

**THE IMAGE OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD IN ENGLISH
TEXTBOOKS:**

In Touch 1-3 and Open Road 1-3

Bachelor's thesis

Anette Tervo

University of Jyväskylä
Department of Languages
English
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Tiivistelmä – Abstract <p>Suomen opetushallituksen lukiokoulutuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteissa 2003 ei määritellä tuleeko opettajan käyttää oppikirjaa apunaan opetuksessa vai ei. Selkeitä tavoitteita kursseille ja opetukselle on kuitenkin asetettu, ja kulttuuritaitojen sekä – tiedon omaksuminen ja oppiminen ovat osa niitä. Vieraat kielet määritellään lukion opetussuunnitelman perusteissa tieto-, taito-, ja kulttuuriaineeksi ja oppilaiden kulttuuritietämyksen kehittäminen onkin tärkeä osa opetusta. Tämä tutkimus käsittelee englannin kieltä ja tarkoituksena oli selvittää mitkä englanninkieliset kulttuurit muodostavat kahden lukiossa käytettävän kirjasarjan kulttuurisen sisällön. Lisäksi tavoitteena oli selvittää missä suhteessa eri englanninkieliset kulttuurit esitellään kirjoissa ja onko olemassa mahdollisesti yhtä valtakulttuuria, joka on eniten esillä kirjoissa.</p> <p>Kirjasarjat, joita käytettiin tähän tutkimukseen, ovat <i>In Touch</i> ja <i>Open Road</i>- sarjat ja molemmista kirjasarjoista tutkittiin kolmen ensimmäisen kurssin kirjat. Lähtökohtana tutkimukselle oli kaksi tutkimuskysymystä: millainen kuva englanninkielisestä maailmasta esitellään kirjoissa ja missä suhteessa eri englanninkielisiä kulttuureja käsitellään toisiinsa nähden. Oletuksena oli, että jokaisesta kirjasta tulee löytymään yksi tai kaksi valtakulttuuria, jotka oletettavasti olisivat Amerikan ja Britannian kulttuurit, ja erot tutkimustuloksissa tulisivat ilmenemään pienempien englanninkielisten kulttuurien näkyvyydessä kirjoissa.</p> <p>Tutkimusmetodina tutkimuksessa käytettiin kuvailevaa data-analyysia ja aineisto kerättiin tutkimalla kuutta tekstikirjaa. Tulokset ovat suurimmaksi osaksi hypoteesien mukaisia, ja kirjoissa käsitellään selkeästi kahta kulttuuria eniten: Amerikan ja Britannian kulttuureja, ja muita englanninkielisiä kulttuureja paikoitellen. Kirjojen väliset erot löytyivät oletusten mukaisesti ja ilmenivät muiden englanninkielisten kulttuurien, kuten Australian ja Irlannin kulttuurien, esiintyvyydessä.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

The current national core curriculum for Finnish upper secondary schools does not define the materials to be used in teaching, neither what kind of material has to be used or how it should be used. Merely different kinds of aims in teaching and students learning objective's outlines are stated (National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools 2003). In other words, Finnish foreign language teachers have power in deciding the structures and materials used in the courses outlined in the syllabus. However, even though it is not required in Finland that teachers use textbooks in teaching, 98% still do (Bärlund 2011). Therefore, it can be assumed that the content of the textbooks can provide at least an outline of the content of teachers' who use textbooks, teaching.

The national core curriculum contains descriptions of each English course offered in schools and all the upper secondary schools in Finland have to follow the outlines of these courses and offer them to students. As stated above, the courses then differ according to the individual school and teacher's style: what topics or themes are emphasized or dealt with more care and how the issues are taught. In this study the English language subject is all the time referred as an A-language, a subject which syllabus starts in grades 1-6 of basic education. The English language is taught in Finland as a practical, theoretical and a cultural subject. Objects of teaching English are for example, to develop students' intercultural communication skills, "to develop their awareness, understanding and appreciation of the culture within the area or community where the language is spoken", and all in all "know how to communicate in a manner characteristic of the target language and its culture" (National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools 2003: 94). The English courses in upper secondary schools offered all around Finland are divided into six compulsory courses and two specialization courses. This study focuses on the first three compulsory courses "Young people and their world", "Communication and leisure" and "Study and work" (National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools 2003).

The aim of the present study is to examine Finnish upper secondary school English textbooks from a cultural point of view. The main reason for the study was to get a picture of which English-speaking cultures (ESCs) are presented to Finnish upper secondary school students and, therefore, of which cultures they gain knowledge. The two book series analysed, *In Touch* and *Open Road*, were chosen because the series are both widely used around Finland. Moreover, *Open Road* is a newer series and offers a fresher perspective on English teaching;

the *Open Road* series is advertised on the account of containing good authentic material, whereas *In Touch* promotes the series by advertising them as coherent study packages. The study is also intended as a fore study for my master's thesis, in which I plan to study the same topic, with the same point of view but to focus on observing teachers, and observe if individual teachers have a leading ESC through which each of them teach the language. All in all, this study provides information on through which ESCs the cultural images of the English-speaking world are formed and presented in two Finnish English book series. The study was carried out with two research questions as a guideline: which English-speaking cultures create the image of the English-speaking world in the textbooks and what is the balance between the cultures identified.

2 ENGLISH-SPEAKING CULTURES

2.1 Definition and aspects of culture

One of the key elements in the present study is the definition of culture. The complexity of it is due to the fact that culture can be linked to and discussed in any context in the modern society and hence can be seen from countless perspectives. Moreover, culture is a part of and shapes all aspects of day-to-day life of each society and individual. A country's customs and individual's behaviour can be explained and usually understood by searching for explanations from their cultural background. An individual's personal culture within society can be called *subjective culture* and the more nationally shared culture that somehow shapes each subjective culture can be identified as *objective culture* (Bennett, Bennett and Allen 2003: 243).

Furthermore, culture is usually divided into two categories: high culture and popular culture, the latter also known as mass culture (Gans 1999: 6). Gans also discusses the definitions of these two concepts and identifies high culture to be the art, music, literature and other symbolic products valued by the well-educated citizens of society, and popular culture to represent the cultural forms appreciated by the mainstream population of a society. However, both of these culture forms refer to products used by the citizens, shared values, and the cultural forms expressing these values, as for example, music, art, design, poetry or criticism (Gans 1999: 8).

The National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project (1996) in the U.S. has created terms for aspects of culture, and grouped all issues relating to culture under the categories of *perspectives*, as in myths, world views or inspirations; *products*, as in print, travel, merchandise or entertainment; and *practices*, for example, customs and society approved manners. In addition, Moran (2001: 25) adds another aspect of culture into the group and terms it *persons*, as in national icons, fictional and real life individuals. The cultural aspects consist of different cultural issues but together the categories form a solid definition of culture.

2.1.1 Culture and language

The compound relationship between language and culture is another relevant topic in this study. Wenying (2000: 328) discusses that culture and its relation to language can be symbolized by a metaphor of an iceberg: language is the tip of the iceberg symbolizing the visible part of culture and the rest of the iceberg under the surface is the invisible aspect of culture to be discovered. Wenying also argues the separation of language and culture to be impossible because of their interdependent relationship: language reflects culture and is simultaneously influenced and shaped by it. Brown (1994: 165) describes the two as follows: “A language is a part of a culture and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture”.

Preisler (1999: 256-266, as quoted in Wierzbicka 2006: 15) approaches the issue from the perspective of language education and argues in agreement with Brown (1994): teaching English only as a lingua franca, a language that is used systematically between people with different mother tongues, without any cultural context, would lack the mediation of the fundamental nature of a language. In other words, Preisler conveys that teaching a language without acknowledging its origins and developments, learners might learn an unidiomatic version of the language and therefore, mistake their idiomatic echoes of their mother tongue as natural forms of language, in this case English. The status the English language has gained during centuries is one of the most researched topics of scholars today and English has been proven to be the most widely used language in the world (Wierzbicka 2006: 10). Crystal (2003: 40) argues that the global status English has gained is the result of it being “in the right place at the right time”, at the centre of international activity.

2.1.2 English as a global language

Crystal (2003) discusses English as a global language and emphasizes the immense spreading of the language and how it has become a universal lingua franca. Crystal (2003: 120-122) mentions two reasons: a geological reason, emphasizing the movements of English in the era of the British Empire, and a socio-cultural reason, i.e. the fact that people around the world have become dependent on the English language in various aspects of life. In other words, the rise of the British Empire and the expansion of British colonial power in the 19th century, combined with the rise of the United States as a superpower and leading economic power in the recent decades have enabled English to become a global language.

Due to the fact that English is as widely spread as it is, several English cultures have also been formed and developed, with their distinctive versions of the English language. In relation to this, Wierzbicka (2006: 6) points out an interesting issue: the complexity of the phrase *English language*, when in fact multiple varieties of English languages exist within the different English cultures around the world, and therefore, *English language* does not exist. Wierzbicka does not consider this an ultimate truth but proposes that it would be appropriate to use the term with an equivalent modifier, as British English or American English, and mentions that these distinctions are more commonly accepted, and also useful. In turn, another way to create distinctions between *Englishes* is a model proposed by Kachru in 1985 (Crystal 2003: 60-65). In his model the variations of English languages are divided into three circles: Inner, Outer and Expanding. Wierzbicka (2006: 6) mentions that Kachru's model is widely accepted in literature and has been described as "pertinent and helpful".

2.2 Variety of English-speaking cultures

2.2.1 The Three Circles of English

The purpose of Kachru's model of The Three Circles of English is to show "1) the types of spread of English worldwide 2) the patterns of acquisition, and 3) the functional domains in which English is used internationally" (Bolton 2006: 292). In other words, the framework of this model is the historical context of English, the status of the language and functions in various regions (Kilickaya 2009: 35). Hence, Kachru's model consists of three concentric circles: Inner, Outer and Expanding, each of which represents a certain type of English distribution and use, measured globally.

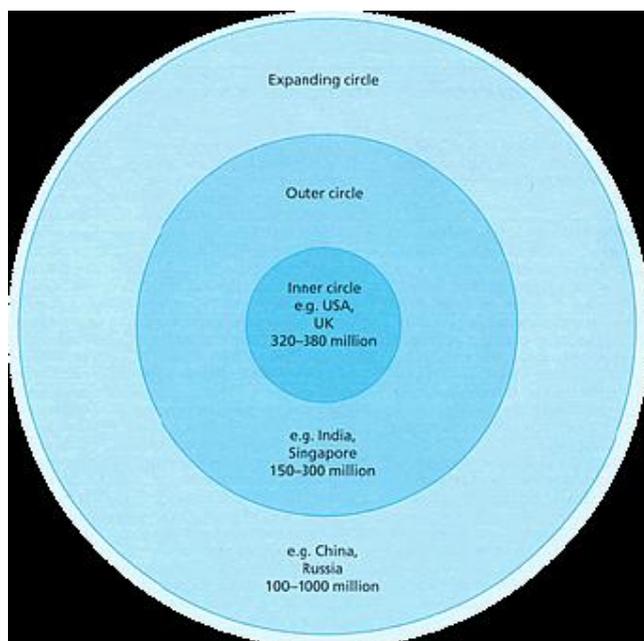


Figure 1: The Three Circles of English

As can be seen in Figure 1, the Inner Circle is formed by countries in which English is the primary language: it includes the USA, the UK, Ireland, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and some Caribbean territories. The number of speakers reaches up to 380 million people, of which approximately 260 million speakers are in the United States. Kachru (Bolton 2006: 249) considers these Native English-speaking countries' cultures to be norm-providing cultures for other ESCs.

Countries in the Outer Circle have acquired English in non-native circumstances and today the language is used somehow as a second language, or at least has gained some degree of recognition as an official, educational or legal language. There are over fifty countries in the Outer Circle, which include, for example, Malawi, India, Singapore and Zambia, many of which are former British colonies. The number of speakers in these regions is estimated to be between 300 to 500 million.

The Expanding Circle, which is also the broadest circle when considering the number of speakers (500-1000 million), include countries that recognize English as an international language but do not have strong historical factors influencing in the background. This list of countries includes also Finland, as well as China, Japan, Poland, Indonesia, Israel and Korea. These nations do not recognize any administrative status of English but are learning English as a foreign language and usually as the most influential foreign language as well (Bolton 2006: 292). All of these circles combined together include over 75 territories where English holds "a special place" (Crystal 2003: 60).

2.2.2 The Inner Circle's cultures

According to Kachru (Crystal 2003: 60) the cultures in the Inner Circle represent the traditional bases of English. These ESCs have each formed a different cultural identity and next the cultures will be discussed in more detail according to the aspects identified above: perspectives, products, practices and persons.

It must be noted that almost all of the cultures in the Inner Circle have been influenced first by the British culture, in the era of the British Empire. Due to that reason the language that has influenced all of these cultures is English. The two most influential or strongest, even though not the largest, ESCs are arguably the globally spread cultures of the United States and the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, even though also having British roots, American culture has developed with the influence of several other cultures, also European ones, and spread the most widely across the world: for example the two most well-known trade brands globally are American Coca-Cola and McDonald's. Other issues that today are recognised as American are, for example, Hollywood and its films, series, actors, directors, producers etc.; music industry (famous artists, producers, MTV); sports (baseball, American football and basketball, with world widely known teams, such as the Knicks and The New York Rangers); fast food (McDonald's); influential individuals (Barack Obama, Oprah); American English (strong accent with distinctive pronunciation [t/ = /d/] and word blending); and politics (Republican and Democratic parties). All in all, one could argue that American culture leads and shapes the popular culture side of other cultures around the world as it is the culture most widely visible in the world (Snowman 1977: 17-19).

The other major ESC, British culture, on the other hand, has stronger roots in history than American culture and therefore, it can be said it is not as changing and restless a culture as the American one. The island of the United Kingdom and its culture as well is actually formed by four different regions: Wales, Scotland, England and the Northern Ireland. Each of these regions possesses their own variation of British culture but the roots are the same in all - the English language, the British Empire and its results, the Industrial Revolution, strong national identity, and overall a rich history. Today the British are known for their distinctive English accent with idiosyncratic pronunciation, for example replacing the sound /t/ with a glottal stop; the Queen and other national icons; literature (authors, classics, plays); the media (TV shows, movies, magazines and newspapers with vast circulation); cuisine (fish and chips, kidney pies and scones); politeness and other characteristic ways of behaviour. As a

summary, it could be said that the British culture relies more on traditions with deeper roots in history and it has had time to influence greatly other cultures as well, mainly spreading the high culture (Gans 1999: 14, Snowman 1977: 78, 102).

Another two other Inner Circle countries, which can be paired up as equivalent duo with the USA and the UK pair, are Ireland and Canada. Both of these cultures are close both geographically and characteristically to one of the two major norm-providing English-speaking cultures. However, both the Irish and the Canadians use another language which is partly as influential as English, and has gained somewhat a valued status in the culture during the countries' history. In Ireland it is Irish and in Canada, French, and therefore, with another language with different cultural roots influencing the country's culture, the nations have the other culture, Irish or French, challenging the prevalence of the English culture (Crystal 2003: 66).

Brown (1994: 165) discusses this phenomenon as a reciprocal relationship: one cannot exist without influencing the other, and therefore, a language cannot exist without influencing a country on a cultural level. In any case, Irish and Canadian English-speaking cultures have also other distinctive factors which separate the nations' cultures from the two major ESCs, American and British. For example, Canada, which is said to be a blend of cultures, a cultural mosaic, is recognised as a country of winter sports (ice hockey); bilingualism; and welfare (Crystal 2003: 108, 128). Also, the nation's cultural identity is also strong and people distinctively recognise themselves as Canadians, instead of Americans. Irish culture, on the other hand, has its roots firmly in folklore. The Irish are known for their traditional music, tales and myths; Celtic sports such as hurling, rugby and Gaelic football; distinctive version of the English language; humour; and in general, a strong cultural identity (King 2006: 32).

In addition, Australia and New Zealand are countries belonging to the Inner Circle, and the countries have also closely linked cultures compared to each other. The nations both have strong historical roots and indigenous people still mark a special status in both cultures: in Australia the aboriginal people have shaped the cultural image, and in New Zealand the Maori culture plays a big part forming their cultural identity. However, Australian aboriginal's culture is stronger than Maori nations' culture's influence, as it has historically influenced New Zealand's culture but not vice versa.

New Zealand has the youngest culture of all of the Inner Circle countries. It was one of the last lands settled by humans thousands of years ago (Brooking 2004: 11). Thus, New Zealand's cultural identity builds greatly on natural environment, Maori and Polynesian aspects, even though it is today developing as a cosmopolitan culture. Australian culture also relies on the force of the country's nature: as Garden (2005: 1) notes that "Australians tend to take preserve pride in the harshness of their landscape and its challenging environments". Finally, the cultures of the last two territories of the Inner Circle, the Caribbean and South Pacific areas, can arguably be said to be the least globally spread cultures and therefore, the least influential ESCs in the Inner Circle. The most significant characteristic of these territories is that they are recognized through their environmental aspects: biodiversity in surroundings.

2.3 Culture in language learning and teaching

A common procedure in teaching, as discussed above, is that language and culture cannot be separated. Hence, teaching cultural knowledge and awareness is a major part of (foreign) language teaching. Baker (2011: 67) argues that in addition to learning the grammatical functions and features of English, an equally important aim is to teach the students how to survive with English in intercultural situations: "Equally important is the ability to make use of linguistic and other communicative resources in the negotiation of meaning, roles, and relationships in the diverse sociocultural settings of intercultural communication through English."

All the English courses taught in Finnish upper secondary school are regulated by the Finnish National Board of Education and therefore, as mentioned above, all courses must follow the same syllabus and aim at the same learning results. Cultural issues are also included and valued in the teaching objects of the core curriculum (National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools 2003). However, the book series the schools can use are not appointed in advance and neither is the approach or the completion of the courses, and thus, the schools and teachers can in some aspects plan their courses by themselves. Hence, each school and also each individual teacher have their own issues to focus on and invest in, and the textbooks only provide a framework for the courses. Baker (2005: 68) also mentions that teaching cultural situations of only two major cultures, the USA and the UK, which is usually the direction in Finnish English teaching, "is clearly not sufficient for global uses of English. A more extensive treatment and understanding of the varied cultural contexts of English use is necessary".

3 THE PRESENT STUDY

3.1 Research questions and hypotheses

The studies of Kachru (Bolton 2006, Crystal 2003) and his model of the acquisition and use of English today, The Three Circles of English, Crystal's (2003) vast research of English as a global language and Wierzbicka's (2006) works are central themes in and support the data analysis of the present study. The framework of the Inner Circle's countries in Kachru's model is also the basis of the choices of the English-speaking cultures examined in this study. In support, each of the cultural aspects, which are also referred as categories, are used in the study as an outline of the data analysis.

The cultures described and dealt with above are the ones that were looked for in the textbooks and the aim was to examine *which* English-speaking cultures are presented in the textbooks and not specifically *how* the cultural aspects are presented. This also means that the study does not reveal what the students are learning in class but only what the books of these two book series have to offer. Another aim was to examine the relations and balance between the cultures found in the books. The textbooks were examined with the help of two main research questions:

- (1) Which English-speaking cultures create the image of the English-speaking world presented in upper secondary school's *In Touch* and *Open Road* first-year English textbooks?
- (2) What is the balance between the cultures identified?

The main hypothesis was that at least two cultures would be presented in each book: American and British culture. Another hypothesis was that the differences found between the images of the English-speaking world created in the books would be found through the presentation of other, minor ESCs. The sections of the book hypothesized to contain these cultural references in, were main chapters, texts, exercises, pictures, songs, and vocabulary section. Also, the vocabulary sections were hypothesized to contain references merely to American and British Englishes and their spelling.

3.2 Data collection and the method of analysis

The data was collected by examining six textbooks and the findings were categorized according to the four categories of culture, mentioned above: *persons, products, practices and perspectives* (National Board of Education 1996, Moran 2001). The cultures focused on were the cultures of The Inner Circle (Crystal 2003: 60): American, British, Irish, Australian, Canadian, Kiwi, South African, and Caribbean cultures. Each of the cultural aspects appears in different ways in all of the Inner Circle´ cultures (ICCs), and with these divisions the balance between the cultures presented in the books were examined.

The present study is a qualitative study and the method of analysis was descriptive data based content analysis. The method was chosen because there was no prearranged ways of examining the data or any predictable results to be discovered, and therefore this method was found to be the most useful approach to the study. Each textbook was examined individually and notes were made on the similar basis about each book. In other words, remarks were collected and lists were created about cultural references, and the findings were divided according to the cultural categories and partially to the structure of the textbooks. All the textbooks could be roughly separated into two or three parts: the main part with texts and follow-up tasks, the grammar-section with grammar points and exercises, and the vocabulary section. The first two parts were examined by making notes of the cultural references within the four categories, and the vocabulary section was examined by counting the references to different ESCs, for example remarks of American or British ways of spelling.

Particular attention could be given to the culture-specific sections of the books, which are emphasized in the textbooks themselves as culture parts of the content: *In Touch* has “Culture Tip”-blocks and *Open Road* “FYI”-blocks. Correspondingly, another general remark of value is that the textbooks were examined only according to the printed material. In other words, the CD provided to students as a part of the book and all listening exercises were not taken into consideration in the data analysis, unless there was a remark to, for example, specific nationality mentioned in writing in the assignment in the textbook. Otherwise, all sections of the textbooks were examined.

4 CULTURAL CATEGORIES

The four aspects of culture, persons, products, practices and perspectives, also referred to as cultural categories, were the outline of this study and the results can be categorized according to them. The cultures to be examined in the books were the Inner Circle's cultures (Crystal 2003: 60). Kachru (Bolton 2006: 292) has divided ESCs according to the status the English language has gained in various countries and also the number of speakers that each of the nations have worldwide. In general, the most references to different ECSs in all of the textbooks were made within two categories – persons and products. Perspectives and practices were noticeably more rarely occurring categories and cultural information is not presented as frequently in the textbooks through these aspects. Another general observation that could be formed is that the first hypothesis about finding two dominant cultures in each book comes true in both book series: American and British cultures are the most visible cultures in all of the books.

However, none of these textbooks is designed for a culture course, which is the fifth course - *Culture* (National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools 2003: 96), and no clear presumptions could, therefore, have been formed about the possible results. Nevertheless, there are the specific aims about gaining cultural knowledge listed separately in the part of “Foreign languages” in Finnish upper secondary schools' core curriculum, which means that culture teaching is present in all of the courses (National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools 2003: 94-95).

The second hypothesis was that the differences between the textbooks' cultural content would be found according to the presentation of the other Inner Circle's cultures in the textbooks, and this is also in line with the study's results.

The third hypothesis, which presumed American and British culture to dominate the vocabulary section as well as the rest of the book's content, however, is not realised that openly: three cultures can be defined to dominate the books' vocabulary sections: American and British cultures, together with Australian culture.

4.1 In Touch and Open Road

Developing a student's cultural identity and gaining cultural knowledge is merely one aim of upper secondary school's syllabus (National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools

2003). However, foreign language learning is one channel to study these issues and meet the learning entities set to students, and examining book series that teachers use is one way to learn more about it. Both the book series' textbooks are designed according to the theme of the course outlined in the core curriculum, and the *In Touch* books are called *In Touch 1: Up close and personal*, *In Touch 2: Been there, done that* and *In Touch 3: Get a Life!*, and the *Open Road* series' books have the number of the course as a title, *Course 1*, *Course 2* and *Course 3*.

The observations made in all three of the *In Touch* textbooks are mostly in line with the hypotheses of the present study, and thus, are dominated by the competition of visibility of American and British culture, with few references to other ICCs. The *In Touch* textbooks are divided into Units, each of which includes a variety of repetitive blocks of tasks (e.g. Get-going, Intro, Key-text and Read-On-sections). Each of the textbooks contains four Units and also a grammar-section, a refresh-section and a vocabulary-section. Even though all of the Units include several different kinds of sections and selection of tasks within them, all of them are not relevant in this study. The most relevant section is the Culture Tip- blocks, which appear as boxes within the Units and reveal all manners of useful trivia about different ESCs.

In turn, each textbook in the *Open Road* series starts with a foreword page which introduces the reader to the book's structure and acts as a threshold for using the book. In the foreword it is mentioned what kinds of sections the book is formed of and what kind of topics the book covers. The textbooks are divided into Themes, instead of Units as in the *In Touch* series, and in addition to the Themes, the book has sections of Travel Guide, Highway Code, Service Station, Key, Alphabetical wordlist and Irregular verbs- sections. Also, similarly to the *In Touch* textbooks, each of these sections includes a variety of different kind of parts/tasks. The relevant section to this study is the part FYI, which is the equivalent for Culture Tip in the *In Touch* series, and provides cultural information for the student. Cultural references in the Culture Tip and FYI provided plenty of data for the present study but still were not the main source for cultural references as the references in these sections mostly placed into one category, i.e. practices.

Although the textbooks are divided according to different Units or Themes, the sections are not all dealing with issues of only one ESC each, but a variety of bits and pieces of several ESCs are presented in some of them. However, one textbook is an exception to this: *In Touch*

2: *Been there, done that*. The textbook is divided into four Units, each of which focuses distinctively on one culture: three cover issues relating to only one ESC and one provides a Finnish culture's perspective. Unit 1 deals with British culture, Unit 2 covers aspects of American culture, Unit 3 approaches the topic from Australian culture's point of view, and Unit 4 presents Finnish culture. However, in general, all the six textbooks introduce several ESCs in some manner and provide cultural information to students; the only difference is the balance in which the different ESCs are presented. The balance between the ESCs can be seen within the frequency of cultural references in the four categories, according to which the cultures were examined in the books – persons, products, practices and perspectives.

4.2 Persons and products

The division between the occurrences of cultural references in the categories is distinct in all six textbooks. The persons and product categories have the most references to different ESCs in all of the books and less frequent categories are practices and products.

Therefore, the most cultural information of ESCs presented to students is by presentation of different nationally significant individuals, real or fictive, and introductions of globally spread products or brands, such as food, clothes and movies. However, the persons category's cultural range is not wide and mostly the ESCs presented are British and American cultures. The cultural references in the persons category are mostly about celebrities as in singers, athletes, authors and actors, but also characters in literature and movies. The references in the *In Touch* textbooks are mostly to these two leading cultures apart from two exceptions: *In Touch 2: Been there, done that!* offers the most culturally variable presentation of all of the three books because it has a chapter solely dealing with Australian culture, and *In Touch 3: Get a life!* has a reference to Canadian culture.

The *Open Road* textbooks realise the same hypothesis of the domination of references to British and American cultures in persons category, but the rest of the references have more variation of ESCs they refer to than in the *In Touch* series' first three books. *Open Road 1* has also a reference to Indian culture, one to Australian culture, and two references to Canadian culture. *Open Road 2*, on the other hand, offers information about Kiwi culture, and *Open Road 3* provides an insight to Australian culture. However, when compared to the number of references to these other ESCs and to British and American cultures, which both have 10-20 references, the cultural diversity is not relatively notable.

The next category with the most cultural references is products, which presents information about all kinds of human produced artefacts, in other words, products that people use: for example tools, food, clothes and buildings. The *In Touch* series offers only American and British culture perspectives in this category, the only exception being *In Touch 2* and its Australian chapter. The *Open Road* series, on the other hand, discusses two more cultures in addition to American, British and Australian cultures – Indian and Canadian culture. Mostly the references in the products category are for example movies and books, but also more concrete objects are mentioned, such as traffic signs, currency, newspapers and magazines.

On the whole, as these two categories include the most references, some general conclusions can be made. The *Open Road* series presents the book's content in the foreword and for example *Open Road 1* and *3* includes a mention of which cultures will be discussed in the books: the UK, the US, Australia and India, which is reflected in the findings accordingly. *In Touch 2* is the only textbook that discusses the cultures to be presented: American, British and Australian (and Finnish) culture, which is also in line with the general outcome of the findings. Hence, these two categories most obviously demonstrate the general picture of English-speaking world that the *In Touch* and the *Open Road* book series' first three books present to upper secondary school students. The cultural overall view of that world is majorly British and American oriented and even though a few other ESCs are discussed in the books, the number of references to those cultures is a mere fraction of the references in the books altogether.

The most frequently referred cultures in the textbooks in the persons and products categories are logically the American and British culture, as Kachru (Bolton 2006: 293) has researched that these two cultures are historically the strongest cultures. The U.S. and the UK have also influenced other countries' cultures through centuries and have themselves grown as powerful countries, which mean that their visibility has also been great globally (Snowman 1977: 77). Gans (1999: 100) discusses the two sides of cultures which can be compared to these two categories: high culture to persons and low culture to products. This can be again related to the status that the UK and the U.S. have reached globally today, as it is also a good measure for how vast the culture has spread, or, in other words, how globally-known their celebrities and brands are.

In turn, the presentation of Australian culture through these two categories was the next frequent one and it could be argued that that is due to the status the English language has in

the country. Kachru (Bolton 2006: 292) explains that countries belonging to the Inner Circle, must have a primary status for the English language, and in line with this theory Australia can be arguably supposed to be a third country, in addition to the U.S. and the UK, to have English as an influential language in the whole country. In other words, as the other ESCs referred to in these categories, Indian and Canadian cultures have one or several other historically valued and in day-to-day-use existing language/s next to English, Australia does not. Moreover, Australian culture has formed a strong cultural identity and therefore is a debatably suitable topic to be a theme in language classes in school and presented in textbooks (Garden 2005: 3).

4.3 Practices and perspectives

Practices and perspectives categories are the two categories with fewer cultural references to ESCs. These two aspects offer insights to ESCs by introducing verbal and non-verbal use of language, actions and interactions (practices), and cultural values and beliefs (perspectives). It could be presumed that these categories would provide the most information about ESCs to students as these are tools which can be used when communicating but nevertheless, few references per book was found about these two cultural aspects. Furthermore, the communication skills presented in all the textbooks is mostly non-culture bounded, which is partly against the view that language and culture cannot be taught separately (Brown 1994: 165, Preisler 1999 as quoted in Wierzbicka 2006: 15).

However, despite the number of references, these references can be argued to be the most valued in the present study as the category's references are mostly FYI or Culture Tip-sections' content. As Baker (2011: 10) argues, the most relevant issues that form culture are the ways of communication and behavior. Baker also addresses the value of teaching these in school as important as without them, one cannot survive in an unfamiliar culture. Thus, as the FYI and Culture Tip-sections are the most emphasized sections culture-wise in the textbooks, and are designed in order to attract students' attention and provide merely additional, cultural information, this category's findings can be argued to be as descriptive as the two categories dealt with above.

The *In Touch* textbooks offer an already familiar set of ESCs through these two aspects: most references are to American and British cultures, which explain behavioral patterns in ESCs and offer tips on how manage oneself when encountering someone from another cultural

background. Despite the low number of references in these categories *In Touch 1* and *3* present two other yet unmentioned ESCs: Irish and South-African cultures. Irish culture has also formed a strong cultural identity but arguably is considered to be similar and too close to British culture and that can be concluded to be the reason behind its poor presentation in the textbooks (Crystal 2003: 66). The presence of South-African culture on the other hand, demonstrates well the omitting of the several other ESCs of the Inner Circle in the textbooks. Nevertheless, the cultural variety within these two categories is relatively broader than in persons and products categories, as the previous two discuss much less number of references. All the cultures dealt with in these two categories are already frequently mentioned American, British and Australian cultures and the additional, rarer ESCs, South-African and Irish cultures.

4.4 Vocabulary

Vocabulary sections were the only parts of the books that offered results somehow against the study's hypothesis. In all of the books the lexicon sections are British English and American English oriented but a third competitive dominant culture is present as well, which is Australian English. Wierzbicka (2006: 15-22) discusses the concept of the English language and argues that one English language does not exist anymore but several varieties of it. Therefore, distinctive terms such as American English should be used in order to be more specific in one's meaning and also because of their usefulness. Therefore, the references to ESCs in the vocabulary sections confirm Wierzbicka's (2006: 20-25) way of thinking: there are certain features, words, and differences in spelling or pronunciation that create these variations and, thus, separate *Englishes* from each other.

All of the books follow the line of separating at least British English and American English from one another. All the references are placed in after the words in brackets in the vocabulary lists and are marking the variation of specific variation of English. *In Touch 2* is the textbook that proved to be the most culturally driven textbook with its clear-cut Unit divisions and the textbook had the most notions in the vocabulary section too, in which three variations of Englishes were mentioned: 22 references to American English, 13 references to British English and six references to Australian English. Likewise, as in general in all of the books, at least a couple of references are marked to emphasize the spelling variations between different Englishes: *In Touch 1* has four markings about American and British English, *In Touch 3* has references also only to British (10) and American (21) English. To conclude, in

terms of vocabulary, The *In Touch* series' first-year books are British and American focused with a hint of Australian English. The *Open Road* series' first three textbooks do not differ greatly either: *Open Road 1* has references only about British (3), American (2) and Australian (2) English, *Open Road 2* marks only British (11) and American (4) English spelling, and *Open Road 3* contains again the top three, British (8), American (27) and Australian (11) English.

Bolton (2006: 294) mentions, as also discussed above that the presentation of the specific variations of English in the textbooks can be about the fact that the countries where the language variations have been formed and are used do not have another rival, challenging language next to English. Thus, the differences between these versions of English are easy to present and justify the differences to students. The English language has a primary status in these countries, and all in all, the UK, the U.S. and Australia can be said to function as norm-providing ESC, including language changes and development as well as spreading both high and mass cultures (Bolton 2006: 290, Snowman 1977: 76).

5 CONCLUSION

To conclude, the domination of American and British culture of the cultural field of English-speaking world is a discussed topic of scholars like Gans (1999) and Kachru (Bolton 2006, Crystal 2003). They discuss in their works also about the status of American and British culture shaping cultures globally, and the present study's results do not differ from the contemporary view of dominant ESCs. Kachru (Bolton 2006: 290) states the British culture and the British English to be one of the most influential ESC in the world and basically, being the foundation of all other ESCs, including the American culture. However, the U.S.' status today as a powerful state leaves the British culture behind in a certain way. In other words, the British culture is considered to spread high culture around the world today, whereas American culture spreads mass culture (Gans 1999), and the mainstream culture, which the Americans spread, can arguably said to be more visible and apparent in the world today. Nevertheless, despite the differences of their influential aspects and areas, these two are the dominant ESCs worldwide today. The present study's results can be compared and are in line with the situation of the two foremost cultures in the world – the image of the English-speaking world in both book series, *In Touch* and *Open Road*, is majorly created by the presentation of the two main cultures, British and American.

Nonetheless, the study was conducted by examining only the first three textbooks of both book series. Therefore, the amount of data gathered is relatively small and results may not reflect the alignment of the topic in the complete series. To be able to make generalizations based on the results, one must examine the series entirely and also include the examination of auditory material related to the books, which was omitted in the present study due to the scope of the study. It would also be interesting to find out if the book series' culture course's textbook were to differ majorly in results, or would there be a clear-cut cultural line to be discovered with both of the series. In addition, the comparison between the series could be made if all of the books were examined entirely, and would be fascinating to discover has there been any development in cultural perspectives in general as the *In Touch* series is older than the *Open Road*.

Also, a perspective that would strongly support the study would be the teacher's point of view. As stated above, even though teachers in Finland are not required to use a textbook in teaching, the textbooks' content provide some sort of outline of teaching, and therefore the teacher's alignment would arguably support the textbook content or differ from it. In the end, the teacher is responsible for his/her teaching and must have clear viewpoints on what to teach, and therefore, one must have an idea of how to provide cultural information for the students. In my master's thesis I plan to focus on this point of view and discover that do teachers usually have a dominant ESC each teaches English with. Moreover, the contribution of textbooks in teaching of those teachers who prefer a certain ESC in the classroom would be another interesting part of the study. All in all, observing individual teachers and their perspectives about teaching language and culture could provide useful information about second language learning and teaching, helping also future teachers to form their possible cultural teaching methods.

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