

“THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND MY WORLD”:
Analysis of the new National core curriculum for upper secondary schools 2015 from EFL
teaching perspective

Bachelor’s thesis
Joni Pyöriä

University of Jyväskylä
Department of Language and Communication Studies
English
April 2017

JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

Tiedekunta – Faculty Humanistis-yhteiskuntatieteellinen tiedekunta	Laitos – Department Kieli- ja viestintätieteiden laitos
Tekijä – Author Joni Pyöriä	
Työn nimi – Title “THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND MY WORLD”: Analysis of the new National core curriculum for upper secondary schools 2015 from EFL teaching perspective	
Oppiaine – Subject Englannin kieli	Työn laji – Level Kandidaatintutkielma
Aika – Month and year Huhtikuu 2017	Sivumäärä – Number of pages 20+4 (liitteet)
Tiivistelmä – Abstract <p>Tutkielmassa tarkastellaan syksyllä 2016 voimaan tulleen lukion opetussuunnitelman perusteiden (LOPS 2015) eroja verrattuna edelliseen lukion opetussuunnitelman perusteisiin (LOPS 2003). Erojen mahdollisia vaikutuksia englanti vieraana kielenä -opetukseen (EFL) pohditaan.</p> <p>Aihetta lähestytään kyselymuotoisen tapaustutkimuksen avulla, jossa on haastateltu kokenutta lukion englannin opettajaa. Kyselyllä on selvitetty, miten uusi opetussuunnitelma vaikuttaa englannin opetukseen. Analyysissä selvisi, että englanti on uudessa opetussuunnitelmassa omana osanaan, erotettuna muista vieraista kielistä, toisin kuin vanhassa opetussuunnitelmassa. Tästä johtuen englannin kielen opetustavoitteet, kurssiteemat ja kurssien sisällöt ovat muuttuneet suuresti. Muutoksen myötä englannin uniikki rooli nykyajan yhteiskunnassa korostuu. Uusi opetussuunnitelma korostaa myös suullisen kielitaidon tärkeyttä enemmän kuin vanha.</p> <p>Tapaustutkimuksesta käy ilmi, että haastatellun opettajan käyttämä oppikirjasarja toteuttaa opettajan mielestä englannin opetussuunnitelman tavoitteita hyvin. Opetuksessaan hän ottaa aktiivisesti huomioon uudet tavoitteet. Koulun opettajille on järjestetty yleistä koulutusta opetussuunnitelman sisällöistä ja aikaa aineryhmien keskinäiselle opetussuunnitelman pohdinnalle.</p>	
Asiasanat – Keywords core curriculum, upper secondary schools, EFL, teaching	
Säilytyspaikka – Depository JYX	
Muita tietoja – Additional information	

Table of Contents

1 INTRODUCTION	3
2 BACKGROUND.....	4
2.1 Defining a curriculum	4
2.2 Aim of a national core curriculum.....	4
2.3 Previous research.....	5
3 RESEARCH AIM AND QUESTIONS.....	5
4 DATA AND METHODS.....	5
4.1 Description of the data and data collection.....	5
4.2 Methods of analysis	6
5 ANALYSIS	7
5.1 Analysis of the curricula	7
5.1.1 LOPS 2003	7
5.1.2 LOPS 2015	9
5.1.3 Comparison.....	11
5.2 EFL teacher's perspective	12
5.2.1 Learning goals	12
5.2.2 Course specific goals	13
5.2.3 Integration and the curriculum in general	15
6 DISCUSSION.....	15
7 CONCLUSION.....	16
BIBLIOGRAPHY	18
APPENDIX 1: Questionnaire.....	21

1 INTRODUCTION

The national core curriculum is an important document in Finnish schools. It lays the national guidelines for education, upon which schools and municipalities then create their own local curricula, for many years to come. The curriculum is renewed approximately every ten years and each time it changes the everyday life in schools significantly, mirroring the current didactic trends and society in general. Thus, research on curricula and their effects is needed in order to find out which changes have benefited teachers and students alike. Research enables teachers and authorities working on the curricula to improve upon past results and findings.

The new National core curriculum for upper secondary schools was published in 2015, and came into effect for the autumn term of 2016. Because the curriculum has only been used for approximately one and half semesters, research on it has not been done yet. Since the scope of a BA thesis is quite narrow, the present study focuses only on the parts of the curriculum that affect EFL (English as a foreign language) teaching. The aim of the present study is to serve as a first analysis of the differences and changes between the old National core curriculum (LOPS 2003) and the new National core curriculum for upper secondary schools (LOPS 2015). Along with the changes in the curriculum itself, analysis is made on the possible implications of the changes regarding EFL teaching. In the second phase of the study, an experienced EFL teacher was presented with a questionnaire on the changes. The teacher was asked to review and comment the changes, and to provide concrete examples from her own work with the new curriculum. The study can be used as groundwork for a larger research regarding the new curriculum.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Defining a curriculum

The term curriculum is problematic. In order to perform research on a curriculum, one must first define what is researched by defining the term. The curriculum for any form of education can be seen as a combination of the ways and actions used in order reach the set goals. The curriculum can also be defined as an ensemble formed by learning goals, contents, methods and organisation of teaching (Lehtisalo 1994: 87). Van den Akker (2003: 2) divides the curriculum into four different levels: macro-, meso-, micro- and nanolevel, where macrolevel is regarded as the national level, mesolevel is the institutional level, microlevel is the classroom and nanolevel is the personal level. The curriculum is different on all levels and each can be researched in a variety of ways. Kangasniemi (1984, cited in Kari 1994: 87) divides the curriculum similarly, but uses more general terms. Vitikka and Hurmerinta (2011: 9, 19) further elaborate Van den Akkers (2003) definition. According to them, the national core curriculum is part of the macrolevel, whereas mesolevel consists of the local curriculum made in municipalities or schools. Microlevel contains a teacher's lesson plan for a single lesson, and lastly nanolevel consists of the students' own syllabus. The present study focuses on Van den Akkers (2003) macrolevel, that is to say the national core curriculum.

2.2 Aim of a national core curriculum

The national core curriculum is renewed approximately every ten years. The aim of the national core curriculum is to define nationwide guidelines for education. The national core curriculum is the most important document for schools in Finland. It defines how education is provided in schools (Atjonen 1992: 1). Schools or municipalities prepare a local curriculum, based on the national core curriculum (LOPS 2015: 9). This arrangement makes education more flexible, allowing the schools to take the local and regional circumstances into account, adding "local colour to the curriculum" (LOPS 2015: 9) when planning their teaching.

The local curriculum can, for example, have specific focus on sports, if the school is able to offer larger-than-average average selection of sports. If the school is located in a city with a university, many kinds of cooperative courses with the university can be organized. If a municipality has multiple upper secondary schools, the schools can specialize on certain subjects. There could be, for example, a school focusing more on music or arts, a school focusing on mathematics and science, and a school with a larger selection of foreign languages.

2.3 Previous research

Since the curriculum is such a central part of education, it has been researched on many occasions. The National Board of Education does its own analysis each time a new national core curriculum has been put to use. This analysis is done in order to get basic information about the realization and results of the new curriculum (National Board of Education 2007, 2000). The curriculum itself is usually not the only research subject, but it is usually analyzed alongside teaching or learning related research (see, for example, Ahola-Houtsonen 2013, Namgung 2016).

3 RESEARCH AIM AND QUESTIONS

The aim of the present study is to review the changes in the National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools of 2015 compared to the National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary schools of 2003. The curricula are compared with each other and analysis on the possible implications regarding EFL teaching is done. A more detailed description of the methods can be found in the following chapter, data and methods.

The research questions of the present study are:

1. As for EFL teaching, what has changed in the National core curriculum for upper secondary schools from 2003 to 2015?
2. How could the changes be implemented in EFL classrooms?

4 DATA AND METHODS

In this section, the data of the present study is described, how it was collected and lastly how it was analysed.

4.1 Description of the data and data collection

The data for this study consists of analysis of two curricula for upper secondary schools, one from 2003 and one from 2015, and a questionnaire that was sent to an experienced EFL teacher by email. The curricula are freely available on the internet on the website of The Finnish National Board of Education in Finnish and the English translations are available as books. My

original plan was to conduct an interview with the teacher, but due to her busy schedule with matriculation exams, regular exams and school holidays, we opted for a questionnaire. I wanted to analyse the new curriculum from 2015 from a teacher's perspective because I believe it will help me develop myself as a teacher, as I will get a deeper understanding of the principles of the curriculum.

The curriculum came into effect in autumn 2016, so it is a fruitful subject for research. I began by studying the curricula extensively. When I had a clear picture of what the important changes were, I started forming the interview questions. I got in touch with the EFL teacher and we discussed our schedules. Due to the aforementioned scheduling problems, we agreed that I will send her the questions by email. I revised the interview questions to better suit a written questionnaire. I showed the questionnaire to my thesis instructor and another student and finalised its form based on their comments. The questionnaire covered the general learning goals and the changes in the course specific goals. In addition, two specific questions were asked about integration, and whether or not the teachers of her school and municipality received training about the goals of the new curriculum.

4.2 Methods of analysis

In the first phase of the analysis, the sections regarding EFL teaching of the curricula were comparatively analysed, starting from LOPS 2003. After analysis of both curricula, their differences were summarised and compared. Focus was put on pointing out what had changed and what differences there were between the two curricula. In the second phase, the questionnaire was focused on.

The presentation and comparison of the curricula was done progressing from the general layout to more precise topics. The general layout, in this case, means where is the EFL section located in the curricula, or if EFL has its own section. More precise topics include learning goals, course themes and course descriptions. Possible implications of the changes regarding EFL teaching is discussed in the discussion chapter.

5 ANALYSIS

In this section, the curricula are presented and analysed and compared with each other. After the comparison, the comments of the EFL teacher are presented.

5.1 Analysis of the curricula

First the older National core curriculum for upper secondary schools 2003 is presented and analysed, followed by the new curriculum. After the analysis of the curricula, the contents are compared with each other in order to see what has changed. Further discussion on the implications of the changes can be found in the discussion chapter.

5.1.1 LOPS 2003

The older core curriculum for upper secondary schools from 2003 does not separate English from other foreign languages. This means that English also shares the same course themes and learning goals with other foreign languages. Course themes for A-level (A-level meaning that studying has started in primary school) compulsory courses in foreign languages are:

- Young people and their world
- Communication and leisure
- Study and work
- Society and the surrounding world
- Culture
- Science, economy and technology (LOPS 2003: 103–104.)

In addition, there are two advanced courses

- Nature and sustainable development
- Globalisation and internationalisation (LOPS 2003: 105)

Learning goals in the curriculum are, that the students

- can communicate in a characteristic manner typical of the target language and its culture;
- can evaluate their language skills in relation to the learning goals
- are aware of their strengths and areas to develop as foreign language users and learners
- can develop their language skills accordingly with appropriate strategies for their study and communication assignments (LOPS 2003: 102)

The CEFR (2001) describes foreign language proficiency on a scale from A1 to C2. Each of the levels have descriptions of what language users are capable of on each level. The purpose of the CEFR is to help foreign language professionals across Europe to reflect on their practices and help in promoting international co-operation. The CEFR provides a common foundation for European countries, upon which study programs, curricula, degrees, study books et cetera can be created. The CEFR also aims to describe the language competence levels which are

demanded from students of a foreign language (CEFR 2001: 1). A Finnish application of the CEFR, called “Language Proficiency Scale” (LOPS 2003: 102) is featured. The curriculum sets the requirement at level B2.1 in the Language Proficiency Scale at the end of upper secondary school in speaking, writing, reading comprehension and listening comprehension. On a general level, the B2.1 level is the “First stage of independent proficiency”. Thus, students are expected to understand the main ideas in a complex speech dealing in either concrete or abstract topics and follow along on detailed descriptions of news, interviews, films and lectures. Another requirement is that students understand main points of input and can summarize key details of what they heard. Lastly, the students are simply expected to understand much of what is said around them. However, following discussions between native speakers can still cause problems (LOPS 2003: 246).

Requirements for speaking skills are, that students can describe a variety of topics clearly, partake actively in different practical and social situations and in formal discussions. Students are expected to speak fluently, with clear and natural pronunciation and intonation, few long pauses and with diverse language structures including idiomatic phrases. Lastly, students are expected to have good control of their grammar, meaning that the occasional errors should not make it harder to understand the utterances (LOPS 2003: 246).

Requirements for reading comprehension are, that students are able to independently read few pages of newspaper articles, fiction and nonfiction, reports and instructions about their own field or general topics. Students should also be able to find the meaning of a text and its writer and locate details from a longer text. Finally, they should be able to quickly identify the content and relevance of new texts and decide if further study is worthwhile. Difficulties are only expected if the text contains idioms and cultural references. (LOPS 2003: 247)

Requirements for writing skill are, that students can write clear, detailed texts about different areas of personal interest and familiar abstract topics. They are expected to know how to write formal applications, summaries, reviews, instructions and business letters. They can effectively express information and views and know how to comment the views of others. In addition, combining and summarizing information from different sources is expected. The vocabulary of the students should be broad and students should use demanding sentence structures to produce cohesive texts. Possible grammatical errors should not lead to misunderstandings.

Demanding structures and flexibility in expressions may still be problematic (LOPS 2003: 247).

5.1.2 LOPS 2015

The new curriculum from 2015 has changed significantly compared to the previous one. First and foremost, English is now separated from other foreign languages and no longer shares the same learning goals as other foreign languages do.

The Finnish application of the CEFR scale is still present, but it has been revised. It is now called “Evolving Language Proficiency Scale” (LOPS 2015: 117). The curriculum sets the target at the end of upper secondary school to level B2.1, the first stage of independent proficiency, in three categories as opposed to four in the previous curriculum. The categories in the scale are interaction skills, text interpretation skills and text production skills. Interaction skills are further divided into three smaller categories: interacting in different situations, using communication strategies and cultural appropriateness of communication. The requirements for interaction skills for students are, that they can communicate fluently in situations that are new to them and where the language may be conceptual but clear. Furthermore, they should be able to employ suitable communicational strategies if they need to gain time for their replies, or if they need to negotiate meanings of complex concepts. The students should also strive for culturally appropriate manners of speech (LOPS 2015: 115, 259). As can be seen, the interaction skills require more from the student than what was required in the old curriculum. The older curriculum did not weight culturally appropriate communication and communication strategies as much.

Requirements for text interpretation skills are, that students understand factually and linguistically complex text or speech. Students should be able to follow long speeches and complex argumentation and distinguish the main ideas from what they heard. Similar to the old curriculum, students are expected to understand much of the discussion around them and different types of texts that may deal with abstract subjects. The requirements for interpretation skills have not changed from the previous curriculum, the difference is that the scale does not differentiate listening comprehension from reading comprehension, a text is a text, whether it is written or spoken. (LOPS 2015: 259)

Requirements for text production skills are similar to those of the older curriculum, but with speaking and writing combined. However, grammar is not mentioned at all, as opposed to the older curriculum. (LOPS 2015: 259)

Specific learning goals are also named and according to them, the student

- develops as a user of English and an actor in the culturally diverse world in local, national, European and global communities
- understands the significance and role of English as the language of international communication
- is able to assess the sufficiency of his or her proficiency from the viewpoint of further studies
- is able to plan his or her language studies for his or her future needs from the perspectives of working life and internationalisation
- gathers experiences of reading, interpreting, and discussing more extensive texts in English
- is able to relate his or her competence with the B2.1 level of the Evolving Language Proficiency Scale, assess the development of his or her knowledge and skill, and further develop these. (LOPS 2015: 117)

Course themes for obligatory courses in the curriculum are:

- The English language and my world
- Human in networks
- Cultural phenomena
- Society and the surrounding world
- Science and the future
- Studying, work and livelihood (LOPS 2015: 117-118.)

Themes for advanced courses are:

- Sustainable way of life
- Communicate and influence by speaking (LOPS 2015: 118-119.)

Courses one and two focus on improving the students' studying skills, developing their own competences and improving their interaction skills in different contexts. From course three onwards more attention is paid towards the language that different kinds of texts require. Courses four to six emphasize language as a tool for information seeking, compacting the essential information and sharing information. It is also mentioned that each course has room for local or current issues. The possibility of integration is brought up, as well as the fact that on every course both spoken and written interaction is rehearsed. (LOPS 2015: 117)

Multiliteracy is mentioned in the course description of course three "Cultural phenomena". *Multiliteracy* in general is defined in the curriculum as a set of skills covering text interpretation, text production and text assessment in a variety of contexts and forms. *Multiliteracy* also covers media literacy. According to the curriculum, learning *multiliteracy* is supported by cooperation with the media, libraries and research and cultural institutions (LOPS

2015: 39, 118) Norrena (2015: 44) points out, that in order to teach *multiliteracy* skills successfully, teaching, learning environment and study materials should be diverse.

As mentioned earlier, courses four to six emphasize the role of language in information seeking and sharing, as well as compacting relevant information. In order to teach these skills properly, teachers will have to broaden their previous ways of teaching and utilize different ICT-gadgets, such as computers, tablets and smartphones. Schools should be active and organise complementary training for teachers, so that the use of the different gadgets brings additional pedagogical benefit to teaching. Carless (1998) argues that teachers need to have a clear understanding of the underlying theoretical principles and practices of proposed changes to successfully implement them in their teaching. As Hardman and A-Rahman (2014) report, a new English curriculum was implemented in Malaysia, but the teachers were not trained enough and did not understand the demands of the new curriculum and actual changes in pedagogical practices did, for the most part, not happen.

5.1.3 Comparison

Compared to the curriculum from 2003 the learning goals, course themes and course descriptions have changed significantly. An introduction has been added to describe the learning goals of the courses in general and each course also has a specific description of its contents. The learning goals have changed too. This is because English now has its own section apart from other foreign languages. The role of English as a global language is recognised and emphasised and aspects of further studies and working life are brought up. Course theme comparison can be seen in table one.

Table 1. Course themes in the curricula

LOPS 2003	LOPS 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people and their world • Communication and leisure • Study and work • Society and the surrounding world • Culture • Science, economy and technology • Nature and sustainable development • Globalisation and internationalisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The English language and my world • Human in networks • Cultural phenomena • Society and the surrounding world • Science and the future • Studying, work and livelihood • Sustainable way of life • Communicate and influence by speaking

Another difference between the curricula is the emphasis on communicative skills. While the older curriculum does mention speaking and communicative skills here and there, the new curriculum has a course specifically focused on communicative skills. This is a welcome change. Pietilä (2014) points out, that more focus should be set on teaching communicative skills in practice. Pietilä (2014: 41) also argues, that teachers don't have enough time to teach oral skills and suggests that a separate course for speaking skills should be implemented. The Finnish matriculation exam should feature an oral English test in 2020.

5.2 EFL teacher's perspective

An experienced EFL teacher was asked to review and comment the new core curriculum, giving concrete examples on how the changes could be (or have been) implemented in teaching. In addition, specific questions were asked on integration, and how much the teachers of the municipality in question have been trained on implementing the curriculum.

5.2.1 Learning goals

The teacher was asked to give concrete examples on how the new learning goals can be incorporated into teaching. She feels, that she does not need to highlight the role of English as a global language. According to her, students understand the role of English as a global language already, and no emphasis is needed on the subject. The new learning goals also

emphasize, that students need to know how to plan their language studies according to their future needs and further studies. The teacher mentions, that sometimes she may present an international school, where students can study in English. Sometimes the topics discussed in her class may give her a chance to present a field of study where English is needed. She also points out, that even though she is teaching an English class, she encourages her students to utilize the wide selection of foreign languages that the students can start studying in upper secondary.

5.2.2 Course specific goals

The teacher was asked to comment on the course themes and course specific learning goals with concrete examples. Regarding the first course, she was asked to comment how the themes (studies, young people's lives and needs for language use) can be connected with the object that students "reflect on the linguistic diversity of the world, English as a global phenomenon as well as language proficiency as a tool for increasing cultural competence." (LOPS 2015: 117) She commends the study book, *Insights* (Karapalo et al. 2016a), that she uses, saying that the texts of the book reflect the themes well and different accents, people and phenomena are brought out in the recordings.

Third course focuses on *multiliteracy*. The teacher was asked to reflect what is required from the teacher and teaching material in order to teach *multiliteracy*. She views, that deepening students' *multiliteracy* skills requires that different kinds of texts are read and they are gone through in different ways. She remarks, that the teacher needs to pick the texts for the course, and possibly find texts that are not in the study book. She also points out, that there is not enough time on the courses to go through every text in the book, but she chooses the main texts in such a way that different themes are covered extensively. Lastly, she gives an example of her own teaching. During the course her classes read newspaper articles, an interview text, an excerpt of a play, poems and a text from a travel blog. On top of that, the students also read a short story in English that they pick from a list given by the teacher.

Information seeking skills and critical reading skills are practiced on course four. The teacher was asked to comment what teaching these skills to students requires. According to her, the same principles that apply to *multiliteracy* apply to critical reading as well. The students need to be given different kinds of texts to read. She mentioned, that study book writers are good at

finding these sorts of texts and bringing out the key issues of critical reading. The teacher points out, that the teaching itself has to rouse different perspectives in students. It is important that students are encouraged to state their own opinions about the topics. Specific tasks that students have in this course include, for example, debating, writing a letter to the editor and delivering a speech on a topic of their choosing. The teacher usually incorporates pair- and self-evaluation with these tasks, so that students get to give and receive feedback from their peers. On information seeking skills she mentions that students can be asked to search information about any subject from the internet. She also commends the study book, saying:

Opiskelijoita voi pyytää etsimään netistä tietoa tai esimerkkejä ihan mistä vain aiheesta.

Esim. “Many rap artists tackle social issues in the lyrics of their songs. Find some examples of this and present them in class” (Suora lainaus Insights 4-kirjasta, s. 26)” (Karapalo et al. 2016b)

Students can be asked to search the internet for information or examples on any subject. For example. “Many rap artists tackle social issues in the lyrics of their songs. Find some examples of this and present them in class” (Direct quote from Insight 4 -book, p. 26) (Karapalo et al. 2016b)

The second specialisation course has been changed to an oral course. The teacher was asked to comment on two things, firstly if she feels that the six compulsory courses have enough oral skills teaching, and secondly, what does teaching an oral course require from the teacher. The teacher says, that the compulsory courses could have more opportunities of oral skills learning, but the amount of oral skills teaching is sufficient. She goes on to say, that the study books usually have more comprehensive oral skills tasks in courses one and two, for example in the form of basic pronunciation tasks, but in one form or the other, oral skills are present in every course. About the oral skills course itself, she says that the teacher will have to think how to carry out the course effectively so that oral skills actually are the focal point of teaching. Another important aspect for the teacher is to choose the exercises in such a way, that many aspects of oral skills are covered. She mentions, for example, basic pronunciation, intonation, reading out loud and, controlled and free discussion and lastly practicing effective listening skills too.

5.2.3 Integration and the curriculum in general

The new curriculum supports integrating subjects, so the teacher was asked if the teachers have been encouraged to integrate their subjects and whether or not the school has tried integrating any subjects. The teacher recalls, that psychology and Finnish have, at some point been integrated. Another school in the same city has an integrated course of Finnish and English, but unfortunately has not taken part in planning or executing these courses.

Finally, the teacher was asked if the teachers in her school/municipality have been trained collectively about the goals of the new curriculum. She reports, that subject-specific training has not been organized, but general training about the curriculum has been organized for all teachers. The school has also provided time for the teachers to discuss the themes of the curriculum with each other.

6 DISCUSSION

The new curriculum could have significant impact on EFL teaching. I feel that the changes in the curriculum are welcome and they highlight the unique role of English in today's society well. Having English separated from other foreign languages gives more freedom to teachers in planning how to implement the aims of the curriculum in teaching. The addition of a course focusing solely on oral skills is a welcome addition. As Pietilä (2014) and Tergujeff (2013) report, more focus on oral skills teaching is needed. Language is, after all, a tool of communication and communicating is mostly done orally. Separating English from other foreign languages should increase the possibilities of integrating English with other subjects. Integration has been possible already during the older curriculum, it was not, however, emphasized as much as it is in the new curriculum. The effect of the curriculum cannot be understated, since according to Atjonen (1992: 1), the national core curriculum is the single most important document for schools and it defines how schools provides education.

Teachers should be open-minded when integrating English with other subjects, for there are no limits for integration. See, for example, Marjanen (2013) and Siironen (2014) on how subjects, with not so much common ground, can be integrated. As Kurki (2016: 58) states, integration benefits the students, helping them connect scattered information by providing more meaningful study units.

Teaching *multiliteracy* in English is important. The rapid change in today's society, development of new technology and change in media environment has led to the need for more diverse text interpretation skills. My own experiences in reading many different kinds of texts in upper secondary school are very limited. At the time, we rarely read anything else besides the text books in EFL classes and multimodal texts were close to non-existent. *Multiliteracy* skills were mostly taught in Finnish classes, but even there they were not in a big role. Hopefully teachers, encouraged with the new curriculum, broaden their supply of different texts and provide a diverse selection for their students. Information seeking and critical reading skills, along with *multiliteracy*, are important skills as well. In today's classroom, where probably every student is connected to the internet in one way or another and information seeking in the internet is quick, it is important for students to know the tools they have at their disposal. Critical reading skills are important when searching for information, since there is plenty of questionable information available. With proper education in EFL classes, students should be able to avoid most of the problems.

7 CONCLUSION

In the present study, I have looked at the differences between the two curricula for upper secondary schools from 2003 and 2015. The purpose of the study was to find out what has changed in EFL teaching in the curricula and how the changes could be implemented in teaching. For this purpose, the relevant sections of the curricula were analysed. To compliment the analysis, an experienced EFL teachers was asked to review the changes in the curricula and provide examples of her own experiences with the new curriculum. In retrospect, the questionnaire should have included a question about the changes in the Evolving Language Proficiency scale.

The findings of the study indicate, that the new curriculum has been updated significantly compared to the older one. English as a foreign language has received its own section separate from other foreign languages and thus has different learning goals and course themes as opposed to other foreign languages. An oral course has been added as a specialisation course and oral skills are focused on more overall. *Multiliteracy* is a new aspect mentioned in the curriculum. *Multiliteracy* is defined as a set of skills covering text interpretation, text production and text assessment in a variety of contexts and forms. Media literacy is also covered.

The Finnish application of the CEFR scale has received an overhaul. The requirements have not changed much content-wise, but the new wording and categories of the scale makes it easier to take the scale into account in teaching than the older one. As a new aspect, students are expected to use culturally appropriate manners when communicating.

The EFL teacher reported in the questionnaire, that her study book Insights (Karapalo et al. 2016a) reflects the new themes in the curriculum well. She shares the views on *multiliteracy* with the curriculum. The teacher was also asked about any training she and her colleagues have received regarding the new curriculum. She reports, that no training has been organised on subject level, but general training about the new curriculum has been organised for all teachers and the school reserved time for teachers to reflect on the new curriculum subject level.

Overall, the present study serves as a fundamental analysis of the EFL section of the new national core curriculum for upper secondary schools and can be used as a foundation for more comprehensive curriculum research. The questionnaire used in the case-study and the results can be used as part of larger study of the new EFL curriculum. The present study is, however, limited in depth. The perspective of the EFL teacher only reflect the thoughts and attitudes of one teacher and it is not possible to draw any conclusions based on it.

Future research on this subject could include large, city- or nationwide studies on the attitudes of teachers and students regarding the new curriculum. The effectiveness of the curriculum can also be researched. A combination of teacher and student interviews or surveys, together with classroom observation should provide adequate data for analysis of the new curriculum on a wider perspective. Interviewing students who have received education by both the old and new curricula, is also a possible theme for further research. With the addition of a specialisation course focusing on oral skills, researching and comparing oral skills teaching now to how they were taught during the previous curriculum is another possibility for further research. Studies on integrations are a possibility as well.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ahola-Houtsonen, T. (2013). Learning and teaching English speaking skills at upper secondary school: The students' and the teachers' views. Unpublished Pro-Gradu Thesis. University of Jyväskylä, Department of Languages.

<https://jyx.jyu.fi/dspace/handle/123456789/41363>

Akker, J. v. d., Kuiper, W., Hameyer, U., Moon, B., Ben-Peretz, M., Pepin, B., . . . Jansen, L. (2003). *Curriculum landscapes and trends*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic.

Atjonen, P. (1992). *Miksi opetussuunnitelmaa (ei) pitäisi eheyttää?: Väitteitä ja vastaväitteitä = Why the curriculum should (not) be integrated? : arguments and counter arguments*. Oulu: Oulun yliopiston kasvatustieteiden tiedekunta.

Carless, D. R. (1998). A case study of curriculum implementation in Hong Kong. *System* [online] 26 (3), 353-368. doi: 10.1016/S0346-251X(98)00023-2.

CEFR 2001 = *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment* (2001). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hardman, J. and A-Rahman, N. (2014). Teachers and the implementation of a new English curriculum in Malaysia. *Language, Culture and Curriculum* [online] 27 (3), 260-277. doi: 10.1080/07908318.2014.980826.

Karapalo, E., Keltto, P., Kilmer, M., Kuusivaara, P., Päckilä, T. and Suonio, A. (2016a). *Insights. course 3* (1. painos.). Helsingissä: Kustannusosakeyhtiö Otava.

Karapalo, E., Keltto, P., Kilmer, M., Kuusivaara, P., Päckilä, T. and Suonio, A. (2016b). *Insights. course 4* (1. painos.). Helsingissä: Kustannusosakeyhtiö Otava.

Kari, J. (1994). *Didaktiikka ja opetussuunnittelu* (3., uud. p.). Porvoo: WSOY.

Kurki, R. (2016). *"I can't come up with any reason why English could not be integrated with any other subject": English teachers' perceptions of integrating English with other subjects in upper grades of comprehensive school*. Unpublished Pro Gradu Thesis. University of Jyväskylä, Department of Languages.

<https://jyx.jyu.fi/dspace/handle/123456789/50368>

Lehtisalo, L. (1994). *Uuteen koulutusajatteluun: Tieto, kulttuuri, työ oppimisyhteiskunnassa* (2. tark. p.). Porvoo; Helsinki ; Juva: WSOY.

LOPS 2003 = *Lukion opetussuunnitelman perusteet 2003* (2003). Helsinki: Finnish National Board of Education

LOPS 2003 = *National core curriculum for upper secondary schools 2003: National core curriculum for general upper secondary education intended for young people*. (2004) Helsinki: Finnish National Board of Education.

LOPS 2015 = *Lukion opetussuunnitelman perusteet 2015* (2015). Helsinki: Finnish National Board of Education.

LOPS 2015 = *National core curriculum for general upper secondary schools 2015: National core curriculum for general upper secondary education intended for young people*. (2016) Helsinki: Finnish National Board of Education.

Marjanen, J. (2013). *"Ope, miks me lauletaan, vaikka meillä on matikan tunti?": Musiikin ja matematiikan oppisisältöjen integrointi*. Unpublished Pro Gradu Thesis. University of Jyväskylä, Department of Languages.

<https://jyx.jyu.fi/dspace/handle/123456789/43021>

Namgung, W. (2016). *A comparative analysis on Finnish and Korean high school English textbooks in the perspective of communicative language teaching*. Unpublished Pro Gradu Thesis. University of Jyväskylä, Department of Languages.

<https://jyx.jyu.fi/dspace/handle/123456789/49567>

Norrena, J. (2015). *Innostava koulun muutos: Opas laaja-alaisen osaamisen opetukseen*. Jyväskylä: PS-kustannus.

Pietilä, K. (2014). *Going into the real world: Language learners' views on how foreign language teaching prepares them to use language in authentic situations*. Unpublished Pro Gradu Thesis. University of Jyväskylä, Department of Languages.

<https://jyx.jyu.fi/dspace/handle/123456789/43142>

Siironen, M. (2014). *Fysiikan ja musiikin oppiaineintegrointi lukiotasolla*. Unpublished Pro Gradu Thesis. University of Jyväskylä, Department of Physics.

<https://jyx.jyu.fi/dspace/handle/123456789/45008>

Tergujeff, E. (2013). *English pronunciation teaching in Finland*. Jyväskylä Studies in Humanities 207. University of Jyväskylä.

Vitikka, E., & Hurmerinta, E. (2011). *Kansainväliset opetussuunnitelmasuunnitukset*. Helsinki: Opetushallitus.

APPENDIX 1: Questionnaire

Kandidatutkimuksen aiheenani on uusi lukion englannin opetussuunnitelma, joka otettiin käyttöön syksyllä 2015. Tutkimuksessa selvitän mitä eroa uudella opetussuunnitelmalla on vanhaan verrattuna, sekä mitä vaikutusta opetukseen muutoksilla on. Vastaamalla tähän kyselyyn annat luvan vastausten käyttämiseen kandidaatintutkielmassa. Vastauksista ja valmiista tutkielmasta ei voi tunnistaa yksittäisiä vastaajia.

Taustatietoja

Työkokemus opettajana vuosina: n. 17 vuotta

Opetettavat aineet englannin lisäksi: ruotsi

Komentoi kysymyksissä esiin nostettuja kohtia opetussuunnitelmasta omien kokemustesi ja ajatustesi pohjalta. Anna lisäksi konkreettisia esimerkkejä kuinka opetussuunnitelman muutokset näkyvät, tai voisivat näkyä, omassa opetuksessasi.

Opetuksen tavoitteissa uusina asioina vanhaan opetussuunnitelmaan verrattuna, on että oppilas:

- ymmärtää englannin kielen merkityksen ja roolin kansainvälisen kommunikaation kielenä
- osaa arvioida oman osaamisen riittävyttä jatko-opintojen näkökulmasta
- osaa suunnitella kieliopintojaan tulevaisuuden tarpeitaan varten työelämän ja kansainvälistymisen näkökulmista

Miten nämä uudet tavoitteet voidaan huomioida opetuksessa? Kerro käytännön esimerkkejä miten otat tavoitteet huomioon.

- *Ensimmäistä kohtaa ei tule erityisesti erikseen omassa opetuksessa korostettua, on niin vahvana ymmärryksenä ja pohjana jo opiskelijoiden omassa kieliajattelussa mukana.*
- *Jatko-opintoja/tulevaisuuden kieliopintoja sivutaan ja sivuan välillä joillain kursseilla tai sopivissa yhteyksissä esim. esittelemällä jonkin oppilaitoksen tai tahon, jossa voi vaikka kansainvälisesti (opiskelukieli englanti) opiskella. Tai välillä tulee puheeksi oppikirjan pohjalta tai muuten vain aiheen pohjalta jokin opintoala. Ja vaikka kyseessä onkin englannin kurssit, kielipohjan laajuus tulee opetuksessani ajoittain esille ja*

haluan korostaa, että kielitaito yleensä on tärkeä elementti ja että opiskelijat muistaisivat hyödyntää lukion kielitarjontaa ja opiskella muutakin kuin englantia ja ruotsia, vaikka edes alkeet.

Kurssikohtaiset tavoitteet:

- ensimmäisellä kurssilla pohditaan maailman kielellistä monimuotoisuutta, englannin kieltä globaalina ilmiönä sekä kielitaitoa välineenä kasvattaa kulttuurista osaamista. Kurssin aihepiirit ja tilanteet liittyvät kuitenkin opiskeluun, nuoren elämänpiiriin ja kielenkäyttötarpeisiin. Miten aihepiirit ja pohdittavat asiat saa yhdistettyä opetuksessa? Kerro käytännön esimerkkejä.
- *Minulla on käytössä Insights-kirjasarja. Siinä 1.kurssin aihepiireissa tulee näitä kielen monimuotoisuuksia, globaaliutta jne esille kirjan tekstien kautta ja esim. äänitteillä puhutaan eri aksenteilla ja esitellään asioita, ihmisiä, ilmiöitä englanninkielisen maailman eri kolkista.*
- Kurssin kolme tarkoituksena on laajentaa ja syventää opiskelijoiden monilukutaitoa. Mitä monilukutaidon opettaminen vaatii opettajalta ja oppimateriaalilta ja miten sitä opetetaan? Kerro käytännön esimerkkejä.
- *Monilukutaidon syventäminen edellyttää, että on erilaisia tekstejä tarjolla ja niitä voi käydä eri tavoin läpi. Opettajalta tämä kai edellyttää sitä, että huomioi, mitä tekstejä ja millaisia materiaaleja kurssin aikana valitsee läpi käytäviksi. Lisäksi voi toisinaan tuoda jotain materiaalia kirjan ohi kurssille luettavaksi. Kurssilla ei koskaan ehdi kaikkia kirjan tekstejä opiskella, ainakaan syvällisesti, mutta valitsen ydintekstit niin, että eri teemoja ja aihepiirejä tulee mahdollisimman kattavasti. Esim. Insights 3-kirjasta käymme läpi haastattelutekstin, sanomalehtiartikkeleita, katkelman näytelmästä, runoja ja matkustusblogi-tekstin. Monesti mukana on kirjallisuuskatkelmiakin. 3.kurssilla opiskelija lukee englanninkielisen novellin, jonka hän valitsee tarjoamaltani listalta. Tähän lukemiseen liittyy suomeksi erilaisiin kysymyksiin vastaaminen kirjallisesti. Tekstien yhteydessä käytän esim.*

sisältökysymyksiä suomeksi tai englanniksi ja oikein/väärin (ja korjaa väärät väittämät) luetun ymmärtämistä. Joskus teksti vain luetaan ja kuunnellaan ja siitä keskustellaan lyhyesti (useimmiten englanniksi, joskus suomeksi lyhyt 'tiivistelmä'). Kirjan materiaalin laatijoilla on nykyiseen 3.kurssin tarjolla myös esim. Tekstin englanninkielinen tiivistelmä, josta opiskelijaa pyydetään korjaamaan esim. 6 virhettä tai vastaava tiivistelmän korjaus suomeksi.

- Kurssilla neljä kehitetään tiedonhankintataitoja ja kriittistä lukutaitoa, sekä harjoitellaan aktiivista toimijuutta englannin kielellä. Mitä opetukselta vaaditaan, että oppilaat oppivat näitä taitoja? Kerro käytännön esimerkkejä.
- *Opiskelijoita voi pyytää etsimään netistä tietoa tai esimerkkejä ihan mistä vain aiheesta. Esim. "Many rap artists tackle social issues in the lyrics of their songs. Find some examples of this and present them in class." (suora lainaus Insights 4-kirjasta, s. 26). Kriittisen lukutaidonkin syventämisen pohjana on erilaiset tekstilajit ja niiden sisältö. Oppikirjan laatijat ovat yleensä hyviä löytämään näitä tekstejä ja tuomaan esille kriittisen lukutaidon keskeisiä asioita. Opetukselta vaaditaan, että herättelee opiskelijoita erilaisiin näkökulmiin ja rohkaisee heitä tuomaan erilaisia asioita ja mielipiteitä itsekkin esille. Kurssilla 4 opiskelijat harjoittelevat mm. väittelemistä ja mielipidekirjoituksen laatimista. He myös valitsevat kukin aiheen, josta valmistelevat minuutin mittaisen puheen. Tähän (tai sopii toki muuhunkin työskentelyyn) sisällytän usein pari&itsearviointia, jossa opiskelijat itse antavat ja saavat palautetta.*
- Englannin syventävistä kursseista toinen on muuttunut suullisen kielitaidon kurssiksi. Onko peruskursseilla riittävästi suullisen kielitaidon opetusta? Mitä suullinen kurssi vaatii opettajalta?
- *Enemmänkin voisi olla peruskursseilla suullisen kielitaidon opetusta, mutta ihan ok sitä on nytkin. Kirja yleensä opastaa kursseilla 1 ja 2 'perusteellisemmin' suullisen kielitaidon saloihin (esim. perusääntämistä), mutta sitä tulee kyllä muodossa tai toisessa kaikilla kursseilla. Suullisella kurssilla opettaja miettii toteutuksia niin, että varmasti tulee se suullinen puoli avainasemaan. Ja pyrkii ottamaan sitäkin*

mahdollisimman monipuolisesti, mm. perusääntämistä, intonaatiota, ääneenlukuharjoituksia, ohjatumpaa & vapaata keskustelua – kuuntelijana olemisen harjoittelua unohtamatta...

- Lisäksi opetussuunnitelmassa mainitaan, että ”jokaiselle kurssille varataan tilaa käsitellä ajankohtaisia tai paikallisia asioita, joista voidaan sopia yhdessä. Oppiainerajat ylittävää tai aihekokonaisuuksia avaavaa opetusta voidaan toteuttaa kaikilla kursseilla.” Onko opettajia rohkaistu integroimaan opetettavia aineita? Onko koulussanne ylipäättään kokeiltu oppiainerajoja ylittävää opetusta? Anna käytännön esimerkkejä tehdyistä kokeiluista.
- *Kyllä, opettajia rohkaistaan integrointiin. Schildtin Voionmaan toimipisteessä on toteutettu vuosien saatossa integraatiokursseja, esim. muistaakseni psykologiaa/äidinkieltä jne jne. Englannin kielessä on toteutettu Schildtin Viitaniemen toimipisteessä ena5/äi5-integraatiokurssi, mutta valitettavasti en näistä tiedä tarkemmin koska en itse ole ollut integraatiokurssien suunnittelussa tai toteutuksessa mukana.*