

The actualisation of the learning objective of information literacy in university
studies
The case of English Philology at the University of Oulu

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1 Introduction

The importance of information literacy is forever increasing in this world, where the quantity of information keeps on expanding and the quality of it is often uncertain. This creates a challenge for societies around the globe. More information does not mean more informed people, unless they have the skills to use the information effectively, as remarked by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL, 2000). As the amount of information people come across in their everyday lives keeps on increasing and an ever-growing part of this information is unedited and unfiltered, it becomes increasingly important to be able to determine what information is valid, reliable, and authentic and what is not. As the American Library Association (ALA, 1989) formulates it, information literacy means the ability to identify, locate, evaluate, and use information effectively. These abilities are crucial in all levels of education, but also in workplaces and personal lives. Therefore, developing lifelong learners is a fundamental goal of higher education institutions all over the world. The Finnish Universities Act (558/2009) states in its Section 2, that “in carrying out their mission, the universities must promote lifelong learning”. The aim of the institutions is to provide the basis for growth and learning that continues throughout the students’ life. As the ACRL (2000) formulates it, “information literacy is a key component of, and contributor to, lifelong learning” (p. 4).

It can be a real struggle for students to find relevant information, to be able to evaluate it, and to understand how to use it properly. From the students’ perspective, information literacy, information retrieval, and understanding the outlines of their own field of research are, in a way, all intertwined as one confusing tangle. Based on my discussions with university students and teachers, students often seem to face difficulties with assignments that require them to find information on their own, such as writing literature reviews on earlier research. One reason for these difficulties may be that the students do not either perceive or fully understand the correlation between earlier research and their own, or, in other words, fail to see the connection between their own research and other scholarly research. As Hirsjärvi and Hurme (2008) point out, students and novice scholars may also shun theory, because they see it as something distant and difficult. What they have not yet come to understand is that the theories are a vital background, against which they can lean their own research and build their theories. When doing their own research, or writing papers, students may often assume they have chosen a subject that

has not been studied before, only because they have not found any earlier research on the subject. Such scenario is truly quite rare, and the reason for the lack of earlier research is usually not that the research does not exist, but more often it is due to the students' inability to find and locate the research (Holman, 2011).

If it is possible to shed light on how the students perceive their own competency in searching, finding, and evaluating information, it could be easier to offer them the guidance they require to improve these abilities. Helping the students understand what the tasks and assignments aim for, and how they themselves can and will benefit from carrying out the assignments, will also do its part in paving the road to their success. Understanding the questions what, why, and how in one's own research, and comprehending why the answers are important, helps to find not only the answers to these questions, but also one's location in the field of research and in relation to others' work.

Information literacy is considered highly important at all stages of education (Hepworth, 1999). It is a practice that is usually embedded in the curriculum, intertwined with other studies and subjects, not a subject of its own. Therefore, the objective of acquiring a certain—or any—competence level may be completely unrecognized by the students themselves. The new curriculum for basic education (FNBE, 2016a; FNBE, 2016b) speaks of transversal competences that are developed in all subjects, among them thinking, learning-to-learn, and multiliteracy. The importance of information literacy, or multiliteracy, has been highlighted more than ever. Similarly, the curriculum for general upper secondary education highlights these competences (FNBE, 2015). When it comes to higher education, the guidelines are not as strict as in the basic or upper secondary education, and the government does not determine the curricula. The new Universities Act (558/2009) has moved the authority even further from the government to the universities. In the current Act, the mission of the universities is to promote free research and academic and artistic education, to provide higher education based on research, and to educate students to serve their country and humanity. According to the Act, "The universities must promote lifelong learning, interact with surrounding society and promote the impact of research findings and artistic activities on society" (The Finnish Universities Act, 558/2009, Section 2). This statement is rather vague and open, leaving practically all decision making to the hands of the board of each university.

In this Master's Thesis, concentration is targeted to the University of Oulu and to the subject of English Philology. The study is limited to one discipline in order to achieve more profound knowledge of a narrower student population, instead of shallow knowledge of a wider student population. The aim is to find out how the learning objective of information literacy is visible in the subject of English Philology. In what way is the learning objective visible in the curriculum, how the students perceive information literacy, and whether they feel that they are getting adequate support in acquiring the competence level sufficient to be successful in their studies, as well as in life after graduation. This thesis will attempt to answer the following questions:

1. How is the objective of information literacy made visible in the curriculum of English Philology at the University of Oulu?
2. What perceptions do the students of English Philology at the University of Oulu have about the objective of information literacy, and about the guidance they receive to achieve the objective?

This study is a case study and the approach to the subject is qualitative.

This thesis is organised as follows: Chapter two concentrates on the concept of information literacy including the ALA's and ACRL's (2015) Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education. It also discusses the general learning objectives of higher education in Finland as well as some nationally and internationally significant information literacy assessment projects. Chapter three discusses information literacy in the context of university education in Finland and chapter four introduces the materials and the research methods used, along with the case context of the study. In chapter five the findings are presented. The final chapter concludes the thesis by discussing the results and the impact of the study, and by considering the possible future research it may invoke.

2 Information literacy

This chapter introduces the concept of information literacy along with the ALA's and ACRL's (2000, 2015) Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education and the Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education. At the end of the chapter, some internationally interesting information literacy evaluation projects and studies concentrating on students are presented.

Information literacy is, in its most simple definition, searching, evaluating, incorporating, and understanding information (ACRL, 2000). It has, however, been argued that the concept of information literacy suffers from combining two problematic concepts, information and literacy (Cheuk, 2000). There is not a single precise definition for either, but instead the definitions reflect the context where they are being explored. One could write a book—and many have been written—about the definition of information. Lloyd (2010) defines *information* as the basis for human interaction that needs to be situated in a context for it to have a meaning and to be used in a meaningful way. Information is not, therefore, static or objectively available, but a product of a negotiated construction that is interacted in a certain context (Lloyd, 2010). For the purposes of this study, this definition of information is sufficient in placing the concept into a relevant context.

Traditionally, the concept of *literacy* has referred to the tangible skills of reading and writing. Nowadays, however, the concept affiliates with multiple different forms of literacies, some of which are partly overlapping. Lankshear and Knobel (2003) separate the concept of literacy from the concepts of reading and writing. Whereas reading and writing are traditionally psychological terms, they see literacy as a sociological concept. Bawden (2001) has discussed the multiple layers of the definition of literacy. The simplest, informal definition is the one Lankshear and Knobel (2003) refer to as the traditional schools' stance, the ability to use language in its written form, the ability to read and write (Bawden, 2001). This stance is also referred to as a cognitive perspective to literacy (Lloyd, 2010). There is, however, also a more complicated definition that implies not only these basic abilities, but also something beyond them: the ability to read with meaning and the ability to understand (Bawden, 2001). More recently, the latter definition has been connected to the concept of information and to being able to make effective use of it (Bawden, 2001). As Kupiainen and Sintonen (2009) have pointed out, the information societies of the 21st century

demand for new forms of literacy that seem to partly diverge from one another. Regardless, literacy is still strongly tied to practices, whether it be reading a newspaper or playing Super Mario (Kupiainen & Sintonen, 2009).

There are a variety of terms that refer to different kinds of literacies, varying from computer or health literacy to transliteracy and metaliteracies (see e.g. Stordy, 2015). Concepts such as new literacies, multiliteracies, digital literacy, media literacy, information literacy, or 21st century literacies, are but a few of the literacy concepts that are often used synonymously or partly overlapping, but also different groups of scholars use these same concepts for different purposes and with different demarcations. As Stordy (2015), formulates it, “anyone looking for consistency in the application or use of these literacy types will be disappointed” (p. 458). In the new Finnish curriculum for basic education (FNBE, 2016a) the currently used concept is multiliteracy. In higher education, the established concept has been information literacy, although other literacy concepts are sometimes also used (Sinikara, 2007; Nevgi & Sormunen, 2007). In the working life, the attention is often placed in more specific skills and skillsets, although literacy concept is not alien in that environment either. The ALA’s (1989) and the ACRL’s (2000, 2015) diligent work is one factor in the establishment of the concept in the context of higher education. The Finnish higher education institutes and libraries have in recent years leaned on the ALA’s and ACRL’s work, and used their set of standards in planning their curricula. For this thesis, the concept of information literacy seemed the most natural choice due to its distribution in the field of research.

Bawden (2001) further introduces the concept of skill-based literacies, meaning literacies dealing with information of increasing complexity, such as library literacy, media literacy, and computer literacy. These skill-based literacies have emerged to meet the demands of a more complex information environment, and although they can be seen as separate skills that are crucial or even precursory to information literacy, they also lead to a consideration of a form of literacy that is much wider than a set of one or more skills, that is, information literacy (Bawden, 2001). In addition to the aforementioned group of more adjacent literacies, also other more recent literacy concepts have arisen. Multimodal literacy focuses on discourse from the viewpoint of different semiotic sources and different modalities and it can be seen either as focusing on media literacy with its various modes, or in the multisemiotic experience of communication (see Kress, 2003, O’Halloran & Lim, 2011). Not all literacies are new, and some stem from other fields of research.

Critical literacy originates from Marxist critical pedagogy and Freire's (1970/2014) social justice pedagogy and has since evolved to refer to use of communication technologies to analyse, criticise, and transform the norms, rules, and practices of social aspects of our everyday lives (Luke, 2012, Lankshear & McLaren, 1993). For a more detailed coverage of the taxonomy of literacies, see Stordy (2015).

Information literacy can be described as a multi-faceted concept that during its history has had many different definitions. During the 1980's and 1990's, scholars compiled diverse lists of necessary skills and attributes for information literacy (Bawden, 2001). These lists vary in length and content, but all of them share the notion of information literacy as being more than a simple skill, but rather a set of skills, abilities, and understanding. As Lloyd (2010) describes it, information literacy is "a constellation of activities and skills" (p. 24). It is, however, beyond the scope of this study to explore the variety of different definitions of the concept. For the purposes of this study the concept of information literacy defined by the ALA and ACRL is sufficient as well as the most relevant: information literacy is a set of abilities requiring individuals to "recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information" (ALA, 1989). Information literacy is not a simple set of skills that one can acquire and thereby become competent in.

Lloyd (2010) questions strongly whether being information literate in one context automatically means being information literate in other contexts. Instead of a set of skills, Lloyd (2010) refers to information literacy as a socio-cultural practice that is not confined to any formal learning environment, but that is a part of human activity in every landscape or context. Information literacy is "embedded and interwoven through the practices that constitute a social field" (Lloyd, 2010, p. 2) and thereby becoming information literate requires "a person to engage with information within a landscape and to understand the paths, nodes and edges that shape that landscape" (Lloyd, 2010, p. 2). Tuominen, Savolainen, and Talja (2005) describe information literacy as a sociotechnical practice, that "evolves in the course of realizing specific work-related tasks and goals and that is learned in relation to specific knowledge contents and situational contexts" (p. 331). The approach in this study follows these lines of thought, seeing information literacy as a practice that connects to a particular context, instead of a generic set of skills separate from their surroundings. According to van Dijk and van Deursen (2009), information

literacy consists of 1) operational skills, the ability to use digital media; 2) formal skills, the control of the structures of digital media, such as menus and hyperlinks; 3) information skills, the abilities connected to searching, selecting, and evaluating information; and 4) strategic skills, making use and taking advantage of information for personal or occupational purposes. This view links information literacy as a part of the information environment of the Internet.

As previously stated in the introduction, information literacy is the core for lifelong learning and mutual to all disciplines, learning environments, and levels of education. According to ACRL (2000), an information literate individual is able to:

- determine the extent of information needed
- access the needed information effectively and efficiently
- evaluate information and its sources critically
- incorporate selected information into one's knowledge base
- use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally

(ACRL, 2000, p.2–3).

2.1 The Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education

The ALA and the ACRL have compiled a list of standards called Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education (ACRL, 2000, see Appendix 1). Each standard includes performance indicators that characterise the standard in practice. These five standards have served as the basis for multiple information literacy initiatives as well as for evaluation criteria of the level of information literacy competence. Even though the standards have been widely used across the world as the basis for information literacy curricula, they have also faced critique. They have been condemned as too general and vague, as simply listing skills that can be learned and used separately in different environments, instead of being integrated into a particular field of study (Tuominen et. al., 2005; Lipponen & Lonka, 2007).

According to critics, the standards do not actually stimulate critical thinking, but instead break information and information searches into separate objects (Gullikson, 2006; Tuominen, et al.,

2005). If information literacy is considered as a practice instead of a set of skills, it could be argued that the standards are not successful in bringing forth this objective. The standards lack the emphasis on critical and independent thinking, as well as the importance of context and becoming a part of one's own scientific community (Tuominen et. al., 2005). As Lipponen and Lonka (2007) formulate it, the standards lack the sociocultural aspect of information literacy. They compare the standards to a shopping list that anyone can use to pick what items they need at that time. According to Nevgi (2007), the students' scientific thinking develops during their studies and even though the standards are important guidelines, they can only be used to evaluate the level of skills or knowledge, not as the way to get there. Even though criticised for taking information literacy out of its context, the standards succeed relatively well in describing the central skills of information literacy and this description is one of the core purpose (ACRL, 2000).

Fifteen years after compiling the standards, the ACRL composed a Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education (ACRL, 2015). Since the framework is relatively new, it has not yet been utilised in many current curricula. The ACRL decided to use the term framework to emphasise that the core concepts are interconnected and have flexible options for implementation, rather than a set of standards, learning outcomes, or prescriptive enumeration of skills (ACRL, 2015). The framework is a structure of six frames: 1) Authority is Constructed and Contextual, 2) Information Creation as a Process, 3) Information Has Value, 4) Research as Inquiry, 5) Scholarship as Conversation, and 6) Searching as Strategic Exploration. Each frame consists of a concept central to information literacy, a set of knowledge practices and a set of dispositions (see Appendix 2).

The frames are rather vague as a list, but each frame comprises a precise description of the frame, along with its knowledge practices and dispositions. The framework is not meant to be used prescriptively, but instead each library, institution or discipline can deploy the frames to best fit their needs and situation. The purpose of the framework is to support the librarians, academic staff, or other institutional partners in redesigning their instruction sessions, assignments, courses or even curricula (ACRL, 2015). In the framework, being part of the scientific community as well as critical and independent thinking have become more apparent. The standards and the framework do have slightly different uses and are not comparable to one another, but it can be argued that the critique for the ACRL standards has been taken into consideration in forming the framework. It

must be recognised that the framework has been compiled in the United States, by American librarians, for the purposes of American higher education. However, the objectives and ambitions of higher education are not that different in Finland or in Europe, for instance, that the framework could not be utilised also elsewhere. Although there have been many national and international endeavours around the world to forward information literacy, many of them, admittedly, are founded on the ALA's and ACRL's standards.

In this study, the framework will be used as a background against which the curriculum of English Philology at the University of Oulu will be reflected. For the purposes of this study, the framework is very comprehensive and partly for that reason the whole framework cannot be examined in depth. Therefore, instead of discussing each frame in precision, those frames that are relevant in the actual information search practices of the students are looked at more closely and other frames are discussed in a less detailed manner (see chapter 5.1).

2.2 Information literacy assessment projects

This sub-chapter introduces some information literacy assessment projects around the world. They have all aimed at developing better ways to give guidance in information literacy, or to test the students' skill levels in order to find out how much support they need. These aims are important for studies in all fields of education and research.

In the United States, James Madison University (JMU) has had a longstanding program that supports students' development of information literacy (Cameron et al., 2007). All students learn basic skills in the university's General Education courses, and skills appropriate for their own field of study later in each field's academic coursework. During their first year, each student participates and needs to pass a Web-based Information Seeking Skills Test (ISST). At JMU, the information literacy skills are perceived as an important foundation for both academic work and lifelong learning (Cameron et al., 2007). A new test called Information Literacy Test (ILT), which could also be used in other institutions, was developed after the ISST and it measures four out of five standards of the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education (Cameron et al., 2007). One of the first projects to create a standardized test for IL skills was

Project SAILS (Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills) by Kent State University (2011). Shortly after this, the Educational Testing Services (ETS) began developing a standardized test to measure information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Currently this test is called iSkills, and it focuses on the assessment of critical thinking and problem solving in ICT environments (Brasley et al., 2009). The test is interactive and performance-based, and students solve given tasks in the context of a simulation that resembles a real application. Unlike a multiple-choice questionnaire, simulation-based tasks provide different opportunities to gather information as well as alternative solution paths. (Brasley et al., 2009.)

Different countries in Europe have developed national networks and websites on the topic of information literacy, and there are active scholars and several projects for instance in the United Kingdom and France (Sinikara, 2007). There are active networks in Australia, New Zealand and Canada as well, and in addition many projects expanding over national boundaries. The European Network of Information Literacy (EnIL) is a European collaboration network of scholars expanding over 14 countries (Sinikara, 2007). The Nordic Countries have also a collaboration network Nordiska forum för samarbete inom området informationskompetens (NordINFOLIT) (Sinikara, 2007). The central global information literacy development networks are International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) that has a separate section called International Alliance for Information Literacy (IAIL) and UNESCO, that also has a separate section, Global Alliance for Partnerships on Media and Information Literacy (GAPMIL) (Sinikara, 2007; IFLA, 2016; UNESCO, 2016).

In Finland, universities and university libraries have implemented both common and separate projects to develop and enhance the information literacy guidance. The Finnish university libraries started a collaboration project, which gave birth to the first set of guidelines and objectives for the information literacy curriculum (Recommendation for universities, 2004). The project also gave precise recommendations about the courses and their timing, scope, implementation, and contents (Recommendation for universities, 2004). The Ministry of Education and Culture has been giving guidelines and directions to universities, especially before the new Universities Act that came into effect in 2010. After the new Act, much of the power was directed from the government to the universities, but still the universities receive instructions from the Ministry. In the first decade of the 21st century information literacy was very much highlighted in the

instructions for higher education, whereas today the attention regarding information literacy has been more strongly directed towards basic education (FNBE, 2016a). Many universities have also implemented information literacy projects of their own. The University of Helsinki implemented in 2005 a study module in information and communication technology, that all students attend in the beginning of their studies (Lehto, 2007; Helminen, 2007). The former University of Kuopio (now part of the University of Eastern Finland) developed their information literacy guidance based on the three-staged curriculum deriving from the university libraries collaboration project (Saarti, 2007). The University of Tampere has a long tradition of collaboration between the university library and the disciplines (Iivonen, Tevaniemi & Toivonen, 2007). These are only some of the examples of information literacy projects in Finland. Most universities were very active in the information literacy projects around the time of the degree reform in 2005 (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2016a), but currently the enthusiasm seems to be waning and attention has been directed elsewhere.

2.3 Information literacy and students

This sub-chapter concentrates on research that involves the information literacy of students and their learning. The main attention is in higher education, although some studies involve younger students. Various researchers have directed their attention to information literacy skills and abilities of students in different levels of education. Many information literacy studies have therefore been conducted in educational institutes, both in Finland and abroad, and in different levels of education. The viewpoint shifts between education and information studies depending on whether the focus of the study is on learning or on information literacy. The connection between information literacy and learning may seem obvious today, but it is a theme that has only been more widely researched for the last twenty years, as Sormunen and Poikela (2008) note.

Sormunen and Poikela (2008) remark that, from the viewpoint of the universities, the challenge is to build a cumulative learning path of information literacy, starting from basic education and continuing via university to working life. Similarly, as Hepworth (1999) points out, the higher education institutions depend on the educational experience the students have acquired in primary and secondary school. Therefore, Hepworth (1999) argues, it is highly important that

these schools encourage the independent learner and provide the necessary level of information literacy. Kiili (2012) has studied how Finnish high school students locate and evaluate information when they use the Internet as a source. What she discovered was that poor information locating skills could become a bottleneck for Internet reading: some students struggled in finding relevant information, and nearly half of the time was spent in finding information leaving little time to do rest of the work (Kiili, 2012). The study also showed that the students focused on evaluating information relevance more often than they did on information reliability. The variation among students was great in their diversity of evaluation strategies and how actively they evaluated information. (Kiili, 2012.)

Karakainen and Saikkonen (2015) conducted a study to find out Finnish youths' information literacy skills in locating, searching and evaluating information. What they discovered was that the skills are insufficient; boys perform better than girls in locating information resources, whereas girls were better in evaluating search results. Both were mainly unable in producing correct and comprehensive search closures (Karakainen & Saikkonen, 2015). The concepts of digital natives or Google generation have been strongly criticised (Bennett, Maton & Kervin, 2008; Kvavik, Caruso & Morgan, 2004; Kennedy, Krause, Judd, Churchward & Gray, 2006; Oliver & Goerke, 2007), and Karakainen and Saikkonen (2015) found out congruently, that those who perform well in information seeking tasks are more active users of digital technology. In other words, it is not the entire generation that is suddenly computer literate or tech savvy, but instead it is the part of the population that is interested in digital technology.

If the transferable skills have not been developed to an adequate level in basic education or upper secondary education, it will bring forth considerable limitations in the teaching at university level (Sormunen & Poikela, 2008). Information literacy is a central ability in higher education and a cornerstone of learning, and a study conducted by Whitmire (2004) has shown that the students' epistemological beliefs and reflective judgment are very much connected to their ways to acquire and use information. Epistemological beliefs are ideas about the nature of knowledge; how it is acquired and how it can be evaluated, and these beliefs change over time and as students gain more knowledge. According to Whitmire (2004), students who were in an early stage of development are likely to take information from teachers or other intellectual authority as certain or absolute, whereas at a later developmental stage less information is seen as indisputable and

the students begin to understand that there is always a possibility for ambiguousness. This stance towards information was perceived to reflect in their information behaviour, and the students in early stages of development were more likely to be content with the first hit their search provided. The higher level of development the students had, the more they were able to take conflicting information into consideration and the easier it was to recognise authoritative sources from the results. (Whitmire, 2004.)

Higher education students are expected to use quality sources in their assignments and works. They are encouraged to use peer reviewed journal articles and to prefer them to books, to prefer books to course books, any books to miscellaneous websites and practically anything to Wikipedia. The real problem according to Buhler and Cataldo (2016) is, however, that students are not able to distinguish these sources from one another. In their study Buhler and Cataldo (2016) discovered that university students had difficulties in identifying and distinguishing online information resources, meaning that they were, for instance, unable to separate journals from e-books. Tanni, (2013), in turn, studied how Finnish teacher trainees' ways to acquire and use information for a work task were related to their conceptions of information literacy instruction, and discovered that even though the teacher trainees used various modes of information acquisition in lesson planning, the variation of experiences was conceptualised only superficially in their conceptions of information literacy instruction. In other words, even though the trainees were fluent in information acquisition and use, they were unable to develop effective practices in information literacy instruction based on their own experiences (Tanni, 2013).

Gross and Latham (2012) conducted a study where they concentrated on college students' information skills and self-view of ability. They discovered, in line with previous studies (Kruger & Dunning, 1999), that students who scored below proficient in information literacy skills tended to overrate their abilities and considered themselves to be above average in their skills. Kruger and Dunning (1999) have studied this phenomenon also referred to as Dunning-Kruger effect on a wider context than just information literacy. They conducted four separate studies focusing on humour, logical reasoning, and English grammar. In each study participants were presented with tests that measured their ability and were then asked to evaluate their ability and test performance. What Kruger and Dunning (1999) discovered, was that especially those students who are incompetent, tend to evaluate their abilities higher than they actually are. Another thing

they found out was that the highly competent students, who performed very well, tended to underestimate their abilities. This was particularly so for comparative abilities. The reason for this could be a false-consensus effect (Ross et al. 1977), meaning that those who performed very well believe their peers will have done the same. Even though the Dunning-Kruger effect and the false-consensus effect are not solely related to information literacy, they are applicable for information skills as well; as for instance the Gross's and Latham's (2012) study shows.

What Kruger and Dunning (1999) saw as problematic was that those students who performed poorly apparently had no notion of doing so. How come they had not received any negative feedback during their academic careers? One reason Kruger and Dunning (1999) came to think of was that people do not tend to give negative feedback about the skills and abilities of others in everyday life; another reason could be that many tasks and settings are such that do not give feedback or any kind of self-correcting information; and a third reason may be that even if one receives feedback, it is not often easy to pinpoint the reason of failure to a specific action and the reason for negative feedback can be directed to some other factor. In other words, when a student fails or gets poor grades, he or she is rarely fully aware why. They may blame the poor results on different factors, such as being very busy at the time of a paper deadline or the examiner asking the wrong questions. They may never know the real reason to their failure. In an interview by Morris (2010), Dunning explains that the problem with the miscalibration of one's abilities is in that the person really does not know that he or she does not know. "We're not very good at knowing what we don't know" (Morris, 2010).

Impostor phenomenon (IP) is another psychological effect related to self-evaluation. Impostor Phenomenon refers to a psychological experience of incompetence regardless actual performance (Clance & Imes, 1978) and has originally been studied among high-achieving women. Clance and Imes (1978) point out that women have lower expectations for their own and other women's performance, and have thus created a self-stereotype. Women tend to attribute their success outwards and to temporary causes, whereas men are more likely to attribute success inwards, to their own abilities (Clance & Imes, 1978). There have been few studies where IP has been looked at from a cultural point of view, although it has been argued that cultural minorities could share the same feelings of being an outsider as women have in previous studies (Peteet, Brown, Lige, & Lanaway, 2015). There are, however, some studies conducted among ethnic minorities, such as a

study by Peteet et al. (2015) about IP among African American college students. In their study Peteet et al. (2015) were able to establish and confirm a congruent result with previous studies also among the African American college students.

Pinto and Sales (2010) conducted a survey to a group of Spanish translation students with a focus on the students' individual and subjective levels of information literacy motivation and self-efficacy together with their preferred sources of learning. The survey used in their study has been specially designed for studying social sciences and humanities at Spanish and Portuguese universities, and it focuses on the self-assessment approach that has been rare in other studies (Pinto, 2010). What they discovered was that the students' motivation and self-efficacy increased as the students advanced in their studies (Pinto & Sales, 2010). Pinto and Sales (2010) also found out that the greatest improvement opportunities related to using bibliographic reference and database managers, knowledge of the laws on the use of information, and communicating in other languages.

Not too long ago sources retrieved from the Internet had to be listed separately in the list of references, and the use of practically any Internet source was frowned upon and often demanded for justification. Today the retrieval of information is very much easier and a wide variety of books and articles can be found and attained by a click of a button. There is, however, still a shadow over the ever-widening use of the Internet and availability of information, argue Sormunen and Poikela (2008). Easy access to wide selection of material adds the temptation to copy-paste writing. Plagiarism is definitely a problem, and it has led to a need to utilise plagiarism checkers such as Urkund, but as Sormunen and Poikela (2008) point out, plagiarism can actually be a symptom of undeveloped abilities to search and use information. Although it is technically easy to execute searches and download information from the Internet, the problem for the students is how to find, evaluate, and adapt information to fit their purposes (Sormunen & Poikela, 2008; Hepworth, 1999). Similarly, Nilsson, Eklöf and Ottosson (2005) argue that students who copy and paste may not, in fact, be cheaters, and should not be treated as such, but instead they may be learners who use these functions productively. What Nilsson and colleagues (2005) say is that such students who process information superficially may not have yet developed the skills to evaluate, analyse, and formulate the content of their references and need support in advancing from superficial learning to a deeper level.

According to Holman (2011), the millennial students have grown up with online information sources and thereby do not discriminate between websites and more traditional print and broadcast media. However, Holman (2011) also point out that even though they have grown up with the Internet and search engines, the millennial students' understanding of them is superficial at best. They are unable to see that their searches are very simple and instead of refining the search and continuing it to achieve better sources, they settle with whatever information they find that is relevant and at least reasonably reliable. They believe themselves to be rather effective because they search fast and they are satisfied with the results they get. Holman (2011) discovered in her study about students' mental search models that misspelling had a significant influence in students' search success. According to her study, students are used to Google's spellcheck and "Did you mean?" result link, and expect a similar algorithm from all databases. Thus, if they conducted a search with very few or no results, they assumed it to be because there were no articles on the subjects instead of trying to refine or change their search. (Holman, 2011.)

Williams and Rowlands (2007) went through 49 academic studies regarding the Google Generation or themes connected to it, aiming to find the truth behind anecdotes, opinions, and hype. They wanted to find out whether there was any academic proof behind the opinions and anecdotes. What they discovered was that most academic studies examined the behaviour of the current or contemporary cohort of young people without making comparison to any previous cohort (Williams & Rowlands, 2007). They also concluded that the searching expertise of the Google generation was not particularly savvy in Internet or database searches (Williams & Rowlands, 2007). On the contrary: search queries were found to be very simple, not many synonyms or alternative search terms were used, and the searches were not planned ahead. Moreover, studies they looked at proved that the Google Generation does not give much attention to authority of the content and very little time is spent evaluating the search results. (Williams & Rowlands, 2007.)

3 Information literacy in the context of university education in Finland

This chapter discusses information literacy in the context of university education in Finland. First, a brief familiarisation is given to teaching and teacher qualifications in higher education institutes in Finland. In the following sub-chapters first the general learning objectives of higher education are introduced, after which the attention is directed into the objective of information literacy. Lastly, the role of the university libraries as guidance providers is discussed. According to the OECD's Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes, AHELO (Tremblay, Lalancette & Roseveare, 2012), skills and human capital have become the basis for prosperity and social well-being in the 21st century. Since higher education carries a central role in innovation and human capital development, it has become increasingly important for maintaining a globally competitive society. This has been widely understood and appreciated in the modern world.

In Finland, university teachers are not required to have pedagogical training by a government regulation, which makes higher education different from other levels of education (Teaching Qualifications Decree, 986/1998). This is a very common phenomenon throughout higher education institutions all over Europe (High Level Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education, 2013). A working committee on the development of the European higher education has taken initiative and in their Report to the European Commission on Improving the quality of teaching and learning in Europe's higher education institutions (High Level Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education, 2013) they have formulated a total of 16 recommendations to the European Union member states regarding the development and improvement of higher education. The aim of these recommendations is to achieve the goal that all higher education institutes in the European Union member states will offer high quality teaching to their students. Among these recommendations is that all teachers in European Union member states will have received certified pedagogical training by the year 2020 (High Level Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education, 2013).

Although the pedagogical training is not required by law in Finnish higher education institutions, in most universities it is either strongly advised or mandatory. Eight universities currently offer their teaching staff the possibility to complete university pedagogy studies of 60 credits, which also provides the qualification named in Section 19 of the Government Decree on University Degrees

(794/2004). For most universities, a large part of the studies in university pedagogy are completely or partly voluntary, but in the University of Oulu all teaching staff are expected to complete at least 25 credits in university pedagogy within two years of the beginning of their employment (Murtonen & Ponsiluoma, 2014).

Meriläinen (2015) has studied Finnish university teachers and the relation between their pedagogical training and what they think about teaching. Based on his study Meriläinen (2015) has argued that university pedagogy should aim in helping the teachers direct their teaching towards the viewpoint of the students instead of the viewpoint of the teachers, and to bring further awareness to the teachers of their own ideas and perceptions of learning and teaching. It appears that the attitudes toward university education are changing, and have come a long way from the basic form of mass lectures by professors and exams. More attention has been directed towards student-oriented methods, such as problem-based learning, for instance. This change has brought forward the need to provide the teaching staff with a pedagogical training, instead of relying merely on their expertise in the field (Meriläinen, 2015; Murtonen & Ponsiluoma, 2014). From the student perspective, this change in attitude is perhaps in some ways visible in the general learning objectives, information literacy as one of them.

3.1 The general learning objectives of higher education

The objective of higher education is to familiarize the students to their discipline and its traditions, practices, terminology, subjects of study, methods, theories, schools of thought, ways and channels of communication, values, and social norms (Kautto, 2004). Nevgi (2007) sees information literacy as a part of academic and scholarly expertise and therefore it is also an important part of education in all disciplines. The Universities Act (558/2009) guarantees Finnish universities freedom of research, art, and teaching. Disciplines and fields of study differ greatly from one another, and therefore the specific objectives and the curricula of different disciplines cannot be constituted using the same form. However, the general objectives of higher education can be defined regardless of discipline or field of study. As Kautto (2004) formulates it, teaching constitutes of different texts, both oral and written, but the quantity, quality, type or variety, and role varies in different branches of science. The students need to learn the practices of their discipline in order to be able to work in that environment. Another important objective of higher

education, regardless of the field of study, is developing a critical and independent stance or approach. This is achieved by problem oriented learning where independent acquisition, evaluation, and use of information are central activities (Kautto, 2004).

The Finnish Government Decree on University Degrees 794/2004 describes the general aims of the lower and higher university degrees. In addition to the overall knowledge of the major and minor subjects and good language and communication skills, the “knowledge and skills needed for scientific thinking and the use of scientific methods” (The Government Decree on University Degrees 794/2004, Chapter 2, section 7) for lower university degree, and “the knowledge and skills needed to apply scientific knowledge and scientific methods or knowledge” (The Government Decree on University Degrees 794/2004, Chapter 2, Section 12) for higher university degree are something all students should acquire during their studies.

As the new Universities Act (558/2009) came into effect in 2010, the Ministry of Education and Culture further extended the autonomy of universities in Finland. The university reform gave the universities financial and legal independence, but also abolished the Ministry’s control and guidance when it comes to the contents of the teaching. Previously the Ministry had formed committees to investigate and report the different possibilities and actions and based on these investigations given more precise recommendations and guidelines, sometimes even orders for the universities. The sufficient core funding for the universities is still guaranteed by the government, but one of the objectives of the reform is to enable universities to apply public funding, and to use revenues from business ventures, donations, and bequeaths, as well as the return on their capital, to finance their operations. (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2016b.)

3.2 The learning objective of information literacy

In this chapter, the general learning objective of information literacy in Finnish higher education is introduced. In higher education, information literacy is globally perceived as a central learning objective in all fields of study. As the ACRL (2000) definition points out, there are several important abilities, skills and practices that enable the students in searching, evaluating, incorporating, and understanding information in their studies, empowering them with the keys to their own learning and entitling them a part of the academia.

In his dissertation, Kautto (2004) studied research literature teaching in higher education within four different disciplines: Physics, Medicine, Social Policy and Social Work, and Literary Studies. The differences between the disciplines were expectedly great, and the views on the criteria of evaluation varied. Kautto (2004) interviewed both students and teaching staff at three universities in Finland, and although the research is for some parts already somewhat dated, especially regarding electronic materials, the theme is still very current. Updated research is very strongly demanded. At the end of his conclusion, Kautto (2004) acknowledges that the technological development changes the scope of study, and encourages for more research in the field keeping this in mind. He also notes that a case study concentrating on one discipline in one university could bring forth knowledge about and the effects of local traditions in teaching and guidance, research trends, as well as the teachers' individual views and stances (Kautto, 2004).

Reed, Kinder and Farnum (2007) conducted a study of collaboration between university teachers and information specialists. In the study teachers and information specialists collaborated in designing a course for first-year university students, where the information literacy objective was tightly integrated into the subject of the students' major. The results were very positive: the students' results in an information literacy test improved, and both the teachers and the information specialists felt the collaboration was beneficial (Reed et al., 2007). Hepworth (1999), in turn, discovered in his study on undergraduate students at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, that the students faced considerable challenges in the area of information literacy and skills. Based on the results of the study, a pragmatic framework to incorporate the information literacy into the undergraduate curriculum was proposed. Hepworth (1999) argues that the amount of information that the teachers should convey to the students at university level is in itself a major challenge. In addition, he also speaks of how important it is for the students to learn information literacy in the context of their own field of study to understand how it helps them achieve better results (Hepworth, 1999). The more distant and vague information literacy seems to students, the less inclined they are to be interested in it, value the abilities, or strive to achieve them.

It is widely recognised that information literacy instruction should be cumulative and continuous, and that it should be woven in the curriculum. It is a responsibility shared by the institution, the faculty, the discipline, and the library services; as O'Neil (2005, 8) formulates, "the integration of

information literacy instruction is the responsibility of all in academia". Although the program faculty has responsibility of the information literacy instruction, the library holds a central role of delivering most of the information literacy instruction in the academy (O'Neil, 2005). In Finland, the university curricula are rather unrestricted; there are no guidelines or strict rules according to which the curricula must be formed. The collaboration between university libraries and disciplines differ among the universities but also among different disciplines within each university. These differences among disciplines became obvious also in Kautto's (2004) research.

Without any assessment, it is difficult to conclude whether a goal or and objective has been achieved or not. This is true for student assessment, but also for institutional assessment. As Maki (2002) points out, "assessing student learning and development, that is, finding out how students achieve educational objectives, is one of the primary means by which institutions demonstrate their institutional effectiveness" (p. 8). She separates between external and internal motivators within the institutions, and underlines how important it is to have an internal motivator, namely institutional curiosity, in order to truly improve student learning. Assessment, when motivated by institutional curiosity, will become an organic process of discovering how, what, and which students learn (Maki, 2002). Thereby, the true interest in the students' learning, both in content and skill level, is a sign of institutional curiosity. This means that the institution is curious of the outcomes of the teaching and instruction it provides and wants to know what and how the students learn, instead of the curiosity stemming from outside, such as from external evaluation.

3.3 The role of university libraries

In most Finnish universities, the university libraries hold the main responsibility for the guidance of the students' information literacy. Sometimes the tasks may be divided with the university teaching staff, or different collaboration projects have been implemented where the guidance is executed by both an information specialist and a teacher (Iivonen, Tevaniemi & Toivonen, 2007).

In the early 2000s the ACRL standards were translated into Finnish and the Finnish university libraries started a collaboration project, which gave birth to the first set of guidelines and objectives for the information literacy curriculum (Recommendation for universities, 2004).

Together the university libraries started a project to form an information literacy curriculum for universities. A central goal was to integrate information literacy in academic studies, but it was left to the universities to take the curriculum to action. In practice, the project gave a list of minimum recommendations of objectives. The curriculum was three staged: 1) new students, 2) intermediate studies: students writing their bachelor's thesis or seminar, and 3) advanced studies: students writing their master's thesis (Recommendation for universities, 2004).

Finnish university libraries had traditionally used a three-staged model even before the standards and the curriculum was introduced, but previously the third stage has been directed mainly to postgraduate students (Lehto, 2007; Sinikara, 2007). The introduced curriculum brought the information literacy guidance to the natural stages where students are likely to need guidance and assistance: namely the beginning of their studies, and both larger independent works they have in their studies, the bachelor's and master's theses. The project gave precise recommendations about the courses and their timing, scope, implementation, and contents (Recommendation for universities, 2004). Kivilahti, Saarti and Sinikara (2010) evaluated the results of the collaboration project, and stated that among the concrete results of the project were a recommendation for the information literacy curriculum, a skill test for the students, a network for the library staff interested in the subject, and web pages for information literacy for Finnish universities. According to Kivilahti and colleagues (2010), both the national and individual university library projects were successful and achieved their goal of integrating information literacy into the curricula of Finnish universities.

According to Lehto (2007), the most typical structure of Finnish universities information literacy guidance is three staged, following the guidelines of the Finnish university libraries collaboration project (Informaatiolukutaidon opintosuunnitelma –hanke, 2007). The first stage is compulsory for most students, and the guidance reaches 91–100 % of its target group. The second stage is compulsory for about half of the students, and the guidance reaches 75–80 % of the target population and when it comes to the third stage, which for most students is elective, the guidance reaches only 15–20 % of the students. There are two additional stages following the final stage, one for postgraduate students and another for teaching staff and researchers. For these groups the guidance is naturally elective, and the guidance only reaches less than 10 % of the postgraduates and 2–5 % of the teaching staff and researches. (Lehto, 2007.) These results show

that participation to guidance diminishes as the electiveness to attend increases. This can be seen as problematic, because the guidance is important and beneficial for the students in the process of writing their theses. On the other hand, it can be argued that a student at a higher education institute must take responsibility of their own studies and making all courses compulsory is not the answer to students' difficulties or their lack of interest in courses.

The first encounter all students at the University of Oulu have with the library and its services is at the beginning of the studies, when students attend a brief training session on library use. For English Philology students, the library organises two tailored courses: Humanistinen tutkimus ja tiedonhaun järjestelmät (Research and structures of information search for humanities) I and II (Oulu University Library, 2016). The first course has a separate group for English Philology students, and for the second course all students from the faculty of Humanities are in the same group. In addition to the library-organised courses, the subject-specific courses like Bachelor's Seminar and Master's Seminar usually contain at least one meeting with an information specialist. The courses offered by the library are not compulsory, although the faculty staff urges the students to attend them.

4 Material and methods

In this chapter the research material and the methods used in this study along with the context of the case at hand will be introduced. The study at hand is a qualitative case study using a combination of methods. The methods used in the study are content analysis of the curriculum of English Philology, observation of a group of students attending a Master's Seminar course, and interviews of some of these students, as well as a faculty member in charge of the course, and an information specialist at the University Library of Oulu. The approach of both observation and interviews is ethnographic (Patton, 2002). This study concentrates on one group of English Philology students at the University of Oulu. The current curriculum of English Philology at the University of Oulu is scrutinised using content analysis with the endeavour to discover how the objective of information literacy is visible in the curriculum.

The research questions in this study are such that they are most naturally approached by qualitative methods, but separate methods for different data are required. To answer research question 1, namely "How is the objective of information literacy made visible in the curriculum of English Philology at the University of Oulu?", content analysis is the primary method, whereas to answer research question 2, "What perception do the students of English Philology at the University of Oulu have about the objective of information literacy, and about the guidance they receive to achieve the objective?" the methods of observation and interviews were chosen. Methodological triangulation is achieved by combining different methods (Patton, 2002), and the strategy aims on one hand to providing a holistic view of the information literacy learning objective and its implementation in the subject of English Philology at the University of Oulu, and on the other hand to forming an idea of the students' perceptions of this learning objective.

The attempt to answer the questions at hand aspires to providing support for the students in their studies and the faculty staff at their work in guiding and helping the students. The better understanding the faculty staff has about how the students think and what problems they encounter, the easier it is for the staff to provide proper guidance and help to the students. The impact of right and properly directed guidance can be immense, especially in the times when funding for universities is scarce and the time the teaching staff has to spare is limited. Even though a qualitative case study is not something that can be generalised as such, it can still

provide vital information about the thoughts and apprehensions of both the students and the teaching staff. It can also function as a starting point or a catalyst for a wider research, expanding over all branches of science to the entire University of Oulu.

4.1 Case Context: Faculty of Humanities in the University of Oulu

This sub-chapter introduces the case context of this study. First a brief introduction will be made to the University of Oulu and its general learning objectives, followed by a more detailed description of the faculty of humanities and the subject of English Philology.

4.1.1 The University of Oulu

The University of Oulu was founded in 1958 and is one of Finland's most multidisciplinary and largest universities. There are 16 000 students and 3000 employees studying and working in the university's six faculties. More than 50 000 alumni have graduated from the University of Oulu. (University of Oulu, 2016.) The University of Oulu is both nationally and internationally significant research university with an educational mission of providing higher education based on research, and to educate youth to serve society and humanity (University of Oulu strategy 2016–2020, 2016a). The new rules of procedure on education for the University of Oulu do not list any general learning objectives, such as information literacy, nor does it mention lifelong learning or other noble aspirations (Oulun yliopiston koulutuksen johtosääntö, 2016). The rules of procedure focus on the general administrative of the university, and the decision-making concerning the learning objectives happens in the faculties. Nonetheless, the new strategy for the University of Oulu has taken the general learning objectives into account. The strategy for 2016–2020 states that the approach of the University of Oulu is to develop education as an integral part of its scientific activity towards six strategic aims: 1) high-quality degree programs attract engaged students, 2) smooth studying processes, 3) modern, digitalized learning environments and pedagogical development, 4) international studying experience, 5) structures supporting cooperation with working life, and 6) systematic doctoral education (University of Oulu strategy 2016–2020, 2016b).

4.1.2 The Faculty of Humanities and the subject of English Philology

The Faculty of Humanities at the University of Oulu was founded in 1972, and currently has more than 30 subjects to study, 14 of which can be studied as a major subject. There are over 2000 students in the faculty. (Faculty of Humanities, 2016.) The faculty educates future experts in the fields of language, culture, and history. The study guide for the Faculty of Humanities (Faculty of Humanities, 2016) states that in the Faculty's education, special attention is paid to the structure and scope of the degrees and to lifelong learning. Both Bachelor and Master of Arts degrees comprehend the essential skills, and, based on professional requirements and experiences, supplementary education is acquired later. According to the study guide (Faculty of Humanities, 2016), teaching at the faculty follows a syllabus that is highly structured and functional. Learning objectives have been determined for all teaching that is part of the degrees. The Faculty of Humanities is considered the cradle of academic freedom, and the studies are constructed accordingly. The students can compile their degrees rather freely, within the boundaries set by their major subject (Faculty of Humanities, 2016).

The students of English Philology, as well as other philologies, are in a special position in that the field of research actually consists of many separate fields with very different paradigms. Language skills, linguistics, literature, and culture are the core areas of study for English Philology at the University of Oulu, and the approaches these core areas hold are very different from one another. Therefore, it is not a clear-cut case for the students to know how to write a research proposal, where to look for previous research, or how to structure a Bachelor's or Master's Thesis. Collecting and analysing material and finding previous research varies, and the students may find it difficult to understand that the approach that they took for one task or paper, may not work for another. It is not the intention of this study to make comparisons between different fields of research or disciplines, but it would definitely be an interesting viewpoint for future research.

English Philology has been a major subject in the University of Oulu for 50 years. Today, the subject of English Philology at the University of Oulu is described as addressing the need for high quality English learning by offering a carefully graded mix of courses focusing on the four core areas of English Philology: Language Skills, Linguistics, Literature, and Culture. According to the subject introduction, the program will introduce the students to one of the world's greatest

literacy, cultural and linguistic traditions, prepare the students to participate in the twenty-first century's global dialogue, and give the students a competitive edge in many language-oriented professions. (English Philology curriculum 2016–2017, 2016.) In Finland, eight universities currently offer English Philology or English Language in their study programs. Each university has its own profile in language research, comprising all language subjects. The University of Oulu currently profiles in studying cultural identity and interaction and research based teacher training (Suomen yliopistot, 2015). This research profile is connected to the University of Oulu strategy, which is based of five thematic research focus areas: 1) Creating sustainability by materials and systems, 2) Molecular and environmental basis of life-long health, 3) Digital solutions in sensing and interactions, 4) Earth and near-space system and environmental change, and 5) Understanding humans in change (University of Oulu strategy 2016–2020, 2016b). Of these focus areas, especially the digital solutions in sensing and interaction and understanding humans in change are areas language subjects, among them English Philology, are adhered to.

All universities form their own curricula for their language subjects. The research profile of the university is likely to have a certain effect on the contents of the curriculum. When it comes to English Philology at the University Oulu, there are several courses connected to the themes of cultural identity and interaction, and research based teacher training, which are closely connected to the strategy of the University of Oulu. However, there are also many other elective courses that the students can choose from. The opportunities to build a study program according to one's own interests are wider than ever. The compulsory courses are minimal, and they become even scarcer as the students proceed to Advanced Studies and towards their Master's Thesis.

4.2 Content analysis of the curriculum

As Jacobsson (2016) points out, interpersonal encounters within various institutions involve abundance of documents and different texts categorise our everyday lives. Jacobsson (2016) sees documents as more than containers of texts in that they direct their readers, evoke emotion, and trigger chains of interaction. Accordingly, Jacobsson (2016) sees texts and documents as research objects that can be approached from an ethnographic viewpoint, especially when organisationally embedded documents are in question. This means that documents are studied as a part of the

social context instead of separating them from it. The documents examined in this study, namely the curriculum and the course descriptions of English Philology at the University of Oulu, are distinctly limited to their context. Not in that they could not be understood outside the context, but in that they are written to serve a specific purpose, and they are written for a specific audience. The documents are also intertextually related to other documents, written within the same organisation. Prior (2003) raises the active role of the reader into discussion, and points out that the reader, or the consumer, also influences the document and its writer. In the context of the study at hand, the students are the readers of the documents and the writers are the staff of English Philology. It can be established that the writers of the documents certainly have the readers in mind as they formulate the documents, and thereby the readers can be said to have had indisputable influence on the writers. Prior (2003) formulates that in approaching documents, we need to keep in mind the dynamic involved in the relationships between production, consumption, and content.

In this thesis, the curriculum of English Philology at the university of Oulu will be examined in order to find out whether the objective of information literacy is visible in its contents. The curriculum is scrutinised against the framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education (ACRL, 2015) in order to see what parts of information literacy are most highlighted or in other ways more visible in the curriculum and the course descriptions. The primary focus is on the compulsory courses, because the objective of information literacy is similar for all students irrespective of their own interests. As already mentioned, the objective is present in all higher education in Finland, but since the guidelines of how the objective is implemented are scarce or even non-existent, institutions and disciplines have rather free hands in how they choose to bring information literacy into their individual study programmes. This can be seen as academic freedom, when the government does not dictate what universities do and how they must do it, but as it leaves very much leeway in how the institutions and disciplines constitute their curricula. There is no homogenous standard of quality for the information literacy skill level of the graduated students. It depends on the curricula and their descriptions of the courses and the overall objectives, how clear and visible these general skills and obtaining them become for the students. If the students do not have the understanding that higher education has other, general objectives that come in addition to each subject of study, some objectives may seem irrelevant to them, albeit that the objectives are actually relevant in all fields of study. Therefore, the more

clearly the objectives are written out in the curricula, the easier it is for the students to see what is expected from them.

4.3 Observation

As a method, observation has certain advantages to interviews. According to Patton (2002), a direct observation 1) enables a better understanding of the context within which the people interact, 2) allows the inquirer to be open, discovery oriented, and inductive, 3) makes it possible to perceive things that may routinely escape awareness among the people in the setting, 4) enables the inquirer to learn things that people would be unwilling to talk about in an interview, and 5) gives the opportunity to move beyond the selective perception of others. It is notable that the observer is not free from selective perceptions, but as Patton (2002) formulates it, reflection and introspection are also important parts of field research. In this research the observation aims to perceiving the context where the students, the teachers, and the information specialist communicate, learn, and teach. The aim is to observe these actions in their everyday context, and to use this information to support firstly the interviews, and secondly, the analysis of the curriculum. In relation to the content analysis of the curriculum, the observation of a course is, as Prior (2003) calls for, a researcher following a document in use and seeing what people do with it.

For this study a group of students taking the Master's Seminar course in English Philology at the University of Oulu was observed in autumn term 2016. There were 13 students in the group, and the students were in the advanced stage of their studies. Some of the students had already finished one Master's Degree at another subject. I was allowed to be present at the group meetings, and thereby had the possibility to familiarise myself with both the teaching staff and the students. I also had the possibility to see how the group worked and communicated. The group was observed in their regular work during their meetings. A library session with an information specialist from the university library was especially arranged for this group of students and the session was also observed. It was agreed that the theme of the session would be 'brushing up the information search skills'. There was no knowledge beforehand whether the students participating the course would have attended previous information search courses, since they are not compulsory courses for the students majoring in English Philology at University of Oulu. However,

since they had all finished their Bachelor's Thesis, it was safe to assume that they had attended a library session in connection to their work in the course Bachelor's Seminar. The general objective of the observation was dual: on one hand to achieve further knowledge of the students to support the interviews, but on the other hand also to see what the course is actually like and deepen the understanding of the curriculum. One interest was also to find out how the students' perceptions of information literacy are manifested during the group meetings.

The Master's Seminar course is one of the last compulsory courses the students attend to before their Master's Thesis, and at this point they should, at the latest, acquire and polish the skills and practices needed to execute their Master's Thesis. It is also safe to assume that the attending students have already participated in teaching or guidance that includes information retrieval and evaluation in their studies before attending the course, because they have all completed their Bachelor's Thesis. This group's skills, practices, and opinions cannot be generalised to represent all English Philology students, but they stand as an example of what skills and practices the students have achieved at that point of their studies. If the information literacy objective is part of the curriculum and the discipline aims to actualise the objective, all students should in principle have attained at least a certain level of expertise and ability, and feel that their needs regarding the matter have been met.

4.4 Interviews

As Patton (2002) formulates it, "we interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe" (p. 340). In other words, we cannot observe feelings, thoughts and intentions, or anything that took place at a previous point in time. Therefore, we ask questions. The main purpose of an interview is to see something from another person's perspective (Patton, 2002). For the purposes of this study, a combination of a standardized and an informal interview felt the most natural. The interview has a basic structure on the topics, but it is open to enable the discussion flow where the respondents or the data leads (Patton, 2002). In this sub-chapter, the different interviews are shortly described.

The plan for the interviews was to conduct them face-to-face with as many students from the group as possible. It then became apparent that many students were either reluctant towards the interview, hard to reach, or busy, and an option of an email interview was also provided to bypass these problems. In the end, only one of the students was interviewed face-to-face. Five students participated in the email interview. The students who were interviewed via email answered the same questions as the face-to-face interviewee. All questions in the interviews were open-ended questions. The aim of the questions was to clarify how the students themselves perceive information literacy and how they feel the curriculum supports their development of information literacy. The interview questions for the students are in Appendix 3.

The two staff members who oversaw the Master's Seminar course were interviewed to get the viewpoint of the teaching staff. One of them is a university lecturer, and the other a post-graduate student completing his university pedagogic studies. The interviews were conducted via email. All questions in the interview were open-ended questions. The aim of the teacher interviews was to get a perception of how the faculty staff views the students and their level of skills, but also to see if there are differences in the views of the students and their teachers. The interview questions for the teachers are in Appendix 4.

The Oulu university library information specialist responsible for the library session for the group was also interviewed. The interview was conducted face-to-face and it was done in Finnish, to assure that there are no language barriers disturbing the interview. The quotations from the interview in the text were translated by the author of this study. All questions in the interview were open-ended questions. The aim of this interview was to see how the information specialist sees the students and their skills, and if this perception differs from the students' own or that of their teachers. The interview questions for the information specialist are in Appendix 5.

5 Findings

This chapter focuses on the results of the analysis of the research material. The chapter is organised as follows: first, the findings of the content analysis of the curriculum will be introduced, and after that the attention is directed to the interviews. The method used to analyse the interviews was also content analysis. The observation is not discussed separately, but instead the findings from the observation will be presented together with either the interviews or the content analysis. This is due to observation being mainly a background material for the other, primary research materials.

5.1 The content analysis of the curriculum of English Philology in the University of Oulu

As Prior (2003) formulates it, documents make actions visible. This is basically the task of a curriculum: to make the contents and the learning objectives of the studies visible to its readers. This sub-chapter concentrates on the results of the analysis of the English Philology curriculum in the University of Oulu. The curriculum will first be examined in general, and subsequently in more detail following the three levels of the curriculum's structure, that is the basic, intermediate, and advanced studies. The focus will be placed on whether obtaining practices such as information literacy or lifelong learning are visible in the curriculum and if they are, how they are described when it comes to learning objectives. The curriculum will also be looked at from the angle of practices that support these learning objectives, be it in the general descriptions or within individual course descriptions. The curriculum will be examined against the Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education (ACRL, 2015) to see how the individual frames and their knowledge practices and dispositions are present in the curriculum.

This inspection aims to discovering whether the learning objectives have been made visible and how they are described in the curriculum. The curriculum is the only written source for the students to familiarize with both the general and individual learning objectives of the subject in general, as well as the learning objectives of individual courses, and therefore it is of great importance how the objectives are described. The attention is focused on the compulsory courses, and the Intermediate and Advanced Studies are scrutinised somewhat more closely, since the

Basic Studies have a purpose of introducing the students to the subject of English Philology. Nevertheless, even those Basic Studies courses that have information literacy relevant content, will be discussed. The approach of the analysis in the current study is qualitative and derives from social research, following the lines of Jacobsson (2016) and Prior (2003), concentrating on seeing the document as a part of its context and analysing it in relation to the actions it evokes, instead of concentrating on numerical data and quantitative analysis. Therefore, the focus of the analysis is directed into the contents of the courses, teaching, and the learning objectives along with the potential results.

The general description of the subject in English Philology curriculum in the University of Oulu (English Philology curriculum 2016–2017, 2016) states that the English language is the global language that is written, spoken, and understood all over the world and is therefore the most important medium for all kinds of international communication, as well as scientific and scholarly research. This special status of the language demands high standard for teaching in several levels of education. These requirements, as well as a selection of courses focusing on the practical aspects of both written and spoken English, and courses in Linguistics, Applied Linguistics, Literature, and Culture, are what the curriculum consists of and aims to address. The studies consist of Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced Studies, and lead to either a Bachelor of Arts or a Master of Arts degree. The learning objectives of English Philology at the University of Oulu (English Philology curriculum 2016–2017, 2016) at the three levels of study are the following:

Basic Studies:

- To enable the students to demonstrate improved practical skills in written and spoken English, to discuss structures of English and English grammar from theoretical perspectives.
- To enable the students to identify and explain the basics of different fields of English linguistics and Anglo-American literature.
- To enable the students to identify, describe, and explain different features of British and North American culture.
- To familiarize students with the main modes of individual and collaborative teaching and learning in the university.

Intermediate Studies:

- To extend students' understanding of the key areas of English Philology while allowing some room for personal interests.
- Through training in the basic skills of research methodology and presentation, leads students to the Bachelor's Seminar and Thesis.

Advanced Studies:

- To encourage students to broaden their skills and knowledge base and to learn to apply them to increasingly specific tasks.
- To equip students with the formal and the intellectual skills that are necessary for independent study and the writing of their Master's Thesis.

There is no direct mention of information literacy in the English Philology curriculum's learning objectives at any level of study. The only reference to any general practices is in the description of Intermediate Studies, where it is stated that "training in the basic skills of research methodology and presentation" (English Philology curriculum 2016–2017, 2016), referring to Bachelor's Seminar and Thesis, and subsequently to the Bachelor's degree (BA). For the Advance Studies, "the curriculum encourages the students to broaden their skills as well as their knowledge base" and the core courses of Advanced Studies are "equipping students with the formal and intellectual skills that are necessary for independent study" (English Philology curriculum 2016–2017, 2016). These references are vague in formatting and basically refer to general academic or scientific practices and skills without specifying them in more detail.

Not having the practice of information literacy or lifelong learning directly mentioned in the general description of the curriculum does not mean that they are not part of the curriculum. The overall goals of the studies are always rather vaguely described, despite the field of study, and the outlines of the curriculum do not give accurate details of any other goals than the ones of preparing the students for Bachelor's and Master's degrees. Therefore, to find out whether the information literacy practice is an acknowledged part of the curriculum, attention needs to be turned to the course descriptions. The focus will be on the compulsory courses, because information literacy is an objective set for all higher education students. Since all compulsory

courses do not include elements that are relevant from information literacy viewpoint, only the relevant courses will be examined. The relevant courses are depicted in Figure 1.

Basic Studies	Intermediate Studies	Advanced Studies
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Academic Communication I• Approaches to English Linguistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Academic Communication II• Research in Language Studies• Researching Literature and Culture• Bachelor's Seminar	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Master's Seminar

Figure 1. Compulsory English Philology courses with information literacy related content

It is obvious, and also visible in the descriptions, that the Basic Studies are much more concrete in their learning objectives, compared to Intermediate and Advanced Studies. This is reasonable, since the Basic Studies and the courses they comprise of are, accordingly, basic. The primary objective of the Basic Studies is on one hand to familiarise the students to the subject and on the other hand to provide the students with a foundation upon which to construct their future studies. All Basic Studies courses are compulsory, and they function as an introduction to the range of fields within the subject. It is worth noting that English Philology is also a popular minor subject meaning that many students attending the Basic and Intermediate Studies have some other major subject. The Basic Studies consist of the following courses: Academic Communication I, Approaches to English Linguistics, British and North American Studies, English Grammar, and Introduction to Literature in English (English Philology curriculum 2016–2017, 2016).

Two courses in the Basic Studies have contents that is relevant form the information literacy viewpoint. The first course is Academic Communication I, where the objective is described as developing the skills of correct usage of written and spoken English in relation to different forms of discourse, learning to apply the generally accepted conventions of academic writing, and developing the students' scholarly writing skills in English. In addition, the course has an objective

to enable the students in making use of the knowledge and experiences acquired, and to help them become further accustomed to reflecting upon their individual learning processes, thereby developing their self-directed learning skills. (English Philology curriculum 2016–2017, 2016.) The course Approaches to English Linguistics list the following learning objectives: displaying an understanding of different areas of linguistic research within English Philology, concentrating on spoken language; recognising the research methodology and the main concepts within these areas; and reading and understanding research in different areas of linguistics. The course also aims to supporting the development of academic communication skills, and thereby endorses the contents of the course Academic Communication I. (English Philology curriculum 2016–2017, 2016.)

In the beginning of their studies, approximately simultaneously with attending to the Basic Studies, the students will attend a library ABC course, a 90–minute library orientation training session that is compulsory to all new students (Oulu University Library, 2016). This course aims to equipping the students with the basic tools for their information searches. The library ABC is a part of the general studies and thereby considered as a part of the English Philology curriculum (English Philology curriculum 2016–2017, 2016).

Intermediate Studies provide much more selection regarding the course contents, and the variety of courses is wide. The compulsory courses in the Intermediate studies are Academic Communication II, Research in Language Studies, Researching Literature and Culture, and Bachelor’s Seminar and Thesis. The first three of the compulsory courses form the core of the Intermediate Studies, and provide the students with the basic skills of research methodology and presentation, leading them to their Bachelor’s Seminar and Thesis and thereby to their Bachelor of Arts degree. (English Philology curriculum 2016–2017, 2016.)

The course Academic Communication II follows and deepens the contents of the course Academic Communication I. The leaning objectives of the course are competence in core skills essential for academic success at the university level, such as effective reading and note-taking strategies, principles of academic reference and citation, writing skills, critical thinking, rhetorical organization, and oral presentation. The course Research in Language Studies aims for providing an overview of research approaches, such as linguistic fieldwork, basic statistics for language,

ethnography, ethnomethodology, conversation analysis, discourse analysis, and action research. In addition, various methods for collecting and analysing data are introduced. The learning objectives of the course are understanding research approaches to the study of language and language learning, along with research ethics, and being able to identify appropriate research strategies in the context of particular research paradigms. The course *Researching Literature and Culture* focuses on integrating socio-cultural and formal approaches to literary works. Texts are examined as literary artefacts as well as cultural products, and a variety of research methodologies from cultural and literary studies are introduced. The learning objectives of the course are enabling the student to offer clear formal analysis of literary works of different genres, understanding the range of socio-cultural forces articulated in those works, applying a range of literary and cultural theories to individual texts, and bringing awareness and ability to apply a variety of research methods. (English Philology curriculum 2016–2017, 2016.)

The Bachelor's Seminar course's learning objectives include enabling the student in selecting and delimiting a phenomenon for research, adopting a relevant research approach and finding earlier scholarly research for studying it, collecting suitable data in an ethical way, and conducting analysis of the data. In addition, the course includes writing a short thesis (20–25 pages) in the correct scholarly form, evaluating other students' research, and offering peer support to other students. During the course the students will gain practice in retrieving and presenting scholarly materials, using libraries, conducting scholarly discussions, and evaluating research. (English Philology curriculum 2016–2017, 2016.)

Advanced Studies mainly consists of elective courses, Master's Seminar being the only compulsory course in addition to writing the Master's Thesis. The Master's Seminar course has the following objectives: being able to select and delimit a phenomenon for research, adopt a relevant research approach and find earlier scholarly research for studying it, collect suitable data in an ethical way, and conduct analysis on the data; writing a seminar paper (25–30 pages) in the correct scholarly form; evaluating others' research; and offering peer support to others. The learning objectives of the Master's Seminar include evaluating others' work and giving support and feedback to others, which are important practices in an academic community. (English Philology curriculum 2016–2017, 2016.)

Looking at the English Philology curriculum against the Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education (ACRL, 2015), it became prominent that some frames are very well represented in the curriculum, whereas others are not so easily detected. This is partly due to the nature of the frames: the more abstract and vague frames are more difficult to locate and pinpoint in the curriculum than frames that have more concrete and precise description. In the following the frames are addressed individually, with examples from the curriculum.

The frame Authority Is Constructed and Contextual is very important from the viewpoint of evaluating information. Defining different types of authority, using research tools and indicators of authority to determine the credibility of sources, and understanding the social nature of the information ecosystems where authorities connect with one another and sources develop over time, are some of the most important knowledge practices of this frame (ACRL, 2015). Authority is not a subject matter clearly described on any of the courses in the English Philology curriculum, nor is it visible in the general description. The matter of determining authority and general credibility of sources is difficult, but crucial in finding valuable and suitable sources. Therefore, this frame comes forth in the library guidance and especially in the individual library sessions connected to the courses Bachelor's and Master's Seminar. The authority and how it is detected comes along when the students become familiar with the central literature of each field of study, but it may remain unclear how the authority is defined within each field. The fact that English Philology consists of several core areas that are very different from one another, adds to the problematic of determining authority correctly. It is difficult to detect and determine the authorities within one field of research, but even more difficult when there are more fields than one. Defining an authority within the field of literature is very different compared to the field of conversation analysis, for instance. In addition, different fields accept different mediums as eligible or proper, and the formalness of the packaging varies. It is, therefore, no wonder that the students struggle with a clear view of the authority and how to evaluate it. This frame would benefit immensely from a collaboration between an information specialist and a teacher, where both of their expertise could be brought together.

The frame Information Has Value concentrates on such knowledge practices as crediting others correctly, different legal matters, and the intellectual property issues. These practices are best represented by research ethics in the course Academic Communication II, where these matters

are dealt at least to some extent. In addition, ethics are naturally intertwined in the work on all courses throughout the studies. Plagiarism, any illegalities, or immorality are frowned upon and this is brought forth during all study work. Unlike some disciplines, English Philology does not use Urkund or other plagiarism detectors to check students' texts for regular course assignments as a rule, but instead each teacher decides for themselves how they deal with the matter. Some choose to use Urkund, others do not, but rely instead on the students moral, the trust between the students and the teaching staff, and their own ability to detect foul play. The ways of cheating have become so versatile that it has become impossible to prevent it completely. For Bachelor's and Master's Theses, Urkund is regularly used, but the students have the option of declining its use for their papers. Copyright, fair use, open access, and public domain, as well as intellectual property, are not written out as being contents for any of the compulsory courses. During the courses Bachelor's and Master's Seminar and Thesis these matters do not come up as strongly as the citing practices.

For the Master's Seminar course, the observation indicated that in the matter of research ethics, intellectual property or legal matters, the attention was strongly directed to correct citing. In the discussion, it was brought up that incorrect citing may at its worst lead to a suspicion of foul play. Any form of deliberate malpractice or illegal activity was not discussed, and felt a subject that everyone wanted to avoid. It is a difficult subject to discuss, and I sensed an air of not wanting to insult the students by questioning their integrity. Instead, even the possible incorrect citing was lightened, and referred to as a mistake: *"An incorrect citing could lead to a problem in Urkund check"*. The approach of the discussion was the same as Nilsson and colleagues (2005) and Sormunen and Poikela (2008) had: there is no presumption of the students cheating and no need to discuss the possibility of students' intentionally stealing someone else's work.

The frame Information Creation as a Process concentrates accordingly to the process of creating information and even though many of the courses contain information creation in some way or another, the practices of this frame are not clearly visible in the course descriptions. Of all the frames, this is the most ambiguous and abstract in its description, albeit the name that gives an impression of something more concrete. The dispositions of this frame concentrate on different formats to pack information and the characteristics of information products. There are certain more general knowledge practices in the frame that can be interpreted as practical, such as

articulating the capabilities and constraints of information or assessing the fit between an information product's creating process and a particular information need, but most of the practices are very abstract. The aforementioned practices come forth most clearly in the library's information search courses and individual library sessions.

Research as Inquiry is a frame that comes through especially in courses Bachelor's and Master's Seminar. Formulating questions for research, determining an appropriate scope of investigation, using various research methods, synthesizing ideas gathered from multiple sources, and drawing reasonable conclusions based on the analysis and interpretation of information, are the basis for writing a Bachelor's or Master's Thesis. They are also the knowledge practices of the frame Research as Inquiry (ACRL, 2015). This frame is thus clearly present in the course description as well as the general description of the subject. During the observation of the group meetings in the Master's Seminar course, the contents of this frame were very prominent especially in the beginning of the course when the students were at the stage of formulating and refining their research questions, scopes, and research methods. Most of the time for the meetings was used for this purpose. The students supported one another from the beginning, and the teachers maintained conversation throughout the processes, trying to lower the threshold for all students to contribute. This was accomplished among other things by forcing all students to converse, even the ones who claimed to have nothing to say. Also, other forms of communication, such as writing, was used to make it easier to express opinions.

As the frame Scholarship as Conversation suggests, research is a discursive practice in which ideas are formulated, debated, and weighed against one another in an ongoing conversation. Different perspectives are recognized, scrutinized, and negotiated and there is an understanding of the possibility of several competing perspectives, even outside one's own discipline or field of research. (ACRL, 2015.) This frame is clearly visible in many of the course descriptions. Some of the knowledge practices within this frame are citing the contribution work of others in their own information production, contributing to scholarly conversation at an appropriate level and identifying barriers to doing so, critically evaluating others' contributions, and recognizing that a given scholarly work may not represent the only or even the majority perspective. (ACRL, 2015.) Such practices as correct citing, evaluating others work, and providing peer support are especially visible in Master's and Bachelor's Seminar courses, but also already in the course Academic

Communication II, perhaps even in Academic Communication I. Introducing the practice of conversation to the students runs through the studies from Basic to Advanced. What is missing from the curriculum regarding this frame, are the dispositions of students seeing themselves as contributors to scholarship instead of only consumers, suspending judgments on scholarly works until the larger context of the conversation is better understood, and understanding the responsibility that comes with entering the scholarly conversation (ACRL, 2015). These dispositions require highly developed understanding of the practices and the context of academia and research. Even though Bachelor's and Master's Theses are the first contributions the students make for the scholarship, it is no wonder their perception of themselves does not necessarily change from consumer to contributor. Students are advised not to refer to other students' theses, or to use them as sources. This practice does not underscore their significance as contributors in the academia.

The frame Searching as Strategic Exploration separates between novice learners and experts. Novice learners use a limited set of resources in their searches, and tend to use fewer search strategies. Experts search more broadly and deeply, and select from various search strategies. It is clear that students represent the category of novice students in this frame. The central knowledge practices of the frame are determining the scope of the task, utilizing divergent and convergent thinking when searching, matching information needs and strategies to appropriate search tools and designing and refining them as necessary, and managing the search processes and results effectively (ACRL, 2015). In other words, this frame represents the actual information search and its processes. The practices are therefore strongly introduced in the contents of the library's information search courses, individual library sessions, or meetings with an information specialist. The students as novice learners should, particularly when it comes to this frame, utilize the knowledge and proficiency of their experts, the information specialists. The library courses are not compulsory for the students majoring in English Philology at the university of Oulu. The only one that they must attend is the orientation course, and in addition there are sessions that are attached to a compulsory course, such as Bachelor's or Master's Seminar. It could be argued that the students would have to attend to a course when it is compulsory, securing that all students acquire the skills and abilities, but then again, not all courses that would be beneficial to the students can be made compulsory. A fair amount of academic freedom stamps the curriculum and the more compulsory courses there are, the less freedom the students will have. Instead of

forcing, perhaps a better approach is to provide information as well and as much as possible, to explain why different courses are beneficial and how they support the students in what they endeavour.

The English Philology curriculum at the University of Oulu is rather vague when it comes to the objective of information literacy. Information literacy is not mentioned as a concept, but certain general skills are, such as “training in the basic skills of research methodology and presentation” in the Intermediate studies, and “to encourage students to broaden their skills and knowledge base and to learn to apply them to increasingly specific tasks”, and “to equip students with the formal and the intellectual skills that are necessary for independent study” in the Advanced studies. As critics (Tuominen et al., 2005; Nevgi, 2007; Stordy, 2015) have argued, the concept of information literacy is difficult to grasp and explain, which may be one of the reasons the concept is not used as such in curriculums or course descriptions. If the concepts are not informative to the students or anyone else reading the descriptions, they serve no purpose and therefore are better explained in other words. Many course descriptions in the English Philology curriculum detail skills and practices that are, in fact, skills and practices that aim for the information literacy objectives.

5.2 The Master’s Seminar course

The Master’s Seminar course is one of the final courses the students attend to, before writing their Master’s Thesis. Most begin to work on their thesis during the course and continue with the support of their supervisor. Being at the final stage of the studies, it is one of the last opportunities for the students to polish the skills they will need to finish their theses, but also for the teachers to see if there is something they still feel needs to be taught or rehearsed. Peer support and feedback was an important part of the group activities during the course. From the primary stages of choosing the topics for their Seminar papers, the group got feedback from each other. Especially in the beginning of the course the idea was to give different points of view to others’ research, to help them think outside the box and perhaps even push them out of their comfort zones. Students have the opportunity to see how other students view their research topic or viewpoint, and they can also get new ideas by hearing what other students are researching. It is possible for the students to continue with the same research topic as in their Bachelor’s Thesis,

but at least in this seminar group there were few who wanted to continue with the same topic. Even if the topic would remain the same, the peer feedback is useful in expanding the idea or in finding new perspectives for the research. The ideas, methods, and methodologies are varied within the subject field of English Philology, and not all students are equally familiar with all of them. As an activity, commenting on others' work, even when they are only at the stage of research ideas, resembles the practices of peer review in an academic community.

One of the interview questions to the students was about their expectations of the Master's Seminar course (see Appendix 3). This question aimed at finding out whether the students had a similar objective in mind as the teachers and the course description present. The question also strived for provoking the idea of learning objectives in the students' minds. The students do not always think about the objectives they have for each course, but instead may concentrate solely on what assignments they need to complete in order to pass the course. The assignments are not there merely to fill a certain number of hours, but instead they usually aim for some kind of learning experience as their result. It would be important for the students to keep in mind that the reason they are taking the courses is to learn, to acquire skills, that they are doing it for themselves, not for the teacher or anyone else. Sometimes this objective gets lost, and the courses and assignments become a series of unconnected tasks. The more the course contents feels connected to the students own needs and objectives, the more motivated they are in completing the tasks.

The students' answers to the question of their expectations of the Master's Seminar course were rather unanimous in that they all wished to get a good start on their Thesis: *"My primary expectations for the course are that I'll find a good topic for my Master's Thesis and get the process started as soon as possible"* (S1). Many felt they needed *"guidance on how to proceed with the project"* (S4) and becoming reacquainted with topics such as methodology and scientific writing: *"the tools I need to start working on my Master's Thesis"* (S6). There were also students who did not expect much new, more of a re-enactment of the course Bachelor's Seminar: *"I think the course will be [...] rather similar to the Bachelor's one, so I do not expect to learn anything big and new"* (S5). These students did not express any expectations of learning something new, and they did not embrace the notion of repeating the course contents of the Bachelor's Seminar course. They were a minority though, and my assumption is that for those students who were

especially hopeful about rehearsing previously learned skills, it had been a while since they completed the Bachelor's Seminar and felt they had forgotten most of it.

All in all, the students had a good notion of the learning objectives of the Master's Seminar course and for most students the learning objectives were in line with their own objectives, whether they were aware of it being so or not. It became clear during the interviews, that the students generally tend to read the course descriptions even though they have not read the curriculum or have not acquainted with the general learning objectives. The course descriptions resemble an introduction to a course, and the students read it to get a general idea of the contents of the course they are about to participate in.

5.3 The library and its services

At the University of Oulu, different disciplines have different standards for implementing the information literacy objective. All disciplines utilise the library services to some extent, but some rely on the library more than others. In some disciplines the library courses are compulsory, whereas in some they are not and rely more on the students' will and demand for assistance. It is difficult to compare different fields, because some of them offer a lot of guidance integrated in their own courses and hence it can be comprehensible that only those students who feel the need for additional support attend the library courses. On the other hand, leaving courses and their attendance only for the students to decide is certain to lead to a situation where a portion of students are not going to attend the course whatever their needs or skill levels are.

The library session of the Master's Seminar course was held a few weeks after the beginning of the course, when the students were at the stage of having decided on their topic for the research. The students were assigned beforehand to collect a list of keywords to help them in the information searches. The information specialist was experienced and appeared very accustomed to holding these kinds of "brush up" sessions for advanced students. The students appeared to be rather passive; they did not ask many questions or give comments, even when they were encouraged to tell if there is something they want to concentrate on or were asked about their topics. This makes it challenging to tell whether they would have needed more information or

clarification on a theme or subject. They seemed somewhat reluctant to tell the information specialist about the topics they were working on or the keywords they used. Perhaps they felt that, being a member of the library staff, the information specialist would not be familiar enough with their topics to be able to help. Another explanation for the reluctance to explain one's work could be that the students had not yet developed a clear enough image of their research topic, and therefore it was difficult to explain it in just a few words. However, being able to briefly explain one's research topic to a stranger or a layperson is an important skill, and should perhaps be exercised more. When asked about using RefWorks or different databases, the students were more inclined to give prompt answers. It seemed that the subjects that were closer to the assumed know-how of the information specialist were such that evoked most answers or comments in the students.

Neither of the course's teachers were present at the library session. This was due to earlier scheduling, since the library session was not originally part of the course schedule. Thus, according to the original schedule, the students would not have had a session with an information specialist. The students were instead encouraged to take the course Research and structures of information search for humanities offered by the university library, but it seemed that most of the students either had not planned to participate or even even heard about the course. This seems unfortunate, since the library session showed that most students needed guidance or, at least, some reminders of the most important issues. For many students, it has been over a year since their Bachelor's Thesis, and much had been forgotten. Moreover, the library website has recently been renewed, along with the search page, and the new locations and functions demanded a lot of time to get acquainted with. Had it not been for the library session, the students would have been on their own, learning to use the new site. It may not sound like a struggle for computer literate students, but without proper guidance, many features on the search page will not be fully exploited. Regardless of their passive demeanour during the library session, most students estimated afterwards that they generally have good or very good searching skills, and that they had found good sources for their papers. They were confident in their abilities to search and evaluate the search results.

Even though the interviews showed that the students were rather confident in their abilities to search and evaluate information and they estimated that the students at the Advanced level are in

general competent in information literacy, they leaned very much on the teachers in suggesting them good source literature and asked for guidance in finding and evaluating literature. This behaviour is somewhat contradictory to their own estimation of their abilities. The students were also more eager to ask for help from their own teachers than from the information specialist. One likely reason is that they believe the teachers have experience in the field of study and can therefore point them towards the right authority, another reason is that they are more familiar with the teaching staff of their own subject, perhaps having worked with them already previously on a different course or at least having gotten to know them during the Master's Seminar course. The information specialist may feel like a stranger, also in the sense of being a professional of a different field. It seems that the students were also more inclined to arrange meetings with the teachers to ask questions of wait for the group meeting to be over and talk to them afterwards, instead of asking questions in front of the group. Sometimes the students can be very sensitive about their work, especially when it is still in progress, and can for this reason be unwilling to talk about it in front of an audience.

None of the students were aware that the library has a service where you can request books to be added to selection. The request is easy to use, and electronic material is acquired quickly, due to not needing to wait for shipping. Students feel reluctant to make acquisition requests, partly because they do not know about the service, but partly also because they often feel unexperienced and doubt that the material they would ask for is likely absent for a reason. The library has a separate quota of funds for acquisitions that relate to theses, but unfortunately, not many students are aware of this. The library also offers information services, where students can either book an appointment or go to the desk without an appointment. This service was also news to the students taking part in the library session. Most likely the students have been informed about these services when they were working on their Bachelor's Theses, but much of information like this becomes forgotten as soon as it is no longer current and necessary. The students would require constant reminders of the services and courses the library offers. This might turn out useful, but it is also an additional effort from the library to be constantly reminding the students about its existence. The teaching staff can also assume the role of reminder, bringing up the library and its services time and again, but it would require extra effort from all staff members and may feel pointless and repetitive.

5.4 The concept of information literacy

The students were well aware of the meaning of the concept of information literacy. They could provide good definitions for the concept and there were some very good examples of information literacy in practice: *"I'm guessing information literacy means being able to find, evaluate and use the information needed?"* (S2), and *"Information literacy deals with the ability to search for information and to determine the relevance and consider the credibility of the information that is found"* (S3). It became apparent based on their answers, that the students were aware of information literacy and its meaning. The teachers view of the group's information literacy knowledge was in line with the students' own views. Both teachers estimated that the group had good information literacy skills, and one of them appraised that the group's abilities were above average: *"I feel that this is a particularly capable group in terms of information literacy"* (T2).

Even though the students were capable of producing the definition of the concept information literacy, and they estimated their own level of information literacy to be average or above average, based on their interviews there was a disconnect between being able to define the concept and understanding it. The definition of the concept was like a memorised rule: everyone can recite the rule, but not necessary act according to it. The confidence may also derive from the success in previous studies. If the students have gotten so far, they must have acquired the proper skills and abilities. There is something truthful here, but the notion of the good abilities can also be false. Without an adequate level of information literacy, the students may use a considerable amount of time and effort in searching and evaluating information, but are not aware of it being in any way abnormal. It is rarely discussed how much time each student has used to complete a task. Moreover, the students may have peers who also use substantial amounts of time in searching and evaluating, and this verifies for both students that their time allocation is justifiable. As one of the students put it, *"Information search [...] takes a lot of time"* (S2). It is, however, difficult to define what is a lot of time and how different people evaluate what is time consuming and what is not.

Out of all the interviewees, the information specialist is the one with most knowledge of the general level of information literacy among students, and whether the level is what it should be. The library staff have the tools to evaluate the students and know what the students are expected of at the stage of studies they are in. However, despite having a better knowledge of information literacy and its evaluation, the information specialist does not usually know the students well enough to see whether the students have progressed during their studies and the time they spend with the students is often so brief that the evaluation can be difficult to do. The teaching staff would have a deeper knowledge and an overall understanding of the students, but also of the field of study and its special demands.

5.5 The general learning objectives of higher education and English Philology

Although the concept of information literacy was clear for the students and they were able to define it in their own words, when asked about the general objectives of English Philology as well as those of higher education, the answers were divided. Some of the students had no idea what the objectives were, and were quite honest about not being too interested in them: *“I only have my own individual objectives in mind”* (S2), or they had a vague or non-existent idea of the objectives: *“I actually don’t know what they are!”* (S6). Other students, then again, were very well aware of the objectives and when asked to describe the objectives in their own words, had no difficulties in doing so:

The learning objectives include the competence to describe and utilize the English grammar, the ability to understand and analyse English literature, the understanding of Anglo-Saxon culture, and the proficiency to produce academic text in English. The general learning objectives of higher education comprise of at least the capability to conduct academic research, the ability to understand complex entities and theoretical concepts, and the ability to understand the cultural diversity of the modern society. Moreover, one of the main objectives of higher education is to produce citizens who are experts in their academic field.

(S3)

These students had a clear understanding of both English Philology learning objective and the learning objectives of higher education in general.

Although the two groups were different in their answers and the first group appeared to have little knowledge of or even interest in the learning objectives, the first group appeared to have a different perception of the objectives and therefore a different stance towards them. Students may sometimes see the objectives in a more negative light, as something prescriptive or restrictive, and may even choose to ignore the objectives altogether. They may instead develop a goal of their own, and feel that goals set from outside may conflict with their own objective or agenda. All students have their own objectives, but some students may feel more strongly that their own objective conflicts with those set by someone else.

5.6 Self-evaluation of information literacy

All students estimated their own information literacy to be average or above average among their peers. Most students did not express any need to advance or improve their information literacy, and they appeared all in all rather content in their own abilities. Based on their answers, the meaning of average varied among the students, though. To some students, average meant that they were approximately as good as all the other students, and to them that meant *“quite competent”*, or, as one of the students put it: *“I find information relatively easily and I don’t have great difficulty evaluating the findings”* (S2). To other students, however, average meant that there is still much room for improvement: *“I still have a lot to learn about this topic”* (S4). Also, as one student clarified, *“it is hard to compare myself to other students on this, but perhaps I’m about average”* (S5). When in doubt, choose the middle. The scale from poor to great and where one would place his or herself on the scale does not appear to mean much, unless we also ask what the scale is to each student and how they see themselves in relation to other students.

However competent they estimated themselves in general, when asked to specify what they find to be most difficult in information searches, the students named many problems they experienced during searches. Problems they experienced were very fundamental, such as defining the correct search terms or finding the right database. They also regarded information searches to be very

time consuming. Based on the problems they experienced, one might assume that the students would estimate their level of information literacy lower than they did. Based on their answers, many students seemed to leave information searches completely outside the concept of information literacy. Therefore, in estimating themselves or their peers, they appeared to be thinking mostly about evaluating a given material instead of material they have searched for themselves. They described information literacy as *“critical reading of text, for example sources”* (S4) or *“the ability to determine whether information is trustworthy and correct”* (S5). Thus, the students may place the focus of information literacy on the evaluation of the text, but it appears that they act as if the texts were handed to them, instead of having to find the text first, and then evaluating it.

Even if the students have a notion of what information literacy is and why it is important, there is a difference in knowing something and understanding it. The difficulties the students described having encountered when executing searches, such as finding relevant sources, finding the right search terms, deciding which database to use, narrowing down the searches and the topic, and the fine tuning each database has, were problems that could be solved by attending to guidance and teaching, by rehearsing the searches and familiarising with the search terms and the databases. Also, as the students described it, the problems often arise when the subject is not familiar: *“I usually don’t have a clear picture of what I’m actually looking for”* (S6), or *“finding the right search terms is more difficult if the subject is more unfamiliar and/or the subject is quite complex”* (S5).

The observation of the library session showed that even though the students, according to their interviews, were not sure of their search terms or databases, they did not say anything when they had the opportunity to get guidance from the information specialist. The group was passive, only a few of the students asked questions or answered the information specialist’s questions. In the interview with the information specialist, she confirmed the students’ difficulties to be generally the same that the students brought forth:

“Joo, ehkä ihan nää perusteet, sen hakulauseen muotoilu ja tekniikat, että miten sieltä haetaan ja se että mistä haetaan, että missä ne tietokannat on ja että mihin tietokantaan mennään, mikä on sen aiheen kannalta hyvä tietokanta.”

"Yeah, perhaps it's the basics, forming the search phrase and the techniques, how to search and where to search, where are the databases and which database to choose, what is a good database for the subject."

(IS)

All in all, for some students, information literacy seems to mean something different than the searches they execute when trying to find information and determine what strategies to implement in getting the best results. They appear to see information literacy as a somewhat abstract concept, as something they need to be able to define but not really as something they use in their daily work. One of the students analysed the general level of information literacy among students as follows:

"There's the ones that say that they know everything, and there's the other ones that said that I felt bored but I still don't really rely on that because it's too complicated for me, I just rely on my own ability to google that stuff"

(S1).

This is in line with Holman's (2011) findings: googling is the most familiar way to find information, and the general assumption is that all databases work with the same algorithms. Holman (2011) also discovered that the searches were superficial and somewhat haphazard, which was supported by the findings in this study in the observation during the library session.

5.7 The actualisation of the learning objective of information literacy in English Philology

Based on the interviews with the students, the teaching staff, and the information specialist, and the analysis of the curriculum, the actualisation of the learning objective of information literacy in the subject of English Philology is fulfilled to a certain extent. More precisely, the curriculum does not specify information literacy as a learning objective, but it brings forth many skills and abilities that support and contribute to the important practices that constitute information literacy.

Moreover, in the individual course descriptions, the objectives clearly have a common ambition and the work done during each course contributes to this ambition.

In their interviews the teachers shared the view of the objective of information literacy being visible in the curriculum, along with the other general learning objectives. The information specialists view is more general in that it is impossible to review each subject separately in the light of information literacy, but the general view of how much the objective is visible in any subjects' curricula is as follows:

”Se on niinku ehkä semmonen – niinkun semmonen hurskas toive, että yliopistosta valmistuis niinkun informaatiolukutaitosia opiskelijoita, mutta mä en usko että se sitte tavoittaa sitä konkretiaa muuten ku meidän kurssilla joka on vaan yks opintopiste siitä kolmesta sadasta.”

”It is more of a pious hope that the students graduating from university would be information literate, whereas in reality I do not think that it is concretised elsewhere than in the course we provide, and it is only one study point out of the 300.”

(IS)

One course simply cannot provide the desirable level of information literacy. It is, however, noteworthy that in their interviews, the teachers naturally have a different stance to the subject of English Philology, because they represent the teaching staff. The information specialist has not familiarised to the English Philology curriculum to the same extent, and it is not something that is expected from her. Therefore, their representations of the objective and its visibility in the curriculum come from different angles, and the information specialist's image in this respect is indirect. Her view of the objective's visibility is mediated by the teaching staff and the students.

The teaching staff has the learning objective of information literacy in mind to some extent, although I venture to claim that the objective is not necessarily always clear to all the teaching staff, either. The staff unquestionably has the students' best interest in mind, but they are experts in their own field and have not necessarily acquainted in information literacy, information searches, or information assessment to the extent that they would consider themselves experts in

that area. They have their own methods and strategies to search and evaluate information, which as such may not always be transferrable to others. The teachers also have limited resources, and have more than enough on their plate when trying to fit everything in the course schedule, even without general learning objectives. The concrete subject matter of the course is likely to overcome, if there is no time for everything.

It is not in any way certain, that the objective of information literacy is something that is recognised by the students of English Philology. Based on the interviews, all students have heard about the concept of information literacy, and have some notion about its meaning. However, the concept itself has suffered and became generalised or commonplace, and today resembles the concept of learning strategies. Everyone knows they are important, each have their own way of implementing them, but many students seem to shrug at them and think that they already master the learning or the searches, and they do not need to refine their skills or practices. The general learning objectives may also have a somewhat boring overtone to them. They sound like the general compulsory courses all students must take and no-one is really interested in. They feel separate from the subject itself, and remain so unless they are tied to it in some way. Therefore, the library courses are currently organised according to the students' major subjects, so they would be able to concentrate to the subject specific databases and searches. Perhaps a collaboration effort of an information specialist and a teacher could be the way to emphasise the importance of the learning objective of information literacy to the students.

6 Discussion

As already stated, information literacy is more than a set of skills. It is, as Lloyd (2010) describes it, “a constellation of activities and skills” (p. 24). The ALA’s and ACRL’s framework gives a general list of practices and dispositions, but they are also criticised as seeing information literacy as mere skills (Gullikson, 2006; Tuominen, et al., 2005). However, giving general frames or standards, is difficult, if a certain number of generalisations are not used. Each field of study is different to some extent, and therefore generalisations are necessary in maintaining applicability to all fields. Tuominen and colleagues (2005) stance on the framework is very critical: they have a viewpoint that mainly looks at working life and its contexts, and this influences the way they see the framework. Perhaps a wider scope would provide a more productive interpretation, one that could be used in different surroundings.

As a case study, this thesis focuses on understanding this phenomenon, more than on explaining or predicting it. However, a wider study would also enable comparison between different disciplines or different universities, and would provide more tangible or statistical results. The limitations that must be considered in this study are the unobjective nature of self-evaluation, and the stance affecting phenomena referred to as Google generation students or sometimes millennials or digital natives.

The faculty staff has a central role in attaining the objective of information literacy throughout the student population. According to ACRL (2000), the faculty staff establishes the context of learning through lectures and leading discussions, inspires and guides the students, and monitors their progress. The teaching staff is closest to the students and has the power to argue the importance of information literacy to them. However, according to ACRL (2000), incorporating information literacy across curricula requires collaboration from faculty, librarians, and administration. If the collaboration is smooth and without problems, it is beneficial for all parties involved. To achieve competency in information literacy, the students need to understand that this cluster of abilities is in fact intertwined into the curriculum’s content, structure and sequence (ACRL, 2000). If the importance of information literacy is not highlighted enough, it is more than likely that students will fail in achieving a good level of information literacy. However, pushing all responsibility to the

shoulders of the teaching staff would be an exaggeration. The students are first and foremost themselves responsible for their own learning.

The leap students take as they advance to higher education, from reading study and course books to reading articles, can be one cause of trouble and it would also be an interesting subject to study. For the first 12 years of students' school years the books and the teachers tell the undeniable and undisputable truth. After this, the students enter the university where they are directed to question and compare information they acquire, but at the same time they still have teachers who are the fountains of truth. Some courses still have designated course literature that is not questioned. This creates a conflict that complicates the adoption of critical thinking as well as evaluation of the authority of a text. The movement towards problem-based learning is simultaneously movement away from the truths dictated from above. The more students need to self take responsibility in finding and evaluating their course materials, the more practice they get in the evaluation and the more prolific it will be for their abilities.

The curriculum does not underline the importance of information literacy or the skills and practices connected to it. Neither is it supposed to, for the information literacy objective is merely one of the general learning objectives of higher education. The most highlighted learning objectives are the ones directly connected to the subject matter of the individual courses and the curriculum and the subject as a whole. It is, however, noteworthy that the general objectives are not in the spotlight in the individual subjects' curricula. Based on the findings of this study, the students rarely read the general learning objectives for higher education, the objectives of the faculty of humanities, or even the general objectives of their own major subject. Some students have a general idea what the general objectives are, but most seem driven in their studies by their own agendas and personal objectives.

6.1 The framework and the curriculum

All of the frames in the framework were found in the course descriptions of the compulsory courses of English Philology. Some frames were not as clearly visible in the curriculum as others: Authority Is Constructed and Contextual was not clearly described in the curriculum, and it most

likely comes forth mainly in the library guidance and individual library sessions. However, the observation showed that even though the frame was not visible in the curriculum itself, the practices came through in the Master's Seminar course. The students leaned on the teachers' expertise and their position to define their authority on the matter of finding relevant literature for their research. Another less clearly visible frame is Information Creation as a Process, which despite of its name, concentrates mostly on the different formats and information products that are the end results of creating information. The frame is abstract and difficult to connect to concrete course contents. The frame indicates that the information products the students create serve different purposes depending on the choices the students make in the process of creation. This, unfortunately, is beyond the average students' scope, since most of the information the students create is for the purposes of a specific course or assignment. The other frames were more concrete, and it was easier to find a correlation between the frame and its practices and dispositions, and the individual course descriptions and the learning objectives of the courses.

To summarise, the frames were to some extent a functional background to examine the curriculum against. Despite of the critique, the lists of skills and abilities associated with each frame give a concrete impression about what the frames are about. Naturally, the curriculum of English Philology had not been created to mirror the frames, but nonetheless the frames were visible in it. Some of the frames came most clearly though in the library sessions and courses organized by the library, which are strictly speaking not part of the curriculum of English Philology, but since the nature of the frames was so clearly related to the actual practice of information searches and library sessions are organized in conjunction to one or more of the compulsory courses of the subject, it is justifiable to see them as part of the curriculum.

6.2 Self-evaluation of information literacy

Most of information literacy evaluation is self-evaluation, because, according to Gross and Latham (2012), objective tests of information literacy have not been widely available. Efforts to assess information literacy have been local and they have been developed for specific contexts and purposes (Gross & Latham, 2012). Also, information literacy assessment projects demand resources, such as time and money, and not all institutions are willing to make the investment.

Self-evaluation is sometimes considered meaningless because people do not have enough competence to evaluate their abilities especially in relation to other people. As previously stated, self-evaluation of information literacy can be miscalibrated and, as all self-evaluation, it is often more or less biased (Gross & Latham, 2012). We are not able to make objective assessment of our own abilities, be it comparative or actual. Being aware of the bias in self-evaluation and keeping it separate from any objective assessment is important. Self-evaluation and people's impressions and awareness of their own actions and abilities are still very important and beneficial. To be able to help students in their efforts and provide support to them, it is imperative to know how they themselves feel they are doing and how they estimate their actual as well as comparative abilities. From there can the work of developing more information literate students begin.

The problem is that if students have a tendency to overestimate their searching abilities (Gross & Latham, 2012; Kruger & Dunning, 1999) and if the faculty staff and the library staff trusts the students' evaluation without measuring or testing it, the misconception of having good or adequate abilities prevails. For many subjects the library courses are elective, although advisable, and even though all students would attend, the learning results are not guaranteed to be sufficient. Some type of objective testing would be beneficial, especially in estimating how much guidance the students require. The investment to creating such a test would soon repay itself, because both library and the disciplines would have better opportunities in directing their efforts to those students who need them the most. Directing the guidance to the right student population could also prevent frustration, when those students who do not need support would not need to attend to it.

6.3 Google generation students

The concept of Google generation, or digital natives, or whatever you want to call them, can contribute to the problem. Youth are perceived—falsely—to be more competent than they truly are (see e.g. Bennett et al., 2008). This can lead to teachers at all stages of education making the false presumption that their students do not need guidance in certain areas, such as ICT. Not all students are computer literate and tech savvy, although it may be expected from them. There are no longer ICT courses for new students as they begin their university studies, and most students

would not need them either. There are, however, also students who do need guidance in writing a document, using different software and databases, or how to use different storage devices, for instance. But since most students seem to be competent enough, or at least get by, no universal guidance is any longer offered. The problems often arise only when the students are required to use more complex software or do exercises together in a computer class. Many students have developed their own workarounds for many functions, and may use incredible amount of time to complete a task, only because they are not able to use any complex commands or do not know how to do anything more difficult than copy and paste. Courses of quantitative studies consisting familiarising to statistical analysis software may end up as a short course to basic commands in Excel and Word.

The assumption of the students' competence in information literacy and the skill and abilities it entails is a disservice for the students. Even though some of them may be very competent in using digital technology, they are not a homogenous mass, where all have the same basic skills and competencies. Many studies have shown (see e.g. Holman 2011; Williams & Rowlands, 2007) that the students are not as good in searching as their teachers or they themselves expect and estimate them to be. On the contrary, the searches have appeared to be random and inconsistent, and this was also visible in the findings of this study. Moreover, the unobjective nature of self-evaluation makes the students' abilities even more difficult to estimate. If the students were asked to estimate whether they needed a course in computer sciences, most would probably say no, even though many of them only have the most basic skills and would benefit from such a course.

6.4 Evaluation of the methods

In this study, different qualitative methods were used to provide a holistic view of the information literacy learning objective and its implementation in the subject of English Philology at the University of Oulu. The research questions in this study required separate methods. To answer research question 1, namely "How is the objective of information literacy made visible in the curriculum of English Philology at the University of Oulu?", content analysis of the curriculum and the individual course descriptions was the primary method, whereas to answer research question 2, "What perception do the students of English Philology at the University of Oulu have about the

objective of information literacy, and about the guidance they receive to achieve the objective?” the methods of observation and interviews were chosen. Methodological triangulation was achieved by combining different methods.

It was surprising how many students found being interviewed face-to-face uncomfortable. Probably most students could have found a 15-minute time slot, if they wanted to. One reason for the reluctance may be that the students felt uneasy being interviewed in English, although as English Philology students they should feel comfortable using the language they are studying. Some may also have avoided the interview due to the subject of the study, feeling that it is either too abstract or uninteresting for them. Perhaps a recorded discussion of a group of students could have been more comfortable, when the students would not need to be alone in the interview situation. For a wider study, it would have been interesting to use a tailored test to evaluate the students’ actual level of information literacy, and combine the results with the interviews with the students and the teachers. As noted, self-evaluation is unobjective and often very difficult, and therefore it would perhaps be beneficial if the interviews could be looked at together with concrete test results.

The observation supported the interviews and the analysis of the curriculum well, providing concrete examples of how the text in the curriculum converts to action, and how the students and the teachers describe their expectations and how their descriptions are mirrored in reality. All in all, the variety of methods proved to be beneficial for the study, even though it was somewhat time consuming.

6.5 Future research

The opportunities for future research are endless. It would be not only interesting but also highly beneficial to study the whole student population of the University of Oulu, as well as to conduct a larger scale study of different universities in Finland. By doing a more widespread study it would be possible to make comparisons between different faculties, different disciplines, or between universities. Even international comparison would definitely be beneficial in the endeavour of accomplishing the best possible outcomes for information literacy practices of the Finnish

university students. The impact of the current study is moderate due to its scale, but the potential of this kind of research in a wider scale would be great. If it can be established that students would benefit from organising information literacy guidance in accordance with the subject matter teaching, the guidance could be reorganised accordingly and thereby bring forth efficiency and results in all teaching and guidance. As the financing are tight and the outcome becomes top priority, efficient and successful teaching should be a desirable end result for all operative units within the university.

The Oulu University Library has already for some time assigned students taking part in the course Research and structures of information search for humanities to write learning journals. These journals could serve as interesting research material for future studies, enlightening the students' experiences of the courses and their contents. Paired with a tailored information literacy evaluation test, the learning journals could be used to plan a functional study unit that would provide the students with the guidance they need.

7 Conclusion

Information literacy is a general learning objective in university education, and this thesis was an attempt to shed light on how the learning objective is visible in the curriculum of a specific subject. Also, it was of interest in this study to see what perception the students have of information literacy and the guidance they receive in their studies. It can be concluded that the objective of information literacy is visible on the curriculum of English Philology, but not as a learning objective named in the general description, but instead as individual practices, abilities, and skills that are present in the course descriptions. The curriculum focuses on the subject-specific learning objectives, but many of the general learning objectives are intertwined or congruent with the learning objectives of the subject. When examined against the Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education (ACRL, 2015), it became apparent that all frames were visible in the curriculum, although some of the frames were more clearly visible, more concrete, and more widely represented. Hence it can be argued that the learning objective of information literacy is indeed visible in the curriculum of English Philology at the University of Oulu.

The student interviews showed that the students were able to define the concept of information literacy, and that they experienced themselves to be average or above average in information literacy among their peers. The students evaluated that they had received guidance in information literacy, and they appeared content with it. However, when students were asked to specify the difficulties they have encountered during information searches, they came forth with difficulties that were quite fundamental, such as defining search terms and choosing the right databases for their searches. This finding was supported by the observation of the library session of the Master's Seminar group, as well as by the interview with the information specialist. It appears that the students have some difficulties in evaluating themselves, but also in understanding the difficulties they encounter.

Even though this study has shown that the objective of information literacy is present and visible in the curriculum of English Philology, and that the students have the notion of the meaning of the concept and evaluate themselves and their peers as good or average in information literacy, it does not mean that there are no grievances or no room for improvement. The curriculum is the only written document the students have for them to lean on, in respect of their studies. The

clearer and more precise the curriculum and the course descriptions are, the more support the students can potentially get from them. Another issue is, that the students do not appear to read the curriculum of either the faculty or their own major subject. Many of the students interviewed in this study were not familiar with the general learning objectives of higher education, or only had a rough idea of them. Many admitted that they had never even read the curriculum. The students are more interested in the course descriptions, and read them much more meticulously. The course descriptions provide tangible and comprehensible information about a particular course, hence the benefit of reading the description is direct.

Although the trends of education and the core objectives change as different governments have different aspirations for higher education institutions, there are still certain general objectives that should not be completely forgotten as a new trend arises. Today, the key projects include research and innovation, among others, but it must not be forgotten that a former key measure, information literacy, is a practice that is imperative for the attainment of many other key projects. Today, it seems to be all about money in education as it is in all fields of life. Higher education institutions must balance between their core objective and their budget. In this situation where individual subjects cannot even rely on existing in the future, general learning objectives are not in the centre of attention.

This research was a small-scale familiarisation to the subject of actualisation of information literacy in university studies in Finland. As stated earlier, the possibilities for further research are wide and called for. As a general learning objective, information literacy is crucial not only for all fields of study, but also for all areas of work and lines of business. In order to maintain the level of competitiveness globally, and taking note that many developing countries have taken huge leaps in advancing their level of education, higher education needs to develop and respond to the needs of different disciplines, but also those of students. Finland has always prided on the high level of education, but this is currently an objective in many other countries around the world, and it appears that many countries are succeeding in their endeavours.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education (ACRL, 2000)

STANDARD	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
<p>The information literate student determines the nature and extent of the information needed.</p>	<p>The information literate student defines and articulates the need for information.</p> <p>The information literate student identifies a variety of types and formats of potential sources for information.</p> <p>The information literate student considers the costs and benefits of acquiring the needed information.</p> <p>The information literate student re-evaluates the nature and extent of the information need.</p>
<p>The information literate student accesses needed information effectively and efficiently.</p>	<p>The information literate student selects the most appropriate investigative methods or information retrieval systems for accessing the needed information.</p> <p>The information literate student constructs and implements effectively-designed search strategies.</p> <p>The information literate student retrieves information online or in person using a variety of methods.</p> <p>The information literate student refines the search strategy if necessary.</p> <p>The information literate student extracts, records, and manages the information and its sources.</p>
<p>The information literate student evaluates information and its sources critically and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system.</p>	<p>The information literate student summarizes the main ideas to be extracted from the information gathered.</p> <p>The information literate student articulates and applies initial criteria for evaluating both the information and its sources.</p> <p>The information literate student synthesizes main ideas to construct new concepts.</p> <p>The information literate student compares new knowledge with prior knowledge to determine the value added, contradictions, or other unique characteristics of the information.</p> <p>The information literate student determines whether the new knowledge has an impact on the individual's value system and takes steps to reconcile differences.</p> <p>The information literate student validates understanding and interpretation of the information through discourse with other individuals, subject-area experts, and/or practitioners.</p>

	The information literate student determines whether the initial query should be revised.
The information literate student, individually or as a member of a group, uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.	<p>The information literate student applies new and prior information to the planning and creation of a particular product or performance.</p> <p>The information literate student revises the development process for the product or performance.</p> <p>The information literate student communicates the product or performance effectively to others.</p>
The information literate student understands many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally.	<p>The information literate student understands many of the ethical, legal and socio-economic issues surrounding information and information technology.</p> <p>The information literate student follows laws, regulations, institutional policies, and etiquette related to the access and use of information resources.</p> <p>The information literate student acknowledges the use of information sources in communicating the product or performance.</p>

Appendix 2. The Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education (adapted from ACRL 2015)

FRAME	KNOWLEDGE PRACTICES	DISPOSITIONS
<p>Authority Is Constructed and Contextual</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - define different types of authority, such as subject expertise position or special experience - use research tools and indicators of authority to determine the credibility of sources, understanding the elements that might temper this credibility - understand that many disciplines have acknowledged authorities in the sense of well-known scholars and publications that are widely considered “standard,” and yet, even in those situations, some scholars would challenge the authority of those sources - recognize that authoritative content may be packaged formally or informally and may include sources of all media types - acknowledge they are developing their own authoritative voices in a particular area and recognize the responsibilities this entails, including seeking accuracy and reliability, respecting intellectual property, and participating in communities of practice - understand the increasingly social nature of the information ecosystem where authorities actively connect with one another and sources develop over time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop and maintain an open mind when encountering varied and sometimes conflicting perspectives - motivate themselves to find authoritative sources, recognizing that authority may be conferred or manifested in unexpected ways - develop awareness of the importance of assessing content with a sceptical stance and with a self-awareness of their own biases and worldview - question traditional notions of granting authority and recognize the value of diverse ideas and worldviews - are conscious that maintaining these attitudes and actions requires frequent self-evaluation
<p>Information Creation as a Process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - articulate the capabilities and constraints of information developed through various creation processes - assess the fit between an information product’s creation process and a particular information need - articulate the traditional and emerging processes of information creation and dissemination in a particular discipline - recognize that information may be perceived differently based on the format in which it is packaged - recognize the implications of information formats that contain static or dynamic information - monitor the value that is placed upon different types of information products in varying contexts - transfer knowledge of capabilities and constraints to new types of information products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are inclined to seek out characteristics of information products that indicate the underlying creation process - value the process of matching an information need with an appropriate product - accept that the creation of information may begin initially through communicating in a range of formats or modes - accept the ambiguity surrounding the potential value of information creation expressed in emerging formats or modes - resist the tendency to equate format with the underlying creation process - understand that different methods of information dissemination with different purposes are available for their use

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop, in their own creation processes, an understanding that their choices impact the purposes for which the information product will be used and the message it conveys 	
Information Has Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - give credit to the original ideas of others through proper attribution and citation - understand that intellectual property is a legal and social construct that varies by culture - articulate the purpose and distinguishing characteristics of copyright, fair use, open access, and the public domain - understand how and why some individuals or groups of individuals may be underrepresented or systematically marginalized within the systems that produce and disseminate information - recognize issues of access or lack of access to information sources - decide where and how their information is published - understand how the commodification of their personal information and online interactions affects the information they receive and the information they produce or disseminate online - make informed choices regarding their online actions in full awareness of issues related to privacy and the commodification of personal information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - respect the original ideas of others - value the skills, time, and effort needed to produce knowledge - see themselves as contributors to the information marketplace rather than only consumers of it - are inclined to examine their own information privilege
Research as Inquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - formulate questions for research based on information gaps or on re-examination of existing, possibly conflicting, information - determine an appropriate scope of investigation - deal with complex research by breaking complex questions into simple ones, limiting the scope of investigations - use various research methods, based on need, circumstance, and type of inquiry - monitor gathered information and assess for gaps or weaknesses - organize information in meaningful ways - synthesize ideas gathered from multiple sources - draw reasonable conclusions based on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consider research as open-ended exploration and engagement with information - appreciate that a question may appear to be simple but still disruptive and important to research - value intellectual curiosity in developing questions and learning new investigative methods - maintain an open mind and a critical stance - value persistence, adaptability, and flexibility and recognize that ambiguity can benefit the research process - seek multiple perspectives during information gathering and assessment - seek appropriate help when needed - follow ethical and legal guidelines in gathering and using information

	<p>the analysis and interpretation of information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demonstrate intellectual humility
<p>Scholarship as Conversation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cite the contributing work of others in their own information production - contribute to scholarly conversation at an appropriate level, such as local online community, guided discussion, undergraduate research journal, conference presentation/poster session - identify barriers to entering scholarly conversation via various venues - critically evaluate contributions made by others in participatory information environments - identify the contribution that particular articles, books, and other scholarly pieces make to disciplinary knowledge - summarize the changes in scholarly perspective over time on a particular topic within a specific discipline - recognize that a given scholarly work may not represent the only—or even the majority—perspective on the issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recognize they are often entering into an ongoing scholarly conversation and not a finished conversation - seek out conversations taking place in their research area - see themselves as contributors to scholarship rather than only consumers of it - recognize that scholarly conversations take place in various venues - suspend judgment on the value of a particular piece of scholarship until the larger context for the scholarly conversation is better understood - understand the responsibility that comes with entering the conversation through participatory channels - value user-generated content and evaluate contributions made by others - recognize that systems privilege authorities and that not having a fluency in the language and process of a discipline disempowers their ability to participate and engage
<p>Searching as Strategic Exploration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - determine the initial scope of the task required to meet their information needs - identify interested parties, such as scholars, organizations, governments, and industries, who might produce information about a topic and then determine how to access that information - utilize divergent and convergent thinking when searching - match information needs and search strategies to appropriate search tools; - design and refine needs and search strategies as necessary, based on search results - understand how information systems are organized in order to access relevant information - use different types of searching language appropriately - manage searching processes and results effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - exhibit mental flexibility and creativity - understand that first attempts at searching do not always produce adequate results - realize that information sources vary greatly in content and format and have varying relevance and value, depending on the needs and nature of the search - seek guidance from experts, such as librarians, researchers, and professionals - recognize the value of browsing and other serendipitous methods of information gathering - persist in the face of search challenges, and know when they have enough information to complete the information task

Appendix 3. The interview questions for the students

1. What are your primary expectations of the Master's Seminar course? What do you think is your most valuable learning objective?
2. How do you consider yourself as a student? Compared to your peers, would you say you are below average, average, or above average?
3. What do you find to be most difficult in information searches? Searching itself, finding relevant sources, determining the relevance of the source, or the authority of the author, or something else?
4. How do you understand the concept of information literacy?
5. How would you estimate the general level of information literacy among students at this level? How would you rate yourself among students in information literacy?
6. Are you aware of the learning objectives of English Philology? How about general learning objectives for higher education? Describe the objectives in your own words.

Appendix 4. The interview questions for the teachers

1. What are your primary expectations of the Master's Seminar course regarding the students' learning results? What do you think are their most valuable learning objectives?
2. What do you think the students have most difficulties with in information searches? Searching itself, finding relevant sources, determining the relevance of the source, or the authority of the author, or something else?
3. How well aware are you of the skills students have acquired so far; what they have learned in other courses and what methods other teachers have applied?
4. How would you estimate the level of information literacy among the group of students?
5. How would you describe the learning objectives of English Philology? How about the general learning objectives of higher education?
6. In your opinion, are these objectives visible in the curriculum of English Philology?
7. What thoughts do you have about the collaboration between library and your subject? How would you improve it?
8. If you did not have to think about the resources (time and money), how would you choose to teach information search to the students?

Appendix 5. The interview questions for the information specialist

The interview was conducted in Finnish, and translated into English by the author of this thesis.

1. Miten arvioit maisterivaiheen opiskelijoiden informaatiolukutaidon? Koetko, että eri oppiaineiden tai eri tiedekuntien opiskelijoiden välillä on eroja? [How would you estimate the level of information literacy among Masters students? Do you feel that there are differences between students from different disciplines or faculties?]
2. Mitkä asiat ovat opiskelijoille yleensä kaikkein vaikeimpia tiedonhaussa? [What do students find most difficult in their information searches?]
3. Miten koet yhteistyön oppiaineiden (erityisesti englantilainen filologia) kanssa? [How do you experience co-operation with disciplines or subjects (especially English Philology)?]
4. Onko informaatiolukutaidon tavoite mielestäsi havaittavissa oppiaineiden opetussuunnitelmissa (ts. näkyykö opiskelijoiden osaamisessa, opettajien kommenteissa tms.)? (Lähinnä HuTK, erityisesti kielet) In your opinion, is the objective of information literacy visible in the curricula (e.g. is it visible in the abilities or skills of the students, teachers' comments, etc.)? (Mainly Faculty of Humanities, especially language subjects)]
5. Näkyykö mielestäsi eri oppiaineissa ja niiden opiskelijoiden taidoissa se, ovatko kirjaston tiedonhakukurssit pakollisia vaiko eivät? [Do you think it is visible in different subjects and skills and abilities of the students, whether the library information search courses are compulsory or elective?]
6. Jos saisit päättää, eikä tarvitsisi miettiä resursseja, miten tiedonhakua opetettaisiin opiskelijoille? [If you could decide and you did not have to consider resources, how would information search be taught to students?]
7. Onko ALAn ja ACRLn standardeja tai frameworkia käytetty tiedonhaun opetuksen pohjana Oulun yliopistossa? [Has the Oulu university library used the ALA and ACRL standards or framework as a base for planning the teaching?]