

Teachers' experiences of English as a lingua franca and English-medium instruction at Helsinki Summer School

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Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract <p>Tutkin pro gradu -tutkielmassani Helsingin yliopiston alaisuudessa toimivan kansainvälisen kesäkoulun, Helsinki Summer Schoolin opettajien kokemuksia liittyen englantiin lingua francana ja englanniksi tehtävään opetukseen. Lähestyn aiheitani opettajien kohtaamien haasteiden kautta. Tavoitteenani on selvittää erityisesti, millaisia haasteita opettajat olettavat kohtaavansa, sekä millaisia haasteita he todellisuudessa kohtaavat. Lisäksi tavoitteenani on selvittää, eroavatko oletetut ja kohdatut haasteet riippuen siitä, opettaako opettaja Helsinki Summer Schoolissa ensimmäistä kertaa vai onko hänellä jo kokemusta kesäkoulussa opettamisesta.</p> <p>Tutkielman alussa käsittelen englantia lingua francana (engl. English as a lingua franca), englannin kielellä annettavaa opetusta (engl. English-medium instruction) ja lyhytaikaista opiskelua ulkomailla (engl. short-term study abroad). Tämän jälkeen esittelen tutkimuskysymykseni, -metodini ja -datani. Haastattelin kahdeksaa kesäkoulun opettajaa, joista neljä oli uusia opettajia ja neljä kesäkoulussa jo aiemmin opettaneita. Haastattelin jokaista opettajaa kaksi kertaa, ensimmäisen kerran ennen kesäkoulua ja toisen kerran kesäkoulun jälkeen. Haastattelut koostuivat avoimista kysymyksistä, ja ne nauhoitettiin, minkä jälkeen nauhoitteet litteroitiin analysointia varten. Analysoin datan yllä mainittujen teemojen mukaan.</p> <p>Tutkimustulosten mukaan sekä uudet että kesäkoulussa jo aiemmin opettaneet opettajat pohtivat samanlaisia asioita ja aiheita haasteisiin liittyen. Haasteita odotettiin ja kohdattiin liittyen oppilaiden kielitaitoon, muiden kursseilla opettaneiden opettajien kielitaitoon, monikulttuuriseen opiskelijakuntaan, kesäkoulun lyhyeen aikaan ja opiskelijoiden akateemisiin odotuksiin. Uudet ja kesäkoulussa jo aiemmin opettaneet opettajat erosivat toisistaan kuitenkin painotuksissaan jonkin verran. Pääsääntöisesti voidaan sanoa, että kesäkoulussa jo aiemmin opettaneet opettajat odottivat uusia opettajia enemmän haasteita, mutta loppujen lopuksi uudet opettajat kohtasivat enemmän haasteita kuin kesäkoulussa jo aiemmin opettaneet. Uudet opettajat olivat kesäkoulussa jo aiemmin opettaneita opettajia herkempiä nimeämään haasteita, kun taas kesäkoulussa jo aiemmin opettaneet opettajat sanoivat helposti, ettei jokin piirre ollut haaste, vaikka kyseiseen piirteeseen saattoikin liittyä haasteellisia tilanteita. Lisäksi kaikki haastateltavat mainitsivat ainakin jossain yhteydessä aasialaiset opiskelijat haasteiden lähteenä.</p>			
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Table of Contents

1 Introduction	1
2 Theoretical framework	3
2.1 English as a lingua franca.....	4
2.2 English-medium instruction.....	9
2.3 Short-term study abroad.....	12
3 Research questions, data and methods	16
3.1 Research questions.....	16
3.2 Data.....	17
3.2.1 Helsinki Summer School.....	18
3.3 Methods.....	20
4 Analysis	21
4.1 New teachers.....	22
4.1.1 First interviews: before summer sessions.....	23
4.1.2 Second interviews: after summer sessions.....	29
4.2 Returning teachers.....	37
4.2.1 First interviews: before summer sessions.....	38
4.2.2 Second interviews: after summer sessions.....	44
5 Discussion	54
5.1 Teachers' attitudes towards the use of English.....	54
5.2 Nationality.....	55
5.3 Native speakers of English.....	57
5.4 Comparison: before the summer school versus after the summer school.....	58
5.4.1 New teachers.....	58
5.4.2 Returning teachers.....	59
5.5 Comparison: new teachers versus returning teachers.....	60
5.5.1 Before the summer school.....	60
5.5.2 After the summer school.....	60
6 Conclusion	61
References	64
Appendix	65
Appendix 1. List of questions and topics covered in the interviews.....	65
Appendix 2. Transcription conventions.....	66

1 Introduction

The world is getting smaller. Thanks to the influence of phenomena and innovations such as globalisation and the Internet, people on one side of the globe can connect and interact with people on the other side and vice versa, news travel faster than before, and events in one place can and will have an effect on various other places, often on a global scale. None of this is news to us. However, with a higher level of global connectedness comes the urgent need for cooperation, which is mandatory in at least some form if we are to coexist with one another. Yet interaction on a global scale is not limited to security issues, nor has it been for quite some time; it is becoming more and more ordinary in both our work and private lives. This type of interaction differs from one in which we engage with people who share our mother tongue and culture, yet language and culture are required components of interaction even when said interaction crosses national borders. In order to interact with each other on the required level, we need to have a shared language in which to interact and some understanding of the other person's background since it will affect the way they behave and use the shared language.

Although there are hundreds of languages in the world, English has due to many reasons become a global language that people often use if they do not share a mother tongue. There is even a name for it – English as a lingua franca, or ELF – and it has been a topic of much research and discussion. In order to understand and communicate with people from various cultural backgrounds, we make use of what is often referred to as intercultural communication skills which help people interpret the actions of the other person since interactions on the global level are almost guaranteed to be multicultural in nature. Both language and intercultural communication skills can be learned and developed, which also means that people are competent in them to varying degrees and, if they are so inclined, will try to improve them. There are hundreds of language courses available in various formats, students are often encouraged to go on an exchange during their studies, and expatriates will most likely either be offered or seek out at least some instruction on the culture and customs of their new home country in order to better interact with the locals. An international summer school, such as Helsinki Summer School, is also one of the ways to experience various cultures and practice foreign

language skills.

I did an internship at the Helsinki Summer School, during which I decided to do my pro gradu concerning their organisation, since I already knew the staff and had their support and help. Additionally, I find the concept of a multicultural, English-medium, short-term study period intriguing, and believe that it can be a useful tool for students and professionals, not only for learning more about a topic that they are interested in, but also as a way for them to experience multicultural interaction and rehearse their language skills. Hopefully, this study will also help the staff of Helsinki Summer School, as well as the teachers themselves, to better recognise the challenges that the Helsinki Summer School context produces. This, in turn, can help the staff to offer even better support to their teachers. Furthermore, although the various aspects resulting from the context of an international summer school, namely ELF, English-medium instruction, and short-term study abroad are all well-researched topics in their own right, the combination of the three has not received much attention in the past. Taking this combination and placing it in the context of Finland creates a unique setting of which I could not find any previous research, a fact which gives credibility to the relevance of the current study.

The aim of this study is to shed light on the kinds of (English-related) challenges that the teachers at Helsinki Summer School face with regards to the multicultural, English-medium ELF context of the short-term study abroad with which Helsinki Summer School provides its students. Another aim is to investigate whether the challenges anticipated and faced by teachers new to Helsinki Summer School differ from the challenges anticipated and faced by teachers who have already taught at the summer school in previous years. By focusing on the challenges, I hope to highlight the potential pitfalls in the summer school setting stemming from ELF and English-medium instruction, both of which I view as highly positive when it comes to higher education and professional life. Additionally, I hope to aid the Helsinki Summer School staff to develop the summer school further. The assumption that teachers will indeed face challenges is my own. I base it on what I heard of previous years during my internship, my experience with Helsinki Summer School, and the fact that neither ELF nor English-medium instruction are unproblematic contexts for communication, as I discuss below. The term ‘challenges’ is not strictly defined in this study; instead, I let the interviewees

define the term for themselves and raise whichever points it prompts in their minds. However, I focus specifically on the challenges connected to the use of English from the point of view of both English-medium instruction and English as a lingua franca. Due to this, other possible challenges raised by the interviewees are communicated to the Helsinki Summer School staff for the purpose of developing the summer school but are not discussed here as they do not pertain to the focus of this study.

This study is structured in the following way. In chapter 2, I discuss the theoretical framework, previous studies and the concepts relevant to this study, namely English as a lingua franca, English-medium instruction, and short-term study abroad. In chapter 3, I discuss my research questions, data, and methods. Chapter 4 consists of the data analysis. I discuss the data collected from teachers taking part in Helsinki Summer School for the first time separately from the data collected from teachers who have taught at Helsinki Summer School in previous years. In chapter 5, I discuss the findings derived from the data, and compare the findings from the new and the returning teachers. Chapter 6 concludes this study by summarising the findings and mentioning the possible implications for further studies. References and an appendix are included at the end of this study.

2 Theoretical framework

In this chapter, I define the concepts that are relevant to this study, as well as discuss previous studies related to the concepts. I begin the chapter with English as a lingua franca, followed by English medium instruction. These concepts are closely related in the context of this study since the courses at Helsinki Summer School are taught in English, a fact that brings us to the concept of English medium instruction. At the same time, English functions as a lingua franca between the students and teachers who more often than not come from many different countries and universities. I finish this chapter by discussing short-term study abroad, a category under which Helsinki Summer School falls when it comes to study periods abroad. It differs from an exchange semester and an exchange year most notably in length, but the shortness of the study period also has implications for the organisation of the courses held during the study period.

2.1 English as a lingua franca

English is spoken around the world, and although learners of English often aim to model their grammar and pronunciation after native speakers, especially British or American, variations are bound to arise from the influence of the learners' mother tongue(s) and other languages that they speak. Probably the most cited classification for the resulting world Englishes (Jenkins, 2009) is Kachru's (see for example 1990) three circles perspective, in which the English language is seen, as the name suggests, as three circles: the Inner Circle consists of those speaking English as their first language, the Outer Circle consists of those speaking English as their second language, and the Expanding Circle includes those speaking and learning English as a foreign language (Kachru, 1990, p. 3). Although varieties of English stemming from the Expanding Circle aren't commonly counted as world Englishes, Jenkins (2009) does so, noting that these Englishes are often viewed by scholars as "norm-dependent" varieties "of greater or lesser proficiency depending on their proximity to a particular Inner Circle variety" (p. 200).

The lingua franca function of English is a prominent one, to the point where it has sparked much research and discussion into its role and legitimacy as a separate entity from standard and non-standard varieties of English that more or less conform to the borders of nation-states (see, for example, Mollin, 2006, for further discussion). It is also the most widely used language for intercultural communication (Hülmbauer, Böhringer, and Seidlhofer, 2008, p. 25; Mauranen, 2012, p. 17) and the working language of business, trade, and academia (Mauranen, 2012, p. 6). As Mauranen notes, English is "the first truly global lingua franca" (2012, p. 17). Seidlhofer (2005) defines ELF as "communication in English between speakers with different first languages" (p. 339), whereas Mauranen (2012) sees it as "an instrument for achieving communication" (p.6) and "a vehicular language used by speakers who do not share a first language" (p. 8). For Jenkins (2009), ELF refers to English "learned for intercultural communication" (pp. 202-203) and used as "the common language of choice, among speakers who come from different linguacultural backgrounds" (p. 200). It is essentially a tool for getting a message across. Jenkins sets ELF apart from English as a foreign language, which she defines as "English learnt specifically for communication with English native speakers" (p. 203). Speakers in an ELF situation often come from the Expanding Circle, since they

far outnumber speakers in the Inner and Outer Circles (Seidlhofer, 2005, p. 339; Hülmbauer, Böhringer, and Seidlhofer, 2008, p. 27; Jenkins, 2009, p. 201), but as Jenkins explains, most scholars include all speakers of English in their definition of English as a lingua franca, regardless of their Circle. In fact, according to Hülmbauer, Böhringer, and Seidlhofer (2008), “*any* speaker using English for the purpose of intercultural communication (i.e. with a speaker of a different L1), in principle, speaks ELF” (p. 26, original emphasis). However, in an ELF context, native speakers “do not set the linguistic agenda” (Jenkins, 2009, p. 201). As Jenkins explains:

No matter which circle of use we come from, from an ELF perspective we all need to make adjustments to our local English variety for the benefit of our interlocutors when we take part in lingua franca English communication. ELF is thus a question, not of orientation to the norms of a particular group of English speakers, but of mutual negotiation involving efforts and adjustments from all parties. (ibid.)

Mauranen is more hesitant in including native speakers of English in the realm of ELF, especially in situations where the majority of participants in a given communicative situation are native speakers. She notes that since native English speakers do not share a first language with those speakers using English as a second or foreign language, they do indeed fit the description of ELF speakers (Mauranen, 2012, pp. 8-9). However, in situations where the native speakers form the majority, language use is often determined via native speakers and Standard English (Mauranen, 2012, p. 9). Furthermore, Mauranen views the interaction between native and non-native English speakers as a special case in the ELF context, and not as a particularly interesting one at that in terms of ELF research (ibid.).

ELF is a mixture of what Jenkins calls “common ground and local variation” (ibid.). What Jenkins means by this is that there are some linguistic features – which may or may not be present in native English varieties – that are shared among ELF speakers, but also local variation that is due to the speakers’ language background. Additionally, there exists the possibility for adjustments in order to make speech more understandable depending on the speakers. In ELF, a feature that is absent from native English variants is not automatically ruled as an error, but could be a legitimate variation and therefore acceptable within ELF (p. 202). This is, however, not an undisputed view, and not

necessarily even a common one; Seidlhofer notes that native speakers are still viewed as the “custodians” of the language and judges of what is acceptable English and what is not even though most people using and influencing English these days are non-native speakers (2005, p. 339). Similarly, Mauranen (2012) notes that “Standard English is the unquestioned prestige variety” even in today’s world (p. 2). Jenkins points out that even if ELF is more accepting of variation, it does not mean that people using ELF are necessarily proficient ELF speakers (2009, p. 202): they can still be “learners of ELF or not fully competent *non-learners*” (ibid., original emphasis) who make errors akin to any other second language learner but whose proficiency is not measured in closeness to native English features but in their ability to communicate successfully using their English skills (ibid.). In contrast to Jenkins, Mauranen (2012) warns against viewing ELF speakers as learners, at least when it means seeing them as learners of English (as opposed to learners of ELF). According to her, lingua franca is not same as learner language (pp. 3-4), and identifying ELF speakers as learners can be “reductive and limiting” as it assumes that they are “deficient communicators who struggle with difficulties” (p. 5). Instead, Mauranen prefers to view ELF speakers simply as users of a second language (p. 4). While it is true that positioning ELF speakers as learners of ELF is perhaps less problematic than positioning them as learners of English especially since there is no such thing as a native ELF speaker, it is also not wholly unproblematic. The underlying assumption in viewing ELF speakers as learners is the supposed existence of some kind of standard to which the learners could aspire. However, neither ELF nor the people using it form a coherent entity from which a clear standard could emerge. In fact, the properties that Mauranen identifies as “vital” when considering the social groups that typically use ELF – possible non-locality, mobility, multilingualism, and non-permanence (Mauranen, 2012, p. 23) – highlight the difficulty in trying to suggest clear set rules for what an ELF community is like. Furthermore, ELF speakers are active innovators and developers of English as a lingua franca who shape ELF through their use of English, whereas learners of any given language do not influence the language that they are learning since their aim is to acquire proficiency in the target language according to a set standard for that language (Mauranen, 2012, p. 6).

According to Jenkins, ELF is not a controversial topic among professionals who work internationally, and hence use ELF daily (2009, p. 202). It is mainly in the academic circles (outside of ELF research, that is) where the concept faces opposition, either due

to its supposed role as a killer of cultural diversity and identity, or due to the lack of standards and the (supposedly unavoidable) presence of errors (pp. 202-203). What Jenkins finds especially problematic in the second line of reasoning for opposition is the position where features in the speech of ELF speakers that differ from those of native English speakers “have exactly the same status as differences from native speaker English in EFL speakers: that is, they are by definition deficiencies rather than legitimate ELF variants” (p. 203). Scholars subscribing to this type of thinking see ELF as polluting or destroying the so-called legitimate native varieties – a view which more often than not is carried to the Expanding Circle through teaching materials made by these same scholars and which is then reproduced in the attitudes of speakers of English in the Expanding Circle (pp. 203-204).

In a questionnaire study involving non-native English speakers, Jenkins found that the participants favoured Inner Circle variants when it comes to the variants’ correctness, pleasantness and acceptability for international communication (p. 204). Jenkins points out the discord between these results and the growing body of evidence showing that British and American accents are in fact not the most understandable variants when it comes to lingua franca contexts due to their preference of features of connected speech (ibid.). Mauranen, too, notes that native English speakers are not necessarily best equipped for ELF interaction, suggesting that “conventions of English-speaking cultures may be quite inappropriate when communicative effectiveness hinges upon dealing with cultural mixes of different kinds” (2012, pp. 5-6). Similarly, Hülmbauer, Böhringer, and Seidlhofer (2008) discuss the disadvantage at which native English speakers are in ELF situations, saying that

As far as *intercultural competences* and strategies are concerned, native speakers are frequently disadvantaged due to their lack of practice in these processes and over-reliance on English as their L1. This can prove counter-productive since the idiomatic kind of language employed by native speakers often represents an obstacle in intercultural communication. (p. 27, original emphasis)

In parallel with her questionnaire study, Jenkins conducted an interview study in which she interviewed young English teachers. Most participants had rather conflicting views regarding their own English; according to Jenkins, the participants felt an “obligation to acquire ‘near-native’ English accents, by which they meant near-(North) American or

British English” in order to consider themselves successful as teachers and speakers of English, while simultaneously wanting to portray their local identity via their use of English, some to the extent of feeling that being an ELF speaker was a part of their identity (p. 204). Jenkins also cites a study by Peckham, Kalocsai, Kovács, and Sherman (2008) in which Erasmus students were interviewed regarding their use of English. In the study, students saw their own English in a more positive light and as more acceptable or legitimate than the teachers in Jenkins’ study, but they still viewed native English varieties as correct and right (Jenkins, 2009, pp. 205-206). Similarly, Mauranen notes that ELF communities tend to look to native speakers for standards despite not being comprised of members of the inner circle, while simultaneously using the language in innovative ways that do not prescribe to the supposed native standards (Mauranen, 2012, p. 25). According to her,

[S]peakers have some uncertainty about evaluating different kinds of Englishes: while non-native speech is regarded as easily comprehensible, functional, and appropriate in its contexts, native speakers’ language is nevertheless set up as an ideal, even if unattainable, model. (ibid.)

Mauranen suggests that many people tend to simultaneously view their non-native English as sufficient yet end up criticising it for its shortcomings only moments later (ibid.).

According to Mauranen (2012), the world of academia is “inherently international” (p. 1), and has been so since the dawn of university-level education (p. 67). Additionally, the academic realm has clearly settled for English when it comes to the common language used in this international and global setting (p. 1), and universities are increasingly trying to attract students on a global scale while students are increasingly looking beyond their countries’ borders for study opportunities (p. 67). Due to these aspects, as well as the fact that academic discourse requires more sophistication in terms of language skills than other domains, Mauranen deems academia a fruitful setting for ELF research (ibid.). According to her, “the trend seems to be towards more English in non-English environments, not less” while the dominance of native English is likely to diminish (p. 67), solidifying the position of ELF as the language of academia. A concept closely related to ELF in academia is that of English-medium instruction, to which I

will now turn.

2.2 English-medium instruction

Recently, English has increasingly become the medium of instruction at institutions of higher education due to a myriad of factors such as the continuing rise of English in international business, the growing number of exchange students and English-language textbooks and, in the case of Europe, the Bologna process (Kuteeva, 2013, p. 1; Bolton & Kuteeva, 2012, p. 429; Söderlundh, 2012, p. 89). Institutions of higher education offer study programmes in English in order to attract both international and national students, to enhance students' employability, and to garner prestige for the institution (Coleman, 2006; Doiz, Lasagabaster, & Sierra, 2011, p. 347). Additionally, English has a central role in academia, as well as other professional contexts, "above all as a lingua franca of international communication in science, education, and business" (Kuteeva, 2013, p. 1), which puts universities under increased pressure to conform to the trend. At the same time, there has been some backlash on the national level regarding language policy (Coleman, 2006, p. 8; Bolton & Kuteeva, 2012, p. 429), where the use of national languages is supported and protected against English, sometimes officially.

In contrast to ELF research discussed above, research into English-medium instruction tends to be wary of the use of English, at times verging on negativity. For example, Doiz, Lasagabaster, and Sierra suggest that the growing number of English-medium courses raises questions regarding teachers' English competence, students' understanding of the course content, and the quality of the study programmes (2011, p. 347). Coleman states that English-medium instruction, and the spread of English in general, "represents an extension of the global threat to minority languages" (Coleman, 2006, p. 10). According to him, English-medium instruction means that international students do not need to get involved in the language and culture of the host country, which he deems necessary for developing students' intercultural competence and awareness (*ibid.*). It could be argued, however, that for countries such as Finland whose national language is not widely spoken or studied outside the country's borders, English can have the opposite effect: it can create the possibility for international students to be introduced to the country's culture by domestic students who speak English without first having to spend years learning the language in order to integrate into the student life.

Quoting Smith (2004), Coleman (2006) lists 15 “predictable problems” that can arise from English-medium instruction (p. 6-7). Most of these have to do with staff and students' negative attitudes towards teaching in English, inadequate language skills of staff and students, and the difficulty or inability of integrating native and non-native domestic and international staff and students into the system (ibid.). Coleman also points out that even if it were possible to find staff that has an adequate command of both English and the subject matter, it is likely that the staff will not have any specialist knowledge on teaching through a foreign language (Coleman, 2006, p. 7). Additionally, although studying through a foreign language brings more gains than losses to an individual student, there is always the possibility of language attrition and loss of cultural identity in the individual, while the quality of teaching can suffer, which in turn can cause a decrease in learning results (Coleman, 2006, p. 10). Both Coleman and Doiz, Lasagabaster, and Sierra seem to have reservations regarding especially the English proficiency of teachers and students, which differs starkly from the stand taken by ELF researchers in advocating for the legitimacy of English as a lingua franca. Additionally, their reservations imply the positioning of teachers and students as learners of English instead of user of the language, a problematic distinction which was discussed in sub-chapter 2.1.

In a self-report survey carried out by Bolton and Kuteeva (2012) in a Swedish university setting, it was found that English is used more on Master level courses and settings than on the Bachelor level, due to language requirements and the bigger emphasis on and admission of international students (pp. 434, 435). Additionally, the amount of English used during teaching varied greatly depending on the faculty and discipline (ibid.). Students often commented on, or outright complained about, the academic staff's level of English, saying that it was bad enough to disrupt the quality of teaching (p. 435). Regarding their own English skills and ability to conduct academic discussions, most students felt that they were better at it in Swedish, their mother tongue, than in English (pp. 437-438). When the academic staff was asked about their level of English, “only a minority reported significant levels of difficulty in speaking and writing English” with the greatest difficulties reported in the faculty of Humanities (p. 438). Academic staff gave their wide support to English-medium instruction (p. 441), and 44% of academic staff from the Science faculty stated that they were more able to discuss their work in English than in Swedish (p. 438). Bolton and Kuteeva suggest that teaching a larger

group through a lecture in English might cause less challenges than a seminar type course based on discussions and active participation (ibid.).

In her article, Söderlundh reports three types of situations where students switched between languages during English-medium instruction instances (pp. 94-97). In the first type, students used their mother tongue (in this case Swedish) to communicate a word that they did not know in English, while seeking help and confirmation from the lecturer or their student peers via non-verbal communication (Söderlundh, 2012, p. 95). Söderlundh notes that this type of codeswitching only happened between English and Swedish, and not any other languages even though native speakers of other languages were present (ibid.). In the second type, students used their mother tongue during what Söderlundh calls “procedure-related talk”, or talk that has to do with how the course is organised and not with the topic of the course (p. 96). The third type took place when students spontaneously formed groups for group tasks and discussions; according to Söderlundh, students tend to form groups with people from the same country, and thus have no need to use English as a lingua franca amongst themselves (p. 97).

The academic staff in Doiz, Lasagabaster, and Sierra’s study (2011) regarded English-medium instruction at their university positively, saying that

It gives them the opportunity to work in English, it attracts foreign students, it increases the students’ job opportunities, it facilitates the teachers’/students’ participation in exchange programmes, and finally, it is indispensable in most research areas. (p. 351)

The staff saw English as a “must” in their field, and suggested that English-medium instruction can help students improve their English, which in turn will be beneficial for them later in life (pp. 351-352). According to the staff, students view English-medium instruction positively as well, although they seem to have some reservations regarding non-native speakers’ competence in teaching in English (p. 353). Students seem to be of differing opinions when it comes to staff preferences: they prefer either a native speaker, or a non-native speaker with a high level of English (p. 355). According to the staff, students sometimes understand non-native speech better than native speech (ibid.), which is in line with the ELF research discussed above. The staff also pointed out that non-native English speakers are able to make use of their other languages if need be,

whereas native English speakers are often monolingual and have no such resources at their disposal (*ibid.*). According to the academic staff, students lack confidence in their own English skills in addition to questioning the language skills of the staff (p. 353). The staff, too, had reservations regarding the students' level of English, saying that the low level affects students' learning outcomes and overall participation on the course (p. 354). The staff mentioned some national differences in English competences, saying that Turkish students' level of English is generally lower than that of German or Austrian students, whereas students from central and northern Europe tend to be more fluent (p. 355). Doiz, Lasagabaster, and Sierra note that despite having such multicultural student groups, the academic staff did not report difficulties when it comes to learning the content of the course (*ibid.*).

Both English-medium instruction and ELF are central concepts when discussing an international summer school such as Helsinki Summer School. However, especially English-medium instruction is mainly researched in longer-lasting settings than a three-week summer school, as most studies into English-medium instruction tend to view the concept in the context of courses lasting for a full semester or a year, or even in the context of a full university degree. These contexts differ drastically from that of Helsinki Summer School. Since the duration of the summer school greatly affects the amount and intensity of both the English-medium instruction and the arising ELF situations, it is worthwhile in light of the current study to also discuss the short-term nature of the summer school. Therefore, I discuss the concept of short-term study abroad in the section below.

2.3 Short-term study abroad

Short-term study abroad is, as the term suggests, a short period of time spent abroad studying a subject or a foreign language. The length of the study period in short-term study abroad has been defined differently by different researchers, ranging from one week to three months (Mills, Deviney, & Ball, 2010, pp. 1-2; Sjoberg and Shabalina, 2010, p. 46). Whatever their length, there is no question that short-term study abroad programmes are growing in number (Sjoberg and Shabalina, 2010, p. 46; Mills, Deviney, & Ball, 2010, p. 2; Dwyer, 2004, p. 151), whereas long-term study abroad has experienced a decline in popularity (Sjoberg and Shabalina, 2010, p. 46). Sjoberg and

Shabalina note that researchers are not in agreement when it comes to whether or not active learning, an integral part of the learning experience, can occur during short-term study abroad programmes (Sjoberg and Shabalina, 2010, p. 47). In fact, Duke (2000) notes that short-term study abroad programmes offer fewer possibilities for the academic integration of ideas and for students to “become comfortable with international situations” due to the shortness of the programmes (Duke, 2000, pp. 156-157). However, short-term study abroad programmes can be a valid alternative to longer study periods and student exchanges: they cost less, can have a better possibility of offering interdisciplinary learning experiences, and can be more flexible with both when students attend them and their requirements than long-term study abroad programmes which follow academic semesters and often require students to take multiple credit courses in order to meet the set requirements (Duke, 2000, p. 156; Sjoberg and Shabalina, 2010, p. 47). Additionally, they are “long enough to experience being in a different culture but short enough that many students who are working to pay their college expenses could manage around a work schedule” (Mills, Deviney, and Ball, 2010, p. 11). Due to their short duration, short-term study abroad programmes enable students to get an international study experience without falling behind in their studies at their home university (Mills, Deviney, & Ball, 2010, p. 2), which is why it is “a viable option to get more students abroad” (Sjoberg and Shabalina, 2010, p. 46). Sometimes short-term study abroad is the only alternative when taking into consideration the resources that students have at their disposal; according to Sjoberg and Shabalina (2010), even though interest in studying abroad has grown, over 95 percent of US students are unable to study abroad for a variety of reasons ranging from course schedules to study programmes and financial issues (p. 46).

In their paper, Sjoberg and Shabalina (2010) look at a short-term study abroad programme organised between universities in the U.S. and Russia, using survey data gathered from 32 students, 12 of which were from the U.S. and 20 of which were from Russia (p. 49). The students’ opinion on various statements was surveyed both before and after the short-term study abroad programme. The researchers pay special attention to the interaction between students from both countries during the programme and how it affects the experience. Their programme differs from that of Helsinki Summer School in that it is a programme between two universities, it is designed as a single course, and the participants are from two different cultures as opposed to many cultures. Sjoberg

and Shabalina discuss peer-to-peer student interaction through a partnership between visiting and hosting universities, stating that

This type of partnership opens new opportunities for cultural immersion, improves global curriculum, and provides interdisciplinary student interaction, service learning opportunities, and collaborative research opportunities. (pp. 47-48)

In their study, Sjoberg and Shabalina found that all in all student learning did occur during the short-term study abroad programme and that students gained global and cross-cultural skills and increased their global knowledge due to their short stay in Russia and the peer-to-peer student interaction (2010, p. 49). Additionally, they noted that “[t]he US students experienced the greatest impact on perceptual difference” which Sjoberg and Shabalina contributed to the peer-to-peer interaction and travelling to another country (ibid.). Connecting with other students facilitated behavioural changes and supported the international group learning process (p. 51). In general, Sjoberg and Shabalina found that the short-term study trip had a positive effect on the students' attitudes and behavioural learning (p. 53). However, it is worthwhile to note that this is not a surprising find as the researchers are quite clearly positive towards short-term study abroad programmes, at times verging on advocacy rather than analysis.

In her study, Dwyer (2004) looks at the longitudinal correlations between specific features of study abroad programmes and students' life and career outcomes (pp. 152-153). She conducted the study using alumni from the Institute for the International Education of Students (IES) as her respondents. The respondents had studied with IES for varying term lengths between the academic years of 1950/1951 and 1999/2000 (p. 154). In her study, the length of the summer term, which is equivalent to a short-term study abroad, varied from six to seven weeks (Dwyer, 2004, p. 155). Dwyer found that students who studied abroad for a full year gained most from their experience, but students who spent a shorter term abroad were not without benefits. 90 percent of the summer term student alumni said that studying abroad increased their interest in languages and academic study (Dwyer, 2004, pp. 155-160). The percentage was higher than the percentages from both full year and semester student alumni. Almost all summer term student alumni said that study abroad helped them to better understand their own cultural values and biases, increased their self-confidence, served as a catalyst

for increased maturity, and continues to influence their world view and interactions with people from different cultures (ibid.). More than half of the summer term student alumni stated a myriad of other benefits and positive effects ranging from language skills to tolerance and career path (ibid.). Finally, over 50 percent of summer term student alumni thought that their study abroad period had had an impact on their intercultural development (ibid.). According to Dwyer (2004),

studying abroad has a significant impact on students in the areas of continued language use, academic attainment measures, intercultural and personal development, and career choices. Most importantly, the study illustrates that this impact can be sustained over a period as long as 50 years. (p. 161)

In some aspects, the summer term student alumni were more likely or as likely to achieve sustainable benefits from their study abroad period as semester students. To Dwyer this seems counter-intuitive. According to her, one possible explanation is that carefully planned, intensive summer programs of at least six weeks could indeed have a “significant impact” on students’ development and growth, although she stresses the importance of educational planning, implementation, and resources in order to bring about this result (Dwyer, 2004, p. 161). Dwyer goes on to state that whether the results would hold if the short-term programme lasted only 1-5 weeks is still unknown (ibid.). As a conclusion, Dwyer states that although longer study term is often more beneficial, shorter programs can be “enormously successful in achieving important academic, personal, career and intercultural development outcomes” (Dwyer, 2004, p. 162).

ELF, English-medium instruction, and short-term study abroad are all well-researched topics, ELF probably more so than the other two. However, there has been very little if any research into the special circumstances created by the combination of the three, especially in the context of Finland, which is one of the reasons for the topic of the current study as stated in the introduction. Above, I have discussed the concepts integral for understanding the setting of this study. I now turn to the research questions and methods chosen and the data gathered in order to research the topic.

3 Research questions, data and methods

In this chapter, I discuss my research questions, data, and methods. First, I state the aim of this study, followed by the research questions formulated in order to approach said aim. Then I discuss the data used in this study, and give a brief overview of Helsinki Summer School in order to give more context for the gathered data. Finally, I discuss the methods used for both the data collection and the analysis.

3.1 Research questions

The aim of this study is to research the experiences and, more precisely, the challenges that teachers at Helsinki Summer School face with regards to the multicultural, English-medium ELF context of the short-term study abroad with which Helsinki Summer School provides its students. Another aim is to investigate whether the challenges anticipated and faced by teachers new to Helsinki Summer School differ from the challenges anticipated and faced by teachers who have already taught at the summer school in previous years. As discussed in the introduction, I believe the challenges stemming from ELF and English-medium instruction to be a worthwhile topic of research as they have been little studied in the past and as studying them can aid the understanding and development of short-term study abroad programs, higher education, and professional and academic interaction in general. My assumption that teachers will face challenges during Helsinki Summer School is based on my experiences during my internship at Helsinki Summer School and my discussions with the staff, as well as the fact that neither ELF nor English-medium instruction are without problems, which I have demonstrated in my review of previous research.

In order to pursue the aims stated above, I have formulated my research questions as follows:

1. What kinds of challenges related to English as a lingua franca and English-medium instruction do the teachers at Helsinki Summer School expect to face during teaching?
2. What kinds of challenges related to English as a lingua franca and English-medium instruction do teachers actually face?

3. Do new teachers anticipate and face different challenges related to English as a lingua franca and English-medium instruction than returning teachers? If so, how do they differ?

The term ‘challenge’ is not determined in this study in order to not limit the interviewees; rather, I wanted to let the interviewees discuss any points that they associate with the term. However, my focus is on the linguistic and communicative challenges related to ELF and English-medium instructions. For this reason, any other challenges are forwarded to the Helsinki Summer School staff for the sake of developing the summer school but are not discussed in detail in this study.

3.2 Data

This is a qualitative study, and the data was collected via semi-structured interviews. The participants were recruited by sending an invitation to course coordinators via email, to which interested teachers then responded. I interviewed a total of eight teachers who were lecturing at Helsinki Summer School in the summer following my internship. Four of the interviewees taught at Helsinki Summer School for the first time that summer, and four interviewees had taught at Helsinki Summer School before. Four interviewees were Finnish and four were not, but all have lived and/or worked in Finland for a long period of time and have a connection to Helsinki and the University of Helsinki through that. Half of the interviewees were from Arts and Humanities, and the rest from other faculties. Interviewees were university teachers, lecturers, professors, PhD students and other academic staff, collectively called teachers, informants or interviewees in this study.

Each informant was interviewed twice; first before the Helsinki Summer School sessions and for the second time after the sessions were over, amounting to sixteen interviews in total. The interviews consisted of open-ended questions and were recorded. The first interview dealt with the informants' previous teaching experiences and their expectations regarding the upcoming Helsinki Summer School, and in the second interview, the informants discussed the kinds of challenges that they had actually faced and how they dealt with them. Appendix 1 includes the topics and questions covered in the interviews, but since the interviews were semi-structured, the order of the

questions and specific wording might have been different depending on the interview.

3.2.1 Helsinki Summer School

The following section on Helsinki Summer School is based on discussions with the Helsinki Summer School employees and information obtained during my internship at Helsinki Summer School, as well as the information on the summer school's website.

Helsinki Summer School is a three-week international short-term study abroad programme for advanced (at least two years of university level studies completed) Bachelor, Master and PhD students as well as professionals (University of Helsinki, 2017). According to the Helsinki Summer School website, "Helsinki Summer School offers university students and graduates a truly international, strongly academic summer session where the research-based teaching and talented young minds meet and mingle to create something new" (University of Helsinki, 2015). In addition to fully credited courses, Helsinki Summer School offers students accommodation and a diverse social programme, as well as IT and library services for the duration of the summer courses. The aims of Helsinki Summer School are to advertise the University of Helsinki and its English language Master's programmes, to introduce international students to the University of Helsinki and Finnish student life, to offer high-quality academic and multidisciplinary Master and PhD level courses, to develop teaching methods, and to enhance academic collaboration (personal communication, 2015).

Helsinki Summer School began in 2000 as the University of Helsinki's contribution to the European City of Culture project. In 2001, Helsinki Summer School continued as a summer school project of the consortium of the nine universities in Helsinki: University of Helsinki, Helsinki University of Technology, Helsinki School of Economics, Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration, Sibelius Academy, University of Art and Design Helsinki, Theatre Academy, Academy of Fine Arts, and National Defence University. The collaboration continued until 2005, when, having been evaluated and received a positive decision about continuing the summer school programme, Helsinki Summer School received a new administrative model and outsourced services to a separate administrative body. The Helsinki Summer School administration chooses the courses for the summer school from applications submitted by course coordinators and

gives support for course planning, as well as guidelines, consultation, and concepts for creating a summer course if needed. The administration also takes care of students' applications, registrations and payments. Due to universities being combined and some dropping out from the summer school programme, in 2013 there were three universities organising courses under Helsinki Summer School: University of Helsinki, Aalto University, and Hanken School of Economics. Aalto University and Hanken dropped out of Helsinki Summer School for summer 2015. In that year, Helsinki Summer School was brought more closely under the University of Helsinki with a unified look with the university. Helsinki Summer School is situated under the Education Services at the University of Helsinki, and the University of Helsinki is the main organiser of courses for Helsinki Summer School. Other universities in the Helsinki area decide each year whether or not they want to organise courses at Helsinki Summer School that year.

Each year, there are roughly 300 students (Lakkala & Ilomäki, 2014; Lakkala, Ilomäki & Mikkonen, 2016) of approximately 60 different nationalities. Approximately one third of students are Finnish students or students studying in Finland. Students apply online and they need to supply a motivation letter stating their reasons for wanting to attend the summer school and the particular course that they are applying for. This letter is the basis of their application, and is used to judge whether or not the student has the necessary skills (academic, language or otherwise) to successfully participate in and complete the course. No other proof of the level of English is required from the students, although the requirement of sufficient English is stated (University of Helsinki, 2017). On the Helsinki Summer School website, the following information is offered:

All courses in HSS are taught in English. Although applicants are not required to present an official certificate of language proficiency, all students must be fluent in English. A good command of English is necessary for completing the course (following teaching, participating in classroom discussions, writing essays) as well as managing day-to-day matters in Finland. An applicant can be rejected if his/her level of English is not deemed equivalent to the standards. (University of Helsinki, 2017)

In addition to this information, the website offers a description, based on the Common European Framework of Reference, of the skills required in order for the level of

English to be seen as sufficient.

3.3 Methods

After the interviews, the recordings were transcribed. I used a transcription software to slow down the speed of the recordings without distorting the sound too much, but the transcribing itself was done manually by me (as opposed to using an automatic audio transcription or voice-to-text software). Additionally, I chose the transcription conventions myself as the transcription software did not provide them. In the transcriptions, capital letters indicate that the sequence was spoken with emphasis, while italics indicate that the sequence was spoken in English even though the interview was conducted in Finnish. Punctuation is used to indicate pauses: a comma denotes a short pause, whereas a period indicates a longer pause. Three periods are used to indicate a longer pause with intonation suggesting that the sentence is not finished. A hyphen is used to indicate an abrupt mid-word stop. Parentheses are used to indicate non-verbal, paralinguistic communication such as laughter or sighs. A full description of the transcription conventions can be found in Appendix 2.

I approached the data via the classification imposed on it by my interview setting, namely the division of teachers into new and returning teachers and the division of interviews into those held before the summer school and those held after the summer school. This enabled me to treat the data as four smaller entities while keeping in mind my aim of comparing both the responses of new and returning teachers as well as their responses before and after the summer school. I went through each entity while marking down all mentions (explicit or otherwise) of the use of English, intercultural communication, and the duration of the summer school, as well as any explicit mention of challenges that did not fall under any of these themes. Additionally, I marked down mentions of opportunities, reasons for participation, and feedback for the Helsinki Summer School staff. I used a Word document to record my notes electronically. I then looked at each theme and the mentions I had placed under them in order to see if any categories for further classification were easily found. Regarding the use of English, four categories were prominent, namely the students' use of English, teaching in English, the teachers' attitudes towards the use of English, and native English speakers. In the case of interviews held after the summer school, changes in both the students' use

of English and their intercultural communication skills was a viable sub-category. After categorising the data within the mentioned themes, I looked at each category to determine what was deemed as a challenge and what was not. Even though I approach the teachers' experiences via challenges, I chose to first classify the data according to the broader themes of the use of English, intercultural communication and short-term study abroad because the thoughts of the teachers regarding these aspects of the summer school, especially ELF and English-medium instruction, are relevant to this study even if they are not deemed challenging. Additionally, I at first included all challenges regardless of their connection to ELF or English-medium instruction because it was easier for me to mark down all challenges before further categorising them and deeming their relevance for this study as opposed to doing both the marking down and categorising at the same time. It must be noted that although my chosen categories are useful in analysing the data, they are to some extent artificial; for example, it is not always clear whether a mention of native speakers should be categorised as an instance of the use of English or intercultural communication. As mentioned, I also marked down mentions of opportunities, reasons for participation, and feedback for the Helsinki Summer School staff. The mentions of opportunities and reasons for participation are included in the data. However, feedback for the Helsinki Summer School staff was asked for the benefit of the staff and the responses are not included in the data unless they pertain to the study at hand.

4 Analysis

In this chapter, I analyse the data gathered for this study. This chapter is dedicated to the reporting of the data, whereas the comparison and synthesis are delved into in chapter 5. In order to maintain the interviewees' anonymity, I have assigned each interviewee a pseudonym. The pseudonyms assigned to the interviewees do not necessarily correspond with the actual gender of the interviewee being discussed or quoted. Only two interviewees, Simon and Lena, wanted their interviews conducted in English. Quotes from everyone else have been translated from Finnish into English by me. For clarification, quotation marks are used only when conveying what the interviewees have said. Apart from Thomas, all interviewees taught at the summer school throughout the three weeks; Thomas taught only for one day. Table 1 includes the background

information of the interviewees.

Table 1. Interviewees' background information. Note that 'field' is used very broadly here in order to protect the interviewee's anonymity.

Pseudonym	New/returning teacher	Field	Position on course	Language of interviews
Simon	New teacher	Humanities and social sciences	Coordinator; main teacher	English
Laura	New teacher	Humanities and social sciences	Coordinator; main teacher	Finnish
Daniel	New teacher	Humanities and social sciences	Coordinator; one of many teachers	Finnish
Anna	New teacher	Humanities and social sciences	Coordinator; main teacher	Finnish
Maria	Returning teacher	Natural sciences	Coordinator; one of many teachers	Finnish
Thomas	Returning teacher	Natural sciences	Teacher, one of many; taught only on one day of the summer school	Finnish
Sam	Returning teacher	Natural sciences	Coordinator; one of many teachers	Finnish
Lena	Returning teacher	Humanities and social sciences	Coordinator; one of many teachers	English

4.1 New teachers

As stated above, four of the interviewees were teaching at Helsinki Summer School for the first time. Daniel had taught one lesson at Helsinki Summer School the year before, but since that was his only experience of teaching at Helsinki Summer School, he was placed in this category rather than with the returning teachers. Two new teachers were rather experienced as teachers prior to Helsinki Summer School. Simon had diverse experience in teaching in English as well as teaching international groups of students, although he said that “to tell you that I am experienced in teaching international students maybe is a bit too much”. However, it was his first time teaching an intensive course such as the summer school course. Laura had taught previously mainly in Finland apart from sessions as a visiting lecturer abroad, although some of her courses had been in English and had attracted international students. The other two new teachers had little or

some experience as teachers. Daniel had taught one course in English, some lectures and a study circle previously. Anna's previous experience consisted mainly of private lessons and tutoring; the Helsinki Summer School course was the first actual course that she taught.

4.1.1 First interviews: before summer sessions

For new teachers, reasons for taking part in Helsinki Summer School included 1) trying out and experimenting with new course topics and teaching methods, 2) developing topic areas, 3) wanting to try an existing course as a summer course, 4) networking with students and experts in the field, 5) creating visibility for the topic area, 6) wanting to teach at the University of Helsinki, 7) the good reputation of Helsinki Summer School, 8) acquiring teaching experience, 9) because the department or a PhD supervisor asked, and 10) monetary compensation. As Simon said:

I've been, uh, tried to teach at the helsinki university for quite some time, but for many different reason it hasn't been possible so far --- so funny enough I've been teaching a lot, you know abroad or outside helsinki but not in helsinki. and I was looking for an opportunity to teach at helsinki university and I hear very very good feedback about this helsinki summer school

Laura said that “I've tried to create a kind of network of students and others in finland who are interested in this topic. this is one way of bringing these people forward”.

The greatest anticipated challenge in the minds of the new teachers seemed to have to do with the students and their expectations and reactions; what their goal is, how they will react to course content or topics of discussion, their potential unwillingness to connect with the teacher or participate in discussions, what the group dynamic is, and their possibly differing views on what studying is and their levels of previous knowledge in the topics discussed. Much of this anticipation seemed to stem from the fact that the student body would be multicultural and multinational. For example, Daniel stated, that

the students are from so many different places and they have different ideas of what, how to study in general, last year it was a kind of a challenge that for example chinese students expect a much more

authoritative teaching method, that it was difficult for us to make them discuss (laughs). if there are like australians and americans versus chinese then discussion between them is, it's difficult to direct because they have different ideas about what is allowed and what is appropriate and how one can join the discussion

Like Daniel, Laura talked about the Chinese specifically, saying that

the chinese have a completely different type of relationship, this authoritative type of relationship towards teachers and that might be demanding, and challenging to get them to talk as well

On a related note, she was worried that she might not be able to connect with the students, which would make workshops and other more conversational ways of teaching more difficult. Additionally, she thought that the differing levels in students' content knowledge might become challenging.

Anna suggested that the international nature of the summer school might be a challenge, because "everyone has a different background". She, too, mentioned the Chinese and the Americans as an example of cultural behaviour:

as a foreigner I know that stereotypes are for the large part lies, but on the other hand it's, it's true that, uhh, that some student groups, due to their nationality, behave in certain ways. like for example the chinese they, they never write references. because it's not like, it's not part of their academic culture, they're not used to it. but, and for example the americans, they say their opinion uhh, even though it necessarily isn't so, but they say in the way that it, it feels almost like they want to offer truths. that okay now I speak and this is the truth, even if they don't really mean it that way, it's a way of expression

Simon, speaking of students in general, said that it's important for students to be confident in class in order for them to share ideas, and whether or not they have the necessary confidence or not is something he as a teacher will know only when he meets the students. Additionally, he talked about the fact that his teaching methods are not the traditional kind of lecturing. Instead he, although recognising the need for some traditional teaching, would like to "do something more interactive" with students. He thought that this might be challenging, saying that "if I teach in schools or university where there is this strong traditional method then of course my method is- cannot be

understood”. Thus he saw that him not having a “traditional way of teaching” might be a challenge, but thought that Helsinki Summer School seems very open and encouraging for trying new teaching methods, and that “probably there are even more innovative teaching methods than mine” at the summer school.

All new teachers recognised the impact of the students’ level of English, but Simon was the only one to explicitly suggest that it might cause challenges. Laura suggested that the students’ English skills would not be a challenge because her course is not “so complex or theoretical” and because those who come to the course are interested in the topic. Daniel said that the importance of adequate English skills was highlighted in the application requirements and that he was confident that the students would have the required level of English. He did discuss possible strategies in the event that students with greatly varying levels of English competence needed to take part in a discussion, saying that

one must then lead the conversation, just like ask comments from the quieter ones and somehow bring them into the discussion, and of course it helps that we have some background information on them and we read their texts continuously and can maybe refer that hey you said this and this yesterday, what do you think about this now and how are these things connected, and in general restrain somewhat those people who like their own voice much (laughs)

Anna thought that the students’ level of English might affect the course but that it would not be a challenge, commenting that

it’ll probably affect so that, uhh, when no one or almost no one has english as their mother tongue. uhh, of course the communication is on a different level. it’s just simpler. but I don’t think it will cause problems

Simon said that language might be a challenge, but that he is quite well prepared for it and has experience of similar situations:

of course there is always who talk less who talk more who is more active who is more confident, it depends a lot on the english level of the class, so and I don’t know how it will be the english level of this uhh, of this helsinki summer school. but uhh, I’m not particularly worried you know

He continued that he tends to not worry about things beforehand; he has experience of similar situations and “if and when the problem will come up” he will deal with it. He noted that sometimes students take his course specifically because they want to practice their English. Simon did, however, think that the students ought to have a sufficient level of English, stating that “if they come to a class with them, which they pay for and they know that is three weeks in English, they should have a basic understanding of English.” Additionally, he spoke at length about his strategies for helping students if there is a situation where they do not understand or if their level of English is not quite adequate. One way he had dealt with this in the past had been that the student spoke their mother tongue and a friend translated what the student said into English. Otherwise he said for example that

I always say to my class that we are a team --- so for example if there is one student that, tries to express an idea and is not clear or I don't understand, if you understand that person or so on you can help, you know

Also,

when I speak normally I speak a bit faster but when I teach I always try to slow down and talk, you know, not too slowly because otherwise (laughs) fall asleep, but to slow down a bit and to be as clear as possible. when I use a word that for example I'm not sure they understand I ask, --- I explain I make some comments, I show some pictures for example --- or write down if I just mention it like orally, uhm, so, of course I cannot check everything but, uhm, something.

He was all in all confident with facing challenges, stating that “In general I think I will manage, and if I will you know face some challenges well I will, face them.” He continued:

I don't know because I really never thought about, you know... teaching in term of challenges. ehh... because for me in a sense I mean every time you teach is a challenge because you never know what they student can ask me or can comment or how they can react, but I don't see them as... that much problematic.

Overall, new teachers did not view their own English skills as a challenge. Laura said

that she is in fact officially English-speaking but that she does not have “fully native english” due to not having lived in an English-speaking country for a long time. Daniel said that in the previous year “it was quite challenging” for him to teach in English and that is why he made the lecture “a discussion lecture so that others can talk at least as much as me (laughs)” but since he had taught in English after that lecture and communicated in English, his English had “developed very much during this year” and “now it doesn't seem in any way problematic”. Simon saw his non-native English as an asset rather than a challenge, although he did seem to think that, ideally, teachers' English should be “perfect”:

I mean of course I mean it would be you know recommended that the teacher would be you know have this perfect english and perfect pronunciation but, uhm, as I don't (laughs), in a sense I use these to tell them do you see I'm not perfect myself, so don't worry if you make mistake. --- you know something like to make them feel at ease

And also,

that help me the fact that I'm not mother tongue, so they know that I myself make mistakes you know, of some pronunciation or some written english and of course I apologise and so on, but in a sense that's very helpful because they understand that, they don't have to be perfect. and that uhh, that's my opinion. I think that in a sense is, uhh, is easier for the one that are shy or not so confident

Anna, too, talked about the fact that she is not a native English speaker, saying that “of course, I know that I'm not a native speaker and that I can never become a native speaker because I don't live in England or in another English speaking country,” but that her English is “quite understandable” and her level of English is “sufficiently high”.

Simon and Laura did not see the short duration of the summer school as particularly challenging. Laura did, however, say that she will have to prepare more material for the summer course than for the similar course that she teaches during the academic year, because the summer sessions are so intensive compared to contact hours during the academic year. Anna and Daniel, on the other hand, did find possible challenges with the shortness of the summer school. Anna said that the schedule is very tight for the three weeks and that it is “physically challenging” as well. She added that she would

probably have more to say than there is time for during the course. According to Daniel, the duration of the summer school might be a challenge due to the intensity of the course, saying that “although this is a short course it's also INTENSIVE. That is also a challenge.” He continued:

I know it's intensive and I know that the students will experience it as very intensive especially if they plan on taking part in the social programme as well. so much to read, so much work --- we know it might be challenging for them

When asked about the opportunities that Helsinki Summer School offers in the teachers' opinion, Simon said that to him, Helsinki Summer School is a great possibility to learn and experience something new. According to Daniel, opportunities for the students include the social aspect of meeting each other and getting the type of teaching that the teachers are able to give. Laura said that Helsinki Summer School is a “fantastic opportunity” and has “enormous possibilities,” and that it is a good way for marketing Finland, because “it's a beautiful time to come here and experience something meaningful and nice, great to get new friends for these students so.” In the same vein, Anna said that

the academic atmosphere of the university of helsinki, or of finland, or of scandinavia is somewhat different than, uhh, than elsewhere in europe and of course outside europe. I think it can be very educational, I think even more than the course itself

She also said that Helsinki Summer School

develops internationality and it is a huge thing these days in my opinion, because, one cannot do research alone any more, or in a small group, it needs to be done in a network and one needs to get as many contacts and points of view and opinions and and, perspectives as possible

Regarding the opportunities for the field of study, Anna said that getting so many students from all over the world who are interested in the same topic can develop the research of that topic as well, because the students “come to learn yes, but, but they can maybe give new ideas and give their contribution” to the field as well. According to Daniel, Helsinki Summer School is an opportunity to bring interested individuals to

Finland and show them that relevant research is being done in Helsinki. Additionally, he talked about the knowledge that the researchers and teachers can acquire. Noting that “our own expertise is very strongly within the angloamerican cultural area”, he emphasised the value of making “new links to new countries” and learning about what is being done in other countries.

4.1.2 Second interviews: after summer sessions

All new teachers had very international student groups at Helsinki Summer School. Laura had six students on her course: three Chinese students, one Brazilian, one Dutch and one South African. She commented that although there were only a handful of students, it worked well as she was able to conduct the course in a more intimate seminar style. All the students completed the course, but one of the Chinese students flunked due to plagiarism: “they took the whole text for the final assignment, from the internet. clear plagiarism”. Laura was quite surprised by the student’s actions; she said that she has never had a situation like that before.

Simon had 20 students on his course. The students were from all over the world; there were many Europeans (including two British students), Asians with at least three from China, and students also from countries such as Argentina, India, Australia, and Turkey. According to Simon, the students were active and had the confidence to share their ideas, which was important for Simon. Almost all students were interested and took actively part in the course, but there was one student whose “lack of responsibility” surprised Simon.

Daniel had ten students altogether. Almost half were Finnish, three were from Asia (China and Japan), one was from Morocco, and two from different parts in Europe. The group was slightly small in Daniel’s opinion, but they were active. According to Daniel, many of the students explicitly stated that they were interested in the Finnish education system, which is why they had come to the course to experience it first-hand. Another reason for attending the course was to meet people from different parts of the world.

Anna had 14 students on her course. Most students were from Europe, and the rest were from Asia (China and Japan), the U.S., and Mexico. According to Anna, the course went

generally very well, but she felt that the students might have expected the information to be more general and that maybe they had not really understood that it is a legitimate academic course.

According to all new teachers, the English skills of the students varied greatly. Laura said that the non-Chinese students' language skills were good and "not a problem", but the Chinese students' language skills were "varying". According to Laura, the Chinese students "were rather quiet but like, when they did say something it was understandable, but they, avoided participation to some extent maybe especially because of this language problem so". They did answer when they were asked a question, and according to Laura two of the students had decent English skills but especially the third one was more "problematic". She didn't try to coax the Chinese students into conversations too much, but let them participate "at their own pace". The compulsory presentation was also challenging for the Chinese students, as they had to hold the presentation quite freely instead of having a pre-written speech prepared. The rest of the group was very active. Laura wondered whether one or two of the Chinese students should have not been allowed on the course due to the level of their language skills, but she ended up saying that they did have a place there and that she would not have turned them down had it come to light before the course that "it would be likely that they have difficulties".

According to Daniel, all students had adequate English skills. They had no native English speaking students, but all the students spoke a "steady international english". Some, however, did struggle more than others:

some had a bit weaker english skills so, some things went clearly over their heads and maybe in written tasks too it was every now and then difficult for them to get the point, point across, so difficult maybe to communicate sometimes but

According to Daniel, the students seemed very aware of their level of language skills as well, with one student even apologising for their poor English. He also noticed that some students who would otherwise "use more eloquent english and in a way more exact, theoretically speaking" might have simplified their speech to fit those in the class with a lower level of English. He continued that the lower level of English or the lack of confidence in one's language skills might inhibit students from asking for clarification if

they do not understand. However, Daniel said that the students had the possibility to ask after lectures and also learning diaries showed if something had been misunderstood. He also said that he had to think of ways to help students keep up, whether it was explaining things through examples or using slides more to give the students the main points also in writing in case they are not used to listening to or speaking English. This was something that Daniel said he had never had to do before.

In Anna's opinion, her students' level of English was all in all "quite acceptable". She said that at the beginning of the course she had discussed language use with the students, explaining to them that apart from a couple of students none of them are native speakers of English, and as long as everyone does their best and gets understood, that is enough. However, there were also some challenges. According to her, the challenges differed: with the Mexican student, the challenge had to do with their low level of English, whereas with the Chinese and Japanese students the challenge lay more with their pronunciation, as "their phonetics, uhh, don't have similar, sounds as english, not at all, so it's very challenging for them". She often had to ask these students to repeat what they had said since she could not understand. There was also a student from Greece who, according to Anna, used an excessive amount of words to express themselves. Anna explained that South Europeans tend to talk much, but that "you can't do that in english. it just doesn't work". According to Anna, native English speakers use the language "as a tool" to get their point across effectively and in a concise manner. In Anna's opinion, the Greek student improved their performance after she had a talk with them. Anna said that there was no division between native and non-native students, and no simplification of speech to suit students with a lower level of English. She suggested that the reason for the non-existence of language simplification could have been "because they were usually talking to me, so in a way if, if someone hadn't understood then I, explained".

Out of all new teachers, Simon discussed the students' English skills the most. According to him, his students had a very good level of English, but "pronunciation was a problem". He noted that when speakers of languages that he also speaks made mistakes, he was able to correct and help them because he knew their language backgrounds and thus was able to see where their mistakes came from, but the situation was more complicated when the students' mother tongue was one that he does not

speak. For example, some of the Asian and Turkish students' accents made understanding difficult during class presentations and discussions, sometimes to a point where Simon did not even get the gist of what the students were trying to say. He said that he was not sure how to correct the situation because

I can't say, you know work on your accent I mean it's very very difficult I mean and something that require a lot of time, but what I CAN say, is like, slow DOWN, because no matter is your accent, everything become a BIT more clear, so that I can do.

However, he felt that he could only interrupt maybe once or twice, because too many interruptions would also obstruct communication and understanding, and commenting on one student's speech too much might also be discouraging to that student. Therefore, after asking a student to slow down once or twice, he would leave it up to the student. Like Anna, Simon had also discussed language use with the students at the beginning of the course:

what I taught all of them at the very beginning is first of all I try to speak slowly, because I'm very aware that I do have an accent, my english is not perfect, uhh both I mean in grammar and in pronunciation but I try to speak as slowly as possible, and to make pause so that everybody can understand, and that's also an invitation to ALL of them to pay attention to, to be aware that each of us has, ehh an accent, and for us it can be totally understandable but not for people that meet us for the first time

He also encouraged students to be respectful in the event that someone makes mistakes in their speech or if their pronunciation is a bit off. He reminded students of how for example the Chinese need to learn a completely different alphabet when learning English, and that due to that the challenges are not the same as for example those of a native German speaker. He also explained to the students that for him, it takes maybe ten minutes to get used to an English-speaker's accent since he has lived and spent much time abroad and in an international environment, but that this is not the case with everyone, which is why (especially native speakers) need to slow down to aid understanding. He said that having this talk with the students made them "much more aware" of their speech. One native English speaker especially was very diligent with speaking slower when asked to. According to Simon, it was a "big realisation" for this student that not everyone will understand his speech at a normal tempo. The native

English speakers did not otherwise modify their language unless Simon explicitly asked them to:

what I really appreciate is that they would say at least the first sentence how they would have said, just slower, uhh and then if I would ask them what do you mean, they, then they would explain in simpler word or use synonym, or examples

On the other hand, one of the native English speakers had trouble explaining themselves in other terms than the ones they used originally; Simon attributed this to the students lack of contact with non-native speakers. Simon noticed this with some non-native students as well; he suggested that it could have been due to their major being in engineering because

I mean uhh, if the computer work like this the computer work like this and if I ask you, what does it mean. I don't know maybe they don't know how to how else to explain because for them is just, one thing working just one way

In the hopes of encouraging his students with their English, Simon also made a point of showing the students that he makes mistakes in English as well:

I will say that the fact that I'm not, an english speaking person, and I'm comfortable to the fact that I know english to a certain level, I can use, quite easily, but sometimes you know I don't have very very specific words --- for me it was very, good to show THEM that I also have uhh, lacks you know like that I don't have ALL the dictionary all the vocabulary in, in english, and uhmm, that I can make mistake with some pronunciation, so that hopefully it will make easier for them

Simon said that he made a conscious effort to make the course content (both prepared and impromptu content arising from the lectures and discussions) as accessible to all the students as possible with the help of these talks, and in his opinion this did indeed help at least some of the students to open up and try more; according to him, some students made a noticeable effort to be understood and to explain their point of view – even coming back to a topic the next day after having had the chance to formulate their point into clearer English. He said that he, too, tries to continuously improve his English and learn from interactions with native speakers (“american english australian”) whenever he has the opportunity.

Anna discussed her own English and teaching in English, saying that

there probably weren't many misunderstandings, but of course it's challenging because. it's, it's not my first language so, uhh. I chose the type of language, level, where I could communicate, precisely enough, everything what I wanted to say, so, --- the kind of language where I'm confident that everyone can understand

Daniel, on the other hand, did not comment on his own English, but noted that all the teachers on the course had very varying accents and students did sometimes say that it was difficult for them to follow a certain teacher.

All the new teachers saw the multicultural nature of the summer school as a positive feature. To Laura, it was "fantastic" that the students came from all over the world, and that they were able to have multiple discussions regarding the different cultures and how things are done in different parts of the world. According to Laura, the group with their diverse origins formed an "incredibly interesting entity" that helped her and the students to experience the different cultures in general but academic cultures as well. She said also that the Chinese students, according to their feedback after the course, had expected more homework and more tasks and that the course was more discussion oriented than they had anticipated, but that they seemed to adjust well to the lower level of hierarchy and authority. They did, however, keep to themselves more than the others; according to Laura, there was quite a clear divide into two groups – the Chinese students, and the rest:

even though the group was small they divided into, this kind of very moti- motivated group and then this kind of, uhh chinese group one could say, who, didn't necessarily like, understand everything or, some of them, were as kind of TOURISTS here in finland.

Daniel, too, found the multicultural nature of the summer school to be mostly an enriching feature. The communication was good, the students came together as a group, and both him and the students learned much about each others' cultures and what the situation is in each culture with regards to the topic of the course. Daniel stated that the students, as well as some of the other teachers, were a bit uptight at the beginning of the course, but that they loosened up during the first week. However, he did not see it as a

result of the multicultural nature of the group, as “after all they’ve all come to an international summer course and are in that way motivated to meet people from everywhere”. He did notice differences when it comes to how structured the students’ prior knowledge of the topic and central concepts were. According to Daniel, the European students had a much clearer idea of the topic whereas the Asians had maybe a general idea but nothing very structured; he suggested that this might also be due to the wider socio-political situation in the Asian students’ countries as the topic of the course has gained wider acknowledgement there later than in Europe. Daniel also discussed the differences in study cultures and students’ expectations, saying that

I had trouble taking the kind of teacher role or coordinator role where I’m, uhh, (laughs) at an appropriate distance, as as there are students, from clearly more authoritative, hierarchical cultures, and then on the other hand we had the finns and for example germans who are like, like treat you as an equal so, so where, where do you position yourself as a teacher is an interesting question

Daniel said that he had tried to make it clear at the beginning of the course that he appreciates active participation and encouraged the students to comment and discuss “even if the comment isn’t well formulated or smart” and that there’s no need to be formal with the teachers. He said that having this talk with the students helped at least somewhat, and the course participation got “evened out” during the course.

According to Simon, the students on his course had differing views based on their cultures and they discussed these differences, but there were no outright clashes. Instead, Simon found the multicultural aspect to be an asset, when students would discuss and compare the customs of their home countries with regards to the subject matter at hand. He said that he had tried to invoke a relaxed and open atmosphere that would be fruitful for discussion. Also, if he noticed some students being quieter, he would talk to them during break and ask how they felt about what they were discussing or doing. Some students did tell him that what was happening was completely new to them. As Simon said, for some students there was "the challenge to see that there are there are OTHER views, OTHER things to take into account" that the students may not have thought of before. Additionally, he noted that the Chinese and Turkish students formed their own sub-groups, and interacted somewhat less with the rest of the group. There were also differences on how the students reacted to the conversational, idea-

sharing format of the course. Simon attributed these differences to the different hierarchical structures of the students' (university) cultures. For example, some of the German students, who in Simon's opinion were probably more used to interacting with their teachers and having open discussions than the Chinese, said that the course was very different from others they have taken but they were still actively involved from the very beginning. For the Chinese students, however, the course format "was a shock", although they did get over it "fantastically", which according to Simon "doesn't always happen with the Chinese because sometimes they might be just pretty closed and just stick, stick with the requirement".

Anna found the multicultural nature of the student group to be "definitely enriching" since it enabled them to discuss the different customs of their countries with regards to the course's subject matter. However, Anna also said that the "internationality" was sometimes a challenge when it came to the students' expectations of lectures and the teacher. According to her, East Asians have in general a very different idea of what lectures and teaching should be like than Europeans, for example. However, what she found more challenging was the diverse backgrounds of the students. She said that for example one student with an engineering background asked many intelligent questions but that she couldn't give them an answer as in her field there rarely are ultimate and objective truths. There were also differences in how seriously students took group work, where some were very "academic" about it whereas others did not have a "strong collaboration attitude" or maybe could not work in groups very well. Whether this was for cultural reasons, Anna did not speculate.

Of the new teachers, Simon and Daniel noticed changes in the students' English language skills. According to Simon, the students became more confident in speaking in English in front of the class and during discussions as the course progressed. Initially Daniel said that he did not notice any changes in the students' language skills, but after some thinking he stated that those with the poorest language skills did improve during the course. The question on changes in the students' intercultural communication skills elicited more discussion. Laura mentioned especially the Chinese students, saying that

maybe these Chinese students opened up, during the course, a little bit
I mean they have such a strong belief in authority that they don't dare

to ask much that it isn't part of the study culture, apparently --- they relaxed, kind of got a handle on this

She continued that Helsinki and the university were a big experience for the students, and that them taking part in the various events that were organised must have helped. Anna didn't notice any changes in the intercultural communication skills, but suggested that the students were already open-minded coming to the course. Simon did not comment on noticing any changes in the students intercultural skills, but discussed it more generally, saying that for example a student from India explicitly said that he had come to the summer school to experience different cultures as it was their first time in Europe.

Before the summer school, Laura had anticipated challenges regarding getting through to the students and the level of their knowledge on the topic prior to the course. Neither of these seemed to be a challenge per se. She said that she was able to connect with the students during the course, and with some of them she keeps in touch via social media which she welcomed as she had hoped to continue building a network for students and researchers and to help the students connect with the networks that she herself is a part of. Regarding the level of previous knowledge, Laura stated that the Chinese students had little to no knowledge in the topic, but she felt that the course content was on such a general level that they were still able to participate. Additionally, Laura commented on the duration of the summer course, saying that the time period was quite short and intensive, maybe more so than she had anticipated, and it left little time to organise any extra outings with the students or to do much else during the summer. However, she said that it was worth it.

In this sub-chapter, I have presented the data gathered from the teachers new to the Helsinki Summer School in detail. I will next turn to the data gathered from the teachers returning to the Helsinki Summer School and who are familiar with teaching there.

4.2 Returning teachers

The remaining four interviewees had taught multiple times at Helsinki Summer School prior to the interviews. Maria has much experience of teaching both in Finland and abroad. More recently, she has focused on research rather than teaching. Thomas has

been a lecturer for two decades, and his student groups have ranged from ten students to a hundred. He teaches both in English and Finnish, mostly in Finland but sometimes elsewhere in Scandinavia as a visiting lecturer. His students are mainly Finnish. Sam has been a researcher for about a decade. As a teacher, he has held some lectures both in Finland and abroad, but not his own courses. He has taught some international audiences and sometimes in English, but according to him the courses at Helsinki Summer School have been the most international teaching events he has had. Lena's teaching history is the most multicultural; she has taught in various countries in Europe and in various languages, and often to multicultural groups. She is also very experienced when it comes to teaching intensive courses, also outside the summer school.

4.2.1 First interviews: before summer sessions

The returning teachers' reasons for taking part in the summer school included 1) tradition, 2) being asked to by another teacher or a faculty member, 3) the international nature of the summer school, 4) getting to experiment, experience and develop innovative teaching methods, and 5) being able to teach in Finland. The returning teachers viewed especially academic differences as possible challenges in Helsinki Summer School, especially when it comes to the academic culture. Maria stated that some students from foreign countries might have difficulty understanding some of the teaching methods, mentioning especially students from China, although she also mentioned students who are not yet as advanced in their studies. Similarly, Thomas mentioned students from more authoritative cultures having trouble with the more open-ended form of teaching in Finland, where teachers make students question and think critically instead of accepting what the teachers say as a universal truth. Sam, too, mentioned Chinese students when discussing possible academic differences, saying that young Chinese students who are accustomed to a more hierarchical "professor culture" could have challenges with the Finnish academic life because

here we are quite familiar, we discuss and, then at the beginning they might be a bit like, uncooperative but quite soon they get used to it that they can like, come and talk like that they don't have to, bow when leaving (laughs), necessarily, if they don't want to (laughs)

Lena discussed the difficulty of navigating between students' expectations, where some

expect her to be “exact” and give them clear tasks whereas others might expect quite a lot of academic freedom. She wondered about having students from all walks of the academic life, ranging from undergraduate to graduate and PhD students, and how to make the course work for everyone. Sam shared Lena’s concern, wondering how to find the right level of teaching so that it does not get boring for the more advanced students on the one hand or too difficult for the less knowledgeable students on the other. In terms of types of exercises that might be difficult for students to understand, Maria mentioned the learning diary, and Sam suggested the four-hour final exams that are common in Finland.

Regarding students’ language skills, Maria suggested that the English language, especially speaking, might be a challenge for some students. According to her, “from the applications, you cannot know, the applications might be written in very good English”, but she continued that “on the other hand I always think about it as a learning situation, in a way so, no one has died yet so (laughs).” She continued later on the topic, stating that

saying that I can speak English means very different things in different countries for example if an Italian says that they speak good English, it (laughs) doesn’t mean they can keep up

On the other hand, Maria said that the students know that the course is conducted in English and “they have themselves decided that they want to take part in it”. She also stated that “it’s not in a way in my opinion our problem if someone thinks that he, can listen to teaching in English”. She did state, however, that during the course she and her colleagues always arrange sessions where students can send in written questions beforehand, and that these sessions have been immensely popular especially among the Asian students because they can ask their questions anonymously and they do not need to read the questions out loud or speak themselves.

Thomas was not worried about the students’ English skills; when asked about it, he said that he had not really thought about it before. After some thinking, he said that those who decide to come to the summer school judge their own English skills to be adequate. Those who have poorer English skills are possibly quieter in group discussions but so far everyone has been equally involved for example in presentations. Not once has

Thomas come across a situation where lack of language skills would have prevented communication. He did, however, mention the Chinese and some African accents as being difficult to understand at times. When asked about his strategies in a situation like that, Thomas explained that he usually asks the student to repeat themselves and that sometimes another student will step in and explain in different words what they think was meant. In any case, the discussion has never halted due to difficulties in understanding.

Sam noted that he has previously had situations in the summer school where the English competence of students especially from Asia has been a challenge. As he said,

they have maybe, I don't know if they've thought that their language skills are better than they are, if they've thought that they can handle it but then. they've had some difficulties, they have barely passed --- with students like that you have to, have to think and discuss how, sometimes someone has received extra, reading to catch up and...

However, in general Sam did not worry about the English skills of the students. According to him, the summer school's screening process is adequate, and he trusts that the people who apply and get chosen to the course are the ones that can handle it. He cited the Helsinki Summer School office's years of experience as basis for his trust. Sam said that he has only once had a situation where a student had not learned enough to pass the course because, according to the student, he had not understood anything. Sam said that since he gets quite a few native English speakers, those with the best English skills tend to dominate discussions because it is easier for them to communicate, but that in recent years he has not faced any challenges related to this. Judging from the sign-ups before the interview, Sam said that based on the countries of origin and cultural backgrounds of the students he expected them to have a good command of English.

Lena talked extensively about the language skills of the students. Interestingly, she mentioned Anglo-American students "feeling very weird about, the language skills of other people or not being able to understand, other people", and continued: "it's never, never the other way around the problem is always angloamerican not understanding the accent of, the rest". She said that there have been a few times when a student did not have the adequate level of English to follow the lectures or to produce course work.

When thinking about how to solve a situation like that, she said after hesitating,

and uhh, in those. most desperate cases. (sighs). yeah it I I you know I don't know, it's, I mean you just. I mean you just abandon them (laughs) --- and you hope that, because that sometimes happen you hope that there are sometimes there are dynamics forming between people, like that someone gets like a huge amount of help from someone who speaks english, very good or or, okay. so, but you yourself you, it's very hard to really, you know, focus or target to help someone because they don't speak english, at decent level.

She noted that sometimes students with poor English skills can become “heavy weight”, an opinion she expressed very self-consciously, laughing and commenting on what a “terrible thing” it was to say. She continued that in case a student speaks a language she speaks, she may be able to help them better. She gave some examples of students with possible difficulties, saying that

I mean italy, france spain they're very sealed off they're, they've got their own, uh academic, world and where you get everything in in, that language and and, and then some then from from china students uhh can can be, not so good in english, -- with asian people I lack, lack maybe this intercultural skills with asia to, solve that, but that's the only, uhh problem connected to to, to nationality I have, is the language one.

None of the returning teachers viewed their own English as a challenge. Maria did, however, discuss her English language use and the role of non-native English in general. She stated that her English is a kind of rigid type (“tankeroenglanti” in Finnish). According to her, she is aware that her teachers in primary school did not know how to pronounce English and thus she could never learn to speak that way, but that she has never been ashamed of it. She explained, “Maybe as a teenager I thought that it’s embarrassing but I don’t think about it that way any more at all I rather think that, it is my, *feature* (laughs) that I’m like this”. She continued that it is a “bad thing” if someone doesn’t understand, but that people from her country generally speak slowly and clearly. According to her, it is in fact a good thing for young people to notice that professors have been able to manage well in their discipline even with their rigid English (the aforementioned “tankeroenglanti”), and that there are teachers who speak with a thick accent. Maria stated,

for example the spanish and the french especially I think the french almost like, WANT to speak their english so that it sounds like french because, that's what they are like that is their identity so I think it's good for, like, young people who wonder do I dare and am I competent they notice that first of all they are much more competent than I am (laughs) and secondly everyone else speaks the way they speak it's said that broken english is the internationally acc- generally used language so it's quite okay in my opinion, and it's a good like, *reality check* that indeed that's how it goes, in life that if you want to work internationally you have to simply dare to speak the type of english you speak

When asked about his own English, Thomas commented: “uhh, *I am comfortable with it* (laughs)” and that “it's not like an *issue* let's say”. He said that his English is adequate for work purposes and everyday use, but that it might be lacking beyond that. To Sam, English is almost like a second mother tongue; he has used it extensively since he was young and continues to use it in his work. Regarding other teachers' English, Sam said that he tries to choose people who can teach and communicate in English. However, he noted that there are some teachers he continues to invite to lecture for their extensive knowledge in the subject despite having somewhat weaker skills in English than he would hope. He also said that sometimes when he asks some people to come and lecture, those people might hesitate due to having a low level of English. Sam continued,

of course I understand that some people have, aren't used to, maybe talk so much especially older generations so it's a bit, they stammer and so on, it's okay but maybe sometimes one thinks that, oh if only it were more fluent then it would be even, even clearer and maybe I myself tend to get a little frustrated then (laughs) when I listen to them from the sidelines but, it's fine and one must remember also that the students too come from many different cultures where people might not necessarily speak perfect english

He added that for teaching purposes it's positive if the speech is both fluent and “riveting” so that students can understand and are interested. Lena commented on her own English by saying: “I mean I always emphasise that I mean I'm not, an english mother tongue myself so everybody, speaks english, as they can --- I see very from very practical point of view that so, people tend to understand me, that's enough”.

When discussing the multicultural aspect of the summer school, Thomas suggested that

some cultural misunderstandings or straight-out cultural clashes might occur, although he noted that he had witnessed no such clashes in the summer school so far. In his opinion, “those who come here they, are already in some way like, culturally open --- no matter where they come from or what their ideological or religious background is.” Lena, on the other hand, noted that students might keep the distance from one another because they are “in a land that they don't know, and and then in a in a multicultural classroom they tend to become a bit uptight”. According to her, especially Asian people tend to group together. She tries to anticipate situations like this by being very strict about mixing people for example in group work so that students with varying skills, including language skills, must work together. She usually has students work on a group project, and in her experience students get more relaxed quite soon.

Three of the returning teachers did not see the shortness of the summer school as a challenge, although Lena did comment, with a laugh, that she is “destroyed after the end of this summer school”. Sam was the only one to discuss the possible challenges stemming from the course length in detail, in cases where a student might get sick and have to miss lectures. In this regard, the length of the course, or rather the intensity of it, might be a challenge, because being ill for a couple of days will cause students to miss quite a lot of instruction. Sam has experienced this in previous years, and he said that he has come up with extra assignments for the students who have missed instruction. On a related note, Maria mentioned a time when she had a student who was absent much of the time and was, according to Maria, more of a tourist than a student, and ended up not passing the course. Lena, too, discussed students' attendance, saying that some students might treat the summer school as a holiday more than a study trip.

Not surprisingly, the interviewees saw many opportunities in the summer school. First and foremost, the returning teachers saw the summer school as a good international networking opportunity, for both themselves and the students, and as a way to show what has been done in research in Finland and see what has been done elsewhere. Maria said that she's been in contact with many of her summer school students after the summer school, and that some teachers come to the course to head hunt students as post-doctorate candidates, employees or partners. According to Sam, the summer school, and the consequent networking creates possibilities for collaboration and that the contacts have sometimes been “surprisingly useful”. The summer school is also a

place for the interviewees to hone their teaching skills by trying out pedagogically innovative methods. According to Lena, pedagogy is given importance in the summer school. The summer school was also seen as a way for students to experience Finnish education, Finland, and the Finnish summer. Additionally, the summer school was seen as an international advertising opportunity and a marketing asset for the University of Helsinki, although according to Maria the university is not utilising the possibility to its full potential. Lastly, Lena stated that “all the problems are opportunities” to learn to work with people who come to the summer school with diverse and varying goals, motivation, and levels of language proficiency.

4.2.2 Second interviews: after summer sessions

All teachers had very international groups of students, which according to Sam is usually the case. All returning teachers said that all in all the summer school went well. Maria had approximately 30 students from Europe, Asia, and North and South America. Only a couple of the students were native English speakers. According to Maria, the students were on average younger than in previous years, not as knowledgeable of the exercise methods employed on the course, and not attending the summer school only for the sake of the course, but also for the social programme. She was not sure why this is, although she noted that different marketing efforts might be one reason for the changed course demographic. In general, Maria felt that it was maybe more difficult to teach them due to their lower level of academics.

Thomas had approximately 18 students in his class with a few Finns, at least four Chinese students, and students from countries such as the U.S., Germany, Pakistan and India. He noted that he had some trouble with the students’ punctuality: most students came late to his lecture, and seemed slightly confused when he chided them for it. He wondered whether there might have been some tourist mentality among the students, where they use the course as an excuse to come to a new country and spend more time on leisure than studying. Thomas was not able to say anything more than to speculate since he only taught one day of the course as stated at the beginning of this chapter, but he did say that once the students arrived, they worked hard on the exercises and noticeably had spent time researching the topic.

There were approximately 18 people on Sam's course, from at least North America (Canada and the U.S.), Central and Northern Europe, Russia, and China. According to Sam, the students were motivated and already knowledgeable on the subject matter, maybe somewhat more so than in previous years. Lena had 21 students on her course, with students from at least North America (both Canada and the U.S.), the UK, Italy, Germany, China and Malaysia. Five or six students were native English speakers, and the rest were non-native.

None of the returning teachers saw the students' language skills as a challenge this year. All mentioned, however, having Chinese students whose language skills, pronunciation, or courage in speaking English were at a lower level than the other students – though not to a point where it would have been a challenge.

In general, Maria thought that the students' level of English was good. She said that with some students she needed to concentrate more in order to understand them, but that it did not interfere with the course. She also stated that the Asian students were quite shy when it comes to speaking (“as Asians tend to be”), but that from the written exercises it was clear that they had understood everything. According to Thomas, none of his students had poor English skills, but there were differences in the competence levels. Nevertheless, the students spoke equally much during their presentations, and everyone said at least something. He stated that when it comes to Chinese students, he himself has often trouble understanding their accent, and even if the speaker's language skills are good, it might take him a while to understand or he might need to ask the speaker to repeat due to the accent. He noted that there were a few times when some clarifications were needed during the lecture and that students helped each other if someone did not understand, saying that

for example a chinese student might like like, ask another chinese student in chinese what something is in english, and then, like. I got a good feeling about the native speakers that they --- they very, very quickly understood, what someone means to say, even if they, fumbled a bit, in their explanations

All in all, Thomas said that even if there were some situations where extra explanations were needed, the understanding was found quite soon. He also noted that most people

would not come to an exotic country such as Finland without having, or at least thinking they have, then necessary (language) skills to manage.

Sam stated that all his students had a very good level of English. Only the Chinese student had some slight difficulties and communication was somewhat slow and the student needed help in finding the right words, but not to the extent of being a challenge. Lena, too, said that her students had very good language skills, noting that there was one Chinese student whose accent made communication somewhat hard, but whose level of English in other areas was good. She said that it was in fact harder to understand some native speakers, mentioning especially a student from Northern England whose “english was very hard to understand, for everybody”. She noted however that “all of them studied in in in different countries and so all of them were aware of uh, uhm different accents and were able to understand”.

None of the teachers noticed any division between native and non-native English speakers. Maria said that it might have been due to the small number of native speakers. Thomas, too, cited the small number of native speakers, as well as having had the groups decided in advance to ensure multicultural groups and especially so that the Chinese students would not group together into one group of their own. According to him, the native speakers seemed supportive towards the non-native speakers, and Thomas noted that they did not group together but mingled even during breaks, saying that

when I was watching them, during a break or before the lecture, the two three natives weren't by themselves not at all but they were like in their assigned groups with others and maybe, the chinese were maybe more by themselves, so maybe they had the, language like. wa- not a wall but, a low fence. and maybe a cultural one as well.

Sam, on the other hand, attributed the lack of division at least partly to the good level of English on the course, and the fact that he had organised opportunities for the students to converse together with him and each other. Lena said that, in the case of her course, there was no division between the native and non-native English speakers for a large part because of two students:

there were like you know a couple of. (laughs) how do you put it I don't know, I was thinking alpha male but no, a couple of, like, outspoken guys and one was, uhh, english speaking native and one was not, but they were, basically, bit like, buddies, so they were a bit, you know, engaging them with everybody, yeah. so I guess because of this fact that one was english speaking one was not, mother tongue so so, that and they were so, the two guys were making of, thing alive so that make the fact, didn't split them into english speakers and non-english speakers

Lena noticed the native speakers changing their way of speaking to suit non-native speakers; she said that the native speakers were often “trying to explain themselves more than talk” for the sake of other students but also the teacher. Thomas, too, noticed some language simplification, saying that the native speakers in his class spoke in a way that was easy for everyone to understand, but had they spoken like they do among other native speakers, one would have needed to make a similar effort as with the Chinese students in order to fully understand. Whether the native speakers did this consciously or subconsciously, Thomas didn't know. Maria stated that some native English speakers, especially if they are monolingual, might have had difficulties realising when they were not being understood:

they might get this that they don't realise that someone is unable to follow them, because maybe this wouldn't necessarily happen with a British audience, so it's kind of difficult to realise if one, uses their mother tongue, and especially if one doesn't speak other languages, so it's difficult to understand what it was that caused miscommunication so simply that, one was speaking too fast and didn't stop at certain terms and show from the powerpoint that this is the term and this is the important thing we're discussing now so if it just comes blahblahblah in the midst of speech, it's difficult

Interestingly, despite associating this challenge with monolingual native English speakers, Maria said that they only had one teacher who spoke too fast, and that this person was multilingual. Nevertheless, she suggested that this teacher's speech might have made understanding more difficult for students. Sam also commented on the other teachers' language skills, saying that some teachers also had trouble finding the right words in English at times and their English was not as fluent, especially if they were visiting speakers from outside the university which, according to Sam, is a very international working environment to begin with.

None of the returning teachers saw their own level of English as having caused any challenges. Maria was the only one to discuss her own English skills, and English in general, at length, as she did during the first interview. She said that as a youngster she used to think that she ought to have a very good command of English with very good pronunciation and knowledge of “all” grammar and vocabulary, but after spending much time with French and Spanish people, she had a realisation:

I realised that, somehow that, to THEM, instead of saying words correctly, pronouncing them correctly or with correct grammar, to them it's MUCH more important to preserve their IDENTITY, I'M spanish THIS is how I'M speaking english, the spanish speak english like this. and to pronounce a word the british way for example would be TERRIBLE for them, and that's when I had a kind of an awakening that hold on I'm FINNISH I'm scandinavian this is how WE speak english, and people can understand it just fine even though it isn't the same english they have in, in britain

She went on to explain that, in her opinion, it is important to realise that what she tries to communicate would not become any more understandable even if she was speaking British English instead of her own variety. She also said that for most, their language skills are enough, and that this was the case especially with all the students and teachers on her course.

None of the returning teachers saw the multicultural aspect of the student groups as a challenge. According to Maria, the group dynamics on her course were good and there was a “respectful atmosphere at lectures,” where those who had understood the text they had to read explained and those who had not understood asked questions. In fact, Maria suggested that the good group dynamics may in fact have been due to the multicultural aspect, because there were not many students from the same country so they had no choice but to speak English together, and she did not see any indication that someone would have thought it difficult to understand other students' cultures. Another possible reason Maria suggested for the multicultural composition not being a challenge was that many of the students had a common denominator in being in Finland for the first time, a fact which the teachers familiar with Finland often milked by joking about the Finnish culture and discussing the local events that were on during the course. A third reason Maria suggested was that the teachers went over the procedures multiple times; Maria talked especially about the “funny Finnish custom” of being on time, and that they had

underlined many times that the lectures start exactly when they are said to start and that students are expected to be there at that time. However, after the explanation, the Finnish academic quarter proved to be a difficult concept:

and then this thing about beginning a quarter past was for them kind of, that it clashes completely with the notion of starting on time so that you always begin, on time, but then it actually starts a quarter past, it was very difficult (laughs) to understand and we went over it MANY times

The academic customs of Finland seemed to be the greatest source of confusion, culture-wise, with the above-mentioned academic quarter, the concept of the learning diary, and the low level of hierarchy. Maria explained that in Finland it is completely fine and natural for a teacher to volunteer for a demonstration and in general be a part of the exercises, whereas in other places teachers, lecturers and other academics are deemed to be “respected bystanders” that do not participate in activities but rather evaluate them. However, Maria said that although the low level of hierarchy seemed somewhat challenging to some students, it was not a great challenge. Maria suggested that this is because there were no big groups of people from more hierarchical cultures, saying

if there were a group of chinese students and we'd try to break the hierarchical structures between them by saying that you will now demonstrate this on these people, they might be completely like what no we can't work like this, but when one chinese student comes here and is on a course like this it's a tough spot for them, they don't have any like, social support, and they just, do like they're told (laughs), and tell people back home everything all horrified (laughs) how we operate here for example like we don't ask questions we just put them to work

She also discussed the difficulties with some workshops and presentations, explaining how

some asians might think that you need to memorize a speech that you just recite --- which is a good start in itself but then if one has a bit better language skills one should, with the one you're giving the presentation to discuss that which parts they are familiar with so you don't need to explain them and so on, so that's, really difficult, and

they won't get there immediately

She also talked of the multicultural aspect of these discussions, saying that

these are the situations where asians just roll their eyes and aren't able to say anything, and the europeans discuss and Americans are like WHAAAT like they're (laughs) completely in their own, in another universe

Maria said that they often discussed how things are done in different countries, and that the differences are "quite interesting" and "telling of the society's kind of, how a society views its citizens, like in Finland citizens are very strongly seen as employees, potential employees".

For Thomas, the multicultural nature of the group was not a challenge partly due to having only a short day to spend with the students. However, there were definitely discussions. As Thomas explained,

for example a presentation might have been, from this kind of point of view with western values, that is familiar to us, and then someone, who's come from a bit further might make a statement that, that yeah sure but, but if I look at this from my country's and my culture's perspective then it looks a bit different and, and so, there were a couple of episodes like this

Again, he mentioned especially the Chinese, saying that in one group two Chinese students talked openly about the corruption with certain services in China. Thomas explained that corruption in that scale feels very foreign to someone in Finland, and that he was happy that this conversation took place. For him, the multicultural aspect is always very eye-opening as students from all over the world come together and discuss such points of view that one might not think of in Finland. He said that the discussions and different points of view are always very enriching for him, and he hoped that they are so for the students as well.

Lena noted that there are always some students who talk more and some who talk less, but that in general the students were all "very much multiculturally minded". She saw the multicultural aspect as a positive thing like it had been in previous years, where

students get the opportunity to discuss and share their views from their culture's and country's point of view. She also noted that people in a multicultural group are often more open-minded than if they were all from the same country and/or the same learning institution.

When asked whether the multicultural aspect of the student group caused any challenges, Sam responded

no quite the opposite (laughs) it's only a good thing, because there, there is different kinds of points of view and it, is a good source for discussions like what's, in your country and in your, culture what's the custom and it's, it's a great thing so no, no problems

According to Sam, it is a good addition and a benefit for students to hear about the experiences in different cultures and different countries regarding the subject matter. In fact, all the teachers saw multiculturalism as a positive aspect.

Maria said that during the summer course, she saw a change in the students' confidence in speaking in English. According to her,

during the course I noticed that even the asians started to get excited (laughs) and talk even more --- it has an influence when students notice that everyone here speaks the same kind of bad english that, some just, a bit faster than others and that it's not kind of, the point is not to showcase your language skills but to learn about this topic

Lena, too, noticed especially the increase in students' confidence when it came to talking in English and them getting more relaxed as the time went by. She did notice a change in the students' cultural or communication skills, but she noted that it had maybe more to do with them starting to use the abilities they already had than learning new skills. She reasoned that since the students got well on as a group, they must have had the necessary skills for interaction in such a multicultural situation. As she said,

you could see that maybe in the beginning, it was very much like you know being, quite formal, also in in relating yourself to others, so you tend to stick a bit to what you, knew first what you remember first and, and then slowly getting into this, you know, very much, intercultural, uhh, taking out your intercultural abilities but, as I said

it's something they had already for sure, so.

She also attributed much of the successful intercultural communication to the Canadian students she had who themselves were very multicultural in their backgrounds, saying that

I don't know if it's just my imagination but I think that like Canada has this multicultural society I think that these Canadian people were really active and really, outspoken so that helped. very much.

Neither Thomas nor Sam noticed any changes in the students' language or intercultural skills, although as Thomas noted, he spent such a short time with the students that there was no time for any changes to happen. Sam, on the other hand, noted that his students already had such a high level of English and were already so well-travelled and experienced that there was not much room for improvement. He also noted that people who apply to the summer course are very motivated because it is a big decision and quite costly to come to the summer school. According to him, most students even expect the summer school to be multicultural.

None of the challenges the teachers had anticipated in the first lecture were challenges to any great degree during the summer course. Maria had expected some tourist students or illnesses, but this did not happen. Thomas had anticipated that strong accents, especially Chinese or African ones, might be a source of challenges, but that did not happen during this summer school. The Chinese students were mostly quiet during general discussions, speaking mainly during presentations. However, Thomas did note that "one needed to concentrate a fair amount, like more, being more like, alert" when it came to understanding the Chinese students. Apart from this, the experience was very similar to previous years, with regard to both the challenges and the rewarding opportunities.

Before the summer school, Sam had anticipated that there might be some challenges regarding the hierarchical expectations especially from the Chinese students, some visa problems, and some illnesses. This time there were no challenges from the first two. There were some illnesses, but nothing major enough that he would have needed to assign extra reading or tasks. Lena had anticipated that people might be somewhat

uptight at the beginning of the course, but this was not a challenge this time, since “it went very much quicker of this, this aspect like, you know. over, it it just, was not, not really there no”. She had also anticipated the possibility of students coming to the course more as a tourist, but this was not a challenge either; she noted that the students were into social life and the social events, but that they worked equally hard on the course. Before the summer school, she had also discussed the possible differing expectations of students when it comes to teaching styles, saying that some students might want her to be more strict in her teaching than she usually is, whereas others might want more academic freedom; this time students mostly wanted more workshops and more unstructured teaching.

None of the teachers reported any unexpected challenges having to do with ELF or English-medium instruction. However, Maria mentioned the fact that the content knowledge of some students was lower than expected and they had to work hard to catch up. Lena noted that this year, the students wanted more from the course and the summer school and were more demanding due to having paid so much to attend the course. As Lena said,

they really wanted a lot, so it was more about hey I paid, now you, train me, so it was very much sometimes not. I mean this is very brutal, but but sometimes it was also nearly so brutal like you've had like okay yeah. calm down (laughs)

Related to this, the students were very aware of the quality of teaching, and one student wrote to Lena, complaining about the PhD students that were also teaching on the course. Lena explained that PhD students, despite being made to teach, receive no education on how to teach. Although Lena has had PhD students teach on the course before, this was the first time she received very clear negative feedback on it. According to Lena, she was able to “adapt to the student needs“ after the feedback and prepared a “super well organised workshop by by me, with a lot of interaction and a lot of work by students” to which the student who had sent in the feedback reacted positively.

Above, I have presented the data collected for this study in detail. In the next chapter, I look at the presented data more selectively, raising some points emergent in the data that I deem interesting regarding ELF and English-medium instruction. Additionally, I view

the data more closely in terms of the research questions stated in chapter 3.

5 Discussion

In this chapter, I discuss the data presented in chapter 4, compare the data from the new teachers to that from the returning teachers, and raise some points I deem worth discussing in terms of the use of English language as a medium of instruction and as a lingua franca. I approach the discussion via the themes arising from the data, namely, the teachers' attitudes towards the use of English, nationality, and native speakers of English. I then compare the expected and actualised challenges as well as the data from new and returning teachers.

5.1 Teachers' attitudes towards the use of English

Most of the interviewees were aware of the possible effect of the students' level of English on their course, especially in the form of causing discussions to be simpler in terms of language. However, this should not necessarily be seen as a challenge or a negative aspect, as ELF tends to be simplified due to its goal being in successful communication rather than in linguistic eloquence. Simon, Anna, Maria and Lena all emphasised the pragmatic use of the English language for getting the point across, as well as trying to encourage students to use English by showing that they are able to work in academic circles with their level of English. Maria mentioned the fact that for some, portraying the accent of one's country is a matter of identity and pride. This is in line with Jenkins' study discussed above, where some teachers felt that speaking English with their non-native accent portrayed their identity as an ELF speaker. Additionally, Thomas mentioned the students asking their fellow students for help with translating words that they did not remember in English, a phenomenon which Söderlundh (2012) observed as well.

Sam noted that the language skills of other teachers on his course sometimes frustrated him. In his opinion, a big part of an engaging and interesting lecture is fluency, in addition to extensive content knowledge. Daniel, on the other hand, suggested that some students found it difficult to follow certain teachers due to their accents. Both of these comments reflect those found in research into English-medium instruction discussed above, especially when it comes to the adequacy of teachers' language skills.

Interestingly, the source of Sam's frustration seems to be simply the fluency of the other teachers' English, not the understandability of it (although fluency can of course affect understanding as well); he did not suggest any lacks in the students' content knowledge after the teaching, and mentioned only hesitation or stammering as an example of the other teachers' lack of fluency in English. The fact that there were no major misunderstandings content-wise might be partly why Sam was less negative in his opinions than the above-discussed researchers of English-medium instruction seem to be.

Neither new nor returning teachers expected their own level of English to become a challenge, which is similar to what Bolton and Kuteeva observed (2012). Interestingly however, when discussing the English skills of either themselves or other teachers on their courses, Simon, Maria, and Sam all talked of the ideal being some type of "perfect English" (Simon even suggested that he apologises to his students for his mistakes in English), whereas when discussing what he expected from the students, Simon said that they should have a "basic understanding" of the language and that they "don't have to be perfect". Simon also discussed trying to learn from his interactions in English but, interestingly, listed only native English speakers as a possible source for learning English. This all seems to point to the teachers' belief that the native English varieties are still somehow better or more correct than other varieties, which is in line with the discussion on ELF above. These comments bear stark resemblance to those of Jenkins (2009) and Mauranen (2012) discussed above with regards to ELF research, and especially to what Mauranen writes of some speakers finding their own English sufficient, only to criticise it a moment later.

5.2 Nationality

It is worthwhile to note that although I did not ask about specific nationalities with regards to English use, all interviewees mentioned certain nationalities explicitly. By far the most discussed group of students that was expected to and did have challenges with their English and intercultural communication was the Chinese, and more broadly speaking Asian students – without exception, the Asian students were brought up by all interviewees during one or both interview rounds. This was not surprising, although it did not feature in any of the previous research discussed; after all, the English skills of Asians are often brought up in general conversation when fluency or accents are

discussed.

Interviewees commented on both the level of English and the pronunciation of Asian students. Before the summer school, Sam, Thomas and Lena mentioned that the language skills of Asian students had been cause for challenges at least in previous years. After the summer school, Laura, Anna and Simon mentioned Chinese or other Asian students as having a challenging level of English, while all returning teachers mentioned having at least some Asian students with a somewhat lower level of English than that of the class on average. Both Laura and Maria suggested that the Asian students were shy about speaking in English, although they were usually able to make themselves understood when they did speak. Sam mentioned a Chinese student as needing help sometimes with finding the right words. In contrast, Anna, Simon, Thomas and Lena all mentioned struggling mainly with the pronunciation of some Asian (Chinese and Japanese) students, whereas the students' language skills were rather good otherwise.

The Asian students were mentioned the most also with regards to possible challenges stemming from the multicultural nature of the summer school, especially when it comes to their participation in discussions and their attitudes towards studying, teachers, and authority. Before the summer school, Laura wondered about the Chinese students' willingness to participate in discussions. Maria and Sam explicitly mentioned Chinese students' expectations of teaching, while Thomas discussed students from authoritative cultures in general. Lena suggested that especially Asian students tend to group together. After the summer school, all new teachers and one returning teacher mentioned Asian students again regarding their expectations of academic culture. Additionally, both Simon and Thomas mentioned that the Chinese students tended to stick together and not interact as much as the others.

Although Chinese students were mentioned the most, they were not the only nationality that was discussed. Before the summer school, Thomas suggested that apart from the accent of the Chinese, he might personally have difficulties with African accents. Lena mentioned students from France, Italy and Spain as possibly having difficulties with English. After the summer school, Maria discussed the American students' confusion and the European students' active participation in class discussions. Anna mentioned

having had a Mexican student who had a low level of English, and a Greek student who, according to Anna, did not use their words sparingly enough in a way that Anna deemed native English speakers to do. On Simon's course, the Turkish students formed their own sub-group within the student group, and the pronunciation of some of them was challenging; the Turkish were also mentioned in the article by Doiz, Lasagabaster, and Sierra (2011). There were other students with strong accents as well, but Simon felt that he was able to understand them better and correct them because he spoke the same languages as they did and was able to see where the students' mistakes came from. Lena, too, suggested that students who had knowledge of some languages as she did were easier for her to understand. These two accounts are in line with what Doiz, Lasagabaster, and Sierra (2011) say about non-native teachers making use of their additional languages.

5.3 Native speakers of English

During the first interview, Lena brought up native speakers of English without prompting, suggesting that in her experience it is the Anglo-American students who might have trouble understanding other (non-native) students rather than the other way round. In the second interview, I asked about the native English speakers specifically when discussing the group dynamics on the course.

None of the interviewees had a majority of native English speakers on their course, making them legitimate ELF situations according to Mauranen's (2012) definition. Thomas noted that the native speakers in his class simplified their speech to suit the class, but he was not sure whether this was due to conscious effort or not. Similarly, Lena suggested that the native speakers sometimes modified their speech by explaining themselves more than simply stating their point. Despite this, Lena found it more difficult to understand some of the native speakers than non-native speakers, mainly due to their strong accent. For Simon, the difficulty lay in the speed of the native speakers' speech. He also suggested that there were times when a native speaker was unable to make themselves understood. Interestingly, Simon had differing explanations for why some students were not able to properly explain themselves even after being asked to depending on the students' English skills; he suggested that the native speaker's inability to explain themselves was due to their lack of contact with non-native speakers of English, whereas the non-native speakers' inability he explained with their major

being in engineering. In other words, the native speaker did not (in Simon's opinion) have the necessary communication skills or experience in order to explain themselves, whereas the non-native speakers had been taught to think a certain way within a field that favours the existence of right and wrong answers to straightforward questions. Whether or not this distinction between native and non-native speakers was due to this particular context or not is unclear. If not, it is an interesting assumption on Simon's part, and similar to Maria's suggestion that native English speakers, especially if they are monolingual, might not realise when they are not understood by others. Further research would be needed in order to better understand the possible differences between native and non-native English speakers' intercultural communication skills on the one hand and teachers' attitudes towards them on the other.

5.4 Comparison: before the summer school versus after the summer school

As stated in my research questions for this study, I was interested in seeing whether the challenges anticipated by the teachers related to English as a lingua franca and English-medium instruction differ from the challenges that the teachers actually faced. I discuss the data from this point of view below. First, I look at the data gathered from the new teachers, and then I turn to the data from the returning teachers.

5.4.1 New teachers

Before the summer school, Anna, Daniel and Laura had suggested that the students' English would not be a challenge, although it might affect the course. Meanwhile, Simon anticipated that the students' English might cause challenges. After the summer course, all new teachers noted having faced challenges that had to do with the students' English skills. None of the new teachers expected their own English to be challenging, and after the summer school they maintained their position. Additionally, none of the new teachers expected challenges stemming from the English skills of other teachers on their courses, but after the summer school Daniel noted some challenges with teachers' various (non-native) accents. None of the new teachers had anticipated challenges resulting from native speakers' language skills, but after the summer school Simon noted that some native speakers were difficult to understand at times because they spoke too fast.

Before the summer school, Laura had suggested that she might have difficulties getting

especially the Chinese students to participate, but according to her this did not come true to the extent of being a challenge. Daniel and Anna had both suggested that the multicultural background of the student body could be a source for challenges, and this came true to some extent: Daniel had difficulty positioning himself in relation to the students as they had varying ideas of how distant and authoritative a teacher should be, while Anna mentioned the differing expectations of East Asian and European students when it comes to studying.

5.4.2 Returning teachers

Before the summer school, Maria and Lena had suggested that the students' level of English might be challenging, whereas Thomas and Sam had not thought so. After the summer school, all were of the opinion that the students' English did not cause any particular challenges. None of the returning teachers expected their own English skills to be a challenge, and after the summer school none of them reported any challenges stemming from their own level of English. Sam had been the only teacher to anticipate any challenges from the other teachers' English skills, and after the summer school, he said that some of the teachers did indeed have a lower level of English than he had hoped. Lena had been the only teacher to suggest that the native English speakers' communication skills might be a source of challenges, and this proved to be true to some extent. Maria, too, faced challenges having to do with native speakers, especially the tempo at which they were speaking.

Before the summer school, Maria and Sam had suggested that the Chinese students' expectations of teaching and studying might be a challenge; according to both, this was not the case, although Maria did state the Asian students' hierarchical expectations as having had an effect to some degree. Thomas had suggested that there might be some cultural clashes and that students from authoritative cultures might be challenging, but apart from the Chinese students keeping to themselves more than others, these were not a challenge. Lena had anticipated students keeping their distance due to the multicultural nature of the summer school, but this did not happen. None of the returning teachers faced any surprising challenges having to do with ELF of English-medium instruction.

5.5 Comparison: new teachers versus returning teachers

The third research question of this current study concerns the possible differences between the challenges anticipated and faced by the new teachers related to English as a lingua franca and English-medium instruction and the ones anticipated and faced by the returning teachers. Below I compare the results from this point of view. First, I look at the anticipated challenges, and then I focus on the challenges that the teachers reported as having actually faced.

5.5.1 Before the summer school

Three of the new teachers did not expect the students' level of English to be a challenge, whereas one suggested that there might be some challenges. The returning lecturers were more divided on this; Sam and Thomas did not expect challenges, or for the level of English to even affect the course while Maria and Lena suggested that there might be challenges. Both new and returning teachers had similar expectations regarding their own English: neither group expected their own level of English to become a challenge. Only one returning teacher, Sam, expected the English language skills of the other teachers on his course to be a possible source of challenges, whereas none of the new teachers expected this. None of the new teachers expected the native English-speakers' language and communication skills to be a source of challenges, whereas one returning teacher, Lena, expressed the possibility of challenges related to the native English speakers.

Both new and returning teachers expected to face challenges that have to do with cultural differences and students' expectations, especially when it comes to students from what the teachers called more authoritative or hierarchical cultures. However, the new and returning teachers differed somewhat when it comes to their focus regarding the cultural differences; the new teachers seemed to be primarily concerned by the international aspect of the student body in general, while the returning teachers discussed especially the discrepancy between their teaching methods and students' expectations of what teaching should be like.

5.5.2 After the summer school

After the summer school, all new teachers suggested that they faced challenges stemming from the students' English skills, whereas all returning teachers thought that

the students' level of English was not a challenge on their course. As all teachers had expected, none of the new or returning teachers thought that their own English was a challenge. One new teacher and one returning teacher commented on the other teachers' English language skills of having been somewhat challenging. Regarding native speakers, one new teacher and two returning teachers mentioned having challenging situations due to them, especially with regards to the speed of their speech. All teachers, both new and returning, viewed the multicultural nature of the summer school as positive, especially due to being able to have discussions on how the different fields and topics are positioned in the cultures and countries of students. At the same time, however, two new teachers noted having faced some challenges due to the multicultural aspect of the summer school. All returning teachers, on the other hand, explicitly stated that the multicultural nature of the summer school was not a challenge.

Half of the new teachers and half of the returning teachers noticed changes in the students' language skills, especially with regards to their confidence in speaking. Regarding changes in intercultural communication skills, only one new teacher, Laura, and one returning teacher, Lena, noticed any changes; both suggested that the students opened up as the course progressed. Additionally, Lena noted that rather than learning new skills regarding intercultural communication, the students began using skills that they already possessed.

6 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to research what kinds of challenges teachers of Helsinki Summer School face taking into consideration the multicultural, English-medium ELF context of the short-term study abroad with which Helsinki Summer School provides students. The aim was also to investigate whether the challenges faced by teachers new to the Helsinki Summer School concept and teaching context differ from the challenges faced by teachers who have taught at Helsinki Summer School in previous years. In order to address these aims, I formulated my research questions as follows:

1. What kinds of challenges related to English as a lingua franca and English-medium instruction do the teachers at Helsinki Summer School expect to face

during teaching?

2. What kinds of challenges related to English as a lingua franca and English-medium instruction do teachers actually face?
3. Do new teachers anticipate and face different challenges related to English as a lingua franca and English-medium instruction than returning teachers? If so, how do they differ?

All in all, both new and returning teachers discussed similar potential and actual challenges, and no clear differences could be seen between challenges anticipated and faced by new teachers and those anticipated and faced by returning teachers. Although it is difficult to draw any clear conclusions as to the differences between new and returning teachers' expected and actualised challenges, it could be said that, on average, the new teachers did not expect the language skills of the students to be a challenge, but they ended up causing challenges, whereas the returning teachers reported not having faced challenges regarding the students' level of English. Similarly, challenges stemming from the cultural diversity were present more strongly on the courses of the new teachers. Neither new nor returning teachers anticipated or faced challenges having to do with their own English, whereas the level of English of other teachers was more challenging than anticipated for both the new and returning teachers. In a way, it could be said that the returning teachers anticipated more but faced fewer challenges than the new teachers. The fact that the returning teachers reported having faced fewer challenges could be due to their previous experiences with the summer school, where what I would have classified as a challenge was for them a normal occurrence on the course. It is also possible that they have a higher threshold for what they consider a challenge than the new teachers (or me for that matter). In any case, what one considers a challenge or challenging is individually determined, maybe more so than I originally anticipated.

It needs to be noted that my internship at Helsinki Summer School and the fact that I was familiar with some of the interviewees, as well as the Helsinki Summer School staff may have affected the interviewees' responses. I took steps to ensure that they would not feel uncomfortable talking to me about the challenges they faced by explicitly telling them that I would not share their participation or their responses with the Helsinki Summer School staff in any more detail than is described in my thesis. Additionally, I tried to make sure not to lead the interviewees during the interviews but

rather let them discuss what came to their mind, only asking more specific questions if necessary. It might also have been worthwhile for me to observe the teachers' courses or survey the students' thoughts with a questionnaire in addition to interviews in order not to rely solely on the teachers' point of view. Furthermore, I believe that there were some points in the data for which I could have asked further clarification had I realised to do so at the interview or soon after. This is a lesson I will carry with me and hopefully utilise in the future.

Nevertheless, I believe that this particular study has been a useful endeavour as it offers a glimpse into the unique combination of ELF, English-medium instruction and short-term study abroad in the context of Finland. Furthermore, the current study corroborates many points made in previous research regarding the use of English in an international academic setting. Research into Helsinki Summer School is relevant especially now, when the University of Helsinki is taking the step towards English-medium Master's programmes with student fees. When students pay for their education, they will be more critical of the education they receive (which was clear also from some of the data in this research). As Helsinki Summer School functions as both a marketing tool for the university and a testing field for innovative teaching methods, including the use of English for teaching purposes, it is worthwhile to develop it and find out what works and what does not. Additionally, research into Helsinki Summer School can guide the planning and development of the English-medium Master's degrees at the university. Since the summer school is intensive and short, it is relatively fast to get results from it.

One suggestion for further research would be to interview the summer school students as well in order to see how well the teachers were able to read the situations, and if their own English skills were truly not a cause for challenges. Another suggestion would be to look more closely into the Asian students taking part in the summer school, since they featured so prominently in the interviewees' responses. A third possibility which I mentioned earlier would be to look into the differences between the communicative competence of native and non-native English speakers in an academic ELF situation, as well as the academic staff's expectations regarding the students in terms of their English language background.

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Appendix

Appendix 1. List of questions and topics covered in the interviews.

Interview 1

- Background
 - Can you tell me a bit about your background?
 - Tell me about your experience as a teacher
- Helsinki Summer School
 - How many times have you taught at Helsinki Summer School? What is your role on the course this summer?
 - Why did you choose to be part of Helsinki Summer School this year?
 - What have you had to take into account in planning the course (regarding the international, multicultural situation of the course)?
- Own use of English
 - How do you feel about teaching in English?
- Challenges
 - What kinds of challenges, if any, do you expect to face during Helsinki Summer School? (if interviewee needs prompting, specifying the short duration and internationality of the summer school, as well as the fact that students do not need to provide language certificates)
 - (if this has not come up in the interviewee's response) How do you plan on dealing with these challenges if they come up?
- Possibilities
 - Do you think Helsinki Summer School offers any opportunities or possibilities, either to you or to the students?
- Additional
 - Do you have anything you would like to add or comment?

Interview 2

- This year's Helsinki Summer School
 - Tell me about this year's Helsinki Summer School; how many students were there and roughly from which countries?
- Students' language skills
 - How were the students' language skills? Were there any challenges?
 - Was there any grouping between native and non-native students?
 - How did the native English speakers react to the non-native English speakers?
 - Did the native English speakers simplify their speech in the presence of non-native English speakers?
 - How was the group dynamic in general?
 - Did you notice any changes in the students' language skills or English proficiency during Helsinki Summer School?
- Multicultural and multilingual student group
 - Did you face any challenges due to the multicultural and multilingual nature of the student group?
 - Did you notice any changes in the students' communication skills or intercultural competence during Helsinki Summer School?
 - Were there any situations where the multicultural/multilingual nature of the students and/or teachers was especially enriching to the course?
- English-medium instruction
 - Were there any challenges (either from teachers or from students) regarding the fact that the language of instruction was English?
 - Were there any misunderstandings? Did teaching in English affect the students' understanding of concepts or the subject?
- Other challenges
 - Did you face any other challenges during Helsinki Summer School? How did you deal with them?
 - Questions specific to the interviewee depending on what kinds of challenges they anticipated during the first interview
 - If the interviewee was a returning teacher: Do these challenges differ from challenges you have faced before in Helsinki Summer School?
- Other changes
 - Did you notice any other changes in the students during the three weeks?
- Helsinki Summer School
 - What kind of information and support would you have needed or wanted from the Helsinki Summer School staff in order to better deal with the challenges?
- Additional
 - Is there anything you would like to add or comment?

Appendix 2. Transcription conventions.

- = speaker did not finish the word before changing to another one
- , = short pause

... = longer pause with intonation indicating that the sentence is not finished

. = longer pause with intonation indicating the end of the sentence

CAPITAL LETTERS = word said with a stress, emphasis or intensity

italicised letters = word said in English even though the interview was held in Finnish

() = comments on non-verbal, paralinguistic communication, mainly laughter

[] = the part in the recording was not clear enough for transcribing

--- = part of the transcription is omitted