

English as a Lingua Franca:
Teachers' Discourses on Accent and Identity

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Abbreviations

CEF	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
EFL	English as a foreign language
ELF	English as a lingua franca
ELT	English language teaching
ENL	English as a native language
ESL	English as a second language
GA	General American
L1	First language
L2	Second language
NNS	Nonnative speaker
NS	Native speaker
RP	Received pronunciation
SLA	Second language acquisition

1 INTRODUCTION

The English language has become a global matter. Its uses have expanded to cover virtually anything from the language of international relations to the language of science; from the language of international business to the language of tourism and popular culture. The presence of English can be felt in all existing media. Thus, today, English represents an unparalleled lingua franca, with its “enormous functional flexibility” (House 2002: 243). An essential reason for this expansion has been the role of nonnative speakers of English and their ready acceptance of the language. In fact, the overall majority of English speakers worldwide are nonnative speakers who often use the language in influential networks, and the proportion of those speakers is growing rapidly.

Along with the variety of uses in different fields, nonnative speakers have also brought about a variety of Englishes, in the linguistic sense. Since English used as a lingua franca characteristically manifests itself in spoken language, accent is one evident area of this diversity. According to those who appreciate linguistic diversity, variation in accent is acceptable as long as intelligibility and conversation flow will be secured. This means that interlocutors are required high-grade accommodation skills as well as cultural sensitivity since many of the English accents — native or nonnative — they will encounter will be unfamiliar to them.

The concept of English as a lingua franca (ELF) has been a disputed matter among linguists for some time now, particularly in the fields of second language acquisition (SLA) and English language teaching (ELT). In these fields, the ultimate goal or standard has been the (unrealistic) ideal of a native speaker, and words such as interlanguage and fossilisation have been used to describe the speech of learners on their way towards that target. Foreign accents have indeed been something to get rid of by training. However, the emergence of ELF has given reason to reconsider the traditional native speaker models. Instead of those, ELF gives priority to efficiency and relevance in ELT, and in language use in general (Seidlhofer 2001: 141). ELF has been shifting the focus from native speakers to nonnative speakers, and suggests that the model in ELT could be based on the proficient, international speaker of English.

The shift in focus also affects English teachers' self-concept. Traditionally, ELT has offered nonnative teachers only a limited number of professional roles to

identify with: nonnative teachers have had to choose between the native community (which is unobtainable to them in reality) and the community of second language learners (which reduces their appreciation and authority in the field). Apart from those, ELF provides another, more appealing identity option to nonnative teachers: instead of perpetual *learners* of English, they can now regard themselves as legitimate English *users* in the international world, without the pressure of mastering some irrelevant aspects of native speaker competency.

This interview study — using discourse analysis as the method of analysis — combines ELF, ELT, accent, and identity. It concentrates on the societal aspects of English as a lingua franca; the perspective is that of seven nonnative English teachers in Finland in lower and upper secondary schools. There are two research questions: one focuses on the teachers' accent perceptions, including native and nonnative accents, the Finnish accent, and the teachers' own accents of English. The other is about the teachers' (professional) identities as English speakers. The intention is to find out how English teachers in Finland are disposed towards the current status of English, and how they see themselves in that setting when it comes to accents, teaching, and professionalism.

I find teachers interesting subjects because in practise they are the core of the educational system. Varghese *et al.* point out that “in order to understand language teaching and learning we need to understand teachers; and in order to understand teachers, we need to have a clearer sense of who they are: the professional, cultural, political, and individual identities which they claim or which are assigned to them” (2005: 22). This is what this study aims at, charting the sociocultural and sociopolitical dimensions of teaching English. Finland, a country where English is widely — and increasingly — spoken as a foreign language or as a lingua franca, provides a suitable setting for this piece of research, especially because comparable studies in the field are very limited in number.

My interest in accent, in turn, draws from the fact that it is such a pertinent part of speech, each English speaker possessing a unique accent. Consequently, accents easily invoke strong opinions, both positive and negative. This was also expected among the interviewees of this study. The discourses the teachers produced were somewhat contradictory: on one hand, the teachers feel that native accents are both personally more pleasing and more suitable for teaching than nonnative accents. On the other hand, the teachers are relatively satisfied with

their own nonnative accents, and the Finnish accent in general apart from the lack of intonation. Thus, there appear to be differences in what is required in school settings, where native ideals are still prioritised, and in other settings, where more practical communication skills are approved of.

Together with accent, my interest in identity originates from the fact that today, the professional identities of English teachers are — or at least could be — in a state of flux. In the words of Pavlenko and Blackledge, “identity becomes interesting, relevant, and visible when it is contested or in crisis. In other words, we see identity as particularly salient in contexts where multiple interpretations or meanings collide, resulting in a power struggle as to whose interpretation prevails” (2004: 19). This describes well the current situation, in which the proponents and opponents of ELF interpret the linguistic development and its implications very differently, the former often from the perspective of nonnative speakers, and the latter of native speakers. Accent, in itself, is a significant factor in linguistic identity formation.

The discerned identity discourses suggest the same kind of contradiction and polarisation between school and the world outside school as the accent discourses: the teachers regard themselves as English learners mostly in contexts related to school, whereas their identities as English users take over often in leisure time. Another complex discourse is that of nativeness: the teachers admire native accents, wishing to acquire one themselves even though they are aware of the improbability of this. However, in both the accent and identity discourses, there are some serious discordant notes, which implies that the ideas connected to English as a lingua franca and ELT may indeed be slowly changing.

I open the thesis by introducing its key concepts and explaining the background: there is one chapter on ELF, one on the relationship of ELF and ELT, one on identity and one on accent respectively (Chapters 2-5). The background leads to the clarification of the research questions (Chapter 6). I will then describe the method, the participants and the procedure in detail (Chapter 7). The next two chapters (Chapters 8 and 9) are about the findings: one deals with the discerned discourses on accent, and the other the discourses on identity. Finally, in Discussion (Chapter 10), I will examine the findings in a more general light, trying to find reasons for the teachers' perceptions, on one hand, and suggesting implications for ELT, on the other.

2 ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA

The purpose of this chapter is to provide background information on ELF. The chapter divides into three sections: the first one focuses on terminology, and introduces ways to group English speakers around the world. In the second, I will consider the differences between ELF, ENL and EFL, arguing that ELF can be distinguished from both. In the third section, I will report on ELF research and its main findings.

2.1 ELF and the English-speaking Community

English as a lingua franca has gradually been established as the main term of what earlier was referred to, and occasionally still is, as *English as an international language*, *English as a global language*, or *English as a world language* (Seidlhofer 2004: 210). This variety of terms suggests that scholars have been aware of the global use of English for a long while now. The varied terminology also suggests that the approaches to the phenomenon of global English have been diverse, even conflicting: some linguists have treated ELF as a legitimate variety in its own right, while others have doubted its relevance to the study of the English language in the first place (see for instance Mollin 2007 for discussion on variety status criteria). The stance of the present study towards ELF is congruent with the former view, and from the many options, *English as a lingua franca* has been chosen as the main term.

Today, the majority of ELF users are nonnative speakers inside and outside English-speaking countries (Llurda 2004: 320), so that as the term *lingua franca* implies, ELF is “an additionally acquired language system that serves as a means of communication between speakers of different first languages” (Seidlhofer 2001: 146). As a consequence, in a sense, there are no native speakers of ELF. This does not mean that ELF would be a restricted pidgin language: ELF is used in countless, often influential domains, which leads to a great deal of linguistic variation and presumes elaboration (ibid.). Diversity, in turn, does not mean that ELF would be incomprehensible: diversity of linguistic backgrounds, uncertainty of shared knowledge, and potential misunderstandings can be tackled by special kinds of communication skills, such as various (proactive) clarification and repair strategies, which often promote intelligibility among ELF speakers (Mauranen 2006: 147).

In the 1980s, Kachru (1985) launched a useful description of the spread of English by dividing the English-speaking community into three concentric circles: the inner circle, the outer circle, and the expanding circle (see the left-hand circle in Figure 1, in which the numbers refer to English speakers in millions). The inner circle includes those English-speaking countries where the language serves as a native language (ENL), for example the UK and Australia. The outer circle refers to countries which have experienced periods of colonisation by English-speaking communities, and the language has thereby been institutionalised in these nonnative communities. Examples are India, Nigeria and Singapore, where people use English as a second language (ESL). The expanding circle, for its part, includes countries where English is used as a foreign language (EFL), for instance in China, Israel and Finland. As the outer and the expanding circles share many characteristics, their clear-cut separation is not always simple (Kachru 1985: 13-14).

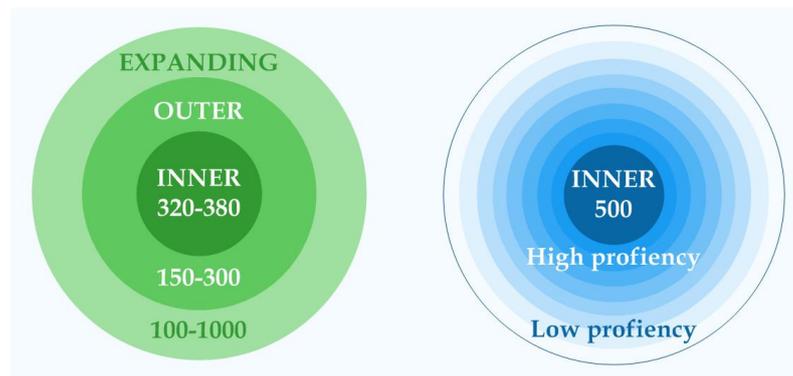


Figure 1: Kachru's (1985, 2004) circles of English (adapted from Graddol 2006: 110)

Since the 1980s, this division into three circles has become increasingly problematic: the neat concepts of ENL, ESL and EFL have become blurred in the globalised world (Graddol 2006: 110). Kachru himself has suggested another kind of circle (see the right-hand circle in Figure 1) in which the inner circle in the core now represents highly proficient speakers of English — native or nonnative — and the former outer and expanding circles have merged into a community of less proficient users (Kachru 2004). This depicts the nature of ELF better: ELF concerns all the users of English, the whole community of English speakers, including natives (Seidlhofer 2004: 210). However, since Kachru's original circles are still feasible in many ways as well as still frequently in use in discussions of the spread of English, I refer to them in this study occasionally, bearing in mind that an alternative abstraction of global

English speakers exists. Anyhow, if we are to see ELF as a legitimate language variety, it is important to consider how it differs from the native language of the inner circle, and the foreign language of the expanding circle.

2.2 ELF versus ENL and EFL

According to Mukherjee (2005), the concept of native speaker can be understood in various ways (see Figure 2): there are linguistic (dividing into usage-based and usage-independent definitions) and non-linguistic (dividing into attitudinal and ideological definitions) approaches as well as differences in whether we are dealing with an abstract concept or with actual language users. If the native speaker is seen non-linguistically, that is the status of a native speaker is seen stemming from the birthright, then Seidlhofer's view is reasonable: ELF is not ENL simply because nonnative speakers cannot become members of the native speaker community through education, "no matter how hard they try, no matter how long they study" (2001: 136). However, if we see the native speaker purely in linguistic terms, that is "nativeness is a matter of linguistic competence which is mirrored in language use" (Mukherjee 2005: 11), then a nonnative speaker *can* become a native speaker provided that he or she reaches a native-like proficiency in lexicogrammaticality, acceptability and idiomaticity (ibid.).

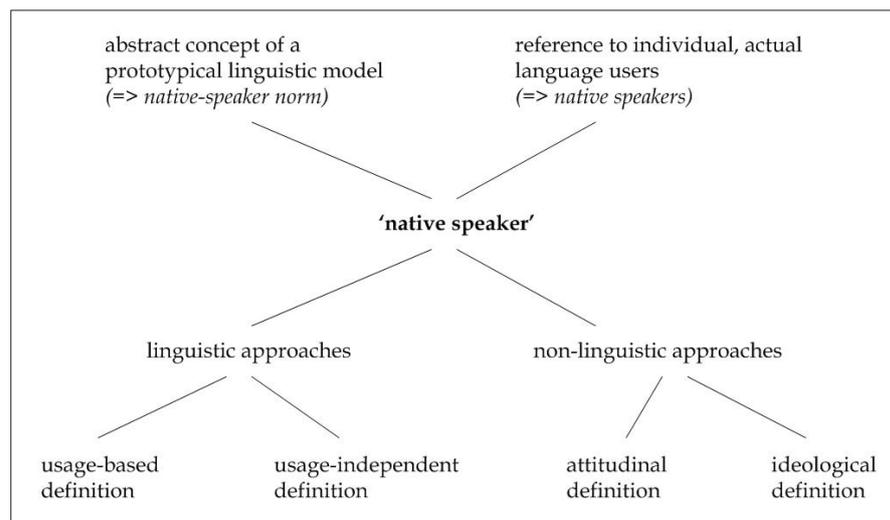


Figure 2: The native speaker concept by Mukherjee (2005: 9)

Even if nativeness was seen in linguistic terms, reaching that level among nonnative speakers is exceptional (see for instance Marx 2002); in practice, it is reasonable to distinguish ELF from ENL. Further, linguistic competence is not the only issue here. It is perhaps even more important to understand that (abstract) native-speaker norms do not necessarily hold true with successful ELF interaction by multilingual speakers; “ELF talk cannot be conceived with a view to an ideal English norm, and the ELF speaker cannot be measured in his/her competence vis-à-vis ‘the native speaker’” (House 2003: 557). Indeed, if native-speaker norms do not improve ELF communication, there is little sense to prioritise them (Jenkins 2006: 140). Thus ELF is a feasible and acceptable alternative to ENL; it is a variety that also native speakers of English need to learn and adapt to (Jenkins 2000: 227; Llurda 2004: 320).

Though it is easy to confuse ELF with EFL both as abbreviations and as concepts, these two are not the same thing either. One of the principal differences between them is what is considered an error. As the goal of foreign language learning is near-native competence — the expanding circle is expected to conform to the inner circle (Seidlhofer 2004: 213) — any deviations from that are errors, whereas in ELF contexts the same ‘errors’ can be regarded as different variants (Jenkins 2006: 141). This is not to say that in ELF interaction any kind of language use is acceptable: language use that results in communication breakdown, for example due to inadequate pronunciation skills, can be considered an error. Thus, we can find a range of proficiency levels not only among English learners, but also among ELF users (*ibid.*).

The distinction between learner English and ELF also relates to the identities of English speakers. Most ELF users have been English learners first. Nonetheless, at some point, nonnative English speakers may want to dissociate themselves from the identity of an eternal learner, and associate themselves with a more convenient identity of an ELF user, corresponding better to their actual contexts and purposes of language use. Many communities may benefit from the divorce between ELF and EFL, specifically nonnative teachers of English worldwide: the separation moderates the inequality between native and nonnative teachers by offering another identity option besides the learner or the fossilised user (Jenkins 2006: 143). The issues of teacher dichotomy and identity will be examined further in

Chapters 3 and 4. To conclude this chapter, I will briefly describe ELF research and its main findings.

2.3 Research into ELF

Although scholars have been interested in the spread of English, and for instance the developments in the outer circle for a couple of decades, specific research into ELF has not started to accumulate until the turn of the millennium (Mauranen and Metsä-Ketelä 2006). Research into ELF complements both ENL and EFL research, and it is not designed to replace either (Seidlhofer 2001: 145); specific ELF research is needed if it is understood as a variety on its own. Nonetheless, according to Jenkins (2006: 150), many SLA researchers have stuck to interlanguage theories irrelevant to ELF, and cognitive-mentalistic orientation has dominated at the expense of social-contextual approach which would often be more fruitful in ELF contexts. Further, SLA scholars often have monolingual bias (*ibid.*: 152), whereas the nature of ELF interactions is multilingual by necessity.

Despite the varied approaches, ELF research has gradually established itself during the 21st century. Studies have been carried out mainly on spoken data since language changes can be detected most easily in its spoken form; written language changes much more slowly, but a written variety of ELF appears to be evolving as well (Seidlhofer 2004: 223). The scope of research has been limited by the level of language, the linguacultural background of the interlocutors, and the domain (*ibid.*: 215). Linguists have been particularly interested in such ELF regions as East and South Asia and Europe, taking a wide range of L1 backgrounds on board (*ibid.*: 221). Many scholars have worked on pragmatics of ELF; interest in lexicogrammar, metadiscourse and discourse organisation has also grown recently (Mauranen and Metsä-Ketelä 2006: 3). On the societal level, the number of ELF attitude studies, concentrating mainly on attitudes among teachers and learners, have been growing in recent years, and the general academic interest in language and identity (Jenkins 2007: 199) has also spread into the field of ELF.

Since descriptions and reference works seem to be the precondition for a wholehearted acceptance of ELF (Seidlhofer 2004: 215), devoted codifying is going on in consequence. The VOICE (Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English) project supervised by Barbara Seidlhofer (VOICE website), and the ELFA (English

as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings) project supervised by Anna Mauranen (ELFA website), offer corpora for solid ELF description, the former providing a more general picture, and the latter focusing on ELF in academic settings. The first international conference of English as a lingua franca, the ELF Forum (ELF Forum website), was organised in March 2008 at the University of Helsinki, bringing all the different domains of ELF research together.

The findings of ELF research have helped describe and define the characteristics of ELF as a variety. The groundbreaking study has been Jenkins' (2000) research into the phonology of ELF: she examined which pronunciation 'errors' lead to intelligibility problems in ELF communication and which do not. Based on her results, Jenkins suggested a Lingua Franca Core arguing that an ability to imitate a native-speaker variety precisely is not crucial; instead, accommodation skills have a critical role. Studies of ELF pragmatics, for their part, have indicated that in ELF communication, misunderstandings are not particularly frequent, interference from L1 interactional norms is rare, and the interaction appears to be consensus-oriented, cooperative, and mutually supportive (House 2002; Seidlhofer 2004; Mauranen 2006). Finally, lexicogrammatical studies have shown that typical EFL errors, such as omitting the third person -s, mixing the relative pronouns *who* and *which*, using articles inconsistently, simplifying tags, using prepositions freely, overusing verbs with generic sense, and overdoing explicitness, do not necessarily hinder ELF interaction. Instead, metaphorical language, idioms, phrasal verbs and fixed ENL expressions may do so (Seidlhofer 2004: 220).

Summarising the ELF chapter, the main points significant to this study are, first, that English as a lingua franca is a spoken, dynamically evolving variety of English extending over all Kachru's circles, thus concerning both nonnative and native speakers of English. Second, even though some exceptional nonnative speakers may be able to reach linguistic native-speaker competency in English, ELF can be distinguished from ENL, as well as from learner English. Third, the scientific approaches to ELF have been varied, and the research into it is in comparatively early stages. In the following chapter, I will discuss the controversial relationship between ELF and English language teaching.

3 ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND ELF

If attitudes towards ELF as a variety have been conflicting, the attitudes towards integrating ELF into English language teaching have been even more so (see for example Kuo 2006). Subscribing to reforming ELT along the principles of ELF in general, in this chapter I will discuss some issues that would be in particular need of reconsideration. These are, for example, the concept of communicative competence, prevailing native speaker authority, and the dichotomy between native and nonnative teachers. To provide a more local picture, I will also describe the ELT practices in Finland.

3.1 Persistent Native Speaker Authority

The ideas of Communicative Language Teaching with the goal of communicative competence have dominated ELT over thirty years. The concept of communicative competence can be divided into four competences: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic (see for example Alptekin 2002 and Leung 2005 for other classifications and further descriptions). From the perspective of ELF, the principal problem with communicative competence is that its linguistic and social goals are ultimately constructed on the native speaker model; “learning a foreign language becomes a kind of enculturation, where one acquires new cultural frames of reference and a new world view, reflecting those of the target language culture and its speakers” (Alptekin 2002: 58). Applying this to the English language with global spread over multitude of cultures seems unfeasible: “any attempt to define the cultural context of the language ... is inherently an attempt to promote one English speaking community's culture at the expense of others” (Modiano 2001: 161). In addition to the difficulty of choosing a politically correct native target culture, enculturation may also influence identities in a harmful way.

Another problem apart from the failure to recognise and appreciate nonnative English-speaking communities is that the native speaker model behind the concept of communicative competence is often idealised. In other words, there is “tendency to assume that there is an almost hard-wired relationship between the status of being a native speaker of a language and a complete knowledge of and about that language ... and that all native speakers share the same knowledge”

(Leung 2005: 130). Of course, such universal native-speaker competence does not exist; linguistic knowledge as well as competence definitely vary also among native speakers. Yet the notion of the idealised native speaker — carrying economic, social and symbolic power — has been deeply integrated in language theorising, description, and teaching (Seidlhofer 2004: 212; Leung 2005: 128).

Any kind of standard language — as often the model in ELT as the idealised native speaker — is an abstraction, too. Standard language maintenance, which is common in many countries, has admittedly some benefits, too: promoting a standard, native variety is often justified for example by clear communication and intelligibility (Widdowson 1994: 379). It has also been argued that standard native English is the only variety which can bring liberty to all English users and learners (Quirk 1990). It is worth noting, however, that standard English is essentially a written variety, which is mainly used for institutional purposes, such as education, administration, and business (Widdowson 2003: 38). ELF, in contrast, is essentially a spoken variety, whose standards and norms are much more difficult, and often even unnecessary, to regulate. Another point of concern here is the traditional authority of the standard chosen for ELT: a self-elected, educated native minority, a kind of “exclusive club” (Widdowson 1994: 379). As Widdowson puts it, “standard English, then, is not simply a means of communication but the symbolic possession of a particular community, expressive of its identity, its conventions, and values” (ibid.: 381). This educated minority represents gatekeepers to nonnative speakers, and often also to uneducated natives.

The native speaker authority is also reflected in the dichotomy between native and nonnative teachers. On a global scale, nonnative teachers of English have traditionally been on the losing side in comparison since professional expertise, native-speakerness (Leung 2005: 129) as well as the notion of authenticity (Widdowson 1994: 387) have privileged native teachers. Nonnative teachers have nonetheless several advantages over native teachers, and over monolingual native teachers in particular: nonnative teachers “know the target language as a foreign language, share with their students the experience of what it is like to try and make it their own, often through the same first language/culture ‘filter’, and can represent relevant role models for learners” (Seidlhofer 2001: 134-135). In other words, nonnative teachers are usually both competent speakers (informants) and competent pedagogues (instructors) of the target language by knowing the process

of foreign language learning, and knowing the students' L1 (Seidlhofer 1999: 236-237; Llorca 2004: 318). Thus, regarding nonnative teachers as inferior to natives is groundless, particularly as to ELF interaction.

3.2 Reforming ELT by ELF

Many ELF speakers are misled by the prevailing — and often mixed — ideologies of nativeness and standard language (Jenkins 2006: 143), but those who have recognised the legitimacy of ELF and the nativised varieties of English have seriously questioned native speakers' "ownership of English" (Widdowson 1994) and standard native language both generally and in ELT for many reasons.

Perhaps the most obvious reason for opposing to native speaker authority is the fact that nonnative and nativised speakers clearly outnumber native speakers of English worldwide (House 2002: 244). One estimation is that there are between 320-380 million ENL speakers, 300-500 million ESL speakers, and about 500-1000 million EFL speakers in the world (Crystal 2003); these numbers of ESL and EFL speakers simply cannot be ignored in ELT. Secondly, the irrelevance of standard native models has been recognised in ELF communication; native-like production is often not only unrealistic but also unnecessary — or even counter-productive — for nonnative speakers in intercultural communication (Jenkins 2006: 143). The same holds true with native patterns of cultural behaviour (Widdowson 1994: 387; Llorca 2004: 319), which are surely irrelevant in nonnative-nonnative communication. Thirdly, superior native-speaker ideals in ELT have been questioned because the exhaustive linguistic competence of native speakers is a myth, and native-speaker English is thus not less varied than that of nonnative speakers' (Widdowson 1994: 383).

One factor promoting the image of the infallible native speaker has been the dominant SLA discourse which portrays L2 learning as "a never-ending elusive quest for NS competence" (Pavlenko 2003: 259), suggesting that the learner is somehow 'at fault' when he or she is unable to acquire fully an L2 (Marx 2002: 277). The emergence and recognition of ELF is gradually changing this view: the target in ELT should be the successful multilingual speaker of ELF instead: "the yardstick for measuring ELF speakers' performance should ... be an 'expert in ELF use'" (House 2003: 573).

ELF is likely to influence ELT in many ways in the course of time: it may affect teacher education, curriculum design, textbooks, assessment, and how English is taught for intercultural, lingua franca communication (Alptekin 2002; Seidlhofer 2004). One of the main reasons for not adopting ELF for teaching so far has been the absence of descriptive work; it has been premature to make detailed pedagogical suggestions (Seidlhofer 2004: 225-226; Jenkins 2007: 238). In a sense, ELT is going through a postmodern phase: "old forms and assumptions are rejected, but no new orthodoxy can be offered" quite yet (Seidlhofer 2004: 228). This state of affairs is, however, quickly changing as ELF corpora are busily compiled and examined. Still, the main source of resistance seems to be the deep-rooted native speaker authority: many native and nonnative speakers object to ELF due to prejudice, vested interests, cultural sensibilities, or by aesthetic arguments (Seidlhofer 2001: 151).

There have already been many suggestions for revising ELT in order to match the reality and the needs of the majority of English speakers better. For instance, Leung (2005) has brought up the issue of recontextualising the concept of communicative competence, Llurda (2004) has reconsidered the role of nonnative teachers in the profession of ELT, Lowenberg (2002) has talked about the changes in assessment in the expanding circle, and Alptekin (2002) has compiled a new pedagogic model, which takes into account both the local and global needs of intercultural English speakers. McKay (2002) has also suggested a theory of teaching and learning English as an international language. The theory caters for crosscultural and multilingual communities, questions native speaker models, and recognizes the status of local varieties of English; intelligibility comes before correctness, and intercultural strategies are needed to promote politeness. Fostering textual competence would still be important. The fact that ELF is a highly diverse language variety — simply because lingua franca language always adapts to changing circumstances (Joseph 2004: 186) — must be taken into account in ELT. Coping with diversity is a question of awareness, sensitivity and accommodation skills which could and should be integrated in ELT.

Finally, it must be underlined that in any language education learner choice is essential, particularly with adult learners. However, the choice between the targets of ELF or native varieties "needs to be made in full knowledge of the sociolinguistic facts and without pressure from the dominant native speaker

community" (Jenkins 2006: 155). Nonnative teachers should also think over their teaching target and practices in the light of ELF.

3.3 ELT in Finland

In Finland, compulsory schooling lasts for nine years: elementary school lasts for six years, followed by lower secondary school lasting for three years. After this basic education, young people aged 15 or 16 apply either for general upper secondary schools or vocational schools where the education usually lasts for three years. General upper secondary education prepares students for the national matriculation examination. In the Finnish educational system, English is by far the most widely taught foreign language; most pupils start studying English at the age of eight or nine as their first foreign language. English teachers in Finland have almost without exception a master's degree in English, that is, they are highly educated. The teacher participants of this study work either in a lower or upper secondary school, teaching young people aged 12-19.

Finland has been quite a clear example of Kachru's expanding circle countries. However, Finnish society has also been affected by general global changes for a while now: as both outward and inward mobility has increased, Finland has become more multicultural and multilingual (Kalaja 2006: 54). Consequently, both users and different uses of English have increased; both classrooms and teachers have become more heterogeneous (*ibid.*: 55). Since Finland has never been colonised by an English-speaking country, we have no tradition of native-speaker teachers of English, as is the case for example in many postcolonial South and East Asian countries. Nevertheless, Finnish ELT has also relied on native-speaker norms and models. The traditional standard varieties, British English, and later American English to some extent, have dominated as teaching targets.

The two principal documents regulating foreign language teaching in Finland are the National Core Curricula for Basic Education (2004) and Upper Secondary Schools (2003), and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF) (2001). The National Core Curricula do not recognise ELF as such. The status of English is, however, special in the curricula as the objectives of language proficiency are higher for English than for other foreign languages. Even though the latest curricula (2003; 2004) have apparently loosened their dedication to

native targets and native cultures, there are still traces of this left (Hynninen 2006: 25). For instance, the “target culture” in the curriculum for basic education (2004: 141-142) seems to refer to native cultures, thus appearing outdated in terms of ELF. Although the national curricula have paid some attention to the fact that English is an international language, it is still questionable whether this is reflected in practice in English classes, where the communication between native and nonnative speakers is still emphasised (Hynninen 2006: 25).

CEF, too, addresses both language skills and cultural skills, and influences the curricula and teaching material for its part (Kalaja 2006: 54-55). For example, the common reference levels of CEF have been integrated in the national curricula. Among its other aims, CEF promotes plurilingualism and pluriculturalism (*ibid.*), which dovetails with the principles of ELF, and may affect ELT in Finland in a positive way in consequence. The reference levels, however, clearly indicate that the native speaker is still regarded as the ideal and goal of foreign language learning (Hynninen 2006: 25). Another genuine problem with CEF is that it does not distinguish English from other foreign languages despite the fact that the status of English is unique in the world. What goes somewhat against ELF in both CEF and the national curricula is that learning a foreign language is considered a life-long effort; the goal appears to be the unrealistic and unattainable native-like proficiency.

Other factors guiding ELT in Finland are the national matriculation examination, and teaching material. From the perspective of ELF, testing English skills in the matriculation exam has been in urgent need of reconsideration: listening comprehension tests and written parts have strongly focused on the native speaker and native cultures, while oral skills — a crucial skill for instance in working life — have not been tested at all. In consequence, ELT in upper secondaries has also concentrated on native varieties, and emphasised written competence at the expense of oral skills. Understandably enough, publishers (Otava, WSOY) of upper secondary teaching material justify their overusage of native accents — only 1-3% of the accents were nonnative in the textbooks examined — by the fact that in the matriculation exam they are by far the most used, too (Kivistö 2005: 82).

This means that the initiative for change must come from the Matriculation Examination Board, as well as from the Finnish National Board of Education. The latter has, in fact, submitted a proposal to test students' oral skills in

foreign languages as part of the general assessment in upper secondaries from the autumn 2010 onwards (Liiten 2008). Even though the test will be optional, and not part of the matriculation exam, this is positive development, presuming that the test will be framed around skills expected from a proficient, international speaker of English.

As a background to this study, it is crucial to understand that the relationship between ELT and ELF has been, is, and most probably will continue to be controversial; there are both serious opponents and proponents of ELF and nonnative teachers in ELT. If we are to provide English learners with useful skills in order to cope with diverse, real life intercultural encounters, some serious reconsideration needs to be done. Reforming ELT must start from the very essentials, such as what could be a realistic target for English language teaching and learning. Reconsiderations are needed on a global, as well as on a local level. As will be discussed in the next chapter on identity, the variety of views in ELT makes the identity formation of English teachers particularly complicated.

4 IDENTITY AND ELF

This chapter deals with identity and tries to answer the following questions: how is identity understood in this study? How is identity related to ELF? What has the research into ELF identities been like? What are the options for nonnative English teachers to construct their identity?

4.1 What Is Identity?

Defining such an intricate topic as identity is not a simple matter. In this study, I will use Varghese *et al.*'s definition, which includes three predominant themes in recent theoretical understandings of specifically language teacher identity. The themes are:

1. Identity as multiple, shifting, and in conflict;
2. Identity as crucially related to social, cultural, and political context; and
3. Identity being constructed, maintained and negotiated primarily through discourse (2005: 35).

I discuss these themes one at a time.

The first theme claims that an individual usually adopts numerous, even conflicting, identities that are brought into play at different situations. These points are subscribed to by many other scholars with an interest in identity as well. For instance, Joseph (2004) describes identity as fluid, hybrid and multiple, resulting in an endless identity construction process. Thus change is one of the key words here: people are able to “resist, negotiate, change, and transform themselves and others” (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004: 20). A good example of identities in conflict is our constant balancing between individual and group identities; we are continuously negotiating our relationship to other people, and whether we want to identify with them, and to what extent.

The second theme argues that social, cultural and political contexts affect identity construction. Thus, identities are both context-bound and time-bound (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004: 27). Standard language seems a particularly enlightening case in point here. Standard language, for instance standard English, is always a political product. One of its key social roles is to establish hierarchy for measuring individuals (Joseph 2004: 225). This means operations of local and global

relations of *power*; “speakers of official languages or standard varieties may be regarded as having greater moral and intellectual worth than speakers of unofficial languages or non-standard varieties” (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004: 15). It is no wonder then that acquiring a standard variety of a language is often considered to be of value, and that individuals' linguistic identities are often influenced by hegemonic language ideologies. However, recalling the fact that identities can be renegotiated, resisting and reshaping these ideologies is also possible, for example by creating and using a new version of a dominant standard language, and thus opposing homogenisation (Joseph 2004: 192; Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004: 27).

The third theme brings out the significant relationship between language, discourse and identity. Language is definitely not the only factor in identity construction, but it seems to be the uppermost one. Lippi-Green (1998: 5) and Joseph (2004: 3), too, note that language is the most salient way of establishing individual's psyche and advertising social order and identities. In addition to the fact that language is an important means of constructing identities, identities affect languages, too: “ideologies of language and identity guide ways in which individuals use linguistic resources to index their identities and to evaluate the use of linguistic resources by others” (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004: 14). Furthermore, while language is an important factor in determining an individual's identity, it is also a powerful element in group identities, for example in national or ethnic identities. Sometimes languages play an important role in professional identities as well (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004: 5). It is worth noting, however, that although languages form group identities, all individuals have different knowledge of the same language (Joseph 2004: 38).

Ultimately, people construct identities by setting themselves against other people; we could say that identity is *social* construction upon language (Joseph 2004: 8). This means that in this study, with the social concept of identity in its core, language is also understood as a sociocultural phenomenon.

On the whole, identity construction is a complex phenomenon in the postmodern, globalised world (Jenkins 2007: 198); linguistic identity, attitudes, ideologies, and power intertwine in an intriguing manner. Pavlenko and Blackledge list several recent sociopolitical and socioeconomic trends that have stirred and keep stirring both language ideologies and available identities: “globalization, consumerism, explosion of media technologies, the postcolonial and postcommunist

search for new national identities, formation of new regional coalitions, such as the European Union, dissolution of former coalitions, such as the Soviet Union, repatriation of former colonies, such as Hong Kong, and increased transnational migration" (2004: 2). It is worth noting that the English language has more often than not an integral linguistic role in these postmodern trends.

The English language itself, then, influences its speakers' identities as a world language since all languages that we acquire or are taught have an effect on our ways of thinking and using languages (Llurda 2004: 320). Nonetheless, mother tongue has a special role in classifying, interpreting, imagining, and dreaming; for instance House (2003: 560) and Joseph (2004: 184-185) have argued that mother tongue is principally used for representational functions, whereas lingua francas are mainly used for communicative purposes. If ELF is understood as an international means of communication, its influence on mother tongues and local cultures does not have to be negative at all, because one of the main ideas of ELF is accepting, and promoting, both linguistic and cultural diversity (Modiano 2004: 225). As individuals can be loaded with many languages, so can languages, such as ELF, be loaded with many cultures (Joseph 2004: 167). For example, in many postcolonial contexts, "world languages ... are appropriated as a means of expressing new national, and social identities, rather than as a means of assimilating to former colonial powers" (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004: 5-6). However, ELF cannot be called a culturally neutral language of 'pure communication', because such a language hardly exists (see for example Kayman 2004: 17).

4.2 Research into (ELF) Identities

Today, linguistic identity is a fast-growing field of literature (Jenkins 2007: 198). In fact, researchers of many disciplines have been interested in identity, and the dividing lines between the disciplines have been blurry (Joseph 2004: 65). Despite the growing interest, the field lacks single, coherent theoretical approach. Instead, researchers have used a wide range of methodological approaches and theoretical frameworks (Varghese *et al.* 2005: 23-24). Varghese *et al.* (2005) themselves present social identity theory, situated learning, and image-text as alternatives to examine identity. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004), for their part, present alternative approaches by dividing them into three categories: sociopsychological, interactional

and poststructuralist. I will briefly go through the main differences between these, following Pavlenko and Blackledge, and conclude that the poststructuralist approach comes closest to the understanding of identity in this study.

The sociopsychological paradigm, originating from the 1970's and sprouting from L2 learning and language use, assumes one-to-one correlation between language and identity, and thus examines ethnolinguistic groups. The paradigm has been criticised for its oversimplifications, and its monolingual and monocultural bias, as well as for its methods, such as self-evaluation, questionnaires, and numerical scales. In addition, the sociopsychological approach greatly ignores other linguistic varieties than standard language, which does not reflect linguistic realities. The interactional approach, for its part, appeared in the 1980's. It examines negotiation of identities in code-switching and language choice. The paradigm is ethnographically oriented, and considers social identities as fluid and constructed in linguistic and social interaction. Yet the paradigm has been criticised for regarding identity as an explanatory concept, although identity is far from a clear concept itself. The interactional paradigm also sees links between languages and specific groups too essentialised, ignoring the fact that people can identify themselves with any group even without an access to it.

The third paradigm, the poststructuralist approach, has its origins in Bourdieu's understanding of language as symbolic capital: since this symbolic capital is unequally distributed within a speech community, it results in dominant linguistic groups and institutions as well as official and standard language varieties. However, in the 1980's, scholars started to argue that Bourdieu's theory does not recognise the possibility for resistance to dominant identities. In consequence, according to the poststructuralist paradigm today, "new identity options come into play and new values are assigned to identity options which have previously been legitimized or devalued by dominant discourses of identity" (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004: 12-13). Multiplicity, fragmentation and hybridity describe the poststructuralist identity. The poststructuralist paradigm is particularly suitable to this study of ELF since it combines identity with social power as well as social change.

Studies of ELF and (teacher) identity have been growing in number in recent years, and many studies have been conducted that touch the issue very closely even though they do not employ the specific term *English as a lingua franca*.

Studies often combine aspects of attitude and identity, and use varying approaches and methods, interviewing appearing to be among the most popular ones, however. Many studies have indicated that nonnative speakers of English often feel perennial learners of ENL, and the fact that they have 'failed' to enter the native speaker community in order to validate their personal and professional identities have had negative effects on their self-perception. See for example Seidlhofer's (1999) study of Austrian teachers; Pavlenko's (2003) study of preservice teachers in the USA; Joseph's (2004) study of the emerging Hong Kong English; Sifakis and Sougari's (2005) study of Greek teachers; Johnson's (Varghese *et al.* 2005) study of a nonnative MA TESOL student in the USA; Jenkins' (2007) study of nonnative teachers from different parts of the world. Brutt-Griffler and Samimy's (2001) study, in turn, has indicated that there are limitations in the native/nonnative dichotomy as applied to highly skilful international speakers of English. To the best of my knowledge, no studies have been conducted that would combine ELF with teacher identity in the Finnish context.

4.3 Identity Options for Nonnative Teachers

As has already been pointed out, people usually have several identities at work at the same time for different purposes. Varghese *et al.* divide identities into assigned and claimed ones (2005). Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) go a little further, and divide them into three: imposed, assumed and negotiable. This is the categorisation I will use in this study because it describes the partly subconscious identity construction and the on-going adjustment of identities better. In this section, I first explain these terms, and present the concept of negotiation as Pavlenko and Blackledge understand them. Then I examine the traditional identity options for nonnative teachers of English, and compare them with the options that ELF has to offer. Finally, I consider the possible means of renegotiation of teacher identities.

Imposed identity means an identity which is simply not negotiable (at a particular time and place). An example could be the identity of an individual with a serious speech disorder. *Assumed* identity means cases in which offered — often by dominant discourses — identities are accepted without criticism and not negotiated. *Negotiable* identities, in turn, refer to identities which are contested by groups and individuals. The term *negotiation* is significant here, referring to "an interplay

between reflective positioning, i.e. self-representation, and interactive positioning, whereby others attempt to position or reposition particular individuals or groups", for instance in oral interaction, in the media, or within individuals (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004: 20-21). Thus, individuals are "agentive beings who are constantly in search of new social and linguistic resources which allow them to resist identities that position them in undesirable ways, produce new identities, and assign alternative meanings to the links between identities and linguistic varieties" (ibid.: 27).

Categorising identities along the lines of Pavlenko and Blackledge (imposed, assumed, negotiable) is useful in the discussion of linguistic and professional identity options available for nonnative teachers of English. Due to the prevailing power, status and dominance of native English teachers in the field (Varghese *et al.* 2005: 25), nonnative teachers have traditionally wanted to identify with the community of native English speakers, even though they have realised the practical impossibility of this. And if one has not been able to join the native speaker community, there has been no choice but to adopt the remaining, less appealing identity option offered by the dominant discourse of native-speakerness: that of L2 learner (Pavlenko 2003: 259).

However, by seeing nonnative speakers as competent and authoritative users of English, ELF "opens up entirely new options for the way the world's majority of English teachers can perceive and define themselves" (Seidlhofer 2001: 152). Alongside with the imagined communities of natives, or nonnatives/L2 learners, nonnative ESL and EFL teachers may now opt for a community of L2 users/multilinguals (Pavlenko 2003). Even though nonnative teachers' identities have not been fixed and imposed before, they have often been assumed, and thus simply not negotiated. Now, by transferring their identities negotiable, nonnative teachers can, and are entitled to, self-determine and renegotiate their professional and linguistic identities towards more favourable ones (Jenkins 2006: 148).

There are several means that can be put to use in the process of the renegotiation. One of them is the reconsideration of the concept of bilingualism. Pavlenko points out that while lay discourses of bilingualism assume that bilinguals have grown up with two languages from birth, contemporary scholarship defines the notion differently: anyone who uses more than one language for particular purposes at some point in their daily lives is a bilingual, regardless of when the

languages have been acquired or how sophisticated their uses are (2003: 261-262). According to this definition, nonnative teachers are clearly bilinguals since they use English daily at least at work. Another useful concept here could be the idea of multimembership: "the process of unifying varying roles, voices, and identities into one self" (Marx 2002: 265). Accepting hybridity within oneself also helps shifting between different roles.

In addition to the concepts of bilingualism and multimembership, Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004: 22-23) list several linguistic means of renegotiation: code-switching, code-mixing, language choice, invention and use of new linguistic varieties, second language learning, literacy learning, new rhetorical strategies, and creation of new identity narratives. At the bottom of all these means is the creative use of imagination (Pavlenko 2003). Getting rid of the native-nonnative teacher dichotomy, and empowering nonnative speakers by seeing English as a language that belongs to all national, racial, and ethnic backgrounds (Pavlenko 2003: 264) will help nonnative teachers of English consider their nonnativeness as an advantage and a source of confidence, not insecurity (Seidlhofer 1999: 238).

One of the aims of this chapter was to make clear what identity means in this study; this was done with the help of Varghese *et al.*'s (2005) definition. Above all, identity construction is constant processing, and related to social surroundings and language. All kind of languages (L1s, L2s, and lingua francas) affect identities, even though mother tongue forms the base of linguistic identity. Another aim was to provide a picture of the research into identity. Research has been conducted in many fields, and the approaches have been varied; this study examines the subject from the poststructuralist perspective. Studies of ELF identities have been growing in number, and many of them have indicated that the nonnative participants have not been completely satisfied with their English skills because the point of comparison has been native speakers of English. Finally, I went through such connected terms as imposed, assumed, and negotiable identities, as well as negotiation. I also considered the available identity options for nonnative teachers of English, arguing that ELF offers more advantageous alternatives compared to the traditional ones. In the next chapter, the issue is accent.

5 ACCENT AND ELF

The objective of this chapter is to introduce the notion of accent, and have a look at studies conducted on ELF, accent and attitudes.

5.1 What Is Accent?

Accent is an integral part of spoken language. In this study, the term *accent* means, as defined by Lippi-Green, a “loose bundle of prosodic and segmental features distributed over geographic and/or social space” (1998: 42). Prosodic features include intonation, pitch, stress and tempo, and segmental features the phonological structure of vowels and consonants. Simply put, an accent is a way of speaking, and every single speaker of a language has it (*ibid.*).

In terms of nonnative speakers, accent is usually used to refer to the breakthrough of native language phonology into the target language (Lippi-Green 1998: 43). In fact, children are born with the ability to produce the entire set of possible sounds, but eventually restrict themselves to the ones they hear used around them (Lippi-Green 1998: 46; Marx 2002: 276). Consequently, there is a sensitive period in learning L2 sounds: in order to gain a native-like accent, the exposure to new sounds must start early, often before the age of six (Derwing 2003: 550). Thus, adult learners who acquire a second language will usually retain a ‘foreign’ accent. This is not always the case, but “foreign accents in general are very hard to avoid for most NNSs” (*ibid.*) This has also to do with the fact that accent appropriation is influenced by neurobiological and language access constraints as well (Marx 2002: 277).

In traditional ELT, the ‘intrusive’ L1 accent is regarded negatively, as something in need to get rid of. ELF ideology sees accented speech differently, however. Since accent can be reduced, but not removed (Lippi-Green 1998: 50), there is no sense in striving for a perfectly native-like accent. The main argument for this is that, as Jenkins' research among others has indicated, native-like accent is not the deciding factor in successful ELF communication, according to the principle of intelligibility. This leads us to the conclusion that the degree of accentedness cannot predict the level of competence in the target language (Lippi-Green 1998: 70).

Instead of near-native accent, accommodation skills, such as flexible listening skills, as well as cultural sensitivity are crucial in fluent ELF communication (Seidlhofer 2004: 222). The main reason for this is variation: spoken language is characteristically subject to variation at every level, and phonology is the greatest potential for variation since different speakers have different 'sound systems' (Lippi-Green 1998: 26). Accordingly, as phonology is a comparatively closed system, in practice all ELF users speak the language with some trace of their L1 accent (Seidlhofer 2004: 215), turning the range of ELF accents extremely diverse. Lippi-Green talks about mutual responsibility: "when speakers are confronted with an accent which is foreign to them, the first decision they make is whether or not they are going to accept their responsibility in the act of communication" (1998: 70). This concerns both nonnative *and* native speakers of English. In ELT, interlocutors' mutual responsibility should be acknowledged, and learners' accommodation skills should be developed in order to be ready to meet English speakers with unfamiliar accents.

5.2 (ELF) Studies of Accent and Attitude

Accents have been a popular research objective in many fields, such as social psychology and applied linguistics, for decades (Derwing 2003: 548). Along with describing the characteristics of different accents, scholars have been interested in related sociocultural aspects. Thus, literature on English language attitudes and English accent attitudes has been plentiful; scholars have looked into attitudes towards regional native-speaker accents and nonnative-speaker accents, and both native and nonnative speakers' perceptions (Jenkins 2007: 65).

As an interlocutor's accent tells a lot to its hearer, people tend to hold biases with regard to accented speech; "the further the accent is from their own, the more likely they are to experience a negative reaction to it" (Derwing 2003: 548-549). Accordingly, studies, using for instance matched guise technique or questionnaires, have shown that native speakers of English are usually evaluated more positively compared to regional English accents, not to speak of nonnative accents. Interestingly, nonnative speakers' perceptions tend to be even harsher in this than natives' (ibid.), and their attitudes are unfavourable also towards the accent of their own L1 group (Jenkins 2007: 89). Nonnative accents have often been blamed for

their supposed unintelligibility, but as Jenkins remarks, the research design and methods may have been too prompting in some of the studies indicating this (*ibid.*: 83). In any event, numerous accent studies have also suggested that prosody has more importance to overall comprehensibility than segments (Derwing 2003: 560).

As is the case with ELF identity studies, the number of ELF attitude studies has started to grow in recent years. The participants have often been either practising teachers, pre-service teachers, or learners of English — that is the perspective has been that of applied linguistics — and most of the studies have focused explicitly on accents or pronunciation (Jenkins 2007: 93). More often than not, the participants' perceptions have been to some extent contradictory, ambiguous and/or biased (*ibid.*: 105).

To mention some accent-related ELF attitude studies, for instance Timmis' (2002) questionnaire study, surveying teachers and students in over 45 countries, indicated that particularly students of English want to hold on to native norms, also in terms of pronunciation. Derwing (2003), in turn, examined Canadian immigrants' attitudes to their own accents, and found out that unimportant segmental units are often thought to be the reason for communication problems with a foreign accent, and that the participants had experienced discrimination and felt inferior because of their accents (Derwing does not deal with ELF as such, but the study can also be applied to ELF contexts). Further, Sifakis and Sougari's (2005) study indicated that Greek teachers' pronunciation beliefs and practices are bound to native norms, and in general, they are little aware of the uses of English as an international language. Jenkins (2007) questionnaire study, eliciting the views of English teachers worldwide, suggested that native accents are still preferable to nonnative accents in every way, and that nonnative accents are ranked hierarchically, the least preferable being the ones farthest away from native accents.

In Finland, for example Ranta (2004), Orvomaa (2007), and Hakala (2007) have charted attitudes towards ELF as well as ELF accents. Ranta's questionnaire study, investigating both teachers' and learners' attitudes to ELF, revealed that particularly younger teachers, and students, would be relatively ready to accept new targets in ELT. However, the teachers pointed out that within the limits of the current curriculum and matriculation examination, this is not feasible. Orvomaa (2007), in turn, found out that upper secondary school students want to study English in order to gain a functional communicative tool, and they do not consider

cultural aspects of target cultures, such as British or American, particularly significant in their language studies. Finally, Hakala's study (2007) indicated that among students of English (lower and upper secondary students and teacher trainees), the accent of an international speaker of English (Dutch as L1) was the most popular one; native accents were not as preferable, and the success of the Finnish accent was even poorer. This is an interesting result considering the findings of other matched guise studies of accent attitudes. All these three studies seem to suggest that attitudes are changing in Finland as for ELF and native targets in ELT.

In this chapter, I clarified what is meant by accent in this study and pointed out accents' tendency to raise biases. I also explained the alternative ways to regard foreign, or nonnative, accent of English: in traditional ELT, foreign accent has automatically been seen as a demerit, while in ELF, foreign accent is a natural sign of variation — just as native accents are — and not problematic unless it causes frequent communication breakdowns. Proponents of ELF emphasise the mutual responsibility to accommodate one's speech due to the diversity of both native and nonnative accents of English. Lastly, I reported on the research conducted in the fields of ELF, accents and attitudes, both in other countries and in Finland.

6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

I opened the thesis by explaining what English as a lingua franca is, and continued by discussing its apparently troubled and complex relationship with English language teaching. One of my main concerns was that even though English functions as an international language on a global scale — most of the communication in English occurring between nonnative speakers — this has hardly altered ELT. In ELT, the only acceptable target for learners of English has continued to be the (idealised) native speaker with native norms and standard native language. The problem with this is that in ELF communication — representing the most frequent communication form that users of English will confront — native models often turn out to be largely irrelevant in these multilingual, multicultural encounters.

Together with ELF and ELT, identity and accent play fundamental roles in this study. In the previous chapters, I have underlined the complex nature of identity, which is in a constant state of flux and always linked to power relations in society. Language as a social phenomenon affects identity construction in various ways, and here accent, as well as attitudes related to accents, come forward. In fact, accent is a crucial factor tying this piece of research together: ELF is essentially a spoken variety of English, comprising of a countless number of accents, which in turn influence their speakers' identities as English users.

The English users in the study are nonnative teachers of English in Finland. There are a couple of significant reasons why precisely these people are interesting to focus on. First, teachers are major actors in the educational world. Particularly in Finland, where teachers are highly educated, appreciated by society, and relatively free to make educational decisions, their views and perceptions are worth paying attention to. Second, and related to the previous point, teachers are naturally those who influence English learners most. Consequently, it is important to know what exactly is the information they are passing to the future users of English. Finland, as an expanding circle country, is interesting in the sense that it is a country where the uses of English are increasing rapidly, changing the country into a multilingual and multicultural society. In the expanding circle the presence and effects of ELF are most easily observable.

Studies examining ELF by combining it with ELT, identity and accent, and concentrating on English teachers in Finland, are practically nonexistent.

Therefore, the purpose of the present study is to shed light on how Finnish teachers of English perceive themselves as English speakers today, when ELF ideology has come to challenge the traditional structures and targets in ELT. The results will be comparable to studies related to accent, attitude and identity conducted in other expanding circle countries, particularly in Europe. The research questions are:

1. How do Finnish nonnative teachers of English perceive accents of English in terms of...
 - 1.1 native and nonnative accents?
 - 1.2 Finnish speakers' accent of English?
 - 1.3 their own accents of English?
2. How is nonnative teachers' identity as English speakers constructed?

By the first question I aim at charting the teachers' attitudes to English accents. How do they associate nonnative accents with native accents? Is there possibly a hierarchy between ENL, ESL and EFL accents? Furthermore, how do they regard the English accent of their own L1 group? And lastly, how do they perceive their own English accents as English teachers? The second question, in turn, focuses on the teachers' identities. As professional speakers of English, what does their linguistic nonnativeness mean to them? Are there possibly new identity options available to them that could be related to the emergence of ELF? Does teaching experience affect this? The two questions work together, accent being in the core of both.

Besides answering these questions, the study also offers some indication of how aware Finnish teachers are of ELF in general, and how ready they are to accept its incorporation into ELT. Lastly, another important objective of the study is to consider the reasons behind the findings: why do the teachers think as they do, and what could be the implications of their way of thinking? Having now clarified my aims of the study, it is time to turn to the study itself. The next chapters will deal with material and methods, report the findings, and finally discuss the results.

7 MATERIAL AND METHODS

The chapter on material and methods opens by introducing semi-structured interviewing as the method of data collection, and describing the interview guide used in the study. This is followed by an account of the participants, and the procedure of the interviews in practice. The next section is about the method of analysis, discourse analysis. In this section I will also explain some of the practical matters of reporting the findings. Finally, I will close the chapter by considering ethical issues and quality criteria.

7.1 Semi-structured Interviewing

The present study is a typical example of qualitative research: it has focused gradually and the research design has evolved flexibly as the study has proceeded (Dörnyei 2007). Given that the aim of the study was to explore teachers' personal views and perceptions, it felt natural to choose interviewing as the method. Although semi-structured interviewing is based on pre-prepared guiding questions and prompts, it is characteristically open-ended and leaves room for the interviewee's elaboration, contrary to fully structured interviews (*ibid.*: 136). The semi-structured interviews yielded rich as well as complex data for the analysis, which was expected and desirable: complex individuals usually produce data that reflects complex realities (*ibid.*: 125).

The interviewer's role in semi-structured interviews is somewhat challenging: it is continuous balancing between staying neutral and providing enough feedback and encouragement to the interviewee. Interviewing is ultimately co-constructed interaction. Thus, in the end, taking a stance becomes unavoidable (Dörnyei 2007: 141). Offering the interviewee options and encouraging elaboration may also result in deeper data (Ruusuvuori & Tiittula 2005: 116; Dörnyei 2007: 142-143). Nevertheless, the interviewer is supposed to minimise their contributions during the interview (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2000: 97); this was my objective, too.

The main tool in semi-structured interviews is the interview guide. Its strength is that it is both flexible and systematic at the same time (Dörnyei 2007: 143). For instance, the chosen themes can be discussed in a varying order in order to follow the natural conversation flow; this is what took place also in the interviews

for this study. Dörnyei (2007: 137-138) pins down the general stages of the guide: the first questions are supposed to create initial rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee; they work best if they are easy, factual questions. In my guide (see Appendix 1), "Warm-up" represents this stage. The content questions come next. In the guide of this study, these are the questions under "Spoken English", "English Accents", "Finnish Accent", "Interviewee's Own Accent", and "Awareness of ELF". These themes appear deliberately in this order: after the warm-up, the topic narrows down fairly logically before a more general topic, that of awareness and identities, closes the interview. Thus the question of L2 learner/L2 user represents Dörnyei's final closing question. All the questions were designed to elicit either perceptions of accents or identity or both, and wordings were made as neutral as possible.

7.2 Participants and Procedure

Seven nonnative teachers of English participated in the study. The sampling process was closest to criterion sampling (Dörnyei 2007: 128): the criteria that the participants needed to fulfil were that they needed to be nonnative speakers of English, and EFL teachers in lower or upper secondary school, to limit the scope. I used my social networks to find the participants in Helsinki or neighbouring areas. Four of them teach in an upper secondary, and three in a lower secondary school. I knew most of the participants before, but I had not discussed the themes of the study with them before. Seven informants seemed to be enough: common themes started gradually to emerge, and on the other hand, these seven informants provided data that was multifaceted enough. Among the participants, there were one man and six women, but gender as such does not signify in this study. I asked the participants' teaching experience in years since this may have had an effect on their answers. At the time of the interviews, the teaching years were as follows: participant A two years; B 11; C 20; D six months; E 13; F 15; G 29; mean 13 years.

The interviews were conducted between November 2007 and February 2008. The teachers were approached by an introductory e-mail. All the informants were interviewed at their teaching school to avoid any extra trouble to them. At the very beginning of each interview, I gave the interviewee general information on what to expect, and instructions how to answer the questions (see Appendix 1). I was not too specific with the subject of the study — ELF, ELT, accents, identities —

in order not to prompt the informants too much (see Section 7.4 on quality criteria for further discussion). I concluded the interviews by asking if there was anything else that the interviewee would like to discuss, and provided my contact information for those interested in the results. The interviews were tape-recorded to catch the nuances of the reflections (Dörnyei 2007: 139), and they were conducted in Finnish as this was everyone's mother tongue (see Appendix 2 for the Finnish version of the interview guide). On the whole, the participants were active and talkative. The interviews lasted from 22 minutes to 45 minutes, the mean being 29 minutes.

7.3 Analysing the Interviews

Analysing qualitative data is interpretative by necessity; it is making sense of complexity into increasingly abstract insights (Dörnyei 2007: 257). The analysis of interviews includes making sense of the first impressions, listening/reading, relistening/rereading, reflecting and noting down (ibid.: 250), and simplifying the data while highlighting special features, and converting those into language chunks (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2000: 137; Dörnyei 2007: 251). This outline also holds true as to the present study. Since the nature of accent perceptions and identity formation is fluid and highly subjective, it seemed unlikely that a universal view on accents, or a universal identity could be found among the participants. Nonetheless, it was possible to look for common discourses, salient themes and dominant views, and generalise about those (Dörnyei 2007: 257). That is, in the chapters on findings (Chapters 8 and 9), I will not analyse the questions one by one, but examine different discourses occurring throughout the interviews.

The analysis of the interviews was done loosely along the lines of discourse analysis described by Hirsjärvi and Hurme (2001: 156). Since the collection and analysis of qualitative data are often circular and overlapping (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2000: 136; Dörnyei 2007: 124), my analysis also started already while interviewing the informants as I gained first impressions. After interviewing, I transcribed the interviews, excluding such linguistic subtleties as emphasis by syllable or word stress, false starts, or overlapping speech; more pertinent to this study was the contents and the central message of a speech act. Then I carried out a tentative analysis, taking one interview at a time, and condensing the informant's

answers into a list of key ideas question by question. After that, I tried to sketch preliminary discourses that started to emerge. This led to a more detailed analysis of the data this time discourse by discourse, keeping my mind open to other discourses at the same time. I found it useful to ask the data and the separate discourses clarifying 'questions' (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2000: 143). As the analysis progressed, I also started to notice contradictions both within discourses and within individual informants. Throughout, I marked suitable and representative quotes that I could use in the research report.

Some practicalities guide the reporting of the findings. For clarity's sake, I have kept the findings and discussion as separate chapters (Dörnyei 2007: 297), trying to keep direct findings from the interviews apart from my more speculative thoughts and ideas. In the findings, I use the term *pupil* when I refer to young people in lower secondary education, and the term *student* when I refer to young people in upper secondary education. For the sake of anonymity, I have renamed the participants as A, B, C, and so forth. I have also edited their quotations occasionally to protect their identity: three dots (...) denote that something too personal, or sometimes redundant to the point, has been left out. However, I have carefully tried to avoid distorting the meaning of the participants' utterances. Square brackets ([]), on the other hand, include my additions to the quote in order to make the idea clearer to the reader. Since the language of the interviews was Finnish, I have translated the Finnish quotes into English. Only the English glosses appear in the body text; the original Finnish transcripts are listed in Appendix 3. Again, in the translations, conveying the main idea of the quote has been a priority. Finally, as the discourses overlap, some quotes may appear in several different discourses.

7.4 Considerations of Ethics and Quality Criteria

Since interview studies are interested in human experience in detail, there is good reason to consider ethics at every stage of the research (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2001: 20). First of all, research should aim at — in addition to acquiring new scientific knowledge — improving human circumstances related to the phenomenon under examination. This study aims at — in addition to understanding the teachers' accent and identity perceptions — offering nonnative teachers food for thought: alternative

and more equal ways to perceive both others and themselves in the English-speaking world.

The research design should take account of issues such as informed consent of the participants, possible threats to the informants, the amount of shared information, and confidentiality. I used passive consent (Dörnyei 2007: 70) in my study because the participants were adults and there were no serious threats involved in the study. I hope that the interview situations did not cause stress to any of the participants; the interviews were supposed to be conducted in a sensitive and fairly informal way. The question of shared information (Dörnyei 2007: 65) was somewhat troublesome: I did not describe the research area to the participants in detail before the interviews. One reason for this was that the subject, the relationship between ELF and ELT, is controversial; I did not want the participants to guess which side I am on and answer the questions accordingly. Another reason was that ELF and identity are very complicated issues; I did not want to confuse the participants in advance. Instead, I wanted as spontaneous answers as possible, since those are often also the most honest. I offered the informants the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the findings and the whole study later if they so wished.

Anonymity and confidentiality (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2001: 20; Dörnyei 2007: 68) were taken care of during the whole research process: I have concealed the teachers' real names and their teaching schools as well as any other too personal information brought up in the interviews in this thesis. The real names do not appear even in the transcriptions, and I have kept the audio recordings in my private possession all the time.

The terms reliability and validity are problematic in qualitative research since they have originally been used in quantitative research, which always aims at objective truth (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2001: 185). Of course, qualitative research aims at objectivity, too, but due to the fundamental differences in methodology and research interests, and the fact that the researcher acts as an instrument in the research, the findings of qualitative research are always subjective and contextual to some extent (Dörnyei 2007: 57). Thus, consistency of the results is difficult to achieve, and in fact, this is often not even expedient. For instance in this study, the attitudes and identities under examination are highly dynamic in nature: it would be odd if the teachers' perceptions would not change somewhat in the course of time.

Nevertheless, I have tried to consider certain things to improve the validity of the study (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2001: 189; Dörnyei 2007: 59-61). I have tried to provide quite a detailed account of my method of analysis. I have tried to choose representative quotes to illustrate my point and give as thick description as possible of the complex data considering the space limitations. I have tried to keep consistent with the concepts introduced in the background chapters. Furthermore, I am aware of the fact that in interview studies the researcher influences both the data collection and builds their analysis on their own classifications. This may have led to potential researcher bias, which I have naturally tried to avoid; I have tried to consider alternative classifications and interpretations along with those I have ended up with. And finally, as the interview data is always co-constructed by the interviewer and the interviewee, potential social desirability bias — “participant desire to meet expectation” (Dörnyei 2007: 54) — must be taken into account in the analysis (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2001: 35). This has been yet another point of concern to me.

8 TEACHERS' ACCENT PERCEPTION DISCOURSES

I discerned eight accent discourses which can be grouped into three broader themes. These are the same as the subquestions in the first research question: native and nonnative accents of English, Finnish speakers' accent of English, and the teachers' own accents of English. The first theme produced a discourse on intelligibility, as well as on the suitability of different accents to English teaching and testing. The teachers also talked about amusing and irritating accents. The theme of the Finnish accent, for its part, set the participants to discuss both the strengths and shortcomings of Finns' accent of English, and Finns' general ability to learn different accents of English. Lastly, the discourse that the third theme produced suggests that the participants regard their own accents of English as modest yet functional enough for professional use. Another discourse under this theme is that of adaptation and accommodation. Next, I will examine the accent discourses in detail, including contradictions within individuals and within discourses that emerged from time to time.

8.1 Native and Nonnative Accents of English

8.1.1 *Intelligibility of Accents*

Discussion on accent intelligibility emerged often in relation to opinions of pleasant and unpleasant accents. The informants had different views on which accents of English are difficult to understand, but on the whole, it seems that the more familiar the accent, the easier it is to understand. For instance, participant D prefers the British accent for its familiarity and intelligibility (Quote 1), whereas E (Quote 2) understands the American accent more easily even though she finds the British accent personally more pleasant. E accounts for this by the fact that she can hear the American accent in Finland so frequently, for instance in the media, and possibly because she has spent time in the USA in her teens:

(1) D: I like the British accent more than American because it's also the most familiar to me ... I don't have to work hard to understand it unless the speaker

comes from the borderlands of Scotland, it's effortless to me, whereas I need to concentrate much harder to understand some Americans ¹

(2) E: there's one student in our school whose English is perfectly British, s/he has been trained by a private teacher from England, by an English person, and sometimes I feel that his/her English is more difficult to understand than American English, I mean Americanism is somehow so strong here in Finland

Generally speaking, the participants found nonnative accents less intelligible than native ones. For example, participant B admitted that she finds nonnative accents very difficult to understand when travelling abroad; she has noticed that her travelling companions with a lower education understand for instance the Greek accent much better than she does. B supposes that these difficulties rise from the fact that she is used to listening only native accents:

(3) B: for some curious reason, I don't confront this at work but when I travel abroad I find it very difficult to understand English spoken as a lingua franca ... I travel with people that have gone through only the compulsory education, and they are much more clever at understanding for example a Greek speaking English than me ... I'm like too used to listening to native accents for example at work, of course I listen to students too but that's a different thing because they're Finns speaking English ... when I need to understand an English speaker with a different native language I'm @ very bad at it

According to the participants, one factor hindering understanding is nonnative speakers' mother tongue which can often be traced in their English accent. Remaining nonnative sounds affect the participants' understanding particularly with Indian and African accents:

(4) I ²: does the strong accent hinder your understanding then
A: well yes it possibly may hinder

(5) C: if you go for example in India or Africa you'll find thick dialects, of course speech sounds are so different in India that they may make understanding more difficult

On the other hand, the participants remarked that all English accents can be equally understandable to nonnative speakers, and natives are able to cope with nonnative accents because they are used to a variety of accents:

(6) E: there are many varieties of English, some speak this way and others that way, all of them can be equally comprehensible

¹ See Appendix 3 for the Finnish transcripts of the English glosses

² The interviewer

(7) C: after all accent isn't that significant, apparently foreign accents don't bother for example native English people that much, especially in England where there are a lot of different accents

Thus, participant E slightly contradicted herself in the intelligibility issue. At the very beginning of the interview she stated that all English accents can be equally understandable (see Quote 6), but then later told that for her, it is sometimes more difficult to understand the British accent than American (see Quote 2). She also added that she has not encountered that many "peculiar" [sic] accents, meaning other accents than the most well-known native accents (see Quote 23). E was not the only participant whose conception of English accents seemed to be relatively limited to few native accents. For instance, participant C described the range of English accents presented in textbooks as varied, yet she specified only American, British and Irish accents.

8.1.2 *Suitability of Accents to ELT*

As to teaching, the general opinion among the participants was that it would be useful for students to become aware of different accents of English, native and nonnative, but apart from raising this awareness, there is little that a teacher can do:

(8) A: it is also a part of the curriculum that varieties of English should be acknowledged, that there are different varieties, and they sound something like this, but this is the deepest you can get into it

The participants doubted whether it would be even possible to offer a comprehensive picture of all English accents. Participant B also pondered on whether it would be more useful to offer students only native accent models, or both native and nonnative. She concluded that lingua franca accents could be excluded from the curriculum since students are exposed to ELF extensively in their everyday lives in any case:

(9) B: the English-speaking world is so hugely extensive, there is a huge range of accents ... and yet the time is so limited in class ... it would be exciting to study whether it would be more useful for students to hear authentic native accents than nonnative accents and build the language proficiency on that

(10) B: I think that students use English as a lingua franca already in their personal lives, they are exposed to it a lot, I think much more than for example English teachers ... maybe it's not that necessary to deal with it in English classes after all

Going deeper into the discourse on teaching ELF accents, the participants turned out to be sceptical about including ELF accents in listening comprehension tests, particularly in the matriculation examination. The informants gave various reasons for their opposition: if there has been a speaker with an ELF accent in the examination before, the results for that part have been very poor; since the exam of English is already very challenging, it should not be made more difficult by ELF accents, for example by Indian or African accents; the chosen accents should not be too uncommon in listening comprehensions; students themselves are very conservative as to unusual accents in the matriculation examination:

(11) B: there was a matriculation exam with a lingua franca speaker, or actually I think it was an Indian who spoke English as an official language, and the results of that section were awfully poor ... students don't understand English as a lingua franca very well either

(12) C: if you think for example matriculation examination, and listening comprehensions there, the accents used should be either American or British I think, maybe even Irish or Scottish, but in my opinion for example Indian or African English shouldn't be used in matriculation exams, they are too difficult, that's too much to require I think ... the exam shouldn't be made more challenging

(13) E: the speaker must speak clearly, you can't use any too uncommon accents there

Particularly participants B, C and E appeared to contradict their own opinions to an extent. These participants generally opposed to the inclusion of nonnative accents in teaching, and in the listening comprehensions of the matriculation examination. This is even though they said that the goal of ELT is to prepare students to manage abroad, and had even themselves encountered ELF accents and found out that their linguistic resources were occasionally restricted in those encounters. Further, on one hand, they claimed that students deal with nonnative accents enough in their leisure time, but on the other that nonnative accents make teaching and tests too difficult.

Some of the participants talked about pronunciation teaching that aims at intelligibility: G explained that she had noticed that in terms of comprehension, it is more important to pronounce consonants and consonant clusters correctly than refine one's vowels after native speakers. She also emphasised the significance of pausing and rhythm to intelligibility:

(14) G: I do pay attention to my pupils' pronunciation ... for example in the word *know* you shouldn't pronounce the /k/ sound ... it could hinder the understanding somewhere in the world, but then again, I think that if your vowels sound Finnish, that's not too harmful, I base this on my work experience

(15) G: I try to teach my pupils to speak, and for example read a text through language chunks that convey meaning, so that they can pause correctly, adding to the speech rhythm ... it makes understanding easier because it's difficult to understand if you read without pauses, or pause in incorrect places without making any sense, no one cares to listen to that

Finally, participant D mentioned that successful communication in terms of intelligibility can be taught with the help of humour, too:

(16) D: you can always give examples, and you can always squeeze some humour out of them ... mistakes happen when one doesn't understand the other and the other misunderstands something and so on ... at least students find this funny

Humour itself was another source of discussion for the informants; I will turn to the discourse on humour and irritation next.

8.1.3 *Amusing and Irritating Accents*

The subject of humour came up in the discourses on native and nonnative accents. The informants said that either other people, for instance pupils, find some particular accents funny, or that they find some accents funny themselves. Those accents included both native and nonnative variants. For example, participant D perceived Caribbean and Indian accents as amusing (Quote 17), and participant A Received Pronunciation (RP) (Quote 18). Participant C, in turn, had noticed that Australian and Irish accents are often made fun of, but she herself finds these accents quite neutral (Quote 19):

(17) D: Caribbean, Indian, and accents like that are funny, they are quite hilarious, just the other day aboard a tram there sat an Indian man behind me and his speech made me smile, those accents are maybe funnier

(18) A: British English is somehow very refined but in a way there's the comical @ comical dimension to it because I've watched so much Monty Python and the like... I always associate the British accent with it

(19) C: Australian and Irish English are maybe often caricatured, but I think they are quite pleasant

The teachers remarked that pupils pay attention to accents that they are not accustomed to hear in class, and often find these amusing. According to the participants, teachers should take advantage of this natural interest:

(20) A: you can easily make some fun out of it, the pupils notice that that guy speaks in a funny way and they start to imitate it, and that's the best kind of learning for kids of that age, subconsciously, with humour

(21) F: all pupils recognise the Indian accent, they simply love to fool around and imitate it in class ... as soon as we've dealt with India in class ... they keep on playing with the accent for a long time, for some reason they find it funny ... American slang likewise

According to A, even the British accent can be exceptional to some pupils because their worldview is so US-centred:

(22) A: sometimes pupils have very funny opinions especially on British English
I: what kind of

A: well they may ask if this is now that British English or will we learn that British English or something, I think that's somehow odd or funny

I: do you feel that their world view is America-centred

A: yes yes I do, I absolutely think so

When asked which accents are unpleasant to listen to, most participants said that there are no such accents; this may partly result from the informants' social desirability bias. However, participant E explained that she could not name one since she has not heard so many different accents, which is slightly odd because she has travelled a lot:

(23) E: I haven't heard that many peculiar accents ... but I can't say that any accent would be unpleasant to listen to, on no account

Participants A and C said that African and Indian accents may be irritating occasionally, partly because the mother tongues are so obtrusive, making understanding more difficult in consequence:

(24) A: if we take for example South African English or Indian English ... accents that possibly irritate or something ... the Indian native languages come through so strongly ... and in a way English is not their native language, but it's 'one of the world Englishes' anyway

Participant F, for her part, does not like too relaxed Caribbean accents, or low style American slang, because she cannot take the speakers of these accents seriously. She does not like meaningless speech on the whole, and what is more, these are alien cultures to her:

(25) F: you can't take seriously speech like 'talkin' to me' @@ ... all these Caribbean accents ... too relaxed, simple English with no real content is something that I don't care to listen to ... they repeat the same slangy phrases, in American street slang likewise, of course I haven't known anyone personally, I base this on what I've heard on TV or suchlike ... they repeat the same slow style phrase all the time ... I myself don't take pleasure in it

In sum, the participants found different accents of English difficult to understand, including both native and nonnative accents; familiar accents are the most comprehensible to them. They justified excluding nonnative English accents from the curricula for ELT, and particularly from testing, often by referring to their unintelligibility and rareness. Some participants, nonetheless, explained that their pronunciation teaching aims at their pupils' accents' intelligibility, not at models provided by native speakers of English. Furthermore, the theme of English accents made the informants talk about humour and its role in teaching and learning. Most of the informants could not — or did not want to — name an accent that irritates them one way or another. Those who named one referred either to nonnative accents' obtrusive L1s, or to meaningless speech that they associate with certain accents. Having dealt with native and nonnative English accents in general, I will now turn to a more specific theme, that of Finnish speakers' accent of English.

8.2 Finnish Speakers' Accent of English

8.2.1 *Young Finns' Decent Pronunciation*

In brief, the participants were of the opinion that particularly young Finnish people, pupils and students, pronounce English well. The main reason for this, according to the teachers, is that young people hear English extensively outside school premises, more than earlier generations before. Another reason for their good pronunciation is Finns' increased international mobility. Nonetheless, there are always some pupils who have severe difficulties with pronunciation:

(26) B: if I think about students then yes, the Finnish can pronounce

(27) F: yes, many pupils pronounce very well, surprisingly well ... maybe it's just because they hear English so much ... they hear English much more than earlier generations

(28) G: well I think pupils can and can't pronounce, there's always this group of people who can't do anything, terrible thing to say but that's the way it is, but

on the whole, I think their pronunciation is ok because they encounter English outside school

Another group of Finns showing a good command of spoken English can be found in the business world, particularly if compared to Finnish politicians' English skills:

(29) F: it's evident with people attending frequently international conferences, the operative language being English, for example people working for Nokia, their language skills are more fluent than politicians', though I should think politicians work internationally all the time, too

Even though the participants did not necessarily like the Finnish accent of English personally, they found reasons to promote it in order to encourage students to speak English. Participant D, for instance, aims at accepting all kinds of accents, prioritising communication flow over accent:

(30) D: it isn't the most beautiful accent I've heard ... I try not to pass students the kind of message that Finns' accent would be terrible since especially the Finnish dread to speak, maybe not these young people any more that much, so if the teacher would add to that and say that your accent is horrific it wouldn't be of any help ... I myself try to accept all kinds of accents, communication flow is the main thing after all, and everybody's personal opinions are another thing

Participant A, in turn, had understood that native speakers of English understand the Finnish accent fairly easily, even the famously Finnish accent of the Formula 1 race driver Mika Häkkinen. Thus there is no reason to devalue it:

(31) A: we speak English like [Mika] Häkkinen in a way ... it's the Finnish way to speak, but I've understood that it's very clear to the English, or to other English-speaking people, so in that sense there's no reason to belittle it

Furthermore, Finnish people's accent was preferred to Spanish, whose L1 is more obtrusive. On the other hand, if compared to the Swedish, Finns are on the losing side in pronunciation:

(32) A: if we take for example the Spanish, their English is much more influenced by their native language, for instance, in the Spanish language /s/ never occurs word initially so they always add an additional vowel to those words beginning with /s/ ... they never really get rid of this

(33) F: it would be interesting to compare Swedish and Finnish speakers, Swedish is a Germanic language, they master pronunciation better than Finns, the differences derive from different mother tongue backgrounds

If pronunciation is, however, the strength of the Finnish accent, there is another area in which Finns would need a lot of practice: intonation.

8.2.2 *Lack of Intonation, Lack of Appreciation*

According to the informants, the main shortcoming of the Finnish accent is by far the lack of intonation: the lack of intonation hinders comprehensibility markedly among native English speakers, whereas pronouncing isolated words incorrectly is not that much of a problem (Quote 34). The teachers claimed that Finns' monotonous speech is sometimes even agonising to listen to (Quote 35). Finnish politicians' English accent is unsatisfying in particular: they falter, there is no word binding, intonation nor stress. The participants assumed that one reason for this is presumably the natural lack of intonation in the Finnish language, which transfers to foreign languages (Quote 36):

(34) B: I think the main problem is the lack of intonation, not that much pronunciation but intonation ... the kind of tu-tu-tu-tu-tu-tu-tu-tu-tu ... the monotony ... I've heard that studies have indicated that lack of intonation hinders understanding a lot, so that even if you could pronounce words correctly but your speech is very monotonous native English speakers don't understand you ... the monotony is perhaps a bigger problem than whether you can pronounce individual words

(35) G: Finnish speakers' English sounds awfully monotonous, I mean once and for all, it's so dull, it's no wonder if you get tired of listening a longer presentation by a Finnish speaker in English ... it's often torturous, this is what I find disturbing with Finns

(36) F: well I just heard Matti Vanhanen, our prime minister, giving a presentation in English ... I must say it was quite poor ... he faltered, he couldn't bind words naturally, there was no intonation whatsoever, if you compare him to Tony Blair when he speaks, well fair enough he's a real talent in this, but he can emphasise things while Vanhanen can't, probably because you don't have to do that in your mother tongue, the stress is in the beginning and then it fades away, and again the stress is in the beginning and then it fades away, it must be very difficult for Finns ... it's difficult to find a Finnish politician who can speak English fluently, our president and prime minister are poor at this to start with

The interviewees explained that another reason for Finns' inadequate speaking skills could be the fact that, traditionally, speaking skills or rhetorics have not been appreciated in the Finnish society in the way they have been in Anglo-American cultures:

(37) F: speaking skills are still undervalued in Finland ... they are not appreciated even in Finnish

(38) G: if I think back over my very long teaching career, it was actually only in the 90s when oral skills started to gain systematic attention

Consequently, the lack of appreciation and training of speaking skills may have led to Finns' insecurity in speaking, especially in foreign languages. This insecurity is something that the Finnish should get rid of:

(39) F: Finns have a strong sense of shame when they think they can't master something perfectly ... but if you start thinking like that there are millions of other things in life that you'll feel uncomfortable with

8.2.3 *Finns' Ability to Learn Different Accents*

The third discourse of the Finnish accent is about Finns' ability to learn different accents of English. Many participants had noticed that acquiring a British accent is particularly challenging, even though it is the most desirable one to the informants (see the discourse on desirable native accents below, Section 9.1.1). For this reason, the accent of many Finns could be described as 'transatlantic':

(40) A: I can't pronounce in the British way at all unless I really practice ... few young people today pronounce in the British way ... they acquire the kind of @ Finnish transatlantic accent by Häkkinen

(41) F: the British accent isn't easier, I mean the American accent is easier to pronounce as a Finnish person with Finnish as the mother tongue, Finns' accent's like mid-Atlantic ... it feels much more difficult to acquire a good, cultured British accent than a general American way to speak

In addition to the British accent, participant E mentioned the Scottish accent as being difficult to achieve:

(42) E: of course you recognise the Scottish way to pronounce, but it's impossible to imitate it unless you live in Scotland for a longer period, the accent's beautiful though

Participant F, in turn, had noticed that her pupils are able to imitate the Indian accent particularly well, probably because the traces of Indian mother tongues are so evident in their English accents:

(43) F: pupils can't imitate other accents than just Indian, for some reason they find it very easy and pleasant ... it's somehow clearer, probably because of the Indian native languages, it's easy to imitate, pupils can't imitate other accents

The informants also discussed people's general ability to learn new sounds and language patterns. They remarked that people tend to speak foreign languages in the same way they speak their L1 — equally clearly or unclearly, for instance. Further, some individuals acquire new sounds more easily than others,

whereas for some, differentiating between unfamiliar sounds seems to be virtually impossible. That is why it is often not wise to waste too much time and resources on meticulous pronunciation training:

(44) F: people tend to speak foreign languages the same way they speak their mother tongue, I mean some speak unclearly in their native language, and as unclearly in any foreign language ... if an individual can pronounce very well one language, they can pronounce very well any language they study

(45) A: those who have a good phonological memory learn to pronounce without practice, they only listen and then imitate, that's the way people learn ... they don't have to pay attention to it or practice as such, it's either or, either they gain it naturally or they have difficulties, in which case they either learn or don't depending either on their own motivation or the teacher's attention to the matter

To participant A, certain sounds of English, such as variation in /r/, /s/, /θ/ and /ð/ sounds, are particularly difficult to master; he supposed that these are difficult sounds also for other Finnish speakers.

To summarise the discourses on the Finnish accent of English, the interviewees, first of all, thought that especially younger generations of Finnish speakers pronounce English well, mainly because they are exposed to English through so many channels in their lives. Second, they were strongly of the opinion that the Finnish intonation of English is the principal shortcoming of the accent, mainly because the lack of intonation complicates understanding. The participants also saw the general lack of appreciation of speaking skills in the Finnish society problematic. Third, the informants had recognised how difficult it is to imitate native accents, particularly the British accent. From the discourses on the Finnish accent I will now turn to more personal discourses on the participants' own accents of English.

8.3 Teachers' Accents of English

8.3.1 *Modest yet Functional Accent*

In the discourse on the participants' own English accents the key word is modesty. There is a touch of modesty — as well as of realism — already in the informants' descriptions of their accents; the participants described their accents most often as a mixture of Finnish, British and American components, acquired through television:

(46) B: I'd say myself that my accent is quite Finnish after all, it doesn't resemble any accent of an English-speaking country

(47) C: my own accent is probably British influenced by American English, TV English, I mean I mix them both unfortunately

(48) D: it's definitely closer to British than American English because I stayed in England for such a long time ... the intonation is probably closer to Finnish than English at times

(49) E: my own accent has again turned to take after Americans ... of course you can hear that it's a Finnish person speaking

(50) A: I pronounce in the American way, I always have, I think it's simply because of the fact that @@ I've watched TV so much

(51) G: it's not a pure accent at all, it's however closest to the British accent if anything, I mean the kind of British accent by a Finnish person

Even though some participants would have liked to have a more native-like accent, they nevertheless appeared to be reasonably happy with their existing accent. The main reason for this was that they feel that their accents are intelligible, and thus functional enough in situations where they need them most: at school in teaching. Again, however, there are traces of modesty in the answers to the question "Are you happy with your own accent?":

(52) A: in fact yes I am. I'm not particularly proud of it or anything

(53) B: yes I'm relatively happy with it ... it works as a working language ... I'm relatively fluent, I'm able to pronounce relatively well to get along and I know how to use intonation, at least well enough, so in that sense I'm happy

(54) C: of course it depends on the day and alertness but I'm relatively happy with my speech at the moment, it's required training and I've needed to stay abroad but it's better than it was twenty years back

(55) D: well not at the moment, or fair enough, it's ok, maybe it's my perfectionism that I should always be better ... I'm quite happy with it, I speak to my students holding my head up high

(56) E: I don't think about improving my accent all the time, I just speak, as long as my students understand me it's good enough

(57) F: I don't consider my accent a problem

(58) G: I think I'm quite happy with it, there haven't been many occasions when people wouldn't have understood my speech

Only few participants had had negative experiences due to their English accents — another case for potential desirability bias. The informants remarked that

someone criticising their accent would feel awkward; discussing their own accents was evidently a sensitive issue:

(59) A: no one has commented on it ... someone criticising it sounds an absolutely awful situation to me

(60) B: negative feedback would feel very very bad to me

Participant C told that in her schooldays the focus in English teaching and learning was on grammar at the expense of oral skills. When she started studying at university, her accent was criticised, which was quite shocking to her:

(61) C: my generation was taught more grammar than pronunciation at school, and I remember that when I entered university I was criticised for my bad pronunciation, but it stems from the fact that we weren't trained to speak in English in upper secondary school ... it was actually quite shocking to start studying English and realise that I don't manage the oral part of it

In contrast, many had positive experiences to tell about, often someone complimenting the informant's accent for its native-like characteristics. It is worth noting that every account the participants gave included a self-deprecating element; this is another piece of evidence of their modesty:

(62) C: I remember when I was in the Middle East a couple years ago, someone there told me that my accent sounds nearly native ... I don't know whether s/he was serious or not but this is a warm memory to me

(63) D: in England my roommate's mother @@ mistook me for her daughter, and the daughter was English, but I don't know if anyone has believed me to be native after that, maybe some foreigner who him/herself doesn't speak English that well

(64) E: when I'm in Britain they're always so surprised about the quality of English coming from Finland, they often tell me that your English is very good ... but I'm myself always very critical

(65) F: many natives said that oh, your English is very good, I don't know if it was up to my English skills or that they were used to much worse English coming from Finland

(66) F: pupils by the way ... they're honest ... they said to me that at least you can speak English compared to some substitute teachers ... I mean I don't think much of myself

(67) G: our principal ... heard me speaking in English and s/he came to me and said that who's the one speaking, it sounds like BBC, s/he said, but that's not correct at all, but to him/her it sounded nice, and then in my international assignments there have been occasions when they've referred to me as the lady who speaks good English ... but my accent isn't that extraordinary

The participants thought that it is not particularly significant whether an English teacher's accent is very native-like, although the more native-like, the better for students. Consequently, their own occasionally Finnish-sounding accents will do for teaching purposes. However, there are some other requirements, for example that of fluency; if the teacher's speech is fluent, lack of authenticity is not a disaster. According to the interviewees, teachers' accents do not have to be 'perfect' since nowadays students hear English from so many other sources, such as television and teaching material. What is more, in foreign language classes the idea is that the students would speak more than the teacher:

(68) C: if we consider how much English students hear on TV and in other media today, plus that the teaching material and textbooks come with very good recordings, so I don't know how significant the teacher's accent is then, after all the main target is that students would speak more than the teacher

(69) E: when I went to school I didn't consider my teacher's accent a problem, and I don't think it's that significant today either, precisely because students hear English so much, of course the teacher's accent can't be totally silly

In general, however, the teachers demanded much more from themselves than from their students when it comes to accent. For instance, participant D wants to get rid of the unpleasant Finnish accent herself, but she does not want to pass this message to her students since this might discourage them from speaking in English. Participant C, too, regrets that she mixes two variants, British and American (see Quote 47), but she accepts the same kind of mixing by her students:

(70) C: if we talk about students in upper secondary school it's too much to require that they cling purely to one accent ... if the issue is whether you use British or American English the place to discuss this is university

Participant A, in turn, first argued that a decent accent — something that is required from all English teachers — cannot be achieved unless one spends time in an English-speaking country or has an English-speaking parent. Later, contradicting himself, he pointed out that his own accent has improved simply by teaching nonnative pupils because he needs to pay so much attention to pronunciation. Thus, his theory of acquiring a decent accent does not seem to hold true.

On the whole, we could say that this discourse is somewhat controversial in itself: on one hand, the participants gave very modest descriptions

of their own accents, but on the other, they concluded that their accents are good enough for teaching purposes.

8.3.2 *Adaptation and Accommodation*

The discourse on adaptation and accommodation concludes the accent perception discourses. The participants had a lot of experiences in which their accent or vocabulary had changed according to their interlocutor. These processes had been both conscious (often when accommodating for instance vocabulary) and subconscious (often when adapting to new environment with a new or different dominant English accent). The informants pointed out that adaption can occur surprisingly quickly. They also noted that their previous adaptation processes could be traced in their accent today:

(71) A: sometimes when some friends speak in the British way of course I start to kind of imitate them ... consciously or subconsciously I start to look for the same vocabulary, mainly, maybe I don't change my intonation, pronunciation that much, but my vocabulary changes

(72) B: I also know that when I stayed in Ireland for the five months the accent stuck to some extent, but now it has faded away, and easily when I go there it sticks again, but it doesn't last in Finland because I didn't stay there even a full year then

(73) D: a foreign friend of mine visited me a couple months back, I've known him/her since the time I stayed in England, and I was just telling him/her that it's awful how my English deteriorates, and s/he said that yes s/he remembers that when we where in England you sounded British but now you sound somehow different ... I think it was the truth ... and I've also stayed for example in Malta, they also have their own accent there and that may have had effects on my accent too

Some participants felt that staying in Finland affects their accents negatively, that is their accents lose their once acquired native characteristics. They felt that staying extended periods in English-speaking countries, or watching television series by native actors, alters their accents markedly towards more 'authentic' ones:

(74) D: because I haven't stayed long periods abroad for a long time, my accent hasn't stayed that authentic continuously ... I've thought that I should go abroad to restore it

(75) E: I'd love to speak with a British accent, I travelled England a lot at one stage and the accent stuck, then I visited my American friends two times last spring and bang the accent disappeared during those trips

(76) E: of course you can hear from my accent that it's a Finnish person speaking, there's nothing you can do about it, then if you for example stay two weeks in New York you'll speak decently for a week, but then the Finnish intonation returns ... I believe there's nothing you can do about it yourself, to keep the sound real ... and again if you stay in Britain for a couple of days and the British accent surrounds you ... luckily it sticks so quickly again ... and when I listen to a couple episodes of British TV series, odd enough I start to pick out things there

Thus, these participants appear to see adaptation and accommodation in a negative light because the processes make maintaining the desired native-like accent more difficult. Participant G, in contrast, seems to regard these processes as a strength, or even as a required skill. According to her, adaptation is needed when one confronts an unfamiliar accent of English:

(77) G: my experience of the Nepalese accent is that, to be honest, I understood nothing first, I thought that this simply isn't going to work, their language proficiency is very good but the accent is so thick, before you get accustomed to it and learn, you must be prepared to learn and adapt to the way they use the language ... my spoken language is very different when I meet someone on leisure time, you need to master the registers, and further when you deal with different cultures you must know the ways of that particular culture for example to address people, or to be with people

According to G, the need to be prepared to learn, to familiarise with, and to adapt and accommodate to different language use than their own applies to native speakers of English, too. In her experience, Americans' cultural sensitivity in this sense is not as good as it could be:

(78) G: it's fun with the Americans, they pronounce certain words differently ... I may have said something like schedule [ʃedju:l] instead of schedule [skedʒul], and they always ask what did you say, they might ask me because I use the British style

In brief, the interviewed teachers described their own accents in realistic terms: they recognised the Finnish characteristics in their English accents. The participants also appeared to be rather happy with their accents, mainly because they feel that their accents are functional in their professional lives. The informants were of the opinion that an English teacher in Finland can manage with a less native-like accent as long as the accent is fluent since pupils and students are surrounded by different English accents in their leisure time as well. Even though the informants had often received compliments on their accents, they tended to belittle these situations, thus appearing modest. Finally, the participants had experienced adaptation and

accommodation processes in practice, yet some of them seemed to consider the processes negatively, while some saw them as a linguistic strength. Having analysed the discerned accent perception discourses, it is now time to take a closer look at the discourses on identity.

9 TEACHERS' IDENTITY DISCOURSES

The two broad identity discourses that stand out quite clearly in the interviews are, first, the discourse on the desirable yet unattainable nativeness, and second, the discourse on nonnative teachers' dual role between a L2 learner and a L2 user. I have divided the theme of nativeness into four more concise discourses: the first discusses the desirability of native accent, while the second is about the undesirability of native accent or native ideals in general. The third discourse deals with the unattainability of native accent, and the fourth with the dichotomy between native and nonnative teachers. The issue of nativeness overlaps heavily with the accent perception discourses as the basis for discussion in the interviews was accents. The other broader identity discourse, that on dual identity, is less connected to accents. However, it deals with one of the fundamental questions of ELF — language user versus language learner identities. Interestingly, both the identity discourses are internally contradictory: among the participants, nativeness is something both to admire and to reject, and both the English learner and user are present in the informants' self-perceptions.

9.1 Desirable yet Unattainable Native Accent

9.1.1 *Desirable Native Accent*

All participants except one, C, who did not have a personal preference, named a native accent to be the most pleasant to listen to. As many as five mentioned the (educated) British accent, and one named the Irish accent. The British accent, and specifically RP, was described as refined, clear, enchanting and melodious, particularly in comparison with General American (GA):

(79) A: of course, it's stuck in my head that the British accent is especially refined ... American English feels so common, it's lost its charm ... the British accent is somehow enchanting ... there's some edge to it

(80) E: the British accent is the most beautiful of all ... it's somehow so clear and what is it, this RP English, it's very beautiful when Tony Blair speaks, I could listen to it on and on in peace ... the intonation, pronunciation, it simply sounds so beautiful

(81) F: well an educated British accent, and why not an educated American @@ I've been watching Heartbeat and Emmerdale ... you can hear all kinds of

accents in these series, but I also like rural, local accents because they somehow sound nice

It is worth noting that the participants do not necessarily speak with the accent they find the most pleasant. For instance, participants E and F preferred the British accent, but described their own accents as something between Finnish, British and American. Participant F seems to like RP or any British regional accent — she told earlier that she finds British culture and countryside fascinating in general — and she also likes GA, as long as the speaker is educated. I will return to the topic of educated accents in Discussion.

Participant G, in turn, explained that her own accent resembles the British accent, which she also finds likeable. G came up with two reasons for her British-sounding accent: on one hand she has grown into speaking it, but on the other, the accent is related to the identity of her choice:

(82) G: I personally like the British accent, I've somehow grown into it, and on the other hand I think it's a kind of matter of choice ... what you want to express by the accent you've adopted, and I think I've got this, that I don't want to identify with Americans though I've worked a lot with them

Informant A's views on pleasant accents are also interesting. He described his own accent clearly as American, largely acquired through television, appearing to be quite happy with it. Nevertheless, his description of the British accent, on one hand, is very complimentary as can be seen in Quote 79. Yet he associates the British accent immediately with humour, too (see Quote 18). These two ideas seem to be in conflict in his mind: the dead weight of tradition almost requires him to consider the British accent somehow elevated (see Quote 96), while his personal experience of the accent has been quite the opposite.

All participants except one (G) have a native accent as an ideal when they teach pronunciation. On the whole, it did not seem to matter which native accent is chosen for the target, but the tacit assumption is that it is either British (RP) or American (GA). The participants gave various reasons for teaching as native-like pronunciation as possible: teaching material provides native models; intelligibility will be endangered without native models; there are simply no options. The participants cling to teaching native pronunciation fast even though they also claim that the Finnish accent is understandable enough (see Quote 31), and nonnative accents in general are not that disturbing to native speakers of English (see Quote 7).

As teachers, the participants saw that their own accents should approximate native varieties more closely for the sake of the students, and they try to practise their accents in various ways. This is the case even though they are relatively satisfied with their accent as a working language (see the discourse on functional accents, Section 8.3.1, above):

(83) B: my accent's quite Finnish after all, it's not similar to any accent of an English-speaking country, but it'd be great if it were ... of course it'd be nice @@ to speak like a Dubliner

(84) D: the more authentic the better ... maybe as a student it's nicer to listen to ... I'm trying to get rid of the Finnish accent, I think that it's not the most beautiful accent to listen to, and as I already said, I don't speak perfectly myself, but my goal is to have a more native-like accent

(85) E: I try to visit an English-speaking country every year so that I'll get the opportunity to speak English properly, and I take these immersion courses by listening British TV series like this by James Herriot and Heartbeat, they speak wonderful English

Participant E also told that she does not worry about her accent as long as her students understand her, which contradicts her previous comment (Quote 85).

Finally, for instance participants B and C told that someone commending their accents for near-nativeness has been a very positive experience:

(86) B: well in Ireland I had these highlights when someone asked me which part of Ireland I was from, it's like hitting the jackpot

(87) C: a couple years back when I was in the Middle East I remember someone commending my accent that it sounds nearly native ... it's a warm memory to me

After telling about this positive experience, participant C claimed that if someone would recognise her as a Finn by her accent, she would not consider this a negative experience. Thus, her comments appear slightly ambiguous.

9.1.2 *Undesirable Native Accent*

Some of the participants objected to the ideal of nativeness and native accent in ELT, G being by far the fiercest opponent. G has acquainted herself with an article on ELF research — she mentioned the variation in the use of the third person -s and in /θ/ and /ð/ sounds — but has not applied those strictly to her teaching. This is somewhat contradictory considering her other opinions, but on the other hand understandable, if we consider the novelty of the whole issue of ELF.

First, the participants pointed out that for hands-on, successful English communication a native-like accent is not crucial, whereas natural, melodious, fluent spoken language with appropriate vocabulary and grammar is. Further, as natives are used to different accents of English, also to nonnative ones, successful communication is possible without a native accent:

(88) C: after all accent isn't that significant, apparently foreign accents don't bother for example native English people that much, especially in England where there are a lot of different accents

(89) F: I'm positive that what will be important in future is that you can speak fluently by using your vocabulary and sentence structures, not whether your accent is British or American or whatever

(90) G: because I've used English so much as a working language with different people, I don't consider learning for example the British or American accent perfectly to be particularly significant ... you should use the language naturally, you should have tone in your voice when you speak, and you should use the language fluently

Second, the informants talked more broadly about removing native ideals from ELT, both as models for pronunciation and general knowledge. Considering the status of English in the world, any kind of aspiration for nativeness is not wise:

(91) G: any kind of aspiration for nativeness is a bit mad in a world where English has this certain status

(92) G: the cultural skills in the curriculum should be extended to mean as wide knowledge of different cultures as possible, not that we'd think that this native British or American person would be our role model for language, for example for accent, or for what they know, Americans often know very little of anything

Participant E, for her part, had acknowledged the natural imperfections of a native speaker: although she quietly criticises herself in class when she notices having made a mistake in pronunciation, she does not always correct herself aloud because she has realised that natives' spoken language is not perfect either.

Third, C and G emphasised that their personal identity is strongly Finnish, and striving for a native-like accent might change that. They have done a conscious choice concerning their linguistic identity:

(93) C: I identify myself with the Finnish

(94) G: I don't necessarily want to be anything else but a Finn ... my accent is British by a Finnish person ... what else could it be, and I consciously don't even aim at native-like accent

9.1.3 *Unattainability of Native Accent*

Most of the participants observed that achieving a native accent is practically impossible and not even necessary for nonnative speakers. Participant A put this in a nutshell:

(95) A: I think that the level of my accent is nearly native, but strictly speaking, we're actually never able to achieve that native level, and achieving that isn't even necessary

Participant A also pointed out that the diversity of accents has increased among younger teacher generations; we can require that English teachers speak fluently — and teacher training should include more courses on practical spoken language — but it would be unrealistic to require native-like pronunciation:

(96) A: I'd say that in the younger generation few have this proper pronunciation, proper British pronunciation, or anything like that ... of course we can't require native-like speech, I myself don't have that either, and will never have

The participants remarked that nonnativeness must simply be accepted; it cannot be achieved through education, even though the target would be native-like pronunciation. According to A, some pupils will simply never learn to pronounce decently. Thus, sometimes it is not worth insisting upon this and wasting resources since people can also manage with rudimentary pronunciation in many situations (A referred to Mika Häkkinen, see Quote 31). The participants found many reasons for the unattainability of a native accent: ageing makes adopting new sounds more difficult; there is not enough time to refine one's accent into perfection; the personally most pleasing accent, British, is more difficult to achieve than for instance GA; attaining a proper native accent requires staying in an English-speaking country for an extended period, which is not always possible.

9.1.4 *Native Teachers versus Nonnative Teachers*

The participants touched upon the dichotomy between native and nonnative teachers. They emphasised the importance of knowing pupils' or students' L1 when teaching a foreign language. The basis for all learning, too, is a good knowledge of the mother tongue. In that sense, native teachers are not desirable for ELT in Finland,

not at least in the language education for children and young people. Hence the teaching of native accents also becomes problematic: nonnative teachers cannot provide the model themselves, and native teachers who could, are not qualified in other ways:

(97) E: natives are not qualified to teach for example in lower secondaries because they don't have the required knowledge of Finnish

(98) F: at school it's decidedly important, it's the base for all learning, be it a foreign language, maths or whatever, that you have a good knowledge of your mother tongue, and this isn't solely the responsibility of Finnish classes, instead every teacher provides a model of mother tongue use to the pupil, and I think it's absolutely necessary that all teachers use their mother tongue vividly and richly when they teach

In addition, even though it would be ideal to use the target language in class all the time, this is not always possible:

(99) F: you can't take it for granted that you'd speak the target language in class all the time because then you're in a role ... if you speak with the target language then first, not everybody will understand you, and second, it's not true, because you're in the role

Apart from the issue of students' L1, there were also other points related to the native teacher/speaker that the participants discussed. Participant B, for instance, wondered whether the pronunciation model that a teacher gives could be even discouraging to students if it is too native-like:

(100) B: on the other hand if the teacher isn't a brilliant speaker, he or she isn't a too daunting model to the students

Participant E, for her part, pointed out that in terms of spoken language, native speakers are not superior to nonnative speakers: spoken language is characteristically imperfect, and the linguistic knowledge of every speaker is imperfect. Finally, participant F had read somewhere about whether Finnish teachers of English are afraid and jealous of native teachers because some quarters consider them superior. She herself is not, mainly because she considers the knowledge of Finnish so valuable in teaching in Finland. Having heard about ELF, she feels that there is no reason to feel inferiority since today, so many ways of speaking English are equally acceptable:

(101) F: and all these lingua franca issues and such ... soon there won't be any single right way to speak English, so why should I feel inferior @@

The main findings in the discourse on nativeness were as follows: on one hand, the participants admire native accents, RP in particular, and would like to be able to speak with a native accent themselves. Native accent also represents the target for their teaching for various reasons. On the other hand, the participants are quite well aware of the fact that achieving a native accent is very unlikely. Interestingly, many participants also found reasons why achieving a native accent is not necessarily even the best option; some had understood that striving for a native accent might for instance change their Finnish identities. Lastly, the participants brought up some strengths of nonnative teachers, thus defending their adopted identity that has traditionally been undervalued in comparison with the identity of native teachers. Next, I will examine the dual identity discerned among the interviewees.

9.2 Dual Identity

9.2.1 *Switching Roles of Learner and User*

Finnish teachers of English seem to identify themselves both with the community of L2 learners, and the community of L2 users. All the interviewed teachers had a dual identity as English speakers; only one participant (A) stated that he is clearly a user, and only one (G) said that she is clearly a learner, but even those informants could recognise situations in which the dominant role changes. The participants commented that the question “Would you regard yourself rather as a L2 learner or a L2 user?” was good yet tricky: it is difficult to separate the roles of a learner and a user as a nonnative speaker. Most participants defined themselves as having a somewhat ambiguous dual identity, in which the roles of learner and user are intertwined, and switch when necessary:

(102) B: I naturally use English at work, but the learner's role is strong there as well

(103) C: I probably have this kind of dual role that I learn all the time, but maybe at the moment I'm rather a user nevertheless

(104) D: at the moment I'd say a learner, but also a user because I speak in English in class all the time ... I'm toing and froing with this ... I think I'm like 60 per cent a learner at the moment, and 40 per cent a user

(105) F: I can't say that I would be either or ... it's difficult to distinguish them ... fair enough, I teach English, so in that sense I use it

Participant A defined himself dominantly as a user of English, but said that he has got a dual role specifically when teaching. Even then, however, he feels that learning occurs on the side; it is rarely conscious or systematic:

(106) A: my learning occurs on the side, I rarely start studying consciously nowadays ... it's not like systematic learning any more

Participant G, for her part, firmly identified herself as a learner, particularly when she faces new contexts of language use. Yet the idea of a user looms in the background:

(107) G: I'm like a user of the language, but I'm also a learner in order to be able to use the language in certain fields

In the dual identities, the learner's role dominates on the whole. Roughly, the learner's role seems to relate both to the teaching profession and to spare time, whereas the user's role is usually restricted to leisure time activities. For instance, participants C and F said that learning is constantly in progress; participant F actively picks up pieces of information all the time:

(108) F: I myself keep my ear to the ground, I gather up nuggets of information here and there, I keep myself active

Participants A, B, D and E related personal learning mainly to their profession as a teacher. As for A and D who had the shortest experience as teachers, two years and six months respectively, this may partly be explained by the fact that they are still adapting to their new work by familiarising themselves with the teaching material, vocabulary, and grammar in order to be able to teach. However, as for participant E, teaching experience (13 years) cannot account for this. She gave an example of correcting students' compositions:

(109) E: if a student has written an odd word in a composition, you can never tell him/her that this is not the done thing, you can never say that this is meaningless, you just need to browse the web and discover that the word is acceptable and it's been used by other people before

In informant G's life, in turn, the learner's role dominates when she confronts a new context of language use, for example in a new work assignment: then there is a need to learn both the new operations model and the kind of language used in it.

While participant A exceptionally stated that the user's role dominates in his life generally, most participants explained that they are users of English predominantly in certain situations in their spare time. For instance, B's identity as a

user is at its strongest when she reads in English for leisure, although she still pays attention to interesting linguistic features in order to learn every now and then. Informant E considers herself a user when she visits the family with whom she lived during her exchange year in the USA over twenty years ago. She also recognises her strength of being able to make sense of grammar better than the natives:

(110) E: when I speak with them we're like on a par ... there are no language barriers ... I feel that I'm just like them ... then I make native speakers familiar with the secrets of the English grammar

Some identified themselves as users also in teaching contexts, for example C when she prepares teaching material and her own exercises to her students (see Quotes 102-105).

9.2.2 *Life-long Learning with the English Language*

The informants presented two principal reasons for the domination of the learner's role: first, people's general tendency to learn, and second, the nature of the English language. Participant B said that as a language teacher as well as an individual, she has a specific interest in language and she wants to know more about it. When she for instance watches television in order to relax, she takes notice of linguistic aspects both consciously and subconsciously. Participant F, too, stated that an open-minded person wants to learn new things all the time, which is only positive. Furthermore, the status of English makes the teachers learn: the informants stated that there is always something new to learn in the English language because it changes all the time, it is so multidimensional and the uses of it are vast:

(111) B: you can always find something new in the English language

(112) C: as a teacher, learning is a life-long effort because the language changes all the time, and the uses of English are so vast that you'll never master all of that

(113) E: the language is so multidimensional, and it changes precisely because it's so widely spoken

Participant G discussed people's ability to learn a language in general: one will never be able to master any language perfectly since there are so many contexts of use, particularly in the case of English. This concerns both native and nonnative speakers:

(114) G: why I consider myself a learner, well you can never learn this, I mean I think this idea that you can master a language perfectly should be brought to an end once and for all, I don't master even Finnish completely ... it's learning all the time, especially when you confront a new sphere of operations, then you need to learn the operations, and the operational language

Interestingly, half of the participants see this constant need to learn positively, the other half negatively. For instance, participants A and E feel that perpetual learning affects them negatively: teaching English has made A humble, it is embarrassing to note that for example his knowledge of grammar is not exact enough for teaching. Participant E, for her part, feels that she never masters the language well enough, which is frustrating:

(115) A: yes it's made me humble, it's especially embarrassing if you notice that a certain piece of grammar isn't completely clear to you ... because you can't teach something that you don't understand yourself

(116) E: it's like ignorance is bliss ... it's quite distressing really, you feel that you're never capable enough

In contrast, C and G were clearly of the opinion that learning all the time is perfectly natural — even fun and interesting:

(117) C: I think it's fun, teaching English is like an adventure into the language

(118) G: I think it's quite natural, it doesn't bother me, I simply learn then ... on the contrary, it's interesting

To summarise the discourse on dual identity, the identity that the participants have as English speakers seems to shift between the roles of a L2 user and a L2 learner, one or the other dominating depending on the situation. On the whole, the learner's role is stronger with most participants; the participants often identify themselves with the learner in professional, teaching contexts, whereas the user's role is adopted more often in leisure time. The participants explained that there are two main reasons for perpetual learning: people tend to learn something new all the time, on one hand, and on the other, the uses of the English language are so vast and keep changing. Some informants considered the constant need to learn positively, some regarded it as negative and even frustrating at times.

10 DISCUSSION

I have divided the discussion chapter into three subsections. First I will consider aspects that relate to the interviewees' accent perceptions, and after that I will discuss points emerging from the identity discourses. Finally I will consider the implications of the findings for ELT in Finland, teacher training and further studies.

10.1 Discussion on Accent Perceptions

I will start the discussion with the discourses on native and nonnative accents: their intelligibility, role in ELT, and accents' amusing and irritating qualities. The interviewed teachers had noticed that familiar accents are easier to understand than less familiar ones, which dovetails with common sense. Interestingly, however, no one mentioned Finnish speakers' accent of English in this context: the Finnish accent should by far be the most intelligible accent to L1 Finnish speakers. Setting aside the Finnish accent may indicate that the participants' perception of English accents indeed comprises mainly of native and only the most widely spoken nonnative accents.

It is natural that accents that are difficult to understand may feel irritating at times; on these occasions the hearer's attention is directed to individual words instead of the overall meaning, making the discourse discontinuous and difficult to follow. Both native and nonnative accents can be difficult to understand, as the participants pointed out. Nonetheless, for some reason only the unintelligible *nonnative* accents were regarded as irritating, unintelligible *native* accents never. Could this be another sign of the teachers' admiration for nativeness? With ELF, the categories of native and nonnative become irrelevant (cf. Brutt-Griffler and Samimy 2001). Instead of this dichotomy, an individual speaker's clarity, pronunciation skills and particularly accommodation skills matter — regardless of the L1.

It appears curious that the teachers often justify the exclusion of nonnative accents from ELT by their unintelligibility. If nonnative accents are difficult to understand, it is most probably because of the lack of exposure to them. Usually people learn what they are taught; in ELT, exposure to nonnative accents in addition to native ones would improve flexible comprehension skills needed in *lingua franca* communication.

The teachers opposed to nonnative accents particularly in the matriculation examination, but in my opinion, their reasons for this do not seem tenable. The informants talked about a listening comprehension exam with an Indian speaker: the poor results of this section had upset both teachers and students. It is no wonder that the results have been below average, however. If students have not been accustomed to hearing Indian accents and prepared for variation, poor results and feelings of injustice can be expected. Moreover, that particular section of the listening comprehension may have been a failure as a test regardless of the accent used in it. Thus, it is not nonnative accents that make exams more difficult; it is natural that students find them difficult if they have not been familiarised with them before. In the end, the exam should reflect the realities of the English-speaking world, and include at least globally most widely spoken nonnative accents, too.

Humour can be an effective tool also in language teaching as the teachers had noticed. However, using humour with accents is somewhat risky: it potentially enhances negative stereotypes related to different nationalities, whether native or nonnative. Unfortunately, people find unfamiliar (nonnative) accents funny more often than familiar (native) ones, which has also been pointed out by textbook authors (Kivistö 2005: 82). Nonetheless, this is not a valid reason for excluding nonnative accents from teaching material; this decision must be made on the grounds of totally different aspects.

The controversial relationship of ELF and ELT is clearly present in the interviewed teachers' opinions. It appears that the teachers perceive school and the world outside its premises as two separate entities: in English language education the goals are accepted to be very high and idealistic even though the overall majority of students fall short of these targets. In oral skills and pronunciation teaching this means native accent ideals. Outside school, on the other hand, the teachers do recognise lingua franca communication, and local, mixed accents are well tolerated. However, they are ready to ignore the real English-speaking world in ELT for various reasons already discussed. One of the most distinct examples of separating school and the real world was participant B's mindset. She openly told about her own difficulties with nonnative accents, yet she was unwilling to integrate nonnative accents in the curriculum in order to widen the range of familiar accents for the benefit of her students — and herself.

Of course, not all the time in ELT can be devoted to different accents, but on the whole, spoken English in its entirety should be more valued since every pupil and student will need these skills in the future. Some of the participants had made this observation, demanding the revision of the curricula of both Finnish L1 education and foreign language education, where oral skills have long been inferior to written skills. The assessment of oral skills has taken an important step forward in upper secondary schools as oral skills will be tested from the year 2010 onwards (Liiten 2008). However, the test should be made compulsory to all for an effective backwash, and the skills of an international English speaker should be appreciated in the test.

The interviewed teachers' views can be compared to the results of Ranta's survey (2004). The upper secondary teachers also in this study find the matriculation exam (too) binding in their teaching. In Ranta's study especially younger teachers showed signs of being ready to accept also nonnative accents in ELT, while in this study the same could be observed both with younger teachers, and teachers with a long work experience. However, with only seven informants, these views cannot be generalised without further studies. If we compare the results to the ones of Sifakis and Sougari (2005), it seems that the bulk of Finnish teachers are as native norm bound in teaching as Greek teachers are, but the picture is more complicated than that: outside school other principles rule, and there is budding awareness of international uses of English among Finnish teachers, too.

The Finnish accent produced discourses on its speakers' abilities to learn different accents, and on the Finnish pronunciation and intonation. A common-sense observation from the teachers was that some people acquire new sounds and sound patterns easier than others. Related to this fact, it should also be noted that there are both skilful speakers and less skilful speakers in every L1 group; not every native speaker of English masters fluent (oral) communication, and this is why the target model in ELT should be changed from the infallible native speaker to the fluent, flexible, international speaker of English. Another observation was that the British and Scottish accents are difficult to learn (cf. Derwing 2003), which should help the teachers understand that trying to master them perfectly is often a waste of time.

The teachers appreciated particularly young Finns' and Finnish businessmen's pronunciation skills. It is worth noting that these are groups using

ELF particularly frequently. It is also a piece of evidence that the Finnish society has changed, and is changing, with its uses of English (Kalaja 2006); oral skills are increasingly needed in various contexts. Nevertheless, according to the teachers, intonation, or mainly the lack of it, is the principal fault of the Finnish accent. They are right in that lack of intonation, or prosody, affects intelligibility more than segments (Derwing 2003: 560). Perhaps we could interpret the teachers' concern about intonation as a sign of willingness to subscribe to more intelligibility-based pronunciation teaching. Intonation is, however, difficult to teach: "the lack of orthographic representation for prosody in English (other than punctuation) makes elements such as rhythm, intonation, and stress considerably more challenging to teach than individual segments, particularly if teachers have not had a strong background in linguistics or pronunciation instruction" (ibid.). Thus, there is much that teacher training could do about this.

The interview data suggests that the teachers see nonnative accents in a hierarchical manner, Finnish accent falling into the middle ground somewhat surprisingly: Swedish accent is better than Finnish, but Finnish accent is nevertheless better than Spanish. For instance Jenkins' study (2007) has indicated that the further the nonnative accent is from English or Germanic languages and cultures, the lower it appears in the hierarchy. However, to return to Brutt-Griffler and Samimy's views once more, "national identity should not be a basis for classification of speakers of an international language. The more English becomes an international language, the more the division of its speakers into native and nonnative becomes inconsistent" (2001: 105). The young participants in Hakala's study (2007) seem to have grasped this already: they preferred a Dutch speaker of English to native ones. It is also a positive sign that at least some of the interviewed teachers of this study accept the Finnish accent and encourage their pupils or students to speak in English whatever their accent is like.

The teachers described their own accents by very modest terms. Considering that they *are* professional, educated speakers of English, this could be interpreted as a sign of underestimation. Perhaps the desire for a native accent is still looming in the background, or perhaps the fact that they are supposed to speak like a native makes them belittle their skills even though they accept their accents themselves. The participants' overall contentment with their accents appears to derive from practice, which is also the starting point for ELF.

The informants' experiences related to their own accents revealed some interesting things. First, the fact that the teachers described only very few negative experiences may suggest, on one hand, that the topic of personal accent is very sensitive, and the teachers did not want to report on their injured feelings or embarrassing situations. On the other hand, it may simply suggest that the teachers feel confident about their accents, and have not registered any negative comments. I think, however, that the first option — social desirability bias, leading to socially correct answers consciously or subconsciously — has a role in this. The recounted positive experiences, in turn, were interesting in the sense that they were often related to an underlying desire to have a native accent.

It is a pity that many of the teachers perceive their natural tendency to adapt and accommodate their speech according to different interlocutors as a disadvantage rather than a strength. According to the principles of ELF, this is something that is in urgent need of reconsideration, as some of the teachers had already realised: accommodation is a most useful skill in encounters with people with an unfamiliar native or nonnative accent (Jenkins 2000). It would be important that teachers pass this message to their students, too. Another important point is that of mutual responsibility (Lippi-Green 1998): fluent conversation in English — for instance between Finns and Americans to make an example of participant G's experience — requires active and sensitive cooperation from all the interlocutors, whether native or nonnative.

10.2 Discussion on Identities

Combining the discourses on pleasant or desirable accents and teaching ideals gives the impression that the majority of the interviewees feel that nativeness is worth aspiring to. There may be several reasons why the teachers prefer native accents. For example, Finnish teachers of English must achieve a master's degree including both English language and cultural studies, and many teachers are genuinely interested in specific English-speaking cultures, such as British (participant F) or Irish (participant B). On the other hand, their long training may have directed the teachers to believe that native accents are superior to nonnative ones as teachers' university education pays hardly any attention to nonnative accents in other than SLA contexts. The informants justified their restriction to native accents in teaching

by reasons that seem to give the responsibility to someone else, for example to the teaching material. Yet Finnish teachers can make educational decisions quite freely within the limits of official documents, such as the national curricula. Teaching material, for instance, is not such a binding document, but rather a supportive tool.

The participants preferred expressly *educated* native accents, such as RP. This may indicate a direct link to their identity construction; they may see the speakers of educated accents of greater moral and intellectual worth (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004), and associate this group with social power (Widdowson 1994; Varghese *et al.* 2005). Participant F is the clearest example of this, but on no account the only one. As an admirer of British culture, she also accepts British regional accents, but above all, she prefers educated British and American accents; she regrets that acquiring RP is very difficult, and dislikes low-style, meaningless speech. This might be social aspiration to belong to the superior group and upper class culture, in search of a new, more favourable identity.

Among the teachers, nativeness is not as straightforward objective as it may seem at first glance, however. Many teachers had understood that achieving a native-like accent is practically impossible, and one participant discarded native ideals outright. Some spoke up for nonnative teachers spontaneously, echoing Seidlhofer's (2001) and Llurda's (2004) views on the importance of knowing pupils' L1 in foreign language teaching. These nonnative teachers' views are thus far from naive in the sense that they would believe in native speaker authority without criticism. Some of them, for instance participant G, had also understood that linguistic identity is a matter of choice and includes endless renegotiation (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004). Related to this, she had noticed that choosing to use a certain accent functions as a powerful social act (Lippi-Green 1998).

The teachers' identities as English speakers (learners versus users) turned out to be multiple, shifting, and occasionally in conflict. This is typical of poststructuralist identities, and also covers Varghese *et al.*'s (2005) first point in their definition of identity. If we consider Pavlenko and Blackledge's (2004) division into imposed, assumed and negotiable identities, the interviewed teachers' identities seem to fluctuate between the two latter ones: on one hand, it is easy to conform to the offered identity of a L2 learner, but on the other, the teachers tend to remodel their linguistic self-perceptions as the need arises, some more actively than others.

The dominant learner identity among the informants draws probably from several sources, too. In a sense, their stance is easy to understand: the postmodern world changes very fast, and to keep up with the developments in different spheres of life, one needs to adopt the role of a constant learner. Another source of learner identity appears to be the strong idea of life-long learning in the Finnish educational world, promoted by the national curricula and CEF. This might explain why the teachers' identities are so polarised, the learner often dominating in professional contexts, and the user more often in other contexts. Yet another reason for the dominating learner may be that ELT in Finland has traditionally been based on native models, and its ultimate goal has been native-like (unrealistic) proficiency: the teachers may feel that they have no choice but to conform to the role of the perpetual nonnative L2 learner.

It is relevant to consider how teaching experience affects the adopted identities. In this respect, A and D are comparable: they have worked as English teachers for a short while, which probably makes them feel learners particularly in teaching contexts. While A already regards himself predominantly as a user, D also predicts that the user will overcome the present learner in a few years time. On the other hand, the only participant who clearly stated that her identity is a learner, that is G, has also the longest teaching experience, 29 years. She has also worked in other, international work assignments, which has shown her that learning any language is a life-long effort. As for the other participants, teaching experience does not seem to have particular significance to their identities except for C, who has gained more confidence in speaking over the 19 teaching years. Thus, it appears that those participants who have entered the profession quite recently show signs of adopting another kind of identity, that of L2 user; it appears that new teacher generations have more identity options to choose from.

As already pointed out, it seems that the teachers are more confident users of English in their personal lives, without the pressure of vocational proficiency. Of course, this kind of ambiguous, context-bound learner identity can be considered natural and not problematic at all if it is consciously chosen, as appears to be the case with some of the participants, particularly with G. But then again, constant learning may cause occasional frustration and tension, as in the case of E, and then reconsidering assumed identities might turn out to be valuable: granted the fact that language, and particularly the English language, changes all

the time and teachers need to keep up with that, there is no reason to feel deficient professionally or in personal lives because of that.

Since the interviewed teachers see learning nonetheless mainly in positive terms, the findings of this study differ slightly from the general, somewhat gloom picture offered by previous, comparable studies (see for instance Seidlhofer 1999; Sifakis & Sougari 2005; Jenkins 2007). In addition to the culture of life-long learning, the teachers' fairly positive self-image and self-respect may be promoted by the practical non-existence of native English teachers in ordinary Finnish comprehensive and upper secondary schools, as well as by their natural realism as to their linguistic skills and capabilities.

How aware are Finnish teachers of English of ELF, then? In fact, as many as three participants mentioned the notion of ELF itself: B when discussing her problems with nonnative accents, F when discussing the dilemma of native and nonnative teachers, and G when discussing the phonology and lexicogrammar of English as an international language. It is clear, however, that the other participants are also aware of the changes in the English-speaking world. For instance, A discussed the pronunciation testing of the English department at the University of Helsinki: there are only two options, British and American, from which the candidates can choose. He wondered whether all students fit in those categories, and from the perspective of ELF, they definitely do not.

Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004: 25) point out that "identity options are most often contested and resisted by the most marginalized and discriminated against segments of the population, which in multilingual societies often consist of linguistic minorities". One can easily agree with this. With ELF, the situation is different, however: the speakers of ELF are a clear majority. Perhaps this could be one reason for the slow renegotiation process of identities. At any rate, today, it seems that nonnative English teachers in Finland have more negotiable identity options than before, and they are also willing to appreciate the strengths of their nonnativeness in the language teaching profession. This goes in accordance with Ranta's study (2004), in which the teachers showed signs of being ready to accept new goals for ELT if the national curricula and for example matriculation exams would make this possible in practice. Next, in the final discussion section, I will suggest how for instance these actors in ELT could be revised.

10.3 Implications for Teacher Training, ELT and Further Studies

Promoting the acceptance of a wider variety of English accents as well as the positive self-image of nonnative English teachers in Finland in the spirit of ELF challenges both teacher training, ELT and related research. In teacher training — at the moment still largely overemphasising native varieties and cultures — a lot could be done: introducing different accents should be balanced to reflect the global reality, which would help nonnative students generate a new sense of professional agency and legitimacy. Exploiting imagination productively in critical pedagogy to (preservice) teachers (Pavlenko 2003: 265-266) could also nourish the positive self-image and potential ELF identity.

Jenkins points out that teachers who attend courses on varieties of English or world Englishes may respond positively to the notion of ELF. However, “when these same students begin or resume work as English language teachers, the institutional constraints imposed on them to teach ‘standard’ NS English by traditional communicative methods prevent them from making links between what they know in theory and what they do in their classrooms” (Jenkins 2007: 246). The national curricula and matriculation examination, both having a strong backwash on English language teaching in Finland, have critical roles in changing ELT in the classrooms, too. The national curricula, first, should make a clear distinction between English and other foreign languages because of its status as a global lingua franca. More weight should be put on oral skills, fluency and accommodation skills; the teaching material should present a wider variety of accents, including nonnative ones; overall cultural sensitivity should be promoted. Native accents would be in an equal position with other accents. Further, the status of oral testing in the matriculation exam of English should be established — as the Finnish National Board of Education has initiated — and students' performance should be measured against a fluent, flexible and proficient international speaker of English. “The educational system may not be the beginning, but it is the heart of the standardization process” (Lippi-Green 1998: 65); in other words, the educational system must become the heart of change.

There is a lot to be done in such a young research area as ELF both on societal level, which has been the interest of this study, as well as on the level of language, which is needed to understand the nature of ELF better. It would be important that SLA researchers give up ideas of interlanguage and fossilisation in

ELT (Jenkins 2007: 239), when the goal is something else than native speaker proficiency. Finally, getting back to the focus of this study, it would be interesting to study how accent perceptions and identities evolve in time. How fast will the opinions related to different accents and teacher identities become more aware of the developments of the English-speaking world? Or will they remain the same in the educational world, which is notoriously slow to change? If the overall perceptions will change, the questions would be *how*, and *why*. As for identities, a thorough treatment of this highly complicated topic would require longer interviews, more participants and even more penetrating analysis in order to make sense of the elusive, personal ideas of the Finnish English language teachers. One fascinating research topic could be the polarisation of professionalism and free time, which the findings of the study suggest: the universality and the reasons behind polarisation could be examined more closely.

11 CONCLUSION

According to Modiano, “a critical ELT supports the belief that the spirit of integration can exist alongside cultural and linguistic diversity. Thus, native and non-native speech communities, their intellectual properties, their historical legacies, and the roles they play in the world at large are not placed in hierarchies but instead are brought forth as equally relevant” (2004: 222). This idea of equality through diversity has largely been the breeding ground for — as well as the objective of — this study, which has combined ELT with English as a lingua franca, accent attitudes, and related identities. The study has delved into the minds of seven nonnative English teachers in Finland. From the perspective of ELF, the purpose of the study was, on one hand, to find out the teachers' attitudes towards different English accents. On the other hand, the purpose was to sketch the teachers' identities as speakers of English. This was done by semi-structured interviews and discourse analysis. The findings were, as can be expected from studies concerning people's ideas, complex.

How do the teachers perceive different accents, then? It is difficult to condense the answer into a few words, but we could say that there is a general preference for native accents; a general disinclination to integrate nonnative accents into teaching, but general acceptance of nonnative accents in lingua franca communication; general comfort with the Finnish pronunciation, but general discomfort with Finns' lack of English intonation; general modesty towards the teachers' own accents.

And how is nonnative teachers' identity as English speakers constructed? A short answer to that could be ambiguously, and sometimes not consciously or critically enough if we consider the issues of English as a lingua franca. Teachers' identities are fluctuating and context-bound, shifting between the learner (often in teaching contexts) and the user (in other contexts). Although the desire for nativeness, and particularly for native accents, emerges every once in a while, Finnish teachers seem to be fairly realistic in that sense, nonetheless. Long teaching experience suggests even more realism about native ideals, while shorter experience seems to leave room for more identity options.

I agree with Pavlenko and Blackledge in that “hegemonic language ideologies demand homogeneity ... the common aim [is to make] visible the hidden

symbolic power which underpins an ideological drive toward homogeneity, a drive which potentially marginalizes or excludes those who either refuse, or are unwilling, to conform ... social injustice through symbolic domination continues to occur" (2004: 27-28). In ELT, some aspects of the outdated native ideals need rechecking, so that the social balance of power would reflect the realities of the English speaking world better. However, the future of Finnish teachers of English does not seem that bleak after all: all in all, these teachers are able to use their common sense when it comes to accents, whether others' or their own. They are also able to criticise native ideals in English language education. I dare to suggest that if properly re-trained by courses on ELF and related issues, and given the opportunity to apply new targets in English teaching, many of them would probably do that with pleasure. The ideology of ELF appears to gain ground gradually in the expanding circle; signs of renegotiation are in the air.

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Appendix 1: Interview Guide in English

Introduction and instructions to the interviewee

- The study is about the English language today and English teachers' experiences and thoughts about it, and their profession
- The form of the interview is relatively free, resembling a conversation: reflective answers are welcome
- You're not expected to be an expert on the topic, I'm interested in your personal views
- If any other ideas even loosely associated with the topic occur to you during the interview, you're welcome to bring them up
- Your anonymity will be protected

Warm-up

- How did you end up working as an English teacher?
- How long have you worked as an English teacher?
- What motivates you to continue your work?

Spoken English

- What do you think are the most important components of spoken English? Why?

English Accents

- Which English native/non-native accents are you (most) familiar with?
- Is one/are some of them particularly pleasant/unpleasant? Why?
- What do you think of the accents that you can hear in the teaching material?
- How significant is the teacher's accent in English teaching?

Finnish accent

- What do you think of Finnish speakers' accent of English? (intelligible/natural/disturbing/deficient/embarrassing...) Why?
- How important is it to teach students native-like pronunciation?

Interviewee's own accent

- Are you happy with your own accent? Why/why not?
- Can you think of any especially positive/negative experience related to your accent?
- Has anybody thought you to be native/recognised you as a Finn on the grounds of your pronunciation? How did you feel?

Awareness of ELF

- Today, English is a global, international language. Its functions have also increased in Finland. Should this affect English teaching? How?
- Would you regard yourself rather as a L2 learner or a L2 user? Why?
- Does this division provoke any other thoughts?

Concluding the interview

- Is there anything else you'd like to add to your answers?
- Thank you for the interview!
- Here's my contact information if you're interested in the results of the study

Appendix 2: Interview Guide in Finnish

Johdanto ja ohjeet haastateltavalle

- Tutkimus käsittelee englannin kielen asemaa nykymaailmassa ja englannin opettajien kokemuksia ja käsityksiä siitä ja opettajuudesta
- Haastattelu on suhteellisen vapaamuotoinen, keskustelunomainen; pohdiskelevat vastaukset ovat tervetulleita
- En ole sinun perehtyneen aiheeseen; olen kiinnostunut henkilökohtaisista näkemyksistäsi
- Jos mieleesi juolahtaa haastattelun aikana ajatuksia, jotka jotenkin liittyvät aiheeseen, voit tuoda niitä esiin
- Takaan täyden anonymiteetin

Lämmittely

- Miten päädyit englannin opettajaksi?
- Miten kauan olet toiminut englannin opettajana?
- Mikä motivoi sinua jatkamaan työssäsi?

Puhuttu englannin kieli

- Mitkä ovat mielestäsi tärkeimmät osatekijät puhutussa englannin kielessä? Miksi?

Englannin aksentit

- Aksentti: tietyn ryhmän (määrittyy sosiaalisesti tai maantieteellisesti) tapa puhua: oleellisia mm. ääntäminen, intonaatio, painotus, nopeus...
- Mitkä englannin aksentit (natiivit/ei-natiivit) ovat sinulle tutuimpia?
- Onko jokin niistä erityisen miellyttävä tai epämiellyttävä? Miksi?
- Mitä ajattelet aksenteista, joita oppimateriaaleissa käytetään?
- Miten merkittävä rooli opettajan aksentilla on englannin opettamisessa?

Suomalaisten aksentti

- Mitä mieltä olet suomalaisten englannin aksentista?
(ymmärrettävää/luonnollista/häiritsevää/puutteellista/noloa...) Miksi?
- Miten tärkeää on opettaa oppilaille natiivin kaltaista ääntämistä?

Haastateltavan oma aksentti

- Oletko tyytyväinen omaan aksenttiisi? Miksi/miksi et?
- Tuleeko mieleesi erityisen positiivista tai negatiivista tilannetta, joka liittyy aksenttiisi?
- Onko sinua luultu natiiviksi tai tunnistettu suomalaiseksi ääntämisesi perusteella? Miltä se tuntui?

ELF-tietoisuus

- Tänä päivänä englanti on kansainvälinen maailmankieli. Sitä käytetään yhä erilaisimpiin tarkoituksiin myös Suomessa. Pitäisikö tämän mielestäsi vaikuttaa englannin kielen opetukseen? Miten?
- Pidätkö itseäsi enemmän englannin kielen käyttäjänä vai oppijana? Miksi?
- Herättääkö tämä jako käyttäjiin ja oppijoihin mitään muita ajatuksia?

Haastattelun lopetus

- Onko vielä jotakin, mitä haluaisit tuoda esiin? Kiitos + yhteystiedot

Appendix 3: Quotes in Finnish

(1) D: mä tykkään siitä brittiaksentista enemmän [kuin amerikkalaisesta] ku se on tutuinkin ... brittienglannissa ei tarvii niinku hirveesti [ponnistella ymmärtääkseen], ellei oo sit just jostain lähelt Skotlantii tai muuta, se on sillei ihan muutta mutkitta, mut joitaki amerikkalaisia joutuu sit tosi paljon tarkemmin kuuntelee

(2) E: meiän koulussa [on] yks oppilas joka puhuu siis aivan täydellistä brittienglantia, hänellä on ollu tämmönen yksityisopettaja Englannista, englantilainen, niin tota välillä tuntuu et sitä on niinku vaikeempi ymmärtää ku sitä amerikanenglantia, et kyl se amerikkalaisuus on jotenki tääl Suomessa niin vahva

(3) B: jostain kumman syystä, mä en siihen työssäni silleen joudu mutta maailmalla matkustaessani niin lingua francana puhuttu englantia niin on musta kauheen vaikee ... mä matkustan ihmisten kanssa [jotka] on käyneet vaan peruskoulun, ja ne on paljon näppärämpiä esimerkiks ymmärtämään jotain esimerkiks kreikkalaista joka puhuu englantia ku minä ... mä oon niinku liikaa tottunu siihen että mä kuuntelen niinku työssäni, niin mä kyl kuuntelen aina natiiveja, tietyst opiskelijoitahan mä kuuntelen kans mut seki on taas sitte eri ku ne on niinku suomalaisia jotka puhuu ... heti ku mä meen sillai et on joku muu tota se äidinkieli, ja sit puhuu englantia, niin mä @ oon todella huono siinä

(4) H: no häiritseek se [vahva aksentti] niinku ymmärtämistä sitte
A: no kyl se mahdollisesti voi tosiaan häiritä

(5) C: jos menee jonneki Intiaan ja Afrikkaan niin voi olla että siellä on sen verran paksu sitte se murre, tietyst äänteet on Intiassa niin erilaisia että ne saattaa vaikeuttaa ... ymmärtämistä lähinnä

(6) E: monia variaatioita on englannissa, toiset puhuu yhtä ja toiset toista, kaikki voi olla ihan samalla tavalla ymmärrettäviä

(7) C: loppujen lopuks sillä aksentilla ei oo niin isoo merkitystä, että se ei ilmeisesti esimerkiks natiivienglantilaista niin paljon ärsytä kuitenkaan ja totanni varsinki Englannissa kun on monennäkösiä aksentteja

(8) A: kyl se kuuluu siihen opetussuunnitelmaan kans et siel niinku tiedostetaan ne [englannin variaatiot], et on olemassa tällasii, ja okei ne kuulostaa vähän tältä ja ei sen syvemmälle voi sit mennäkään

(9) B: englantia puhuva maailma on niin valtavan laaja, siel on niin valtavasti niitä aksentteja ... niin mihin se aika sitte niinku riittäis ... se oiski jännä tutkimuksen aihe että kummasta niinku hyötyy enemmän, siitä että kuulee enemmän sitä semmosta aitojen natiivien [puhetta kuin vierasperäisten] ja sit sen pohjalta rakentaa sen kielitaidon

(10) B: kylhän opiskelijat varmaan kuitenkin sitä lingua francaa [käyttää] niinkun jo ihan semmosessa omassa henkilökohtasessa elämässäänkin niinku ne on paljon altistuneita sille, paljon enemmän varmaan ku esim. englannin opettajat ... ehkä se ei oo sitte kuitenkaan niinkun välttämätöntä sitte taas niinkun englannin tunneilla

(11) B: yks ylioppilaskirjotus mis oli tämmönen lingua francana puhuva, tai se tais olla itse asiassa niinku intialainen joka puhu niinku virallista englannin kieltä, niinku virallisena kielenä ja sehän, ylioppilastulos siltä osiolta meni ihan hirvittävän huonosti ... ylioppilas ei myöskään tahdo oikeen ymmärtää sitä lingua francana puhuttua englantia

(12) C: jos aattelee esimerkiks ylioppilaskirjotuksia, ja kuuntelutehtäviä siellä, niin sillen mun mielestä niin ei pitäis, sillen mun mielestä nää kuuntelutehtävät pitäis olla joko amerikanenglannilla tai brittienglannilla, ehkä vielä irlantilainen aksentti voi olla tai skotlantilainen mutta sitten joku Intian tai Afrikan englantia ei mun mielestä kuulu vielä ylioppilaskirjotuksiin, se menee liian vaikeeks, se on liian paljon vaadittu mun mielestä ... ei pitäis enää vaikeuttaa entisestään

(13) E: pitää olla selkee puhe et ei sinne voi valita mitään hirveen harvinaisia aksentteja

(14) G: mä kiinnitän siihen [oppilaiden ääntämiseen] kyllä huomiota ... esimerkiks jos on joku tämmönen know, ettei sitä koota siellä äännetä ... se vois haitata ymmärtämistä jossakin päin maailmaa, mutta sitten taas niinkun se että kuulostaaks jotkut esimerkiks jotkut vokaalit, et onks ne niinkun suomalaisia vai ei, niin mun mielestä sellanen ei oo niinku kauheen haitallista, mutta se taas johtuu tästä mun työkokemuksesta

(15) G: mä yritän noita tota oppilaita opettaa puhumaan, ja esimerkiks lukemaan tekstiä niin että ne lukee tämmösistä merkitystä kantavista kokonaisuuksista, et osaa tauottaa oikein, et siit tulee niinku sil tavalla rytmiä siihen puheeseen ... [se helpottaa] ymmärtämistä koska on vaikee ymmärtää ku lukee niinku ihan pötköön, sit tekee taukoja ihan missä sattuu, ettei siin oo niinku mitään järkee, eihän kukaan jaksaa kuunnella sellasta

(16) D: esimerkkejä voi tietenki aina antaa, ja jotain huumoriahan niist saa aina revittyä irti ... tapahtuu niit kämmejä ku toinen ei ymmärrä toista ja toinen ymmärtää jotain väärin tai jotain tämmöstä ... oppilaat ainaki, niist on hauskaa

(17) D: hauskoja on kyl jotku noi Karibian ja Intian ja tällaset versiot, ne on aika hilpeitä, just yks päivä ratikassa istu mun takana semmonen intialainen mies ja kyl mua alko hymyilyttää ku se puhu, et kyl ne on ehkä jännempiä

(18) A: brittienglanti on oikein semmost hienoo ja tavallaan et siin on jotenki se koominen @ koominen ulottuvuus ku on kattonu niin paljon Monty Pythonii sun muuta ... jotenki se assosiaatio on aina siihen

(19) C: usein ehkä tehdään karikatyyrejä jostain australianenglannista ja irlannista, mutta musta ne on ihan miellyttäviä

(20) A: siit just helposti saa semmost hauskaa, toi puhuu tollel hassusti ja sit ne rupee matkii sitä ja sehän on kaikkein parasta oppimista niille sen ikäisille [yläkoululaisille] tavallaan et ne huomaamatta, et on hauskaa

(21) F: kaikki koululaisetki tunnistaa intialaisen aksentin, nehän rakastaa pelleillä sitä esimerkiks luokassa hirveesti ... heti ku on ollu joku tällanen Intiaan käsittelyvä kappale ... niin sitä ne jaksaa sit veivaa siel monta tuntii, et se on jostain syystä niille sellasta hupaa ... samalla ku ne ehkä katukielijenkkiä

(22) A: välil kuulee kyl, niinku joillain oppilailla on tosi hassui mielipiteitä varsinki siit brittienglannista

H: millasii

A: no sillei jotaki et onks tää nyt sitä brittienglantii tai opitaanks me sitä brittienglantii tai jotain tai mun mielest se on jotenki outoo tai hassuu

H: onks sul sit semmonen tunne et niil on enemmän sellai amerikkalaispainottunu se jotenki se maailmankuva

A: kyllä kyllä oon, mä oon ihan ehdottomasti sitä mieltä

(23) E: en mä ole niin kauheesti kuullu mitään semmosia omituisia aksentteja ... mut ei mikään niinku näistä [eri aksenteista] voi sanoo et ois vastenmielistä kuunnella, ei missään nimessä

(24) A: sit jos me ajatellaan jotain Etelä-Afrikan englantia ja Intian englantii ... mikä niinku ärsyttää mahdollisesti tai jotain vastaavaa ... tulee niin voimakkaasti ne intialaiset kielet sieltä läpi ... ja sit tavallaan ku se ei oo niiden niinku äidinkieli mut se on kuitenkin niinku one of the world Englishes

(25) F: ei sitä voi ottaa vakavasti tämmöstä talkin' to me @@ ... kaikki tämmöset karibialaiset [aksentit] ... se semmonen turhan letkee, vähän yksinkertanen englantia mis tuntuu et ei täs nyt oikein päästä puusta pitkään niin ei semmost jaksa kuunnella ... toistellaan niit samoi puheenomasii fraasei tai niinku just joku tommonen katukieli jenkeissä, tietyst en oo henkilökohtasesti ikinä tuntenu ketään, et kaikki mitä mä kuulen on perustunu sitten siihen mitä mä oon nähny telkkarissa tai jossain vastaavissa ... toistellaan koko ajan jotain samaa alatyyljuttua ... ei se niinku ittelle kolahda kyl sillee

(26) B: jos mä nyt opiskelijoitaki ajattelen, niin kyllähän suomalaiset osaa kyllä ääntää

(27) F: onhan se [ääntäminen] niinku hirveen hyvää monilla [oppilailla], hämmästyttävän hyvää ... onks se sitte vaan et ne kuulee hirveesti ... nehän kuulee englantia ihan erilailla kun aikasemmin

(28) G: no mun mielestä osaa ja ei [oppilaat ääntää], et sitten on aina se porukka joka ei osaa mitään, kauheet sanoo mut niin se vaan on, mut yleensä ne mun mielestä ääntää mukavasti, koska ne on sen kielen kanssa tekemisissä koulun ulkopuolella

(29) F: sen vähän näkee tällasista Nokian tyypeistä sun muista jotka on jatkuvasti kansainvälisissä konferensseissa, niitten työkieli on se englantia, koko se operatiivinen kieli niin siel näkyy et se sujuu huomattavasti paremmin kuin poliitikoilta, vaik luulis et neki on koko ajan [kansainvälisissä yhteyksissä]

(30) D: ei se välttämättä kaikist kauneimmalta korvaan kuulosta ... varsinkaan oppilaalle en, pyrin etten ollenkaan välittäis sitä et suomalaisten aksentti on jotain kauheeta, ku varsinki suomalaisil on niinku hirvee kammo, ei ehkä näillä nuorilla enää niin paljoo, mut on kuitenkin sellasta et ei uskalleta puhua, niin se että sanoo opettaja vielä että tollanen aksentti on ihan kauheeta niin se ei ainakaan yhtään paranna sitä ... mä ite pyrin hyväksymään kaikenlaisia [myös suomalaisen aksentin], et pääasia kuitenkin on et se kommunikointi sujuu, se että milltä se kenenki korvaan kuulostaa on ehkä kuitenkin sivuseikka

(31) A: meil on se häkkisenglanti tavallaan ... et ne niinku puhuu vaan suomalaisittain, mut se on hirveen selkeetä mun käsittääkseni niinku englantilaisille tavallaan, ja muille englantii puhuville, et siin mieles sitä ei tulis tavallaan väheksyy

(32) A: esimerkiks jos vertaa vaik espanjalaisiin ku ne puhuu englantii, niin niilt tulee jotenki paljon vahvemmin se espanja sielt viel läpi, esimerkiks espanjalaisil ku niillä ei voi sanat alkaa esimerkiks s-kirjaimella, nii niil pitää aina olla, sitte ne sanoo, ne laittaa sen tukivokaalin sinne alkuun ... ne ei pääse siit koskaan oikeestaan kunnol eroon

(33) F: jos pantais ruotsalainen ja suomalainen nauhalle peräkkäin niin se vois olla ihan mielenkiintosta, koska ruotsinkieli kuitenkin germaanisena kielenä, et kyl mun mielest niillä on niinku se ääntäminen enemmän hallussa ku suomalaisilla että siinä tulee nää erot must kyl esiin siinä oman äidinkielen niinku taustoissa

(34) B: must se intonaation puute on ehkä se suurin ongelma, ei varmaan niinkään se ääntäminen mut se intonaatio ... semmonen tietty pöpöpöpöpöpöpöpö ... se monotonisuus ... siitakin on mun käsittääkseni semmosia tutkimustuloksiakin että se [intonaation puute] vaikeuttaa sitä ymmärtämistä todella paljon, et vaikka sinänsä osais sanat lausua oikein, sit jos se on sillei kauheen monotonista niin siitä ei välttämättä englantia puhuva saa selvää sillä tavalla ... se liika monotoniisuus on ehkä suurempi ongelma ku se että osaako yksittäiset sanat lausua

(35) G: [suomalaisten englantia kuulostaa] hirvittävän monotoniselta, siis kertakertakaikkiaan, että siis niinku niin ykstoikkosta että, et mä en yhtään ihmettele jos joku kuulee pitemmän esityksen joku suomalainen ettei jaksa kuunnella ... se on tuskallista monta kertaa, et se on mikä musta on häiritsevää suomalaisilla

(36) F: no mä just kuuntelin [Matti] Vanhasta [puhumassa englanniksi], missä se nyt oli piti jonkun esityksen, meidän pääministeri ... kyl se oli aika kökkö ... se ensinnäki takelteli sanoissa, se ei pystyny sitoo sanoja niinku luontevasti, se intonaation käyttö, ku ei tuu mitään niinku sellasta, jos sä vertaat esim. Tony Blairiin ku se puhuu, no okei se on puhuja oikeen, mutta se et sä osaat niinku painottaa asioita, ja se tulee varmaan siitä ku ei äidinkielelläkään tartte, ku kaikki alkaa, alussa on paino ja sit se laskee, ja taas on alussa paino ja sit se laskee, niin se on kyllä suomalaisille varmaan hirveen vaikeeta ... mut suomalainen poliitikko niin kyllä saa hakee sellasta joka sujuvasti, et alkaen ihan presidentti ja pääministeri niin kyl se on ihan kökkö

(37) F: yhäki Suomessa tää puhumisen taito niin ei oo silleen kunniassa ... ei äidinkielelläkään

(38) G: ku mä aattelen mun hirveen pitkää opettajan uraa, niin oikeestaan vasta 90-luvulla ruvettiin ihan ikään kuin systemaattisesti kiinnittämään huomiota siihen, että kielessä on sellasiakin [puhekielellisiä] keinoja

(39) F: suomalaisilla on niin voimakkaasti just aina tää häpeäntunne siitä et mä en oikein osaa tätä ... mutta jos sille linjalle lähtee niin elämässä on miljoona asiaa joista saa koko ajan olla vaivautunu

(40) A: mä en pysty ollenkaan niinku ääntää esimerkiks niin [brittiläisittäin], ellen mä sit niinku tosiaan harjottele ... se brittiääntämys nykyuorilla on se kyl aika harvas ... [ne] saa semmosen niinku @ tavallaan transatlanttisen suomi-häkkis-englannin

(41) F: ei se [brittiaksentti] oo sen helpompaa, siis jenkkihän on oikeestaan helpompaa ääntää jos ajattelee ittee suomalaisena, et äidinkieli on suomi niin

kyllähän, tai siis sehän on vähän sellasta middle atlantic ... semmonen hyvä kultivoitunu brittiaksentti tuntuu paljon vaikeemmalta omaksua kun perusamerikkalainen tyyli puhua

(42) E: tottakai sitä tunnistaa sen skotlantilaisen ääntämisen sieltä, mutta sitä on mahdotonta niinku imitoida ellei siel asu pidempään, kaunistahan se on

(43) F: eihän oppilaat pysty ... niinku millään lailla matkimaan mut ku just tätä intialaista, se on niin kuitenkin jostain syystä niin hirveen helppoa ja miellyttävää ... se on niinku jollain tavalla selkeempi, se varmaan johtuu kaikista niitten äidinkielisistä jutuista, se on sellanen helppo matkittava, ei ne pysty matkii jotain muita

(44) F: ihmisillä on selvästi musta taipumus puhuu vierasta kieltä niinku ne puhuu äidinkieltään, et jotkut puhuu epäselvästi äidinkieltä, ja samallalaila epäselvästi mitä tahansa vierasta kieltä ... jos ihminen osaa ääntää erittäin hyvin yhtä kieltä, se osaa ääntää hirveen hyvin mitä tahansa muuta kieltä mitä se opiskelee

(45) A: niil joillon se hyvä fonologinen muisti, ne oppii sen tavallaan ilman harjottelematta, et ne kuulee, sit ne matkii sitä, niihän ne opitaan ... niiden ei tarvii niinku lainkaan kiinnittää siihen huomiota eikä sinänsä harjotella, et se on joko tai, joko ne saa sen itsestään tai sit niil on vaikeuksia, sitten ne joko oppii tai ei opi riippuen joko omasta motivaatiosta tai sitte opettajan huomiosta et kuinka paljon se paneutuu

(46) B: mä itse nyt katsosin et mulla nyt on aika semmonen suomalainen aksentti sit kuitenkin, mul ei oo niinku selkeesti minkään maan aksenttia

(47) C: mun oma aksentti todennäköisesti on semmonen amerikanenglannin, TV-englannin vaikuttama britti, eli mä itte sekotan molempia valitettavasti

(48) D: [se on] ehdottomasti lähempänä sitä [brittienglantia] ku amerikanenglantia, ku siel [Englannissa] niin kauan oli ... se intonaatio ja se on niinku lähempänä varmaan suomen kieltä ku englannin kieltä välillä

(49) E: [oma aksentti] on taas painunu enemmän sinne amerikkalaisen puolelle ... kyl siin tottakai kuuluu et suomalainen puhuu

(50) A: mul on niinku amerikkalainen ääntämys, aina ollukki, tavallaan se on varmaan just tullu siitä ku @@ on hirveesti kattonu TV:tä yksinkertaisesti

(51) G: ei se oo mikään puhdas aksentti ollenkaan, se on kuitenkin lähinnä ehkä brittiaksenttia jos nyt jotain, siis se tällanen suomalaisen brittiaksentti

(52) A: itse asias kyl mä oon, oon. emmä siit nyt mitenkään erityisen ylpeä oo

(53) B: kyllä mä suht koht olen ... kyllä tää työkielenä menee ... suht koht sujuva olen, ja tota osaan lausua suht koht hyvin sen mitä tarvii ja osaan käyttää intonaatiota, ainaki riittävän hyvin, että sillä tavalla oon tyytyväinen

(54) C: se riippuu tietenki päivästä ja vireydentilasta mutta mä olen kohtalaisen tyytyväinen mun omaan puheeseen tällä hetkellä että kyllä se työtä on vaatinu ja on täytyny ulkomailla olla ja mutta että parempihan se on ku mitä se oli aikoinaan kaksyötä vuotta sitte

(55) D: no en tällä hetkellä, tai no joo, on se niinku ok, ehkä se on tämmöstä perfektionismia että aina pitäis olla parempi ... kyl mä nyt itekki oon ihan sillä tavalla tyytyväinen, et ylpeenä oppilaille puhun

(56) E: en mä mieli [aksentin parantamista koko ajan] koska mä vaan puhun, niin kauan ku oppilaat ymmärtää niin se on ihan hyvä

(57) F: en mä koe et se ois mulle semmonen ongelma

(58) G: kyllä mä varmaan oon siihen ihan [tyytyväinen] että en mä hirveesti oo tota joutunu semmoseen tilanteisiin ettei mua ois ymmärretty mitä mä puhun

(59) A: ei oo kyl kukaan kommentoinu ... [negatiivinen kommentointi] kuulostaa ihan hirveelt tilanteelt

(60) B: se [negatiivinen kommentointi] tuntuis kyl tosi tosi pahalta

(61) C: mä olen sitä ikäluokkaa joka on enemmän oppinu kielioppia kuin ääntämistä, ja muistanpa aikoinaan ... yliopistoon tullessani saaneeni moitteita tästä huonosta ääntämisestä mutta mikä johtuu siitä että meillä lukiossa ei puhetta harjoteltu ... se oli sit oikeastaan aika järkyttävää sitte tulla opiskelemaan englantia ja huomata että ei niinku suullisessa puolessa sitte pärjää

(62) C: mä muistan joskus muutama vuosi sitten ollessani tuolla, no just siellä Lähi-Idässä niin siellä joku sitten kehui että on melkein aidonkuulonen ... en tiedä oliko nyt sitten tosissaan tai ei mutta jäi lämpimänä muistona mieleen

(63) D: [Englannissa] mun kämppiksen äiti @@ luuli mua siks tytöks, ja se oli siis englantilainen tyttö, joo se oli kiva, mut en mä tiiä onks sen jälkeen joku [luullut natiiviksi], voi olla et joku ulkomaalainen, jostain [maasta] niinku joka ei välttämättä sit ite puhu hirveen hyvin [englantia]

(64) E: ku on Britanniassa niin ne on aina hirveen yllättyneitä et miten hyvää englantia siel Suomessa puhutaan, usein kuulee just et sä puhut kyl tosi hyvää englantia ... mutta kyl sitä sitte itte aina on tosi kriittinen

(65) F: monet ne [natiivit] sano että aijaa, sun englantihan on tosi hyvää, että mä en tiiä johtukse siitä että mitenkään mun englanti oli hyvää mut ne oli tottunu paljon huonompaan Suomesta tulevaan englanttiin

(66) F: oppilaathan muuten ... on suorii kyl ... [he sanoivat että] sä sentään osaat puhuu sitä [verrattuna joihinkin sijaisiin] ... siis mä en kuvittele ittestäni yhtään mitään

(67) G: meidän rehtori ... kuuli mun puhuvan tuolla englantia ja se tuli sanomaan mulle että oi kuka siellä puhuu ku kuuntelin että ihan niinku olis jossaki kuunnellu BBC:tä, se sano, mut ei se pidä paikkaansa ollenkaan, mutta sille se vaan kuulosti tota hyvältä, ja sitte näissä mun kansainvälisissä tehtävissä niin siellä niinku on tullu sellasia tilanteita että se niinku lady siinä joka puhuu sitä hyvää englantia ... mut ei se [oma aksentti] niin ihmeellistä oo

(68) C: nykypäivänä kun ajatellaan et kuinka paljon englantia oppilaat kuulee TV:stä, ja muista medioista, ja sitten kun meillä on todella hyvät näät äänitemateriaalit noissa kirjoissa niin en mä tiiä onko sillä suurempaa

merkitystä mitä opettaja sitte, loppujen lopuks kuitenkin tärkeintä olis että oppilaat puhuu enemmän kuin opettaja

(69) E: itse mä en kokenu sitä [opettajan aksenttia] aikoinaan ongelmaksi, enkä mä usko et sillä nykyäänkään on kauheen suurta merkitystä, nimenomaan sen takia koska oppilaat kuulee sitä englantia niin paljon, kunhan se nyt sitte ei ole ihan hassua

(70) C: jos puhutaan lukioikäisistä niin ei ehkä kannata vielä lähtee vaatimaan että pysyy puhtaasti yhdessä aksentissa ... jos ruvetaan keskustelemaan että käyttäkö brittienglantia tai amerikanenglantia niin sit mennään mun mielestä jo yliopistotasolle

(71) A: välillä on jotain tuttui tai jotain jotka puhuu [brittiläisittäin], niin sitte kun sä puhut niiden kanssa niin sä alat tavallaan vähän niinku matkii niit tietysti ... tiedostaen tai tiedostamatta lähtee hakee niit samoi, lähinnä sanastoo, et en mä niinku sillei sitä intonaatioo, ääntämystä ehkä sinänsä muuta, mut just se sanasto muuttuu

(72) B: senkin mä tiedän et silloin se [irlantilainen aksentti] ehkä vähän tarttu ku siellä oli sen viis kuukautta, mut seki on sillai taas hiipunu pois, ja se helposti ku mä oon käyny siellä, se helposti kyllä tulee sillai mut ei se pysy sillai et se pisyis tänne saakka ku mä en kuitenkaan ollu edes koko vuotta siellä

(73) D: yks semmonen ... [ulkomaalainen] kaveri oli käymässä täällä ihan tossa pari kuukautta sitte, ja sen mä oon tuntenu niiltä Englanti-ajoilta saakka, ja se sano että ku mä just sanoin et kauheeta ku tää englantia rapistuu ja, niin että kyllä hän muistaa et silloin ku oltiin Englannissa niin silloin kuulostit ihan britiltä mutta nyt sä kuulostat niinku jotenki erilaiselta ... se oli varmaan totuus ... ja sit ku on ollu siellä Maltalla ja muuta, niin siel on kans niin oma se aksenttinsa että mä en tiä mitä vaikutuksia silläki on

(74) D: tässä itse kullaki [kun] ei oo pitkään aikaan ollu pitkiä aikoja ulkomailla, niin ei se kuitenkaan niin autenttisenä pysy, ihan jatkuvasti ... kyl mä niinku oon aatellu et pitäis lähtee johki et se palautuis niinku

(75) E: itte haluaisin puhua kauheen mielellään brittiaksentilla, matkustelin yhteen aikaan tosi paljon Englannissa, ja sain sen niinku tarttumaan, sitte meninki viime keväänä kaks kertaa amerikkalaisten ystäväni luokse ja pam se hävis sinne matkalle

(76) E: kyl siin [omassa aksentissa] tottakai kuuluu et suomalainen puhuu, et ei sille voi mitään, sitte ku on just käyny jossain matkalla, ollu vaikka kaks viikkoo New Yorkissa niin sit sitä puhuu niinku viikon ihan kunnolla, mut sit se taas palautuu siihen suomalaiseen intonaatioon ... sitä ei vaan saa täysin ite pidettyä yllä että, ihan aidon kuulosena niin mä en usko siihen ... sit taas ku sä oot ollu siellä [Britanniassa] muutamia päiviä, sitä [brittiaksenttia] tulee kaikkialta ... niin sit se tarttuu onneks kuitenkin niin nopeesti ... ja ku niitä [brittiläisiä TV-sarjoja] kuuntelee muutaman jakson niin kummasti taas alkaa niinku ittekki poimii sieltä

(77) G: mun oma kokemukseni esimerkiks on tämmösestä nepalilaisesta aksentista et enhän mä ymmärtäny yhtään mitään suoraan sanoen, mä aattelin et tästä ei tuu yhtään mitään kerta kaikkiaan, et niillä on hirveen hyvä kielitaito mut niitten aksentti on niin voimakas, ennenku siihen tottuu ja oppii, täytyy niinku olla valmis oppimaan, ja sopeutumaan siihen että miten ne käyttää sitä

kieltä ... ja se mun puhuttu kieleni on hyvin erilaista kun että mä tapaan jonkun sen työn ulkopuolella, et sun täytyy niinku hallita ne rekisterit sitten, ja sitten vielä kun sä oot tekemisissä eri kulttuurien kanssa, niin mikä niinku siinä kulttuurissa on sitten se tapa esimerkiks puhutella, tai olla ihmisten kanssa

(78) G: se on hauska noitten amerikkalaisten kanssa, kun ne ääntää niit tiettyjä sanoja toisella tavalla ... mä saatoin niinku jotaki sanoa, joku tämmönen niinku schedule [ʃedju:l] tai schedule [skedʒul], niin tämmösiä, niin siit tulee aina et mitä sä sanoit, ne saattaa kysyä multa, koska mä käytän sitte niinku brittiääntämistä

(79) A: tietysti on jääny jonneki tonne takaraivoon semmone et se brittienglanti on oikein semmost hienoo ... perusenglanti on sitä jenkkienglantii tavallaan et se on lässähtäny vähän semmoseks ... brittienglannis on semmost vähän niinku tenhoa ... siin on jotain sitä niinku särmää

(80) E: brittiaksentti on kaikist kauneinta ... se on jotenki niin selkeätä ja mikä se nyt on se RP English, se on todella kaunista ku Tony Blair kun puhuu niin sitähan vois kuunnella ihan niinku vaan levyllisen verran rauhassa ... se intonaatio, se semmonen ääntäminen ja se on vaan se sointuu tosi kauniilta

(81) F: no englantilainen koulutettu britti kyllä, ja miksei koulutettu jenkkiki @@ et kyl sen verran telkkaristaki on kattonu Heartbeatia ja Emmerdale'ia ... sielläki kuulee monen sortista niinku sitä vähän mut kyl kaikki semmonenki landeaksentti menee koska se on mun mielestä jotenki kivaa

(82) G: mä itse tykkään brittiaksentista, et jotenki mä oon siihen niinku kasvanu, ja sit toisaalta mä luulen et siin on myös niinku tämmönen valintakysymys ... et mitä sä haluat viestiä sillä et minkä aksentin sä oot omaksunu, ja mä luulen et mulla on se, et mä en halua samaistua amerikkalaisiin, vaikka mä oon paljon tehny niitten kanssa työtä

(83) B: mulla nyt on aika semmonen suomalainen aksentti sit kuitenkin, mulle ei oo niinku selkeesti minkään maan aksenttia, must olis kyl aika hieno jos mulla olis ... oishan se kivaa @@ puhua kuin dublinilainen

(84) D: mitä niinku aidompi tavallaan [sitä parempi] ... ehkä ite oppilaana olis kivempi kuunnella ... mä yritän päästä pois siitä [suomalaisesta aksentista], kyl mä oon ajatellu ja ehkä välil vieläki niin ei se välttämättä kaikist kauneimmalta korvaan kuulosta, mutta niinku sanottu, niin ei sitä ittekkään aina niin täydellisesti puhu, mut tavote ois kuitenkin että ois lähempänä jotaki natiivia

(85) E: mä pyrin joka vuosi käymään jossain englantia puhuvassa maassa, et pääsee puhumaan sitä oikeesti ja semmosia kielikylpyjä et mä kuuntelen noita, mullon DVD:llä näitä brittisarjoja niinku nää James Herriot, he puhuvat ihanaa englantia ja Heartbeat ja tämmöset

(86) B: no siellähän [Irlannissa] mul kävi semmosia jotka oli semmosia huippuhetkiä et joku sano et mistä päin Irlantia olet niin siinä vaiheessa on niinku aivan, sehän on niinku lottovoitto

(87) C: muistan joskus muutama vuosi sitten ollessani tuolla, no just siellä Lähi-Idässä niin siellä joku sitten kehui että on melkein aidonkuulonen ... jäi lämpimänä muistona mieleen

(88) C: loppujen lopuks sillä aksentilla ei oo niin isoo merkitystä, että se ei ilmeisesti esimerkiks natiivienglantilaista niin paljon ärsytä kuitenkaan ja totanni varsinki Englannissa kun on monennäkösiä aksentteja

(89) F: mä oon ihan varma siitä että se mikä tulee korostumaan niin ei se että onks sulla nyt britti vai amerikkalainen vai mikä ääntäminen vaan se, että pystytäs puhumaan ... sujuvasti sanastollisesti ja lauserakenteellisesti

(90) G: kun mä oon ollu niin paljon tekemisissä sellasten ihmisten kanssa jotka, et englantia on meidän työkieli, niin mä en tällä hetkellä pidä hirveen tärkeenä sitä, että joku oppii täydellisesti jonkun brittiaksentin tai jonkun amerikkalaisten ... sä käytät kieltä luontevasti, sulla on niinku väriä siinä äänessä kun sä puhut ja sä käytät sitä sujuvasti

(91) G: kaikenlainen natiivinkaltisuus tässä maailmassa, jossa englannilla on tietty asema, mun mielestä on vähän hullua

(92) G: [opetussuunnitelman kulttuuritaitoja tulisi] laajentaa siihen suuntaan että ei ajatella että on olemassa tää brittinatiivi, tää britti, amerikkalainen, joka on niinku meidän esikuva, sekä niinku sen kielen, esimerkiks aksentin kannalta, tai sitten se että mitä hän tietää, amerikkalaiset ei monesti tiedä yhtään mistään mitään, et mun mielestä pitäis jotenki niinku olla mahdollisimman semmonen laaja tieto eri kulttuuripiireistä

(93) C: identifioin itseni suomalaiseksi

(94) G: mä en välttämättä halua olla muuta kun suomalainen ... [oma aksentti on] suomalainen brittiaksentti ... mitä muuta se vois olla, ja sitte se et koska mä en pyri ees tietosestikaan siihen et se olis

(95) A: kyl mä tavallaan pidän silleen et se [oma aksentti] on lähes natiivitasoo, mut, jos halua olla ihan tarkkoi niin eihän me voida koskaan päästä siihen natiivitasoon, eikä meidän tavallaan niinku tarviskaan

(96) A: mä väittäisin kyl et meist nykynuorista niin aika harvoilla on se oikea ääntämys, oikea brittiääntämys, ja muutenkaan niinku mitään siihen suuntaan ... ei voi tietyst realistisesti vaatii natiivitasoon puhetta tietenkään, eikä mullakaan sellasta oo, eikä tuu olemaan

(97) E: ne ei oo päteviä täällä opettamaan sellaset natiivit jossain yläasteella ku ei oo sitä suomen kielen taitoo jota tarvitaan

(98) F: koululaitoksessa niin ehdottoman tärkeitä, kaiken oppimisen perusta, oli se sitte vieras kieli tai matematiikka tai ihan mikä tahansa, on hyvä äidinkielen taito, ja se ei voi olla pelkästään niin sanottujen äidinkielen tuntien varassa, vaan jokainen opettaja opettaa sitä ilmasua äidinkielellä sille oppilaalle, ja se on mun mielestä ehdoton juttu että opettajat olis kaikki sellasii ihmisiä jotka käyttää äidinkieltä elävästi ja rikkaasti opettaessaan

(99) F: ei voi olettaa että kaikki tehdään sillä kohdekielellä koska silloin sä oot roolissa ... niin jos sä puhut ... kohdekielellä niin a) kaikki ei ymmärrä, b) se ei oo totta, koska sä oot roolissa

(100) B: toisaalta onhan siin varmaan seki puoli sitte että kun ei oo liian häikäsevä siinä opettajana puhumisessa niin sitte tota, se ei oo sitte liian semmonen musertava malli

(101) F: ja sit myöskin kaikki nää lingua franca -jutut sun muut ... ei oo kohta enää oikeestaan mitään yhtä oikeeta tapaa puhuu englantia, elikkä miks tarttis tuntea mitään huonommuutta @@

(102) B: mä käytän englantia tietyst työssäni, mut mä sielläki koen sen niin vahvana sen oppijana, sen puolen

(103) C: kyllä mulla varmasti on sellanen kaksoisrooli että mä itse opin koko ajan, mutta ehkä mä enemmän olen tällä hetkellä käyttäjä kuitenkin

(104) D: tällä hetkellä vois olla enemmän oppijanakin, mut käyttäjänä siinä mielessä et kylhän mä niinku koko ajan puhun tunnilla englantia ... siinä menee edestakasi ... varmaan oppija tällä hetkellä, ehkä sillei 60-40 prosenttia

(105) F: en mä voi sanoo et mä olisin jompaakumpaa ... emmä niit oikein voi erottaa ... okei mä opetan englantia, kyl mä tietysti käytän sitä

(106) A: se oppiminen tulee jotenki enemmän siin sivussa, et harvoin sitä niinku alkaa ihan niinku opiskelee enää ... se ei oo niinku sinänsä suunnitelmallista oppimista enää

(107) G: mä oon niinku kielen käyttäjä, mutta mä oon opiskelija käyttääkseni sitä kieltä niillä tietyillä toiminta-alueilla

(108) F: itte koko ajan on korvat auki, koko ajan blokkaa jotaki jostaki, ja on aktiivinen

(109) E: koskaan ei voi sanoo oppilaalle et näin ei voi sanoa, jos se on kirjottanu aineeseen jonku ihme sanan, koskaan ei voi todeta et toi ei oo mitään niinku et aina niinku netti auki ja ettimään niin sitä voi huomata että niin voi sanoa ja noinkin on sanottu

(110) E: sit ku puhuu heidän kanssaan niin me ollaan ihan niinku samalla viivalla ... et ei siin oo sellasta kielimuuria ... sitä tuntee että mä oon ihan niinku hekin ... sit sitä perehdyttää alkuperäsen kielen puhujan kieliopin salaisuuksiin

(111) B: [englannin] kieli, siitä löytyy aina uutta

(112) C: opettajana se oppiminen on elinikästä, koska kieli muuttuu koko ajan ja englantia on niin laaja alue et ei siinä koskaan tuu valmiiks

(113) E: se on niin moniulotteinen kieli, ja ku se muuttuu kuitenkin just sen takia kun sitä puhutaan niin paljon

(114) G: miksi [pidän itseäni oppijana], no kun ei tätä koskaan voi oppia, siis kertakaikkiaan mun mielestä pitäis niinku lopettaa sellanen käsitys että mä hallitsen jonkun kielen täydellisesti, enhän mä hallitse täysin ees suomee ... se on koko ajan oppimista ennen kaikkea se että heti ku sä tuut jonkun tietyn uuden toiminta-alueen piiriin, niin sä joudut opettelemaan sen toiminnan, ja siihen liittyvän kielen

(115) A: on tää niinku nöyristäny kyllä, ja varsinki se on niinku noloo et huomaa et joku kielioppijuttu on jääny joskus hämäräks ... koska ethän sä voi opettaa jotain sellasta mitä sä et ite ymmärrä

(116) E: se on niinku että tieto lisää tuskaa ... kyl se aikamoista tuskaa on, et kyl siinä tuntee että en osaa koskaan sitä hyvin

(117) C: must se on hauskaa, et mä koen et englannin kielen opettaminen on niin kun seikkailu siihen kieleen

(118) G: mun mielestä se on ihan luonnollinen asia, ei se mua häiritse yhtään, et mä sitten opettelen ... se on mielenkiintosta päinvastoin