforementioned volume.

Beliefs have been defined in different ways depending on the research paradigm and the approach used (Barcelos 2003: 7–29). First, some general definitions will help in understanding the field of belief research. Dewey (1933: 6) describes beliefs in general as a type of thinking that “covers all the matters of which we have no sure knowledge and yet which we are sufficiently confident of to act upon and also the matters that we now accept as certainly true, as knowledge, but which nevertheless may be questioned in the future”. A more recent description of learner beliefs in particular can be found in Aro’s study (2009: 12), where she describes them as “the conceptions, ideas and opinions learners hold about language learning”. She goes on to describe that beliefs are something that an individual holds to be true, without verification of the truthfulness of the proposition.

Beliefs might be seen by some as a problematic field of research and it has even been called a "messy" construct (Pajares 1992: 307). However, to understand the influence that beliefs and preconceptions have on our thinking, we might consider an example which demonstrates that most things that people "know" to be true are not actually based on their own knowledge at all, but on their belief that what they have read or heard from a reliable source is true. For example, a learner of English who in their childhood has been taught by their teacher that the only way to master a foreign language is to learn the correct way of writing might find it difficult to participate in a communicative English language course with less emphasis on correct grammar. A conversational approach to language learning and the idea of learning by doing might not feel helpful to a person who is convinced that they need verb conjugations to go further in their learning process. Of course there are different types of learners who make use of different learning strategies, but if the aforementioned learner has never tried a communicative approach to language learning, it is their *beliefs* about their own learning that affect their attitude. The boundary between knowledge and beliefs is often blurred, but nevertheless it is true that our preconceived notions shape our reality: we make decisions and choose to behave in a certain way based on our beliefs. Therefore, the importance of beliefs in general and in learning processes in particular has to be acknowledged.

The reasons for directing belief research towards learners in particular lies in the fact that nowhere can the effect of beliefs be seen as clearly as when people meet information or skills unfamiliar to them; when people act in an environment in which they are not among those "in the know". Since they cannot yet rely on their own experience or their own skills, they will have to resort to what they believe to be true in order to cope with the learning situation. Kalaja and Barcelos mention some situations where the effect of learner beliefs has been proven, such as in mismatches between teachers' and learners' agendas in the classroom, in students' use of language learning strategies, in learners' anxiety, and in autonomous learning (Kalaja & Barcelos 2003: 1). For example, a language learner who feels unsuccessful in their learning process and is therefore

unmotivated might hold strong beliefs about the difficulty of the target language, their own lack of skills or some mystical quality that makes language learning easy which they do not possess. What is important to note is that whether these beliefs are true or not is beside the point - what is important is that they give us clues as to what the learning situation is about to different learners and how these beliefs might affect the learners' success or difficulties in their language learning process.

There are several schools of thought when it comes to the ways of uncovering and analysing beliefs that people hold. As Barcelos (2003: 7–9) points out, beliefs have been studied for a long time under different names in anthropology, psychology and education and, since the early 1980s, also in the field of applied linguistics with focus on beliefs about SLA (second language acquisition). Previous studies on beliefs, depending on the researchers' agendas, have talked about *learner representations* (Holec, 1987), *learning culture* (Riley, 1997), *metacognitive knowledge* (Wenden, 1986), *learner's philosophy of language learning* (Abraham & Vann, 1987), and *culture of learning languages* (Barcelos, 1995). Dufva (2003: 146) points out that we might also talk about *knowledge, opinions, attitudes, stereotypes, prejudices, or everyday knowledge*.

As far as terminology goes, I agree with Aro (2009: 12) about the appropriateness of using *learner beliefs*. Of the above terms, *learning culture* seems to concentrate first and foremost on the collective aspect. Since the subject of this study also includes elements that are very much about the individual, I do not consider *learning culture* the most appropriate term to use here. It is true that the collective aspect and learning culture have a strong influence on beliefs and it must be taken into account when dealing with them. I would use the term *learning culture* to refer to something that *affects* beliefs. *Metacognitive knowledge*, on the other hand, focuses on the learners' ideas about their own learning and knowledge. This is also what beliefs are partly about, but the term *metacognitive knowledge* has a connotation of active knowledge, something that the learner is always aware of. In contrast, the term *belief* carries a meaning of something that exists in the mind

of the learner without them always being aware of or being able to specify or analyze it. This, in my opinion, is closer to the reality.

In the early years of belief research in language teaching and learning, the focus was on teachers' beliefs and the way they affect their teaching. From then on, the interest has shifted from teachers towards students. However, until fairly recently, much of the research concentrated on the objective or even passive role of the learners in the learning process and the phenomenon was looked at very much out-of-context, with not much room for the respondents' own perspectives (Kalaja & Barcelos 2003: 2). This could be termed as the "mainstream approach" to learner belief research (Kalaja 2003: 87; Dufva 2003: 131). This approach includes research that sees beliefs as stable mental representations that are simply stored inside the learners' minds (Wenden 1987). The human mind is seen as its own separate system, as something that exists and works independently of the human body and the environment the body is in. According to this mainstream approach, beliefs do not change or develop: they are fixed elements that determine learners' success in their learning process.

The research methodology in mainstream belief research relies on a positivist framework. Positivist research refers to studies done in natural sciences, which aim at explanations and exhaustive analysis of the components in the study, possibly in a numerical form. Thus, beliefs as fixed mental structures were studied with the traditional tools of quantitative research (Barcelos 2003: 11; Dufva 2003: 132). This meant using surveys and questionnaires, where respondents have to react to a given statement. The questionnaires might include Likert-type scales that include statements with a predetermined set of reactions (e.g. "strongly agree", "agree", "neutral", "disagree" and "strongly disagree"). The most widely used tool for uncovering beliefs in this way was the BALLI (Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory) questionnaire, developed by Horwitz in 1985 (Barcelos 2003: 11).

In more recent research on learner beliefs, the assumptions underlying the mainstream approach have been questioned and different ways of obtaining research data have been devised (Barcelos 2003: 19–20). Under the new research paradigm, which is the basis of the present study, beliefs are perceived as changing and developing over time, and they can be altered by the individual's new learning experiences and situations in life, as well as by other people's beliefs. Also, the same individual can hold a different belief in a different situation, depending on their role in it and other people involved. In this sense, beliefs are now seen as *context-dependent* (Barcelos 2003: 19). Also, the learner's subjective experiences and ideas are seen to contribute significantly to the learning process (Aro 2009: 15), whereas in earlier belief research learner beliefs were mostly seen as counterproductive or erroneous misconceptions that hinder the advancement of the learning process (Barcelos 2003: 11). Because of this shift in approach, the methods of mainstream research have been seen as insufficient, and the reliability of the material gathered with questionnaires has been contested. Simple Likert-type scales alone are no longer regarded as sufficient for the respondents to express themselves when it comes to something as complex as beliefs (Barcelos 2003: 10).

Kalaja describes an approach that is part of the new research paradigm and which may provide fruitful results in the study of learner beliefs about second language learning: the *discursive approach* (2003: 87). The discursive approach to learner beliefs admits beliefs to be difficult to uncover from the mind of the individual, and therefore research about it should “try to look beyond the text ... it is studying” (Aro 2009: 23). Here, “text” can refer to the answer that a pupil gives in an interview, for example. Also, another viewpoint to the new research paradigm is given by Dufva (2003: 140) when she talks about the *emergent* nature of beliefs. If the respondent is only asked to react to given statements, we do not find out what they actually believe, only how they react to a given formulation of a belief. Beliefs only *emerge* in interaction with others, in dialogue. Before that, beliefs “lie dormant” in the experiences of the individual, and they need to be awoken by

somebody or something (Dufva 2003: 143). This makes interviews a suitable tool for uncovering beliefs. There are also other ways in which respondents are free to formulate their experiences, such as diary research (Hosenfeld 2003). It is crucial that the learner is able to speak freely and not be restricted to a predetermined set of answers. More research on learner beliefs in the newer research paradigm has been conducted e.g. by Kalaja (1995), White (1999) and Yang (1999). The present study relies on the ideas of the new research paradigm on learner beliefs and thus, semi-structured interviews are used to uncover the emergent beliefs of the informants, with no directions or predetermined topics given to the informants.

3.2 Dialogism and the concept of voice

According to the newer, discursive research paradigm in belief research described in the previous section, beliefs are seen to emerge only in interaction with others. Therefore, the theoretical framework of *dialogism* and particularly its concept of *voice* is helpful in analysing these beliefs. Aro (2009: 54) examines learner beliefs in her study using three aspects, two of which are included in this study: the *content* of the beliefs and the *voicework* that is present in the respondents' answers. The voicework of the informants has to do with how much of the respondents' answers are in fact given in their own voice in comparison to "alien voices". The concept of *voice*, which has its origins and theory in the study of the philosophy of language will be discussed next.

The concept of *voice* has been examined in the framework of dialogism by the so-called Bakhtin circle, drawing on the writings of literary scholars Mikhail Bakhtin (1981, 1986) and Valentin N. Voloshinov (1973). More recent contributions to the dialogical view of language have been made by Rommetveit (1992), Linell (1998), Wertsch (1985, 1991), Lähteenmäki (1994, 1998) and Dufva (1998, 2003). Dufva (2003: 137–139) gives reasons as to what dialogism has to offer to belief research. She points out that beliefs are said to *emerge*, to be awoken, in dialogue. Beliefs are not something that are waiting in a person's mind ready to be taken out when necessary, but beliefs

are in fact created on the spot when talking about them. The dialogical view on language and beliefs guides us in the analysis of the meanings constructed in a dialogue, such as in a research interview.

The basis of a dialogical approach to language can be summarised in Voloshinov's words (1973: 102–103): "meaning is the effect of interaction between speaker and listener". Therefore, all utterances depend on the situation in which they occur. All speech always has a meaning and words and utterances always represent a point of view. Whether we are talking about a short interjection like "Oh!" in everyday discussion or a profound scientific text, the meaning conveyed by these words depends on who is doing the talking, when the words are said, who they are said to, what was said before and what is expected to happen after they are said. Therefore, the meaning of an utterance is always defined by its *context*, and therefore is always *contextual*. According to Bakhtin (1986: 82), we can understand the possible meaning of a sentence that might occur in an utterance (such as "The sun has risen"), but we can only know its true meaning if we know the context in which it is said.

The key concepts in Bakhtinian dialogism are those of *voice* and the *appropriation* of voices. *Voice* refers to the values, motivations and worldview that can be heard in a specific utterance. According to Bakhtin, utterances do not only include words and structures, which are the visible constituents in it, but also intentions, motivations and values (Bakhtin 1981: 293). This is why Bakhtin's concept of voice could also be described as "the speaking personality, the speaking consciousness" (Holquist & Emerson 1981: 434). Because our knowledge of the world and the beliefs we hold about it is based on numerous different kinds of interactions with our environment, it is clear that there are multiple voices that affect us at the same time. In a way, our knowledge always comes from "the mouths of others" (Bakhtin 1986: 138). We are surrounded by different kinds of voices. There are *voices that have a face*: i.e. voices of people close to us such as our family members and friends, voices of power-holders and decision-makers in the society, and also *faceless voices*: i.e. voices that are present in the media, voices of the current modes of thinking or

the spirit of the age (“the *Zeitgeist*”), and so on. Because of the abundance of different voices around us, our own experience and knowledge of the world necessarily becomes *multivoiced*: it consists of many voices that we have been exposed to in different situations. Not all of our experience comes from one univocal source: therefore these voices and our experiences can conflict and contradict each other. It then follows that also our beliefs have a multivoiced, sometimes even a contradictory, nature. This *multivoicedness* of experience and beliefs is also referred to with the term *polyphony* (Aro 2009: 33, 38).

Some words and voices affect us more than others, depending on our personality, situation in life and the source of the affecting voice. Aro presents Bakhtin’s division of voices or words into three categories: firstly, there are *irrelevant* words that we feel are not of importance to us and with which we do not want to be associated. In this context, there is not much to say about these since we do not tend to use these words. Secondly, there are *authoritative* words that come to us from authorities, be it parents, teachers, religious dogmas or universally recognised truths. These words tend to be repeated as they are in our speech: we do not use them for our own purposes because they feel to be someone else’s. Thirdly, there are *internally persuasive* words, that we feel we can make our own, to add our own experience to them and to use them creatively in new contexts (Aro 2009: 32; Bakhtin 1981: 341–342, 345).

This is where the concept of *appropriation* comes in. Appropriating words or voices means that we start accommodating others’ words and voices into our own speech (Bakhtin 1981: 341–342, 345; Bakhtin 1986: 91–93). Here, we stop simply repeating others’ opinions and ideas and start using certain expressions comfortably for our own purposes. The process of appropriation was apparent in the interview dialogues that Aro studied. The respondents sometimes ventriloquated authoritative voices in their speech in the beginning of their language learning process as children, with explicit or implicit reference to e.g. their parents and what they have said about language learning. However, in the later interviews, when the same respondents had acquired more

experience of language learning themselves and had appropriated some of the authoritative voices they had before only repeated, they expressed the same ideas as before but with their own words, presenting their own experiences as examples (Aro 2009: 116–144). Of course, there are some authoritative voices that we can appropriate and others that we cannot. This process depends on many aspects, some of which are personal and some social or relating to our environment.

As we have seen, the beliefs that emerge in a dialogue and that can be analysed by looking at the different voices used by the respondents are always only related to a particular context. This is why the dialogical approach to learner beliefs does not aim at making generalisations. The intention of this approach is to present some conclusions that are relevant in a particular context and thereby increase the overall knowledge of the field.

4. Methods

In the present interview study, a qualitative and an interpretive style of analysis was employed. With a group of eight informants for the interviews, this is a case study. The scope of a case study is advantageous when a particular context is concentrated on, because it zooms in on a particular case (such as an individual, a group, or a situation) in great detail, within its natural context of situation (van Lier 2005: 195). The research methodology used in this particular case study consisted of *qualitative interviewing* to collect data and *content analysis* to process it. As noted in the previous chapter, open-ended interviewing is a suitable tool for gathering data about learner beliefs. The benefits of interviewing are also attested by Brenner (2006: 257), who points out that where surveys and tests are appropriate data collection methods for finding particular pieces of information or determining the frequency of different responses, open-ended interviews allow informants the space to "express meaning in his or her own words". This freedom of expression makes it also possible for the informants to use the voices of their own choosing in their answers (see section 3.2).

An essential quality of an open-ended interview is that both the informant and the interviewer engage in an interactional relationship where meaning is built by a reciprocal exchange of information. "Knowledge is created in the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee", as described by Kvale (2007: 1), who has looked into the shaping and outlining of the qualitative interview process in academic research. The informant is not expected to give a "right" answer to a question, they are encouraged to contribute their own ideas to the conversation where also the interviewer has a stake. This type of interview allows for the informants' beliefs to emerge during the course of the interview.

Kvale (2007: 18) also defines the limits of qualitative research interview: it is not as anonymous or neutral as a survey questionnaire, nor it is as personal and emotional as a therapeutic interview, in which the patient is looking for help. The interaction between the participants is somewhere between these two extremities: the objective is to obtain descriptions of the lived everyday world of the interviewee and to interpret the meaning of the phenomena that are talked about (2007: 8, 11). The interviewer's task is to create a positive atmosphere in which the interviewee feels comfortable to talk about their experiences and feelings. Therefore, the interviewer uses themselves as a research instrument, employing their skills, sensitivity and knowledge of the subject matter (Kvale 2007: 48–49). However, despite the fact that there is a reciprocal exchange of ideas, the interaction does not take place between two equal partners, because the interviewer is the one defining the topic of conversation and steering the course of the interview (Kvale 2007: 9).

Qualitative research interviews vary in terms of how structured they are, ranging from highly structured and organised interviews where standard question formulations are strictly followed, to open interviews where a certain topic is in focus and perhaps an introducing question to the topic is devised beforehand, but where the following questions are not planned and only formulated during the course of the interview as a reaction to the interviewee's answers (Kvale

2007: 60–65). In this study, a semi-structured interview was adopted. A loose interview structure including certain topics and preliminary questions to probe these topics was used, but the wording of the questions and the order in which the topics were discussed varied according to the course the conversation took with each interviewee. To allow comparisons with the interview results of Aro's study, the same interview structure was used here.

Spradley (1979: 50) describes different types of descriptive questions in a qualitative interview. One of them is the *grand tour question*, which is often used in the beginning of the interview to find out more about the informant's experiences. An example of a grand tour question when interviewing a student might be "Could you describe your typical school day?". The answer to this question gives the interviewer more information about the informant and leads them to new questions, termed *probing questions*, that can then be asked about the details of the school day. In the present study, grand tour questions were used in the beginning and in the middle of the interview to introduce new interview topics and after the initial responses given by the informants, probing questions were used to elicit more detailed information.

After the interview data, recorded with a digital recorder during the interview process, was transcribed into written form, it was analysed using the method of content analysis. In content analysis, passages of social communication, such as written texts or verbal communication, are examined by "systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of messages" (Holsti 1968: 608). This means that all of the informants' answers were carefully read and examined several times, after which the answers were categorised into themes that were seen to recur in the data. These themes were then compared to the themes that had occurred among the reference group in Aro's study.

5. The present study: data description

The data collection for the present study was conducted in the Finnish International School of Tampere, which is one of the international schools in the Tampere area that offers teaching in the English language at the elementary and the junior secondary level. The school provides English-language teaching from Year 1 of the Finnish comprehensive school (pupils attending the first grade are usually 7 years old) until Year 9, where pupils are approximately 14 or 15 years old. The Finnish International School of Tampere admits as its pupils children whose first language is Finnish but who have sufficient knowledge of English to follow teaching, as well as children who speak English as their first language. An aptitude test is organized before attending Year 1, to determine whether the child in question will be able to follow teaching given in English. As its goals, the school lists providing "basic skills and knowledge to manage in a changing society", fostering "the student's personal growth to a responsible adult with confidence and a strong work ethic" and developing cooperative behaviour among the students. Also, multiculturalism is reflected in all school activities, because a large number of the students come from various cultural backgrounds (Finnish International School of Tampere: "Curriculum").

The informants for the present study were students in Year 8, following the teaching programme with more English emphasis (see section 2.2). The class of 8th-graders in question was multicultural, but, for the purposes of this study, only the students with Finnish as their mother tongue were chosen for the interviews. This made it possible to narrow down the study to learner beliefs among pupils with English as a foreign or a second language and to compare this group of pupils to the one in Aro's study, where all informants' mother tongue was Finnish. Therefore, a group of eight pupils in total was interviewed.

Table 1: Background information of the informants (names changed)

Name	Age	Background information
Matilda (<i>childhood abroad</i>)	14	- Lived abroad since the age of 18 months until the age of eight, attended an international school there - The Finnish International School of Tampere since Year 2
Valtteri (<i>childhood abroad</i>)	14	- Lived abroad since nursery school and attended an international school there - The Finnish International School of Tampere since Year 3
Lisa (<i>childhood abroad</i>)	14	- Lived abroad and attended an international school there since Year 1 until Year 4 - The Finnish International School of Tampere since Year 5
Ella (<i>English-language kindergarten in Finland</i>)	14	- English-language kindergarten since the age of three; an international school since Year 1 - The Finnish International School of Tampere since Year 8
Fanny (<i>English-language kindergarten in Finland</i>)	15	- English-language kindergarten since the age of five - The Finnish International School of Tampere since Year 1
Eemeli (<i>English-language kindergarten in Finland</i>)	15	- English-language kindergarten since the age of three - The Finnish International School of Tampere since Year 1
Sofia (<i>English-language kindergarten in Finland</i>)	14	- English-language kindergarten since the age of five - The Finnish International School of Tampere since Year 1
Maaria (<i>English-language kindergarten in Finland</i>)	14	- English-language kindergarten since the age of three - The Finnish International School of Tampere since Year 1

Some background information about the informants is needed in order to understand the analysis of the interview responses in chapter six. In the group of informants, there were six girls and two boys (Table 1). Three of the informants had lived abroad in their childhood, and upon their families' return to Finland, they had been placed in the Finnish International School of Tampere in the English-emphasis programme. Although these informants had spent a part of their childhood abroad, their home language was always Finnish. The experience of spending a part of their childhood abroad was taken into account in the analysis and some of their answers were examined in that light. Five of the informants had been living in Finland since their birth, but had followed teaching in the English language since kindergarten. The informants and their answers were studied and analysed collectively as one group of CLIL pupils, not as separate, personal narratives. The

collective viewpoint is justified by the fact that all of the informants have a sufficiently similar background to make careful generalisations among this group possible.

The data collection method used was semi-structured interviewing, where the goal was to uncover the informants' own ideas and conceptions and their own formulations of their experiences, and therefore a relaxed and informal atmosphere was necessary. The one-on-one interviews were conducted during the students' home economics class, in a room that was separated from the main classroom. The interviews were recorded so that the informants' answers could be transcribed for the analysis. The interview structure that was used (Appendix 1) was adopted from Aro (2009: Appendix 3), in order to enable comparison of the results to the ones in Aro's study. Although the interview structure in this study was the same for all of the informants and all of the same interview questions were covered with every informant, the order in which the questions came up varied in each interview. The informants were encouraged to articulate their own ideas and recollections and for this reason, some themes or topics were emphasised by some informants more than others.

The main parts in the interview structure had to do with *why* and *how* English is studied in the informants' opinion. The *reasons* (Why is English studied?) and *ways* (How is English studied?) *of learning English* were subdivided into general and personal questions. When dealing with the *reasons for learning English* from the general viewpoint, such questions as "Why do people study English in general?" and "Why is knowing English useful to people?" were asked. In the personal approach to the same aspect, questions such as "Why do you study English?" and "In what ways is English useful to you?" were asked. When dealing with the *ways of learning English* from the general viewpoint, such questions as "How do people study English?" and "What are the best ways for people to learn English?" were asked. From the personal viewpoint, questions such as "How do you learn English?" and "What do you do in order to learn English?" were asked. After each question, more ideas were prompted from the pupils by asking if there is anything else that comes to their mind and whether they engage in certain activities that involve English, such as reading,

playing computer games or other hobbies. However, no specific themes were recommended to the pupils by the interviewer. To increase the viewpoints to the reasons and ways of learning English, questions such as "Where does one come across English in one's life? / in Finland? / in Tampere?" and "Where can one learn English?" were asked. The answers to these questions were incorporated into the reasons and ways of learning English in the analysis.

The ethical aspects of conducting research were considered in this study in the preparation of the interviews, during the interviews as well as during the analysis of the interviews afterwards. The permission to interview the students was obtained with a permission form (Appendix 2) sent to the students' homes before the interviews took place. Before the interviews were conducted, the informants' assent to using a digital recorder to tape the interviews was asked. For reasons of anonymity, the informants' names were changed. Also, careful consideration was given as to how much background information is given in Table 1. This is why the table only mentions whether an informant had lived abroad or not. The countries where the informants had lived were not deemed relevant for this study, since all the informants who had lived abroad had attended an international, English-language school.

6. Data analysis

The data analysis is divided into three parts: the first two parts deal with research question 1 and the third part deals with research question 2. In sections 6.1 and 6.2, I attempt to answer the first research question about the content of the learners' beliefs concerning English language learning and the knowledge of English. As mentioned above, the informants' beliefs about learning English were examined by asking two *grand tour* questions: *why* English is studied and *how* it is studied. These reasons and ways are further divided into two categories according to Aro's interview structure: *general* and *personal* questions (Table 2). With this categorisation we can achieve a more

structured picture of the informants' beliefs and see what kinds of differences or similarities emerge. I will present the answers of the informants under each question by outlining recurring themes and then, after discussing each *grand tour* question, make comparisons between these themes and those that came up in the reference group. The extracts of the informants' answers are first given in their original form in Finnish, and English translations are given below. I have translated the answers from Finnish into English myself, respecting the original wording of the answers as much as possible.

In section 6.3, I will answer the second research question about the voicework that was present in the informants' answers. This will be done by looking more closely at the wordings and voices that the informants used in their answers and what they reveal about the informants' beliefs on language learning. This section will not include all of the themes discussed in the previous sections, but specific themes that revealed the informants' voicework will be concentrated on.

The beliefs among this particular group of pupils possibly stem from a variety of experiences and factors. In the analysis, some speculation and comments are presented about the reasons the pupils hold the beliefs that are reported. However, exact knowledge about how much certain beliefs and attitudes are due to general aspects about the world today, such as globalisation, and how much they are due to more particular aspects, such as being exposed to a CLIL environment and the informants' personal characteristics, is beyond the scope of this study. Also, it must be kept in mind that there is an age difference between these two groups: the pupils in the CLIL group were 14 or 15 years old, whereas the pupils in the reference group that were the focus of Aro's study were attending Year 5 of elementary school, which makes them circa 11 years old. This is one possible reason for many differences in the two group's results, and it is discussed in each section of comparison in more detail. The goal here is to bring forth ideas and attitudes that were relevant to this particular group of pupils and by the gained contextual information add to the research of learner beliefs and attitudes in general.

Table 2. Summary of the interview questions

Categorisation of the interview aspects (<i>grand tour questions</i> in bold):	
Why is English studied?	How is English studied?
- Why do people study English?	- How does one learn English?
- Why do you study English?	- How do you learn English?

6.1 Why is English studied?

The aspect of why English is studied was approached by first asking questions about the reasons people in general might have for learning English and different needs and uses people can have for it, and then questions about the reasons that the informants themselves have for learning English and about their own needs and uses for it. Some of the themes that came up had some overlap, i.e. they were present in both the general and personal aspects, but there were also themes that were only mentioned in connection with one of these aspects.

6.1.1 "Why do people study English?" *English as a lingua franca and work*

When asked about people's needs for learning English in general, the informants gave answers in which the most frequent themes were those of 1) *speaking English as a global language* and 2) *work*. In addition to these, the themes of 3) *acquiring information* and the idea that 4) *English is easy to learn* for everyone were also mentioned by more than one informant.

Among the informants, the most prevalent theme that came up as the first answer in most interviews to the question about why people learn English in general, was that of *speaking English as a global language*. Often, the terms "globality" and "international language" came up and the informants seemed to have a firm idea of the all-encompassing role of English in the world. In this theme, the recurring idea was that English is spoken as a native language around the world and in

addition to that, English is often used between two people of different languages whose mother tongue is not English. Therefore, the theme of English as a *lingua franca* was prevalent in the group's answers. The informants expressed a profound understanding of the global importance of English, and of the fact that the global community that needs English as a language of intercultural communication includes Finland, as well. Therefore, English was not only seen as a foreign thing. Six of the informants worded the global status of English as relating to place: English is spoken *everywhere*. Also, the expression that English is specifically *spoken* in many places came up, referring to people's active capability of producing English language almost wherever one goes.

[1] Matilda: No... Koska sitä puhutaan niinkun joka paikassa [...]
Well... Because it's spoken, like, everywhere [...]

[2] Fanny: No, mun mielestä se on aika semmonen kieli et sitä puhutaan niinku, niinku tosi laajasti täällä et sen takia mun mielestä niinku.
Well, in my opinion it's the kind of language that's spoken, like, like, very widely here so that's why in my opinion, like.

Eemeli brought up specifically the importance of speaking skills:

[3] Eemeli: No sehän on yks maailman puhutuimmista kielistä, niin kansainvälinen että... kannattaa taitaa se kieli.
Well it's one of the most spoken languages in the world, so international that... it's good to know that language.

In addition to mentioning speaking skills, he also shows an understanding of the fact that English is by no means the only widely spoken language in the world, stating that "it's *one* of the most spoken languages in the world". He seems to be aware of other languages that have a large number of speakers, too, suggesting an understanding of the multilingual nature of the world. Lisa did not concentrate on speaking in her answer, but stressed first and foremost people's ability to *understand* English in many countries:

[4] Lisa: No mun mielestä se on hyvä että sitä opetetaan monissa kouluissa koska se on aika yleismaailmallinen kieli ja sitä ymmärretään monissa maissa.
Well, in my opinion it's good that it's taught in many schools because it's quite a universal language and it's understood in many countries.

We can assume that bringing up the skill of understanding English might imply that even if people cannot speak English very well themselves, they may be able to understand it a little and therefore, some meaning will successfully be conveyed with the aid of English in basically any part of the world.

Another aspect of English as a global language was that it is spoken by *everyone*: six informants approached this theme by stating the possibility of communication between people with different mother tongues and different nationalities. Some of the informants mentioned both the aspect of place and people in the same answer, giving a full picture of the importance of English in different places as well as with different people. Some informants only mentioned one of the two aspects, therefore stressing either the aspect of place and the possibility that when one goes abroad, one can manage with English or the aspect of people and the possibility of two people of different mother tongues understanding each other regardless of where they are. Matilda expressed this idea of communication regardless of nationality in the following way:

[5] Matilda: Ja ne on niinku... on helppoo sitte puhua kaikkien kanssa.
And they're like... then it's easy to speak to everyone.

She suggests that knowing English is to a large extent the key to communication with anyone, as she says that it will be "easy to speak to everyone". Her first idea seems to be that if you know English, other problems of communication will be easier to solve. Sofia also mentions the ease of communication, but by using the word "if" seems to suggest a slight uncertainty. She is aware that not everyone in the world knows English, even though "so many know it":

[6] Sofia: Ja sit kuitenkin niin moni osaa sitä [...]; niin on helppo puhua ku tulee toimeen ku jos kaikki osaa englantia.
And then after all so many know it [...]; so it's easy to speak because you get by if everyone knows English.

A slightly different point of view came up in Ella's answer - she puts more emphasis on the possibilities of acting independently that open up for an individual if they know English:

[7] Ella: Että pystyy ite kommunikoimaan niitten ihmisten kanssa.

That you can communicate yourself with those people.

The interesting choice of words in her answer - "you can communicate *yourself*" - suggests that the important thing is to have a direct contact to different people and that you yourself are part of the communication, with no one acting as a middleman and interpreting what you say.

Two of the informants described a possible situation where English could work as a *lingua franca* between people who do not speak English as their mother tongue. At least for these informants, it seems to be clear that English is not only needed in situations in which native English speakers are participating:

- [8] Valtteri: [...], sit sä voit puhuu niiden muiden kanssa vaik teillä ei niinku ois sama äidinkieli et pystyy puhuun englantia...
[...], then you can speak to those others even if you, like, didn't have the same mother tongue so you can speak English...
- [9] Maaria: [...] jos on vaikka suomalainen ja ruotsalainen ihminen, toinen...
 suomalainen ei osaa ruotsia ja ruotsalainen suomee niin se on semmonen kieli jota molempien tulis osata [...]
[...] if there's for example a Finnish and a Swedish person, the other... the Finn doesn't know Swedish and the Swede doesn't know Finnish and so it's the kind of language that both of them should know [...]

Valtteri gave a more general comment about a situation where two people speak different languages and the solution to mutual understanding would be using English. He seems to take for granted the fact that these people will probably know English in addition to their mother tongue, and therefore it's an obvious choice to use it. Maaria gives a particular example that is quite close to home (i.e. a Finnish and a Swedish person). Although Swedish is the second official language of Finland, she proposes that English might be an effective language of communication for these people, because it is probable in her opinion that they do not know each other's languages. However, she uses the expression "they *should* know English", suggesting that this is not necessarily the case but knowing English is recommended if one ends up in situations like the one described.

Valtteri mentioned a seemingly straightforward reason for the need to learn English, which is nevertheless the basis for the whole concept of a global language:

[10] Valtteri: Siksi että muutkin opiskelee [...]

Because others study it, too [...]

He mentioned this in the same answer where he spoke about communicating with people of different mother tongues, so he probably did not only refer to others in the near environment. Therefore, his comment could be seen to have global significance.

As seen from the examples above, the inherent usefulness of communicating with people of other nationalities was taken for granted by most informants. On the one hand, this natural reaction to the need for internationality and intercultural communication is quite normal among today's youth, who have grown up in the globalised world. On the other hand, the group's more or less unanimously positive attitude to intercultural communication might partly arise from their CLIL background in education: having attended English-language education since their early childhood and having classmates from different countries would probably lead to a familiarity with multicultural issues and a first-hand experience in interacting with non-Finnish people. Valtteri explicitly brought up a desire to speak to foreigners, which suggests a motivated attitude towards intercultural communication:

[11] Valtteri: [...] tai ihan sellasta että halua puhua ihmisten kanssa joiden äidinkieli ei ole sinun äidinkieli.

[...] or just the fact that you want to talk with people whose mother tongue is not your mother tongue.

Interestingly, the idea that English replaces the knowledge of many other languages was relevant to three informants. Lisa mentioned that other foreign languages than English are much more difficult, and she seems to suggest that knowing English could spare the trouble of learning other, more difficult languages:

[12] Lisa: [...] niinku jos miettii että kaikki... monet kielet on tosi hankalia niin jos ei ois esim. enkkua [...]

[...] like, if you think that all... many languages are very difficult so if there wasn't English, for example [...]

She did not specify further what would happen if there was not English to be made use of. However, we can assume that her pondering on the importance of English ensues from the beginning of her comment, "many languages are very difficult". In another comment, she mentioned that English language is "relatively easy" ("se on suht helppoa"), which, together with the previous comment implies that one does not have to spend too much time and effort in learning other languages if you already know English. Ella and Sofia also answered that knowing English can substitute the knowledge of other languages:

[13] Ella: Että ei tarvitte alkaa opiskelemaan niinku kaikkia eri kieliä [...] *So that one doesn't have to start studying, like, all the different languages [...]*

[14] Sofia: Niin ettei tarvi opetella kaikkia kieliä erikseen. *So one doesn't have to study all languages separately.*

One of the most recurring ideas in connection with English as a global language was that people need it when travelling abroad. Five of the informants mentioned this as a general reason for learning English. Travelling is here seen as part of the larger theme of English as a global language, but it should be mentioned that it was given as a separate answer in many interviews: i.e. first, the general theme of English as a *lingua franca* was mentioned, and some of the informants later added that travelling was one of the concrete situations for which people might want to learn English. This was probably because the informants seemed to view the status of English as a *lingua franca* as a permanent state of things in the world and as a reason to learn English also in a situation where travelling is *not* immediately relevant: that even though you would not travel yourself, the global world will come to you. Travelling, then, was mentioned separately and specified as travelling for recreational purposes or specifically for the purposes of getting to know another culture, which was what Ella suggested:

[15] Ella: [...] että pääsee niinku eri maihin sillee tutustumaan [...] *[...] so that you manage to kind of get to know different countries [...]*

Maaria also mentioned English being useful for people when they go abroad, and according to her, everyone should know English. She used the same expression in example 9 when talking about English as a *lingua franca* between people of different native languages:

- [16] Maaria: [...] että ku menee ulkomaillekin niin kaikki... niinku mun mielestä kuuluis kaikkien osata englantia [...]
 [...] so that when you go abroad, as well, then everyone... like, I think everyone should know English [...]

Most of the informants saw that English would be needed in travels anywhere in the world, which is consistent with the answers relating to the first theme of English being a global language. However, two of the informants specified the destination of travels where English would be needed to English-speaking countries: Fanny mentioned that English would be useful if one wants to go "somewhere like America or for example Australia or England" (jonnekki Amerikkaan tai vaikka Australiaan tai Englantiin). Eemeli mentioned that English is the most spoken language in the USA, and therefore would be needed when travelling there.

In addition to the themes of speaking English with foreign people abroad or in one's homeland, the theme of *speaking with non-Finnish friends* came up. Although speaking with one's family in English was not a relevant theme because all of the informants' home language was Finnish, all of them did mention the need to speak English to friends either in foreign countries or to non-Finnish friends who are in Finland. Here we mention only the comments that had to do with the general need people might have and in the next section, we will present those answers that had to do with the informants' own needs.

- [17] Valtteri: [...] jos sulla on jotain ulkomaalaisia ystäviä [...]
 [...] if you have some foreign friends [...]

Valtteri spoke about having foreign friends in a general way, using the "you" pronoun in its generic sense, meaning "if one has foreign friends". He did not specify whether he was thinking of foreign friends who live abroad or foreign friends who live in Finland. Lisa also mentioned a general need for using English if one has connections with foreign people:

- [18] Lisa: Ja se auttaa myös niinku ihmissuhteissa yleensä jos on ulkomaalaisten kanssa toiminnassa niin... se on semmonen... yleinen kieli.
And it helps also, like, in human relations in general if you're in connection with foreigners then... it's that kind of... general language.

She uses the Finnish word "ihmissuhde" in her comment, which translates into English as "relationship" or "human relation", and therefore it seems that she was not thinking about some general need for communication e.g. when shopping abroad, but was referring to a more profound need for communication with foreign friends or family, for instance.

Another frequently occurring theme among the informants' answers to the question of why English is needed in general was that of *work*. The informants gave quite diverse comments about the role of English in working life and incorporated the following situations in this theme: 1) working abroad, 2) international working environments with foreign colleagues, 3) the possibility to advance one's career and 4) the need to know English in non-international work, as well.

Four informants mentioned the possibility of working abroad that is relevant to many people these days. After talking about the general importance of English as a global language, Matilda mentioned working abroad:

- [19] Matilda: Esimerkiks, työn kannalta. Että jos on jossain töissä ulkomailla, niin enkku auttaa sen niinkun... sen perusteella.
For example, because of work. So that if one is working abroad somewhere, then English helps, like... for that reason.

Ella also talked about work. Her first answer to the question about additional uses for English included the idea of building a career and in direct connection with this she linked working abroad:

- [20] Ella: No siis tota, jos aatellaan silleen uran kannalta niin sehän koko ajan rakentuu siitä ja tälleen näin että jos pääseeki sitte ulkomaille vielä tekemään sitä työtä.
 JN: Aivan, eli työn kannalta siitä on hyötyä?
 Ella: Niin et siinä on mahdollisuus päästä sitte vähän pitemmälle ja niinku korkeampaan asemaan. Että esim myös niinku näitä kieli- no siis kielet on nyt kaikki niinku tosi tär- niinku hyvä opiskella, että niinku on sitte niinku laajemmin pystyy niinku tekemään ja oppimaan ku ymmärtää sitä niitten ihmisten kieltä.
 Ella: *Well erm, if one thinks about a career, it is built from that all the time and so, like, if one gets to go abroad even, to do that job.*
 JN: *Right, so it's useful for work?*

Ella: Yes, so one has a chance to get ahead a bit and, like, in a higher position. So for example, also language- well all languages are, like, really impor- like, good to study, so that, like, then one can like do and learn more extensively when one understands those people's language.

According to Ella, knowing English helps in getting to work abroad. She also uses her mother as an example of the possibilities that knowing languages can provide in one's working life, saying that going abroad to study and work has had a positive impact on her mother's career. Her beliefs about working life possibly stem from her mother's example. Going to work abroad is clearly a desirable state of things for her because she uses the term "to get to go abroad". Also, the possibility of getting a better position in working life comes up in Ella's answer. Working abroad, according to her, makes it possible to get ahead and reach a higher position. She also mentions that English is not the only language that helps in building a career, but it is good to study "all languages" because one can benefit from understanding the language of the country one works in. Interestingly, she mentions both "doing" and "learning" in connection with working life: one can "learn more extensively". In her mind, working is clearly not only putting already acquired skills to use but also about learning new things while working and thereby getting ahead.

Eemeli did not mention the possibility of working abroad, but, like Ella, he had an idea of English as a factor in advancing in one's career:

[21] Eemeli: Jaa, no ihan... opiskelun vissiin takia että, se voi niinku edellyttää saamaan hyvää työtäkin. Vähän riippuu tietenki mihin menee töihin, mutta... Vaikka niinku, öö... Suomihan on tällanen talousmaa että täältä tilataan paljon että... Ja ulkomailtahan tilataan paljon tavaraa niin kannattaa osata kieliä että voi kommunikoida vieraiden maiden ihmisten kanssa.
Oh, well... because of studies I guess, so that it can, like, enable to get a good job, as well. It depends a little bit where you are going to work, of course, but... For example, like, erm... Finland is a kind of country of economy so people order things from here... And other countries order lots of goods from here so it's good to know languages so one can communicate with people from foreign countries.

Eemeli mentions that English is learnt "because of studies", a statement which he restrains by the expression "I guess", that suggests his uncertainty about whether this is an absolute truth but that

this is how he supposes things might proceed. He mentions studying as being a means to getting ”a good job”, an example of which he provides: trade and commerce. He speaks about importing and exporting goods in and out of Finland, where knowing English and other languages helps. Thus, he expands the need of knowing foreign languages to an entire economy, instead of only speaking about tasks in a particular job.

As well as mentioning working abroad, Valtteri talks about another aspect of knowing English in working life: working in an international company, which is not necessarily abroad. He suggests that some international companies use English as the language of the working environment, regardless of the location of the office:

- [22] Valtteri: [...] ja, sitten, työpaikoilla on usein kielenä englantia, varsinkin tällaisissa kansainvälisissä töissä ja... jos muutenkin menee ulkomaille töihin niin osaa englantia.
[...] and then, work places often have English as their language, especially these kinds of international jobs and... also if one goes working abroad then one knows English.

Valtteri and Eemeli talked about working abroad or in an international environment in relatively neutral terms, not explicitly stating whether this was a desirable situation or not. According to their answers, this is something that is relevant in today’s world, whether one wants it or not. Matilda and Ella, on the other hand, saw working abroad as a desirable outcome in one’s working life: Ella worded her ideas as ”getting to work abroad” and Matilda, later in the interview when talking about her own hopes for the future, was quite straightforward that she will absolutely want to work abroad. However, a slightly different viewpoint to working abroad and using English in one’s working life was also present among the group. Sofia also admitted the possibility of working abroad but did not see it only as a positive thing:

- [23] Sofia: Joo no jos on semmonen työ että joutuu oleen ulkomailla tai tekemisissä muiden ihmisten kanssa niin.
 JN: Aivan. No onko englannin osaamisesta sitte hyötyä kaikissa töissä?
 Sofia: Eee, no ei välttämättä jollain, no emmä tiiä, jos niinku joku kadunlakasija mutta sit jos on joku kone jossa on ohjeet englanniksi niin kai sit se joutuu opiskeleen englantia et se saa selvää.

- JN: Niin, semmosessakin tilanteessa enkusta olis apua.
- Sofia: Niin nykyään joka työssä että jos meet johonki työhön millä ei oo mitään tekemistä kielten kanssa niin silti oletetaan että sun pitää osata kaikkia kieliä. Et se on, kai se on joku oletus että kaikki osaa englantia nykyään.
- Sofia: Yes well if one has the kind of job that one has to be abroad or in contact with other people then.*
- JN: *Right. Well, is knowing English useful in all jobs, then?*
- Sofia: Errmmm, well not necessarily in some, well I don't know, if, like, some street sweeper but then if there's some machine that has instructions in English, then I guess they will have to study English so they can make it out.*
- JN: *Yes, English would be helpful in those kinds of situations as well.*
- Sofia: Yes, these days in every job, if you do a job that has nothing to do with languages, then still it's expected that you have to know all languages. So it's, I guess it's a kind of expectation that everyone knows English these days.*

First, she talks about working abroad as something that one might "have to do" in a certain kind of job, suggesting obligatoriness rather than possibility. Then, she talks about the need of English in jobs that do not include going abroad or working with international colleagues. She first hesitates about whether English would be at all useful for example for "some street sweeper" but then she remarks that even in this kind of job one might encounter instructions for machinery in English. In this case, according to her, one would have to "study English" so one can "make out" the instructions. Sofia also speaks interestingly about the expectations of knowing "all languages" in any kind of job these days. From the way she phrases her ideas, it can be detected that she does not see it as a completely positive thing that knowing languages is expected more and more in jobs that do not operate in international environments.

Acquiring information was the third major theme of the uses of knowing English in general.

This was mentioned by three informants. The informants who talked about English as a means of getting information mentioned 1) signs and markings in shops, 2) signs that are vital to understand in order to survive and 3) information available on the internet. Matilda suggested that knowing English helps if one comes across signs or markings in shops that are in a language that one does not know. She assumes that in addition to this unknown language, the English equivalent is also given in the sign:

- [24] Matilda: Että jos on esimerkiksi kaupassa ja näkee jonkun kyltin jostain niin sen, että siinä on se jonkun tietyn maan kieli ja sitten enkun kieli, ja se... enkku paremmin sitte selittää mikä se oikeasti on, jos ei osaa sitä toista kieltä.
So that if one is for example in a shop and one sees some sign of something so that, that there is some country's language and then English language, and it... English then better explains what is really is, if you don't know the other language.

Perhaps Matilda supposes that signs and markings are translated into English almost everywhere because she does not mention a specific country where this might take place. She goes on to specify the need to understand English-language markings in a food product, for instance:

- [25] Matilda: Sitten... kaupoissakin näkee niinkun jossain la- niinkun jossain ruuissa on semmonen lappu missä lukee englanniks kanssa ja... no niissä mun mielestä.
Then... also, in shops you can see like in some la- like, in some foods there is this kind of label where it says in English also and... well those, in my opinion.

Eemeli also mentions that English is useful for understanding the markings in "foreign" food products "imported to Finland" from other countries.

In addition to the previous examples of everyday life where English is useful for getting information, a more serious approach was taken. Eemeli thinks about the importance of getting information from signs by recalling a scene in the film *Titanic*:

- [26] Eemeli: Mä muistan ku kattelin, ku oon monesti kattonu ton *Titanic* -elokuvan ja muistan ku siellähän oli ulkomaalaisia paljon ja tuli mieleen semmonen arabialainen perhe ku se laiva oli uppoomassa niin siel oli tienviittoja niinku yläkansille ja katto sanakirjasta ku ei osannu englantia niin... Niin oli sitte aika hädässä siinä ku, "mitä tuo tarkoittaa?"
I remember watching, 'cause I've watched the film Titanic many times and I remember when there were a lot of foreigners and this Arabic family came to my mind when the ship was sinking and there were signposts, like, to the upper decks and [they] looked in a dictionary 'cause they didn't know English so... So [they] were in quite a distress there 'cause, "what does that mean?"

Eemeli takes the importance of understanding information further, suggesting that by knowing English, one might have a better chance of survival in an emergency situation. This comment expresses a more serious pondering on the importance of getting a message through and the role that language skills can have in that kind of situation.

As well as mentioning everyday needs such as shopping and the more fundamental needs of survival, one informant talked about the need to get information from the internet, something that is relevant in the transmission of information today:

- [27] Sofia: Netissä. Koska ne, netti on kuitenkin niinku englantilaisten keksimä että sikäli se on, siellä on tosi paljon asiaa englanniksi ja ja...
On the internet. Because they, internet was anyway, like, invented by the English so in that way it's, there's lots of things in English and and...

Sofia mentions that the internet was invented by "the English", and although the reality of the matter may not be as straightforward as that, her second comment does not go amiss: plenty of information about all kinds of things can be found in English on the internet and this, according to Sofia, is a justifiable reason for people to learn English.

The last theme that emerged in connection with why people learn English was that it is *easy to learn* for everyone. Although this idea could be seen as dependent on subjective experience, two informants mentioned this as a universal fact:

- [28] Lisa: [...] niin se on sillä tavalla aika mielenkiintoinen kieli koska se on suht helppoa.
[...] so in that way it's quite an interesting language because it's relatively easy.

Lisa seems to juxtapose in her mind the two qualities of English: it is both easy and interesting. By her wording, we could understand that according to her, English is interesting exactly because it is easy. Lisa's comment shows no signs of hesitation as to the truthfulness of this statement: she presents this as a general fact.

Sofia also seems to think that English is easy to learn, and she gives a more ample description of this with an example:

- [29] Sofia: No, englantia on kai tosi helppo kieli oppia, sikäli et se on niinku helppo opet-, kaik-, niinku et, et se on yhtä helppoo suomalaiselle ku vaikka jolleki afrikkalaiselle et se on yhtä helppoo kaikille. Jotenki sillai niinku peruskieli.
Well, I guess English is a very easy language to learn, so far that it's like easy to learn-, ever-, kind of as easy to a Finnish person as to an African person so it's as easy for everyone. Somehow, like, a basic language.

Sofia mentioned this as her first answer to the question about the general usefulness of English. She points out that in her mind, English is just as easy to learn for a Finnish person as it is for an African person, and after this she goes on to say that it is a global language. It seems that according to her, the globality of English is explained by the fact that it is so easily learnt. This idea is reinforced with the term "basic language" that she uses.

Even though the universal applicability of the notion that English is easy to learn can be questioned, other answers given in the interviews suggested a consensus among the group. This might be due to their own experiences of learning English. All of the informants mentioned at some point of the interview that they remember learning English easily as a child, five of them in an English-language kindergarten in Finland and three of them abroad. For example, Sofia commented on her memories of learning English in her childhood:

[30] Sofia: Joo koska sitte ku mä olin oppinu jo vähän englantia niin mä aattelin että hei täähän on ihan helppoo. Ku mä osasin niinku pelkästään kahen vuoden jälkeen, mä osasin jo tosi hyvin englantia [...]
Yes because then when I had already learnt a little English then I thought hey, this is perfectly easy. When I knew, like, only after two years, I already knew a lot of English [...]

The ease or speed with which people learn English varies from person to person, and it has surely been different for each informant in the CLIL group, as well. What is important for the purposes of this study, however, is the belief they now seem to have, which is that English is easy to learn. The reason for this might partly be in their learning environment and partly in individual personality traits.

6.1.2 "Why do I study English?" On speaking with friends, hobbies and the future

After dealing with the reasons the informants thought were important for people in general to learn English, we moved on to the reasons they themselves had for studying and knowing English, the uses they have for English at the moment and the uses they think they might have for it in the

future. Perhaps because the interviews were conducted in a school environment, some of the informants were inclined to think about English in their school environment first. However, to questions such as "What do you use English for at the moment?" and "What do you think you will need English for in the future?", the informants expressed many reasons for which English is useful in their lives outside school. The five themes that came up here were those of 1) *speaking with friends*, 2) *studies and work*, 3) *hobbies and recreation*, 4) *travelling* and 5) *enjoyment*.

The theme that came up most often and that provided the most extensive answers, was that of *speaking with friends*. All of the eight informants mentioned this as a personal reason to learn English. This theme included different situations and viewpoints, including *speaking English with non-Finnish friends* (in Finland and abroad) and *speaking English with Finnish friends*. However, all of the situations were about personal interaction with friends in the informants' everyday lives. First, we will look at the answers that the informants gave about *speaking English with non-Finnish friends*. This was mentioned by five informants. The first answer that Maaria provided to the question about why she studies English was as follows:

[31] Maaria: Koska mulla on hirveästi kavereita jotka on niinku, ettei osaa ollenkaan suomee [...]
Because I have so many friends who, like, don't know Finnish at all [...]

To her, the first thing about the usefulness of English in her own life is about being able to communicate and interact with friends who do not know Finnish. However, she does not specify the environment in which she interacts with these non-Finnish friends. Eemeli has a similar comment when asked what he uses English for in his everyday life, mentioning that the non-Finnish friends he is in contact with are mostly his school mates in the international school:

[32] Eemeli: [...] tietenkin ihan koulutovereille, monethan [...] hehän eivät puhu suomea melkein, no [nimi] osaa jonkin verran mutta... [...] He eivät oikein osaa kauheen hyvin niin heidän kanssaan puhun englantia pelkästään ja sitte...
[...] to school mates, of course, many of them [...] they don't speak Finnish almost, well [name] knows a little but... [...] They don't really know very well so with them I speak only English and then...

Ella comments on her need to speak English to non-Finnish friends in two different situations, that of speaking with non-Finnish friends who live in Finland and with non-Finnish friends who live abroad:

- [33] Ella: [...] mulla on kavereita jotka on sitte ulkomailta niin niitten kanssa Facebookissa jutellaan englanniksi ja, sitte mulla on tota, mitä mä nyt oon tutustunu niin niinku ihmisiin niinku koulun ulkopuolellaki, niin ei osaa puhua suomea niin mun kaveripiiri on laajentunu sitä mukaa et miten mä opin niinku puhumaan.
[...] I have friends who are from abroad so with them I talk on Facebook in English, and then I have like, I have got to know like people like outside school as well, so [who] can't speak Finnish so my circle of friends has expanded as I've learnt to speak.

She mentions non-Finnish friends, apparently residing in Finland but "outside school" with who she speaks English. Interestingly, from the wording of her answer it is apparent that she thinks knowing English enables her to interact with non-Finnish people and to "expand" her "circle of friends". Thus, developing her English skills works as a key to communication with more and more people. However, before this she mentions another aspect to having non-Finnish friends: friends who live in other countries. Thanks to social media, such as Facebook, Ella is able to talk with them online. Therefore, distance is no longer an obstacle to communication with people around the world. Sofia also talks about using English on the internet quite often in her freetime, and she comments on a similar situation that Ella has:

- [34] Sofia: Ja mulla on [...] muutamia kavereita siis muissa maissa ja sillon se kieli jolla puhutaan on englanti koska... en osaa esimerkiks hollantia niin se on vähän vaikee, eikä se ymmärrä suomee yhtään sanaakaan.
And I have [...] some friends in other countries and then the language that we speak is English because... I can't speak for example Dutch so it's a little difficult, and they don't understand one word of Finnish.

Sofia mentions using English as a *lingua franca* with a foreign friend: she does not know Dutch and her Dutch friend does not know "one word" of Finnish.

Only one informant had a slightly hesitant approach to speaking English in everyday situations. When mentioning speaking English to non-Finnish people, Fanny stated that she would speak English if she "had to", reflecting a less enthusiastic attitude towards interacting in English:

- [35] Fanny: No siinä vaiheessa jos tarvii jolleki joka ei puhu suomee niin se on tosi- tai niinku jos puhuu jotain niinku vahvempaa niinku jotain muuta kieltä niinku äidinkielenä, sillee. Et muutenki jos niinku- siis jos joku vaikka englantilainen ois jossain tai jotain.
Well at that point if I have to [speak] to someone who doesn't speak Finnish then it's very- or, like, if one talks a, like, a stronger, like, another language, like, as a mother tongue, like that. And anyway if like- well if some for example an English person would be somewhere or something.

Her answer gives the impression that she is not as eager to speak English as her fellow pupils, since she uses the expression "if I have to speak" and saying that she would use English "at that point". She also mentions a possible situation where she would speak English: "if an English person would be somewhere", probably thinking of a situation where she would come across an English person. Her way of linking English language with an English person echoes the answer of one reference group informant who talked about the general need for English in situations where "English people would come". Despite a hesitant attitude towards speaking with non-Finnish strangers, she did mention speaking English with some Finnish friends, although according to her, "it depends on the person" (riippuu ihan ihmisestä).

This brings us to another kind of situation where English was spoken with friends: *speaking English with Finnish friends*. Five informants mentioned that not only do they speak English when it is necessary, i.e. with non-Finnish friends, but they speak English also when the possibility of speaking Finnish exists. Lisa describes using English as a kind of thing that "unites" her with a Finnish friend who also speaks English well:

- [36] Lisa: [...] mulla on esim. toi mun kaveri köksässä toi [nimi], niin se on ihan suomalainen ja se ei oo koskaan asunu ulkomailla että se ei niinku yhistä meidän sitä vahvuutta mutta siis se on vaan jotenki meille kummallekki jotenki, me vaan puhutaan enkkuu sillon ku puhutaan keskenämme.
[...] I have for example this friends in home economics, [name], so she is Finnish and she has never lived abroad so that's not what, like, unites our

strength but, like, it's just for both of us somehow, we just speak English when we speak to each other.

It is clear from the example above that for these two friends, English is "their thing", and that English might not be used when speaking with all Finnish friends but as something that comes naturally in this particular friendship. Lisa also felt that some peers find it odd that she should speak English with a Finnish-speaking friend:

- [37] Lisa: [...] monet puhuu kavereitten kaa suomea ja sit niinku kysellee multa ja mun kavereilta välillä et "miks te puhutte enkkua, tähän voisitte ihan yhtä hyvin puhua suomea ku te osaatte", niin... Ei, se tuntuu vaan niinku välillä helpommalta, tai että se on vaan vaihtelun vuoks.
[...] many people speak Finnish with friends and then, like, sometimes ask me and my friends "why do you speak English, you might as well speak Finnish since you can", so... No, it just sometimes feels easier, or that it's just for a change.

This comment suggests some interesting social dimensions that have to do with using English among junior secondary school pupils in an international school setting. Pupils who speak English well and who like to use it also speak it with friends who speak Finnish as their mother tongue. On the one hand, these pupils feel that their behaviour is viewed as slightly odd by pupils who do not use English as avidly as they do. On the other hand, this odd image is precisely the thing that unites the English-speaking Finnish pupils, because they can then take on English as their territory, as it were, and perhaps regard themselves as those "in-the-know".

Sofia describes in more detail the way English is used among Finnish-speaking pupils and considers the reasons why this happens:

- [38] Sofia: [...] joskus vaihtuu kaver- niinku suomalaistenki kanssa keskustelu vaan niinku suomesta englanniks jos puhutaan jostain aiheesta mikä liittyy englannin kieleen, niin sit se kieli saattaa vaihtua kesken lauseen englanniks.
 JN: Mielenkiintosta. Miks sää luulet että niin käy?
 Sofia: Joo, siis. Mä en tiedä miks ku, kai se että jotku asiat on helpompi ilmasta englanniks ku suomeks niin sen takia se kieli välillä vaihtuu. Ja sitte ku on helpompi ilmasta suomeks niin se vaihtuu takasin ja sitte niinku kieli vaihtelee tällee kesken keskustelun. Että meillä saattaa yhen välitunnin aikana silleen vaihtua viis kertaa suomesta englanniks ja takasin.
Sofia: [...] sometimes it changes with friend- like, with Finns also the conversation just changes from Finnish into English if we speak about a subject that has to

do with English language, so then the language might change into English in the middle of a sentence.

JN: That's interesting. Why do you think that happens?

Sofia: Yes, well. I dunno why because, I guess it's just that some things are easier to express in English than in Finnish so that's why the language changes from time to time. And then when it's easier to express in Finnish then it changes back and then like the language varies like in the middle of a conversation. So that we might change from Finnish into English and back five times during one break.

Sofia mentions that the language of communication might change from English into Finnish and back during the same conversation, or even in the middle of one sentence. This phenomenon is referred to in linguistics as *code-switching*, which is used for a situation where interlocutors change the language of their speech over sentences or phrases (Beardsmore 1986: 49, 75–83). Sofia says that the reason for the fact that code-switching happens among CLIL pupils might be that "some things are easier to express in English than in Finnish" and then again, some things are easier to express in Finnish. The fact that the pupils find it easier to express something in English might well be a result of CLIL, since this is something that did not come up in the reference group. Although the comments by Sofia and other informants seem to suggest an ease with alternating between English and Finnish, Sofia mentions that there are times when using two languages might also create difficulties:

[39] Sofia: [...] mä tunnen kaks tai kolme semmosta ihmistä jotka puhuu hyvin suomee ja englantia mutta sitte jos sä puhut niille ensin englantia ja sit ne saattaa vastata sulle suomeks niin sit tulee semmonen nolo tilanne että oisko mun sittekki pitäny puhua suomee.
 [...] *I know two or three people who speak Finnish and English well but then if you speak to them first in English and then they might answer you in Finnish then you are in an embarrassing situation about whether I should have spoken in Finnish after all.*

According to Sofia, the reason for possible difficulties seems to lie in the interaction between specific people in a given situation. She says that she knows "two or three people" with who she does not always feel sure which language should be used in a given utterance which, she says, can

lead to "embarrassing situations". Sofia's words suggests that there is perhaps a difference in expectations between two people in this kind of situation.

Ella also recognises a situation where the language of a conversation varies between English and Finnish. In her comment, she seems slightly unsure about whether the listener understands this kind of variation because she describes it as "stupid":

- [40] Ella: Tota, me puhutaan silleen sekasin tyhmästi, emmää tiä se on varmaan niinkumää oon jotenki silleen tottunu että- mulla tulee joskus sillee että mä en jotaki tiettyä suomenkielisiä asioita osaa selittää muuten ku englanniksi... Kait se on se et mä en oo opiskellu silleen suomeksi ellei niinku äikän tunteja lasketa niin... Se on jotenki, siihen tavallaan tottuu siihen englannin käyttämiseen. *Well, we talk like in a mixed way, stupidly, I dunno it's probably like- I'm somehow like used to- sometimes I can't explain some particular things in Finnish but only in English... I guess the fact is that I haven't like studied in Finnish, if you don't count Finnish classes so... It's somehow, you kind of get used to using English.*

It is doubtful whether Ella in fact thinks that this "mixed way" of speaking is stupid since she takes part in it herself: we can assume that her seemingly deprecating attitude towards this results from a fear that it would be regarded as somehow odd, a fear somewhat justified by Lisa's earlier comment that some peers consider this variation in language as strange. Ella gives similar reasons for this variation as Sofia: sometimes she can only explain "some particular things" in English. She gives a further explanation why this is the case, which is that one "gets used to using English" after one has only ever been in an English-language school environment.

Maaria also touches the idea of code-switching and the social dimension that plays a part in the choice of the language of communication:

- [41] JN: Puhutko sää sitten suomenkielisten kavereiden kanssa vain suomea?
 Maaria: Joo ja sit enkunkielisten kavereiden kanssa englantia. Et se vähän riippuu että jo- ku mulla on tosi monta täältä koulustaki sellasta jotka osaa suomee ja enkkuu niin se vähän riippuu aina päivästä, joskus me [puhutaan] enkkuu keskenämme ja joskus suomee. Niin et se vähän riippuu tilanteesta että ketä kaikkia ihmisiä siinä on.
 JN: *Do you speak only Finnish with your Finnish-speaking friends, then?*
 Maaria: *Yeah and then English with English-speaking friends. So it kind of depends whether- 'cause I have so many here at school who know Finnish and English so it kind of depends on the day, sometimes we [speak] English with each*

other and sometimes Finnish. So it kind of depends on the situation and who there are.

First, she says that she uses Finnish with Finnish friends and English with non-Finnish friends, but then, after thinking about the probing question, she gives an expanded image of what really happens: "it kind of depends on the situation and who there are". In other words, the communication situations are quite intricate and dependent on many different influences. In what language the communication is carried out depends on time, place, the people present and possibly also the people's moods and thoughts.

Another theme that came up when discussing personal needs for English was that of *studies and work*. When asked what the informants use English for at the moment, most of them mentioned the school environment at some point, saying that they use English at school every day. However, six informants also talked about further studies on a more advanced level in the future, and that is what we focus on here. This theme is in some respects different from the previous one in that mostly these ideas were mentioned as having to do with the future, whereas the previous theme was firmly anchored in the present moment. The two ideas of studies and work were combined here because they were often linked in the informants' answers: studies were usually mentioned as a pathway to working life. Knowing English was seen as useful in both studying and working, and some informants expressed a hope of studying or working abroad. Therefore, this theme has some overlap with the theme of travelling.

When asked about what she thinks she will need English for in her future, Maaria replied:

[42] Maaria: Varmaan niinku opiskelussa [...] ku lukee jotain tekstiä niin se ei välttämättä aina löydy suomeks.
Probably, like, in studying [...] when you read a text then you won't necessarily always find it in Finnish.

Her idea of needing English for her studies had to do with finding more information in English than in Finnish. She seemed to be aware of the fact that in case one wants to become an expert in a field of work where knowledge is gained by reading, one will probably find information more

extensively in English than in Finnish. Matilda's thoughts about her English skills and her future studies and work lead her to think about a future outside Finland:

- [43] Matilda: No, mä haluan mennä opiskeleen ulkomaille sitten tulevaisuudessa ja haluan ulkomailta töitä ja, mä en halua pysyä Suomessa, mä haluan mennä niinku ympäri maailmaa.
Well, I want to go studying abroad then in the future and I want to work abroad and, I don't want to stay in Finland, I want to go, like, around the world.

Matilda is quite adamant about the fact that she wants to live abroad in the future. She combines the ideas of studying and working abroad and also says that she wants to go "around the world". It seems that she has no particular country in mind but the idea of building a life abroad and living in more than one place is an important part of her plans for the future.

However, not all informants mentioned working abroad. Knowing English was also seen as beneficial in one's working life regardless of whether one works abroad or not. Valtteri says that his English skills will be necessary in his working tasks:

- [44] Valtteri: Mää luultavasti meen johonkin IT-alalle niin siellä jos sää teet jotain ohjelmistoja niin sun täytyy niinkun tehdä suurin osa englanniks...
I will probably work in some kind of IT industry so there if you make some kind of software then you have to, like, do most of it in English...

He does not give any suggestion about working abroad. We can assume he does not connect work and being abroad because after this comment, he also spoke about travelling as something separate from working life.

A third theme that could be distinguished was that of *hobbies and recreation*. The informants spoke about their freetime as something where knowing English is required and they described different recreational activities where English is either necessary or helpful. More freetime activities were described later on in the interview, when the informants were asked about how they learn English and what they do in order to learn more. The answers that those questions provided will be looked at in section 6.2.2. Here, the informants talked about their freetime activities as something that is relevant both in the present moment and also in the future.

Valtteri mentioned several freetime activities that have to do with knowing English. He also gave reasons why English is relevant in these activities:

[45] Valtteri: Sitten... se on ihan kätevää kun mä tykkään lueskella kirjoja niin, ja minusta on aina parempi lukea sillä originaalikiielellä jolla se oli tarkotettu [...] sama elokuvissa niin, originaalikiielellä on aina parempi katsoa niin... Sama elokuvissa että niinkun, jos on mahdollisuus katsoa elokuva ilman dubbausta niin mä katon sen ilman dubbausta. Ja niinkun, ja sitte mä tykkään katsoa niinkun YouTubesta ja internetistä paljon videoita ja semmosta niin siellä englantia on myös todella kätevä että, ei siellä videoissa paljon muuta puhutakaan.

Then... it's quite useful because I like to read books so, and I think it's always better to read in the original language that it was meant [...] same with films, it's better to watch in the original language so... Same with films so that, like, if you have the chance to watch a film without dubbing then I will watch it without dubbing. And, like, then I like to watch, like, lots of videos and things like that in YouTube and the internet, so there English is also very useful because not much else is spoken in those videos.

He thinks that both books and films are better enjoyed in the original language, which, according to him, is most often English. Also, English is widely used on the internet, which is what Sofia also mentioned in connection with the general reasons for knowing English (example 27), as well as in her personal needs for using English:

[46] Sofia: Joo no, netissä nyt ainakin, koska mä pyörin paljon semmosilla sivustoilla missä tarvitaan englantia.

Yeah well, at least on the internet, because I go often to the kind of sites where English is needed.

Other informants also talked about using their English skills on the internet and in social media, such as Facebook. Internet and especially social media were important venues for using English for some of the informants, especially for those who said that they did not play any video games in their freetime. However, two of the informants mentioned computer and console games as something where knowing English is necessary:

[47] Valtteri: Mä pelaan aika paljon videopelejä että niissä- varsinki näitä multiplayer online -hommia että niissä tarvii englantia et sä pystyt niinku kommunikoiimaan muiden kanssa.

I play quite a lot of video games so in those- especially these multiplayer online games, in those you need English so that you can like communicate with the others.

- [48] Eemeli: No emmä tiiä mä pelaan aika paljon ja siinä yleensä englannin kieli mistä...
Well I dunno I play quite a lot and there usually it's English that...

Valtteri spoke about needing English in multiplayer online games to be able to communicate with the other players who are participating in the game and Eemeli mentioned video games in a general way. However, later on in the interview, Eemeli mentioned that he does not participate in online games as much and therefore does not need English to communicate with other players. He said that he needs English in games in order to understand the storyline of the game, as well as the instructions on what to do next that come up while playing.

In addition to books, films, internet, social media and video games, other recreational activities included TV programmes and music:

- [49] Ella: [...] katon mieluummin englanniksi kaikki ohjelmat [...]
[...] I prefer to watch all [TV] programmes in English [...]
- [50] Valtteri: Sitte myös aika suuri osa musiikista on englanninkielistä että jos sä haluat ymmärtää mitä siinä lauletaan.
Then also quite a large part of music is in English so if you want to understand what they're singing about.

Also, Sofia mentioned a specific type of hobby that linked the theme of hobbies and recreation to the theme of travelling. Her comment was part of the answer to the question about the uses she might have for English in the future, which suggests that she sees this activity as something she might continue into adulthood:

- [51] Sofia: Netissä ja koulussa ja luultavasti nyt kun mulla on tää harrastus missä käydään aika usein ulkomailla [...]
JN: Minkälainen harrastus?
Sofia: Kansantanssi.
Sofia: *On the internet and at school and probably now that I have this hobby where we go abroad quite often [...]*
JN: *What kind of hobby?*
Sofia: *Folk dancing.*

The hobby of folk dancing itself does not require a good command of English, but the fact that this hobby involves interaction in an international environment renders English skills necessary. In

The fifth and final theme that came up in the comments of three informants was that of *enjoyment*. In addition to its functionality and usefulness in getting a good job or communicating abroad, knowing English was also important to the informants because of its aesthetic value, because they considered it a beautiful language. Lisa mentioned that, for her, the beauty of English makes it enjoyable to learn:

[54] Lisa: Ja mun mielestä enkku on myös aika kaunis kieli et se on kiva... kiva opiskella myöskin.
And in my opinion English is also quite a beautiful language so it's nice... nice to study, as well.

Lisa points out explicitly that this is "her opinion", which suggests that she thinks this is a subjective experience. The positive emotional response to English was mentioned by many informants by saying that they think it's a "nice" language. For example, Eemeli mentions:

[55] Eemeli: No mää ihan pidän enkun kielestä ja emmää... mää, no öö emmää nyt keksi oikein...
Well I quite like English language and I don't... I, well erm I can't really think of anything right now...

Ella also mentioned the beauty of the English language, but in her answer there is also the issue of social status of a language:

[56] Ella: Se vaan jotenki kuulostaa sillee hienommalta ja jotenkin... *more intellectual*.
It just somehow sounds finer and somehow... more intellectual.

Ella states that English sounds "more intellectual" than Finnish. Although Finnish is not mentioned in the above comment explicitly, the comparison is justified by the fact that it followed a discussion about different situations in the informant's life where she likes to use English as opposed to Finnish. Another interesting aspect in this comment is that Ella uses an English expression in her answer that was for the most part in Finnish. This goes to show that English comes naturally to her also in everyday life conversations.

6.1.3 Comparisons to the reference group

Now that we have an idea of the themes concerning the reasons for studying English among the CLIL group, I will compare these themes to the ones that came up among the reference group in Aro's study. This way, interesting points about the possible similarities and differences between these groups can be discovered and some conclusions can be made about how these two different learning environments possibly affect the learners' beliefs. I will first compare the general reasons for studying English in both groups and after that, the personal reasons will be compared. To facilitate comparisons, figures 1 and 2 below summarise the themes linked to the reference group and the CLIL group and demonstrate the features that were common in both groups.

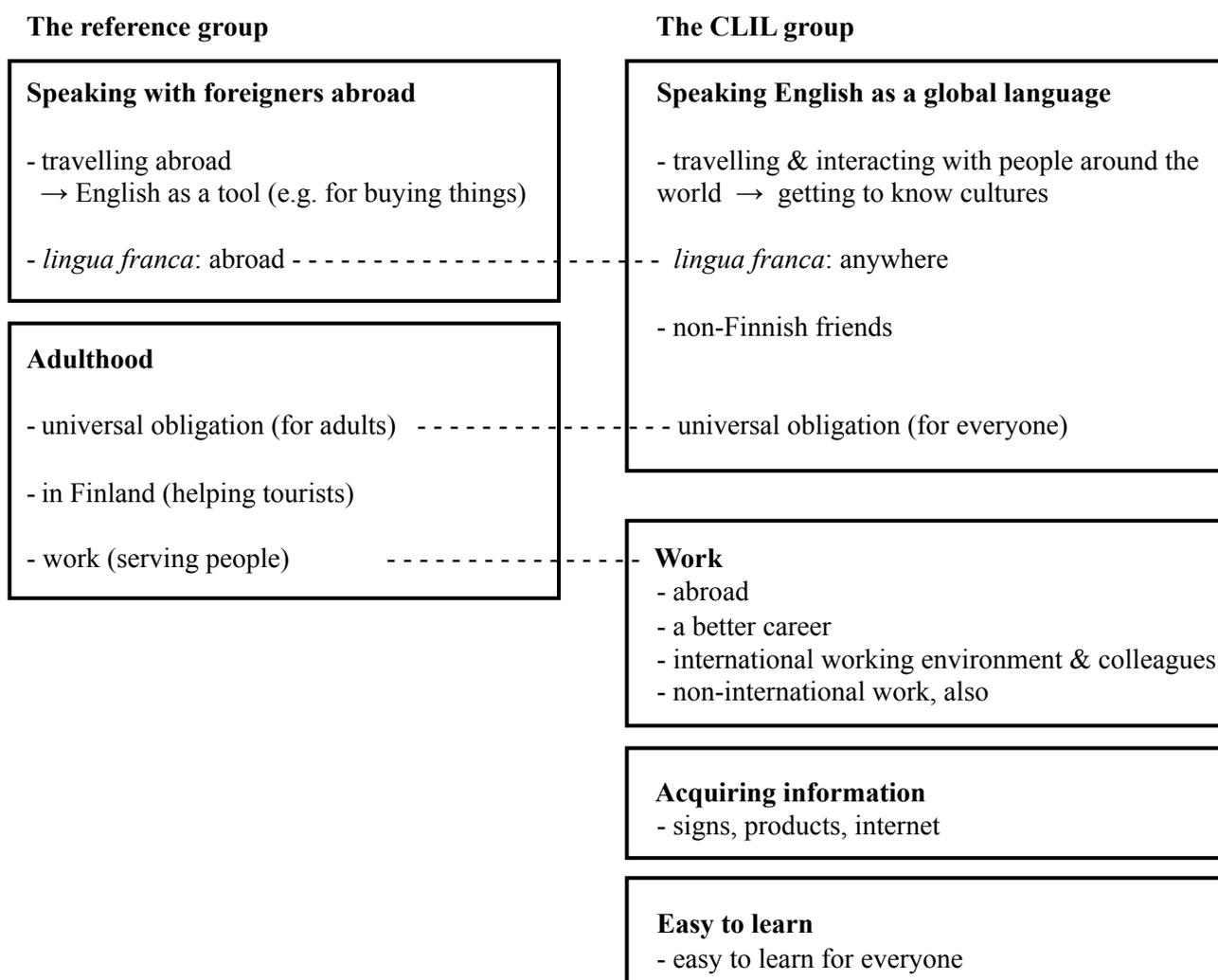


Figure 1. Summary of the themes in *General reasons for learning English* in both groups

First, I will compare the themes connected to the general reasons for people to study English. Of the abovementioned themes, the first two - *English as a global language* and *work* - shared some features with the themes of the reference group. The other two themes - *information* and *English is easy to learn* - did not appear in Aro's results. Aro categorised the answers about the general reasons for learning English that came up in her study into two main themes, which were further divided into subthemes. Aro's themes were as follows: 1) the theme of *speaking with foreigners*, which included ideas about speaking English *abroad*, *at work*, *as lingua franca* and when *helping tourists in Finland*; and 2) the theme of *adulthood*, which was central in their ideas about speaking English *in working life*, but which also had some overlap with the first theme.

A comment on Aro's categorisation may clarify the interdependence of the themes of *speaking with foreigners abroad* and *adulthood*: Aro lists these themes separately because the informants often mentioned these ideas separately in their answers. However, Aro speculates whether these themes could also be connected because the informants, when talking about speaking with foreigners, often used references to the future, such as "when they go abroad sometime [...] then they can, discuss with people there" (2009: 91). This example suggests a certain distance to using English that the informants often expressed; that speaking English abroad is something that might take place in the future, when one is grown up and when English skills are already mastered.

The theme of adulthood also came up in the reference group informants' explicit mentions of the word "adult". When asked about the uses that people might have for English, one of the informants answered: "so that they then know it as an adult, if some English people come" (2009: 39). Therefore, it was clear that the need to know English was linked to adults, not to the informants themselves. Also, some of the informants' answers reflected an idea of a universal obligation for adults to know English. This universal obligation was for some reason enough, with no need to specify what adults need it for. One informant mentioned: "I mean an adult should know it" (2009: 93), with no further explanations as to when or where this is the case.

The theme of *English as a global language* in this study covers similar ideas as the theme of *speaking with foreigners* in the reference group. However, the theme is named here differently because of the expressions and concepts used by the informants. The comments given by the CLIL informants were broader in scope and included terms such as "international language" and "global language". What was different about the answers was the explicitness of understanding the global nature of English: in the reference group, the most usual comment was that English is spoken "abroad" (2009: 91), denoting areas outside Finland, whereas in the CLIL group the most usual comment was that it is spoken "everywhere" and by "everyone" (examples 1 and 6). The CLIL group seemed to have a fuller understanding of the global status of English and included Finland more in this discussion. The CLIL group's comments about this were less detailed than the reference group's, but they were also worded more carefully, which shows a well-rounded understanding on the multitude of situations where English might be useful. Most of the informants in the reference group talked about concrete situations and actions where English is useful for people, such as shopping and buying things while travelling abroad.

At first it seemed that the CLIL informants did not give concrete examples of situations where English is useful for people because of the vastness of the theme in question. Instead, they talked about the globality of English in more general terms. The reference group's answers included both exact and general answers. On the one hand, detailed comments came up about the fact that "English people" might come "here" (2009: 93), i.e. to Finland, and English is needed in order to help them. This comment presents a specific example of a situation where English might be needed, but it is also quite marginal: the first thing that the English language is linked to is "English people". On the other hand, some talked about this in more general terms, describing English as being a language that is spoken simply "abroad" (2009: 92). This suggests that the reference group had similar ideas about the globality of English that were more extensively covered among the

CLIL group but the reference group informants did not yet have the necessary vocabulary to express themselves with the terms that the CLIL group used.

There was one comment among the reference group which explicitly suggested an understanding as to the nature of English as a *lingua franca*, not just as a language to be used with English-speaking people. One of the informants mentioned that "it's then easier to get by there, abroad [...] if you don't know the local language" (2009: 92), suggesting that English can be used instead of the local language of the area. In the CLIL group, two informants described in detail what the notion of a *lingua franca* means. Even though they did not use the term "lingua franca", they did have a well-formed idea of its meaning, because they talked about two people of different nationalities being able to communicate in English if they do not know each other's languages (examples 8 and 9).

The CLIL group brought up the idea of knowing English as a universal obligation, that knowing English is a skill that people simply ought to have. The fact that the whole world seems to learn English is reason enough to know it. As one of the informants mentioned: "because others study it, too" (example 10). The reference group also thought that knowing English is a universal obligation, but they did not seem to include themselves in this obligation; they talked about the fact that "adults should know it". This way, they distanced themselves from the group of people who are expected to know English. Interestingly, none of the CLIL informants mentioned the word "adult" in connection to any of the themes. This suggests that they have a closer connection with the things that the reference group linked with adulthood. A probable reason for this is the older age of the informants and the familiarity with all of these themes that most of the informants already had. The CLIL group mentioned the possibility of people having non-Finnish friends as a reason for knowing English. Whether they meant non-Finnish friends in Finland or abroad did not come up in their answers. This idea did not come up in the reference group.

The essential content of the aforementioned theme among the reference group was summarised as "speaking English with speakers of other languages in foreign countries" (2009: 91). Among the CLIL group, the essential content was similar but it was conceived of in different terms. Therefore, the content here could be summarised as "interacting globally with people of different nationalities and mother tongues".

The theme of *work* was also present in both groups but it was much more frequent in the CLIL group. Most comments among the reference group on why people need English for work were slightly vague and related to the world of adults. Again, this could partly be explained by the younger age of the reference group informants; they did not yet see adults' needs for English as relating to their own experience. The CLIL group informants, however, gave more elaborate comments about working life and the possible role of English in it. Also, some of the informants in the CLIL group already had some experiences on working life. This is why work was included in the results of this study as its own theme.

The reference group's comments about work were not very frequent and did not have as much variation as the comments by the CLIL group. One informant in the reference group mentioned that "so that when you then get a job you know how to serve people from different countries" (2009: 93). Here, linking the two concepts of work and speaking English lead to the idea of customer service, which is something that a child may have had contact with when travelling abroad, for example. There were no other mentions of specific types of work among the reference group.

The CLIL informants gave more detailed answers about their ideas and often illustrated their thoughts and opinions by giving examples of situations or tasks in working life where knowing English would be helpful. They approached the idea of speaking English in working life from the viewpoint that it will be possible to advance one's career or that it will be possible to work in another country. They talked about certain fields of work, such as export industry, and certain tasks

where English would be in a key role, such as working with international colleagues. One informant also mentioned that even people who do not work in an international environment might encounter English in their tasks. The informants' comments clearly suggest career-oriented thinking, something that was absent from the reference group. A possible explanation for this is the fact that in junior secondary school, pupils are gradually guided towards thinking about working life and different jobs and career paths are being introduced. Another possible explanation is that since English has an important role in the informants' lives, they have possibly paid more attention to information about working life where English is important, whereas young people who do not speak English on a daily basis would perhaps not be as responsive to the idea.

Next, I will compare the personal reasons for studying English among the reference group and the CLIL group. The themes that came up among the reference group were as follows: 1) *obligatoriness*, which was about the fact that English is an obligatory school subject for the informants; 2) *adulthood*, which included the ideas of speaking to foreigners abroad in the future and the universal obligation for adults to know English that would apply to them when they were grown up; 3) *speaking with friends*, which included one mention of friends abroad, one mention of a pen friend abroad and one mention of speaking English to Finnish friends; 4) *recreation*, which comprised of some informants' mentions of their freetime activities that involve English; and lastly, 5) the theme of *not needing English yet*, which included several comments about the fact that using English for many informants was related to adulthood and their own (e.g. recreational) uses for English were not seen as relevant. Figure 2 below summarises the themes of the two groups in the personal aspect.

Some similarities to the CLIL group's themes could be seen in the reference group's themes of 3) *speaking with friends*, 4) *recreation* and in some of the aspects in the theme of 2) *adulthood*. There were informants in both groups who mentioned the fact that, at the moment, they use English to speak with friends, but there were clear differences in how much of the communication between

friends takes place in English. There were only a few informants in the reference group who mentioned ideas relevant to this theme: one informant said that they use English sometimes in order to speak to some Swedish friends when they meet, one informant said that they used to have a pen friend in France to whom they wrote in English (apparently this was no longer the case during the interview), and one informant said that they sometimes speak English with friends during school breaks. Thus, this theme was not as frequent as it was in the CLIL group, where all but one informant mentioned an everyday habit of speaking to non-Finnish as well as Finnish friends in English.

The reference group's theme of *recreation* included similar features as the theme of *hobbies and recreation* in the present study: the informants mentioned that they sometimes watched English-language films and TV programmes and played English-language computer or video games. Reading books in English and using social media and internet that have mostly English-language content was not mentioned in the reference group. It is possible that some freetime activities simply did not come up in the reference group even though they would have been a part of the informants' lives. One possible reason for reading books in English being absent from the reference group is that it requires some skills in reading comprehension, which are possibly more advanced among the CLIL pupils. The fact that internet and social media were absent from the freetime activities among the reference group might be explained by the informants' younger age, since many social media platforms have an age limit for registered members. The CLIL informants are old enough to register, so the popularity of social media might be explained by this.

Some aspects about the theme of *adulthood* could be perceived in the CLIL group's answers, too, although formulated in a different way. The reference group informants often commented on adults' need to know English in the general reasons and they were consistent about this aspect in the personal reasons. Many of them mentioned that they study English because they will need it as an adult. Some also mentioned a situation in which they would probably need it: when speaking to

foreigners abroad. In the CLIL group, adults or adulthood were not mentioned at all. This was consistent with the fact that they did not mention these in connection with the general reasons for knowing English, either. However, the CLIL informants did speak about future uses for English that they might have, some of which were the same as their present uses. Understandably, the theme of *studies and work* was where the aspect of future was most prevalent. *Hobbies and recreation* were also seen by some CLIL pupils as relating to their future lives, as well as *travelling*. In the answers of the CLIL informants, references to one's future, "then in the future" (sitte tulevaisuudessa) replaced the reference group's references to adulthood: "then when I'm grown up" (sit aikuisena; 2009: 95).

The themes that did not appear in the CLIL group were those of 1) *obligatoriness* and 5) *no need for English yet*. When asked about the personal reasons for studying English, many of the reference group informants simply answered "Noo siks koska sitä on pakko opiskella" (Well coz it's compulsory; 2009: 95). This is an understandable comment since it is true, but it also implies a feeling among the informants that learning English is something that is decided for them. The theme of obligatoriness did not come up in the CLIL group, understandably so because attending CLIL education is by no means obligatory.

An intriguing theme among the reference group was that of *not needing English for anything yet*, which is connected to the theme of adulthood. This might seem an odd theme, since it is clear from the themes above that the reference group informants did mention situations where they use English. Aro (2009: 96) points out that the informants often first denied needing English for anything in their lives, and then, after prompting questions and suggesting different activities, they did admit to speaking English with friends or playing English-language video games and so on. The general reasons for knowing English in the beginning of the interview mostly had to do with speaking to foreigners, and therefore Aro (2009: 99) speculates: "as English was a language that one used to speak to foreigners abroad, their own uses were not as appropriate". The informants

also often said that they do not need English for anything "yet" but that they will when they are "grown-up". Hence, there seemed to be a distance between the informants' lives and adults' lives and adults' needs for English were seen as the "real needs" that were considered important.

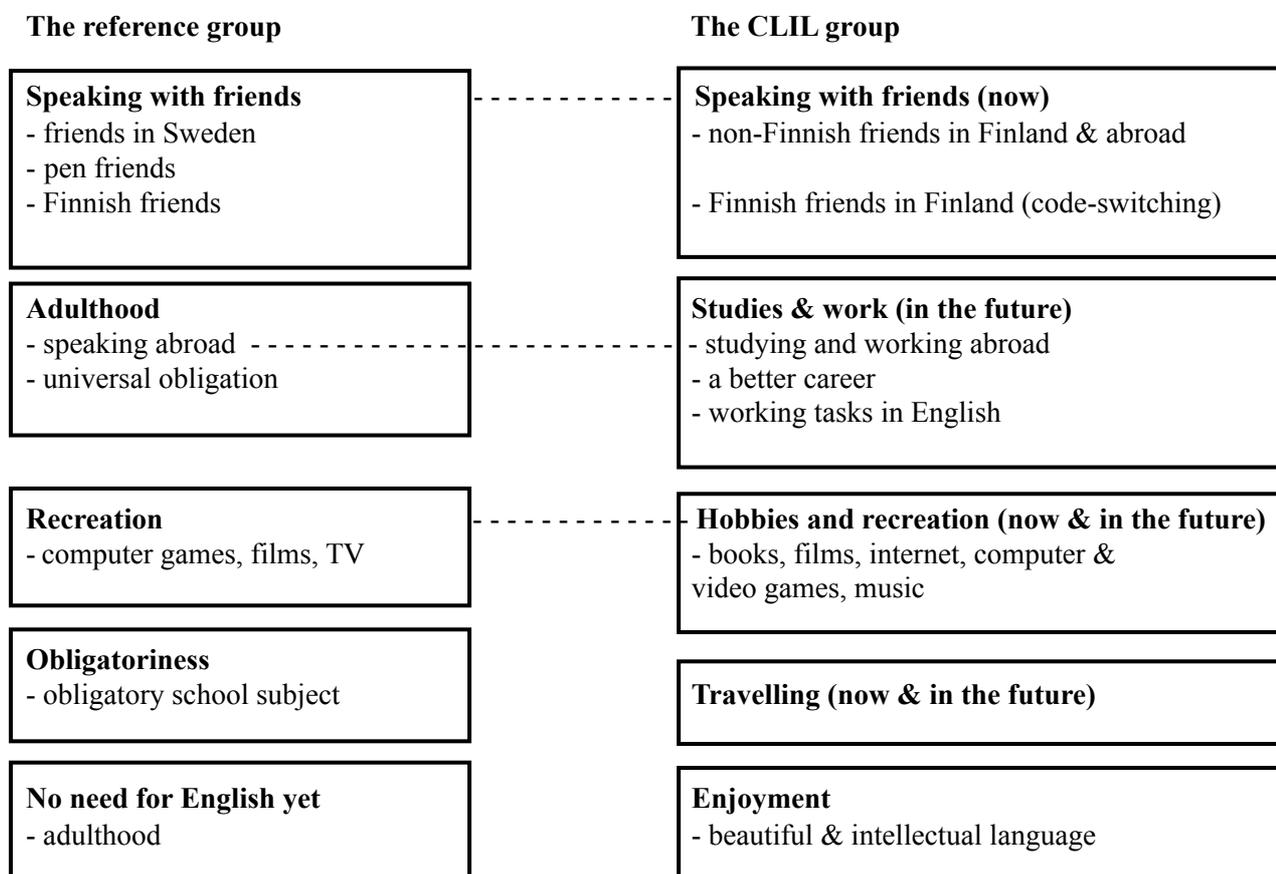


Figure 2. Summary of the themes in *Personal reasons for learning English* in both groups

6.2 How is English studied?

To gain information about the informants' beliefs on the ways in which English is best learnt, the interviews were continued with the topic "How is English studied?". First, the informants were asked questions about what they think are good ways to learn English in general as well as about the different ways that people might have for learning it. Then, questions about how the informants themselves have learnt English and what they do now in order to learn were asked.

6.2.1 "How does one learn English?" On school work and learning by communicating

In this part of the interview, general questions were asked, such as "How do people learn English?", "What ways or techniques do people have for learning?" and "In what situations can people learn English?". There was a dichotomy among the answers to the questions here: the most frequent answers had to do with, on the one hand, *school*, which included the aspect of written language, and on the other hand, exposure to English outside school, which included ideas about *communicating in an English-speaking environment* and *recreational activities*.

First, we will look at the most frequent theme, *school*. All of the informants mentioned that going to school or going to an English language course was an obvious way of learning English and it was often mentioned first. The relevancy of school is understandable here, since all of the informants not only go to English classes at school but also use English in most school subjects. However, the effect of school on learning English was not only seen as a positive thing. Only one informant (Eemeli) said that at school, "practice makes perfect" (*harjotus tekee mestarin sillee*) and did not question the power of school in learning. All of the other informants, although they saw school as relevant when speaking about learning, were also critical about it:

[57] Lisa: Mun mielest niinku enkkua opitaan helpoiten jos sitä käyttää päivittäin ja sitte et se ei oo aina sitä että niinku oppitunneilla vaan käytetään enkkua sillee et sä luet kirjan pohjalta ja teet tehtäviä et sillä mun mielestä ei pääse kauhean pitkälle siinä oppimisessa.
I think that, like, English is most easily learnt if one uses it daily and then that it's not always that, like, in class you only use English, like, by reading the book and doing exercises so, in my opinion, that doesn't get you very far in learning.

Lisa's answer echoes the answers of the other informants': according to them, using English "daily" is important if one wants to learn it. "Using English" is here separated from classroom activities, which include reading and doing exercises. When speaking about the uses that people in general and they themselves have for English in section 6.1, the informants talked mostly about speaking to

people and communicating with others at home and abroad, in working life as well as in freetime. Thus, if "using English" means speaking and communicating to the informants, it is understandable why written exercises done at school are not seen as really "using English".

Linking classroom activities to written language was very usual in the informants' answers. Therefore, Maaria suggested that an international school develops one's English skills precisely because English is used outside English classes, as well. She says that English-language education is a good way to learn it because learning is efficient "in the environment where all your friends speak it" (siinä ympäristössä jossa kaikki kaverit puhuu), so that one gets input from one's peers, not just from the English classes:

[58] Maaria: [...] siinä oppii ihan erilaista sanastoa ja sitä nimenomaan sitä puhumista, ku se taas jos on niinku normaalilla englanninkielen tunnilla jolla opitaan vaan sitä kirjallista tavallaan.
[...] there you learn a whole different kind of vocabulary and speaking in particular; whereas if you are, like, in a normal English class where you kind of learn only the written [language].

In addition to the many comments about learning written language in English classes, Eemeli mentions another aspect about school that is important in learning for him: "one should of course have a qualified teacher" (täytyy tietenki olla pätevä opettaja). He also says that the teacher's attitude plays an important role in learning, although he does not elaborate on this. Therefore, it is not possible to say what kind of attitude Eemeli thinks the teacher should have, but it is clear that the personality of the teacher is important overall. Aro (2009: 101–102) noted that some of the informants among the reference group also attributed learning to external factors, such as the learning environment and the teacher. Among the CLIL group, however, mentioning the importance of the teacher in learning was limited to one informant.

Learning English at school was also seen as slow and difficult. Valtteri mentions that if someone wants to learn English, they could "quite simply take some English language course where they study their tail off... cramming" (ihan vaan ottaa jonkun englannin kielen kurssin jossa opiskellaan sillai hiki hatussa... pönttämistä). Valtteri seems to think that although attending an

English course is a viable option in learning it, it is hard work. Matilda thinks that learning English at school is slower than learning it by interacting in an English-speaking environment:

[59] Matilda: No, jos menee vaikka pariks kuukaudeks ulkomaille, niin siinä oppii tosi paljon. Että, vaihto-oppilaaks tai jotain tai, ihan enkun tunneilla mut siinä kestää niinkun, kauemmin sitten.
Well, if you go abroad for a couple of months, then that way you learn a lot. So that, as an exchange student or something or, simply in English classes but that then, like, that takes a longer time.

In Matilda's comment above we can distinguish the second theme about the general ways of learning English, which is *communicating in an English-speaking environment*. If the first theme, *school*, had to do more with learning written language, this theme was about learning spoken language. The theme of *communication* was the most frequent when speaking about learning outside school, mentioned by seven informants. The informants often talked about listening to English-speaking people and speaking English to people at home or abroad. To the informants, *an English-speaking environment* could mean for example a foreign country on a larger scale, and the pupils of an international school or a smaller circle of friends on a smaller scale. Matilda, in addition to her comment about the benefits of spending some months abroad, mentioned that she teaches her father English at home by trying to speak with him and correcting his answers. In this case, Matilda's father is the learner and Matilda constitutes an English-speaking environment. Eemeli also mentions the importance of an English-speaking environment by simply saying that one can learn from "what one, like, hears English being spoken" (mitä niinku kuulee englantia puhuttavan).

Sofia also thinks that one can learn English by communicating with an English-speaking person. She says "if one is in contact with someone who speaks English, then you can't help learning a little" (jos joutuu tekemisiin jonku semmosen kanssa joka puhuu englantia niin siinä saattaa väkisinkin oppia vähän). Maaria mentioned that if one's friends speak English, there is a good chance of learning it, too. Lisa elaborates on how communicating in English might help in learning:

- [60] Lisa: [...] se yleensä on niinku se opettaa enemmän, koska oppii tavallaan virheistään niin se myös niinkun... Ku se aikoo kokeilla ilmaista itteään enkuks, se ei välttämättä saa itteään ymmärretyksi niin se voi oppia että miten se vois ilmaista uudestaan toisella tavalla.
[...] it usually, like, it teaches you more, because you kind of learn from your mistakes so it also, like... Like, when they try to express themselves in English, they don't necessarily get themselves understood so they can learn how to express themselves again in another way.

She suggests that in spoken language, it is easier to make mistakes and try again, whereas in written language the risk of making mistakes seems higher. This is possibly because of the more permanent nature of written language: once you have written a text, it is not as easy to go back and correct a part of it. Spoken language is seen as being in a state of constant change: you can interrupt, pause, think, rephrase and ask questions. Lisa also said that being brave and trying to speak would help in learning, even though one would not be too sure about one's skills. According to her, the courage to make mistakes is important if one wants to learn English:

- [61] Lisa: Sillee pitäs vaan niinkun, olla vähän rohkeempi siinä että vaikka ite, omasta mielestä ei osais sitä kieltä niin hyvin, ja että on vähän epävarma käyttää sitä tilanteessa niin pitäs vaan niinku koittaa heittäytyä siihen että, kokeilee sitä
 [...] *Like, you should just, like, be a little braver in that even though you yourself think that you don't speak the language that well, and you're a little unsure about using it in a situation then you should just, like, try to throw yourself into it, like, try it [...]*

In addition to communicating in English, learning outside school could happen in other ways, too. The informants mentioned that one could learn also from a variety of *recreational activities*. Watching TV and films was mentioned as an example by four informants.

- [62] Ella: [...] mun yks kaveri opetteli englantia puhumaan television kautta, että ku suurin osa ohjelmista on englanniksi. Niin siinä samalla sitä oppi.
[...] one friend of mine learnt to speak English via television, because most programmes are in English. So that one could learn at the same time.

While Ella mentioned a friend of hers, many informants also spoke about their own experiences of learning English from TV and films. Many of them said that a good learning strategy for beginners

is to read the Finnish subtitles as well as listen to the English speech, but that later on one could practice one's listening skills by watching TV programmes or films without subtitles.

Another possibility of exposure to English in one's freetime was the internet, where most content is in English. Five informants mentioned this as being useful for learning. Matilda suggests a website specifically designed for studying English when she mentions "some kind of website where you, like, learn English" (joku semmonen, sivusto mistä niinkun oppii englantia). Valtteri, on the other hand, talked about surfing the internet with no specific reference to English language learning websites:

- [63] Valtteri: Voi tietysti niinkun vaan mennä jonnekin internettiin ja käyttää sun enkun kielen taitoja, voi vaikka kuunnella jotain- jos meet YouTubeen niin kattelis jotain videoita ja jos sä niinkun osaat vähän englantia niin sä voit niinkun täydentää sun sanavarastoa [...]
You can of course just, like, go somewhere on the internet and use your English skills, you can for example listen to something- if you go to YouTube then you could watch some videos and if you, like, already know a little English then you can, like, complete your vocabulary [...]

His idea about using the internet for learning English seems to be linked to a person who "already knows a little English". We can also assume that this suggestion for learning English comes from his own experience, since he mentioned this as his freetime activity elsewhere in the interview.

Another recreational activity that was considered helpful in learning English was reading, mentioned by two informants. Matilda pointed out that "if you read, books and magazines, then you can understand a little with the help of the pictures, like, oh, this means that" (jos lukee, kirjoja ja lehtiä, niin siitä niinkun pääsee vähän perille kuvien perusteella että aa, toi tarkoittaa tota). Other informants mentioned reading as a freetime activity in connection with the ways they learn English themselves. I will discuss this in more detail in the next section.

6.2.2 "How do you learn English?" On speaking and recreational activities

In this part of the interview, questions about personal ways of learning English were asked, such as "How do you study English?", "What do you do in order to learn English?" and "What activities have you found useful for learning?". The most often-mentioned activities were 1) *recreational activities* such as reading, computer and video games, TV and films, internet and music. The other major theme that was mentioned almost as frequently as recreational activities was 2) *communicating in English*. Interestingly, 3) *school* was brought up as often as the previous two themes but there were conflicting attitudes towards its relevancy in the informants' learning: two informants felt that school is helpful in their learning process whereas the other informants did not consider it as particularly helpful.

First, we will look at the theme of *recreational activities*. All but one of the informants mentioned reading books or magazines in their freetime as a significant way of developing their English skills. Some of the informants were more avid readers than others but, on the whole, it was considered a good way to increase one's vocabulary in English and learn new ways of describing things. Matilda mentioned that "for example, when you read a book then there you learn new words and, like, how to describe ways- in new ways" (esimerkiks kirjaa lukee niin siinä oppii uusia sanoja ja niinkun, miten kuvaillaan tapoja- uusilla tavoilla). Lisa elaborated on the way one can learn new words when reading:

[64] Lisa: [...] mä ainaki oon oppinu niinku lukemalla enkuks ja sitten niinkun miettimällä ite, niin en välttämättä että tajuaa sen sana sanalta sen koko lauseen vaan mieltii sitä niinkun... yhte- niinku context siinä sillee...
 [...] *at least I have learnt, like, by reading in English and then, like, by thinking myself, not necessarily so that you understand it word by word the whole sentence but you think about it, like... one- like, in the context and so on...*

She points out that one does not have to resort to a dictionary right away when encountering a new word, but that one can understand the approximate meaning of it from the context in which it occurs.

Watching TV and films was also mentioned by five of the informants as an efficient way to learn English for the informants themselves. In the previous section about the general ways of learning English, the informants mentioned that watching TV and films could help in learning English and that beginners could resort to reading the Finnish-language subtitles whereas more advanced learners could try watching a TV programme or a film without subtitles. When speaking about personal ways of learning English, the informants said that they prefer watching TV programmes and films without subtitles, which puts them in the category of advanced learners. Eemeli reminisces about his childhood and the role that TV had in his learning process:

[65] Eemeli: [...] juuri näistä englanninkielisistä telkkarisarjoista ja elokuvista ja. Joo, tuli mieleen, määki opin paljon englantii siitä ku määhä kattelin Simpsonsia tosi pienenä. Siinäki oppi, oppi paljon ku se oli englanniks. Eikä osannu lukee tekstejä niin, sitä suomenkielistä tekstitystä niin, siinä oppi niinku tosi paljon myös. Alko ymmärtään niitä sanoja ja eleitä ja semmosta.
[...] exactly from these English-language TV programmes and films and. Yes, that reminds me, I learnt a lot of English also when I watched the Simpsons when I was very little. That way I also learnt, learnt a lot since it was in English. And I couldn't read the texts so, the Finnish-language subtitles so, that way I learnt, like, a lot as well. I started to understand those words and gestures and so on.

He points out that he could not resort to reading the subtitles since he could not read at that age, and therefore had to understand what was being said in the programme from the general context, the gestures that the characters used and so on. In Eemeli's case, learning English happened by means of listening to English-language speech at a very young age, before any formal language teaching took place.

Lisa mentioned that nowadays she might pause a programme or film that she is watching in order to check the meaning of an unknown word or expression, in case it is something that she could use herself: "sometimes I might even, like, stop watching for a moment and I want to find out what the word means and how I could use it in everyday life" (välillä mä saatan jopa niinkun lopettaa katsomisen hetken ja mä haluan ettiä mitä se sana tarkoittaa et miten mä voisin käyttää sitä

arkielämässä). Ella says that a determined attempt at watching films without subtitles has resulted to better listening comprehension for her:

- [66] Ella: [...] oon alkanu kans kattoon niitä elokuvia silleen että mä en kato niitä suomenkielisiä tekstejä [...] mitä mä nyt oon enemmän niitä yrittäny kattoo niin sitä helpommaksi se tulee koko ajan. Ja tota mä ymmärrän nyt myös helpommin niinku jos joku sanoo jotain tosi nopeesti, niin mä ymmärrän sen nyt niinku nykyään helpommin.
[...] I have started to watch those films so that I don't watch the Finnish-language text [...] the more I've tried to watch them like that, the easier it gets all the time. And, well, I understand better now, like, if someone says something really fast, so now I understand it, like, more easily.

According to Ella's experience, she has made progress in learning by deliberately trying to concentrate on the English speech only. She suggests that because some characters in films speak "really fast", she was not always able to understand what they said without the help of subtitles. After practicing and exposing herself more to the English-language speech only, she has noticed a development in her understanding.

Among the less frequently mentioned ways of learning English, internet was the most frequent, mentioned by three informants as something that they use in order to learn English. Different ways of using the internet for learning were mentioned: the informants watched videos on the internet, they searched for information about a particular topic in English, and they looked for a translation from Finnish into English or vice versa. However, when Valtteri talked about his use of internet, he specified that it is not in fact learning that he aspires to because he already has a good command of English:

- [67] Valtteri: Emmää niinkun sillai yritä oppia englantii koska mä niinkun osaan ihan suht hyvin että suurimman osan sanoista, niin se on vähän niinku sitä taidon ylläpitoa [...] melkein joka päivä katselen YouTubesta jotain videoita jotka on yleensä englanniks ja surffailen netissä aika paljon [...]
I don't, like, try to learn English because I, like, can speak [it] relatively well, like, most of the words, so that it's a bit, like, maintaining my skills [...] almost every day I watch some videos in YouTube that are usually in English and surf on the internet quite a lot [...]

However, we could also consider "maintaining one's skills" as a kind of learning in that it is very difficult to define a level of perfect mastery in a language, beyond which no learning can take place. It is possible even for a native speaker to learn new expressions in their own language and complete one's vocabulary. Valtteri's comment is therefore included in these answers, although we must note the interesting formulation of his idea about "not trying to learn English".

Internet was also used for searching information. Eemeli points out that one can learn new vocabulary as a by-product of this:

- [68] Eemeli: [...] ihan netissä oleminen siis. Ku tutkii niinku vaikka Wikipediaa englanniks, sieltäkin löytää paljon kaikkee. Vaikka englannin historian projektiin, mä tein justiin projektin siitä Pearl Harborin hyökkäyksestä niin, siinäkin löyty kaikkee niinku esimerkiks näitä sanoja että "conflict" ja sitte "hostile" ja sellasta.
[...] just surfing the internet, like. When you, like, for example, look at Wikipedia in English, you find lots of things there as well. For example, for our history project, I just did a project on the attack on Pearl Harbor, so, there I also found all of these, like, for example words like "conflict" and then "hostile" and so on.

Eemeli did not set out to learn new words when looking for information about his school project, but this was something that happened anyway when coming across a new word. He also points out the general usefulness of Wikipedia: "you find lots of things there". He seems to suggest that Wikipedia and other sources of information on the internet offer both information about "lots of things" and the possibility to widen one's vocabulary if the information is in English.

Lisa describes a specific language learning technique in which she uses the internet:

- [69] Lisa: [...] tai sitten mä käytän ihan internettiä ja niinkun valitsen jomman- jos mä haluan ilmaista itteäni suomeks niin mä yleensä haen sitä niinku aihetta enkuks ja koitan ettiä sieltä niinkun joten kuten sen miten kääntää sen suomeksi, et se yleensä toimii molemmin päin kummallaki kielellä.
[...] or then I just use the internet and, like, choose either- if I want to express myself in Finnish then I usually, like, search for the topic in English and try to find there, like, an approximate way of translating it in Finnish, and so it usually works both ways with both languages.

She has managed to use the internet as a tool for the purposes of translation or finding correct expressions. She explains that if she knows a word, an expression or a concept in Finnish, she uses

this word to find information on the internet, and then tries to find her way onto English-language websites about the same topic. Interestingly, she says that she uses this technique both ways, so that sometimes she knows a word in English that she does not know the equivalent for in Finnish.

In connection with using internet, social media was mentioned by three informants. Matilda says that she uses Facebook regularly. However, she feels that using social media in English does not have anything to do with learning. She says "Well I don't really learn anything new, so it's like, I know those things already" (No emmä siinä kyllä opi uutta, et se on niinku, mä tiedän ne asiat jo). Using social media belongs to the domain of "just using English", not learning new things.

One of the less frequently mentioned activities in connection with learning English was computer and video games. Three informants mentioned playing computer or video games and learning English from them, while all the other informants, when asked about whether they play computer or video games in their freetime, replied simply that they did not. In example 47, Valtteri already mentioned playing multiplayer online games as one reason for learning English, because one has to communicate with other players in English in order to move forward in the game. He did not mention explicitly that he has learnt English from the games, but we might consider this possible. Eemeli, however, mentioned that learning new words in English has taken place while playing:

[70] Eemeli: No emmä tiiä mä pelaan paljon ja siinä yleensä englannin kieli mistä...
 [...] kun mä oon pienenä vaikka niinku näitä pelannu että onhan siellä paljon tullu vieraita sanoja vastaan että, mutta ne on sitte ajan myötä oppinu niinku, oppinu ymmärtään mitä ne tarkoittaa.
Well I dunno, I play a lot and there it's usually English that...
 [...] when I played these, like, when I was little, I came across a lot of new words, so, but then I've learnt them over time, like, learnt to understand what they mean.

For him, the process of learning new words has happened "over time", probably by guessing the meanings of words from the context in the game, not by checking new words in the dictionary right away. This process of learning new words from the context bears similarities to the process of

learning that the informants described happening in kindergarten, when they tried to understand the speech of the kindergarten teachers and nurses.

Sofia also plays "some console games" in English:

- [71] Sofia: [...] konsolipelejä mä oon joitain pelannu [...] ku valikossa että mitä kieltä haluat kuunnella niin sit mä valitsen yleensä siitä englanniks ja sit mun pikkuveli tulee siihen viereen et "miks sä pelaat englanniks?!"
[...] I've played some console games [...] when in the menu [you can choose] what language you want to listen to then I usually choose English and then my little brother comes next to me like "why do play in English?!"

Sofia suggests that she could also choose Finnish as the language of the game but she opts for English instead. This, according to her, astonishes her little brother, who is possibly not as competent in the English language as Sofia herself. Sofia seems to make a distinction between herself and her little brother because of her English skills, by counting herself among those "in-the-know".

Listening to music was also mentioned as a possible learning activity by two informants. For Ella, listening to the lyrics in a song is an important part of enjoying music:

- [72] Ella: [...] mä kuuntelen niinku yleisimmin englanniksi musiikkia, ja tota mä yritän yleensä jos mä kuuntelen jotain tiettyä biisiä niin mä yritän sillee niinku miettiä että mitä ne sanat tarkoittaa siinä, ja yritän ettii sille jonkinlaista merkitystä.
[...] I, like, mostly listen to music in English, and well, I usually try, if I listen to a particular song then I like, try to think about what the lyrics mean and I try to look for some kind of meaning to it.

For her, listening to a song is not only about understanding the words that are sung, it is also about understanding the message that the words attempt to convey. This way, her learning process goes further than just picking up words here and there. Maaria also listens to music in English but she is not as convinced as Ella of the possibilities of learning from it:

- [73] Maaria: [...] mä kuuntelen enemmän englanninkielistä musiikkia ku tota suomalaista [...] Mutta tota, kyl mä muistan niitä sanotuksia, mutta tota, emmä kyllä siitä niinku mielestäni niinku niin paljon saa kuitenkaan irti ku jostain puhumisesta ku mä niinku ite puhun.

[...] I listen to English-language music more than to Finnish [...] But, well, I do remember the lyrics, but then, I don't think I really, like, benefit from it as much as from speaking, when I, like, speak myself.

Maaria feels that she learns more from active participation in speaking than from listening to music and lyrics, which is a more passive activity. Although listening to English-language music was also mentioned by Fanny, she did not see it as a possible way of learning.

The second important theme in developing one's English skills was *communicating in English*. Most of the informants mentioned that they learnt English by listening to the speech of the teachers and nurses in their English-language kindergarten when they were little. Step by step, they started to use words that their teachers and nurses had used, thereby gradually increasing their vocabulary. The informants also said that nowadays they learn more words and expressions by speaking English with people who also know English. Some informants mentioned speaking with friends who live abroad and some mentioned speaking with friends who attend the same school. Valtteri tied in the activity of communicating in English with travelling, saying "in some English-language countries" (jossain enkunkielisissä maissa), suggesting that travelling abroad offers an opportunity to speak English. Eemeli pointed out in a general way that communicating helps him learn, mentioning "but also, like, one learns by just communicating" (mutta myös niinku ihan sitä oppii paljon siinäki ku kommunikoi). In addition to mentioning speaking English with friends from school as a learning experience, Sofia spoke about finding friends abroad with the help of the internet and using it as a means of communication with English-speaking people:

[74] Sofia: Ja sitten koitan löytää kavereita muualta maailmasta just netin välityksellä, sitte jutella niille netissä. Ja sitten, justiinsa niinku puhua englanniks ja, se on niinku se lukeminen ja puhuminen niin.
And then I try to find friends from other parts of the world with the help of internet, then talk to them on the internet. And then, exactly, like, speaking in English and, it's like the reading and the speaking.

We now move on to the third theme in developing one's English skills among the informants. Interesting comments and viewpoints came up as the informants talked about the role of

school and classroom activities in their own learning. Five informants mentioned school when asked about how they learn English. One might suppose that more informants had mentioned school as a factor in their learning. However, this can partly be explained by the fact that most of them had already talked about school as a general way of learning English and possibly felt that the same answer that was given about learning in general would include themselves, too. It is also possible that some informants saw school as such an obvious way of learning for them that it did not need much explaining.

There were conflicting ideas about the relevancy of school in the informants' learning. Eemeli simply pointed out: "that English class on the third floor, that's where we learn" (tu englannin luokka tuolla kolmannes kerroksessa että, siellä opitaan). For him, the role of school in learning is incontrovertible: learning happens in a classroom with a good teacher. The learner's own responsibility of their learning is not given much attention. Ella, on the other hand, represents a more independent attitude towards learning in a classroom situation:

[75] Ella: [...] jos me ollaan niinku englannin tunnilla ja sit siellä selitetään niin mää kirjotan ne niinku sillee ylös [...] Ja mulla on jääny vähän tää niinku sieltä tarhasta se kuvat ja värit ja nää tämmöset niin mää yhistan sitä siihen tekstiin kans mitä mä ite kirjotan että miten mä sen ite ymmärrän, että tietty väri tarkoittaa tiettyä semmosta, mulla on tämmönen systeemi.
[...] if we are, like, attending an English class and then there is explained then I, like, write them down [...] And I've kind of retained this, like, from the kindergarten this pictures and colours and things like this so that I combine them to the text that I'm writing in the way that I understand it, so that a certain colour means a certain thing, I have this kind of system.

She describes in detail her activities in the classroom. She is not only a passive listener and a receiver of teaching, but she actively processes the information given with the help of her own system of learning which includes "pictures and colours". Ella does not give an evaluation of the teaching that is given during an English class, but seems to concentrate first and foremost on her own learning, with the help of her own "system". The other informants did not mention such specific learning strategies in connection with school activities. This does not necessarily mean that

the others did not have learning strategies of their own, it is possible that they just did not bring them up during the interview. Nevertheless, when looking at the two previous examples we can see that the informants had very different ways of speaking about their own learning: there were both passive and active learners in this group.

Two of the informants who mentioned school in their own learning process were somewhat wary about its efficiency. Both of them viewed English teaching as somewhat irrelevant in advancing their learning because they felt they already know the things that were being taught:

- [76] Valtteri: [...] se mitä me enkun- enkusta opiskellaan niin ei se mua hirveesti tunnu et se auttaa ku- se on vaan aina niinku et se kielitaito niinku pysyy yllä eikä niinkun laske alas koska mä oon todella hyvä englannissa tällä hetkellä että, mä käytännössä en yleensä lue enkun kokeisiin, mä vaan vastaan mitä haluun ja tulee joku ysi puol [...]
[...] what we in English- study about English, it doesn't really feel that it's helping because- it's just always, like, to keep up the language skills so that they don't decline because I'm extremely good at English at the moment so that, I practically don't study for English exams, I just answer what I like and I get something like a nine and a half [...]

Valtteri is very confident about his English skills and he does not feel the need to learn more. He points out that English classes are good for maintaining his English skills "so that they don't decline", but learning new things or striving to get a better grade in exams is unnecessary for him. Sofia, on the other hand, expresses a sense of frustration. She is also of the opinion that at school, they are learning things that she already knows:

- [77] Sofia: Joo siis, nyt englannin tunneilla kun mä avaan sen kirjan, mä tiedän jo tasan tarkkaan, siis mä tiedän jo mitä mä opiskelen [...] siis mä osaan puhua englantia ja mä tiedän miten sitä pitää puhua ja mä osaan taivuttaa verbejä mutta, silti, se jotenki se tuntuu niin eri maailmalta se kirja siinä edessä. [...] Niin sikäli, se jotenki tuntuu vähän turhalta mutta [...] Siis onhan se hyvä että me opiskellaan kuitenkin englantia mutta.
Yes well, now in English classes when I open the book, I already know exactly, I mean I already know what I'm studying [...] like, I can speak English and I know how it should be spoken and I know how to conjugate verbs but still, the book in front of me somehow seems like a different world [...] So that way, it kind of feels somehow useless but [...] I mean it's good that we study English anyway but.

Sofia admits in the end of her comment that, in general, it is "good that they study English anyway", but she does not see much benefit in it for herself. She "knows exactly" what they are going to learn from the textbook, which nonetheless appears "a different world" from the reality of her life and, possibly, of her own uses for English.

6.2.3 Comparisons to the reference group

When comparing the answers that the reference group and the CLIL group gave about the ways in which English can be learnt, a definite distinction is perceived: the reference group's comments were clearly centered around written language, whereas the CLIL group's comments had more to do with spoken language. In this section, we will look at this distinction in more detail. Figures 3 and 4 below summarise the two groups' ideas about how people learn English and how they learn English themselves.

The themes that Aro came across when interviewing the reference group about how people in general learn English were those of 1) *written language*, 2) *teaching* and 3) *recreational activities*. The same themes recurred when dealing with the question about how the informants themselves learn English. However, it is important to note that in both questions, the first two themes came up without prompting, whereas the theme of *recreational activities* was not mentioned before the interviewer asked prompting questions about whether the children engage in recreational activities that involve English and gave examples such as reading books, watching TV or films, playing computer games and so on.

The theme that came up most frequently among the reference group was that English is learnt with the help of *written language*. The reference group informants relied heavily on the power of the printed text: they mentioned that one can learn English by reading one's English textbook, by looking up words from dictionaries and by studying word lists, among other things. All of these activities are usual in a school setting, which is a learning environment familiar to the

informants. When thinking about how people in general could learn English, they drew from their own experiences of classroom activities. One informant in the reference group said that if one wants to learn English, one should "read the words and practise how to write them" (Lukee niitä sanoja ja harjotella kirjottamaan niitä; 2009: 101). Therefore, learning how to read words and reproduce them on paper constituted an important part of learning. School activities that included written language were also often mentioned: another informant answered that one should "read all the vocabulary for the chapter" (lukee kaikki kappaleen sanat; 2009: 101). Here, it is not only written language in general that one should pay attention to when learning but more specifically "the vocabulary for the chapter", the chapter probably referring to an English textbook chapter. Doing one's homework was also central in learning for many of the reference group informants.

The ideas about the importance of written language recurred among the reference group when speaking about their personal ways of learning English. When asked how they themselves learn English, most of the reference group informants recalled exercises and activities done in their English class at school, such as reading the textbook, studying the vocabulary and doing grammar or vocabulary exercises. Some of them also mentioned that they learn English by doing their homework assiduously.

The beliefs about the usefulness of written language in learning were somewhat different in the CLIL group. The benefits of learning from written language were acknowledged in the CLIL informants' comments about reading, but this had to do with reading in one's freetime, not at school. The informants mentioned that written language does play a central role at school, but this was not seen as a positive thing (examples 57 and 77). The informants of these examples were of the opinion that if one wants to learn English, one should *use it* elsewhere in addition to the written exercises done at school. Learning from written language was thus not enough if one wants to achieve a good command of English. Only one informant in the CLIL group had faith in the learning that takes place at school, mentioning that "practise makes perfect". One informant saw

that there is a difference between attending a regular school and attending an international school in that in the latter, English is used also outside the English classes. A contrasting viewpoint in the CLIL group was that learning English in formal education is slower and more difficult than learning English in a "natural environment", such as an English-language kindergarten or spending time in an English-language environment abroad. This is probably because the CLIL informants had a personal experience of this kind of learning in their own early childhood. Conversely in the reference group, the power of formal education was not contested.

Mentioning external factors as important elements in one's learning was more frequent in the reference group than in the CLIL group. The theme of *teaching* that came up in the reference group included comments that suggested a passive attitude in learning, with ideas such as "well they should go study it at school" (no sitte kannattaa mennä opiskelemaan sitä kouluun; 2009: 101–102). These ideas were classified as a theme in its own right by Aro because several informants in the reference group did not elaborate on one's own independent activities in learning, but simply said that if one goes to school or an English course, one learns English. The role of the teacher was also mentioned here: one should "go on a language course with good teachers" (mennä jollekki kielikurssille missä on hyvät opettajat; 2009: 102). "A good teacher" was therefore one prerequisite for successful learning. The role of the teacher was also present in the reference group's comments on their own personal ways of learning. When asked how they learn English themselves, one informant answered "so that the teacher teaches" (sillei että opettaja opettaa; 2009: 104). We might assume that the prevalent role of external factors in learning could again be due to the fact that the reference group informants were younger. Because of their age and their lesser experience in the world of learning, the reference group informants were more prone to rely on an authority in teaching, in this case the teacher. Independent learning strategies are possibly developed later in their school careers.

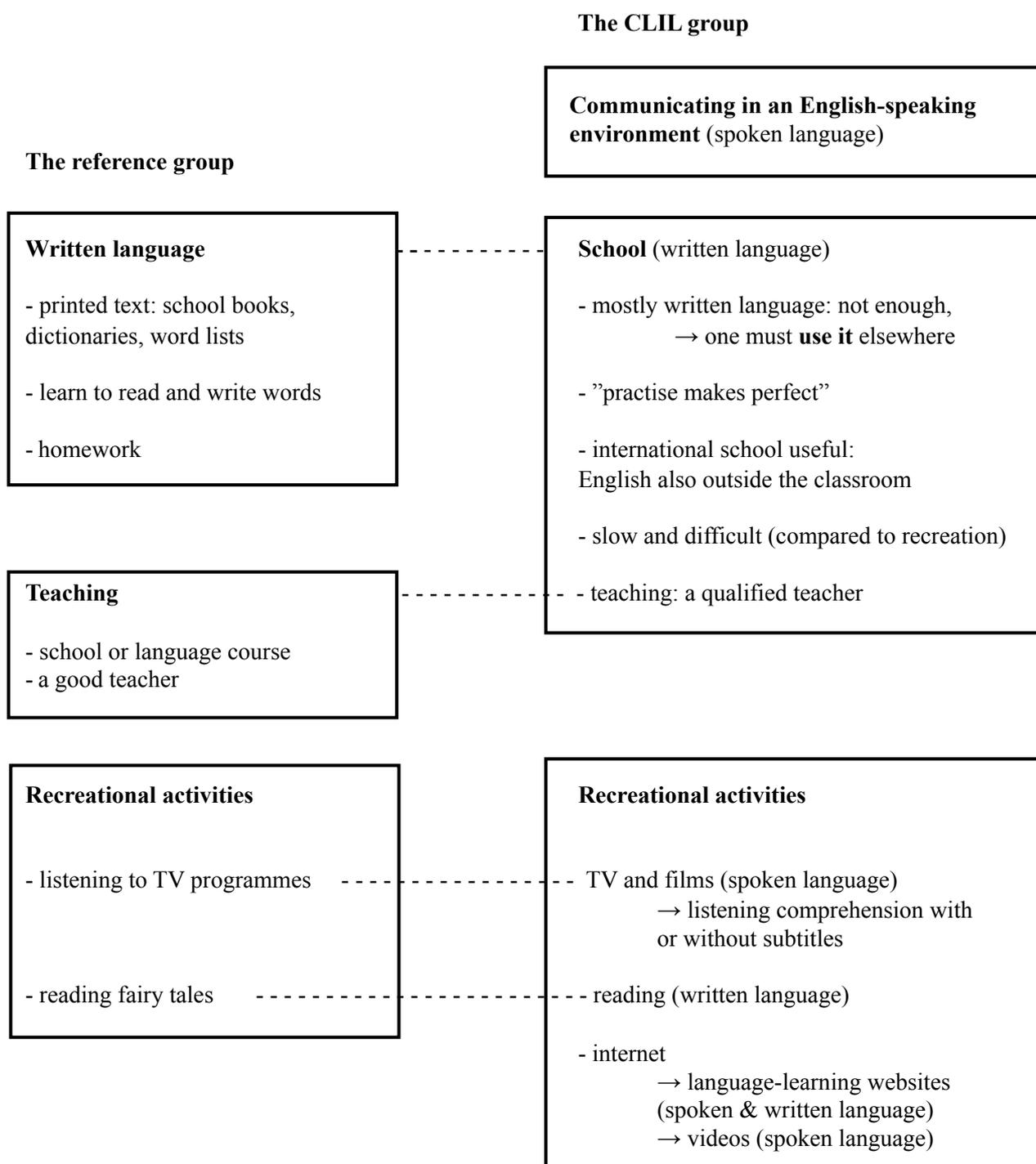


Figure 3. Summary of the themes in *Generals ways of learning English* in both groups

External factors were also present in the CLIL group, but they were more rare. Only one informant said that one should have a "qualified teacher" whose attitude has an effect on the pupil's learning. Because of the marginal appearance of the comments on teaching, this was included in the general theme of school in the CLIL group. In the CLIL group, there was slightly more variation in

the passivity or independence in the informants' own learning. On the one end, there was Eemeli who mentioned the importance of the teacher in learning in general, and said that his own learning happens in "the English class on the third floor", and not mentioning anything about himself or his own activities that advance his learning. On the other end, there was Ella who spoke about her own "system" of learning that she puts to use in the English classroom (example 75). Her system had to do with listening to the teacher and converting the information into written language reinforced by her own set of markings and colours.

An attitude towards learning at school that was present in the CLIL group but absent from the reference group was that school work is irrelevant and not useful. Valtteri and Sofia spoke about their indifferent and even slightly negative attitude towards formal language teaching. Neither of these informants were absolutely against English classes at school, saying that it is good for "keeping up one's English skills" (example 76) and that "it's good that we study English" (example 77). Nevertheless, there was a distinct sense of frustration in their answers. Both Valtteri and Sofia were of the opinion that they know English so well that further learning at school is unlikely. Sofia also mentioned a different kind of frustration: the English textbook "seems like a different world" compared to her own experiences of life and the English language.

In addition to the school-related themes of written language and teaching, *recreational activities* were mentioned in connection with learning in both groups. As mentioned already, the reference group informants did not comment on activities outside school by their own initiative. Their ideas about how English is learnt were firmly rooted on written language and school. Therefore, it required some prompting questions from the interviewer before they admitted to engaging in activities that involve English in their freetime. Aro (2009: 105) noticed that the reference group spoke rather dismissingly about learning that could happen outside school because they believed that learning entails some form of deliberateness. She points out that some informants felt that "activities like watching television or listening to music were not useful, because when one

is doing them, one is having fun and not concentrating on the language. Learning was thus considered to at least require attention, if not to be a downright serious business”. This can be seen in one of the reference group informant’s comment that while watching TV ”you don’t think about, like, English lessons” (ei siinä kun niinku kattoo nii ei siinä tuu sillee ajateltua että, niinku jotain englannin tunteja; 2009: 104).

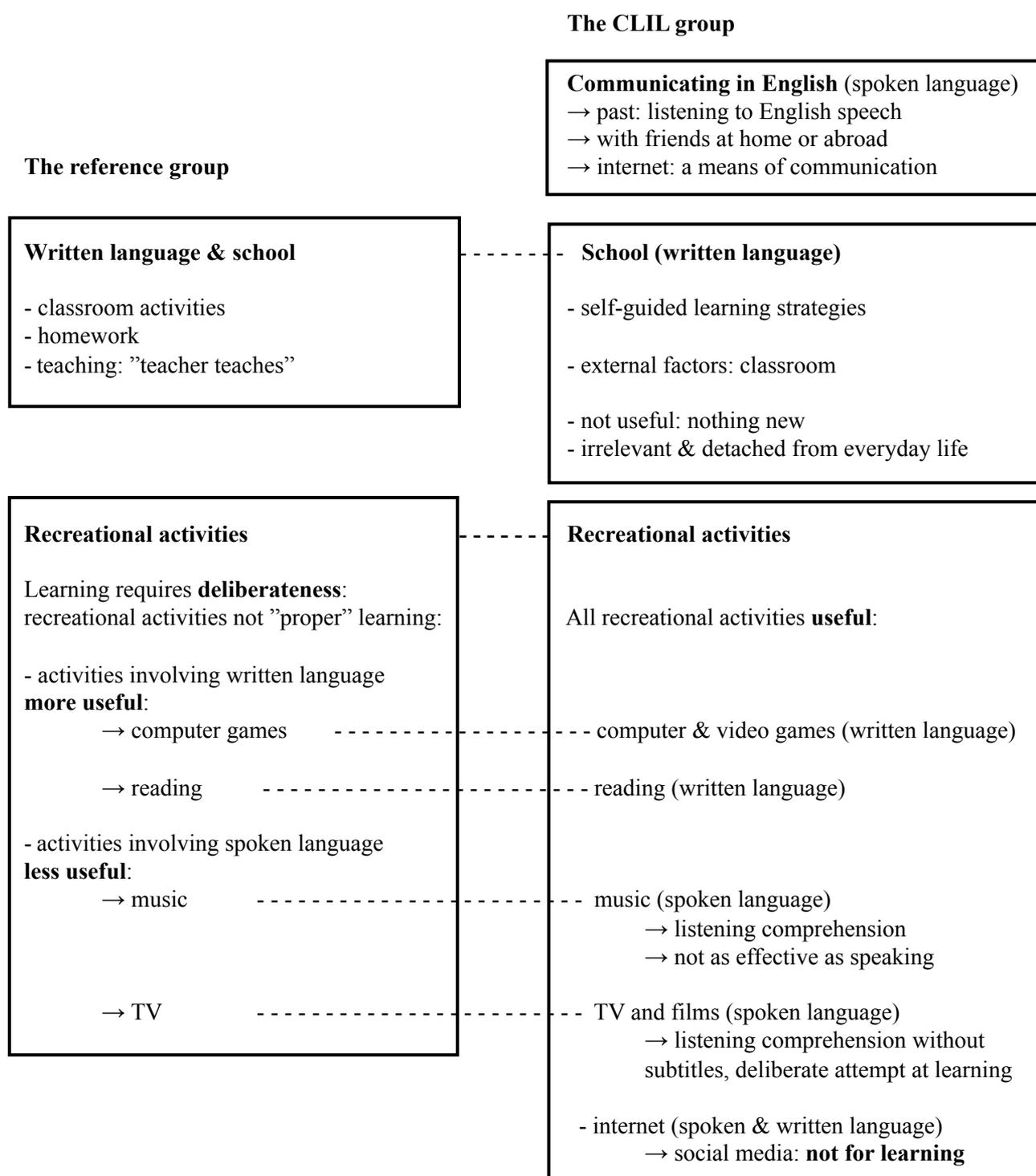


Figure 4. Summary of the themes in *Personal ways of learning English* in both groups

Only a few reference group informants mentioned that people in general could learn English by "reading fairy tales" and "listening to TV programmes" (2009: 103). Other freetime activities were mentioned in the answers to the question about how they learn English themselves and even then, these activities were prompted by the interviewer. The informants admitted that they come across English in activities such as playing computer or PlayStation games, listening to music, watching TV and reading comics or books. When asked whether they had learnt English from these activities, there was a division of the activities into those that involve *written language* (computer games and reading) and those that involve *spoken language* (music and TV). The activities with written language were considered to be somewhat helpful in learning, whereas the activities with spoken language were not. Aro (2009: 105) points out that, according to the informants, "learning takes place predominantly through the written form of the language", and that spoken language was not seen as tangible in the same way as written language.

As mentioned above, the CLIL group did not have a unanimously positive feeling about the usefulness of formal education in learning. When speaking about *recreational activities*, however, most of the CLIL informants mentioned several English-related activities without the need of prompting questions. When they talked about ways to learn English in general, they mentioned watching TV and films with or without the help of subtitles, reading books and magazines and using the internet, which included watching videos and using language-learning websites. Both spoken and written language were part of the recreational activities mentioned by the CLIL group. The CLIL group also felt that some activities were better than others for learning, but mostly concluded that all of these activities would be beneficial in different degrees to different kinds of learners. The idea about the deliberateness in learning that was mentioned in connection to the reference group was also mentioned in the CLIL group. Fanny summarised most of the CLIL informants' feelings about the usefulness of recreational activities:

[78] Fanny: [...] kyl mä sitä katon ihan muuten et ei nyt sen kielen takia mut sit ku sitä kuuntelee niin sitä ymmärtää kuitenkin hyvin [...] varmaan tota, niinku, tota, oppii samalla sillee, vähän niinku vahingossa tai sillee.
 [...] *I watch it for no particular reason, so it's not because of the language but then when I watch it then I understand well anyway [...] maybe, well, like, you learn at the same time, like, kind of, like, by accident or something like that.*

She points out that she watches TV "not because of the language", suggesting that she does not choose to watch a specific TV programme only because it is in English, but that she is more interested in the plot and the characters, for example. However, she "understands" the programme "well anyway": this might be because learning happens "by accident".

Whether learning in recreational activities happens "by accident" or by concentrating on the learning process seemed to depend on the learner. While most of the CLIL informants mentioned that they have learnt English by listening to English-speaking people or to English-language TV programmes and that this way, learning has happened "by accident", some informants described deliberate attempts at learning in their freetime activities. Ella said that she has started to watch films without subtitles in order to learn more (example 66) and Lisa mentioned that she might pause a film in order to check the meaning of an unknown word. Ella also pointed out that she tries to find a meaning to the lyrics in a song (example 72), which also constitutes a deliberate attempt at learning. Maaria, on the other hand, said that while she might remember the lyrics to a song, she does not see the learning derived from it as helpful as when she speaks English herself. Another activity that some of the CLIL informants engaged in but did not feel to be useful for learning was social media. It was approached in much the same way as the reference group informants approached all recreational activities.

A theme that was present in the CLIL group's answers and absent from the reference group's answers was that of *communicating in English* as a way to further one's learning. The CLIL informants pointed out the importance of listening and speaking in English outside school in both the general and personal ways of learning English. The informants mentioned that one should use

English daily in addition to school exercises, and that the best way to learn English is to be in an English-speaking environment (e.g. abroad) and try to communicate with people there. Concerning their own learning experiences, most of them mentioned learning by communicating as having been the most meaningful and effective way in their learning processes. They remembered having learnt English in their childhood by listening to English-speaking people and by interacting with them, and described deliberate attempts at finding non-Finnish friends (e.g. on the internet) with whom they could speak English in order to develop their English skills.

6.3 Voicework

In this section, I will answer the second research question about the voicework that the informants used in their answers. As described in section 3.2, the analysis of different *voices* that appear in a dialogue are a helpful way to discover more aspects on the beliefs that a particular person holds about a particular topic. The focus in this chapter is thus on how the informants said what they said (Aro 2009: 116). I will look at what kinds of voices the informants used when speaking of their ideas about learning and knowing English and whether they had appropriated *authoritative voices* in their speech or not.

To give an example of possible voicework heard in the informants' answers about the usefulness of English: when speaking about the global status of English, an informant might say English is useful "because it is spoken around the world". This kind of wording is probably not invented by the informants themselves, based on their own experiences. It is more probable that they have heard this *alien voice* from elsewhere, possibly from an authoritative source, such as a teacher or the media, and believed it to be true. This can be inferred also from the fact that it sounds almost like a slogan.

Another possible wording of the same topic by another informant might be: "when I was travelling in the Middle East with my family, I noticed that many people could speak English

there". The second example clearly stems from the informants' own experience, since they explicitly mention their own observations in a particular situation. When speaking about their beliefs, people might use both voices: *alien* (and possibly *authoritative*) voices in which they echo something they have heard from someone else in addition to their own personal voices in which they speak from their own experiences, perhaps confirming the alien voice they repeated or invalidating it.

If only a slogan-like *alien* voice is used, with no indications to the informants' own feelings or experiences, we might conclude that this voice is not appropriated by the speaker, and therefore only repeated as a universal fact, with no clear sign of commitment to its truthfulness on the part of the speaker him/herself. If an *alien voice* is used together with justifications based on the speaker's own experiences, we might conclude that this voice is partly or completely appropriated by the speaker, and therefore the speaker is also more committed to the truthfulness of the voiced belief. As Aro (2009: 38) puts it, "talking about one's beliefs also means taking stands, choosing perspectives and echoing the voices of others".

The informants in the reference group were named by Aro (2009: 140) as "learner-users", based on the voices they used. They used more examples and details of their own experience and viewpoint in Year 5 than they had in the previous interviews in Years 1 and 3. They were developing their own voice and take on language studies, whereas in the previous years they had been more reliant on authoritative voices about language learning (2009: 131). The informants no longer attributed their words to their parents or teachers. They were also increasingly fluent in "student-speech", using school terminology such as *revision*, *pronunciation*, *translation*, and so on (2009: 136). Being part of the class was important for the informants: even though questions were asked in the second person singular ("you"), the informants often answered in the second person plural ("we"), to emphasise the classroom activities that they took part in as a group (2009: 137).

Next, we will look at two of the most prominent themes from the viewpoint of voicework in both the reference group and the CLIL group. These themes are *voices of expertise* and *the future*.

First, I will present a brief summary of the first theme among the reference group and explain how the informants voiced their beliefs about their own knowledge of English and their own role in learning it. Some of the informants in the reference group expressed a more confident attitude towards their own language learning, voicing their own views on learning as relevant after having studied English at school for two years (Aro 2009: 140). They were also sensitive to a diversity of experience in learning, recognising that the learning strategies they used themselves might not be helpful for everyone (2009: 140). However, there were still some informants who were unsure about their own knowledge of English and who relied on their parents for support. One reference group informant said: "Yes they are actually you learn from then when, like, if there's a word then you ask for example your parents what it means and then learn a word again" (On oikeestaan niistä oppii sitte niinku, jos tulee joku sana vastaan niin sit voi kysyä vaikka vanhemmilta että mitä se tarkoittaa ja sitte oppii taas sanan; 2009: 106).

The CLIL group was more eager in voicing their experience and expertise about the English language. There were mentions of specific learning strategies (example 75) as well as confidence on the informants' own English skills (example 76). In addition to this, the informants described a sense of being an expert on the English language. These comments suggest that English comes very naturally to them and that they in some sense "own" the language when dealing with it. All but one of the informants described situations where they were in an authoritative position in relation to other people when it comes to English. Matilda's description of teaching her father English at home reflects this well:

[79] Matilda: Ja sitten, mää teen mun ismän kaa niin että... se ei osaa kovin hyvin enkkaa niin mä puhun kotona sen kaa englanniks, että mää yritän sanoo sille jotain englanniks ja korjaan mitä se sanoo sitten takasin.
And then, I do this with my dad... he doesn't speak English very well so I speak English with him at home, so that I try to say something to him in English and I correct him when he says something back.

In this situation, she is performing the part of the teacher rather than the student. Maaria also mentioned that she is the expert on English in her family and her parents rely on her for help:

- [80] Maaria: Että koska mulla on molemmat vanhemmat suomalaisia ja kummallakaan ei oo hirveen vahva kuitenkaan englantia, et siis... en kotona käytä [englantia]. Että siis... nehän kysyy multa aina neuvoo jos...
So because both of my parents are Finnish and neither of them has a very good command of English, so like... I don't use [English] at home. So like... they always ask my advice if...

Also, the situation of being abroad was taken up in these kinds of discussions. Rather than only saying that she learns English herself by communicating with people abroad, Ella points out that she is in fact mostly responsible for communication, even on behalf of her parents:

- [81] Ella: [...] jos me ollaan niinku perheen kanssa jossaki ulkomailla niin mää sitte yleensä puhun siellä.
[...] if we are like somewhere abroad with the family then I usually speak there.

In addition to being an expert on English in her family, she mentions being an expert in her circle of friends, too, helping her friends with their English homework. Eemeli uses his voice of expertise even when relating something that happened in his childhood:

- [82] Eemeli: [...] joskus neljän-viiden vanhana ku pelailin mun isoveljien kanssa niinku pleikkapelejä jotka oli englanniks, ei ollu mitään suomennoksia niin, muistan mää ymmärsin sitä jopa paremmin ku he, ja opin niinku siinä vielä enemmän.
[...] sometimes when I was four or five when I played with my big brothers, like, PlayStation games that were in English, there were no translations and, I remember I understood it even better than them, and I learnt like there even more.

His role of expertise on English is strengthened by the fact that he understood the English-language PlayStation game even better than his older brothers when he was little. This way, age is not the basis of his expertise in English. Eemeli also brought up his role as an interpreter for his mother on their travels abroad and also connected with his mother's work:

- [83] Eemeli: [...] vanhemmat ei osaa yhtä hyvin englantia ku minä... Vaikka osaa, no isä osaa aika hyvin mutta äiti ei oikein osaa niin...
 JN: Toimitko sinä sitten tulkkina niissä tilanteissa?

- Eemeli: Joo toimin niinku kommunikaattorina. Juuri niin. Justiin... muistan viime kesänä oltiin Skotlannissa niin siellä oltiin kaupassa niin, niinku, tuli myyjä kysymään äitiltä että haluaako ostaa niin se oli ihan pattitilanteessa että... Niin mä tulin siihen sitten selventään että joo.
- JN: Onko sinulla tullut vastaan muitakin tällaisia tilanteita, esimerkiks Suomessa?
- Eemeli: Jaa no [...] ku mun äiti on niin kosmetologi tai no ku sille tulee kaikkia näitä, kaikki näitä tavaroita niinku missä on englanninkielistä tekstitystä niin se pyytää mua suomentaan niinku.
- Eemeli: [...] *parents can't speak English as well as me... Although they can, well dad can quite well but mum doesn't really so...*
- JN: *Do you act as an interpreter in those situations?*
- Eemeli: *Yeah I act like as a communicator. Exactly. Right... I remember last summer we were in Scotland and there we were in a shop and then, like, the vendor came to ask mum if she wants to buy so she was in trouble so... So then I went there to clarify and yeah.*
- JN: *Have you come across other similar situations, for example in Finland?*
- Eemeli: *Well [...] 'cause my mum is like a beautician or well, 'cause she gets all these, all these products like with texts in English so she asks me to translate, like.*

Most of the informants mentioned helping their family or friends with speaking or understanding English or even interpreting for their family abroad. Lisa had another viewpoint on her actions towards others in her role of English-language expert:

- [84] Lisa: [...] mulla on silleen et jos mä kuuntelen ku ihmiset puhuu niin mulla on sellanen, tavallaan huono tapa että jos joku sanoo sen väärin niin mä meen heti korjaan niitä silleen että ”ei ei, se menee näin” [...] *[...] I have this, like, if I listen to people speaking then I have this, bad habit in a way that if someone says it wrong then I instantly correct them like ”no no, it goes like this” [...]*

Lisa clearly feels that she should not correct other people's mistakes as much as she does, because she describes her actions as a "bad habit". From the wording in her comment we might conclude that she is aware of her own expertise in English, but that bringing that expertise to the fore too much is seen by some as a way of showing off. Her attempt to correct other's mistakes might stem from a genuine desire to help but might, in the Finnish culture with an inclination to modesty, be interpreted as expressing one's superiority.

There was a difference in the strength of the voices of expertise in the two group's answers. Although the reference group did voice a feeling of expertise in relation to English language

learning and acting in a school environment as well as in some situations outside school, the CLIL group voiced a stronger feeling of expertise in relation to other people in general. In addition to this, the CLIL group expressed a sense of ownership towards the English language. This is best summarised in Sofia's comment:

[85] Sofia: Niinku mä huomaan välillä ajattelevani englanniks [...]

Like, I sometimes find myself thinking in English [...]

She expresses a natural attitude towards English in that the language that dominates in her thoughts at times is English. English is therefore not only a language used for functional reasons such as communicating with others, it is also a language of one's inner world.

Another theme where different kinds of voices dominated the reference group and the CLIL group was the theme of *the future*. Most of the reference group informants' comments were about adulthood in general (section 6.1.3), with vague notions on working life and adults' needs for English. Here, *authoritative voices* dominated the informants' answers, with comments such as "so that they then know it as an adult" and "I mean an adult should know it". The young informants in the reference group had no personal experience of adulthood yet and they were not able to give many examples of the reasons why an adult needs to know English. Therefore, it seems that these slogans were in a way ventriloquated after hearing them somewhere else. One comment on working life was given, where an informant said that one could "serve people from different countries" if one knows English.

The voices that were heard in the CLIL group's answers about the future were somewhat more personal and based on their own feelings and experiences but included also authoritative voices. All of the informants first mentioned a straightforward reason for knowing English in the future that sounds somewhat like a slogan: in working life, it's good to know English. In a way, "working life" had replaced "adulthood" that was present in the reference group's answers. Some of the informants left it at that, with no further elaborations as to what factors in working life make English useful in particular. In these cases, it seemed that the idea of the importance of English in

working life had been acquired from authorities such as teachers and parents or from peer groups, because these informants did not give examples as to what they might do in working life in the future or what their parents or other people they know use English for in their working lives.

Other informants, however, went on to describe working tasks (example 44), working environments (examples 21 and 22), and their own experiences of working life so far:

[86] Lisa: [...] ku mä oon tota töissä... tai tavallaan töissä mut mä oon niinkun vapaaehtonen Punasella Ristillä, mä oon välillä töissä sellatteessa Kaiken Maailman kahvilassa, jossa on yleensä niinku maahanmuuttajia ja sellattia, niin mä yleensä siellä käytän enkkua aika paljon.
 [...] *when I'm, like, working... or kind of working but I'm like a volunteer for the Red Cross, I'm sometimes working at this All World's cafe, where there are usually like immigrants and so on, so there I usually use English quite a lot.*

For Lisa, the idea of using English in a working situation is familiar, with experiences of her own from this kind of situation. In her comments about working life we do not only hear echoes from alien voices, but her own formulations about why and where English is useful.

In the answers of the CLIL group, the voices that they used mostly reflected a sense of expertise and ownership towards the English language, with confidence towards their own skills and an authoritative position in regard to other people. Not all of the CLIL informants possessed the same amount of confidence about their skills, but even those that did not express a strong sense of expertise, evaluated their knowledge of English as advanced. All of the informants were of the opinion that they could manage with English in almost any situation that they were likely to encounter in their lives at the moment and in the future. These voices share some features with the voices that were present in the reference group, but the reference group's emphasis on the role of English in their lives had more to do with learning, with the school environment dominating the background of their uses of English.

7. Discussion

The analysis of the informants' comments on their beliefs about English language knowledge and learning as well as the voicework that they used in their answers led to interesting observations. Since the CLIL group consisted of eight individuals, some conflicting beliefs and voices could be perceived. However, among the themes covered in the analysis, discrepancies in the ideas of the informants were much less frequent than agreements. This is why these themes were considered viable for the purposes of this study. The informants also shared beliefs and attitudes that were visible in the similar voices that they used. When comparing these themes to the ones that emerged in the reference group, it could be noted that on the one hand, the two groups had some resembling ideas which they viewed from a different perspective and on the other hand, some beliefs were only characteristic to either one or the other group. Thus, two different sets of beliefs and ideas could be roughly traced, with some links between certain themes. With the help of the figures summarising the four aspects discussed in the analysis (figures 1, 2, 3 and 4), we can draw together two mindsets that consist of more detailed themes, such as the particular ways to learn English.

In the question "Why is English studied?", spanning both the general and personal aspects, the CLIL group was adamant about the reason that English is a global language spoken as a *lingua franca* around the world, and it is a universal obligation for everyone, including themselves, to know it. They also thought that what makes learning English even more important is that it is relatively easy to learn for everyone. The idea of English as a language of communication abroad was shared also by the reference group, but their beliefs about the usefulness of English focused more on people travelling abroad for a holiday and on communication situations connected to that scenario. Also, the idea of English as a *lingua franca* between people of different nationalities was explicitly mentioned by only one informant in the reference group, whereas it was explained in more detail by two informants in the CLIL group. The difference in understanding the global use of

English in the two groups might partly be due to the two different learning environments. The CLIL group informants' international classroom has possibly made them more aware of the multitude of nationalities that speak English as well as of the increasing mobility of people in the globalised world. Getting to know their classmates who come from different nationalities has probably widened the informants' perspective on why people travel and move to other countries. The reference group informants, however, mostly had experiences of travelling abroad with their families for recreation, which was then reflected in their answers. This difference can also be partly explained by the age difference of the two groups. Although the reference group was not used to international surroundings in their school at the time of the interview, it is possible that they will come into contact with people of different nationalities in their future years, which might bring about similar contemplations about the globality of English that the CLIL group already had.

The CLIL group had more uses for English in their own lives at the moment and they saw more uses for it in the future than the reference group. A recurrent theme among the reference group was that they did not need English for anything yet and that English would be needed in adulthood. Their view on the obligation to know English was limited to adults, and therefore did not see that they themselves were required to know English yet. The voices that the reference group used were mostly those of "learner-users", which reflected their perception of themselves as learners of English who sometimes also used it. They all mentioned that learning and using English happens at school, with more emphasis on learning than using. After prompting questions, they mentioned using English in their freetime activities but they did not see this as "proper" usage. Proper usage of English, according to their answers about the general usefulness of English, takes place when speaking with foreigners, which was not part of their freetime activities.

The CLIL group, however, saw themselves as independent users of English in many situations. They mentioned many activities where they use English at the moment (such as speaking with Finnish and non-Finnish friends, recreational activities, school and travelling) and they

believed that these activities would continue in the future. For them, further studies after compulsory school and working life would also require using English. Thus, the future uses for English were more clearly defined for the CLIL group than for the reference group. This difference could be partly explained by the different learning environment, the CLIL informants being more used to English-speaking surroundings and activities. However, the centrality of adulthood in the reference group's answers could also be attributed to their younger age. It is possible that, after passing from elementary school to junior secondary school, pupils start to be more interested in and get more information about the different activities that belong to an adult world. This is why the CLIL informants were more specific about these activities, whereas the reference group, with less information about them, passed them off as "adults' business".

The CLIL group seemed to have more personal motivation to study English than the reference group, which was reflected in two different, possibly even opposing reasons that they had for learning English. The CLIL group informants expressed a valuation for what they saw as the aesthetic aspect of English, saying that they thought it to be a beautiful and an intellectual language. On the other hand, the reference group's reason for learning English was that it is an obligatory school subject. Although some reference group informants also expressed an interest in the English language, the fact remained that it was imposed on them by the school system. Thus, they pointed out a motivation from outside, which was not present in the CLIL group. This is understandable, since studying English is certainly obligatory for everyone in the Finnish school system, whereas attending more extensive English-language education is not.

Considering the answers to the question "How is English studied?", the main difference between the beliefs of the two groups had to do with the role of written and spoken language. For the reference group, school was central in learning English, with exercises in written language being the most important activity. They admitted that some learning might take place also in recreational activities, but in those cases, concentrating and a deliberate attempt at learning was

needed. They expressed doubt as to the usefulness of spoken language in learning, and it seemed that, to them, written language was more tangible and therefore more guaranteed to develop one's English skills. The CLIL group, on the other hand, expressed some conflicting ideas about the usefulness of school in learning. Many informants mentioned that if someone wanted to learn English, they should be exposed to formal education, such as school or an English language course. However, when it came to their own learning processes, some informants pointed out that school was irrelevant. Here, they often talked about English classes in particular and mentioned that the English textbook and the exercises in it seemed "a different world", separate from their everyday lives.

One CLIL informant had an active role in their own learning and mentioned a specific learning strategy they used when following teaching in the classroom. Most of the other informants did not take a strong stance for or against formal teaching, but simply pointed out that they use English at school, referring to all kinds of situations where English is present, including English classes, other subject classes and communication with classmates. There was a general consensus among the CLIL group about the usefulness of recreational activities in learning English. They pointed out that English could be learnt in recreational activities by concentrating and making a deliberate effort on learning (examples 66 and 72), as well as "by accident", with no explicit goal for learning in mind (examples 62, 65, 70 and 78). Although formal education and recreational activities were seen as efficient in learning, the most important activity for developing one's English skills was communicating with people in English. This included speaking with foreigners as well as with Finnish people who have good English skills. This was a major difference to the reference group, who saw spoken language as relevant to people who had a good command of English already, not as an effective way to learn it.

The voices that the informants used reflected the opinions they had on the different themes of knowing and learning English. The reference group concentrated more on expressing their

learning in their answers, often preferring to speak about learning in collective terms, by using "we" that referred to the whole class. The CLIL group, however, concentrated more on the fact that they *use* English more than they *learn* it, and that they have sufficient expertise on the matter to give evaluations of others' skills and to teach English to people whose skills are not as advanced as theirs. They expressed a sense of ownership towards the English language, whereas the reference group saw good English skills as something that adults might have and something that they are still striving to achieve.

The voices of expertise that the CLIL informants used also gave some indications about why some of them believed school was irrelevant in their learning. Since all but one of the informants saw themselves as not only users of English but also as teachers of English in their own circle, learning new aspects about the English language would require a great deal from the formal English teaching that they attend. Prodromou (2003), in his article on the idiomaticity of language and the non-native speaker, points out that idioms, which are features of language that do not correspond to the dictionary definitions of words (2003: 43), are difficult to teach in EFL (English as a foreign language) education with a non-native teacher: "if their teacher was a non-native speaker using materials which neglected to focus on idiomaticity it is possible that one could reach a reasonable level of English without ever having to encounter or engage with idiomatic language" (2003: 45). As mentioned in section 2.2, the CLIL teacher is not required to be a native speaker of the language of instruction, but an expert on the content subject with sufficient skills in the instructional language. Although content expertise is crucial, the fact remains that the instruction is given in English, which, as we have seen, is the language of everyday use outside school in addition to classroom activities for many CLIL students. This might produce a contrast voiced by Sofia in example 77, with the students' contact with idiomatic language use in their freetime activities clashing with the textbook English encountered at school.

However, it is also possible that being a user of and an expert in English might also give the students misconceptions about what constitutes good English skills and about their own level of English, and thereby even block the processing of new information. For example, a student who has very advanced skills in English for their own uses might still not be an expert when it comes to vocabulary about a topic as yet unfamiliar to them or to a particular register of speech. Whether this is the case or not, the students' skills should be acknowledged and made use of in formal language teaching.

The comparison of the two groups in this study allowed a discussion on learner beliefs in two different groups of informants and on the possibility of two different learning environments having an effect on these beliefs. It is possible to conclude from the results this comparison yielded that both the age of the learners as well as their learning environments had an effect on the beliefs they held and on the way they voiced their beliefs. Based on the experience gained by conducting this study, I would suggest some alterations to the research process in possible future studies of a similar kind. One improvement has to do with the interview situation: after eliciting a brief response from the informant, more prompting questions should be made in order to clarify a vague answer. If no clarifications are made, the answer will be difficult, perhaps even impossible, to include in the data analysis. Another improvement has to do with the selection of informants. The age difference of the two groups in this comparative study was a variable whose effects to the interpretation of the data were difficult to account for. This is why a similar interview study on two groups of the same age might provide more reliable results. In addition to the age difference, there were differences in the informants' background, with some informants having spent part of their childhood abroad and some in Finland. A similar study might be conducted with more concentration on the informants' backgrounds, either selecting informants from as similar backgrounds as possible or studying the effects of the informants' backgrounds on their beliefs in more detail.

More research about learner beliefs and attitudes is needed in order to maintain and develop the relevancy of formal education in the learning process, and to develop learners' motivation for studying English as well as other foreign languages. Examining one group of students provides valuable contextual information about beliefs in a particular geographical and educational setting, but information about learner beliefs in a wider scale is also needed. Revealing more about learner beliefs in different settings would require several studies in different contexts, as well as some quantitative studies with a larger sample of informants. However, a semi-structured interview study proved to be helpful in illuminating the aspects of learning English that were relevant to the informants. The goal of this study, similarly to other qualitative studies on beliefs, was to reveal not *the* truth, but the informants' subjective reality, *their* truth (Riley 1997: 127).

8. Conclusion

This study revealed some of the beliefs that a group of CLIL students attending a Finnish international school held about the knowledge of English and the learning of English. A wider perspective to these beliefs was provided by comparing these beliefs to the ones held by a group of pupils, three years younger, attending a regular Finnish elementary school. The following four points were central to the results that this comparison provided: 1) the CLIL group saw English as an everyday part of their lives whereas the reference group saw English as a tool mainly for adults' use; 2) the CLIL group believed that developing one's English skills happens best via spoken language and by communicating in English, whereas the reference group believed that learning English happens deliberately via written language; 3) the CLIL group believed that using one's English skills are an integral part of learning it - one learns English by using it - whereas the reference group believed in a consecutive process where one first learns English and only then starts using it; and 4) the CLIL group was more confident about using English, which could be seen in

their voices of expertise, whereas the reference group held beliefs about their role as language learners rather than users, which could be seen in their voices of learning and developing.

In the results presented in this study, we can see a difference in the beliefs about English language learning among pupils following regular teaching and pupils following English-language education. The reference group's concentration on written language conflicted with the CLIL group's concentration on spoken language. From the CLIL group's confidence about their English skills, we might conclude that a presence of English in other subjects than just English classes might be helpful for bridging the gap that lies between learning English in its written form and using English in its spoken form for many pupils following regular English teaching. This seems to assert the benefits of CLIL. Another approach that combines several content areas in regular formal education is cross-curricular teaching (Barnes 2007). Using a cross-curricular approach would allow the integration of several school subjects, such as examining a historical event by using frameworks of history, geography and English in the same course module. This multidisciplinary approach is already often used together with the CLIL method (Marsh et al. 1999: 34), integrating several content subjects and a foreign language to create complete, meaningful themes of learning. Examining a topic from a multidisciplinary perspective might provide more opportunities for authentic learning situations, which were clearly lacking in the experiences of an informant who expressed the English textbook to be "a different world". Also, the advanced skills of many CLIL students might be better employed in a multidisciplinary setting where information about a non-language topic is given together with details on linguistic features relevant in the discussion of this topic.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview structure

(Aro, Mari. 2009. "Appendix 3". *Speakers and Doers: Polyphony and Agency in Children's Beliefs about Language Learning*. University of Jyväskylä.)

1) Why is English studied?

Why do people study English? Where and how can English skills be useful?

Why do you study English? Where and how do you use English now / in the future?

Uses of speaking / reading / writing / understanding English?

2) Where is English studied?

What should one do in order to learn English?

What do you do in order to learn?

At school / at home

In what kinds of places can you find English?

3) How is English studied?

What should one do in order to learn English?

What do you do in order to learn English?

At school / at home

TV?

Pop music?

Computer / PS games?

English language books?

Why are some people good at English, others not?

Are you good at English? Why (not)?

Appendix 2: Permission form

3.4.2013

Hyvät 8.-luokkalaisten vanhemmat,

Olen syksyllä 2013 kieltenopettajaksi valmistuva opiskelija Tampereen yliopistossa ja olen työstämässä pro gradu -tutkielmaani englannin kielen opettamisesta. Tutkimukseni koskee englannin kielellä annettavaa opetusta seuraavia oppilaita, eli ns. “enkkuluokkien” oppilaita. Tarkoitukseni on tutkia sitä, minkälaiset käsitykset englannin kielen oppimisesta ja tarkemmin ottaen englannin puhumisesta enkkuluokkien oppilailla on verrattuna tavallista, suomenkielistä opetusta seuraaviin oppilaisiin. Olettamukseni on, että enkkuluokkien oppilailla voi olla syvällisempi käsitys puhutun kielen tärkeydestä oppimistilanteissa kuin suomenkielisten koulujen oppilailla.

Tutkimuskohteekseni valikoitui Amurin *Finnish International School of Tampereen* 8. luokan ryhmä, ja olen rajannut tutkimukseni koskemaan ainoastaan ryhmän oppilaita, joiden äidinkieli/kotikieli on suomi. Kerään aineistoa tutkimustani varten haastatteluiden avulla, jotka suoritetaan yksilöhaastatteluina (rento, keskustelunomainen haastattelu minun ja oppilaan välillä) kotitalouden tuntien aikana huhtikuun lopussa.

Pyydän teitä ilmoittamaan tällä lomakkeella suostumuksenne siihen, että lapsenne voi osallistua ko. haastatteluihin.

Ystävällisin terveisin,

Jenni Niska (HuK)
Tampereen yliopisto

Kyllä, lapseni saa osallistua yllämainitun kuvauksen mukaiseen haastatteluun.

Ei, lapseni ei saa osallistua yllämainitun kuvauksen mukaiseen haastatteluun.

 Päiväys

 Allekirjoitus