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Elina Tergujeff

English Pronunciation Teaching in Finland

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To my daughter Veera – We girls can achieve anything.

ABSTRACT

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Finnish summary
Diss.

This doctoral dissertation explores what English pronunciation teaching is like in the Finnish school context, from primary to upper secondary level. More specifically, this research looks into the extent to which pronunciation teaching corresponds to recent recommendations in the pronunciation teaching literature (communicative approach and suprasegmental orientation), and at the role of phonetic training in English pronunciation teaching in Finland. A further aim was to find out whether the English as an International Language (EIL) approach is taken into account in the choice of pronunciation model.

To attain a good cross-sectional view of the topic, a *mixed methods* research design was chosen. The research task was divided into four sub studies, each of which used different data and research methods. Thus, the study comprises a textbook analysis, a survey for teachers, a classroom observations study, and a learner interview study. The results of the sub studies are presented in the four original papers on which this dissertation is based.

The results show that the recent recommendations for pronunciation teaching are not fully applied in practice in English pronunciation teaching in Finnish schools. Instead of focusing on suprasegmental features of speech, such as rhythm and intonation, the teaching mainly concentrates on individual sounds. Using communicative tasks that explicitly focus on pronunciation is rare and phonetic training plays only a minor role in the teaching. The relevant phonetic symbols seem to be taught at the primary level, but thereafter are only sparsely used in teaching. The results also indicate increasing influence of the EIL approach on the choice of pronunciation model.

Keywords: pronunciation, English language teaching, ELT, English as a foreign language, EFL, English as an International Language, EIL, mixed methods, textbook analysis, survey, classroom observations, interviews

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LIST OF ORIGINAL PAPERS

This doctoral dissertation is based on four original papers by the author. Study I has been published in a peer-reviewed conference proceedings, whereas the other three studies have appeared in peer-reviewed international journals. In the dissertation, the original papers are referred to as follows:

Study I Tergujeff, E. 2010. Pronunciation teaching materials in Finnish EFL textbooks. In A. Henderson (ed.), *English Pronunciation: Issues and Practices (EPIP): Proceedings of the First International Conference. June 3–5 2009, Université de Savoie, Chambéry, France.* Université de Savoie: Laboratoire LLS. 189–205.

Study II Tergujeff, E. 2012. The English Pronunciation Teaching in Europe Survey: Finland. *Apples – Journal of Applied Language Studies* 6 (1), 29–45.

Study III Tergujeff, E. 2012. English pronunciation teaching: Four case studies from Finland. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research* 3 (4), 599–607.

Study IV Tergujeff, E. 2013. Learner perspective on English pronunciation teaching in an EFL context. *Research in Language* 11.1, 81–95.

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

When speaking a foreign language, pronunciation is the aspect that often creates the first impression of the speaker and his/her language skills. Although attitudes towards foreign accents have generally changed from judgmental to more tolerant, successful communication in a foreign language requires a certain command of the pronunciation of the target language; pronunciation is responsible for intelligibility[1] (Seidlhofer 2001). In other words, pronunciation can be seen as a central component of face-to-face interaction and a part of the process in which speakers present an image of themselves to others. Also, phonological features are suggested to be among the most salient linguistic dimensions used by speakers to create a sense of personal identity, and pronunciation can also project social identity. When speaking a foreign language, some speakers may consciously retain certain phonological features of their mother tongue as markers of ethnic or group identity. (Pennington & Richards 1986.) Intonation in particular plays a major role in communication. It conveys emotions, interest, doubt and attitudes; signals emphasis; helps the listener to recognise the grammatical structure of spoken language; and gives cues in the turn-taking of the interlocutors. Hence, inappropriate intonation can be misleading, disrupt communication and cause annoyance. (Rogerson-Rewell 2011, 192.)

For all the above reasons, pronunciation merits serious consideration in foreign language teaching. Pronunciation was an important area of English language teaching (ELT) when the latter blossomed along with the post-war globalisation of the 1950s and 1960s. However, with the rise of the communicative approach to language teaching from the end of the 1970s, pronunciation became "the orphan" (Gilbert 2010, Derwing 2010) or "Cinderella" (Seidlhofer 2001, 56) of language teaching. Traditional pronunciation teaching methods were mainly rejected by the proponents of

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[1] In the present study, *intelligibility* is referred to as the degree to which a listener understands a speaker. The term *comprehensibility* is understood as a listener judgment (measured on a scale) of how easy or difficult it is to understand the speaker's production. (Derwing & Munro 1997, Derwing et al. 2007, Derwing 2010.)

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as incompatible with teaching language as communication (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, 11), and, since no comprehensive communicative set of methods was offered in return (ibid., 9), it has been suggested that pronunciation became largely neglected (Fraser 2000, Derwing & Munro 2005, Derwing 2010). This can be considered a negative effect of CLT (which in itself is a highly positive approach), because – as already mentioned – pronunciation plays a crucial role in successful communication, and gives the first impression of a speaker's language skills. The study of pronunciation issues has also been claimed to have been marginalised within applied linguistics (Derwing & Munro 2005). Thus, this study aims to bring Cinderella back into the limelight, as it focuses on English pronunciation teaching in an English as a foreign language (EFL)[2] context, namely, Finnish schools from primary to upper secondary level. The study uses multiple methods and data sets, and is based on four sub studies. The first sub study is a textbook analysis exploring pronunciation teaching materials in Finnish EFL textbooks. The second sub study is a teacher survey. The third sub study deals with classroom observation data, and the fourth is based on learner interviews. All the sub studies have been reported on in the original papers appended to the present work, and are referred to here as Studies I, II, III, and IV.

Before moving on to the present study in more detail, some background information related to English language teaching in the Finnish context should be given. Finland is officially a bilingual country with two national languages, Finnish and Swedish. In addition, the Sami and Romany languages are recognized in the Constitution of Finland (§17): speakers of these languages are mentioned as groups who have the right to maintain and develop their language and culture. Also, interpretation and translation support for users of Finnish sign language is provided for by law. Thus, English has no official status in Finland. Demographically, the number of Finnish residents with English as their mother tongue is not high. In 2011, there were 13 804 native English-speaking residents in Finland (Statistics Finland 2012). Although native speakers of English are among the largest foreign language minorities in Finland, they account for less than 0.3% of the total population. However, globalization in its various forms (e.g. in the areas of working life and popular culture) has resulted in the English language being strongly present in the everyday life of Finns – in education, working life and leisure activities. Attitudes towards English in Finland are positive overall, and the strong presence of a foreign language in Finnish society is not seen as a threat to the native languages or cultures. (See Leppänen et al. 2011.) The linguistic landscape includes many English language items, e.g. in advertising, and English is widely heard in the media, as foreign films and television programmes are not dubbed but subtitled.

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2 In this study, the term *English as a foreign language (EFL)* is understood as English language teaching given in a country where English has no official status. The term *English as a second language (ESL)* is understood as English language teaching given in an English-speaking country.

In schools, English is taught as a foreign language, and it is the most widely studied foreign language in Finland. In 2009, 99.6% of upper secondary school graduates had studied English as their first foreign language. Schoolchildren begin their English studies in the lower grades of basic education (in most cases in grade three in the age of nine but depending on the school's language choices). This is even before starting to study the obligatory second national language that is not their mother tongue (Swedish or Finnish). In general, the Finnish educational system offers many opportunities for language studies, and therefore it is quite common that during their educational history, Finnish upper secondary school graduates have studied three or even four languages in addition to their mother tongue. (Kumpulainen 2010, 88–89.) Studying the second national language and at least one foreign language is obligatory during the nine years of compulsory basic education, which starts at age seven, and also during upper secondary education (for more information on the Finnish educational system, see ibid., 222).

Teaching is regulated by the national core curricula, although municipalities and individual schools usually have their own curricula as well. National core curricula that are relevant for the present study are the *National core curriculum for basic education* (Finnish National Board of Education 2004) and the *National core curriculum for upper secondary schools* (Finnish National Board of Education 2003). For language studies, the curricula present learning objectives in terms of language proficiency, cultural skills and learning strategies, and give guidelines for the content of teaching. In foreign languages, the emphasis is first laid on oral communication, with the amount of written practice gradually increasing towards the end of basic education (Finnish National Board of Education 2004, 139). Despite this emphasis on oral skills, pronunciation is hardly mentioned in the objectives of the core curricula. In grades 7–9 of basic education, the learning objectives include "the pupils will learn to be aware of some of the key differences between different variants of English" (ibid., 141); this is the most explicit reference to pronunciation in the National core curriculum for basic education. Similarly, the National core curriculum for upper secondary schools does not explicitly mention pronunciation. The national matriculation examination that is taken at the end of the studies does not include an obligatory test in oral skills; only listening comprehension, grammar and written skills are tested (see The Finnish Matriculation Examination). However, since 2009 upper secondary schools have been obliged to offer their pupils an elective course in foreign languages that focuses on oral skills and includes a national test at the end of the course (Finnish National Board of Education 2009). The result of the test is attached to the candidate's matriculation examination as a separate diploma.

However, the language proficiency scale of the curricula, meant to be used in assessing learners, includes detailed descriptions of the requisite pronunciation skills. The scale is a Finnish application of that in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR; Council of Europe 2001).

For example, at level A2.2[3], which is the goal for English at the end of basic education, the criteria include "pronunciation is intelligible, even if a foreign accent is evident and mispronunciations occur" and "speech is sometimes fluent, but different types of breaks are very evident" (Finnish National Board of Education 2004, 284). The upper secondary school goal, level B2.1, include the following criteria: "pronunciation and intonation are clear and natural" and "can produce stretches of speech with fairly even tempo and few longer pauses" (Finnish National Board of Education 2003, 246). The goal set for upper secondary school pupils, in particular, can be considered very ambitious, and its achievement requires considerable effort from both teacher and learner.

1.1 Previous studies on English pronunciation teaching

As pointed out by Derwing & Munro (2005), pronunciation and related topics have been rather neglected in research, although, more recently, increased interest towards pronunciation has been observed (Derwing 2010). In this section, I introduce the most important studies on pronunciation teaching that are relevant to the present work – starting from the Finnish context. The state of English pronunciation teaching in Finnish schools has been criticised by Lintunen (2004), whose study reveals that even advanced Finnish learners of English make systematic errors in their pronunciation. In his study, Lintunen investigated the development of pronunciation and transcription skills among 34 university freshmen. For pronunciation skills, the results showed that most participants consistently mispronounced at least one phoneme (suprasegmental features of speech such as stress, rhythm and intonation were not considered in his study). This led Lintunen to conclude that not enough attention is paid to pronunciation in school teaching (ibid., 215.) His claim is partly supported by the fact that in his questionnaire to university freshmen (n=108), half of the participants stated they had not been taught how to read phonemic symbols at all (ibid., 187). As Lintunen did not study school teaching as such, I was inspired to fill this research gap and to find out whether Lintunen's critique is justifiable.

The claim that not enough attention is paid to pronunciation in Finnish EFL teaching is also supported by Iivonen (2005, 46). He states that Finnish EFL teachers find pronunciation difficult to teach, and that they often neglect it, preferring to teach other skills (reading, writing) instead. It is also possible that language classes in Finland are of the kind described by Mildner & Tomic (2007): in class, it is impossible to pay attention to individual problems, since teaching groups are big and time is limited. If teaching pronunciation is perceived by many teachers as difficult, then good and varied teaching

[3] In the Finnish version of the CEFR language proficiency scale, each level is divided into two; e.g. A2 of the CEFR has been replaced with the more detailed A2.1 and A2.2.

materials are needed to support teachers. Textbooks play an important role in language classes, but despite this they are not a major theme in research. More than two decades ago, Westbury (1989, 477–479) noted that research on textbooks concentrates mainly on analysis of different biases in textbooks, and on content analysis focusing on gender and ethnic stereotyping. As at least for Finland, Westbury's notion still holds: it is known that teachers use textbooks extensively in foreign language instruction (Luukka et al. 2008), but only limited, research-based information about their contents and the ways they are used is available. For this reason, textbooks are included as one source of data in the present study. Derwing & Munro (2005) have suggested that untrained teachers may rely too heavily on textbooks.

Before the present study, no broader studies on English pronunciation teaching in Finland had been conducted. The little that is known about English pronunciation teaching in Finland was mainly based on learners' recollections, and covered only the use of few (phonetic) teaching techniques. The studies do not speak for a strong phonetic emphasis in pronunciation teaching (Lintunen 2004, 187; Tergujeff et al. 2011), nor an extensive focus on suprasegmental features of speech (Tergujeff et al. 2011). Oral exercises more generally have been studied in the context of Finnish upper secondary level by Mäkelä (2005), who recommends paying more attention to pronunciation. Globally, many of the existing studies on the subject have focused on English-speaking countries. These English as a second language (ESL) contexts include Canada (Breitkreuz et al. 2001, Foote et al. 2011), the USA (Murphy 1997), Australia (e.g. Macdonald 2002), and the UK (Bradford & Kenworthy 1991, Burgess & Spencer 2000). Pronunciation teaching in contexts where English is a foreign language has been studied, for example, in Spain (Walker 1999) and in the EFL environments of Ireland (Murphy 2011). A relevant body of studies has been conducted in Poland, but these studies have mainly focused on the learners' perspective/attitudes (e.g. Waniek-Klimczak 1997, Waniek-Klimczak & Klimczak 2005, Janicka et al. 2005).

The previous studies are mainly surveys aimed at educational establishments and/or teachers. They have focused on finding out which phonological features are taught and on how pronunciation teaching is practised, among other things. The educational contexts have usually included tertiary and adult education; fewer studies have dealt with primary and secondary education, which is the focus of the present study. The studies show that many teachers have not received pedagogical training in how to teach pronunciation (Breitkreutz et al. 2001, Foote et al. 2011). Lack of training in this area was frequently brought up by teachers who were asked about the shortcomings of their training, and who wished that they had more of it (Bradford & Kenworthy 1991, Burgess & Spencer 2000, Breitkreutz et al. 2001, Foote et al. 2011). Another object of criticism is teaching materials. Many teachers in Ireland evaluated the teaching materials available for pronunciation teaching as inappropriate (Murphy 2011), and in Australia, one of the reasons for teachers being reluctant to teach pronunciation was lack of suitable

materials (Macdonald 2002). Fernandez & Hughes (2009) state that, in Spain, pronunciation issues are not as well covered in EFL textbooks as other areas of language. Both the segmental (individual sounds) and suprasegmental levels seem to be taken into account in teaching, according to studies conducted in various countries (e.g. Murphy 1997, Burgess & Spencer 2000, Murphy 2011). In Canada, acknowledging the importance of suprasegmental features of speech seems to have increased between the 2000 survey (Breitkreutz et al. 2001) and 2010 survey (Foote et al. 2011). A review of the literature also reveals that a wide variety of techniques are used in pronunciation teaching, including listen and repeat / drills, minimal pair practice, role play, teacher correction, phonemic script, recording learners, using mirrors and diagrams of the mouth, listening tasks, and encouraging learners to think of their pronunciation goals. Other themes that seem to be generally current in the field of English pronunciation teaching research are (finding) the balance between teaching segmental and suprasegmental features of speech, and the possible lack of teacher training and appropriate teaching materials. These themes are discussed in many of the studies mentioned above.

Now that the main directions of previous research have been discussed and the current themes identified, more detailed consideration can be given to the present study. As no wider studies on English pronunciation teaching in Finland yet exist, it is not known whether similar issues are current in this country context as elsewhere. The next section of the dissertation presents the research questions used to find out what English pronunciation teaching is currently like in Finnish schools.

1.2 Aim and research questions

The aim of this doctoral dissertation is to explore how English pronunciation is taught in Finnish schools. The work examines teaching from the primary to upper secondary level, and uses multiple data sets to obtain a comprehensive cross-sectional view of the topic. In the analysis, special emphasis is laid on implementation of the current recommendations presented in the pronunciation teaching literature/research, and on the role of phonetic training[4]. Thus, the following three overarching research questions were set for this dissertation:

1. How does English pronunciation teaching in Finland correspond to recent recommendations in the pronunciation teaching literature, including communicative pronunciation teaching and the *broad approach*[5]*?*

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4 In this dissertation phonetic training is understood as activities that make use of phonetic terminology, the International Phonetic Alphabet, and/or focuses on physical articulation and functions of the articulators.

5 The term *broad approach* refers to a top-down approach to pronunciation teaching where the focus is on suprasegmental features of speech (e.g. stress, intonation,

2. What is the role of phonetic training in English pronunciation teaching in Finland?

3. In the choice of pronunciation model, is the English as an International Language (EIL) approach acknowledged in pronunciation teaching in Finland?

The original papers include more specific research questions, and these are introduced in Chapter 3. The aim of the overarching research questions presented here is to construct a synthesis of the original papers. The present research has a strong practical orientation. Finding out what English pronunciation teaching practices are in Finland is the first step to developing them to better serve learners wishing to achieve better learning results. The results of the study will also benefit textbook writers and development work in teacher education. After all, many of the teaching techniques and practical tools used by teachers derive from the education they received during their own teacher training. Textbooks are also known to play a great role in language teaching (e.g. Luukka et al. 2008).

Learning second language (L2) phonology is a complex issue that is potentially affected by several factors. These include e.g. age, length of residence in the L2 context, amount of L2 and first language (L1) use, type of L2 input, language learning aptitude, and motivational and social factors. Willingness to communicate has also been considered crucial in language learning, and it has been suggested that increasing willingness should be a goal of teaching (MacIntyre et al. 1998). Learning L2 phonology and the factors affecting it are not within the scope of this dissertation; instead, the focus is on teaching practices. For a review of the factors influencing L2 pronunciation learning, see e.g. Piske et al. (2001).

1.3 Outline of the dissertation

This dissertation is based on four original papers (Studies I–IV) and is thus a so-called article-based dissertation. The research work was divided into four separate sub studies, the results of which are presented in the original papers. To keep the dissertation coherent in style and genre, the original papers are only summarised here. However, they are found in their original form as Appendices to this dissertation.

The dissertation comprises four chapters. This first introduces the topic and field of research, aim of the study and research questions, and structure of the dissertation. The second chapter presents the theoretical framework of the study, concentrating on Finnish and English phonology, current issues in

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rhythm) as opposed to segmental features (individual sounds) that are emphasised in the *narrow approach.*

English pronunciation teaching, and pronunciation teaching methodology. The sub studies and some methodological and ethical considerations are presented in Chapter 3. At that point I concentrate on the research data and methods, but as this chapter also serves as a summary of the original papers, the main results of the sub studies are also presented. Chapter 4 discusses the findings of the dissertation, thematically organised. The overarching research questions set in 1.2 are answered based on the results obtained in the four sub studies, and I conclude the dissertation with its implications for teaching and future research, along with reflections on the study and research process. The main findings of this doctoral dissertation are also summarised in the conclusion.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter focuses on the theoretical background of this dissertation. In 2.1 I introduce Finnish and English phonology, applying a contrastive approach in order to identify the challenges Finnish learners typically encounter in learning English pronunciation. The core of 2.1 is a contrastive analysis of Finnish and English segmentals and prosody, but in addition, I devote one short section to explaining why this dissertation focuses in particular on the role of phonetic training in English pronunciation teaching (see research questions in 1.2). This relates to Lintunen's (2004; 2005) suggestion that phonemic transcription is a helpful pronunciation learning tool for Finnish learners of English. In 2.2 I consider current issues in English pronunciation teaching. These include Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), the change of focus in pronunciation pedagogy, and English as an international Language (EIL). From there, in 2.3, I move on to a practical exploration of pronunciation teaching methods.

In the literature, pronunciation pedagogy has undergone a major shift from an emphasis on individual sounds to an emphasis on suprasegmental features of speech (e.g. intonation, stress, rhythm). This change of focus has been influenced by the rise of the communicative approach to language teaching. An issue that cannot be overlooked when discussing English pronunciation teaching is the status of English as an international language. The rapidly growing interest within linguistics of studying English as a lingua franca (ELF) has stimulated research interest in pronunciation in ELF contexts as well, and attempts to codify the pronunciation of these international varieties of English have emerged (e.g. Jenkins 2000, Jenkins et al. 2001) and resulted in lively debate on the choice of model in English pronunciation teaching.

2.1 On Finnish and English phonology

This section addresses the phonology of Finnish and English, and the phonological distance between the two languages. I also approach the issue of why phonetic training can be assumed to be beneficial in the learning of foreign language pronunciation, particularly in the case of L1 Finnish-speaking learners. In the section on Finnish phonology, I use descriptions of standard Finnish, with Iivonen (2009a, 2009b) and Suomi et al. (2008) as my main sources. For English phonology, I use British Received Pronunciation (RP) as the reference variety, following the Longman Pronunciation Dictionary (Wells 2008) and Roach (2009). RP was chosen because contrastive studies on Finnish and English have dealt with RP, and RP is the most frequently used variety in Finnish EFL textbooks (Tergujeff 2009; 2010). It is also the variety most commonly used in EFL teaching in Europe (Henderson et al. 2012). However, I am aware of the debate on the suitability of RP as pronunciation model; for a summary, see e.g. Jenkins (2000, 14–16).

2.1.1 Finnish phonology

The Finnish vowel inventory includes eight monophthongs that can be transcribed, using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), as /i, e, y, ø, æ, ɑ, o, u/. However, it has been noted that the Finnish /e, ø, o/ are approximately half-way between /e/ and /ɛ/, /ø/ and /œ/, /o/ and /ɔ/ respectively (Suomi et al. 2008, 20); their height is not mid-close but mid (Iivonen 2009a, 48). The Finnish monophthongs can be exemplified by the following word set: *tikin, tekin, tykin, tökin, täkin, takin, tokin, tukin* (Wiik 1965, 40) – all words being meaningful items in the Finnish language. In Finnish, a given monophthong is regularly represented by the same grapheme in writing, i.e. <i, e, y, ö, ä, a, o, u>. All the monophthongs can occur as short or long (single or double), and the quantity of the vowel does not noticeably change its quality. As quantity is a distinctive feature in Finnish (e.g. *mäki* 'a hill' vs. *määki* 'bleated'), the long vowels can be seen as separate phonemes. Long vowels are represented also in writing, e.g. <ii> for /iː/. The following phonotactic (vowel harmony) rule applies to Finnish vowels: back and front vowels do not occur in the same word, with the exception of /i, e/ which are neutral in the vowel harmony system (can occur with both back and front vowels). Finnish monophthongs are presented in Table 1 below. For a quadrilateral illustration of the Finnish monophthongs, see Iivonen (2009a, 49).

TABLE 1 Finnish monophthongs following Iivonen (2009a, 48).

	front		back	
	unrounded	rounded	unrounded	rounded
close	i, iː	y, yː		u, uː
mid	e, eː	ø, øː		o, oː
open	æ, æː		ɑ, ɑː	

In Finnish, diphthongs are usually regarded as combinations of the eight monophthongs. Durationally and metrically they are equivalent to long monophthongs. Due to phonotactic restrictions, not all vowels can be freely combined into diphthongs (Löflund 2004, 13); altogether, there are 18 diphthongs: /ɑi, ei, oi, ui, yi, æi, øi, ɑu, eu, iu, ou, ey, iy, æy, øy, ie, uo, yø/. In addition to diphthongs, sequences of 2–4 vowels are possible in Finnish, but they include a syllable boundary, e.g. *tauoissa* 'in pauses' /tɑu.ois.sɑ/ (see Iivonen 2009a, 55).

The consonant inventory of Finnish includes the following 13 phonemes: /p, t, k, m, n, ŋ, d, s, h, ʋ, r, l, j/. In addition, many speakers have the following extra consonants in their inventory: /f, b, g, ʃ/. These phonemes only occur in loan words, and some substitute them with more familiar sounds, e.g. pronouncing *galleria* 'gallery' with a /k/ in the beginning. The Finnish voiceless plosives /p, t, k/ are unaspirated. Finnish /t/ is listed as an alveolar plosive in Table 2, which presents the Finnish consonant sounds. However, Iivonen (2009a, 58) points out that /t/ is often realised as laminal, prealveolar and partly postdental, which means that the tongue tip can touch the teeth. Standard Finnish orthography has a close letter-to-sound correspondence (Suomi et al. 2008, 141), with the exception of the sound/ŋ/: it is the only phoneme that does not correspond to a single grapheme in writing; instead it occurs in two grapheme sequences, <nk> and <ng>. Many of the Finnish consonant phonemes have several (coarticulatory, positional, stylistic) allophones. For example, the main allophone of the Finnish /r/ is a trill [r], but in word-medial intervocalic positions /r/ is often realised as a tap [ɾ] (Mustanoja & O'Dell 2007). Following Iivonen (2009a, 57), the place of articulation of Finnish /h/ is defined as "variable" in Table 2, and it is classified as both a fricative and approximant. This is due to the wide distribution of /h/: it occurs in many positions (also syllable-final), and is realised as several allophones. Moreover, realisations of /h/ vary according to coarticulation with the adjacent vowel. (See Suomi et al. 2008, 26; Iivonen 2009a, 58–59.)

Most of the consonants can be geminated between vowels, and some also after laterals and nasals (see Iivonen 2009a, 59). As mentioned above, quantity is a distinctive feature in Finnish (e.g. *tuki* 'a support' vs. *tukki* 'a log'). In addition to the native and loan consonants, the glottal plosive [ʔ] can occur as a boundary signal between words (Iivonen 2009a, 57) the first of which ends in a vowel and the second of which begins with a vowel, e.g. *anna olla* 'let it be' [ɑnːɑʔolːɑ], but is not considered a phoneme or an allophone. The glottal plosive has also sometimes been noted to have the function of emphasis or

accentuation in vowel-initial words, and interactional use as an indicator of a wish to maintain the turn in a conversation (Lennes et al. 2006).

TABLE 2 Finnish consonants following Iivonen (2009a, 57).

	bi-labial	labio-dental	alveolar	post-alveolar	palatal	velar	variable
plosive	p (b)		t, d			k	
trill			r				
nasal	m		n			ŋ	
fricative		(f)	s	(ʃ)			h
approximant		ʋ	l		j		

Although the division of languages into syllable-timed and stress-timed is too simplistic (e.g. O'Dell & Nieminen 1999), it is referred to here for its pedagogical value. Finnish is traditionally seen as a syllable-timed language. Primary stress is always placed on the word-initial syllable, but the placement of secondary stresses is not fully predictable. There are empirical phonetic grounds for three degrees of word-level stress (or, lexical stress) in Finnish: a syllable can be primarily stressed, secondarily stressed, or unstressed. (Suomi et al. 2008, 75.) In Finnish, stress is not a distinctive feature. As for utterance stress (or, sentence stress, phrasal stress), three degrees of accentuation can be found in Finnish: thematic, rhematic and contrastive (ibid., 79, 112). In all these cases, the main stress is placed on the last lexical item but is produced differently with different means (intonation, intensity, duration). It is precisely the information structure of the utterance that directs accent placement. (ibid., 113.) The most common pitch pattern in complete Finnish utterances is a smoothly descending pitch contour; hence, Finnish intonation has been described as flat or monotonous (ibid., 114–115), but rising intonation also occurs. Final rises have been found in tag-questions (Iivonen 2001), echo-questions (ibid., Mixdorff et al. 2002), and particularly in the speech of teenage girls (e.g. Ogden & Routarinne 2005). Questions are marked by rising intonation in many languages. Although the aforementioned studies demonstrate rising intonation in certain types of questions, questions in Finnish are mainly marked by lexical and grammatical means, such as question words, inverted word order and an interrogative suffix (e.g. Iivonen 2009b, 71). In other words, intonation alone does not, typically, distinguish questions from statements.

2.1.2 English phonology

The RP English vowel sounds can be classified into short vowels, long vowels, diphthongs and thriphthongs. Following Wells (2008), the seven short[6] (lax)

[6] The classification of short and long phonemes in this chapter is based on the fact that some phonemes *tend* to be short and some long. However, the length of English vowel phonemes varies according to their context (Roach 2009, 16). In fact, short and long are phonological terms that do not always correlate with phonetic reality (Gut 2009, 65) but are nevertheless very useful for pedagogical purposes.

vowels are /ɪ, e, æ, ɒ, ʌ, ʊ, ə/ as in *kit, dress, trap, lot, bud, foot, about*. The five long (tense) vowels are /iː, uː, ɑː, ɔː, ɜː/ as in *see, two, start, law, stir*. The major difference between the RP English and Finnish vowel inventories is that there is no noticeable quality difference between the Finnish short and long vowels. According to Wells (2008, xxv), /i, u/ can also occur as short in weak forms, e.g. *glorious, situation.*[7] The following nine diphthongs occur in RP English: /eɪ, aɪ, ɔɪ, əʊ, aʊ, ɒʊ, ɪə, eə, ʊə/ as in *face, price, boy, show, mouth, cold, near, fair, poor* (Wells 2008, xxiii–xxv). For vowel quadrilateral illustrations of the RP English vowel sounds, see e.g. Roach (2009, 13, 16, 18). Monophthongization of diphthongs is an on-going process in RP, and e.g. /ʊə/ is now increasingly produced as /ɔː/ (Gut 2009, 65). The English phoneme inventory also includes thriphthongs, or sequences of three vowels. Some of these can be felt to contain two syllables (Roach 2009, 19). The thriphthongs always end in the so-called neutral vowel, or schwa, and are the following: /aɪə, eɪə, aʊə, ɔɪə, əʊə/, as in *fire, player, hour, loyal, lower*. Spelling-to-sound of English phonemes is irregular, and at times even ambiguous: there are homographs such as *bow–bow* /bəʊ–baʊ/, *live–live* /lɪv–laɪv/and *tear–tear* /tɪə–teə/, which have the same spelling but different pronunciation and different meaning (Wells 1996).

According to Wells (2008, xxv), RP English has a total of 24 consonant phonemes: /p, b, t, d, k, g, ʧ, ʤ, f, v, ɵ, ð, s, z, ʃ, ʒ, h, r, l, j, w, m, n, ŋ/. This is almost the double of the Finnish consonants, which indicates that many of the English consonants are not familiar to L1 Finnish-speaking learners from their mother tongue. The English consonants are presented in Table 3. There are six plosives: the aspirated and voiceless /p, t, k/ and what are often classified as their voiced counterparts /b, d, g/. However, in speech they often lose their voicing, and can occur as partly voiced or voiceless in addition to voiced (Roach 2009, 26). Nine of the English consonants are fricatives: voiced–voiceless counterpart labiodentals /f, v/, dentals /ɵ, ð/, alveolars /s, z/, and post-alveolars /ʃ, ʒ/. In addition, there is a voiceless glottal fricative /h/, which coarticulates with the following vowel (ibid., 42). Fricatives that are traditionally labelled as voiced are also often devoiced in production (Yavaş 2006, 63). The same applies to the affricate pair /ʧ, ʤ/ – the latter, which is often classified as voiced, is fully voiced only in intervocalic positions (ibid., 65). The three English nasals /m, n, ŋ/ are bilabial, alveolar and velar respectively. English approximants are /l, r, w, j/, of which /l/ is a lateral liquid, /r/ a non-lateral liquid, /w/ a labio-velar glide, and /j/ a palatal glide. The glottal plosive [ʔ] occurs in English as an allophone of /p, t, k/ in certain contexts (Roach 2009, 26). Glottalization is also possible in strongly stressed syllables which begin with a vowel; either in the beginning of a word or in the middle (Morris-Wilson 1992, 94; Lehtonen et al. 1977, 153). In these cases, the glottal stop is a cue for emphatic stress.

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7 Gut (2009, 64) notes that many textbooks suggest the use of the diacritic ː to indicate vowel length even though the phonetic symbols themselves convey this information. Based on Wells' (2008, xxv) notion that /i, u/ can also be short in weak forms, however, the distinction may not always be that clear; hence, the diacritic is used here for clarity.

TABLE 3 RP English consonants following Roach (2009, 52).

	bi-labial	labio-dental	dental	alveolar	post-alveolar	palatal	velar	glottal
plosive	p, b			t, d			k, g	
fricative		f, v	θ, ð	s, z	ʃ, ʒ			h
affricate					ʧ, ʤ			
nasal	m			n			ŋ	
approximant	w			l	r	j		

In English, syllable weight is an important element of stress assignment: stress is placed on heavy syllables (syllables with long vowels, diphthongs or coda consonants) (Yavaş 2006, 145–146). Primary stress placement is less predictable in English than in e.g. Finnish, but research has established a number of specific stress patterns (see e.g. Roach 2009, 76–79, 82–87). Stress is a distinctive feature, e.g. IMport (noun), imPORT (verb). Degrees of word-level stress can be defined as high (primary), medium (secondary, tertiary, quaternary), and weakest (demi-beat) (Pennington 1996, 130–132). Traditionally, English has been classified as a stress-timed language, meaning that the speech rhythm is formed by the somewhat regular alternation of unstressed and stressed syllables. Approximately every 2–3 syllables are strongly stressed, and the unstressed syllables are squeezed in between. (ibid., 135.) However, information structure affects the accentuation of utterances, also in English (see ibid., 137–139). Moreover, information structure and what the speaker considers as important in the utterance are key issues in the intonation of English. For example, a falling intonation contour is typically used for utterances expressing finality (for more about the functions of intonation in English, see Roach 2009, 123–126). As will be discussed in 2.2.2, intonation serves various functions in interaction. In English, a rising intonation can distinguish questions from statements.

2.1.3 Challenges of English phonology for Finnish learners

Contrastive Finnish-English studies (Wiik 1965, Lehtonen et al. 1977, Morris-Wilson 1992) have found that based on the phonological distance between the languages, the most difficult sounds for L1 Finnish-speaking learners of English are sibilants, affricates, dental fricatives, and the tense-lax opposition of vowels (e.g. /iː/–/ɪ/). These problem areas have remained the same ever since Wiik's (1965) pioneering work (cf. Lintunen 2004; 2005). Acoustic measurements by Niemi (1984, 234) reveal that Finnish word stress is physically weaker than English word stress, and less melodic. As pointed out by Morris-Wilson (1992, 190), Finnish learners may find stress and rhythm extremely difficult. This is due to the traditional view of English as stress-timed and Finnish syllable-timed, so that speaking English with a Finnish rhythm has been compared to "trying to dance waltz to the music of tango" (Morris-Wilson 1992, 190). Overall, the problems met by L1 speakers of Finnish learning English may be greater on the level of suprasegmentals than of segmentals, as suggested by Morris-Wilson

(ibid., 189). As for stress and rhythm, Paananen-Porkka (2007) has argued that Finnish learners of English make too narrow a distinction in fundamental frequency (F0) between stressed and unstressed syllables, and that they use fewer weak forms than native speakers of English. A similar result had been reported by Hirvonen (1970, 76), who explains that the stress difference in Finnish is much smaller than in English. In English, stressed syllables are very strong whereas unstressed syllables are sometimes only "barely audible". (ibid., 77.) In Paananen-Porkka (2007), native-speaker listeners were asked to evaluate the speakers' perceived intelligibility with respect to speech rhythm on a six-point scale. The ratings suggest that some aspects of deviant speech rhythm were detected by the NSs, and resulted in poor evaluations.

With respect to intonation, English has a richer system in regards to distinguishing general questions from particular questions and imperatives, which according to Hirvonen (1970, 76) may cause trouble for Finnish learners. According to Hirvonen (ibid., 79), producing rising contours is challenging for Finnish learners of English. In a later study, Toivanen (1999) observed that pitch range was not a problem for Finns speaking English, although level intonation was significantly more frequent in their speech than in that of RP English-speaker controls. The study also suggests that the Finnish participants did not know how to use rising intonation to express informational openness, e.g. in implicatory and reserved statements. Acceptable placement of sentence stress and question intonation, however, did not pose the participants any great difficulty, and Toivanen (ibid.) concludes that the intonation-related problems encountered by Finnish learners of English should not be exaggerated.

As no extensive intelligibility studies have been conducted with Finnish-accented English, it is not known which of these difficulties (when audible in speech) are crucial for intelligibility in interaction with native speakers of English or in English as a lingua franca.

2.1.4 Phonemic transcription and Finnish learners of English

The (irregular) spelling conventions of English generally cause difficulties for learners. Phonemic transcription has been suggested as one way to bring relief to learners struggling with this problem (e.g. Wells 1996), since the transcription system is based on the principle of one grapheme corresponding to one sound in speech. For L1 Finnish-speaking learners, such a transcription can be seen as particularly beneficial because the Finnish orthography by and large follows the same principle (Suomi et al. 2008, 141). In other words, speakers of Finnish are used to a close letter-to-sound correspondence in their mother tongue, and a transcription system relying on the same principle can help learners to produce the word correctly, even without a model to imitate, and decrease the amount of spelling-induced mispronunciations.

A correlation between pronunciation skills and skills in phonemic transcription has been found in a study with L1 Finnish-speaking participants. Lintunen (2004; 2005) studied the pronunciation and phonemic transcription skills of advanced Finnish learners of English (first-year university students of

English). He tested the subjects' pronunciation and phonemic transcription skills three times during a 42-hour pronunciation course that stretched over one academic year. Error analysis of the pronunciation and transcription tests showed results that were predictable from the phonological distance between Finnish and English. In pronunciation, the most difficult phonemes were the sibilants, affricates and dentals. Also, the tense–lax distinction of vowels was problematic for Finnish learners of English. In the phonemic transcription, the most common error types were full vowel pro schwa, fortis pro lenis, schwa pro full vowel, and incorrect phonemic (vowel) symbol. The study revealed a correlation between pronunciation and transcription skills; Lintunen (2004, 222) concludes that there is evidence of transcription possibly having some predictive value for pronunciation, and that transcription skills may be related to improvement in pronunciation. When asked after the course, most of the students were of the opinion that the transcription teaching that they received helped their pronunciation (ibid., 186).

2.2 Current issues in English pronunciation teaching

This section explores issues that have been the topic of recent debate concerning English pronunciation teaching globally. Since the 1980s, when increased interest began to be shown in pronunciation teaching as a research topic, various changes have taken place in language pedagogy, particularly in approaches to pronunciation teaching, as well as in the status of English as an international language. In language pedagogy, we have witnessed an era dominated by the communicative approach, or Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which has, among other things, been implemented by directing the learner's attention away from form to conveying meaning, and as a growth in the appreciation of learner-centred methods (e.g. Richards & Rodgers 2001, 153–177). Communicative methods have been suggested for pronunciation teaching as well, and many of the traditional methods have been abandoned as inappropriate for communicative language teaching (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, 11). Their place (in recommendations) has been taken by communicative pronunciation tasks and a change of focus from accuracy in the production of segmentals (individual sounds) to fluent use of suprasegmental features of speech (e.g. intonation, stress, rhythm). However, the proponents of CLT have been criticised for not sufficiently addressing pronunciation teaching (ibid., 9). When discussing English pronunciation, the status of English as an international language cannot be ignored. The lively debate around the theme of English as an International Language (EIL), and on the ownership of English, has had an impact on English language teaching as well.

2.2.1 Communicative Language Teaching

From the late 1970s, the communicative approach has been popular in language teaching. Its origins, however, date back to the end of the 1960s, when British applied linguists such as Christopher Candlin and Henry Widdowson initiated change in the language teaching tradition. They drew on Dell Hymes' (1971) theory of *communicative competence* – a development of (or response to) Noam Chomsky's (1965) *linguistic competence* – seeing the need to focus on communicative proficiency instead of mere mastery of structures in language learning. (Ridhards & Rodgers 2001, 153.) CLT is based on the notion of communication as the primary purpose of language, and therefore using language for communicating should be emphasised in language pedagogy (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, 8). However, CLT and pronunciation teaching seem to be a problematic combination. CLT is based on directing the learner's attention away from language items to conveying and focusing on meaning. Lane (2010, 11) notes that in communicative speech situations learners' pronunciation tends to fall apart because the learners have to process too many things at the same time: find the right words, make grammatical choices, manage difficult articulations and unfamiliar prosodic patterns. Also, to learn language items, they need to be noticed (Schmidt's *noticing hypothesis;* e.g. Schmidt 1990; 1995) and therefore highlighted, which forms a dilemma in the CLT framework (Seidlhofer 2001, 57). Proponents of CLT have been found fault with not setting strategies for teaching pronunciation communicatively (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, 9), despite their rejection of many of the commonly used techniques as incompatible with teaching language as communication (ibid., 11).

As communicative goals have become important in language learning, and traditional segmental training has been rejected in the CLT framework, it has been suggested that more emphasis should be laid on teaching suprasegmental features of speech, as these seem to play greater a role in intelligibility than segmentals. In the communicative approach, fluency and intelligibility are considered more important than accuracy at the segmental level. This so-called *broad approach* is further dealt with in 2.2.2. Promoting learner autonomy is manifested, for example, in the urge towards increasing learner involvement, for example through self-monitoring (which, however, was nothing new in language pedagogy, even in the 1980s, as pointed out by Morley 1991, 493–494), and in the demand that learners be considered as individuals with different learner styles (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, 337–338; Morley 1991).

2.2.2 Broad approach to pronunciation teaching

Suprasegmental features of speech play an important role in interaction. Studies have shown, for example, the importance of correct sentence stress for intelligibility (e.g. Hahn 2004). The role of intonation in interaction has been substantially researched within the *Discourse Intonation* framework, developed from the 1970s by David Brazil and colleagues, and in *Interactional Phonetics,*

which combines methods of conversation analysis and acoustic phonetics with special focus on prosody. Both these frameworks offer many points of interest for pronunciation teaching. In general terms, intonation makes speech coherent and interpretable to the listener (Pennington & Richards 1986, 211). Inappropriate intonation can mislead people, disrupt communication and cause annoyance (Rogerson-Revell 2011, 192), as also does deviant speech rhythm and word stress, according to Pihko (1997). Intonation can be seen as having four functions: attitudinal, accentual, grammatical and discourse function (Rogerson-Revell 2011, 192). In the attitudinal function, intonation conveys e.g. emotions, interest, doubt and attitudes towards the topic or the interlocutor (ibid. 2011, 192; Seidlhofer 2001; Pennington & Richards 1986, 211). Intonation is an important means of signalling emphasis (and de-emphasis) (Rogerson-Revell 2011, 192; Seidlhofer 2001), this being the accentual function. Intonation marks elements that the hearer should or should not pay attention to (Brown & Yule 1983). In its grammatical function, intonation helps to recognise the grammatical structure of spoken language (Rogerson-Revell 2011, 192). Further, intonation has a discourse function, giving cues about the nature of the uttered information (whether it is new, known, salient, less salient, topic, comment etc.) (Pennington & Richards 1986, 211) and the turn-taking of the interlocutors (Rogerson-Revell 2011, 192; Seidlhofer 2001). For further information on the fields of Discourse Intonation and Interactional Phonetics, see e.g. Brazil (1985/1997), Brazil et al. (1980), Wennerstrom (2001), Chun (2002), Couper-Kuhlen & Ford (2004), Pennington (2007), Barth-Weingarten (2010), and Selting (2010).

In recent recommendations, intelligibility has clearly replaced accuracy as the main goal of pronunciation teaching and learning (e.g. Derwing & Munro 2005). In striving for this new goal, suprasegmental features of speech seem to have a more crucial a role in the sense that their use has greater impact on intelligibility than the accurate production of segmentals, which in itself is not perhaps seen to characterise near-native pronunciation. Also, the accurate production of segmentals is not a fundamental prerequisite of intelligible speech. (Pennington & Richards 1986.) In fact, compared to mispronounced segmentals, inappropriate use of suprasegmentals has been suggested to cause more communication breakdowns in communication between non-native (NNS) and native speakers (NS) (Lane 2010, 9). However, Jenkins' (2000) empirical study on communication between non-native speakers suggests the opposite: she claims that mispronounced segmentals cause more communication breakdowns, and that, for example, inappropriate word stress alone rarely causes intelligibility problems (ibid., 41). This is in contradiction with e.g. Roach (2000, 100) who names incorrect stress placement as a major cause of communication breakdowns, and Cruttenden (2008, 322) who classifies word stress as high priority for learners of English. This view is also shared by Seidlhofer (2001, 59) and Dirven and Oakeshott-Taylor (1984, 333). Nevertheless, we must at least consider the possibility of NNS–NNS communication being different from NNS-NS communication, and bear in mind that while most

studies in this field have dealt with NNS–NS interaction, Jenkins' data consist of NNS–NNS interaction only. Yet, notice the criticism directed towards Jenkins' study, which is addressed in 2.2.3.

The major role of suprasegmentals for foreign language intelligibility has also been suggested in an accent intelligibility study conducted on Finnish learners of English. In Pihko (1997), Finnish learners evaluated the perceived comprehensibility of various native and non-native accents of English, and took part in a partial dictation test that measured accent intelligibility. The results indicate the importance of suprasegmentals as a critical intelligibility factor: features that threatened intelligibility were hesitations, disfluency, deviant or broken speech rhythm and deviant lexical stressing. In addition, these types of deviance caused considerable listener irritation. (Pihko 1997, 126.)

Before the era of CLT, pronunciation teaching mainly comprised segmental training – it was considered important to get the individual sounds right. This type of practice often takes place at the word level, dealing with words in isolation or in very controlled sentence environments (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, 10). The underlying idea is to operate bottom-up, starting with the individual sounds and then working up towards intonation (Dalton & Seidlhofer 1994, 69), but if segments are heavily emphasised, teaching perhaps fails to reach the suprasegmental level. Later on, this *narrow approach* was not seen as fruitful in teaching language as communication, and a new, expanded concept of pronunciation was adopted. After all, the objective of English language teaching can hardly be that "students -- become proficient readers of word lists" (Lane 2010, 12). More recently, for reasons more closely explored below, a *broad approach* emphasising suprasegmental features of speech and operating top-down has been recommended for pronunciation teaching.

In the beginning of the 1990s, Morley (1991, 490) assumed that a broad approach to English pronunciation teaching was likely to be more effective than a narrow approach based on articulatory phonetics, and urged pronunciation instruction to be taken far beyond imitation "for maximum effect" (ibid., 505). Not long after, Seidlhofer and Dalton-Puffer (1995, 135) mentioned a growing awareness among teachers that a narrow approach is unsatisfactory, and suggested that fixation on detail may even be counterproductive (ibid., 144). These suggestions were put to the test by Derwing et al. (1998) in a teaching experiment, where three approaches were compared: narrow, broad and laissez-faire (control group). After a substantial amount of teaching had been received by the two groups, their and the control group's pronunciation development was evaluated in terms of comprehensibility, accentedness and fluency by native-speaker listeners, from both read-aloud and free speech. Overall, the learners in the broad approach teaching group received better development ratings than the rest; hence, the study suggests that a broad approach leads to better learning results than a narrow one, at least if it is assumed that comprehensible and fluent speech without an obvious foreign accent is the learning goal.

Changing the approach to pronunciation teaching from narrow to broad does not mean total neglect of teaching segmentals. Especially when dealing with learners for whom a substantial phonological distance exists at the segmental level between their L1 and the target language, it is wise also to focus on the challenging segments. This is precisely the case with L1 Finnish-speaking learners of English. For example, Finnish lacks sound contrasts such as /s, z/ and /s, ʃ/ that are considered to have high functional load (Brown 1988), and therefore great importance for intelligibility, in English. Segmental level issues such as these contrasts should be retained as part of the teaching, and therefore the recommendation for the context of the present study would be better described as a *balanced approach* following Lane (2010, 8), who also includes the important consonants and vowels as well as suprasegmentals in pronunciation teaching. Similarly, Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, 11) see a tendency towards a balanced view in recent recommendations, recognising that difficulties on the segmental and suprasegmental levels can both cause intelligibility problems. It is also recognised that the segmental and suprasegmental approaches may work best interactively (Seidlhofer 2001), and that attention to both segmental and suprasegmental features of speech in teaching benefits learners (Derwing et al. 1998).

2.2.3 English as an International Language

English has gained a status of an international language, and is used as a *lingua franca* in numerous contexts when people do not have any other common language to communicate in. Speakers of English as a second language (L2) or foreign language (FL) are found all over the world, with varying accents and command of the language. This is a challenge for English language teaching, especially pronunciation; native varieties alone diverge from each other phonologically (Trudgill 1998; 2003), and when all the national L2 varieties and FL accents are considered, learners are faced with a puzzling plethora of speech varieties. This is a result of the geographical spread of English from the 17th century onwards, and the division into varieties that followed (Nevalainen 1998). Braj Kachru (1985) has classified the varieties of English in his model of the *three concentric circles of world Englishes.* In this approach, the *inner circle* refers to speakers at the traditional geographical bases of English (e.g. UK, USA, Australia), where English is the primary language. This is the traditionally norm-providing circle of native speakers of English. In the *outer circle,* institutionalised varieties of English are used; these regions have gone through periods of colonisation by the inner circle. The speakers in the outer circle are bilingual or multilingual, and English is only one of two or more languages in their repertoires. Moreover, English has official status in the language policies of most of these outer circle multilingual nations (e.g. India, Singapore, Nigeria). The *expanding circle* is formed by speakers from all over the world using English for international communication and studying it as a foreign language. As the term suggests, the outermost of the concentric circles is expanding; the number of people involved in EFL learning is ever-increasing. It has been estimated that

as many as 1 billion FL speakers of English exist worldwide (Crystal 2003, 68). Estimates for the inner and outer circle speakers, respectively, are 400 million and 430 million (Crystal 2003, 67–68), which indicates that non-native speakers outnumber native speakers.

The ratio of native to non-native speakers of English has given rise to debate about the ownership of the English language. Opinions have been expressed according to which it is peculiar that a minority (even if they are native speakers, as in Kachru's inner circle) should be in a norm-providing position. Moreover, it can already be seen that the language is being shaped at least as much by its non-native speakers as by its native speakers (Seidlhofer 2005, 339). Thus, the English of non-native speakers, especially in interaction between non-native speakers, has gained great interest as a research topic in recent years. This interest has for example led to the compilation of two major English as a lingua franca corpora: the Vienna–Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE 2011) and the English as a Lingua Franca in Academic Settings (ELFA 2008), while there is a growing number of studies on the nature and uses of English as a lingua franca (ELF) (e.g. Mauranen & Ranta 2009, Seidlhofer 2011).

In EFL pronunciation teaching in Europe, the situation is even more extreme, as British Received Pronunciation (RP) is mainly used as norm, even though less than three per cent of the British population speak it in its traditional form (Crystal 2002, 65). Several researchers are of the opinion that RP (or any other native-speaker variety for that matter) is not a suitable norm in EFL teaching (e.g. Morley 1991, Seidlhofer 2001). The rationale for this includes the argument that a native-like pronunciation is an unrealistic and unnecessary goal for most learners (e.g. Hewings 2004, 13). Derwing & Munro (2005) point out that learners who strive for native-like pronunciation are likely to become disheartened, as research shows that at least for adult learners this goal is very rarely achieved (see e.g. Scovel 2000). Generally, RP has been an easy choice for teaching for the following reasons. First, RP is extensively documented, so that descriptions of it (both phonetic and sociolinguistic) are widely available. Second, many teaching materials (textbooks, dictionaries) are based on RP. (Rogerson-Revell 2011, 7.) Received Pronunciation is also a widely understood accent, and offers a good starting point for those who later want to adopt another accent.

Questioning the suitability of RP (and other inner circle varieties or accents) as target/model of EFL teaching has naturally resulted in a search for better solutions. One suggested model is that of a good non-native speaker, e.g. a Finn who speaks English with comfortable intelligibility (Lehtonen et al. 1977, 31). Another suggestion – meant to be applicable to the international multitude of learners – is some sort of variety of *international English*. Such a variety could be based on inner circle norms, but would allow simplifications in, e.g., pronunciation in order not to frustrate learners by the unrealistic goal of native-like pronunciation. At worst, learners may be discouraged and give up when they have too great expectations, and teachers may feel that they are failing in

their job (Morley 1991). The idea has resulted in several proposed outlines for an international English over time (e.g. Gimson 1978; Quirk 1982; Crystal 2003, 185–189), the most thought-through perhaps being the empirically-based Lingua Franca Core (LFC) by Jennifer Jenkins (2000), which specifically concentrates on the pronunciation of English as an International Language (EIL). This model is designed for international communication with the goal of international intelligibility, and it draws on empirical research on interaction between non-native speakers of English. More specifically, the LFC reveals the items that caused intelligibility problems in communication between non-native speakers of English in Jenkins' data.

The LFC maintains the consonant inventory of RP and General American (GA) to a great extent, whereas vowel substitutions are more freely allowed. In consonants, allophonic variation is allowed unless it overlaps onto another phoneme of English. Also, some substitutions of /ɵ/ and /ð/ are permissible. The LFC prefers rhotic varieties of 'r' and the British English /t/ instead of the American flap in words like 'latter' and 'matter'. In addition, aspiration in voiceless stops is considered crucial for intelligibility, which is a point to be kept in mind when considering L1 Finnish-speaking learners, since Finnish lacks aspiration. In consonant clusters, omissions are not acceptable word-initially, whereas in word-middle and word-final clusters omissions are possible as long as they follow the rules of English syllable structure. Adding vowel sounds to ease the pronunciation of consonant clusters (typical of, e.g., L1 speakers of Spanish) is acceptable. The British version /nt/ between vowels, e.g. in 'winter' is preferred to the American way of deleting the /t/. When it comes to vowel sounds, regional qualities are allowed if used consistently, with the exception of /ɜ:/ which must be maintained. Important is also the maintenance of a distinction between tense and lax vowels, e.g. 'sheep' vs. 'ship'. (Jenkins 2000, 136–146.) The LFC includes the appropriate use of contrastive stress to signal meaning, but considers the teaching of weak forms, connected speech, word stress and pitch movement as unhelpful. In Jenkins' view these features might even be unteachable. (ibid., 146–156).

The LFC has been widely debated. It has been acknowledged for pointing out that it is acceptable to speak with a foreign accent, and that intelligibility should not be defined from the native-speaker perspective alone (e.g. Dauer 2005). However, Jenkins' attempt to codify EIL has also been subject to criticism, and retaining the native-speaker model also has its proponents (see e.g. Kuo 2006). It seems that despite the view of the proponents of ELF that a native-like pronunciation as an unrealistic and unnecessary goal for learners of English as a foreign language, many teachers prefer to teach it, as pointed out by Jenkins (2007, 205) herself. Moreover, many learners want to learn it (Prodromou 1992, Timmis 2002, Janicka et al. 2005). Also, the volume of the interaction between non-native speakers of English (compared to NNS–NS) has been claimed to be exaggerated (Maley 2009), while the formation of a distinct EIL variety has been seen as unlikely on grounds of the lack of a stable speech community (Meiercord 2004, Maley 2009). Some are of the opinion that a strong foreign

accent may give a bad impression of the speaker, and that the LFC is only a justification for mediocrity (see Keys & Walker 2002). Criticism levelled at Jenkins' omission of word stress from the LFC is available in McCrockling (2012). Jenkins' research setting has been criticised by e.g. Dauer (2005), who thinks the number of participants in Jenkins' (2000) study was so small and the group so homogeneous that the results may not be generalizable to a larger population of EFL learners.

2.3 Overview of pronunciation teaching techniques

This section is an exploration of English pronunciation teaching techniques. The approach here is very practical, and relates to classroom practices. The aim of this classification is to provide a summary of the different tasks and activities that are frequently recommended for foreign language classrooms. I offer concrete examples, since current issues in English pronunciation teaching have been discussed on a more general level in 2.2. I present the pronunciation teaching activity types in list format. The list is compiled by the author, and it is based on the pronunciation teaching literature and various specialist textbooks on pronunciation. Notes on materials, tools and technology are included.

1. Imitation and drilling. Before the communicative approach to language teaching, pronunciation teaching relied mainly on mechanical production: drilling and imitation practice. Although these techniques may seem old-fashioned to many, drilling is important, as motor skills and automaticity are essential in learning to produce new sounds (Rogerson-Revell 2011, 23). Also, imitation tasks have maintained their status as an all-time favourite in pronunciation teaching, and many recent textbooks still rely on them (e.g. Dale & Poms 2005). Similarly, tongue twisters are suggested in recent teaching materials (e.g. Folse 2006, 241), and it seems that new ones are being invented to replace the clichéd ones like *She sells sea shells on the sea shore,* as will be demonstrated by Example 2 in Study I (e.g. *Vic the vet loves Vonda the village vocalist and vice versa*). Minimal pair drills can be made contextualized (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, 9; Seidlhofer 2001) in order to make the practice more meaningful, e.g. as ear training for sound contrasts and choosing the correct alternative in sentences such as *She thinks she's going today/to die* (Hewings 2004, 56). Minimal pair practice (like many other practice types) can also be made into a game, e.g. minimal pairs bingo (ibid., 53). Reading aloud and recording learners' production is also often used and recommended, prompting Morley (1991) to point out that these types of mechanical tasks should not be used once the learner can produce the given feature easily, but instead learners should move on to rehearsed and extemporaneous speech modes. Pennington and Richards (1986) prefer a similar approach as they state that "the goal of any explicit training should be to bring learners gradually from controlled, cognitively based performance to automatic, skill-based performance".

2. Phonetic training. This category includes activities that make use of phonetic terminology, the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), and/or focus on physical articulation and the functions of the articulators. Since the first linguistic efforts in teaching pronunciation were strongly connected with the founding of the International Phonetic Association and the development of the International Phonetic Alphabet during the Reform Movement in 1886 (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, 3), phonetic training in language pedagogy is perhaps first and foremost associated with learning the IPA and producing transcriptions. These techniques can be very useful for L1 Finnish-speaking learners (see 2.1.4), and a connection between transcription skills and English pronunciation skills has been suggested (Lintunen 2004; 2005). The IPA is also strongly present in Finnish EFL textbooks, as will be shown in Study I.

However, phonetic training can be understood as a wider range of activities, including e.g. explanation of how sounds are articulated and comparisons of the L1 and the target language (TL) phonological systems. Phonetic terminology can be helpful in these tasks, along with vowel space diagrams, formant maps, consonant charts, intonation contours, pictures (and practice) of lip-shapes and tongue positions (e.g. Hewings 2004, 42–43), and head cross-sections (e.g. ibid., 43). Knowing the IPA is essential for learning the pronunciation of previously unfamiliar words with the help of dictionaries, and it helps learners in tackling with the irregular (and at times ambiguous) spelling(-to-sound) of English (see Wells 1996). Gomes de Matos (2002, 314) mentions phonetic training in his list of learners' rights. According to him, the learners have the right to receive explicit phonetic instruction, and the right to be taught how to read transcriptions in dictionaries.

3. Awareness-raising tasks. One of the goals of phonetic training is to help learners to learn through raising their phonetic and phonological awareness (cf. Schmidt's (1990; 1995) noticing hypothesis, according to which learning new language items requires noticing them). Awareness of other aspects can help learners, too. For example, the variation in the English language and the status of English as an international language, dealt with in 2.2.3, are topics that merit learner awareness. Also, introducing connected speech can be approached from an awareness-raising discussion on stereotypical ideas about 'correct' and 'sloppy' speech (Seidlhofer 2001). Another issue, which is taken up in the recent literature, is the fact that learners are individuals, and not all teaching methods and working habits work for everyone (e.g. ibid.). Thus, tasks have been designed to help learners recognise their learner type. These include, e.g., learner diaries and awareness-raising questionnaires (e.g. Hewings 2004, 26). Here, it should be mentioned that pronunciation teaching should also cater for these different learner types. Excellent tips in how to do this are presented in Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, 337–338). To mention just a few, tasks that use different multisensory modes (visual, auditory, tactile, kinaesthetic) are getting learners to stretch rubber bands to demonstrate vowel length, feeling voicing by

placing a finger on one's Adam's apple, demonstrating tongue positions by hand gestures and aspiration by holding a sheet of paper in front of your mouth (e.g. Lane 2010, 22, 121, 142, 151).

4. Ear training. Training one's ear, so to speak, (or, perceptual/receptive training) can range from practice in discriminating individual sounds to getting used to whole accents and language varieties. Because of the close connection between perception and production (e.g. Diehl et al. 2004; Baars & Gage 2007, 212), speaking and listening can be seen as two sides of the same coin – spoken language (Cauldwell 2003). While there is disagreement [8] on how the relationship functions, its existence has not been questioned. Discrimination practice often deals with individual sounds, e.g. distinguishing between two sounds like /m/ and /n/ (Morley 1992, 288). However, this technique can be also used for listening for stress and intonation. As understanding speakers is at least as important as being understood, learners would benefit from familiarization with different varieties and accents of English. This factor is also listed in Gomes de Matos' (2002, 314) list of learners' rights. Ear training in this scale, named *accent addition,* is recommended (in a very programmatic manner) in Jenkins (2000, 208–212). Returning to smaller units, peer dictation and spelling activities are used and suggested (e.g. Seidlhofer 2001) because they activate both speaker and listener.

5. Creative techniques. Pronunciation teaching can benefit from various techniques that derive from other disciplines such as drama, and non-mainstream pedagogies such as Suggestopedia. Drama techniques applicable for pronunciation teaching deal with, e.g., control of speech volume, rate of delivery, imitation techniques, interview, improvisation, sociodrama, and simulations (see Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, 339–343). A method referred to in Seidlhofer (2001) as *whole brain activities* often includes incorporation of relaxation techniques, guided imaginary activities and use of classical music (to activate the right hemisphere of the brain). Developmental approximation drills, deriving from first language acquisition research, are mentioned by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, 10). This method is based on word pairs that present sounds in the order typically found in L1 English-speaking children's language acquisition.

6. Corrective feedback. Included in the recommendations on corrective feedback (CF) are that it should not cause negative feelings in pupils, and they should not feel as if they were being punished (Morley 1991). According to Gomes de

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[8] There is disagreement among scholars researching the relationship between perception and production of speech. Simply put, the question that remains unresolved is whether perception precedes production or the other way around: that is, are good perception skills a prerequisite of good pronunciation or vice versa? Or do both skills affect each other? There are also opinions according to which it is not helpful to consider perception and production as a "mirror image" of each other (Leather 2003, 26). For a review of the topic, see e.g. Llisterri (1995).

Matos (2002, 314), it is a learner's right to be corrected "in a positive, tactful manner". Lane (2010, 15) suggests that pupils should have a chance to self-correct by giving them a cue about a mispronunciation and space for modifying his or her production. Morley (1991) also sees correcting as the learner's task, whereas the teacher's task is to give cues on how to do that. Using *recasts* (Nicholas et al. 2001) in the sense of reformulations (or, paraphrasing) of the learner's utterance in a way that it does not come across as explicit correction is a soft way of CF. Research findings by Saito and Lyster (2012) suggest that CF has a positive effect in form-focused instruction: L1 Japanese-speaking learners who received CF in addition to form-focused instruction developed more than peers who only received form-focused instruction. The authors suggest that CF might be especially effective in L2 pronunciation development.

7. Materials, tools and technology. Many kinds of assistive tools are available for pronunciation teaching – especially in the present technological era. However, tools can also be as simple as the following (some of which have been mentioned above): sound-colour charts, mirrors, pictures, rubber bands, and plain sheets of paper (for more on visual aids, see e.g. Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, 10). Kazoos are considered excellent for teaching intonation (a kazoo is "a toy instrument into which you hum a melody"; see Gilbert 2008, 35). Because English language teaching is such a huge industry, the variety of published materials is also enormous. In general, textbooks, dictionaries and reference guides for teachers are published nationally in many countries, as well as internationally. Some of these focus specifically on pronunciation (e.g. Longman Pronunciation Dictionary, Wells 2008).

It should also be kept in mind – especially now that authentic materials have gained popularity – that suitable materials can often be found closer to hand than we think: in e.g. jokes, poetry, songs, and comic strips (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, 343–354). Also, the Internet offers unlimited resources for different kinds of materials, and teachers can use electronic platforms or create a course website or blog for sharing materials and exercises, collecting course work, and offering a forum for discussion for learners. Modern language labs and instructional technology can offer efficient audio and visual feedback. For example, seeing the pitch contour of your own production displayed on a computer may be very helpful in learning intonation (Chun 2013); this is one example of the multiple possibilities of modern pronunciation software that have been demonstrated to help L2 learners to learn prosodic patterns. It has been suggested that computer-mediated pronunciation teaching (CAPT) could meet the needs of teachers, who seem to suffer from lack of time for pronunciation teaching and insufficient training in how to teach it (e.g. Breitkreutz et al. 2001, Foote et al. 2011, Henderson et al. 2012). According to Levis (2007), CAPT applications are tireless, consistent in their presentation of stimulus material and feedback, and provide variety in the number of voices used as models and in the form of visual feedback. This is usually not the case

in traditional classroom teaching with individual teachers. CAPT also promotes learner autonomy. (Levis 2007.)

Research has shown that CAPT can lead to pronunciation development. For example, Thomson's (2011, 2012) experiment in teaching Canadian English vowels to L1 speakers of Mandarin by using high variability phonetic training (HVPT) was successful. HVPT is one example of CAPT, and is based on exposing the learner to multiple voices producing the target sounds. After the stimulus, the learners are to click on labels indicating which sound they perceived, which is followed by immediate feedback. Many CAPT applications, however, have been criticised for not bringing much new to pronunciation teaching but simply presenting similar content in a new medium. It is also uncertain whether the development achieved with CAPT could equally well have been achieved in regular classroom teaching.

With respect to the use of automatic speech recognition (ASR) in CAPT, it should be kept in mind that ASR cannot handle non-native speech accurately, as pointed out by e.g. Chun (2013) and Levis (2007). ASR-based systems may be able to give satisfactory overall evaluations of learners' pronunciation, but they cannot pinpoint specific errors, which would be important for the learner (ibid.). It is also uncertain to what extent these systems correlate with human judgments of intelligibility (Thomson 2011). The use of phonetic displays (i.e. spectrograms) in CAPT has also been criticised, because they are not interpretable by non-experts and therefore cannot offer information that could be readily used to improve pronunciation (Levis 2007, Thomson 2011). All in all, it seems that CAPT is a promising means of complimenting traditional classroom teaching, but the suitability of each application to language learning should be carefully evaluated before use, as suggested by Derwing et al. (2000) – especially if they are ASR-based.

3 THE PRESENT STUDY

The aim of the present study is to offer a cross-section of English pronunciation teaching in Finnish schools. The research questions presented in 1.2 are approached through a *mixed methods,* or *triangulation* design (e.g. Creswell 1998, 202). The design includes multiple data sets and methods of data collection and analysis, and these are used in the series of four sub studies described below. The research design comprises an EFL textbook analysis, a survey for teachers, a classroom observations study, and a learner interview study. The research design is summarised in Table 4 and the four sub studies in 3.2–3.5. The overarching research questions set for this dissertation are explored in all these sub studies, if not explicitly then implicitly. In designing the research, it was decided to expand its scope beyond, e.g., mere teacher survey, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the topic. The aim was to address the topic from multiple perspectives by focussing on textbooks, teachers, classroom practices, and learners. Researching English pronunciation teaching in Finland from such varied perspectives called for diverse methods of data collection and analysis; suitable methods were chosen for each perspective. For example, survey methods were considered suitable when approaching teachers, whereas in studying learners' views, interviewing was seen a better choice of methodology. This chapter also serves as a summary of the original papers on which this dissertation is based.

TABLE 4 Summary of research data and methods.

Sub study	Data source	Research method
Study I	Finnish EFL textbooks, exercise books and teacher's guides (n=16)	Textbook analysis / classification
Study II	Finnish EFL teachers (n=103)	Online survey
Study III	Teaching practices of Finnish EFL teachers (n=4)	Classroom observations
Study IV	Finnish learners of English (n=10)	Interviews / qualitative content analysis

3.1 Methodological and ethical considerations

Mixed methods studies have gained in popularity in recent years, and mixed methods can be considered an established research methodology in itself. Mixed methods designs (traditionally understood primarily as mixing quantitative and qualitative methods) have been suggested to increase generalizability (e.g. Sharp et al. 2012) and the credibility of the research results in cases where the results obtained with different methods are in line with each other (Fielding 2012). Mixed methods designs are considered beneficial when researching complex phenomena: they can enable a more thorough understanding of the topic (Hashemi 2012), and offer better opportunities for in-depth analysis (Sharp et al. 2012). However, fault has been found with some studies, labelled mixed methods research by their authors, especially in how these have been reported. Bryman (2007) mentions a tendency towards insufficient rationale for the mixing of methods, and suggests that many studies do not in fact integrate the different data. This may be due to the fashionable nature of mixed methods methodology: a seemingly mixed methods design is chosen because it is popular, but the study itself may lack systematicity in terms of integrating the data (Fielding 2012).

The present study mixes methods primarily for analytic density, and secondarily for convergent validation (Fielding 2012): by mixing methods and using several data sets I hoped to gain a thorough understanding of English pronunciation teaching in Finland and to find support for the results obtained in one sub study from the results obtained in the other sub studies. The reason for using multiple methods was also motivated by the fact that the different perspectives required different methods of data collection and analysis. Multiple data sources were included because of the mapping nature of the study: it was considered necessary to look at the phenomenon under study from different angles to obtain a valid cross-sectional view of it. This research was originally designed as a project consisting of four sub studies which would subsequently be brought together in this final report to provide answers to the over-arching research questions.

This dissertation focuses on English pronunciation teaching. The need for defining pronunciation teaching became evident in the very first stages of my research work, as criteria were required for the classification of teaching materials in Study I. After just a glance at any of the selected textbooks, I was already struggling with the question "Is this a pronunciation exercise or not?" Obviously not all the exercises that had the potential of developing the learners' pronunciation skills could be included in the analysis, so I made the decision to draw a line between pronunciation-specific materials and other materials suitable for pronunciation teaching (implicit tasks such as more general oral skills exercises). The pronunciation-specific materials were defined in line with Schmidt (1990; 1995), who states that (language) items must be noticed before they can be learnt. Thus, in the textbook analysis, pronunciation teaching

materials are defined as materials that are designed explicitly to direct the learner's focus on pronunciation, e.g. phonology, articulation, or discrimination. This criterion was then used for pronunciation teaching throughout the research. However, I would like to emphasise that I do not deny the potential of more general oral skills training for pronunciation, but for practical reasons and need of a defined focus, the present study did not consider this type of training.

Studies II, III and IV involve participants, some of them children and teenagers under the age of 18. All of the participants took part in the study voluntarily and agreed to the use of data obtained by their participation for research purposes. In the case of the under-aged participants, the consent forms were signed by their guardians. Study III and Study IV (partly) took place in school environments. Thus, they were conducted with the permission of the schools' principals. Also, permissions from municipality authorities responsible for education were sought and granted. In reporting the results – whether in the original papers, this dissertation, or conference presentations – the participants' anonymity is secured by the use of pseudonyms. Similarly, the names of the towns and schools where the sub studies took place remain confidential.

3.2 Textbook analysis (Study I)

It is well acknowledged that textbooks play an enormous role in teaching in general, and in language teaching in particular. Sobkowiak (2012) claims that the textbook is the centre of nearly all EFL classrooms world-wide, and the recent survey by Luukka et al. (2008, 94–95) suggests that textbooks and exercise books are the most popular teaching materials used by Finnish teachers of foreign languages. In light of this, it was considered essential to include a textbook analysis of the EFL textbooks currently used in Finnish schools in this dissertation. The textbooks are by Finnish publishers and designed for the local context. The aim of the textbook analysis was to find out *what kind of materials Finnish EFL textbooks offer for the teaching of pronunciation.* This research aim was split into the two following specific questions:

1. How can the pronunciation teaching materials be classified?
2. What are the focus areas of the pronunciation teaching materials?

A data-driven classification was carried out to answer the research questions. A systematically collected pool of pronunciation-specific teaching materials from 16 EFL textbooks and teacher's guides served as the research data. In the autumn of 2008, the data were collected from the series of textbooks produced by two of the three leading publishers in Finland. The target learners were beginner, intermediate, and advanced level school pupils, i.e. basic education grade 3 and grade 7, and upper secondary school course 1. The textbooks were published during the period 1999–2007. In the analysis, owing to the major role

of textbooks in language teaching, the emphasis was on printed materials. Thus, all the extra materials provided by the publisher (videos, CD-ROMs, websites) were excluded. The textbooks are listed in Table 5.

TABLE 5 Textbooks analysed in Study I.

Name	Type	Level	Publisher	Year
Surprise Storybook 1	Textbook	Beginner	Otava	2003
Surprise Workbook 1	Exercise book	Beginner	Otava	2001
Surprise Opettajan kirja 1	Teacher's guide	Beginner	Otava	2001
Wow! 3 Studybook	Textbook	Beginner	WSOY	2002
Wow! 3 Busy Book	Exercise book	Beginner	WSOY	2007
Wow! 3 Opettajan materiaali	Teacher's guide	Beginner	WSOY	2003
This Way Up Texts 1	Textbook	Intermediate	Otava	1999
This Way Up Exercises 1	Exercise book	Intermediate	Otava	1999
This Way Up Teacher's File 1	Teacher's guide	Intermediate	Otava	1999
Key English 7 Courses 1–2 Textbook	Textbook	Intermediate	WSOY	2007
Key English 7 Courses 1–2 Workbook	Exercise book	Intermediate	WSOY	2007
Key English 7 Courses 1–2 Opettajan materiaali	Teacher's guide	Intermediate	WSOY	2002
Culture Café Book 1	Course book (texts + exercises)	Advanced	Otava	2002
Culture Café Teacher's Guide 1	Teacher's guide	Advanced	Otava	2003
In Touch Course 1	Course book (text + exercises)	Advanced	WSOY	2007
In Touch Kurssi 1 Opettajan materiaali	Teacher's guide	Advanced	WSOY	2005

In the first round of the data analysis, the following criteria were used to spot potential pronunciation teaching materials. First, all exercises that include oral production were collected. Second, all occurrences of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) were collected, and finally, other cases that were considered related to pronunciation and oral production were collected. This round resulted in a total of 1 803 cases, which were divided into pronunciation-specific materials (829 cases) and other materials suitable for pronunciation teaching (974 cases; these were mainly more general oral skills exercises). In drawing the line between these two types of materials, it was considered whether the activity was designed to direct the learners' attention explicitly to pronunciation or not. The materials deemed pronunciation-specific were taken for closer examination and formed the final research data for the textbook analysis.

The data-driven classification of the pronunciation-specific materials yielded eight types of pronunciation teaching materials. The most frequent material types were *phonetic training* (33%), *read aloud* (29%), and *listen and repeat* (18%). Other types of materials were less commonly present: *rhyme and verse* (8%), *rules and instructions* (4%), *awareness-raising activities* (4%), *spelling and*

dictation (3%), and *ear training* (2%). It seems that Finnish textbook writers strongly rely on phonemic transcription, which, it has been suggested, is beneficial for L1 Finnish-speaking learners of English (Lintunen 2004; 2005). The results also reveal that alongside traditional pronunciation practice, newer techniques (e.g. awareness-raising activities) have been adopted in Finnish EFL textbooks. Unlike the recommendations in the pronunciation teaching literature (e.g. Morley 1991), Finnish EFL textbooks almost entirely lack explicit teaching materials on intonation, rhythm, and connected speech.

3.3 The English Pronunciation Teaching in Europe Survey (Study II)

The English Pronunciation Teaching in Europe Survey (EPTiES) was a collaborative project between European colleagues who all share an interest in gathering information about English pronunciation teaching practices and teachers' views. The aim of the project was to establish the state-of-the-art of English pronunciation teaching practices and to learn about the attitudes of English language teachers working in EFL contexts around Europe. The group was coordinated by Dr. Alice Henderson from the Université de Savoie, Chambéry, France; I worked in this group of researchers as the representative of Finland. The heart of the collaborative project was a teacher survey which was jointly prepared by colleagues from ten countries: Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Macedonia, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. From the very beginning, the study was designed as an online survey, so that it would be easily accessible to respondents throughout Europe. The survey was administered using LimeSurvey (LimeSurvey Project Team & Schmitz 2012) and was open for respondents' answers from February 2010 to September 2011.

After the joint effort of designing the online survey, I was responsible for inviting teachers from Finland to participate in the study, for analysing the data provided by the Finnish respondents, and for writing the research report included in this dissertation as Study II. In addition, I co-authored in Henderson et al. (2012) and Kirkova-Naskova et al. (subm.). The Finnish respondents were first invited through the website of the Association of Teachers of English in Finland and mailing lists of local member associations of the Federation of Foreign Language Teachers in Finland. To attract more participants, the schools of ten randomly chosen municipalities were contacted directly at a later stage. The data was analysed with the help of LimeSurvey, Microsoft Excel, and SPSS version 19.

The survey was answered by 103 EFL teachers from Finland. The respondents represent the demographics of Finnish EFL teachers well. They were predominantly female (95.1%), non-native speakers of English (99.0%), teaching English in the public sector (92.2%). Most had finished an MA degree

(94.1%), which is the standard qualification for EFL subject teachers in Finland. The average age of the respondents was 44.6 years, and they had 15.9 years of teaching experience on average. The respondents were quite evenly distributed between different teaching contexts: 29.4% primary, 31.4% lower secondary, and 27.5% upper secondary. A few stated that they teach at tertiary level or in a vocational school.

Of the extensive data provided by the Finnish respondents of the English Pronunciation Teaching in Europe Survey, the following themes were chosen for closer examination in Study II: teacher training, teaching materials and methods, pronunciation assessment, status of pronunciation teaching, and pronunciation model. On average, the respondents gave a mediocre overall rating of their teacher training in regards to how to teach pronunciation. The responses clearly showed that the teachers were of the opinion that they had been well trained in their own pronunciation but had not received specific training in how to teach pronunciation. The data interestingly reveal that the oldest age group of respondents (from 60-year-olds) gave much higher ratings of their training than the youngest age group (up to 30-year-olds). The most commonly used teaching materials according to the survey are textbooks, CDs, dictionaries, DVDs, and websites (whether or not intended for language learning). Less than half of the respondents reported having access to a separate language laboratory, but the use of CD players, tape players and digital players is more common.

Based on the present survey, the teaching of phonetic symbols seems to be a controversial issue. The respondents had opposing views about the benefits of knowing phonetic symbols for the learning of pronunciation: some of them regarded it as an essential skill and extremely helpful in the learning of pronunciation, whereas some claimed that it causes confusion in the learning process (especially spelling). Teaching learners to recognise symbols was significantly more common than teaching learners to write them: 95.6% of the respondents reported teaching their learners to *recognise* all or some of the symbols, whereas only 22.8% reported teaching learners to *write* all or some of the symbols. In particular, teachers working at the primary level were of the opinion that learning to write phonetic symbols is not a useful activity for their learners. In pronunciation assessment, the most commonly used tasks are *reading aloud (with or without preparation time), oral performances, listening & questions,* and *exams in pairs or groups.* Using *written work, e.g. transcriptions*, as pronunciation assessment tasks was found to be rare. Also, the use of diagnostic assessment, in which the learner's proficiency is evaluated at the beginning of the course, was not very common. Only 22.6% of the respondents reported using diagnostic assessment.

When asked about the pronunciation model used, the variety most commonly reported for both receptive and productive tasks was RP (94.7%, 93.4%). GA was used for receptive tasks by 76.3% of the respondents and 63.2% for productive tasks (more than one alternative could be chosen in answer to this question). However, the respondents were of the opinion that their learners

generally prefer GA for receptive (86.8%; RP 65.8%) and productive (78.9%; RP 65.8%) tasks. Interestingly enough, in all categories, the third most popular choice after RP and GA was "a type of International English" (IE), which as many as 42.1% of the respondents reported using for receptive tasks, while a variety of other options were also frequently chosen, e.g. Australian English (35.5%), Irish English (26.3%), Scottish English (23.7%), and Canadian English (21.1%).

3.4 Classroom observations (Study III)

After exploring the materials available for pronunciation teaching and studying what teachers *say* about their teaching practices, the next step is to go and *see* how English pronunciation is taught in Finnish schools. For this purpose, classroom observations were arranged. The observations aimed at answering the following research questions:

1. What methods are used in teaching English pronunciation in the context of Finnish schools?

2. What aspects are emphasised in English pronunciation teaching in the context of Finnish schools?

Hence, the classroom observations were concerned with both teaching techniques and teaching content. The study was carried out by means of *focused observations* (Hopkins 2008, 89), with the help of a pre-prepared observation form. The observation form consisted of a list of possible teaching methods drawn from the literature (e.g. Seidlhofer 2001, Celce-Murcia et al. 1996) and the textbook analysis (Study I), and it included space for describing the procedure in class if the method in question was used by the teacher.

Four teachers were observed for 6–9 lessons each within a period of one week in spring 2009. In total, 32 lessons were observed and a written record was kept of the observations. Due to the relatively short observation period, the teachers were afterwards asked to fill in a short questionnaire on their background and teaching of pronunciation, including a question on whether they taught the regular amount of pronunciation during the observation period. To this question all but one gave a positive answer.

Observations from the lessons of the four teachers are treated as four case studies in Study III. The teachers represented different levels, from the lower grades of basic education to upper secondary school; they worked in schools of different sizes in terms of teaching group size; and both qualified [9] and unqualified EFL subject teachers were present among the observed teachers

[9] In Finland, fully qualified EFL subject teachers hold an MA degree in English, with teacher training/didactics as a minor subject in the degree.

(temporary and part-time posts are often taken up by teachers without full formal qualifications, and in the lower grades of basic education English is commonly taught by primary school teachers with a specialization in ELT). The four teachers had from 10 to 23 years of teaching experience. Background information on the teachers is summarised in Table 6.

TABLE 6 Background information on the teachers observed in Study III.

Teacher	Qualifications	Experience	Pupils
Ms Laine	M.Ed.	23 years	8–13 years old
Ms Sten	B.A.	13 years	13–16 years old
Ms Niemi	M.A.	10 years	13–19 years old
Ms Virta	M.A.	12 years	16–19 years old

As in the textbook analysis (Study I), the data analysis was commenced by excluding research material representative of general oral skills teaching rather than explicit pronunciation teaching. Here, the same criterion was used as in the textbook analysis, and also throughout the research: pronunciation teaching is something that is designed to direct the learner's attention explicitly to pronunciation. The final data were classified, using the observation form serving as a starting point, to study the use of different teaching methods by the four teachers. The data were further studied in order to analyse the content of teaching.

During the 32 EFL lessons observed, 111 pronunciation-specific activities occurred (see Table 7). These were classified into ten different teaching categories. The teachers used the techniques to a varying degree, ranging from using most of them (one teacher) to using only one (one teacher). Traditional imitation tasks and teacher corrections were found to be most popular categories, measured by overall frequency of occurrence and the number of teachers using them. Another relatively frequent technique used by the teachers was pointing out pronunciation issues such as individual sounds and British versus American conventions, whereas using rhyme, dictation, spelling, discrimination practice, presenting rules and tactile reinforcement were less popular. The methods indicate that the teaching was highly teacher-led and the principles of CLT were not applied in practice, while for the focus in the teaching content was strongly on segmentals – especially on those known to be difficult for L1 Finnish learners to produce (sibilants and affricates; see 2.1.3). The teaching content also suggested a pragmatic orientation in the sense that teachers frequently interfered with their pupils' pronunciation if they spotted a threat of communication breakdown caused by mispronunciation.

TABLE 7 Summary of the teaching methods used by the teachers in Study III.

Teaching method	Times used in teaching				
	Ms Laine	Ms Sten	Ms Niemi	Ms Virta	Total
Listen and repeat	34	-	2	3	39
Teacher corrects	11	4	8	-	23
Teacher points out	5	-	-	16	21
Read aloud	4	-	6	-	10
Phonemic script	2*	-	-	7	9
Rhyme	3	-	-	-	3
Rules	1	-	-	1	2
Dictation/spelling	1	-	1	-	2
Discrimination	1	-	-	-	1
Tactile reinforcement	-	-	-	1	1
Total	62	4	17	28	111

*Mentioned, not actively used.

3.5 Learner interviews (Study IV)

In the final sub study, I wanted to address learners' views on English pronunciation teaching. This was done by conducting thematic interviews with pupils attending basic and upper secondary education. Ten pupils were interviewed: two pupils attending primary education, six pupils attending lower secondary education and two pupils attending upper secondary school. The interviews were conducted in spring/summer 2012, and took place in various locations: in the learner's school, in the premises of the researcher's university, and in one case in the interviewee's home. The main focus of these ten interviews was to gain an insight into how learners perceive English pronunciation teaching and how they evaluate it. In addition, the theme of the sub study was expanded to touch on learning as well, the aim being to find out whether the learners considered that they had learnt English pronunciation at school and in different everyday contexts. For this sub study, the following research questions were set:

1. What do Finnish learners indicate as their goals in English pronunciation?
2. In learners' view, how is English pronunciation taught in Finnish schools?
3. How do Finnish learners evaluate the English pronunciation teaching they are receiving, and their learning of English pronunciation?

The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed by the author for qualitative content analysis (Kvale 2007, 105). The data were coded for recurrent themes and themes of interest in relation to the research questions. To avoid researcher bias, researcher triangulation (Denzin 1978) was carried out. In the

triangulation process, two established researchers gave their analysis of the data in addition to the author's. The purpose of performing the triangulation was to gain a deeper understanding of the topic by discussing the data in a group.

The results suggest that the learners do not seem to have aspirations for native-like pronunciation, but rather aim for intelligible and fluent speech. Only a few reported an accent preference, either British or American. From the learner perspective, these are also the pronunciation models used in the teaching, and other varieties are seldom introduced. According to the learners, the teaching practices mainly consist of imitation, reading aloud, listening for word stress, and learning phonemic script. These exercise types were also found in the pupils' textbooks when they were asked to introduce pronunciation tasks in them to the researcher. It appears that textbooks are widely used in teaching, and the participants frequently mentioned that they seldom skip exercises in the textbook, but rather cover the whole of it. The data also speak for somewhat spontaneous pronunciation teaching, as teachers were said to deal with pronunciation issues when problems occur. Using phonemic script in pronunciation teaching is clearly more common among teachers of primary level pupils; many of the participants attending the higher levels indicated that they had done transcription tasks at the primary level of their education but did not have these anymore. On the usefulness of phonemic script they were divided: the skill of reading phonemic script was seen as either beneficial for learning pronunciation or not useful at all.

Drawing upon the participants' comments, it seems that at the primary level, pronunciation receives more attention in the teaching than at the higher levels. Also, the learners on the primary level reported being happy with the amount of pronunciation teaching, whereas most of the lower and upper secondary level learners claimed that pronunciation is not taught sufficiently. Despite their criticisms of pronunciation teaching, the learners were of the opinion that they have learnt English pronunciation at school. In addition, many of the learners described pronunciation learning outside school, e.g. through media and personal encounters.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter brings together the results of the sub studies and discusses themes around the research questions set in 1.2., i.e. communicative pronunciation teaching, narrow versus broad approach, the role of phonetic training, and the EIL approach to pronunciation teaching. In addition, I discuss the role of textbooks, as this appears in the light of my research results. The implications of this study for teacher training, pronunciation teaching and future research, and reflection on the PhD study are also presented. I conclude with a summary of the main findings.

4.1 Communicative pronunciation teaching

The present study suggests that pronunciation-specific teaching of English in Finland mainly relies on traditional techniques such as imitation, reading aloud and phonetic training (especially at the primary level). This finding emerged from the textbook analysis (Study I), the classroom observations study (Study III), and the learner interviews (Study IV). The only type of communicative task in which pronunciation can be argued to play a crucial role is dictation. Dictation tasks featured in the textbooks (Study I) and were observed in class (Study III). In both contexts, the number of dictation tasks was very small. The lack of communicative pronunciation-specific tasks does not, however, mean that the communicative approach is ignored. Gathering research data for the textbook analysis revealed an abundance of more general, communicative oral skills exercises. These included, e.g., tasks in which simple reading aloud was developed into drama as an additional task, or as an alternative modification of the original reading exercise. However, the present study only considered the kind of practice that is designed to draw the learners' attention to pronunciation, based on the noticing hypothesis presented in Schmidt (1990; 1995).

Proponents of CLT have sometimes been blamed for not offering much in return after rejecting most of the traditional pronunciation teaching methods as

incompatible with teaching language as communication (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010; 9, 11). Based on the findings of the present study, English pronunciation teaching in Finland seems to rely strongly on mechanical training, but the training is sparse. Unfortunately, hardly any research exists on pronunciation teaching methods in Finnish schools before the rise of CLT, but it can be speculated that in the era of CLT, mechanical pronunciation practice has declined and hardly any pronunciation-specific communicative practice has emerged to fill the gap. However, more general communicative oral skills tasks are frequent, and they can also offer good pronunciation practice. After all, the learner interviews (Study IV) exemplified the view of "learning by doing": Valtteri (lower secondary level), for example, was of the opinion that you learn to pronounce whenever you speak. Drawing on Schmidt's (1990; 1995) noticing hypothesis, we might challenge the idea of learning new pronunciation features just by speaking. However, more general oral skills tasks can be very beneficial for the automation of the requisite motor movements, even if they do not draw the learners' attention to pronunciation. Even though pronunciation-specific communicative tasks are not common in English pronunciation teaching in Finnish schools in the light of this study, the teaching seems to more or less follow the recommendations stated by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, 44–49) and Morley (1991, 510): pronunciation teaching is moving away from mechanical training through guided practice to tasks that require more spontaneous production of speech.

4.2 Narrow vs. broad approach

For the most part, English pronunciation teaching in Finland, as demonstrated by the sub studies, tends to focus on the segmental level. Emphasis is clearly laid on the potentially challenging sounds, especially sibilants and affricates. This is well exemplified by many of the cases presented in Study III, in which the teachers were found to frequently correct and point out the pronunciation of sibilants and affricates. One teacher, Ms Virta, also used phonemic script to demonstrate the pronunciation of sibilants. In Study II, many of the teachers claiming to teach only some of the phonetic symbols said they teach the symbols describing sounds that are not included in the Finnish phoneme inventory. It seems that the phonological distance between Finnish and English is well taken into consideration in pronunciation teaching. It makes sense to concentrate on the sounds and distinctions that are missing from the learners' L1, even though it is not known which features of Finnish-accented English cause misunderstandings in interaction.

The teaching of pronunciation seems to offer very little explicit instruction on suprasegmental features of speech. Training in this domain mainly deals with listening for word stress. Word stress exercises are present in the textbooks (Study I), and the learners referred to these activities when they described the pronunciation teaching practices of their teachers (Study IV). The textbook

analysis (Study I) also revealed that the rising intonation of one-word questions and linking-r are briefly dealt with, although this type of training was not detected in any of the other sub studies. Otherwise, no explicit training of suprasegmentals is offered, and thus the overall approach is narrow, concentrating on the segmental level.

Several types of implicit training in suprasegmentals were found in this study. In this kind of training, the learners' attention is not necessarily drawn to the suprasegmental features, but the tasks nevertheless offer practice on them. The most common task offering implicit training of word and sentence stress, rhythm, and possibly intonation, was imitation of longer stretches of speech. These tasks were found in the textbooks (Study I), observed in class (Study III) and arose in the learner interviews (Study IV). Similarly, reading aloud tasks offer implicit training in suprasegmentals, and occurred in the same three sub studies. The use of rhyme and verse – sometimes recommended for practising rhythm – was present in the textbooks (Study I) but without instruction on how to draw the learners' attention to rhythm, or indeed any instruction at all. Similarly, when Ms Laine (Study III) used nursery rhymes in her teaching, she did not explain the purpose of the training to her learners. Thus, in this way, the practice of rhythm remained implicit only. In the case of intonation, playing with one's tone of voice was practised by reading text in different moods (Study I). Again, the purpose of the exercise was not explained. On one occasion, Ms Virta (Study III) encouraged her learners to pay attention to their intonation.

The textbooks include an abundance of materials that have the potential for promoting the learning of suprasegmentals. The above-mentioned implicit training could be made more explicit by the simple means of pointing out certain issues to the learners. However, as no instruction is given and no ready-made exercises in these areas are provided in the textbooks, the teachers do not seem to make use of this potential. As it now stands in light of the present study, the teaching of intonation, rhythm, sentence stress and connected speech are less emphasised areas. This is not in line with L1 Finnish-speaking learners' typical challenges with English pronunciation (see 2.1.3). Morris-Wilson (1992, 189) suggests that Finnish-speaking learners have greater difficulties in learning suprasegmental features than segmentals. Also, one of the stated goals of the National core curriculum for upper secondary schools (Finnish National Board of Education 2003) is that the upper secondary school graduates reach level B2.1 on the Finnish version of the CEFR language proficiency scale. Pronunciation at this level includes the requirement that "pronunciation and intonation are clear and natural" (ibid., 246). If "clear and natural" are meant to be interpreted from the native-speaker perspective, the goal is very ambitious. Intonation, in particular, is considered difficult to learn. Above all, the present research suggests that there is a lack of explicit training in the intonation of English in Finnish schools, in which case achieving the goal of the national core curriculum would seem extremely difficult for most learners.

4.3 Role of phonetic training

The results of the present study clearly show that phonetic training is invested in mostly at the primary level. Overall, phonetic training does not play a major role in English pronunciation teaching in Finland – except for textbooks, in which the relevant symbols are introduced and which include exercises promoting their acquisition (Study I). Although actual use of the IPA was observed only in the teaching of upper secondary school teacher Ms Virta (Study III), primary school teacher Ms Laine mentioned in class that they would study the phonetic symbols. The interviews with learners (Study IV) supports the observation that phonetic symbols are more systematically taught at the primary level, after which they are sparsely, and non-systematically, used in teaching at the higher levels. It seems as if, once taught, it can be assumed that the learners know them; they do not need to be studied anymore but can be used as a tool in teaching and learning. Also in general, pronunciation teaching seems to be more frequent at the primary level (Study III, IV); this is most probably a reflection of the curriculum. The National core curriculum for basic education (Finnish National Board of Education 2004, 139) states that the task of foreign language instruction at the primary level is "to accustom the pupil to communicating in the foreign language -- at first orally for the most part, then gradually increasing the written communication".

Whether the possible assumption that learners know the relevant IPA symbols after these have been taught at the primary level is plausible or not, two interesting viewpoints emerged. When learners were presented with phonemic script in the interview, most of them were able to read it to some extent, despite the fact that many said they did not know how to read the symbols (Study IV). However, perhaps more to the point is the experience of a learner, Emma (lower secondary level). She stated in the interview that she had not been motivated to study English at the primary level, so she had not learnt the symbols. Now that teaching of phonetic symbols has not been offered at the upper levels, Emma and all the pupils with a similar learning history have not been able to make use of the IPA as a learning tool.

Based on the present study, the use of phonetic symbols occurs mainly in deciphering tasks, in which the learners' task is to read phonemic script. This task type is present in the textbooks (Study I), is used by teachers (Study II), and was observed in the teaching of Ms Virta (Study III). Ms Virta also wrote phonetic symbols on the black board to demonstrate sounds. The teacher survey revealed a strict division between teaching learners to recognise and teaching them to write phonetic symbols: 72.8% of the respondents (n=92) stated that they teach their learners to recognise all the symbols, whereas only 5.4% indicated that they teach the writing of the symbols (Study II). The teachers working at the primary level, in particular, reported not teaching their learners to write phonetic symbols.

Another clear division was detected concerning the views on the usefulness of phonemic script. It appears that both teachers and learners are divided in the matter (Study II, IV). The same reasoning also underlies their attitude, whether positive or negative. In both groups there are those who argue for the usefulness of knowing phonetic symbols. Their rationale includes its usefulness for the development of pronunciation skills and, in particular, for self-study (e.g. dictionaries). In turn, according to its opponents, teaching phonetic symbols to learners confuses them in regard to regular spelling. This reasoning was also offered by both teachers and learners. Research suggests, however, that concern over learners getting confused when faced with learning both phonemic script and English spelling is unnecessary. For example, Dufva and Vauras (2002) found that phonetic training supported the development of literacy in learners who were struggling with the foreign language ("at-risk pupils").

With respect to other types of phonetic training, the present study found that tactile reinforcement (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, 337–338) is used in English pronunciation teaching in Finland. This technique offers the learner reinforcement through the sense of touch; in the present data learners were guided to feel voicing as vibration on their throats while pronouncing voiced plosives (Study I) and /ʒ/ (Study III). Making use of tactile reinforcement is an example of an attempt to consider different learning styles and, in this case, to better serve kinaesthetic learners. To conclude on phonetic training as part of pronunciation teaching, teaching phonetic symbols is a controversial issue. The present research finds arguments for and against it among both teachers and learners. These opposing views may derive from the notion that this method probably does not work for all learners. As teachers working at different levels and learners at different levels and ages are all divided on this issue, it is not possible to conclude that the suitability of phonemic script as a pronunciation learning tool depends on the learner's age or level of proficiency. It seems more likely in the light of the present study that the suitability of this method depends more on individual differences among learners.

4.4 EIL approach in pronunciation teaching

The present study also aimed at finding out whether the English as an International Language (EIL) approach has been taken into account in English pronunciation teaching in Finland. This issue was addressed by exploring the pronunciation model in use. The respondents (n=76) to the teacher survey (Study II), mainly reported RP (94.7% for receptive and 93.4% for productive tasks) and GA (76.3% for receptive and 63.2% for productive tasks) as their pronunciation model. In answering this question, it was possible to choose more than one alternative, and as the relative frequencies reveal, the majority of the respondents reported using both RP and GA in their teaching. This observation was supported by the learners' views: also from their perspective, these were the varieties mainly used as a pronunciation model in class (Study

IV). RP seems to be the main variety, according to both the teachers and learners, although some learners stated that American English was the principal variety used in the teaching they were receiving. In the classroom observations study (Study III), only RP and GA were used or addressed in teaching. Differences in the British and American conventions (pronunciation and spelling) of e.g. *schedule, vase, algae, and aluminium/aluminum* were addressed in the teaching of Ms Virta.

"A type of International English" was the third most popular for both receptive and productive tasks, as reported by the teachers (Study II), and was notably frequent for receptive tasks (42.1%). No definition of International English was given in the questionnaire, and one can only speculate how the respondents might have understood it. I find it more likely that they would see IE as any L2 variety of English, for example English spoken by Finns, than as a codified, culture-free variety such as the one suggested by Jenkins (2000). This assumption is based on the fact that IE has not been promoted as a clear-cut pronunciation model in Finland. In addition to RP, GA and IE, several other varieties were mentioned by the respondents – especially for receptive work. These included e.g. Australian English (35.5%), Irish English (26.3%), Scottish English (23.7%), and Canadian English (21.1%). Canadian English was also mentioned by a learner, Valtteri, (Study IV), but varieties other than RP/British and GA/American English were seldom mentioned by the learners. IE has widely been reported to be gaining a foothold in European countries, but using a wide variety of pronunciation models is typical of especially Finland and Germany (see Henderson et al. 2012). Overall, I find the broadened range of varieties or accents used in pronunciation teaching as a sign of increased awareness of the demographics of present-day English-speakers, and a higher tolerance of accented speech.

To continue this line of argument, the learners only rarely had an accent preference, but emphasised fluency and intelligibility as their goals in English pronunciation (Study IV). When the teachers evaluated their learners' goals, the average rating of the learners' aspiration to acquire native-like pronunciation was 3.17 on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 = do not at all aspire, 5 = aspire 100%), and the learners' general preference for pronunciation model more likely GA than RP (Study II). By and large, the learners also did not seem to mind their English being accented, or the fact that they might be recognised as foreigners among native speakers of English (Study IV) – an issue addressed in one of the textbooks analysed (see Study I, Example 5). Native-like pronunciation was even considered a negative achievement: Valtteri said in the interview that he wanted to emphasise that he is not British but a Finn. He is a good example of a learner who feels that the way he speaks is a part of his identity and does not want to change it (Pennington & Richards 1986; Jones 2001; Yates & Zielinski 2009, 14).

For practical reasons, the textbook analysis (Study I) did not address the issue of pronunciation models. However, a smaller sample of the textbooks was chosen for a pronunciation model analysis. The results have been presented as a

conference presentation (Tergujeff 2009) and a conference poster (Tergujeff 2010). The results of the analysis supports the findings of Study II and Study IV on pronunciation models in EFL teaching in Finland: RP and GA are the main varieties used, but other varieties are usually also introduced to give the learner some feel of the great variability of spoken English. The aim of these materials seems to be the provision of an opportunity for some *accent addition* (Jenkins 2000, 208–212), though not as programmatically as suggested by Jenkins (ibid.). This also supports the view, alluded to above, that speaking English with an accent is more acceptable than earlier and that a speaker of RP is an unlikely interlocutor in the situations where the learner is going to use the obtained language skills. For pedagogical purposes, it may be wise to choose one main model of pronunciation, but it is also highly recommendable to introduce other varieties to learners and to train their ear in them. The question of which variety is the best candidate for the main pronunciation model was not included in the research objectives of this study.

4.5 Role of textbooks

That textbooks play a major role in English pronunciation teaching in Finnish schools seems indisputable in light of the present study. Almost all the teachers (97.8%, n=90) reported they use textbooks in their teaching (Study II), and the importance of textbooks is also evident from the learner interviews (Study IV). According to the learners, textbooks are also carefully covered during the terms and not many exercises are skipped. Textbooks are also used out of class: Emma, for example, stated that she uses the textbook for self-study at home, reading texts aloud for pronunciation practice. When the contents of teaching and teaching practices are examined, it becomes clear that they reflect the contents of textbooks. In the following, I consider such obvious cases revealed in the course of the present study.

It has already been stated that the pronunciation models used in teaching are RP and GA: one as the main model and the other introduced so as to point out the major differences between the two varieties. The CDs accompanying the textbooks, however, have been found to include a range of inner, outer, and even expanding circle (Kachru 1985) accents (Tergujeff 2009; 2010; Kopperoinen 2011). This was reflected in the teacher survey (Study II) and learner interviews (Study IV). Many of the varieties the teachers reported using for receptive tasks are also included in the textbook CDs, e.g. Canadian English (21.1%). Canadian English also came up in the interview with Valtteri.

Although the emphasis on phonetic training present in the textbooks (Study I) as such does not seem to transfer to teaching (Study III), the textbook preference for phonemic transcription tasks does. The textbooks were found to favour deciphering over producing phonemic script (Study I), and the same preference was strongly expressed by the respondents of the teacher survey (Study II). The majority of the teachers (77.2%, n=92) claimed not to teach their

learners to write phonetic symbols at all, as discussed in 4.3. Also, only deciphering tasks were observed in class (Study III). More generally, the fact that textbooks introduce phonetic symbols was given as a reason to teach them by one survey respondent (Study II).

Certain exercise types that are present in the textbooks also occurred during the classroom observations and in the learner interviews. These include dictation and tactile reinforcement (Study III) and listening for word stress (Study IV). However, I find it more interesting that exercise types and contents that are *not* present in the textbooks did *not* come across in teaching either. This reinforces the suggestion that teaching is textbook-oriented. To demonstrate this orientation, I would like to raise the issue of the relative lack of suprasegmental training already stated in 4.2. In my view, the fact that word stress is the only type of explicit training of a suprasegmental feature offered in the textbooks (Study I) and used in teaching (Study III, IV) suggests that Finnish EFL textbooks have turned into "poor masters" in the teaching of suprasegmentals. As hardly any materials are given in the textbooks for teaching, for example intonation, rhythm, and connected speech, the teachers do not seem to teach these features. As it stands, trusting and following the textbook blindly and disregarding the learning goals set in the curricula can lead to the neglect of an important area such as intonation, as demonstrated in the present study. This finding also supports the suggestion made by Derwing & Munro (2005), according to which untrained teachers may rely too heavily on textbooks. However, Finnish EFL teachers can hardly be labelled as totally untrained in teaching pronunciation, but according to the self-reports in the teacher survey (Study II), many of the teachers were dissatisfied with their training in this area.

The suggestion that teachers heavily rely on textbooks is by no means surprising. In fact, I find it perfectly understandable, as Finnish EFL textbooks are generally regarded as of good quality. They are all-inclusive material packages designed for the Finnish context of EFL teaching and learning. Moreover, they are designed to follow the national core curricula, although they do not always seem to succeed in this in all aspects (cf. the goals regarding intonation). The lack of materials for teaching suprasegmentals in Finnish EFL textbooks may also derive from the curricula, which are not highly explicit about pronunciation. Given the vagueness of the curricula on the topic, the amount, content and quality of pronunciation teaching materials in textbooks are largely up to the textbook writers. The heavy reliance on textbooks is also natural because teachers simply do not have the time and energy to find extra materials – let alone make their own.

4.6 Implications

The present study has implications for teacher training, English pronunciation teaching in Finnish schools, and future research. Although in-service training

opportunities exist for EFL teachers in Finland, the education that formally qualifies them for their profession is the primary source of training in how to teach pronunciation, among other areas of language. The level of teacher satisfaction with their training may be good in comparison to that of teachers in other European countries (see Henderson et al. 2012), but one cannot disregard the fact that, in Study II, many teachers rated their training as *extremely poor* in this respect. In addition, the open-ended questions revealed that it seems to be a general tendency in teacher training in Finland to train future teachers well in their own pronunciation but not in how to teach it to learners. Some of the respondents claimed not to have received any training in how to teach pronunciation. Thus, these findings suggest that teacher training programmes should reconsider their emphases and make sure that future teachers are well equipped to teach pronunciation as well as other skills. I doubt that an EFL teacher with no teacher training in how to teach *grammar* would be much appreciated, but somehow not being trained in pronunciation teaching seems more acceptable. I find this extremely inconsistent with the established approach of teaching language as communication and the important role of (suprasegmental features of) pronunciation in intelligibility (see 2.2.2).

The present study showed that Finnish EFL textbooks commonly lack explicit teaching materials on intonation, rhythm and connected speech. This lack of materials was reflected in teaching, as no teaching in these areas was observed in class (Study III) or referred to by the learners (Study IV). This suggests the following scenario: teachers trust that the textbooks cover all the necessary topics. As they mainly use the textbooks as teaching materials, many of the suprasegmental features of speech are neglected because they are not dealt with in the textbooks. In doing this, teachers forget the wisdom of the proverb "good servants but poor masters" (cf. Cunningsworth 1984, 1). Instead of blindly following the textbook, teachers should rather turn to the curriculum for their objectives and choose the appropriate teaching materials and methods accordingly. That textbooks can be poor masters is well exemplified by the present study, given that intonation plays a crucial role in intelligibility and that the learning goal for upper secondary school graduates includes clear and natural intonation (Finnish National Board of Education 2003, 246). Of course, this extremely ambitious goal could also be better considered by the authors and publishers of textbooks.

With respect to the implications of this study for future research, the poor masters theme could also be worth addressing in relation to the teaching of language skills other than pronunciation. Is the same effect present for grammar, for example, or do teachers compensate for possible lack of materials with additional materials? The present study raises the issue of phonemic script as a controversial teaching and learning tool; the opinions both for and against are relatively strong, and both teachers and learners are similarly divided in their views. A thorough investigation of the possible benefits of phonemic script for the learning of pronunciation is much needed. Such an investigation could also consider the effects of factors such as learner age, level of proficiency

and individual learner differences on the learning of pronunciation with the help of phonemic script, with the aim of finding out who (if anyone) benefits from it.

4.7 Reflections on the study

Now, I would like to address possible limitations in some of the individual sub studies. One such issue concerns the proportion of phonetic training in the analysed textbooks (Study I). One of the original criteria used to spot pronunciation-specific teaching materials in the selected textbooks was "the International Phonetic Alphabet is used", and among the results I present that words in most vocabularies and word lists are given in phonemic script. This may prompt the question about how the proportion of phonetic training (33%) in the textbooks was calculated and whether including the vocabularies and word lists possibly skews the results. The analytical procedure, the description of which is unfortunately missing from Study I, was the following: one vocabulary or word list that included phonemic script was counted as one case of phonetic training, just if, for example, it had been an imitation task with several items. The idea was to include all sorts of pronunciation teaching materials – not just readily formulated exercises with specific instructions.

Some justification for the selection of textbooks is also in place, as a reader familiar with the Finnish textbook market may know that three publishing houses dominate the market, and therefore may wonder why one of the publishers is not represented in Study I. First and foremost, the textbook selection was based on the aim of studying a variety of teaching materials ranging from textbooks for beginners to textbooks for advanced learners. Accordingly, the textbooks were chosen from among those aimed at basic education grade three (where children usually begin their English studies), basic education grade seven (where the level of proficiency could be determined as intermediate), and upper secondary school course one (advanced). To avoid bias, textbooks from the above levels were chosen from two publishers instead of only one. As the amount of data was sufficient, textbooks from the third major Finnish publishing house were not included in this sub study. Bringing in an additional publisher would probably not have changed the results significantly.

The results of the teacher survey (Study II) were possibly affected by the number of questions: the survey was perhaps too lengthy, and resulted in a number of non-completed responses. As many of the respondents quit the survey only in the latter parts of the lengthy questionnaire, I used all the responses for those parts they had been filled in. The number of responses per question dealt with in Study II varied from 76 to 103. The reason behind the length of the survey was that the online questionnaire that was used to gather the data was designed for the purposes of a European-wide research project of

much wider scope than my sub study. I only used selected questions of the survey for Study II.

In the classroom observations study (Study III), the teachers were observed for 6–9 lessons each within one week. This might be considered a relatively short observation period, as obviously it cannot include all the possible cases of pronunciation teaching used by the teachers in their work. I was aware of this already when planning the observations (longer observation periods were impossible to arrange for practical reasons). Consequently, after the observation period the teachers filled in a short questionnaire including a question on how much pronunciation they had taught during the observation period compared to usual (less, the same, more). Only one of the teachers was of the opinion that she had taught less pronunciation than usual, and this is mentioned in the original publication. Overall, I feel that the time spent in observing the teachers was adequate to form a picture of their teaching practices and style. Towards the end of the week they started to repeat their pronunciation teaching methods and no new teaching techniques appeared.

I would also like to comment on an issue of terminology regarding Study III. When I state that *recasts* are not considered pronunciation teaching in that sub study, I am referring to recasts more in the original use of the term deriving from L1 acquisition research, i.e. as reformulations (or, paraphrasing) of the learner's utterance without it coming across as explicit correction. However, I am aware of the tendency towards narrowing down the definition of recasts in L2 acquisition studies, and that even the kind of corrective feedback I describe in Study III could be regarded as recasts. As the term is still often associated with its use with L1 acquisition research and connected with implicit feedback (which is outside the scope of this dissertation), I prefer the term *teacher correction* to describe the actions observed in my data in Study III. (For literature review on recasts, see Nicholas et al. 2001.)

The scope of this research was English pronunciation teaching from primary to upper secondary level. All the sub studies included data that involve teaching in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary level. A careful study of the results presented in the sub studies suggests that pronunciation teaching is different in these three levels – especially in primary level compared to the others. However, this doctoral study did not have comparison between the different levels as its aim, but combined the data obtained from all three levels. Some observations were made about the differences, but a systematic comparison (wholly possible from the present data) was left for future research (see Tergujeff 2013).

The general trustworthiness of surveys and interviews can be challenged by e.g. doubting the participants' honesty. The mixed methods design of the present study was chosen to strengthen the credibility of the results, and as the results obtained in the sub studies are in line with each other, I believe my overall conclusions project an authentic image of English pronunciation teaching in Finland. However, in relation to this I would like to discuss the possibility of the participants not having the same perception of pronunciation

teaching as myself. In other words, the participants may have had a very narrow idea of pronunciation teaching, whereas I have adopted a broader definition that includes suprasegmental training and ear-training. This speculation concerns first and foremost the interviewees in Study IV, and if true, the learners may not have been able to describe all pronunciation teaching they were receiving, owing to their narrow approach possibly hindering them from recognising certain activities as pronunciation practice. Nevertheless, I valued their viewpoints as they are, and did not want to interfere by, for example, introducing the broad approach. Another point to bear in mind is that to some extent learners' views may echo those of their teachers and parents (Fielding 2012).

The teacher survey (Study II) did not include a question exploring the range of the teachers' pronunciation teaching methods. With respect to these methods, the survey concentrated solely on the use of a few selected techniques, whereas the range of pronunciation assessment tasks was mapped thoroughly. Accordingly, in this sub study it was impossible to draw conclusions on the implementation of recent recommendations in the pronunciation teaching literature, e.g. whether the approach is broad or narrow. This sub study was conducted as a part of an international project, as stated above. Some compromises had to be made, and in the end the research did not focus so much on pronunciation teaching practices but emphasised other aspects, such as the teaching context and questions of attitude. However, valuable information on the use of phonetic symbols and pronunciation models were obtained in Study II. To sum up, the study covered English pronunciation teaching in the context of Finnish schools from four important perspectives: textbooks, teachers, classroom practices and learners. It offers a cross-section of the topic and good opportunities for further, more detailed, study.

4.8 Conclusion

This doctoral dissertation aimed to find out how English pronunciation is taught in the context of Finnish schools from primary to upper secondary level. More specifically, the present study sought answers to the research questions presented in 1.2. using a mixed methods design, focusing on the realisation of recent recommendations in pronunciation teaching, the role of phonetic training, and acknowledgment of the EIL approach in the choice of pronunciation model. The main findings were the following:

1. The recent recommendations for pronunciation teaching found in the literature are not fully applied in practice in English pronunciation teaching in Finland. The use of communicative activities that explicitly focus on pronunciation are rare. However, plenty of implicit training is offered in the form of more general oral skills exercises. The overall approach to teaching English pronunciation can be described as *narrow,* as focus is clearly on the segmental level.

2. In general, phonetic training as part of English pronunciation teaching only plays a minor role. Teaching learners to recognise the relevant phonetic symbols seems to be an objective at the primary level, after which the symbols are only sparsely used as a tool. Concentration on physical articulation and the use of phonetic terminology appears to be rare.

3. The choice of pronunciation model does suggest increasing influence of the EIL approach. Although the main models are the traditional RP and GA, additional varieties are introduced to the learners through receptive tasks. The learners seem very tolerant towards accented speech and seem to value intelligibility and fluency over native-like proficiency.

The present study contributes to the research conducted in the field of pronunciation teaching in the context of Finland. So far, the existing research has been meagre, small-scale and narrow in scope. The use of multiple data sets and mixed methods has provided an opportunity to address the topic and the research questions from multiple angles, and it has resulted in a deeper understanding of the existing pronunciation teaching practices than would have been obtained by a monomethod study. The mixed methods design applied in the present study is also among the first at the international level, and sets a potential example for future mappings of pronunciation teaching practices – and also the teaching of any other language skill. Since the majority of such wider mappings of English pronunciation teaching have been done in ESL contexts (Murphy 1997, Breitkreuz et al. 2001, Foote et al. 2011), the present work contributes to the international field of pronunciation teaching research by offering a comprehensive cross-section of the topic in an EFL context.

TIIVISTELMÄ (FINNISH SUMMARY)

Vieraalla kielellä puhuttaessa ääntämisellä on suuri vaikutus puheen ymmärrettävyyteen. Ääntäminen on myös kielitaidon osa-alue, johon kiinnitetään helposti huomiota ja jonka perusteella kuulijoille muodostuu ensivaikutelma puhujan kielitaidosta. Vaikka vieraalla korostuksella puhumiseen suhtaudutaankin nykyään myötämielisemmin kuin ennen, onnistuneeseen kommunikointiin vieraalla kielellä vaaditaan kuitenkin tietyn tasoista kohdekielen ääntämisen hallintaa. Englannin kielen opetuksessa ääntäminen olikin tärkeässä osassa 1950- ja 1960-luvuilla, mutta kommunikatiivisen kielenopetuksen vallatessa jalansijaa 1970-luvulta lähtien eksplisiittinen ääntämisen opetus on jäänyt vähäiseen rooliin. Myös soveltavassa kielentutkimuksessa ääntämiseen liittyvät tutkimusaiheet ovat kiinnostaneet vain harvoja tutkijoita. Ääntämisen opetusta on tutkittu lähinnä englanninkielisissä maissa ja usein aikuisopetuksen kontekstissa (esim. Murphy 1997, Breitkreuz et al. 2001, Foote et al. 2011). Suomessa on spekuloitu englannin ääntämisen opetusta laiminlyötävän kouluopetuksessa (Lintunen 2004, Iivonen 2005), mikä on johtanut tämän väitöskirjan syntyyn. Väitöstutkimuksessa selvitettiin, millaista englannin ääntämisen opetus on suomalaisessa koulukontekstissa.

Teoreettinen viitekehys

Kontrastiivisten tutkimusten (Wiik 1965, Lehtonen et al. 1977, Morris-Wilson 1992) perusteella tiedetään, että suomen ja englannin äännejärjestelmien eroavaisuuksien vuoksi suomalaisille englannin oppijoille haastavia aspekteja ovat sibilanttien, affrikaattojen, dentaalifrikatiivien ja pitkien ja lyhyiden vokaalien välisten laatuerojen tuottaminen. Lisäksi puherytmi, sana- ja lausepaino sekä intonaatio voivat tuottaa vaikeuksia (Hirvonen 1970, Toivanen 1999, Paananen-Porkka 2007). On kuitenkin epäselvää, mitkä suomalaisella korostuksella puhutun englannin piirteet vaikuttavat negatiivisesti ymmärrettävyyteen. Avuksi erityisesti äännetason haasteisiin on suositeltu foneemista kirjoitusta, sillä se noudattaa samaa periaatetta kuin suomen ortografia: yksi merkki kirjoituksessa vastaa yhtä äännettä puheessa. Suomen oikeinkirjoituksessa tästä säännöstä tekee poikkeuksen ainoastaan ŋ-äänne (ks. Suomi et al. 2008, 141), kun taas englannin kielen ortografiassa kirjain-äännevastaavuus on huomattavasti heikompi, ja yhtä äännettä vastaa usein useampikin eri kirjainyhdistelmä kirjoitetussa kielessä. Foneemisen kirjoittamisen ja englannin ääntämisen taitojen välillä on myös havaittu yhteys suomea äidinkielenään puhuvilla edistyneillä englannin oppijoilla (Lintunen 2004).

Kuten mainittua eksplisiittinen ääntämisen opetus on vähentynyt kieltenopetuksessa kommunikatiivisen suuntauksen myötä. Tämä johtuu pääosin siitä, että kommunikatiivisen lähestymistavan kannattajat torjuivat suurimman osan perinteisistä ääntämisen opetuksen menetelmistä, koska ne eivät sopineet uuteen viitekehykseen. He eivät kuitenkaan tarjonneet riittäviä vaihtoehtoisia menetelmiä. (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, 9, 11.) Viimeaikaisessa opetus- ja tutkimus-

kirjallisuudessa on ollut myös pinnalla laajemman lähestymistavan soveltaminen ääntämisen opetukseen: on ehdotettu, että opetus lähtisi liikkeelle puheen äännettä suuremmista yksiköistä (intonaatio, rytmi, lause- ja sanapaino) sen sijaan, että keskityttäisiin lähinnä yksittäisten äänteiden harjoittelemiseen. Ehdotus perustuu näkemykselle, jonka mukaan äännettä suuremmat yksiköt ovat merkittävämpiä vieraskielisen puheen ymmärrettävyyden kannalta kuin yksittäiset äänteet (esim. Lane 2010, 9; Roach 2000, 100). Yksittäisiin äänteisiinkin keskittyvää harjoittelua kuitenkin tarvitaan.

Mielenkiintoisen lisän tutkimusalan ajankohtaiseen keskusteluun tarjoaa englanti maailmankielenä -näkökulman heijastuminen ääntämismallin valintaan. Englannin kielen levinneisyys on johtanut sen erkaantumiseen eri kielimuodoiksi eli varieteeteiksi, ja jo yksin syntyperäisten puhujien kieli eroaa toisistaan merkittävästi juuri ääntämisen tasolla. Useimmiten englannin opetuksessa ääntämismalliksi valitaan joko britti- tai amerikanenglannin standardivarieteetti. Euroopassa eniten käytetty ääntämismalli on brittienglannin ns. Received Pronunciation (RP; ks. Henderson et al. 2012), jonka valintaa on kuitenkin kritisoitu (esim. Morley 1991, Seidlhofer 2001). Kritiikki perustuu lähinnä siihen, että kyseistä kielimuotoa puhuvat vain äärimmäisen harvat, ja oppijoille olisi käytännöllisempää opiskella sellaista varieteettia, jonka puhujia he todellisuudessa kohtaavat. Yhdeksi vaihtoehdoksi on esitetty ”kansainvälistä englantia”, joka voisi perustua syntyperäiselle varieteetille, mutta sallisi oppijoille joitakin helpotuksia. Tällaisesta kansainvälisestä varieteetista on esitetty useita luonnoksia, mutta eniten huomiota niistä on kerännyt Jennifer Jenkinsin (2000) Lingua Franca Core (LFC). LFC on tutkimustietoon perustuva yksityiskohtainen esitys kansainvälisen englannin fonologiasta, jonka ohella ehdotetaan myös oppijoiden korvan harjaannuttamista erilaisiin englannin varieteetteihin.

Tutkimuksen tavoitteet

Väitöstutkimukseni tarkoituksena oli selvittää, millaista englannin ääntämisen opetus on suomalaisessa koulukontekstissa. Tarkastelun kohteena oli opetus peruskoulun alakoulusta aina lukiotasolle asti. Kattavan läpileikkauksen saavuttamiseksi tutkimuksessa käytettiin useita aineistoja ja aineistonkeruu- ja analysointimenetelmiä. Analyysin keskiössä olivat opetus- ja tutkimuskirjallisuuden viimeaikaisten suuntausten toteutuminen ja foneettisen harjoittelun rooli opetuksessa. Väitöstutkimuksen tutkimuskysymykset olivat seuraavat:

1. Kuinka englannin ääntämisen opetus suomalaisessa koulukontekstissa vastaa opetus- ja tutkimuskirjallisuuden viimeaikaisia suosituksia, mukaan lukien kommunikatiivinen ääntämisen opetus ja laajempi lähestymistapa ääntämisen opetukseen?
2. Mikä on foneettisen harjoittelun rooli suomalaisessa koulukontekstissa annettavassa englannin ääntämisen opetuksessa?
3. Miten englanti maailmankielenä -näkökulma on huomioitu ääntämismallin valinnassa suomalaisessa koulukontekstissa annettavassa englannin opetuksessa?

Tutkimus on tavoitteiltaan käytännönläheinen. Englannin ääntämisen opetuskäytänteiden kartoittaminen nähdään ensiaskelena opetuksen kehittämisessä. Työssä pyrittiin myös saavuttamaan tietoa, joka hyödyttää oppikirjojen laatijoita ja opettajankoulutusta. Ääntämisen oppimista koskevat kysymykset sen sijaan rajattiin tämän väitöstutkimuksen ulkopuolelle.

Osatutkimusten esittely

Tutkimukseni on julkaistu ns. artikkelimuotoisena väitöskirjana, joka koostuu neljästä osajulkaisusta ja ne yhteen sitovasta osasta. Kaikki neljä osajulkaisua ovat ilmestyneet kansainvälisillä vertaisarvioiduilla foorumeilla, ja ne löytyvät väitöskirjan liitteinä alkuperäisissä asuissaan. Tutkimuksessa käytettiin monimenetelmäistä lähestymistapaa, jonka etuja ovat tutkimustulosten yleistettävyyden ja uskottavuuden paraneminen sekä hyvät mahdollisuudet tutkimusaiheen syvälliseen analysointiin (esim. Sharp et al. 2012, Fielding 2012). Koska aineistolähteitä oli useita, jokaisen kohdalla haluttiin valita sopivin aineistonkeruu- ja analysointimenetelmä. Siten päädyttiin kokonaisuuteen, jossa yhdistyvät oppikirja-analyysi, kyselytutkimus opettajille, luokkahuonehavainnoinnit ja oppilashaastattelut. Tutkimushenkilöt osallistuivat tutkimukseen vapaaehtoisesti ja antoivat suostumuksensa heiltä kerätyn aineiston käyttämiseen tutkimustyössä. Alaikäisten henkilöiden kohdalla heidän huoltajansa antoivat suostumuksen. Koulukontekstissa kerätyt aineistot saatiin kyseisten koulujen rehtoreiden ja koulutoimesta vastaavien viranomaisten luvilla. Tutkimushenkilöiden anonymiteetti on pyritty suojaamaan peitenimien käytöllä, eikä tutkimuksessa mukana olleita kouluja tai paikkakuntia ole nimetty.

Ensimmäisessä osatutkimuksessa selvitettiin, millaista opetusmateriaalia suomalaisten kustantajien englannin oppikirjat tarjoavat ääntämisen opetukseen. Tutkimusaineisto kerättiin 16 ala- ja yläkoulun sekä lukion oppikirjasta ja kirjasarjoihin sisältyvistä opettajan oppaista. Oppikirja-analyysi perustui aineistolähtöiseen luokitteluun. Tuloksena saatiin luokittelu, jossa on kahdeksan ääntämisen opetuksen eri materiaalityyppiä. Yhteensä kriteerejä vastaavia harjoituksia ja muita materiaaleja esiintyi 829 kappaletta. Suosituimpia tyyppejä olivat foneettinen harjoittelu (33%), ääneen lukeminen (29%) ja kuuntele ja toista (18%). Harvemmin esiintyviä kategorioita olivat riimittely (8%), säännöt ja ohjeet (4%), tietoisuutta lisäävät materiaalit (4%), sanelu ja tavaaminen (3%) sekä reseptiivinen harjoittelu (2%). Opetusmateriaalin sisällön kannalta huomionarvoista oli puheen äännettä suurempien piirteiden opetukseen käytettävien materiaalien vähyys. Esimerkiksi intonaatioon ja puherytmiin keskittyvää opetusmateriaalia ei esiintynyt aineistossa juuri lainkaan.

Toisena osatutkimuksena toteutettiin kyselytutkimus Suomessa työskenteleville englannin opettajille (n=103). Aineisto kerättiin osana kansainvälistä English Pronunciation Teaching in Europe Survey -projektia, jossa toimin Suomen edustajana. Vastuualueenani projektissa oli vastaajien kutsuminen, aineiston analyysi ja tulosten raportointi Suomessa työskentelevien vastaajien osalta. Kysely keskittyi nimenomaan englannin ääntämisen opetukseen ja sitä sivuaviin teemoihin. Osatutkimuksessa selvitettiin opettajien näkemyksiä mm. saamastaan koulutuksesta, arviointikäytänteistään, käyttämistään opetusmateriaa-

leista ja -menetelmistä sekä ääntämismalleista. Saamalleen koulutukselle opettajat antoivat keskimäärin keskinkertaisen arvosanan, ja avovastausten perusteella näyttää siltä, että koulutuksessa on keskitytty tulevien opettajien omaan ääntämistaitoon sen sijaan, että heille olisi tarjottu konkreettisia työkaluja ääntämisen opettamiseen. Perinteisten opetusmateriaalien kuten oppi- ja sanakirjojen sekä CD-levyjen ohella opettajat ilmaisivat käyttävänsä jossain määrin myös internetiä ääntämisen opetuksessa. Alle puolella vastaajista on käytössään erillinen kielistudio. Mitä tulee foneettisten merkkien käyttöön ääntämisen opetuksessa, on yleistä opettaa merkkien tunnistamista, kun taas vain harvat opettavat merkkien kirjoittamista. Ääntämisen arvioinnissa silmiinpistävää on, että vain noin viidesosa vastaajista ilmaisi arvioivansa oppijoiden lähtötason. Suosituimmat opetuksessa käytettävät ääntämismallit olivat britti- ja amerikanenglannin standardivarieteetit, mutta myös ”kansainvälistä englantia” ja muita malleja käytetään lisänä erityisesti kuunteluharjoituksissa.

Kolmannessa osatutkimuksessa havainnoitiin englanninopettajien (n=4) työskentelyä yhteensä 32 oppitunnin ajan. Kunkin opettajan opetusta seurattiin yhden viikon aikana. Tarkoituksena oli selvittää miten he opettavat ääntämistä ja mitä he ääntämisestä opettavat. Havainnoinnista tehtiin kirjalliset muistiinpanot, ja havainnointijakson päätteeksi opettajat täyttivät vielä pienen kyselyn. Tutkimuksen tuloksena saatiin kymmenen kohdan luokittelu käytetyistä ääntämisen opetusmenetelmistä, sekä opetuksen sisällölliset painotukset, joihin kuuluvat mm. suomenkielisille oppijoille tyypillisesti haastavat sibilantit ja affrikaatat. Suosituimpia ääntämisen opetuksen menetelmiä olivat imitointi, opettajien tekemät korjaukset ja eksplisiittinen huomion kiinnittäminen ääntämiseen. Foneettista harjoittelua esiintyi luokkahuoneissa verrattain vähän.

Neljäs osatutkimus keskittyi oppijan näkökulmaan. Tässä eri-ikäisten oppijoiden (n=10) haastattelututkimuksessa pyrittiin saamaan tietoa oppijoiden näkemyksistä ja mielipiteistä koulussa tarjottavasta englannin ääntämisen opetuksesta sekä heidän tavoitteistaan englannin ääntämisen oppimisen suhteen. Aineiston keruumenetelmänä käytettiin teemahaastattelua ja analyysimenetelmänä laadullista sisällönanalyysia (Kvale 2007, 105). Tulosten perusteella haastatellut oppijat eivät pidä tärkeänä saavuttaa syntyperäistä kielenpuhujaa vastaavaa ääntämistaitoa. Heille tärkeintä on sen sijaan ymmärrettävän ja sujuvan puheen tuottaminen. Harvat oppijat kertoivat mieltymyksestä tietyn ääntämismallin oppimiseen. Sekä britti- että amerikanenglannin ääntämistä käytetään heidän mukaansa mallina kouluopetuksessa, mutta kuitenkin niin, että toinen on pääasiallinen ääntämismalli. Ääntämisen opetuksen menetelmistä oppijat mainitsivat useimmiten imitoinnin, ääneen lukemisen, sanapainoharjoitukset sekä foneettisen harjoittelun. Oppijat esittelivät samoja harjoitustyyppejä oppikirjoistaan, kun heitä pyydettiin näyttämään kirjoista, millaisia ääntämisharjoituksia he niistä yleensä tekevät. Samassa yhteydessä ilmeni, että oppikirjaa seurataan tarkasti, ja harjoituksia jätetään harvoin väliin. Haastattelujen perusteella näyttää siltä, että alakoulussa ääntämisen opetukseen panostetaan eniten. Haastatellut alakoululaiset olivatkin tyytyväisiä saamaansa ääntämisen opetukseen,

kun taas yläkoululaiset ja lukiolaiset pitivät saamaansa opetusta riittämättömänä.

Johtopäätökset

Tutkimustulokset osoittavat, että opettajat tukeutuvat englannin ääntämisen opetuksessa lähinnä perinteisiin menetelmiin: imitointiharjoituksiin, ääneen luettamiseen ja foneettiseen harjoitteluun. Kommunikatiivista ääntämisen opetusta ei juuri esiinny, vaikka yleisessä suullisen kielitaidon harjoittelussa kommunikatiivisuus on usein läsnä. Samoin äännettä suuremmat puheen yksiköt jäävät tämän tutkimuksen aineistossa hyvin vähälle harjoittelulle, joten lähestymistapaa voidaan kuvailla kapeaksi kirjallisuudessa suositellun laajemman lähestymistavan sijaan. Foneettiseen harjoitteluun panostetaan eniten alakoulussa, ja foneemisen transkription opettamiseen liittyy kahtalaisia mielipiteitä. Sekä opettajien että oppijoiden joukoissa foneemisen kirjoituksen lukutaitoa pidetään hyödyllisenä itseopiskelun kannalta, mutta kirjoituksen tuottamisen pelätään häiritsevän oikeinkirjoituksen oppimista. Englanti maailmankielenä -näkökulma heijastuu ääntämismallin valintaan, sillä vaikka perinteiset varieteetit ovatkin pääasiasiallisina malleina, niiden lisäksi käytetään myös muita malleja erityisesti kuunteluharjoituksissa. Tutkimus osoittaa myös, että oppikirjoilla on suuri vaikutus opetuksen sisältöön. Vaikka opetussuunnitelman perusteet asettavat korkeita tavoitteita intonaation oppimiselle, analysoiduista oppikirjoista ei löytynyt materiaalia sen harjoittamiseen. Intonaatiota ei myöskään opetettu havainnoiduilla oppitunneilla, eivätkä oppijat maininneet sitä opetusta kuvaillessaan. Monia muita ääntämisen osa-alueita kuitenkin käsiteltiin opetuksessa, mihin vaikuttaa luultavasti se, että niiden harjoittelemiseen löytyy valmiita tehtäviä oppikirjoista.

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ORIGINAL PAPERS

I

PRONUNCIATION TEACHING MATERIALS IN FINNISH EFL TEXTBOOKS

by

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Pronunciation teaching materials in finnish EFL textbooks

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Abstract

Recent pronunciation teaching literature suggests moving away from mechanical production concentrating on individual sounds, towards emphasising areas more important for intelligibility: stress, rhythm and intonation. The communicative approach has also gained ground in pronunciation teaching. This study explores what kind of pronunciation teaching materials Finnish EFL textbooks have to offer. In this textbook analysis, 16 Finnish EFL textbooks, exercise books and teacher's guides are systematically analysed. The analysis is based on a data-driven classification. The results reveal that phonemic transcription has a strong foothold in Finnish EFL textbooks, and that both traditional and newer methods are promoted. However, the textbooks lack explicit teaching materials on intonation, rhythm and connected speech.

Keywords: textbook analysis, pronunciation teaching, English as a foreign language, EFL.

Introduction

During the past few decades, the status of the English language has changed rapidly and dramatically in Finnish society. English is used extensively in the fields of education, media and working life, even in situations where the national languages – Finnish and Swedish – could just as well be used (Leppänen, Nikula & Kääntä, 2008). This situation does not, however, seem to result in good language skills in all areas. A recent study by Lintunen (2004) reveals that even advanced Finnish learners of English make systematic errors in their pronunciation. This leads Lintunen to suggest that not enough attention is paid to pronunciation in school teaching. The claim is supported by Iivonen (2005, p. 46), according to whom Finnish EFL teachers find pronunciation difficult to teach, and they often neglect it, preferring to teach other skills (such as reading and writing) instead. It is also possible that language instruction in Finland is the kind described by Mildner & Tomic (2007): in class, it is impossible to pay attention to individual problems, since teaching groups are big and time is limited. Since teaching pronunciation seems to be difficult for many teachers, good and varied teaching materials are needed to support their work. In general, textbooks play a great role in language classes, but still they are not a major theme within research (Westbury, 1989).

The present study is part of my ongoing doctoral study, in which I investigate English pronunciation teaching practices in Finland. The investigation will address the topic as a series of individual studies, with the aim of gaining an understanding of how English pronunciation is taught in Finnish schools. The present study offers the textbook perspective to the topic, exploring pronunciation teaching materials available in Finnish EFL textbooks. A textbook analysis was taken up because textbooks are an essential part of language teaching. This was demonstrated in a recent study in Finland by Luukka, Pöyhönen, Huhta, Taalas, Tarnanen & Keränen (2008). Their survey revealed that teachers of foreign languages (n=324) most often indicate that they use textbooks and exercise books in their teaching, whereas they seldom use literary texts, newspapers, magazines and Internet materials. In addition, textbooks were viewed as the most important teaching materials by the respondents. (*ibid*., pp. 94–95). Cunningsworth has stated that textbooks can even set teaching objectives, though generally viewed as "good servants but poor masters" (1984, p. 1).

Textbooks and Finnish EFL teaching

In Finnish schools, English is taught as a foreign language. Most pupils start their foreign language studies with English, in basic education class three, at the age of nine. Following the Finnish standards, qualified teachers of English hold an MA degree with English as major or minor

subject. Textbooks that are used are designed for the local context by Finnish publishers, and one could characterise them as all-inclusive general course books: they include texts, exercises, teacher's guides, CDs (and CD-ROMs) for both the teacher and the pupil, websites and video material. Among other things, the teacher's guides offer ready-made course schedules and lesson plans. The contents are supposed to follow the national curricula, the most recent ones relevant to this study being the *National Core Curriculum for Basic Education* (Finnish National Board of Education, 2004) and the *National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools* (Finnish National Board of Education, 2003), which are based on the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (Council of Europe, 2001). In the introductions to the teacher's guides, the course books emphasise the communicative approach to language teaching and the importance of oral skills. These principles are adopted from the curricula.

How to teach pronunciation

Recent literature on English pronunciation teaching has frequently suggested moving away from mechanical production concentrating on individual sounds, and focussing on areas more important for intelligibility: stress, rhythm and intonation (see e.g. Seidlhofer 2001; Celce-Murcia, Brinton & Goodwin 1996). Emphasis is often laid on teaching fluency and accuracy at the same time (Murphy, 1991; Chela-Flores, 2009), and the communicative approach to language teaching, including learner-centred methods, has been suggested also for pronunciation teaching (Morley, 1991). These newer focus areas seem to be closely linked with Jenkins' (2000) claim, according to which 'non-standard' productions of most individual sounds of English do not compromise intelligibility (in English as an International Language communication).

Seidlhofer (2001) sums up pronunciation teaching activities in her suggestion for classroom procedures, which is based on an earlier, extensive work by Dalton & Seidlhofer (1994). Seidlhofer begins her list with the traditional methods of elicited mechanical production (e.g. tongue twisters) and listen and repeat activities. Seidlhofer suggests the often drill-like elicited mechanical production to be transformed into activities where a message must be conveyed in a meaningful context, e.g. peer dictation. She also considers the receptive side of pronunciation and suggests discrimination practice to train the ear for sound contrasts. With reference to mature learners, she recommends methods that rely on the learner's cognition, including explanation and analysis, e.g. phonetic training and giving rules. Awareness-raising questionnaires and learner diaries, for example, are suggested for developing learner autonomy and learning strategies. Learner-centred communication activities and games that focus on a communicative

purpose or outcome are also recommended. Finally, Seidlhofer mentions so-called whole brain activities, i.e. techniques that aim to activate the right brain hemisphere. These may include use of classical music and guided fantasies, for example. (Seidlhofer 2001, pp. 62–64.)

Seidlhofer's proposal includes both traditional and newer methods. Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) present a more detailed proposal, partly overlapping with Seidlhofer (2001); they recommend using visual aids in pronunciation teaching, e.g. sound-colour charts and mirrors. For foreign language learning they also suggest developmental approximation drills, as mentioned in L1 acquisition studies. These drills are based on the order in which L1 English-speaking children acquire producing sounds. Authors also suggest practice of vowel shifts and stress shifts common in orthographically similar words (e.g. *mime–mimic, photograph–photography),* reading aloud and recording learners' productions. (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996, pp. 8–10.) In relation to newer techniques and resources, they (*ibid*., pp. 290–316) recommend using multisensory modes (visual, auditory, tactile, kinaesthetic reinforcement), authentic materials (children's rhymes, comic strips), and techniques from other disciplines (such as drama).

Present study

Aims

Since textbooks seem to have an important position in language teaching (Luukka et al., 2008; Westbury, 1989), analysing them should offer valuable information not only about teaching materials but also teaching practices in classrooms. In this study, I concentrate on the following research question: *What kinds of materials do Finnish EFL textbooks offer for the teaching of pronunciation?* The research question is further divided into two sub questions: (1) *How can the pronunciation teaching materials be classified?,* and (2) *What are the focus areas of the pronunciation teaching materials?* The overall aim of the study is to investigate Finnish EFL teaching materials and discuss them in the light of recent literature in the field. The results offer useful information on the teaching materials to those who work with them: teachers, textbook writers and publishers.

Materials

For this study, I collected research materials from EFL course book series by two major Finnish publishers. The books were published in the period 1999–2007, and are aimed at basic education class three (beginner), basic education class seven (intermediate) and upper secondary school course 1 (advanced). The selected course materials for the beginner and intermediate levels all include separate textbooks and exercise books,

whereas in the advanced-level books, texts and exercises are integrated in one volume. All books include a CD. In addition, all the books come with a teacher's guide, which offers extra teaching materials among other things. In this study I concentrate on these printed materials, and all other extra materials provided by the publisher (videos, CD-ROMs, websites) were excluded. In total, I collected research materials from ten Finnish EFL textbooks and exercise books plus six teacher's guides (Table 1):

Table 1
Finnish EFL course books analysed in the present study

16 Finnish EFL Course Books					
Abbr.	**Name**	**Type**	**Level**	**Publi-sher**	**Year**
STB	Surprise storybook 1	Textbook	Beginner	Otava	2003
SEB	Surprise workbook 1	Exercise book	Beginner	Otava	2001
STG	Surprise opettajan kirja 1	Teacher's guide	Beginner	Otava	2001
WTB	Wow! 3 studybook	Textbook	Beginner	WSOY	2002
WEB	Wow! 3 busy book	Exercise book	Beginner	WSOY	2007
WTG	Wow! 3 opettajan materiaali	Teacher's guide	Beginner	WSOY	2003
TTB	This Way Up texts 1	Textbook	Intermediate	Otava	1999
TEB	This Way Up exercises 1	Exercise book	Intermediate	Otava	1999
TTG	This Way Up teacher's file 1	Teacher's guide	Intermediate	Otava	1999
KTB	Key English 7 courses 1-2 textbook	Textbook	Intermediate	WSOY	2007
KEB	Key English 7 courses 1-2 workbook	Exercise book	Intermediate	WSOY	2007
KTG	Key English 7 courses 1-2 opettajan materiaali	Teacher's guide	Intermediate	WSOY	2002
CC	Culture Café book 1	Course book (texts + exercises)	Advanced	Otava	2002
CCTG	Culture Café teacher's guide 1	Teacher's guide	Advanced	Otava	2003
IT	In Touch course 1	Course book (texts + exercises)	Advanced	WSOY	2007
ITTG	In Touch kurssi 1 opettajan materiaali	Teacher's guide	Advanced	WSOY	2005

The abbreviations for the textbooks used in the leftmost column of Table 1 will henceforth be used when referring to these books in this paper.

Method

The present textbook analysis uses a data-driven classification. I studied the EFL textbooks, exercise books and teacher's guides systematically and collected all the materials I judged as being connected with pronunciation and which met the following criteria:

- they require oral production of English,
- the International Phonetic Alphabet is used, or
- they are otherwise related to pronunciation and oral production.

This was necessary because one activity could include different subtasks, and therefore could not be handled as one. The 1803 cases that met the above criteria were divided into pronunciation-specific materials (829 cases) and other materials suitable for pronunciation teaching (974 cases), based on whether or not the materials explicitly directed the learner's focus towards pronunciation. In the present study I concentrated uniquely on the pronunciation-specific material. The 829 cases of pronunciation-specific materials were classified into the following eight categories, in order to determine the relative frequency of occurrence of each category in EFL course books:

1. phonetic training
2. read aloud
3. listen and repeat
4. rhyme & verse
5. rules & instructions
6. awareness-raising activities
7. spelling & dictation
8. ear training

Each of these categories of pronunciation-specific materials is discussed in more detail using examples from the course books.

Results

The eight categories are discussed in descending order, starting with phonetic training materials (the most common) and ending with ear training materials (the least common), as shown in Table 2:

Table 2 Frequency of occurrence of materials in each category, by % of 829 instances of pronunciation-specific materials		
1.	phonetic training	33%
2.	read aloud	29%
3.	listen and repeat	18%
4.	rhyme & verse	8%
5.	rules & instructions	4%
6.	awareness-raising activities	4%
7.	spelling & dictation	3%
8.	ear training	2%

In the examples, all the English translations of the Finnish expressions are mine.

Phonetic training

The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is extensively used in Finnish EFL course books. The symbols are introduced in sections of their own, e.g. in the back of the book, and words in most vocabularies and word lists are also given in phonemic script. When an exercise introduces new words, they are sometimes given in phonemic script to help the learner. The books include exercises in both writing and deciphering phonemic script, but deciphering tasks are more common. These include reading aloud text written in phonemic script or writing it in normal orthographic symbols (e.g. KEB, p. 15). In addition, there is a crossword puzzle with hints in phonemic script (SEB, p. 96), and different matching tasks: phonemic script with written word, phonemic script with picture and phonetic symbol with the word which contains it, as shown in Example 1:

Example 1
Matching sound with word that contains it

Mieti, kuinka seuraavat sanat äännetään. Rastita sanoista ne, joissa on [ŋ]-äänne. ('Consider how the following words are pronounced. Tick the words that contain the ŋ-sound.')
□ nice □ green □ long □ eight □ strong □ song □ night □ England □ English

(*Surprise 1 workbook,* p. 69)

In the writing tasks, learners are asked to transcribe either given words (TEB, p. 55) or words of their own choice and let their partner decipher them (TEB, p. 14). Concentrating on physical articulation, learners are

encouraged to feel voicing as vibration in their throats when pronouncing voiced stop consonants (e.g. CC, p. 18), an exercise which Celce-Murcia et al. classify as *tactile reinforcement* (1996, p. 296). Learners are also told to observe aspiration as air flow by holding a sheet of paper in front of their mouths when pronouncing aspirated stop consonants (e.g. WTG, p. 33). Overall, the proportion of phonetic training in the pronunciation-specific teaching materials analysed in this study was 33 %.

Reading aloud

In this study, reading aloud is seen as pronunciation-specific activity if it does not have an obvious communicative function. Hence, reading aloud ready-made questions from the book, for example, are not included in this category. Reading aloud merely for the sake of pronunciation is quite common in the analysed course books: these activities make up 29 % of the pronunciation-specific material. They involve reading single words, sentences, stories and dialogues, depending on the level at which the book is aimed. A partner is always involved, even though the reading in these activities does not serve a communicative purpose; words are read to a partner, longer text are read taking turns with a partner sentence by sentence, and dialogues are naturally read together. Some dialogues are developed into drama by encouraging the learners to act out the dialogue (e.g. IT, p. 62). Also comic strips function as sources for dialogues (e.g. WEB, p. 134), and reading single words aloud are common tasks in board games printed in books for beginners (e.g. WEB, p. 149). Playing with one's tone of voice is encouraged by reading a text in different moods (e.g. STG, p. 64).

Listen and repeat

Listen and repeat exercises are all-time favourites in language teaching. My data includes various types of these traditional imitation tasks, and they make out 18 % of all specific pronunciation teaching materials in the studied course books. In the simplest types of these activities, learners are asked to imitate separate words or sentences. The activities are often related to the teaching of vocabulary. Even longer word lists and glossaries are used in listen and repeat exercises. It is common for such an imitation exercise to be followed with another task, e.g. practising the pronunciation with a partner (e.g. WEB, p. 24). A comic strip dialogue can also function as material for a listen and repeat activity (WEB, p. 94). For teaching focussed on segments, the books offer listen and repeat exercises on minimal pairs (e.g. TEB, p. 54) and tongue twisters. Some of the tongue twisters concentrate on contrasts between two phonemes with a set of three tongue twisters: the first concentrating on practicing the first phoneme, the second concentrating on

the second phoneme, and the third including practice on both phonemes, as Example 2 shows:

Example 2
Tongue twisters concentrating on the v–w distinction

V: Vic the vet loves Vonda the village vocalist and vice versa.
W: Willy wiped his wet wellies with Wally's new white waistcoat.
V/W: Vince viewed war videos while waiting for Wanda's Volvo to arrive.

(*In Touch book 1,* p. 56)

The pronunciation model in the imitation activities is mainly provided by speakers on a CD related to the course book.

Rhyme and verse

Rhyme is made use of in 8 % of the specific pronunciation teaching materials in the studied course books. Example 3 shows one way in which rhyme is presented in the form of poems, children's rhymes and rhyme activities:

Example 3
Practice on rhymes combined with phonetic training

Etsi sanoille pari loppusointujen perusteella. Miten se kirjoitetaan foneettisesti? ('Find a rhyming word. How is it written phonetically?')

sheep	_____	[ ]	cheap
half	_____	[ ]	bite
shoe	_____	[ ]	chew
feel	_____	[ ]	comb
dare	_____	[ ]	meal
four	_____	[ ]	fort
taught	_____	[ ]	hour
knight	_____	[ ]	their
power	_____	[ ]	jaw
home	_____	[ ]	weight
great	_____	[ ]	laugh

(*This Way Up exercises 1,* p. 55)

This example combines a rhyme activity with phonetic training. Some of the poems and children's rhymes come with a task, most often encouraging learners to read them aloud; others are simply provided in the book and on the CD, leaving it up to the teacher to decide how to use them

in class. They can also be performed with a partner or even in front of the whole class after they are learnt by heart. Another technique in reading children's rhymes is to repeat them time after time, faster and faster. In addition, rhyming words are used in activities in which learners fill-in the gaps in a rhyme, continue lists with rhyming words or match words that rhyme (pictures with written words).

Rules and instructions

Rules and instructions make up 4 % of the pronunciation-specific material. Rules are given on how to pronounce present simple endings *–s* and *–es*, as in Example 4:

Example 4
Pronunciation of present simple endings

1. Loppu **–s** äännetään yleensä [z]:
('Ending –s is usually pronounced [z]:')
comes [z] [kʌmz] **does** [z] [dʌz, (painoton ('unstressed')) dz]

2. [f], [k], [p] ja [t] jälkeen **–s** ääntyy [s]:
('After [f], [k], [p] and [t] ending –s is pronounced [s]:')
coughs [s] [kɔfs] **stops** [s] [stɔps]
looks [s] [luks] **cuts** [s] [kʌts]

3. **–es-**pääte ääntyy [iz]:
('Ending –es is pronounced [iz]:')
changes [iz] [tʃeindʒiz] **pushes** [iz] [puʃiz]

(*In Touch course 1,* p. 93)

Rules for pronouncing past tense *–ed* are also dealt with, as its pronunciation varies according to the phonological context (e.g. TTG, p. 199). Instructions on voicing and aspiration of English stops are given in the course books (e.g. WTG, p. 33). This is important because Finnish lacks aspiration (Morris-Wilson 1992, p. 90) and there is traditionally no voicing distinction in stop consonants in native Finnish words (Suomi, Toivanen & Ylitalo 2008, p. 38). Beginners are also given instructions on how to make one-word questions with the help of rising intonation (e.g. WTG, p. 48). Information on linking-r (WEB, p. 102), homophones *there, their, they're* (TEB, p. 175), choice of the indefinite article *a/an* (e.g. KTB, p. 140), and word stress (see further, Example 6) is also provided in the course books.

Awareness-raising activities

Finnish EFL course books include some awareness-raising activities that focus on pronunciation. These activities make up 4 % of the pronunciation-specific teaching materials in the course books, and some broach the subject of spoken English speech varieties (e.g. SEB, p. 9), as in Example 5:

Example 5
Extract from awareness-raising materials on language learning habits

Read the following language learning habits. Place a tick next to the ones which describe what you do.
… 10. Don't speak too much because I don't like my accent.

Habits that might be unhelpful in the long run

… 10. There is nothing wrong with speaking English with an accent! Of course, it is important to pronounce words so that others can understand you, but don't let your accent stop you from communicating.

(*Culture Café book 1,* pp. 5–6)

Learning strategies are also promoted in the Finnish EFL course books by awareness-raising sections and exercises. These discuss different learner modes and learning styles, as well as language learning habits, and challenge learners to find ways of learning that work for them. Many of the awareness-raising sections emphasise informal learning environments and encourage learners to explore language learning possibilities outside the classroom (e.g. identifying accents of singers, CC, p. 90). Course books also include self-evaluation sheets. Such sheets encourage learners to reflect on their skills, progress and working habits related to pronunciation (e.g. KEB, p. 160).

Spelling and dictation

Peer spelling and dictation activities are not frequent in Finnish EFL textbooks. They make up 3 % of the pronunciation-specific materials offered by the selected course books. Spelling exercises are used to teach the spelling of words with difficult letter-to-phoneme correspondence or in order to practise the useful skill of spelling one's name or other important information. In such peer dictation activities separate words, minimal pairs and mathematical problems are dictated (TEB, p. 10; cf. Gilbert 1993, p. 109). In my data, there are also peer dictation activities performed as lip-reading (called *mouthing* in Celce-Murcia et al. 1996, 309–310; e.g. WTG,

p. 36). In these activities, the dictation is done silently, by mere movements of the mouth, and the "listener" reads the "speaker's" lips and writes down the message. In addition, whispering is also used (WEB, p. 91).

Ear training

Ear training and the teaching of the IPA are tied together to a great extent in the course books. Hence, the activities concentrate mainly on discriminating segments. For example, a discrimination task between two phonemes is preceded by an introduction to the phonemes in question by presenting example words and the relevant phonetic symbols. In the exercise, the learners hear a set of words and their task is to indicate which of the given, alternative sounds they hear in them (e.g. SEB, p. 40). The words can be played from the CD. In a variation of this exercise type, the words that the learners hear from the CD are also printed in the book, and the task is to match phonemes with words in which they occur (e.g. SEB, p. 63). Past tense verb ending *-ed*, the pronunciation of which varies according to the ending's phonological context, is also practised in discrimination exercises with the alternatives printed in the book. Discrimination practice on suprasegmental level takes place in the form of exercises where the learners have to indicate correct word stress, as in Example 6:

Example 6
Word stress practice

The words below have all appeared in this unit. First underline the main stress in each word, and then listen to the tape to check your answers.
1 improve 2 success 3 ambition 4 develop 5 photographer 6 advertising 7 experience 8 enjoy 9 important 10 predict 11 politician 12 suggest 13 personal 14 personality 15 congratulations

Now practise saying the words with your partner.

(*In Touch course 1,* p. 17)

In Finnish, the stress is always placed on the first syllable of a word. In English, the stress can come at the beginning, in the middle or at the end.

Word stress may cause difficulties to Finns, since it is not distinctive in Finnish (Suomi et al. 2008, p. 39). Letter-to-sound correspondence is addressed in a listening activity, in which the task is to identify silent letters, such as <k> in *know* (IT, p. 35). All in all, ear training represents only 2 % of the teaching materials focussing on pronunciation.

Discussion

The results suggest that the majority of the pronunciation teaching activities in Finnish EFL textbooks are traditional. The focus areas revealed by the classification are phonetic training (33 %), reading aloud (29 %) and listen and repeat (18 %). Tongue twisters and practice on minimal pairs, which are also considered traditional teaching methods (Celce-Murcia et al. 1996, pp. 8–9), occur within these categories. However, newer ideas are also adopted: authentic materials such as children's rhymes and comic strips are included in the exercises, and techniques from theatre arts are also used, e.g. lip-reading (*ibid.*, pp. 309–310). Overall, the pronunciation activities are designed to be learner-centred, where the learners act as active doers (Morley, 1991), and some encourage metalinguistic processing (awareness-raising activities, e.g. learning strategies). The extensive use of phonemic script and materials for the teaching of the IPA may be explained by the fact that transcription as a learning tool is considered helpful to Finnish learners in particular (Lintunen 2004, 2005): L1 speakers of Finnish are used to a close letter-to-phoneme correspondence, since Finnish orthography is almost 100 % phonemic (Suomi et al. 2008, p. 141). As the English spelling system is far from phonemic, transcription can prevent mispronunciations caused by spelling (Wells, 1996).

The teaching materials can be seen as a package which attempts to train learners' productive, receptive and theoretical skills. In my data, the productive side is emphasised, but the other two areas are also represented. All three skills are intertwined and support each other, and the activities encourage the combination of skills. However, many of the activity types listed in recent literature in the field are missing from the studied course books. Communication activities and games concentrating specifically on pronunciation (Seidlhofer 2001, p. 63) are non-existent in my data, and neither visual aids nor recordings of learners' production (Celce-Murcia et al. 1996, pp. 9–10) are included or recommended. No developmental approximation drills (Celce-Murcia et al. 1996, p. 9) or so-called whole brain activities (Seidlhofer 2001, p. 63) are included, so techniques derived from first language acquisition studies and from suggestopedia have not been adopted in Finnish EFL course books. Using multisensory modes in pronunciation teaching is not frequently promoted in the course books; of the suggested visual, auditory, tactile and kinaesthetic reinforcement (Celce-Murcia et al. 1996, pp. 295–299), only tactile reinforcement is present.

In a broader sense, these Finnish EFL course books exclude explicit teaching materials on intonation, rhythm and connected speech, even though rising intonation of one-word questions and linking-r are briefly dealt with. This finding shows that the recommendations included in recent literature in the field (e.g. Seidlhofer 2001; Celce-Murcia et al., 1996) do

not seem to have been fully taken into account. Although teachers can use existing course-book materials, such as reading aloud activities or any of the more general oral exercises that were excluded from this study, to draw learners' attention to intonation, rhythm and connected speech, the lack of explicit theoretical information and activities in these areas is a shortcoming. In the end, however, it is always up to the teacher to decide what materials they use in their teaching, and how. This is the topic of an ongoing study, in which I approach English pronunciation teaching by observing the teaching practices of Finnish EFL teachers.

Conclusion

In this textbook analysis, 16 Finnish EFL textbooks, exercise books and teacher's guides were analysed in order to find out what kind of pronunciation teaching materials they offer. Only pronunciation-specific materials were chosen for closer examination, and more general oral activities were excluded. In the studied course books, 829 cases were found that meet the criterion for pronunciation-specific teaching material. This data was classified into eight categories using a data-driven classification: (1) phonetic training, (2) read aloud, (3) listen and repeat, (4) rhyme and verse, (5) rules and instructions, (6) awareness-raising activities, (7) spelling and dictation, and (8) ear training. The main focus of the pronunciation teaching materials were found to be phonetic training (33 %), read aloud (29 %) and listen and repeat (18 %). The other categories are in a clear minority (2–8 %). The study reveals that Finnish textbook writers use phonemic transcription to a great extent. Alongside the traditional pronunciation activities, newer techniques such as authentic materials and awareness-raising activities are present in the course books. However, the selected books almost entirely lack explicit exercises on intonation, rhythm and connected speech, which seems to speak against both the communicative goals expressed in the curricula and the ideas in the recent writing about recommended practices in pronunciation teaching.

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II

THE ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION TEACHING IN EUROPE SURVEY: FINLAND

by

Elina Tergujeff 2012

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The English Pronunciation Teaching in Europe Survey: Finland

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This paper reports on the findings of the English Pronunciation Teaching in Europe Survey (EPTiES)[1], concentrating on responses from EFL teachers working in Finland (n=103). The survey was designed to gain research-based information about the state of English pronunciation teaching in European teaching contexts, and it included questions related to teacher training, teaching materials and methods, assessment of pronunciation, status of pronunciation teaching, and pronunciation model, among other things. These issues are now addressed based on the data provided by the Finnish respondents.

Keywords: pronunciation teaching, survey, English as a foreign language, EFL, teacher training, teaching materials, pronunciation assessment, pronunciation model

1 Introduction

In Finland, foreign language teaching has a strong emphasis on oral skills. Despite the emphasis, there has been speculation about a lack of specific pronunciation teaching at least in English language teaching (Lintunen 2004: 215). Research-based information about the topic has not been available except for few recent publications (Lintunen 2004; Tergujeff et al. 2011; Tergujeff 2012), most of which have concentrated on learners' reflections over the teaching they have received during their school years. Wider mappings of pronunciation teaching in Finland have not been conducted. World-wide, English pronunciation teaching has mainly been studied in English as a second language (ESL) settings: research has been conducted e.g. in Canada (Breitkreuz et al. 2001; Foote et al. 2011), the USA (Murphy 1997), Australia (Macdonald 2002), and Great Britain (Bradford & Kenworthy 1991; Burgess & Spencer 2000).

In Europe, the shared interest in gaining research-based information about English pronunciation teaching practices and teacher attitudes also in English as a foreign language (EFL) settings led to a joint project between researchers from ten countries. The product of this collaboration was the English Pronunciation Teaching in Europe Survey (EPTiES), the selected results of which are presented in Henderson et al. (2012). In this collaboration, the author acted as representative of Finland by participating in designing the online questionnaire,

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and gathering and analysing the data from Finland. This paper presents selected results obtained from the Finnish data, aiming to offer a cross-section of issues around English pronunciation teaching in Finland. The focus is on topics related to teacher training, teaching materials and methods, assessment of pronunciation, status of pronunciation teaching, and the pronunciation model.

What is known about English pronunciation teaching in present-day Finland so far is from the classroom observations in Tergujeff (2012), and learner surveys in Lintunen (2004: 183–188) and Tergujeff et al. (2011). These previous studies suggest that the teaching is somewhat teacher-centred, but pragmatic in a sense that avoiding communication breakdown seems to be a priority for teachers. Pronunciation practice is mainly done at the segmental level, and training of intonation and rhythm is quite rare. From a learners' viewpoint, using phonetic symbols in teaching English pronunciation is not common: in Lintunen's (2004: 187) survey, first-year university students of English were asked whether they had been taught how to read transcription symbols at school, and as many as 50.0% of the respondents (n=108) said symbols had not been taught at all. Only 5.6% were of the opinion that *all* of the relevant symbols had been taught. The survey by Tergujeff et al. (2011) was also aimed at university students (n=207), and according to the results, 1% of the respondents had *often* received teaching of phonetic script, 19% *sometimes*, 55% *rarely*, and 25% *never*. In this study it was not specified whether the learners had been taught to recognise or write phonetic symbols; the respondents simply indicated how often the teaching they had received had made use of phonetic symbols. However, Finnish EFL textbooks have a strong emphasis on phonetic training (Tergujeff 2010). The pronunciation model in the textbooks is mainly British Received Pronunciation (RP) (in a broad sense, following Wells 2008: xix), but other varieties (native and non-native) are also introduced (Tergujeff 2009; Kopperoinen 2011).

This paper first introduces the English Pronunciation Teaching in Europe Survey (EPTiES) project and its data gathering in Finland. In addition, some background information about the Finnish respondents is given before the results section. Results are discussed as they are presented, and a short summary and the concluding remarks are given at the end of the paper.

2 The survey

The EPTiES project is a collaborative effort by a group of researchers from all over Europe. Shared interest in gaining more information about English pronunciation teaching practices and teacher attitudes in Europe led to the designing of an online survey, which was open from February 2010 through September 2011. It consisted of 57 questions, some of which were formulated to reflect specific national contexts. The survey was administered using LimeSurvey. The researchers and their contacts invited teachers of English from their own country to participate. In Finland, participants were invited by the author first by an invitation at the website of The Association of Teachers of English in Finland and through the mailing lists of local member associations of The Federation of Foreign Language Teachers in Finland (SUKOL). To attract more participants, the schools of ten randomly chosen municipalities were contacted directly. In total, the survey attracted 843 respondents from 31

European countries. Data provided by participants from Finland were analysed by the author with the help of LimeSurvey, SPSS version 19 and Microsoft Excel.

The survey attracted 103 predominantly female (95.1%) respondents from Finland. Not all of them completed the survey, but all responses are considered for those parts of the questionnaire that were filled in. Almost all the respondents are non-native (99.0%) speakers of English, and teach English in the public (92.2%) sector. The respondents are highly educated: 94.1% had finished at least an M.A. degree. In Finland, qualified EFL subject teachers hold an M.A. degree in English with a teacher training programme/didactics as a minor subject in the degree. However, not all respondents meet the formal qualifications of an EFL teacher, which is fairly representative of the situation in Finnish schools. Temporary and part-time teaching posts are often taken by teachers without full formal qualifications, having still finished a B.A. degree like the formally unqualified teachers that participated in the present study. Age of the respondents varies from 24 to 67, with an average of 44.6 years. They have teaching experience from 0 to 44 years, and 15.9 years on average.

3 Results and discussion

3.1 Teaching context and exposure to English

The respondents came quite evenly from different teaching contexts, i.e. primary (29.4%), lower secondary (31.4%), and upper secondary (27.5%) level. Only a few respondents indicated to teach in other contexts (vocational school, university, other). When asked about their learners' native language, almost all (99.0%) respondents reported having L1 Finnish-speakers as learners. However, 22.3% of the respondents listed native languages in addition to Finnish. These languages include Swedish (the second national language of Finland) and typical immigrant languages such as Russian, Somali and Estonian.

The respondents (n=96) indicated that their learners are exposed to English language in their daily environment. TV programmes were said to be subtitled by 94.8% of the respondents. Even higher percentage of respondents (97.9%) indicated that foreign language films are subtitled in cinemas. This certainly holds true: subtitling is the main means of translation for TV and cinema in Finland. Occasional voice-overs do occur, but dubbing is not practised with the exception of children's programmes and films.

Whether the learners watch English-language news channels such as the BBC World was unknown to 39.6% of the respondents, whereas 38.5% indicated that *some* do. Only 6.3% answered with a definite *yes.* Table 1 below presents the proportion of the respondents who estimated that their learners are *frequently* or *sometimes* exposed to English via certain media. It appears that according to teachers, being frequently exposed to English via subtitled TV programmes, subtitled films in cinemas and online resources is much more common than being exposed to English through live or phone interactions, or radio programmes.

Table 1. Proportion of teachers who estimate their learners are *frequently* or *sometimes* exposed to English through different media.

learners are exposed to English via	frequently	sometimes
subtitled TV programmes (n=96)	95.8%	2.1%
subtitled films in the cinema (n=96)	54.2%	33.3%
online resources (n=95)	32.6%	41.1%
live interactions with NSs or NNSs (n=95)	7.4%	44.2%
radio programmes (n=96)	7.3%	24.0%
phone interactions (n=95)	4.2%	13.7%

As to whether the learners have opportunities to practise English outside the classroom, 62.5% replied *yes* whereas 34.4% replied *some* (n=96). Most of the respondents replied in the negative (62.5%) or were unaware (27.1%) of whether their learners receive private tuition outside their regular classroom. There is not much demand for private language schools in Finland, since public education offers good opportunities for language learning. Besides studying the second national language (Swedish or Finnish), it is obligatory to study at least one foreign language. If a learner goes through the educational system until graduation from upper secondary school, in principle he or she has an opportunity to study up to five languages other than the mother tongue, depending on the school. (See Kangasvieri et al. 2011 for language study options in Finnish basic education; National core curriculum for upper secondary schools 2003: 108 indicates that one extra foreign language can be studied as an elective in upper secondary school.) In this light, it is understandable that taking lessons at private language schools is not popular among children and teenagers in Finland, and such language schools do not even exist in great numbers.

The questions related to exposure to English reveal that according to the teachers, Finnish EFL learners are frequently exposed to English in their daily environment. The exposure seems more likely to happen via television, films and the Internet than via personal contacts with other speakers, whether native speakers (NSs) or non-native speakers (NNSs) of English. Television and films offer a great deal of exposure compared to Central European countries, for example, because dubbing is generally not practised in Finland. In general, English is strongly present in the Finnish society (e.g. education, working life, leisure activities, media) despite the fact that it has no official status, and what is more, Finns have positive attitudes towards English (see Leppänen et al. 2011). English is the most commonly studied foreign language in the educational system: 99.6% of all upper secondary school graduates in 2009 had studied English, and begun these studies at the primary level (Kumpulainen 2010: 88–89), usually on the third grade at the age of nine. On the negative side, in recent years the trend has been for the learners to choose fewer elective language studies (Sajavaara et al. 2007; Kangasvieri et al. 2011), and this is partly the result of the popularity of English.

3.2 Teacher training

The respondents were also asked to evaluate the teacher training they received, particularly in regards to training in how to teach English pronunciation. The section included three questions, the first of which dealt with an overall evaluation of the training on a five-point scale (1 = extremely poor, 5 = excellent). On average, the respondents evaluated their training as 3.16 (n=81). The most frequent response was 4 (32.1%), but the whole scale was used: 16.0 % of the respondents evaluated their training as *extremely poor,* whereas 13.6% said it had been *excellent.*

Here it was found worth considering whether novice teachers and highly experienced teachers evaluate their teacher training differently. The assumption behind this is that novice teachers have gone through the training recently, whereas the highly experienced teachers received their teaching even decades earlier, and in between the training and emphases of it may have changed. For the comparison, participants were divided into age groups, and the average rating for teacher training was calculated for the youngest (up to 30-year-olds) and the oldest (from 60-year-olds) age group. Indeed, the comparison gives interesting results: the youngest age group (n=10) evaluates the training they received as 2.30 on average, whereas the oldest age group (n=10) give an average rating of 3.90. As this suggests a correlation between respondents' age and their evaluation of teacher training, these items were tested for Spearman's correlation. The correlation was found to be 0.201, $p<0.072$, which signifies suggestive statistical significance. With more data this finding could have been significant.

These results give grounds to speculate that with respect to how to teach English pronunciation, teacher training in Finland may have changed for the worse. This may be connected with at least three issues: firstly, the rise of English as a global language, secondly, the rise of the communicative approach to language teaching, and thirdly, the overall decrease of the teaching of phonetics in Finnish universities. When the oldest age group went through teacher training in the 1970s, the pronunciation model for English was RP and everyone was expected to strive for that. In general, attitudes towards other varieties and accented speech were not as positive as nowadays, where the English language is extensively used as a lingua franca by non-native speakers. Recently, confusion about which model to choose for teaching may even have caused unease and reluctance in dealing with the issue in teacher training. With the rise of communicative language teaching (CLT) from the 1970s, most of the traditional pronunciation teaching methods were rejected as incompatible with teaching language as communication (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010: 11), and pronunciation teaching was generally neglected (see Fraser 2000: 33). Also, as emphasis may have changed from accuracy to fluency, the departments may have moved into integrated pronunciation teaching, and the names of units and courses may also have changed from including straightforward *pronunciation* to e.g. *oral skills and communication.* Thus, the youngest age group might not think they have received extensive pronunciation-specific teaching even if the courses have included it. It should also be noted that as decades have passed since the teacher training of the oldest age group, the respondents may not remember the

details very clearly and their recollections may sometimes be influenced by a sense of nostalgia.

In an open-ended question, the respondents described how much training they had received. Here it became clear that the respondents had generally received a substantial amount of training *in their own English pronunciation* but little in how to teach it. When they were asked to describe the content and/or style of the training, the respondents listed very traditional pronunciation teaching methods: phonetics and transcription, repetition and drills, discussion exercises, reading aloud, and listening tasks. Training in the language laboratory was mentioned frequently, and some respondents mentioned a theoretical orientation, or that the training consisted mainly of lectures. In the Finnish educational system, foreign language teachers are trained at departments of foreign languages studying for an M.A. degree in the language(s) they intend to teach. Didactics and teacher training offered by departments of education are included in their degree as a minor. In other words, teacher education is not a single unit but consists of two parts. In a system like this it is essential that both substance and didactics are addressed properly, but in regards to English pronunciation and the teaching of it, this does not seem to be the case in Finland based on the present study.

The suggestive statistical significance found between the respondents' age and rating of their teacher training calls for further research on how pronunciation is dealt with in teacher training at present and how it has changed over the years due to curriculum developments in teacher training programmes. On the whole, the respondents' answers to the questions about teacher training give the impression that EFL teachers in Finland are well trained in their own pronunciation, but they lack training in how to teach pronunciation to learners. This can be seen as a major shortcoming, because in order to teach any skill to learners, having the skill yourself is not sufficient but pedagogical know-how is of course needed as well (Burgess & Spencer 2000).

3.3 Status of English pronunciation teaching

In the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to evaluate the importance of English compared to other languages and the importance of pronunciation in relation to other language skills. In the same section they were asked how much of their teaching time they devote to teaching pronunciation. Answers to these questions imply that pronunciation is seen as an important skill but not much time is spent on teaching it. The amount of pronunciation teaching was also found little in a previous study: in four case studies, classroom observations of 32 EFL lessons in Finland revealed that the teachers participating in the study (n=4) referred to pronunciation 3.5 times per lesson on average (corrected, pointed out pronunciation, had the learners do a pronunciation task). The average varied between the teachers from 0.4 to 7.8. (Tergujeff 2012.)

In the present study, the importance of English was rated extremely high on a five-point scale (1 = not important at all, 5 = extremely important): 4.65 (n=78) on average. However, the importance of pronunciation in relation to other language skills was rated lower but still relatively important: 3.90 on average (1 = the least important, 5 = the most important). The time devoted and the time teachers would like to devote to pronunciation teaching per week seem to be

relatively in balance. However, it seems that the teachers would like to devote a little more time to teaching pronunciation than they currently do. The majority of the respondents (84.8%, n=92) devote *up to 25%* of their teaching time to pronunciation. There are respondents who indicated that they do not devote time to pronunciation at all (3.3%), but also respondents who devote *up to 50%* (7.6%) or even *up to 75%* (4.4%). All the respondents (n=92) would like to devote *up to 25%* (66.3%) or more of their teaching time to pronunciation, and quite a few *up to 50%* (28.3%).

Table 2. Time devoted to teaching pronunciation per week as indicated by teachers, and time they would like to devote to teaching pronunciation (n=92).

teaching time	devote to pronunciation	would like to devote to pronunciation
0%	3.3%	0.0%
up to 25%	84.8%	66.3%
up to 50%	7.6%	28.3%
up to 75%	4.4%	3.3%
more than 75%	0.0%	2.2%

The formulation of the question was somewhat unsuccessful because the options did not offer enough scope for precision. For example, *up to 25%* was also chosen by the potential respondents who only devote one per cent of their teaching time to teaching pronunciation. Narrower categories (such as used in Foote et al. 2011) would have given more exact information, and the results may have indicated that there are also very small amounts of pronunciation teaching.

3.4 Pronunciation teaching materials

When it comes to teaching materials, the respondents' answers indicate a preference for traditional, printed materials over online materials. In the context of Finland, there is research-based information about how extensively textbooks are used in the teaching of foreign languages and mother tongue (Luukka et al. 2008), but it is not known how teachers use the textbooks and how much the textbooks determine the contents of teaching. The present study also suggests that textbooks are widely used by EFL teachers in Finland: 97.8% of the respondents indicated that they use textbooks, whereas all other teaching materials are used by a smaller proportion of the respondents (see Table 3 below). However, using websites (whether intended or not particularly intended for language learning) seems to be more common according to the present study than according to the survey of Luukka and colleagues (ibid.). Whereas 53% of the respondents (foreign language teachers, n=324) in Luukka et al. (ibid.: 95) claim to use web-based teaching materials in their teaching *often* or *sometimes*, in the present study 80.9% claim to use websites intended for language learning. Other websites are used *often* or *sometimes* by 43% of Luukka et al.'s respondents (ibid.), whereas the proportion of respondents using comparable materials in the present study is 83.3%.

Table 3. Use of different teaching materials as indicated by teachers.

teaching material	**used by**
textbooks (n=90)	97.8%
CDs (n=90)	96.7%
dictionaries (n=90)	95.6%
DVDs (n=90)	85.6%
websites not intended for language learning (n=90)	83.3%
websites intended for language learning (n=89)	80.9%
videos (n=90)	60.0%
pre-existing online modules or courses (n=89)	44.9%
social networking sites (n=90)	34.4%
cassettes (n=89)	33.7%
podcasts (n=89)	23.6%
blogs (n=89)	19.1%
forums (n=89)	19.1%
mailing lists (n=89)	13.5%
virtual world environments (n=89)	2.2%

Comparing the results of the present study with Luukka et al. (ibid.) gives reason to believe that in just a few years at the end of the 2000s, the use of websites in the teaching of English has increased (the majority of Luukka and colleagues' respondents were EFL teachers). This can be seen as development towards the use of a wider range of teaching materials in the perhaps textbook-centred teaching tradition in Finland. An interesting demonstration of the textbook-centredness of foreign language teaching in Finland are the learner beliefs according to which one learns to *speak* English by *reading books* (Aro 2009).

Even if textbooks are still the most commonly used source of teaching materials, the present study shows that a variety of sources are used by many teachers. The results suggest that using websites in teaching English has increased, and moreover, using websites that are not particularly intended for language learning are used by even more teachers than language learning websites. This raises an extremely interesting question about what type of websites are used by EFL teachers and *how.*

3.5 Use of language laboratory and sound players

When asked about having access to a separate language laboratory, only 37.8% (n=90) responded *yes,* meaning the following question about language laboratory type was answered by a relatively small sample of the respondents (n=34). Of those having access to a separate language laboratory, 50.0% have a cassette-operated laboratory, whereas 67.7% have a digital one and 55.9% a multimedia language laboratory. More than one option could be chosen here. Portable sound players are accessed by 76.7% of the respondents (n=90). Of these (n=69), 98.6% have access to a CD player, 66.7% have access to tape players, and 49.3% to digital sound players.

How frequently the respondents use a separate language laboratory and portable sound players is demonstrated in Table 4. Respondents who have the possibility to use a language laboratory seem to use it, but many of them not to a great extent. The ones who stated earlier that they do not have access to a language laboratory (62.2%) obviously answered *never* (62.2%) to this question. Only 13.3% use a language laboratory *frequently*. Portable sound players are used *frequently* by 70.0% of the respondents (n=90), whereas 21.1% indicated *never* using them. The majority (77.8%) of the respondents (n=90) feel they have sufficient access to technical help.

Table 4. Use of language lab and portable sound players as indicated by teachers (n=90).

how often do you use	language laboratory	portable sound players
frequently	13.3%	70.0%
sometimes	12.2%	2.2%
rarely	12.2%	6.7%
never	62.2%	21.1%

When asked about the use of a language laboratory, the respondents were not asked to specify what they use the laboratory for. As the Finnish matriculation examination taken by the candidates after finishing upper secondary school includes a listening comprehension test but no obligatory test on oral production (The Finnish Matriculation Examination; a separate oral skills test may be taken as part of a voluntary course focussing on oral language skills), it may be that the upper secondary school teachers mainly use the language laboratory for listening tasks instead of production activities.

To conclude, working in the language laboratory does not seem very common, and in fact not that many of the respondents have access to a separate language laboratory. However, the lack of a separate language laboratory is not necessarily considered a shortcoming, because varied pronunciation teaching can be given in a regular classroom. On one hand, though, recording learners' speech requires extra equipment (e.g. portable audio recorders) under regular classroom conditions, and the benefit of being able to record a whole class simultaneously (as in a language laboratory) is lost. On the other hand, working in a classroom setting instead of a language laboratory may help to create more authentic speaking activities and encourage the teacher to apply communicative teaching techniques.

3.6 Teaching phonetic symbols

It seems the majority of the teachers (n=92) in the present study do include teaching learners to recognise phonetic symbols in their objectives, whereas teaching learners to write them is not so common. When these things were asked in the survey, there were three alternative answers: *yes, no,* and *some of the symbols.* The frequencies are presented in Table 5 below. There is a major difference between the proportion of teachers teaching learners to recognise phonetic symbols and teachers teaching learners to write them. Whereas 72.8% of the respondents indicated that they teach their learners to recognise the

symbols, only 5.4% teach to write them. Teaching to recognise and write *some of them* was almost equally common (22.8% and 17.4%).

Table 5. Teaching phonetic symbols as indicated by teachers (n=92).

Do you teach phonetic symbols?	to recognise	to write
yes	72.8%	5.4%
no	4.4%	77.2%
some of them	22.8%	17.4%

The respondents of the present survey were also asked to explain why they choose or choose not to teach phonetic symbols. An analysis of these open-ended questions reveals a variety of reasons for teaching the recognition and/or the writing of symbols. Most of the comments (n=75) about teaching to recognise phonetic symbols were very positive, as can be expected based on the fact that 72.8% of the respondents indicated this is in their objectives. Among the most frequent comments were that knowing how to read the symbols helps the learners in their pronunciation, and that knowing the symbols helps them to learn on their own, e.g. with the help of dictionaries. Also, it was frequently mentioned as *essential* in language learning. The respondents also seem to think that at least some of the learners are interested in learning the symbols and even find studying them fun. In addition, they find it helps the learners to distinguish written and spoken language, e.g. *"To aid in understanding the difference between written and spoken language"* (#773, Q34).

Teaching learners to recognise phonetic symbols was also motivated by an indication that EFL textbooks introduce the symbols and provide material for practising the symbols, e.g. *"The phonetic symbols are included in our study book in every chapter"* (#618, Q34). The strong foothold of phonetic symbols in Finnish EFL textbooks was discovered in a previous study (Tergujeff 2010), and the respondents' comments here give grounds to speculate that textbooks do guide teaching practices.

Those who did not comment on the reasons why they teach their learners to recognise phonetic symbols, concentrated on justifying why they do not teach them. Quite a few were of the opinion that young learners (especially at primary school level) do not need to be taught phonetic symbols. One of the reasons for this was said to be that it would be too difficult and confusing for them, e.g. *"Some students already have difficulties with regular spelling so they get very confused and they don't seem to get the idea anyhow"* (#764, Q34). Another reason for not teaching the recognition of phonetic symbols was lack of time. Teaching only some of the symbols was also mentioned in several comments. The symbols chosen for teaching are sounds introduced in textbooks, *"the most frequent ones"* (#759, Q34), or as in most cases, sounds that do not occur in Finnish, e.g. *"I think it's necessary to know the symbols that are not part of the Finnish phonetic system (e.g. sounds for 'th')"* (#599, Q34).

Whereas recognising phonetic symbols was considered a useful, even essential, skill by many of the respondents, being able to write the symbols was considered quite the opposite. The most frequent topic in the open-ended question about teaching learners to write phonetic symbols (n=74) was that it is unnecessary, e.g. *"-- I think writing phonetic symbols is necessary only for teachers"*

(#753, Q36). In addition, it was frequently specified that recognising the symbols is enough. Here as well, it was frequently mentioned that this sort of activity is not suitable for young learners. In fact, not teaching learners how to write phonetic symbols was more common amongst respondents teaching at primary level compared to lower and upper secondary level: 80.0% of the respondents teaching at primary level indicated that they do not teach the writing of symbols, whereas for lower secondary level teachers the rate was 62.5% and for upper secondary school teachers 67.9%. Lack of time and confusion among learners were also mentioned frequently. In the comments related to learners getting confused, the respondents mainly referred to spelling. Moreover, some of the comments were quite harsh, e.g. *"What's the point? I think that they have enough problems with spelling as it is"* (#557, Q36). The issue of teachers' priorities also came up regularly: several comments included the view that there are more important things to teach, and therefore teaching learners to write phonetic symbols is left to one side.

What is striking about the results is that there seems to be a very strict line between teaching learners to recognise symbols and teaching learners to write them: teachers, especially at primary level, felt that their learners do not benefit from knowing how to produce phonemic script. On the contrary, many teachers felt that learning to write phonetic symbols will exacerbate spelling difficulties. However, some respondents were of the opinion that learning to recognise phonetic symbols helps the learners to distinguish spoken language from written language. The present data confirm that using phonetic symbols for pronunciation teaching is seen as a controversial method, and it may come back to the fact that learners are different and not all methods benefit all learners. However, Lintunen's (2004) study suggests a correlation between skills in phonemic transcription and English pronunciation skills in adult learners. Moreover, the majority of the participants in his study were of the opinion that learning phonemic script had benefitted their pronunciation (ibid.: 185–186).

3.7 Ear training

Ear training is seen as part of pronunciation practice due to the close relationship of speech perception and speech production. Even though there is disagreement on how this relationship functions, the existence of it has not been questioned. (See e.g. Diehl et al. 2004; Baars & Gage 2007: 212.) What is meant by ear training in the context of pronunciation teaching is listening tasks that focus on pronunciation. Traditionally these have been sound discrimination exercises, but as Morley (1991) suggests, a wider range of listening foci could benefit learners. Instead of identifying individual sounds, the focus could just as well be on suprasegmental features such as stress or intonation. Moreover, listening tasks can be used to raise awareness about different varieties of spoken English (cf. *accent addition* in Jenkins 2000: 208–212).

In the present study, the term "ear training" presumably caused confusion among some of the respondents. When asked whether the respondents (n=92) use ear training, a substantial proportion responded *I don't know* (26.1%). It may be that these respondents have not been entirely sure what is meant by ear training. *Yes* was chosen by 40.2% of the respondents, whereas 27.2% indicated to use *some* ear training. No ear training is used by only 6.5% of the respondents.

Table 6. Use of ear training as indicated by teachers (n=92).

Do you use ear training?	proportion of respondents (n=92)
yes	40.2%
some	27.2%
no	6.5%
I don't know	26.1%

It is a shame that ear training probably was not a familiar concept to all teachers, which led to approximately one-fourth of the respondents indicating they do not know whether they use it in their teaching or not. A better formulation of the questions would have been "Do you use listening tasks in pronunciation teaching?", for example. Traditionally listening tasks have a strong foothold in foreign language teaching in Finland, but the focus is usually on contents, not on form. This type of training is particularly common in upper secondary schools because the matriculation examination in foreign languages includes a listening comprehension test, as discussed above. Hence, if content-oriented listening tasks are done in any case, it would not be difficult to bring in some pronunciation-oriented listening as well. Surely the same speech samples could be used with different questions, and even if the content questions were kept, the teacher might want to add a few questions about a pronunciation issue.

3.8 Pronunciation model

The respondents were asked to estimate their learners' aspiration to have a native or near-native level of English pronunciation. This was done on a five-point scale (1 = do not at all aspire to sound native or near-native like, 5 = aspire 100% to sound native or near-native like), and the average result was 3.17 (n=78).

For both receptive and productive training, RP and General American (GA) seem to be most frequently used by teachers (n=76). When asked about receptive work, 94.7% of the respondents said they use RP, and 76.3% said they use GA. For productive work, RP was mentioned by 93.4% and GA by 63.2% of the respondents. The option of 'a type of International English' (IE) was interestingly the third-most frequent among the varieties used by teachers, both for receptive (42.1%) and productive (19.7%) work. The extensive use of this variety raises a question about what the respondents understand by it. Do they regard it as any second/foreign language variety, e.g. English spoken by Finns, or do they see it as a codified, culture-free variety like the one introduced in e.g. Jenkins (2000)?

For receptive work, a variety of different models was frequently chosen by respondents, e.g. Australian English (35.5%), Irish English (26.3%), Scottish English (23.7%), and Canadian English (21.1%). This is perhaps because of the effect of the EFL textbooks that are used in Finland: recent studies have shown that the textbooks' audio CDs include the use of various native and non-native varieties (Tergujeff 2009; Kopperoinen 2011). For productive work, it was very rare to choose a model other than RP, GA or IE.

When it comes to learners' general preference as indicated by the teachers (n=76), the same three models (RP, GA, IE) were frequently chosen by the respondents. However, GA was the most frequently chosen option both for

receptive (86.8%) and productive (78.9%) work, whereas RP did not receive as high a degree of popularity (65.8% for both receptive and productive work). IE was indicated to be generally preferred by learners by 15.8% of the respondents for receptive work, and 19.7% for productive work. The results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Teachers' use and learners' general preference for pronunciation model as indicated by teachers (n=76).

pronunciation model	teachers use for receptive tasks	learners prefer for receptive tasks	teachers use for productive tasks	learners prefer for productive tasks
RP	94.7%	65.8%	93.4%	65.8%
GA	76.3%	86.8%	63.2%	78.9%
IE	42.1%	15.8%	19.7%	19.7%

The present study suggests that according to teachers, Finnish EFL learners strive for a (near) native-like English pronunciation, at least to some extent. This is good to have in mind when debating the importance of pronunciation teaching in schools. Now that the status of English as a global language has made attitudes towards non-native varieties and accented speech more tolerant, teachers may feel pronunciation teaching is less necessary, and find it difficult to justify their choice of pronunciation model. According to the results, the choice of pronunciation model is traditional: most teachers use RP and/or GA in their teaching, RP still being notably more popular. However, there is a discrepancy between what models the teachers use and what the teachers say their learners generally prefer: in the learners' general preference, GA is more popular than RP or any other model. Then again, this is not surprising given the American dominance in popular culture, which often plays an important role in the lives of teenagers and pre-teens. Many of the respondents have presumably been taught RP themselves, so RP is a natural choice for pronunciation model. Finnish EFL textbooks deserve to be acknowledged for offering material for introducing other varieties as well. As mentioned above, various varieties are used by the respondents for receptive tasks, and this is surely due to textbooks including these varieties (Tergujeff 2009, Kopperoinen 2011).

3.9 Pronunciation assessment

According to the respondents (n=84), assessing pronunciation during the course (45.2%) is more common than assessing only at end of the course (3.6%) or using a combination of continuous and end-of-course assessment (33.3%). Diagnostic assessment is used by only 22.6% of the respondents. When asked about tasks used in diagnostic, formative and evaluative assessment, *reading aloud (with or without preparation time)* was the most frequently chosen option in all categories. Other frequently chosen options were *oral performances, listening & questions,* and *oral exams in pairs or groups.* The latter was used by a significantly greater proportion of respondents for evaluative assessment (52.4%) than for formative (32.1%) or diagnostic (14.3%) assessment. Use of written work, e.g. transcription, was marginal in all categories (8.3%–10.7%). Only 22.6% of the respondents

stated their assessment is linked to an established scale (national or international, e.g. the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR; Council of Europe 2001)). When asked to which scale their assessment is linked, 79.0% of these respondents (n=19) referred to CEFR.

Table 8. Tasks used in pronunciation assessment as indicated by teachers (n=84).

method	diagnostic	formative	evaluative
written work, e.g. transcription	8.3%	10.7%	8.3%
oral performances	23.8%	64.3%	50.0%
individual oral exams	8.3%	17.9%	32.1%
oral exams in pairs or groups	14.3%	32.1%	52.4%
listening & questions	17.9%	46.4%	35.7%
reading aloud	36.9%	70.2%	58.3%
other	9.5%	13.1%	9.5%
I don't know	3.6%	0.0%	2.4%
none of the above	60.0%	16.7%	19.0%

In Finland, teaching at all levels is regulated by national core curricula (e.g. National core curriculum for basic education 2004; National core curriculum for upper secondary schools 2003). These curricula include a Finnish version of the CEFR assessment scale. In this light, it is surprising how small a proportion of the respondents said to base their assessment on an established national or international scale.

4 Conclusion

Based on the present sample, the study offers a cross-section of Finnish EFL teachers' views on various topics around their English pronunciation teaching practices and teacher training. The most interesting results are obtained from questions around teacher training, teaching materials, teaching phonetic symbols, and pronunciation model. The survey suggests that teacher training in Finland does not give EFL teachers appropriate tools to teach pronunciation, but the training concentrates on their own pronunciation skills. Moreover, there may have been a change into a negative direction, as younger teachers seem to appreciate their training less than more experienced ones. When it comes to teaching materials, textbooks and other traditional materials are still most commonly used by teachers, but the frequency of teachers saying that they use websites is also very high. The teachers also seem to have found ways of making use of websites that are not particularly intended for language learning. Based on the present study, teaching phonetic symbols seems to be a controversial issue in pronunciation teaching. The respondents gave opposing views in their answers to open-ended questions about teaching learners to recognise and write phonetic symbols, some of them regarding it an essential skill to a language learner and some treating it as a cause of confusion in the learning process. The choice of pronunciation model by the respondents reveals the influence of textbooks: for receptive tasks the respondents use the varieties which have been found to be included in Finnish EFL textbooks. Overall, the most commonly

used variety for both receptive and productive tasks is RP, even though according to the respondents the learners generally prefer GA.

To reflect on the study, the survey was possibly too lengthy (only part of the questions is dealt with in this paper), the consequence of which was a substantial amount of non-completed responses. Also, as taking the survey was voluntary, it attracted respondents who for one reason or another were interested in taking part. In this particular case, the respondents may have been more interested in pronunciation teaching than the average (more than one-fourth indicated that they would like to devote up to 50% of their teaching time to teaching pronunciation). Despite the survey's limitations, I feel that it is a valuable addition to the work already done within English pronunciation teaching research in Finland. As part of a European collaboration, it also contributes to a wider, international mapping of English pronunciation teaching practices and teachers' views.

Endnotes

1) The online survey that was used to gather the data for the present study is a product of the author's collaboration with Alice Henderson (Université de Savoie; project leader), and Una Cunningham (Stockholm University), Lesley Curnick (Université de Lausanne), Rias van den Doel (University of Utrecht), Dan Frost (Université de Savoie), Alexander Kautzsch (University of Regensburg), Anastazija Kirkova-Naskova (University of Skopje), David Levey (University of Cádiz), Deirdre Murphy (Trinity College Dublin), and Ewa Waniek-Klimczak (University of Łódź) (in alphabetical order).

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III

ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION TEACHING: FOUR CASE STUDIES FROM FINLAND

by

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English Pronunciation Teaching: Four Case Studies from Finland

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***Abstract*—The present study looks at how English pronunciation teaching practices are like in Finnish schools from the primary to upper secondary level; in particular, which methods are used and which items are emphasised. The study was carried out as *focussed observations* (Hopkins 2008, p. 89), as classroom observations were considered the best way to achieve the aim of this study. Four EFL teachers were each observed for 6–9 lessons within a period of one week. A pre-prepared observation form was used as a tool, and then developed into a categorisation of the teaching methods used by the observed teachers. As for the results, the teachers offered pronunciation teaching very different from each other, but in general the pronunciation teaching was found to be pragmatic and teacher-led, and traditional teaching methods were used. At the segmental level, a strong emphasis was placed on phonemes that have typically been found to be difficult for L1 Finnish-speaking learners (sibilants and affricates). Despite the emphasis on suprasegmentals in pronunciation teaching literature, explicit teaching of suprasegmental features of speech was neglected by the observed teachers.**

***Index Terms*—pronunciation teaching, EFL, classroom observations**

I. Introduction

Since the late 1980s, when interest in pronunciation teaching as a research topic was on the rise, the focus of pronunciation teaching has shifted from practising individual sounds to concentrating equally on suprasegmental features (e.g. intonation, rhythm, stress) – at least in (English) pronunciation teaching literature (e.g. Seidlhofer 2001; Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, p. 11; Lane 2010, p. 8). Is this the case in the classrooms as well? This paper addresses the issue in the context of Finland, where English and many other foreign languages are studied extensively and language skills are highly valued. In general, a great deal is invested in language studies in Finnish schools, and according to 2009 statistics 40.1% of the year's upper secondary school graduates had studied three different languages in addition to their mother tongue, and 11.0% had studied four. English is the most widely studied foreign language in Finland. Nearly all children study it as their first foreign language: 99.6% of all upper secondary school graduates in 2009 had begun their English studies in the lower classes of basic education[1]. (Kumpulainen 2010, pp. 88–89.) Besides education, English has a grown status in Finnish working life and people's leisure activities (see Leppänen et al. 2011).

The pronunciation skills of advanced Finnish learners of English (university students of English) have been recently studied by Lintunen (2004). Lintunen's study, which was restricted to segmentals, reveals that even advanced Finnish learners of English make systematic errors (or, deviations from the standard) in their pronunciation. This result led Lintunen (2004, p. 215) to suggest that pronunciation is not given enough attention in school teaching. However, this critique aimed at teachers is only based on the learners' pronunciation skills, not on any empirical work on EFL teaching, teacher surveys or the like. Thus, Lintunen's study raises questions regarding how English pronunciation teaching is carried out in Finnish schools if the learning results are found fault with. This paper, part of my ongoing Ph.D. project, aims to shed light on this question and to fill the research gap in English pronunciation teaching in Finland. A special interest is taken in both teaching methods and the contents of teaching. The following research questions were set for the present study:

(1) *Which methods are used in teaching English pronunciation in the context of Finnish schools?*
(2) *Which aspects are emphasised in English pronunciation teaching in the context of Finnish schools?*

To answer these questions, classroom observations in Finnish schools were arranged and the study described in Chapter III was conducted.

II. Theoretical Background

English pronunciation teaching has undergone a change in focus from what is called a narrow approach – concentrating on segmentals – to a broader one that emphasises suprasegmentals and regards pronunciation as an integral part of oral language use (e.g. Morley 1991). This expanded concept of pronunciation operates top-down, and

[1] The compulsory basic education for 7- to16-year-olds in Finland lasts nine years. For more information about the Finnish educational system, see e.g. Kumpulainen (2010, p. 222).

includes more focus on longer stretches of speech, the effects of voice-setting, stress and intonation, as well as coarticulation phenomena such as shortenings, weakening, and assimilation (Pennington & Richards 1986). Included in the concept is also the simultaneous teaching of accuracy and fluency (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, p. 361), so the contents of the narrow approach (segmentals) are not abandoned even though a broader approach is adopted. Here we might also use the term *balanced approach* (e.g. Lane 2010, p. 8), recognising the need for both segmental and suprasegmental training. The teacher's role is regarded more as that of a coach (Morley 1991), and learner-centredness is seen as a key issue: learner autonomy and authority should be recognised, and the learners' personality, ego and identity issues as well as different learner modes should be taken into consideration in pronunciation teaching (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, p. 362).

According to recommendations in the literature, method-wise the teaching should be grounded in meaningful practice that considers the learners' needs for real-life situations (Morley 1991), and to communicative language teaching (CLT) (Celce-Murcia et al. 1996, p. 316; Seidlhofer 2001). However, applying the principles of CLT to pronunciation teaching is more easily said than done, and developing communicative pronunciation teaching methods has been urged for long (Seidlhofer 2001; Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, p. 9). Computer-assisted instructional technology could naturally be made use of in pronunciation teaching, and it has also been suggested that the teaching could benefit from the ideas and techniques of other disciplines such as drama (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, p. 362). On a personal note, it pleases me greatly that there is a call for more emphasis on the link between speaking and listening, which can even be seen as two sides of the same coin, namely, spoken language (Cauldwell 2003). Related to this link, a very welcome point is suggested by Jenkins (2000, pp. 208–212) in connection with the concept of English as an International Language(EIL). She suggests that instead of getting rid of one's foreign accent, learners would benefit from so-called *accent addition,* i.e. adding different (especially non-native) accents of English to their perceptive repertoire (but not necessarily to their productive repertoire). Overall Jenkins (2000) and many scholars involved in the study of English as a lingua franca (ELF) (for more about ELF research, see e.g. Mauranen & Ranta 2009; Seidlhofer 2011) speak for intelligibility (as opposed to perfection) as the main aim of pronunciation teaching.

Contrastive Finnish-English studies have been extensively conducted, and the pronunciation problem areas of L1 Finnish-speakers of English are well mapped, particularly regarding the segmental level (Wiik 1965, 1966; Lehtonen, Sajavaara & May 1977; Suomi 1980; Morris-Wilson 1992; about suprasegmentals see e.g. Hirvonen 1967, 1970; Niemi 1984; Toivanen 2001). The L1 Finnish-speaking learners of English are prone to encounter problems in the following areas due to differences in the sound systems of Finnish and English. First, plosives give trouble to Finns due to voicing distinctions, as do sibilants and affricates, most of which do not occur in Finnish. Plosives are also problematic in the sense that aspiration is not a familiar phenomenon in the L1 of Finns. Similarly, interdentals do not occur in the Finnish language. The v–w distinction causes problems for Finnish learners of English, whereas vowel sounds do not usually bring about noticeable difficulties. When Lintunen (2004) made a segmental analysis of Finnish university students' English pronunciation, he found that most difficulties lie in the above-mentioned areas, and the students made significantly fewer errors in vowel sounds than in consonants.

Unfortunately, researchers have not taken an interest in pronunciation teaching in Finnish schools. What is known about the matter is mainly based on learners' opinions, and covers only few phonetic teaching methods. Lintunen (2004) asked university students (n=108) whether they had been taught how to read phonetic symbols during their school years, and the participants' answers do not indicate a strong phonetic orientation in school teaching: only 5.6% of the participants said that they had been taught how to read all of the relevant symbols, whereas 50.0% were of the opinion that none had been taught to them. A similar study by Tergujeff, Ullakonoja and Dufva (2011), also conducted with university students (n=207), revealed similar results: In the teaching of English, phonetic script was taught *often* to only 1% and *never* to 25% of the respondents; phonetic listening tasks, e.g. sound discrimination, were done *often* in the teaching received by 1% and *never* in the teaching received by 47% of the respondents; and finally, none of the respondents indicated they had *often* received training in intonation and speech rhythm, whereas 48% indicated that they had *never* received teaching in these areas.

As pointed out by previous studies, learners' opinions suggest that phonetic training is not frequently used in English pronunciation teaching in Finnish schools, even though phonemic transcription can be seen as a useful tool in pronunciation teaching for L1 Finnish-speaking learners in particular. This is due to the fact that the learners are used to a close letter-to-sound correspondence in their L1 (Suomi, Toivanen & Ylitalo 2008, p. 141), and a correlation between pronunciation skills and skills in phonemic transcription has been suggested (Lintunen 2004).

III. Method

This section presents the method of the study. In order to obtain first-hand information about English pronunciation teaching, classroom observations were chosen as the method. In the description of the classroom observations, the discussion is partly devoted to explaining why the record-taking method of the observations was chosen. Finally, the cases and data analysis are introduced.

A. Classroom Observations

Teachers from four different schools were chosen for this study. I attended EFL lessons by one teacher from each school without participating in the teaching in any way. Each teacher was observed for 6–9 lessons within a period of one week. Two of the schools were small village schools with teaching groups of 4 to 15 pupils, and the two others were medium-sized schools with teaching groups of 14 to 28 pupils. The teachers knew that the classes were observed for research purposes, but the focus of the observations was revealed to them only after the period of observation, in order not to influence their teaching and behaviour in class. They did not know whether the focus of the observation was on them or their pupils.

The choice of the record-keeping method of the observations was made between written accounts and video recordings. Audio recording was not seen as an option due to practical reasons – classrooms are too large and often have poor acoustics, teachers move about, and important information can be drowned in other voices and general noise. The combination of recording and writing transcripts was ruled out because the study did not aim at a detailed analysis of what is said during the lessons (cf. Wragg 1999, p. 14). Video recording would have offered a good, re-playable visual and audio account when analysing the data, but teachers and pupils, if not used to being video recorded, might have been affected by the presence of the video camera, and getting appropriate permissions for the video recordings from the schools, the teachers and the pupils or their parents if they were under-aged could have been problematic. Overall, it might have been more difficult to find teachers willing to participate. Written notes were considered adequate for the present purposes and were chosen as the method, though immediate decisions about what to record were required and the possibility of action replay was excluded. However, an observer with pen and paper rather than a video camera was estimated to have less of an effect on the teachers and the pupils (cf. ibid., pp. 16–17)

Data gathering was carried out as *focussed observations* (Hopkins 2008, p. 89). An observation form was prepared beforehand and filled in during the lessons. The form consisted of a list of pronunciation teaching methods drawn from pronunciation teaching literature (Seidlhofer 2001; Celce-Murcia et al. 1996) and a textbook analysis of current EFL textbooks used in Finland (Tergujeff 2010). In addition, the form included space for notes after each pronunciation teaching method in the list, which was used to describe the procedure in class if the method in question was used by the teacher.

After the observation period the teachers were asked to fill in a short questionnaire regarding their education, work experience, and teaching materials they use in their pronunciation teaching. Because of the relatively short observation period, the teachers were also asked to estimate how much they taught pronunciation during the observations compared to usual.

B. Cases

The teachers were chosen for this study so that they would represent teaching at all school levels from basic education to upper secondary school. I also wanted to observe teachers from both small and bigger schools in terms of teaching group size, as a larger teaching group is sometimes named as a factor that makes pronunciation teaching difficult. Because temporary and part-time teaching posts are often filled by teachers without full formal qualifications[2], and in the lower classes (1–6) of basic education primary school teachers (and not EFL subject teachers) are often in charge of teaching English to young learners, such teachers were included in the present study.

The four observed teachers – Ms Laine, Ms Sten, Ms Niemi and Ms Virta (the names have been changed) – had teaching experience varying from 10 to 23 years. Two of the teachers were qualified EFL subject teachers by Finnish standards, holding an M.A. degree. One held a B.A. degree only and one was a professional primary school teacher with ELT specialisation. The professional primary school teacher, Ms Laine, was responsible for teaching English to children in basic education classes 3–6, and the teacher with a B.A. degree, Ms Sten, taught pupils in basic education classes 7–9. Of the formally qualified EFL subject teachers, Ms Niemi taught pupils both in basic education (classes 7–9) and in upper secondary school, and Ms Virta taught in upper secondary school. Relevant background information about the teachers is given in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1.
BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE OBSERVED TEACHERS.

Teacher	Qualifications	Experience	Pupils
Ms Laine	M.Ed.	23 years	8–13 years old
Ms Sten	B.A.	13 years	13–16 years old
Ms Niemi	M.A.	10 years	13–19 years old
Ms Virta	M.A.	12 years	16–19 years old

Ms Laine, a professional primary school teacher, was observed for eight 45-minute English lessons during a period of one week in spring 2009. Her education includes some studies of English, but she is not a formally qualified EFL subject teacher by Finnish standards. She teaches English at the beginners' level, i.e. to basic education pupils aged 8 to 13, and has teaching experience of 23 years. The size of her teaching groups was 8 pupils on average. A school helper was at her disposal and attended the classes regularly. When asked about her choice of pronunciation teaching materials

[2] In Finland, fully qualified EFL subject teachers hold an M.A. degree in English, including a teacher training programme/pedagogy as a minor subject in the degree.

after the classroom observations, she stated that she uses exercises included in the course books, other materials such as cards and pictures, and materials she prepares herself. She also stated that during the classroom observation period, she taught the same amount of pronunciation compared to the usual.

Ms Sten was observed for nine 45-minute lessons during a period of one week in spring 2009. She holds a B.A. degree in English, but is not a qualified EFL teacher by Finnish standards. She teaches English to pupils aged 13 to 16 at the basic education level. The size of her teaching groups was 17 pupils on average. She has 13 years of teaching experience. After the classroom observations, she said that she uses pronunciation exercises included in the course books and exercises that she prepares herself. She stated that she taught less pronunciation during the observations than in general.

Ms Niemi was observed for nine 45-minute lessons during a period of one week in spring 2009. She is a formally qualified EFL subject teacher, and teaches English at the basic education level and also in upper secondary school, i.e. to pupils aged 13 to 16 and 16 to 19. Her teaching groups averaged 11 pupils. She has 10 years of teaching experience. When asked after the classroom observations, she indicated that she uses pronunciation exercises included in the course books, materials from other sources and her own materials. She estimated that she taught pronunciation the regular amount during the classroom observation period.

Ms Virta, also a formally qualified EFL subject teacher, was observed for six 75-minute lessons during a period of one week in spring 2009. She teaches English in upper secondary school, i.e. to pupils aged 16 to 19. The average size of her teaching groups was 25 pupils, and she has teaching experience of 12 years. In pronunciation teaching she uses exercises that are included in the course book and in specific pronunciation and oral skills textbooks. In addition, she prepares materials herself. She taught the regular amount of pronunciation during the period of classroom observations.

C. Data Analysis

Analysis of the classroom observations began by excluding material that represented general oral skills teaching instead of specific pronunciation teaching. In drawing the line between these two, the same criterion was used as in the textbook analysis by Tergujeff (2010): specific pronunciation teaching explicitly directs the learner's focus towards pronunciation. Due to this definition, *recasts* (see Nicholas, Lightbow & Spada 2001) for example were not counted as pronunciation practice. However, reading aloud tasks were included, as they were not seen to serve any other (e.g. communicative) purpose than pronunciation practice. The same decision was made concerning the use of nursery rhymes, which are regularly mentioned in pronunciation teaching literature and can offer good practice of speech rhythm. The final data was then classified, which was simple because an observation form had been used. The form served as a starting point for the classification. Further, the data was studied in order to analyse the contents of pronunciation teaching, i.e. what was and was not taught, at both the segmental and suprasegmental levels.

IV. Findings

This chapter presents the findings of the study. In the first section, a summary of all teaching methods used by the observed teachers is presented to give an overall picture of the range of methods. In the following sections, the idea is not to describe each and every pronunciation teaching exercise, but to demonstrate the teaching during the classroom observations and to highlight issues of interest from the viewpoint of my research questions. In more detail I shall describe the teacher corrections and the teachers pointing out pronunciation, phonetic training and ear training. Listen and repeat exercises were mainly imitating word lists the teacher read from the course books. Similarly, reading aloud was often done from course books. These methods are not dealt with any further. An example of a pronunciation rule is provided within one of the sections. Finally, I shall explore which teaching methods were *not* used and which areas of pronunciation were *not* taught by the observed teachers.

A. Teaching Methods

During the observed 32 EFL lessons, 111 pronunciation teaching activities were detected. These are presented in a teacher-specific manner in Table 2 below. Overall the activities were very traditional, including the time-honoured listen and repeat tasks, reading aloud, giving rules and teachers correcting and pointing out how to pronounce. Some phonetic training and ear training were also found to be used by the observed teachers. In addition, some rhymes were used in pronunciation teaching, and tactile reinforcement (reinforcement through the sense of touch) on one occasion.

TABLE 2.
SUMMARY OF TEACHING METHODS.

Teaching method	Times used in teaching				
	Ms Laine	Ms Sten	Ms Niemi	Ms Virta	Total
Listen and repeat	34	-	2	3	39
Teacher corrects	11	4	8	-	23
Teacher points out	5	-	-	16	21
Read aloud	4	-	6	-	10
Phonemic script	2*	-	-	7	9
Rhyme	3	-	-	-	3
Rules	1	-	-	1	2
Dictation/spelling	1	-	1	-	2
Discrimination	1	-	-	-	1
Tactile reinforcement	-	-	-	1	1
Total	62	4	17	28	111

*mentioned, not actively used

As predicted, the teachers showed great variation in their teaching methods. Ms Laine, teaching beginners, was by far the most active in teaching pronunciation: she used pronunciation tasks in most of the categories that were found to be in use by the four teachers. More than half of all pronunciation tasks detected during the observations were found in Ms Laine's teaching. Ms Sten, teaching at intermediate level, was the complete opposite of Ms Laine. She did not teach much pronunciation during the observed lessons, and when she did, she always used the same method: correcting the pupils. Ms Niemi and Ms Virta were slightly more active in pronunciation teaching, but they used different methods sparingly. They each used different methods from four or five categories.

A closer look at especially Ms Virta's choice of methods demonstrates that the proficiency level and/or age of the pupils possibly affect teaching. Compared to the other teachers, Ms Virta's pronunciation teaching is more analytical: she concentrates on pointing out pronunciation issues and uses phonetic training frequently. The other teachers are more practical. In their pronunciation teaching, they focus on listen and repeat activities, correcting their pupils and reading aloud tasks. Only Ms Laine used rhyme in her teaching – perhaps nursery rhymes and poems are seen as too childish for teenagers.

B. Teachers Correcting and Pointing Out Pronunciation

How to teach pronunciation communicatively is a challenge (e.g. Seidlhofer 2001), and this seems to be true for Finnish EFL teachers as well. In the era of communicative language teaching (CLT), it is surprising how teacher-led pronunciation teaching seems to be in the light of these four cases. This is demonstrated for example by the high frequency of teachers correcting pupils' pronunciation. Correcting pupils, however, should not cause negative feelings in pupils, and they should not feel as if they were punished, as stated by Morley (1991). Morley adds it is always the pupil who corrects (or better, *modifies)* the pronunciation, whereas the teacher's task is to give cues on how to do that. Lane (2010) is also of the opinion that the pupils should be offered an opportunity to self-correct, and suggest an instant cue (e.g. teacher saying "Pronunciation!") to notify the pupil of the mispronunciation without correcting him/her. In fact, this was usually not what the Finnish EFL teachers did. Mainly the teachers corrected their pupils by repeating a mispronounced word in the desired form. On one occasion Ms Sten also repeated the undesired form uttered first by a pupil, and then she explained that the undesired form could be misinterpreted as another word. Ms Niemi came closest to giving cues on how to correct mispronunciations, but in fact gave orders.

Example 1. Ms Niemi to a pupil pronouncing the word *honest* as [hɒ nɪ st]:
"Älä sano h:ta siihen!" *(Don't pronounce the h there!)*
Example 2. Ms Niemi to a pupil pronouncing the word *whole* as [whɔʊ l]:
"Sano pelkkänä h:na se alku!" (*Pronounce the beginning as a plain h!)*

The teachers' corrections and the occasions on which they take up pronunciation issues are of interest in the sense that they reveal possible focus areas of the pupils' pronunciation problems. Another possibility is that they reveal what the teachers regard as important factors in pronunciation. The two possibilities can of course be – and are hoped to be – interrelated. The teachers' corrections are summarised in Table 3 below. Most frequently the teachers corrected words that contain sibilants and affricates, e.g. *China, ocean, chocolate, Tracy, assistant, penguins* (Ms Laine),[3] *dictionary* (Ms Sten), *future, actually* (Ms Niemi). It is predictable that English sibilants cause difficulties for L1 Finnish-speaking learners, as the Finnish phoneme inventory only includes one sibilant, /s/, and no affricates. Therefore, the English sibilant and affricate sounds /z, ʃ , ʒ , ʤ, ʧ/ are foreign to Finnish learners and difficult to produce for many. Learning to produce these sounds is further complicated by the fact that Finnish traditionally lacks voicing distinctions in consonants.

Another tendency was found in the teachers' corrections of pupils' pronunciation, namely correcting spelling-induced mispronunciations. Such cases were the past perfect *had read, had drunk* (Ms Sten), *honest,* and *whole* (Ms

[3] Here it was at times difficult to distinguish whether the correction was directed towards the sibilant/affricate or some other segment or feature, especially with Ms Laine's young pupils.

Niemi). In their L1, Finnish learners of English are used to a transparent letter-to-phoneme correspondence (Suomi et al. 2008, p. 141), and are therefore especially prone to making mistakes caused by the irregular spelling conventions of English (for details about the irregular spelling of English see Wells 2008). As pointed out by Seidlhofer (2001), teachers should be aware of the relationships between orthography and phonology. A good example of such awareness was offered by Ms Laine, when she explained to her young pupils that the letter combination <kn> corresponds to sound /n/. Also, Ms Niemi corrected a pupil's mispronunciation of *honest* from [hɒ nɪ st] to [ɒ nɪ st] and of *whole* from [whəʊ l] to [həʊ l] (see Examples 1 and 2). Other words that Ms Niemi corrected were *psychology, euros*, *bargains* and *particularly.* In addition to the previously mentioned words, Ms Laine corrected the following words: *David, the USA,* and the phrase *Were David and Ann…?*

TABLE 3.
WHAT THE TEACHERS CORRECTED.

Item corrected	Example words
Sibilant sounds	*ocean, dictionary*
Affricate sounds	*chocolate, actually*
Spelling-induced mispronunciations	*had read, honest*

At times, two of the teachers pointed out the desired pronunciation of certain items before the pupils had attempted them. A summary of such cases is presented in Table 4 below. In these instances sibilants and affricates were also in focus. Ms Laine pointed out the affricate in *chance* by repeating the sound as follows:

Example 3. Ms Laine: "Ch-ch-chance!"

Ms Virta was very active in pointing out the pronunciation of words that include sibilants and affricates. Such words were *decompose, organisation, corporations, religious, garage,* and *positions.* To demonstrate the pronunciation of *positions,* Ms Virta wrote the word on the blackboard in phonemic script, and the word was persistently practised after the teacher (all together aloud), as she was not content with the pupils' performance. Ms Virta pointed out the pronunciation of the words *diner* and *volunteer* as well.

In correcting and pointing out pronunciation, there were instances in which the teacher interfered because a mispronunciation caused or might have caused a change in meaning and therefore potential communication breakdown. Ms Laine, for example, advised her pupils to pay attention to the aspirated /k/ in *cold,* in order to not be interpreted as having said *gold.* Also, she warned the pupils not to mix up *beard* with *beer.* Ms Sten corrected a pupil's production of *cousin,* because in the teacher's words it sounded more like *cushion* (due to the quality of the first vowel), and Ms Virta reminded her pupils as follows:

Example 4. Ms Virta: "It's Thai – thigh is something else."

Ms Virta also informed her pupils about words with alternative pronunciation (often British English vs. American English conventions), such as *schedule, vase, algae* and *aluminium/aluminum.* In addition, she instructed the pupils on how to distinguish *crisis* from *crises* in pronunciation.

TABLE 4.
WHAT THE TEACHERS POINTED OUT.

Item pointed out	Example words
Sibilant sounds	*organisation, positions*
Affricate sounds	*chance, religious*
Potential communication breakdown	*cold/gold, beard/beer*
Alternative pronunciations	*schedule, vase*

C. Phonemic Script

That Finnish EFL textbooks emphasise phonetic training, and that phonemic script is strongly present in them (Tergujeff 2010) were not reflected in these four case studies. Only one of the teachers used phonemic script and transcription exercises during the observed lessons, and in addition, one teacher referred to phonemic script – Ms Laine, who once urged her pupils to pay attention to the pronunciation instructions in phonemic script in a word list, and at another occasion noted that they would go through the phonetic symbols later. Despite the strong presence of IPA in Finnish EFL textbooks, phonetic training is not a frequently used pronunciation teaching method in Finnish schools; surveys have shown that pupils do not feel they are well taught e.g. how to read IPA symbols (Lintunen 2004, pp. 187–188; Tergujeff et al. 2011).

Ms Virta used phonemic script in her teaching in two ways: to demonstrate pronunciation and in deciphering tasks. The pupils were not asked to transcribe anything themselves. When the teacher demonstrated the pronunciation of individual segments with the help of transcription, it dealt with sibilant sounds, namely /z, ʒ , ʃ/. The two first were found to be among the most problematic sounds for Finnish learners of English, and the last one among those that often cause problems (Lintunen 2004, p. 149). The word *casual* was quite spontaneously picked up by the teacher and written on the blackboard in phonemic script, which in my view demonstrates her good transcription skills. Then she asked the pupils what sound the symbol ʒ stands for. In addition, they repeated the word time after time, and felt the voicing of

/ʒ/ with their fingers on their throats, giving the pupils some tactile reinforcement (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, pp. 337–338).

D. Ear Training

Similar to the productive side of pronunciation, the recommended focus of practice has shifted towards units larger than the segment also in ear training. Morley (1991) suggests focussing more on pronunciation-oriented listening activities in English pronunciation teaching. She notes that particularly sound discrimination and identification tasks were traditionally important components of pronunciation teaching, but that a wider range of listening foci is recommended (ibid.). This was not realised in the observed lessons, and the receptive side of pronunciation was overall seldom practised. Ms Laine presented one sound discrimination exercise, asking her pupils whether they heard a 'hissing sound' in the word *sofa* like they do in the word *ship*. She also used a spelling task in her teaching, spelling to pupils herself. Ms Niemi assigned the pupils to dictate sentences to one another.

E. What was Missing?

As Table 2 shows, a range of pronunciation teaching methods was used by the four teachers. However, there are many methods that could have been used but were not, and in fact a whole area of pronunciation was neglected in the teaching: suprasegmental features. Here again, the idea is not to list all possible pronunciation teaching methods that could have been used, but I shall concentrate on a few main areas which would possibly have benefitted the learners according to recommendations in the literature. None of the teachers gave explicit instruction in intonation, word or sentence stress, nor rhythm, even though these areas of pronunciation have been suggested to be more crucial for intelligibility than individual sounds (Lane 2010, p. 2), and in pronunciation teaching literature it has recommended that these areas were emphasised. This broad approach to pronunciation teaching has also been suggested to lead to better learning results than a narrow one that concentrates on segments (see Derwing, Munro & Wiebe 1998). However, the pupils received implicit intonation practice in imitation tasks with longer stretches of speech, in read aloud tasks and when reading rhymes. Also, Ms Virta reminded her pupils of intonation in connection with an imitation task by saying:

Example 5. Ms Virta: "Imitoikaa ja muistakaa intonaatio ylös ja alas."
(*Imitate and remember: intonation up and down.*)

Learners' overall fluency of speech could also benefit from training connected speech (weak forms, assimilation, elision, linking), but this was not included in the teaching either. However, some have deemed it unnecessary to teach pupils to produce these features, but only to recognise them (Rogerson-Revell 2011). Further, the observed lessons lacked learner-centred pronunciation teaching methods. No so-called awareness-raising tasks or self-evaluations were used. Learning strategies were not dealt with either. It is also noteworthy that no technology or other helping tools (mirrors, charts, images, etc.) were present in the teaching (cf. Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, pp. 10, 354–361).

V. Discussion and Conclusion

Positive effects of pronunciation instruction have been reported in numerous studies. These studies suggest that instruction at both segmental and suprasegmental levels can result in improved pronunciation skills, and that teaching methods such as discrimination practice (e.g. Neufeld 1977, 1978 quoted in Neufeld & Schneiderman 1980; Derwing et al. 1998), concrete rules, giving immediate feedback (e.g. Elliott 1995, 1997), and imitation (e.g. Macdonald, Yule & Powers 1994) have had positive effects on the learning of pronunciation. In a comparison of narrow/segmental and broad/suprasegmental approaches, Derwing et al. (1998) conclude that the suprasegmental approach is more effective in terms of comprehensibility, accentedness and fluency.

The aim of the present study was to shed light on the methods and focus areas of English pronunciation teaching in the context of Finnish schools. Observing 32 EFL lessons revealed a range of ten different types of pronunciation teaching methods, including traditional imitation tasks, teacher corrections, teachers pointing out pronunciation issues, reading aloud, use of phonemic script and rhymes, presenting rules, dictation/spelling, sound discrimination, and tactile reinforcement. The teachers used different methods to varying degrees, ranging from one teacher (Ms Laine) using nine to another teacher (Ms Sten) using only one. Here it is worth noting that Ms Sten stated after the observations that she had taught pronunciation less than she typically does, whereas the other teachers indicated they taught it the regular amount. Measured by overall frequency in the whole data, the traditional listen and repeat exercises – found effective in e.g. Macdonald et al. (1994) – were the most common pronunciation tasks used during the observations. However, this finding is due to the fact that the method seems to have been Ms Laine's personal favourite – other teachers used it only sparingly. Teacher correction (comparable to immediate feedback in Elliott (1995, 1997)) and pointing out pronunciation issues were also common methods measured by the overall frequency of occurrence, whereas using rhyme, dictation/spelling, tactile reinforcement, and the well-tried methods of discrimination practice (e.g. Neufeld 1977, 1978 quoted in Neufeld & Schneiderman 1980; Derwing et al. 1998) and presenting rules (e.g. Elliott 1995, 1997) were less popular methods. None of the teaching methods were used by all the four teachers; imitation tasks and teacher correction were both used by three teachers. These two methods can be seen as the most popular ones in my data, as they were most common in terms of both frequency of occurrence and number of teachers using them.

Overall, the pronunciation teaching practices can be characterised as being teacher-led to a great extent. This does not correlate well with the principles of communicative language teaching (CLT), which usually aims at promoting learner autonomy and being learner-centred. In many instances the teacher interfered with and corrected a pupil's pronunciation, or gave them information about the pronunciation of a word. Communicative pronunciation tasks were hardly used in the observed lessons. Even though we are living the era of CLT, in fact, CLT and pronunciation teaching is a complicated combination, as stated by Seidlhofer (2001): CLT directs the learners' attention to communication and away from form, but a certain formal aspect, such as pronunciation, can be difficult to learn unless one pays attention to it. This is also demonstrated in Elliott (1995, 1997).

As a whole, the teachers seemed to be well aware of their pupils' potential problem areas in regards to segments. Sibilant and affricate sounds frequently appeared not only in teacher corrections but also in ear training, phonemic script and when teachers pointed out pronunciation issues. Therefore, the teachers must have had knowledge of the generic difficulty of these sounds to L1 Finnish-speaking learners, attained from experience or literature – or perhaps both. This is a very positive result in regards to Lintunen's (2004) study: the problem areas demonstrated again by his study were emphasised in the observed teaching. Pronunciation teaching given by these four teachers can also be characterised as somewhat pragmatic: the teachers seemed eager to correct their pupils' pronunciation, in particular if it raised the possibility of mispronunciation, thereby leading to communication breakdown. This gives the impression that the teachers emphasise intelligibility in their aims of pronunciation teaching. However, also in this the teachers operated at the level of segmentals, even though suprasegmental features of speech have been found to be more crucial for intelligibility than segmentals (e.g. Pennington & Richards 1986), and emphasis on suprasegmentals in pronunciation teaching has been suggested to be more effective than emphasis on segmentals (Derwing et al. 1998).

This study addressed only a short period of English pronunciation teaching given by four teachers. The aim was not to make any generalisations about English pronunciation in Finland, nor about the teaching of the observed teachers (for a general view of teaching practices, a survey study of EFL teachers from Finland and other European countries is in progress (Henderson et al., forthcoming)). However, the data offered possibilities for a close examination of pronunciation teaching methods and the contents of English pronunciation teaching in the context of Finnish schools, and resulted in the following main findings. First, the teaching methods, the most popular of which were imitation and teacher correction, were found to be teacher-centred. Second, affricates and sibilant sounds stood out as the main contents of the teaching. Third, the recommended emphasis on prosodic features in pronunciation teaching was not realised during the observed lessons. Finally, a pragmatic approach was found in instances in which the teachers corrected their pupils in order to avoid communication breakdown from mispronunciation. Despite the small sample of the present study, some of these findings may be typical for English pronunciation teaching in general.

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IV

LEARNER PERSPECTIVE ON ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION TEACHING IN AN EFL CONTEXT

by

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LEARNER PERSPECTIVE ON ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION TEACHING IN AN EFL CONTEXT

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Abstract
This paper reports on an interview study with EFL learners that aimed to explore learners' perceptions and views on English pronunciation teaching. The participants of the present study were ten EFL learners studying in the public educational system of Finland. Six of the participants were pupils attending basic education class nine, i.e. 15- to 16-year-old lower secondary level pupils. Two were primary level pupils attending basic education class four (aged 10), and two were upper secondary school pupils (aged 18). The interviews were thematic, and the learners were encouraged to speak freely about the English pronunciation teaching they were receiving and their opinions on this. In addition, they were asked to discuss their goals in English pronunciation, and to consider their pronunciation learning in class and out of class. The interviews were part of a wider study, mapping English pronunciation teaching practices in the context of Finnish schools.

On the basis of the findings, the learners do not seem to have aspirations to native-like pronunciation, but rather aim at achieving intelligible and fluent speech. Only few reported an accent preference (British or American). The primary level learners expressed satisfaction with the amount of pronunciation teaching, whereas most of the lower and upper secondary level learners claimed that pronunciation teaching was insufficient. Despite their criticisms of their pronunciation teaching, the learners reported that they had learnt English pronunciation at school. In addition, many of the learners described learning pronunciation outside school, e.g. through media and personal encounters.

Keywords: English as a foreign language, EFL, pronunciation teaching, interview.

1. Introduction

In Finland, English is taught in schools as a foreign language. It is the most popular language study option and, according to statistics, almost all schoolchildren study English as their first foreign language, beginning their study of English already at the primary level (Kumpulainen 2010, 88–89; for more information about the Finnish educational system, see ibid., 222). Although English has no official status in Finland, globalisation and the media have brought English into the everyday lives of Finns, also outside of the field of education: English is heard and seen in the linguistic landscape, needed in working life, and used in leisure activities, especially by youth. Moreover, Finns generally have a positive attitude to English, and they do not consider it a threat to their native languages or culture. (Leppänen et al. 2011.) The present study uses Finnish

schools as an example of an EFL context of English pronunciation teaching, and is motivated by the claims made about the possible neglect of teaching in this area, both in Finland (Lintunen 2004, 215; Iivonen 2005, 46) and internationally (e.g. Fraser 2000, Gilbert 2010). Also, it adds a learner perspective to the series of studies in English pronunciation teaching in Finland conducted by the author (Tergujeff 2010, 2012a, 2012b).

This article is part of a larger study on English pronunciation teaching in the context of Finnish schools, focussing here on the perspective of learners on the topic. More specifically, the paper reports on an interview study with EFL learners that aimed to explore learners' perceptions and views on English pronunciation teaching in the Finnish school context from primary to upper secondary level. The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. *What do Finnish learners indicate as their goals in English pronunciation?*
2. *In the learners' view, how is English pronunciation taught in Finnish schools?*
3. *How do Finnish learners evaluate the English pronunciation teaching they are receiving, and their learning of English pronunciation?*

The study addresses several issues related to pronunciation teaching and learning: learners' goals, teaching practices, and learners' evaluations of their teaching. With respect to teaching practices, the teaching of phonemic script has special focus in this study. It has been suggested that phonemic transcription is a beneficial learning tool for Finnish learners of English (see Lintunen 2004). Because the present study addresses such a wide variety of issues, a separate literature review is not given here, but relevant previous research is discussed in section three in connection with the analysis.

2. The present study

The participants of the present study were ten EFL learners, studying English in the public educational system in Finland. Six of the participants were pupils attending basic education class nine, i.e. 15- to 16-year-old lower secondary level pupils. Two were primary level pupils attending basic education class four (aged 10), and two were upper secondary school pupils (aged 18). Participant information is presented in Table 1. The pupils came from three different schools, and one of the pupils (marked with *) studied English with a special education teacher separately from the rest of his class. The names have been changed to ensure participant anonymity. All of the participants volunteered to take part in the study, and signed a written consent allowing the interviews to be used for research purposes. In the case of the under-aged participants, the consent forms were signed by their guardians.

participant	***level***	***school***
Maria	primary	A
Hanna	primary	A
Anna	lower secondary	B
Liisa	lower secondary	B

participant	*level*	*school*
Emma	lower secondary	B
Selma	lower secondary	B
Valtteri	lower secondary	B
Lassi	lower secondary	B*
Suvi	upper secondary	C
Linda	upper secondary	C

Table 1. Participant information.

To answer the research questions set for the present study, thematic interviews were conducted with the participants. In the interviews, the learners were encouraged to speak freely about the English pronunciation teaching they were receiving and their opinions on this. In addition, they were asked to discuss their goals in English pronunciation, and to evaluate their pronunciation learning in class and out of class. As stimuli for the discussion, the interviewees' own EFL textbooks and a list of words in phonemic script were used. The interviews were framed such that the researcher told the interviewees that she did not know how English pronunciation was taught in Finnish schools and considered the pupils as the experts best able to provide her with this information (Fontana & Prokos 2007, 70). The interviews were conducted in the learners' native tongue, i.e. in Finnish. In this article, I refer to the original Finnish-language data, but translations into English are also provided. The interviews took place in various surroundings: at the learners' school, on the premises of the researcher's institution, and also at the home of one of the interviewees (the youngest participants were interviewed in the home of one of them to reduce possible nervousness on the part of the children). In the school context, appropriate permissions were asked from and granted by the head of school and the municipal education authorities.

The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed by the author for qualitative content analysis (Kvale 2007, 105). The content analysis was applied to the data to identify the central thematic categories. Six categories emerged: (1) pronunciation goals, (2) pronunciation exercises in textbooks, (3) pronunciation teaching practices, (4) pronunciation models, (5) amount of pronunciation teaching, and (6) pronunciation learning. Conclusions were drawn for each of the six categories based on interpretations of the interview excerpts. To avoid researcher bias, researcher triangulation (Denzin 1978) was carried out: two established researchers gave their analysis of the data in addition to the author's. The purpose of triangulation was also to gain a deeper understanding of the topic by discussing the data in a group.

3. Analysis and discussion

The results of the qualitative analysis of this interview study are described below. The analysis is discussed in connection with the results. The quotes illustrate recurrent or otherwise interesting themes spotted in the analysis.

3.1 Learners' pronunciation goals

A review of the previous research on learners' goals in English pronunciation, accent preferences and attitudes towards accents reveal a number of interesting results. Many learners seem to have negative attitudes towards (their own) non-native and *outer circle* (Kachru 1985) varieties (e.g. Pihko 1997, Dalton-Puffer et al. 1997), and they often prefer an accent that is familiar to them: in Europe, this seems to be British Received Pronunciation (e.g. Dalton-Puffer et al. 1997, Genoz & Garcia Lecumberri 1999, Waniek-Klimczak & Klimczak 2005). Learners' aspirations to learn a native-like pronunciation have been recorded in both ESL (Derwing 2003) and EFL (e.g. Janicka et al. 2005) environments. However, in a survey of Polish EFL learners by Waniek-Klimczak (1997), only a minority wished to sound native-like.

In the present study, the majority of the learners reported fluency and intelligibility as their main goals in English pronunciation. In addition, they did not have ambitions to the production of a specific variety, as pointed out by the following learner:

> (1) "[Haluaisin oppia] hyvää englantia, ymmärrettävää englantia. Se menee monesti semmoseksi suomen englanniksi, semmoseksi töksähteleväksi, mutta haluaisin osata semmoista sujuvaa ja ei sillä oo väliä onkse brittiä vai amerikkalaista mutta kunhan se olis oikeen sellasta ymmärrettävää ja sujuvaa."
> *([I would like to learn] good English, intelligible English. I often slip into a kind of Finnish English, awkward-sounding, but I would like to be fluent. It doesn't matter whether it's British or American, as long as it's genuinely intelligible and fluent.)*
> (Anna, lower secondary level)

For the learners interviewed for the present study, native-like pronunciation does not seem to be a goal. Some of the learners pointed out that it does not bother them if people hear that they have a foreign accent, while one learner clearly stated his wish to be identified as a Finn (cf. Jones 2001 on accent as a reflection of identity), when asked whether he would find it desirable to speak without a foreign accent:

> (2) "Ei se hienoa olis. Haluan korostaa sitä että en ole brittiläinen vaan olen suomalainen."
> *("No, it wouldn't be nice. I want to emphasise that I'm not British but a Finn.")*
> (Valtteri, lower secondary level)

If native-like pronunciation was mentioned by the learners, they referred to it as if it were only wishful thinking. A couple of learners considered it "nice" if they could speak like a native speaker, but this was still not their main goal. They emphasised intelligibility and fluency, and also stated that it did not matter if listeners notice their foreign accent. The results perhaps reflect the general change in attitudes towards non-native accents and accented speech: it is widely accepted to speak English with a foreign accent as long as it does not compromise intelligibility (cf. the work of Jenkins, e.g. Jenkins 2000). It has also been suggested that in English pronunciation teaching in Europe, the use of "a type of International English" as pronunciation model is gaining a foothold (Henderson et al. 2012, Tergujeff 2012b).

3.2 Pronunciation exercises in textbooks

Textbooks play an important role in foreign language teaching. In the Finnish context, the dominance of textbooks over other teaching materials has been shown in a survey by Luukka et al. (2008), and, with particular reference to English pronunciation teaching, by Tergujeff (2012b). In the present study, the learners' textbooks were used as stimuli for discussion in the interviews by asking them to introduce typical pronunciation exercises in their textbooks. This was not an easy task because it seemed that pronunciation is not a frequent textbook topic. Many had to struggle to find pronunciation exercises:

(3) "Emmä tiiä onks täälä semmosia. -- Ehkä enemmän just niissä yläasteen ku lukion. Miten mä en löydä täältä niinku yhtään mitään?"
("I don't know if there are any. -- Maybe there were more in the lower secondary level books. How come I don't find anything?")
(Suvi, upper secondary level)

Research-based information on the relative proportion of pronunciation exercises in Finnish EFL textbooks is not available. A classification of pronunciation teaching materials in Finnish EFL textbooks, however, is available in a recent textbook analysis (Tergujeff 2010). This textbook analysis revealed a range of pronunciation teaching materials: phonetic training, reading aloud, imitation, rhymes, rules and instructions, awareness-raising activities, spelling, dictation, and ear training. In the learners' view, the range of pronunciation teaching materials in their EFL textbooks seems to be narrower than was indicated by the textbook analysis. The learners mentioned word stress exercises, in which the learners listen to words and mark the correct stress placement, as a frequent exercise type in the lower secondary school textbooks that they used. Another frequently mentioned exercise type was a list of words and expressions (presented in a text box) preceding a text. In these lists, words and expressions from the text are highlighted before the text is studied. The lists can be listened to on the CD accompanying the teacher's book; according to the learners a typical classroom procedure is repeating words and expressions aloud together as pronunciation practice.

(4) "No tuossa on siitä mihin se painotus tulee. Ja tuossahan on noita merkkejä että miten se äännetään. -- Ja sit se on tässä tekstikirjassa ku on ennen tekstejä näitä laatikoita niin nämä me käydään aina läpi".
("Here's one on where the stress falls. And here are symbols showing how it's pronounced. -- And in the textbook there are boxes like this before each text, and we always study them.")
(Liisa, lower secondary level)

The primary level pupils mentioned that their textbook includes a CD. The pupil's CD is a concise version of the teacher's CD, and usually features the audio version of the key texts of the textbook. Maria stated that the CD was specifically for pronunciation practice at home:

(5) "Kuuntelen sitä ja siinä on semmosia pieniä taukoja et sen aikana voi ääntää niitä."
("I listen to it, and there are pauses during which you can pronounce the words.")
(Maria, primary level)

Based on Luukka et al. (2008) and Tergujeff (2012b), textbooks are the most widely used teaching materials in foreign language teaching in Finland: almost all teachers use textbooks. Another proof of the major role of textbooks in foreign language teaching is offered here, as many of the learners stated that during the lessons they do not often skip things in the textbook but cover all of it during the term.

(6) "Kyllä me ollaan noita tehty. Että melkein kaikki asiat täältä kirjasta on käyty. Ettei kauheasti hypitä kyllä."
("Yes, we have done those. We have covered pretty much all of the book. We seldom skip stuff.")
(Selma, lower secondary level)

3.3 Pronunciation teaching practices

When the learners talked about the pronunciation teaching they were receiving at school, they mentioned very traditional teaching techniques: mostly imitation and reading aloud. This suggests that despite the recommendations in the literature on the subject (e.g. Morley 1991; Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, 44–45), pronunciation teaching relies heavily on mechanical production without moving on to controlled practice and, finally, communicative tasks, as recommended at the stage when the learner has already learnt to produce the segments of the target language. However, it may also be that the teaching practices include more general oral skills (conversational) tasks which the learners do not label as pronunciation activities, since in their minds these consist of segmental-level mechanical production. The typical classroom practices reported are well exemplified in the following excerpt from the interview with Valtteri (lower secondary level):

(7) Valtteri: Se perinteinen on se että opettaja sanoo sanan oikein ja oppilaat sanoo perässä. Yrittää ääntää samalla tavalla. No mitenkähän sitä nyt yleensäkään… opetellaan. Aika lailla sillä tavalla.
("The traditional way is that the teacher says the word correctly and the pupils repeat it. Try to pronounce it the same way. Let me think how do we usually… study. Well, pretty much like that.")
Interviewer: Tuleeko muita harjoituksia mieleen?
("Can you think of any other tasks?")
Valtteri: No niitä sellaisia kai että pitää kuunnella nauhalta niitä sanoja ja pitää siinä kohtaa merkata missä se on se paino siinä sanassa.
("Well I guess those in which you have to listen to words and mark where the stress falls in that word.")
Interviewer: Mitä muuta opetetaan kuin painoa?
("What else do they teach, in addition to stress?")
Valtteri: Ei niitä enää sillä lailla opeteta kun nehän on tullu jo ala-asteella ne hommat että miten mitkä kirjaimet ääntyy missäkin tilanteessa minäkin ja tämmöset. Tämmöset hankalat sanat käydään erikseen. Aika lailla keskitytään niihin yksittäisiin äänteisiin että koko sana menee oikein.
("They don't teach that much anymore because it's all covered in primary school. The stuff about how letters are pronounced in different positions and that stuff. Difficult words are dealt with separately. We pretty much focus on individual sounds to get the whole word right.")

It also seems common for teachers to deal spontaneously with pronunciation when difficulties appear; e.g. when a pupil is unable to pronounce something, or there is a recurrent mispronunciation. This aspect has been discussed by Burgess & Spencer (2000), and by Macdonald (2002), who interviewed Australian ESL teachers reluctant to teach pronunciation. Macdonald mentions that pronunciation teaching is not always systematic but incidental in nature and that pronunciation is dealt with in class "as it comes up".

The present study focused in particular on the use of phonemic script in pronunciation teaching. This derives from the fact that the orthography of the learners' L1, Finnish, follows a principle of close letter-to-sound correspondence (Suomi et al. 2008, 141), and thus phonemic transcription can be seen as a beneficial learning tool for them, helping them to tackle their difficulties with the sometimes ambiguous spelling of English (cf. Wells 1996). What is more, it has been suggested that transcription skills and English pronunciation skills correlate in advanced Finnish learners of English (Lintunen 2004). Based on the interviews in the present study, phonemic script is not very commonly used in pronunciation teaching. A similar de-emphasis was found in an earlier study, based on classroom observations of the teaching of Finnish EFL teachers (Tergujeff 2012a), and a retrospective learner survey in Lintunen (2004, 183–188). However, the participants of the present study often stated that even though their teaching did not at the moment make use of phonetic symbols, these had been used earlier in their education – typically already in primary school. This is also supported by the fact that the primary level pupils interviewed here reported receiving teaching of phonetic symbols. The following excerpt is from an interview with Emma who is currently in lower secondary school.

(8) Interviewer: Ne on tuttuja sulle?
("You are familiar with them?")
Emma: Joo mutta mä en oikein osaa niitä. Tai siis silleen en oo koskaan osannu näitä kovin hyvin.
("Yes but I don't really know them. I mean I have never known them that well.")
Interviewer: Niitä ei ole varmaan paljon sitten opetettukaan?
("So have they not been taught thoroughly?")
Emma: No ku ala-asteella mä en ollu todellakaan tosi hyvä niinku englannissa -- niin mä en oikein keskittyny enkä halunnukaan oikeen oppia sitä nii vasta motivaatio nousi ku halus lähtee ulkomaille, nii en mä muista näistä kauheesti.
("Well I wasn't very good at English in primary school -- so I didn't concentrate and didn't even want to learn English. I had no motivation until I wanted to go abroad, so I don't remember much about them.")
Interviewer: Eli niitä on opeteltu ala-asteella mutta nytkö ei enää?
("So the symbols were taught in primary school but not anymore?")
Emma: ei yläasteella ole minun mielestä paljoo opetettu näitä.
("No they haven't been taught much in lower secondary school in my opinion.")

It seems likely that the interviewees had been taught phonetic symbols at some stage, even if they were not used in their current teaching, as despite the learners' tendency to downplay their skills, most of them were able to read phonemic transcriptions of single words presented to them in the interview. The idea was not to test their skills but to use

transcription reading as a stimulus for the discussion. The transcriptions included words such as *cat, fish, robot, anyone, religion, nothing* and *allergic*.

The learners were divided on the usefulness of knowing phonemic script. This division was not linked to age or level of proficiency, and may perhaps have more to do with personal preference or learner type. The same division was found among respondents to a teacher survey (Tergujeff 2012b). Even the reasoning behind the opinions was similar in teachers and learners: those who saw it as beneficial referred to checking the correct pronunciation of words, and those who did not referred to the actual spelling of words, feeling that phonemic script would interfere with the learners' spelling, as in the following quote:

(9) "-- en mä oikeen ymmärtäny että miksi noita pitäs tolleen kattoa. Ku ei niitä oikeastikaan noin kirjoteta."
("I didn't understand why they should be seen like that. After all that's not how you write English anyway.")
(Emma, lower secondary level)

3.4 Pronunciation models

As stated in 3.1, the learners do not seem to have great ambitions towards achieving a native-like pronunciation, and no strong preferences for a specific accent. A recent survey suggests that the pronunciation models most commonly used English pronunciation teaching across Europe are British Received Pronunciation (RP) and General American (GA) (Henderson et al. 2012). This finding is supported by the view of the learners interviewed for the present study. According to learners, the varieties used in the teaching they receive are British and American. Most of the learners stated that both are used, and that one is typically the main variety whereas the other is introduced on the side.

(10) "Britti. Sitä on. Ollaan me käyty vähän tota amerikanenglantiakin ja niitä eroavaisuuksia katottu."
("It's British, that's what it is. We have also explored American English a little, looked at the differences.")
(Selma, lower secondary level)

The majority of the learners reported that the British variety was the main pronunciation model taught, while for some learners it was American English. Other varieties, or introductions to these, were seldom mentioned. Valtteri, however, mentioned Canadian English:

(11) "Kyllä se nyt ollu vähän kumpaakin [britti- ja amerikanenglantia] nytte niinku viimesinä vuosina. Että sehän on alkanu ala-asteelta ja seiskaluokalle saakka brittienglantina mutta sitten meillä on ollut justiinsa tämä kirja missä se korosti niitä eroja ja täällon paljo tehtäviä alussa niistä. Täällon näitä sanaeroja ja kaikkee ja ääntämiseroja. Sitten täällä on kanadanenglantiakin. Tai täällä on pari kappaletta missä on vaan tehtäviä näistä."

> *("It's been both [British and American] these past few years. It began as British English in primary school until seventh grade but now we've had this book that emphasises the differences and there are lots of exercises on them. Differences in words and everything, and pronunciation. And there's Canadian English even. I mean there are a couple of texts with exercises.")*
> (Valtteri, lower secondary level)

The use of this variety has already come up in a previous study: in a recent survey (Tergujeff 2012b), 21.1% of the respondents (EFL teachers working in Finland, n=76) reported that they use Canadian English for receptive pronunciation tasks. It was suggested that this is due to the current EFL textbooks used in Finland, which also include audio material in Canadian English (ibid.). The use of different varieties offers opportunities for raising accent awareness, and even for receptive *accent addition* (i.e. adding accents to one's receptive repertoire by means of perceptual training, as suggested by Jenkins 2000, 208–212). As there is great variation in the pronunciation of English worldwide, it is good for learners to be aware of this and prepared to encounter people who speak differently from the main pronunciation model offered to them in teaching; see e.g. Cunningham (2009).

3.5 Amount and success of pronunciation teaching

In recent years, it has repeatedly been claimed that pronunciation teaching is generally neglected, both in Finland (Iivonen 2005, 46; Lintunen 2004, 215) and internationally (e.g. Fraser 2000, Gilbert 2010). This claim can be seen as related to the rise of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which started at the end of the 1970s. The proponents of CLT largely rejected traditional pronunciation teaching as incompatible with teaching language as communication (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010, 11), yet offered no comprehensible communicative set of methods in return (ibid., 9). Also, many teachers find pronunciation difficult to teach (Macdonald 2002), and are of the opinion that their training in how to teach pronunciation has been insufficient (Breitkreutz et al. 2001; Foote et al. 2011; Henderson et al. 2012; Tergujeff 2012b).

In the present study, learners were asked how much attention was paid to pronunciation in the teaching they were receiving, and what they thought of the amount they received. The primary level pupils reported receiving plenty of pronunciation teaching. Added to the findings on the teaching of phonemic script, it seems that more attention is paid to pronunciation teaching at the primary level than at the lower and upper secondary levels. This is in line with the national core curriculum for basic education (Finnish National Board of Education 2004), which emphasises the primacy of oral language skills in teaching foreign languages, and states that the weight given to written skills is to be added gradually (ibid., 139). The present study gives grounds to speculate that currently the weight given to written skills is added at the cost of pronunciation, as the majority of the learners expressed dissatisfaction with the amount of pronunciation teaching at the lower and upper secondary levels. They stated that this component had not been dealt with sufficiently, and they hoped for more teaching in this area. This view is exemplified by the following quote:

(12) "Aika vähän minun mielestä. Siis siihen keskitytään ihan liian vähän koska se olis paljon tärkeämpää kun mitä sitä nyt harjotellaan. Minusta se on aika vähästä mitä me sitä harjotellaan. Ja just että koko sen tunnin pitäs pystyä puhumaan englanniksi jotenkuten ettei aina menis siihen että puhuu sitte oikeesti suomeksi ja sanoo jotain vähän sinne päin. Tulis semmosta sujuvuutta."
("There's way too little focus on that, as pronunciation is much more important than you'd figure from the amount of practice at school. I think we practise pronunciation very little. And I think we should speak English the whole lesson and not slip into Finnish. It would bring that fluency.")
(Anna, lower secondary level)

While many of the learners expressed that pronunciation teaching is insufficient, some appeared to have taken action on their own initiative to develop their pronunciation skills. They had adopted an active role in the learning process, both in class and out of class. Emma, for example, said she reads texts aloud at home to practise pronunciation, and that she regularly asks her teacher how words are pronounced, as exemplified in the following quote. It also appears that she has identified a way of learning that suits her, and that she is aware of her own learning.

(13) "Olen ihan hyvin kyllä oppinu. Siis minä ite aina tykkään kysyä että miten tämä äännetään kun en tiiä. Ja silleen oon ihan hyvin oppinu."
("I have learnt pretty well. I like to ask how something is pronounced if I don't know it. I've learnt well that way.")
(Emma, lower secondary level)

Despite the fact that most learners interviewed for the present study claimed that pronunciation teaching was insufficient, they nevertheless considered that they had learnt English pronunciation at school. "Learning by doing" – presumably meaning exposure to English and practising it by speaking – was mentioned frequently by the learners. The learners seemed to be saying that it would be impossible *not* to learn pronunciation at school, which gives an interesting addition to the discussion on whether pronunciation is a teachable skill in the first place. The positive effects of formal pronunciation instruction have been challenged by Suter (1976) and Purcell & Suter (1980), but most studies conducted in this area have reported on developed pronunciation skills after teaching experiments (for a synthesis see Saito 2012). The following quote from Anna is an example of how obvious the learning of English pronunciation in class is to the interviewees.

(14) "Joo, kyllähän sitä väkisinkin oppii ja kun kuuntelee niin, tekemällä oppii."
("Oh yes, you just learn, and when you listen, yes, you learn by doing.")
(Anna, lower secondary level)

The learners reported they had also learnt English pronunciation outside school. It seems that the majority of them engage in various leisure activities that include the use of English. When asked whether he had learnt English pronunciation at school, Valtteri was of the opinion that leisure activities had taught him more about English pronunciation than formal teaching:

(15) "No, jaa-a. Enpä nyt sanois. Ehkä tietenki jonkun verran. Sehän on että ääntämään oppii aina ku puhuu. Koulussa tulee aika paljon kuitenkin käytettyä englantia kun nää on englannin tunteja. Kyllä sitä on jonkun verran tullu opittua mutta suurin osa tulee vapaa-ajalta."
("Well, I wouldn't say so. Perhaps a little. You learn to pronounce whenever you speak, that's how it is. At school we use quite a lot of English, as these are English lessons. I've learnt some but mostly in my free time.")
(Valtteri, lower secondary level)

The learners' descriptions of their pronunciation learning outside of the classroom included various contexts. However, many of them had to do with media. The learners seemed to feel that listening to music, watching television and films, and playing online games is beneficial to their learning of English pronunciation. Playing online games includes talking to other players using English as a lingua franca.

(16) "Aika paljo sillä lailla ku jotaki pelejä pelaa. Onlainina. Nii siinä käytetään aika paljon Skypea ja TeamSpeakiä ja näitä, että että voi kommunikoida. Se on helpompaa ku ruveta kirjottelemaan siinä kesken kaiken. Siinä oppii aika paljo."
("Quite a lot by playing games online. We use Skype and TeamSpeak and so on, to communicate. It's easier than typing in the middle of the game. You learn a lot like that.")
(Valtteri, lower secondary level)

Foreign contacts in person were also mentioned by the learners as learning situations. According to the interviewees, these encounters typically take place with tourists and foreign seasonal workers in Finland (as in the case of Lassi, lower secondary level).

(17) Lassi: Ääntämään? No en. Onhan se mitä kesällä ulkomaalaisten kans. Siinäki jotaki.
("To pronounce? No. Or well, a little with the foreigners in summertime. I guess that's something.")
Interviewer: Niin sä kuitenkin puhut joittenkin kanssa englantia koulun ulkopuolella? Keitä ne ovat?
("So you do speak English with people outside school? Who are they?")
Lassi: No yleensä thaimaalaisten kanssa. Ja joskus kun pelaa netissä ni niitten ulkomaalaisten kanssa.
("Usually Thais. And sometimes when I play online I speak with the foreigners there.")

Overall, the learners seemed able to identify their own learning of English pronunciation in both formal and informal contexts. The English language is strongly present in Finnish society, and it is known from a nation-wide survey that young people in particular use English also in their leisure activities (see Leppänen et al. 2011). The present study sheds light on the language learning involved in these activities, as many of the interviewees were of the opinion that they have learnt English pronunciation while playing online games, listening to music, watching television and films, and encountering foreigners.

4. Conclusions

The aim of the present paper was to explore learners' views on English pronunciation teaching in the context of Finnish schools from primary to upper secondary level. This interview study yielded the following main results in answer to the research questions. The learners considered intelligible and fluent speech to be their main goal in English pronunciation. They did not express aspirations for a native-like accent, and did not commonly have an accent preference. According to the learners, English pronunciation teaching mainly relies on traditional methods such as imitation and reading aloud. Tasks on word stress placement were also frequently mentioned. Phonemic script (on the usefulness of which the learners were divided) is used more in the teaching at the primary than lower or upper secondary level. The results also suggest that pronunciation teaching is not necessarily very systematic but rather is spontaneous in nature. Textbooks seem to play an important role in English pronunciation teaching. A British or American standard variety is generally used as the pronunciation model. Pronunciation is taught extensively at the primary level, and the learners expressed satisfaction with this. The learners at the lower and upper secondary level expressed the opinion that pronunciation is not paid enough attention to in teaching, and would like more pronunciation teaching. Notwithstanding, all the interviewees stated that their pronunciation skills had developed because of classroom activities. In addition, many reported learning pronunciation outside of the classroom, e.g. through media and personal encounters.

The results of the present study imply that more attention could be paid to pronunciation at the lower and upper secondary levels. According to the learners, it is not sufficient to focus on pronunciation at the primary level only; instead, they would like to see a continuation of pronunciation teaching at the later stages. The major role of textbooks in teaching imposes pressure on them, as there is a risk of language items being left out of the teaching if they are not dealt with in the textbook. In this connection, it is worth keeping the old proverb about "good servants but poor masters" in mind: textbooks are valuable tools for the teacher, but it is the curriculum that defines the objectives of teaching and the teacher who uses his or her expertise in planning and teaching the lessons (cf. Cunningsworth 1984, 1). Teachers could also pay more attention to opportunities for learning pronunciation outside of the classroom, and try to build bridges between learners' leisure and classroom activities. After all, many of the learners interviewed for the present study indicated that they had learnt English pronunciation outside school.

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