

TEACHING GRAMMAR IN GRADES 7 THROUGH 9:
An analysis of English and Swedish L2 textbooks

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<p>Tiivistelmä - Abstract</p> <p>Kieliopin opettaminen on ollut osa vieraiden kielten opetusta niin kauan kuin niitä on opiskeltu. Kieliopin tuntemus kuuluu kielitaitoon ja sen hyvä hallinta mahdollistaa viestin perillemenon vaativissakin kommunikaatiotilanteissa. Suurin osa vieraiden kielten opettajista käyttää opetuksessaan oppikirjoja, joten niiden merkitys on suuri oppilaan kielitaidon kehittymiselle. Siksi on tärkeää tutkia, miten oppikirjoissa kielioppia opetetaan.</p> <p>Tässä tutkimuksessa analysoitiin kieliopin opettamisen näkökulmasta kahta englannin ja kahta ruotsin yläkoulun oppikirjasarjaa, jotka on julkaistu vuosina 2006-12. Kieliopin esittämistavat, käytetyt esimerkit rakenteen muodosta, merkityksestä ja käyttötilanteista sekä harjoitukset luokiteltiin ja arvioitiin perfektin ja pluskvamperfektin osalta.</p> <p>Tutkimus osoitti, että oppikirjat luottavat edelleen perinteeseen: kielioppi esitetään sääntöinä ja rakenteina, ja rakenteiden muodon opettaminen on pääosassa, merkityksen ja käyttötapojen jäädessä vähemmälle. Autenttista tekstiä tai puhekieltä ei käytetä esimerkeissä. Kielioppia harjoitellaan pääasiassa irrallisina lauseina käänös- ja aukkotehtävissä. Myös modernimpia vieraan kielen oppimisen teorioita on jonkin verran hyödynnetty tehtävien suunnittelussa. Esimerkiksi rakenteiden merkitys selviää oppilaalle tekstinymmärtämistehtävissä ja muoto suullisissa harjoitteissa ennen kielioppiasian selitystä tai kielioppisääntöjä johdetaan päättelytehtävän avulla. Kielioppinäkemystä kannattaisi tulevaisuuden oppikirjoissa laajentaa sekä mm. autenttisten tekstien ja aidosti kommunikatiivisten aktiviteettien osuutta kasvattaa.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

In an ideal world, language teaching should match the learner's needs and it should therefore prepare a language user to notice, understand, choose and accurately and effectively use structures and patterns that frequently occur in spoken and written communication in the situations they meet in real life. The quality of teaching material is of utmost importance for the language learner since it has a key role in introducing the structures of the target language and illustrating their use in authentic situations. It is therefore not insignificant how teaching materials are constructed, what they encompass and what their approach to language, language learning and grammar instruction is.

Grammar has been an essential part of second or foreign language (L2) teaching and learning for centuries, although the emphasis has certainly fluctuated from being the main subject of teaching to having a minor role in understanding the structures and patterns of a language. Teachers and learners alike might perceive grammar as a necessary evil, boring but important, which is needed to achieve fluent and accurate skills in communication. However, grammar instruction does not have to be a monotonous routine since both second language acquisition (SLA) theories and research in grammar teaching have contributed to grammar instruction methodology by providing an abundance of options to be applied in designing teaching materials and planning classroom activities. Currently the most prominent approaches emphasize integrating form-focused instruction in a communicative context thus promoting language use over explicit knowledge of it (Ellis 2012: 267-269).

Some time ago I came across several different options in teaching English foreign language (EFL) grammar and was fascinated by the variety of approaches to L2 grammar teaching. During my long experience as a language learner (almost 40 years) I had not met many of these in action and so I decided to further investigate this issue. In Finnish schools, L2 teachers are inclined to use ready-made language teaching materials (Luukka et al. 2008: 94), most often textbooks and exercise books from eminent publishers. This has obvious

advantages: it saves lesson planning time, ensures that the material is produced in accordance with the valid national core curriculum (NCC) and the contents have already been tried out with real learners. The lay perception is however that current textbooks are not based on the latest pedagogical thinking (Mátyás and Skinnari 2012: 15). Studies of teaching materials may therefore provide us with valuable insights that are important since first, teachers usually make the choice of teaching material themselves and would perhaps need some support to do this and second, the studies of teaching materials may also provide authors of future L2 textbooks with some ideas how to design a balanced teaching material that is based on recent SLA research.

Studies of L2 textbooks have been done from different perspectives in Finland; the communicative approach, learning styles, writing tasks, cultural issues and meta-cognitive support have been addressed but grammar instruction has been less studied. There are, however, some international studies which evaluate and analyse grammar instruction in L2 textbooks or give recommendations and guidelines how a methodological analysis of them could best be done.

The idea of the present study is twofold; first, to introduce alternative notions of grammar, options of grammar instruction based on commonly acknowledged SLA theories and practical applications of these options; and second, to analyse grammar instruction in four relatively recent English and Swedish L2 textbook series that are used in basic education in Finland. In the analysis, the explicit grammar description, language data used to illustrate target structures and the types of activities are examined in order to find out what kind of approaches grammar instruction utilizes in current seventh to ninth Grade English and Swedish teaching materials and how the chosen approach reflects commonly acknowledged principles of SLA and different perspectives on grammar teaching.

Chapter two, the role of grammar in L2 teaching and learning, provides a theoretical framework for this study; it examines grammar and grammar instruction from a number of perspectives: the definitions of grammar, the role of explicit grammar instruction and practical applications are discussed in the

light of SLA theories. In addition, previous studies on L2 textbooks are reviewed. Chapter three, the present study, introduces the aims of the present study and the research design; the evaluation framework is adapted from previous studies and will be explained in detail. Chapter four, findings, describes the explicit grammar description, data and activities in each textbook series and compares and contrasts them from three perspectives, namely, the methodological options used, the three dimensions of grammar and the six criteria for designing pedagogical grammar. Chapter five, discussion, discusses the findings of the present study in the light of form-focused instruction, compares and contrasts the results to those of the previous studies and gives some recommendations to future authors of L2 textbooks. Finally, the last chapter, conclusion, concludes the present study, evaluates it and gives some suggestions for further study.

2 THE ROLE OF GRAMMAR IN L2 TEACHING AND LEARNING

The present study builds on hypotheses that grammar is an inseparable part of a language and grammar teaching in one form or another has an essential role in developing a learner's language skills. Thus the present study begins with defining what grammar actually is and discussing the role of grammar instruction in SLA theories. Then some practical options in grammar instruction are illustrated using grammar books especially directed to English as second or foreign grammar teaching as examples. The final section of this chapter reviews previous studies that focus on L2 textbook evaluation and grammar instruction in particular.

2.1 Defining grammar

Defining grammar has altered over the centuries and especially in the 20th century. When our ancestors saw grammar as a set of rules which had to be memorized, the contemporary views are more diversified: in addition to the grammar-as-rules view, today some see grammar as frequent patterns which

can be identified in corpus data, while others see it as an algorithm which the human mind utilizes when processing information (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 1-14) or even as a dynamic, emergent, context-sensitive phenomenon (Larsen-Freeman 1997:141-165). The definition of grammar has an impact on instructional practices: the notions of grammar and language in general affect how they are taught. In traditional approaches, such as the grammar-translation or audio-lingual method, grammar teaching concentrate on teaching structures and rules at sentence level, for example, knowing the various parts of speech and the syntax of a sentence. Today this limited view of grammar has been replaced by broader and more practical approaches which, for example, take into account text and discourse levels of grammar (Barton 1999: 5-6).

The idea of using texts and discourse to examine grammar in context (Barton 1999) is based on one of the contemporary definitions of grammar. The rest of this section will introduce alternative ways of looking at grammar to create a common ground for discussing the justification of grammar teaching and reflect on the most common approaches and methods later on in the present study. The definitions of grammar are here classified into seven categories which will be introduced one at a time:

1. grammar as a set of rules,
2. grammar as structures,
3. grammar as mathematics,
4. grammar as algorithms,
5. grammar as texture,
6. grammar as collocation and
7. grammar as an emergent phenomenon.

Grammar as a set of rules. Seeing grammar as a set of rules is a traditional way of analysing grammar by syntactic and sentence-level functions and word class units (Byrd 2005: 546) and it often results in grammar-translation type of exercises. This prescriptive approach generalizes the regularities in a language into portions learners may digest and gives them security by letting them to hold on to static explanations (Larsen-Freeman 2003: 49). An example from *A Practical*

English Grammar shows how detailed yet concise a rule of plurals can be (emphasis in original):

Twelve nouns ending in **f** or **fe** drop the **f** or **fe** and add **ves**. (Thomson and Martinet 1986: 25)

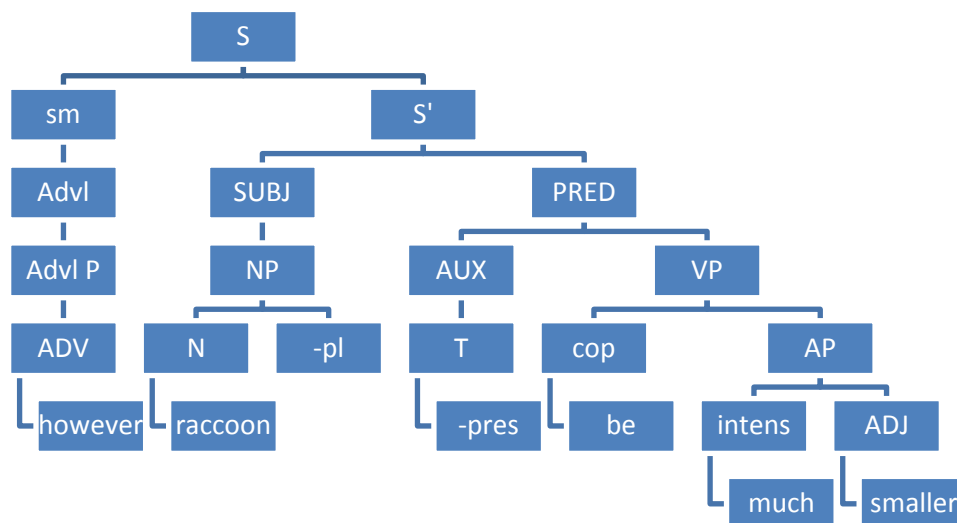
This approach, however, may not be completely helpful for learners: teachers should not expect learners to remember a list of rules or to understand complicated metalanguage involved in explanations and consequently to apply the memorized rules in their own communication (Thornbury 2009: n.p.). An example from a basic Swedish grammar book *Grammatik från grunden* shows how surprisingly high the number of metalanguage words can be in a prescriptive explanation (emphasis by me):

Kasuskategorierna är två eller ibland tre: grundkasus, genitiv och för personliga pronomen också ackusativ. [...] Genitivändelsen -s sätts ut bara en gång sist i nominalfrasen, helst på nominalfrasens huvudord – vi har således ingen kasuskongruens inom nominalfrasen. (Andersson 1993: 68)

In conclusion, research shows that learners may remember a prolific amount of complex rules but not be able to apply them in communication (Ellis 2006: 87).

Grammar as structures. Structuralism sees language as a system with structurally related elements (Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Pawlak 2012: 5); grammarians try to identify and list all the possible or important structures and patterns in a language. The audio-lingual method is based on this view of grammar: the assumption is that instead of memorizing a set of rules a learner could master a language by practising and habituating grammatical sentence patterns in the form of oral drilling (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson 2011: 35). Oral drills are often not authentic and they may be monotonous, but repetition after a given model may encourage learners to try out a new structure in a safe environment and thus lower the anxiety of using it (Folse 2009: 290). Repetitive oral drills not only help learners to automate their pronunciation and thus develop fluency in speech, but also enable them to notice and remember other dimensions of the phrase, such as morphological, syntactic, semantic, pragmatic etc. characteristics (Kjellin 2002: 136).

Grammar as mathematics. According to Chomsky (Abrahamsson 2009: 156), there is an innate universal grammar consisting of a set of core principles common to all languages and acquisition occurs when a child or a language learner **sets** language specific parameters unconsciously based on input. In L2 acquisition a learner has to reset these parameters if they differ from his/her first language (L1) (Abrahamsson 2009: 165). So instead of listing all the possible structures in a language, the deep structure or logic of the innate grammar is described (Platzack 1998: 15-17). This is done, for example, with tree diagrams: the core sentences in a language are described with hierarchical combinations of phrases and words, and these diagrams can also be used to generate all the possible grammatical sentences of the language (Beskow, Lager and Nivre 1996: 23). As an example a tree diagram from *The grammar book* (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999: 523), which illustrates one possible positioning of the logical connector *however* in a phrase “However, racoons are much smaller”:



These diagrams may not be psychologically applicable for a learner (Thornbury 2009: n.p.); a learner cannot automatically generate sentences with the help of them although the essence of this theory lies in unconscious knowledge of language rules and generative processes in the human mind (Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Pawlak 2012: 5).

Grammar as algorithms. The human brain is similar to a computer that processes linguistic information in the input using cognitive processes without

any innate knowledge (van Patten and Benati 2010: 37); from the accumulative input the brains refine intake into self-organizing networks which represent the linguistic patterns in the language (Larsen-Freeman 2003: 81). The intake, in turn, is internalized to a learner's interlanguage system, which again is used to produce output (Ellis 1998: 42-43). Grammar can thus be seen as a set of production plans which are needed for processing information, that is, input and output, in order for the grammar to emerge over time (Thornbury 2009: n.p.), (more about this model see section 2.3.)

Grammar as texture. Functional grammar implies that grammar can only be understood in its surrounding context, in other words, as an inseparable part of a text. One example of this kind of thinking can be found in the introduction of *Grammar in context*, where the author explains his view of grammar: "grammar is the way we organize language – putting words, phrases and sentences into an order that makes sense to our audience" (Barton 1999: 10). An example of an exercise which encourages learners to pay attention to and pick examples from a text:

Pre-1900 writing often uses more complex structures and more formal vocabulary than present-day writing. Find three words or phrases which seem complex or formal. (Barton 1999: 42)

In other words, contextual awareness makes learners who know the fundamentals of grammar pay more attention to how grammar is used in discourse (Hughes and McCarthy 1998: 268). It also encourages them to analyse the meaning and use of grammatical structures and devices, helps them to choose and use them appropriately and, finally, to analyse the effects their choices have on communication.

Grammar as collocation (likely co-occurrence). Corpus linguistics has shown a close connection with vocabulary and grammar; there is no boundary between grammar and lexis but they are dependent since particular words are frequently used in particular grammatical contexts (Byrd 2005: 549). As an example some uses of the word *any*, which also reveal different grammar patterns, such as *not + any + plural or uncountable noun*:

Is there any milk?

She hasn't got any experience.
If you have any questions, ... (Thornbury 2004: 10)

In other words, fixed or semi-fixed multi-word expressions (also called chunks) form lexical units which constitute a large proportion of both spoken and written discourse (Larsen-Freeman 2003: 82-83), and grammar can be thought to be a product of the accumulation of the lexical combinations an individual encounters in his/her lifetime (Hoey 2005, cited in Thornbury 2009: n.p.). Using memorised chunks is a normal phase in language acquisition, but it is also a common strategy for a language user and a sign of language competence (Sundman 2010: 328).

Grammar as an emergent phenomenon. Connectionists think that language is an emerging structure, a system of weighted connections in a learner's mind and grammar is the result of constructions having been learned (van Patten and Benati 2010: 76). Connections are strengthened by frequently occurring examples of local features (phonemes, morphemes, lexemes) in input, which form patterns and regularities without interference from outside. *Grammar as algorithms* view pronounced quite similarly that the human brain processes language patterns as self-organizing networks but emergent grammar reaches even further: instead of set production plans, language is seen as a dynamic, organic system, which evolves and changes (Larsen-Freeman 2006: 591). It is seen as a complex system, similar to a bee swarm or a school of fish, which grows and organises itself from the bottom up according to situational or, more specifically, context demands.

As these seven ways of defining grammar show, our understanding of grammar may vary significantly and the definition we have adopted has an impact on our way of teaching it. SLA theories suggest that grammar is either a special mental construction (a linguistic approach) or a manifestation of behavioural imprints (a cognitive approach) in the learner's mind (van Patten and Benati 2010:5). Either way, grammar is implicit knowledge of the language which the learner can use in communication; thus, grammar teaching can be considered to be an intervention in pursuit of enhancing the learner's explicit and implicit knowledge of grammar (Ellis 1998: 42-43). Despite the way how grammar is

looked at in instructional settings, a general goal for a language learner is probably the ability to recognize and to produce “well-formed” sentences in the target language (Thornbury 1999: 3). In addition, an ability to adapt language use (semantics and pragmatics) in encountered situations in real life is equally important. Thus, pragmatic and cultural use of language may be the most useful for a language user though accuracy and fluency of use should not be neglected either (Norrby and Håkansson 2007: 115).

Grammar as a product, process or skill. When grammar is put into educational practice, it can be seen, for example, as a) a product: grammar is a system which is a total of its parts; b) a process: grammar can be used to communicate effectively; or as c) a skill: with the help of context, grammatical structures are used to create meaning (Batstone 1994: 51-52). The focus on teaching grammar as a product is to make learners to notice grammatical structures and to construct and reconstruct their knowledge of the language system. When grammar is taught as a process, a learner proceduralises his/her knowledge while using language in meaningful contexts. Grammar as skill merges these two approaches: the learner uses language to convey meaning but pays attention to structures when doing so. In short, all these three approaches can be applied in grammar instruction; they just use different methods and have different goals.

In the next section, different views of teaching grammar and how they are supported by SLA research findings are discussed. The key questions are: is explicit grammar teaching necessary or useful, which approaches are typical in grammar instruction and which methods, techniques and activities are considered plausible in the classroom in order for learners to learn grammar items and develop their interlanguage system at their own pace.

2.2 Current understanding of L2 grammar instruction

As long as people have studied languages they have studied grammar, or language form, as an integral part of it (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 1). Thus, grammar has been taught systematically for 4000 years (Robins 1997, cited in

Fotos 2005: 654). Traditionally grammar teaching concentrated on grammar rules, that is, presenting forms and functions of isolated structures and patterns of the language one after another and practicing them with specific exercises (Ellis 2006: 84), most notably by the grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 2).

Nevertheless, it has been debated whether explicit grammar teaching is needed or whether it has any effect on language acquisition and learning; if language is acquired in a natural order, should we teach grammar in the same order or is teaching grammar redundant? In addition, questions, such as when is grammar instruction at its most efficient, and whether different approaches should be used for learners in different ages are of interest. A common perception by both teachers and learners is that grammar teaching and learning is necessary but at the same time boring (Jean and Simard 2011: 475). In this section an investigation is made to find out why scholars, despite arguments against it, encourage teaching grammar and what their ideas are of when grammar instruction is at its most efficient, what grammar items should be taught and how should it be done.

Arguments against and for grammar instruction. In the 1970s, scholars, such as Krashen and Pienemann, began to debate whether explicit, formal language instruction is needed, useful or necessary to learn a language (van Patten and Benati 2010: 47-49). They argued that formal instruction had no or only a confined effect on language acquisition. According to this view, language acquisition is an unconscious process to which explicit formal instruction cannot significantly contribute. Natural acquisition order and developmental sequences of language features are seen as evidence for this; despite explicit instruction, the progression is immutable. Other arguments against explicit instruction exploit, for example, Chomsky's idea of a universal grammar (Larsen-Freeman 2003: 79-80); since a learner has access to the core principles of the universal grammar, he/she sets (or resets in case of L2) the parameters of the target language unconsciously on the basis of input and thus acquires the target language without external interference.

Based on these theories, communicative language teaching (CLT) abruptly neglected L2 grammar instruction in the late 1970s and 1980s but it did not turn out to be a complete success, as van Lier (2001: 257) playfully remarked: “the discarded bathwater may have had a few babies in it”. The need for explicit grammar teaching was noticed at some point after CLT had made inroads into Canada, India and China and teachers had abandoned grammar teaching (van Lier 2001: 257). Teachers became aware that meaning-focused CLT was inadequate and learners did not acquire all linguistic features available in input (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 8). Students became also critical, Chinese college students claimed in a survey that their inaccuracy and unsatisfactory performance in English originated from a lack of knowledge of syntactic structures (Yu 2008, cited in Wang 2010). This purely experiential instruction in which L2 is supposed to be acquired solely through communication, as in the case of L1, has been criticised by many researchers (Scheffler 2009: 5-6). The main arguments were: first, adult learners use their cognitive skills in learning a language and second, CLT is ineffective regarding learners’ grammatical accuracy.

A turning point was again reached at the beginning of the 1990s when many scholars became convinced that “making learners aware of structural regularities and formal properties of the target language will greatly increase the rate of language attainment” (Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, Thurrell 1997: 144). The distinction between L1 and L2 acquisition became evident and numerous empirical studies were conducted to investigate the matter (Ellis 2005: 307). Over the years, several scholars after reviewing dozens of studies have come to a conclusion that explicit instruction is beneficial (van Patten and Benati 2010: 50-51; Gass and Selinker 2008: 380): it cannot alter natural acquisition orders or developmental sequences but it can reinforce learners’ abilities to notice linguistic features, speed up the learning processes and help them to advance further. However, critical arguments against these studies have also been aired (Truscott 2000, 2004); their results have been challenged by claiming they used biased testing techniques or too simplistic an approach to SLA acquisition or

grammar, and thus, support for natural, experiential, unconscious acquisition and language immersion has again been expressed.

The present study bases on those research results which acknowledge that grammar instruction is beneficial to a L2 learner. The rest of this section concentrates on discussing when and how it could be realized in L2 teaching to best promote language acquisition and what there is to teach.

When grammar should be taught. SLA theories and research provide valuable insights why, when, what and how grammar should be taught but they do not provide any **definite** guidelines to these matters. A general understanding is that L2 acquisition occurs in interaction that provides a learner with comprehensible input and output (Ellis 1995: 87). A learner's interlanguage develops in sequences in pursuance of enhancing implicit knowledge and results in communicative competence. Explicit knowledge gained by teaching may help developing this implicit knowledge but does not guarantee it. Grammatical competence, however, requires explicit intervention in the form of grammar instruction in order for a learner to use language accurately and fluently in real communication situations (Ellis 1995: 87; Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 14).

The place or timing of grammar instruction in L2 curriculum has aroused discussion and recommendations (Ellis 2002b: 22-23): grammar instruction is not seen necessary or even useful for beginners, quite the contrary, most of the beginners are likely to acquire fundamentals of word order rules and the English auxiliary system naturally. In addition, language acquisition, both L1 and L2, with children and adults alike, begins with learning words and formulaic sequences (chunks) and thus an overt focus on grammatical rules is not necessary until at the intermediate stages of development. Studies show inconsistent results of the efficacy of grammar instruction for elementary school pupils (Herman and Flanigan, 1995: 9). Thus, teaching beginners should focus more on meaning than form (Tomlinson 2008: 6) and have a stronger focus on lexical growth (van Lier 2001: 262). The chunks learned in the early stages of acquisition, however, serve as further input for learners' developing

interlanguage (Gass and Selinker 2008: 384) since learners do not acquire the target language forms perfectly one at a time (Nunan 1998: 101-102). Therefore grammar instruction is not detrimental to beginners, but the view of grammar should be something else than “grammar as a set of rules”.

Adult learners and learners past puberty, however, need more conscious focus on forms. Despite substantial exposure to the target language, structures are not internalized into adult learners’ interlanguage without conscious operations (Larsen-Freeman 2003:90). Therefore, especially learners who are past puberty and also learners who wish to reach a high level of communication proficiency in a L2 benefit from a focus on target language forms (Scheffler 2009: 5). In addition, L2 learners are used to grammar instruction and they expect to get it (Ellis 2002b: 20): advanced level learners themselves consider explicit grammar instruction to be particularly useful regarding those grammar points they find difficult (Scheffler 2009: 10).

What grammar points should be taught. The reasons why grammar instruction is necessary, at which point it should be done and which methods should be applied are widely discussed by various scholars. The question of what to teach has not occupied researchers that much. Perhaps the reason is considered to be too obvious as Ellis (2006: 88) remarked: those items that cause difficulties to learners should be taught. But he continued that defining those difficult items is somewhat complex; either the learner has difficulties in understanding the grammatical feature (explicit knowledge) or in learning to use the feature accurately in communication (internalizing). Ellis (2006:88) further defined the focus of grammar teaching to cover: (1) forms that differ in the learner’s L1 and the target language; (2) marked forms. Contrastive analysis as such has been heavily criticized and widely abandoned since it cannot explain the majority of learner errors (Abrahamsson 2009: 35-38) but some of the errors are caused by transfer from L1 to L2 and are therefore worthy subjects for teaching (Ellis 2006: 88). Markedness stems from the idea of rare and typical features in languages, in which the rare one could be seen as cognitively complex (post verbal negation) or requiring advanced articulation (cluster of three or more consonants in the

final position) and thus it needs additional attention in teaching compared to the typical one (Abrahamsson 2009: 149; van Patten and Benati 2010: 54).

Many teachers follow the order of an L2 textbook or a valid curriculum in grammar instruction, although a more reactive approach could be more effective; the grammatical items should be taught based on learner needs and natural acquisition order rather than the curriculum (Salo 2007: 427). Recent research has also showed that the order of grammar items in L2 textbooks does not comply with the natural language acquisition order, and thus grammar instruction is not as efficient as it could be (Nyqvist 2013: 70).

How grammar should be taught. There is no absolutely right or wrong way of teaching grammar or at least research has not been able to verify the superiority of any particular method (Ellis 2012: 70), but it is important for a teacher to be aware of his/her assumptions of learning, teacher and learner roles, the nature of language, and thus makes conscious choices of how to teach, what materials or activities to use and how to respond to learners questions, answers and errors (Borg 1999: 162). A study by Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Pawlak (2012:111) compared input-based approach, namely Ellis' interpretation tasks, and traditional output-oriented grammar instruction and found out that input manipulation has beneficial effects on the development of interlanguage but also traditional instruction leads to frequent and successful output production. The conclusion was that in both cases learners benefitted from the pedagogic intervention and improved their performance. A balance is needed between various kinds of grammar instruction, practice exercises and form-focused tasks in order for the learner to take in and internalize the grammar points, that is, to form correctly and use successfully a wide variety of grammatical features in their communication (Nunan 1998: 109). Thus, it is not an exaggeration to say that learners benefit from carefully planned and executed form-focused instruction in a communication context despite the specific approaches and methods applied. But to ensure that all learners will benefit from grammar instruction various form-focused strategies should be integrated in CLT.

Many teachers make use of a method called PPP (present-practice-produce) during their teacher education and they apply it regularly and faithfully thereafter. PPP is a widely spread practical application of teaching L2 grammar (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 4). This popular method is a deductive approach to language teaching, and it consists of three stages which are executed one after another. First, in the presentation stage, a new grammar point is introduced and explained and perhaps some rules are provided. Second, in the practice stage, the learner does various kinds of exercises to rehearse this language feature. In the last stage, the production stage, the learner uses the structure in free and perhaps even more communicative production tasks. The PPP method is also commonly used in Finland and taught to future L2 teachers (based on the author's own experience). However, there are alternative options available for grammar instruction which exploit the different ways of viewing grammar and the wide range of input- and output-based options based on current understanding of L2 grammar instruction (see sections 2.3 and 2.4).

To sum up, the present study adheres to those theories which acknowledge that grammar instruction in some form of intervention during the language acquisition process can benefit the learner. Comprehensible input, interaction and output are seen as vital parts of L2 acquisition, moreover, explicit focus on linguistic items is considered useful and even necessary to facilitate acquisition. These principles are acknowledged in form-focused grammar instruction and it will be introduced in the next section.

2.3 Form-focused grammar instruction

Form-focused grammar instruction, that is, introducing grammar items in teaching, can realise in several ways and in different phases of the L2 acquisition. This section first defines *focus-on-form* and *focus-on-forms* approaches to grammar instruction and then introduces a computational model of L2 acquisition with input-based, explicit instructional, interaction- and output-based and corrective feedback options of form-focused grammar instruction.

Focus-on-form and focus-on-forms. The approach to grammar instruction can be for example, a) a skills-based approach where L2 learning is considered a cognitive

skill which develops through conscious and systematic study and practise or b) a task-based approach, where pedagogic interventions in the form of grammar instruction occur in a supporting role while learners focus on interaction to perform a task (Scheffler 2009: 6). Pedagogic executions of these two approaches are often called: *focus-on-forms* and *focus-on-form* and, despite their confusingly similar names, they differ significantly in their objectives and focus and how they realise in teaching (Gass and Selinker 2008: 380). The aim of the former approach (*focus-on-forms*) is to systematically teach and practise grammar items one by one and of the latter (*focus-on-form*) to add instruction of grammatical items into other, often communicative, meaning-focused activities. The execution and focus of these approaches may vary greatly: *focus-on-forms* may be realised in separate grammar lessons or sessions that focus intensively on forms and may exploit either inductive or deductive instruction, in other words, the grammar points are explained to learners or they may discover the underlying grammar rules themselves (Ellis 2006: 100). In contrast, the *focus-on-form* approach in a communicative classroom may realise in grammar-tasks which also have social value since learners cooperate and interact while performing these meaningful tasks. It also gives opportunities to provide them with discreet corrective feedback as error-focused pedagogic intervention may be beneficial in language development (Ellis 2006: 102; Larsen-Freeman 2006: 611). In the present study, **form-focused instruction** will be used to refer to explicit grammar instruction in general regardless of the approach unless there is a specific reason to demarcate between *focus-on-forms* and *focus-on-form*.

A computational metaphor for L2 acquisition is often used to show how a language learner processes input to produce output; developing his/her interlanguage in this subconscious process (see figure 1).

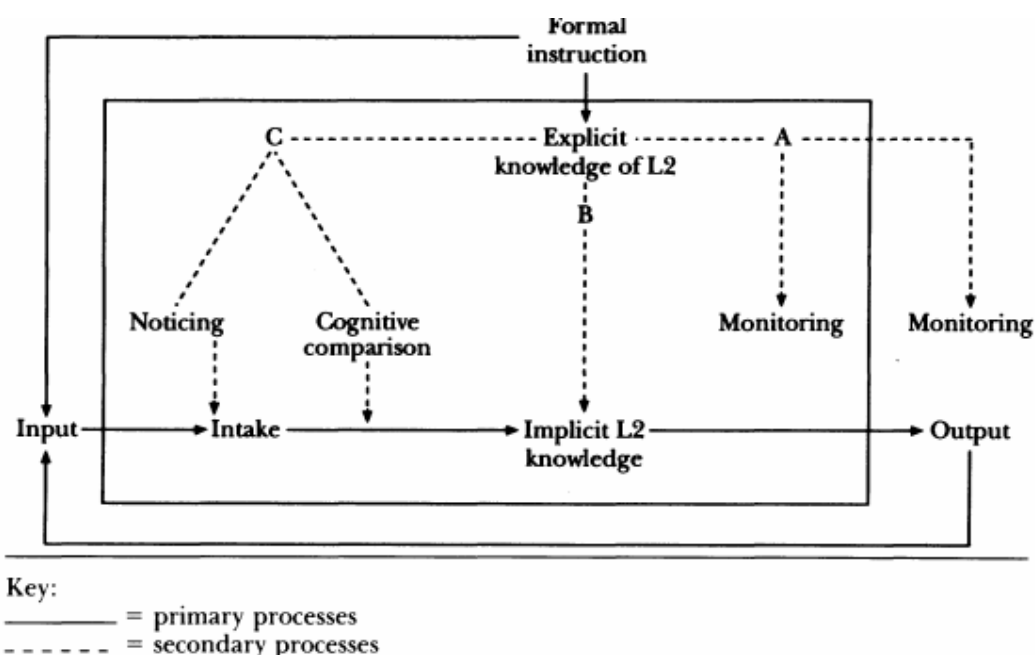


Figure 1. A computational model of L2 acquisition (Ellis 1995: 89)

In this model, there are several points for possible intervention where a variety of form-focused instructional options can be used to accelerate a learner's interlanguage development (Ellis 1995: 89; Ellis 1998: 42). Numerous methods, techniques and materials have been suggested and created by practitioners and scholars in order to support and accelerate the acquisition process. Some of these options are presented here and they are categorized to: input-based options, explicit instructional options, interaction- and output-based options and corrective feedback options. The categories overlap; an interaction or explicit instructional option may be, for example, input or output-based.

Input-based options. The vast majority of theories and approaches to SLA acknowledge that the role of input is essential in language acquisition and that input is also the basis of a learner's construction of grammar (van Patten and Benati 2010: 36-37). Moreover, before target language input can become intake, a learner has to attend to linguistic items while processing the input (Larsen-Freeman 2003: 93-94). Input-based options in form-focused instruction are based on these ideas and therefore aspire to make a learner aware of grammatical features in input and to notice them, that is, recognise what is in the input and consciously register it in memory (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 21, 37). These options may be exposure- or response-based and they consist of input enhancement,

specially contrived or manipulated input data to trigger a learner's comprehension of the target structure, tasks for consciousness-raising, that is, learners attending to and figuring out the properties of grammar features or explicit explanations of grammar structures and rules before or after exposure to input.

Input enhancement is used to make certain forms in input more noticeable to a learner and the ways to do this may vary considerably in the degree of directness, duration and intensity: a teacher may use explicit metalinguistic explanations, rule presentations or implicit clues such as highlighting, gestures or recasts and this may happen either repeatedly or on single occasions (Sharwood Smith 1991, cited in Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 38-39). Furthermore, the focus of enhancement may vary from positive to negative, a learner's attention is drawn to a correct form or to an error. Exposure-based instruction is implicit: the target structure is not explicitly mentioned or explained (Ellis 2012: 285). It provides learners with exemplars of the target structure in writing or speaking and can be either enhanced or enriched.

Textual enhancement means that input is manipulated to call a learner's attention to specific linguistic features by using typographic (bolding, highlighting, italics, colours) or acoustic (stress, repetition, intonation) devices (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 36). In *input flooding*, enriched input contains a number of instances of a certain target structure but these are not highlighted in any way (Ellis 2012: 285). These methods attempt to make linguistic forms salient in either written or oral input in an implicit, positive manner: learners' focus is drawn to correct forms while they process the text for meaning and no explicit instruction is provided. Research suggests input enhancement to have positive effect on noticing but for better effectiveness in learning especially with complex target features it should be accompanied with formal grammar instruction, some input- and output based activities and corrective feedback (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 46-47; Ellis 2012: 289).

Raising learners' consciousness of grammatical features is considered more useful than providing them with production activities (Larsen-Freeman 2003:

91). The *Input Processing Model* is interested in strategies and mechanisms that learners use to make form-function-meaning connections and also how they get linguistic data from input while they concentrate on comprehending meaning (van Patten 1996: 7, 14). One of the main principles of this model suggest that learners process input for meaning before they process it for form. In *Processing Instruction*, a practical application of this model, the aim is to enrich learners' intake with structured input. Learners are assisted to make form-meaning connections by providing explicit information of linguistic forms in input and also by pointing out possible problems that processing might have. In principle, learners process the form in activities with structured input and they are not required to produce output (Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Pawlak 2012: 76).

Considering the importance of input processing and structured input Ellis (1995: 88) suggests designing *interpretation tasks* that are sequences of activities "that focus learners' attention on a targeted structure in the input and that enable them to identify and comprehend the meaning(s) of this structure." This series of activities first draw learners' attention to the meaning of a specific grammatical feature and help them to make a form-function connection, then require them to notice the properties of the grammatical feature and finally to make an error identification or a cognitive comparison, that is, identify the gap between their own use of the feature and the way it works in the input. These stages (attention to meaning, noticing the form and identifying the gap) are hypothesized to be important for intake and interlanguage development, in other words, they enhance a learner's implicit knowledge.

Explicit instructional options. Explicit instruction is used either directly (explicit presentation of a grammatical feature or phenomenon) or indirectly (giving learners an opportunity to discover linguistic patterns and structures themselves) to make learners understand the regularities and rules connected to the target structure. This may, for example, include formal instruction before and after an interactive communicative task (Fotos 1998: 306). Explicit grammar instruction does not, however, necessarily mean teaching metalinguistic knowledge about a language (van Lier 2001: 256).

Form-focused grammar instruction and CLT can be integrated by creating consciousness-raising grammar tasks which learners solve interactively in groups or pairs (Fotos 1998: 306; Fotos and Ellis 1999: 194). This kind of tasks aim to encourage learners to discover and discuss the grammatical properties of the L2 since the tasks themselves are grammatical problems which need to be solved. In a study by Fotos and Ellis (1999: 206), consciousness-raising grammar tasks enhanced learners' implicit and explicit knowledge of grammatical features and also functioned as an effective type of classroom activity. In a reference group, a traditional grammar lesson where a teacher explained the grammar point explicitly did, however, result in more durable, long-term learning outcomes on the focused grammar point. Possible reasons for these results might be that the learners were not accustomed to autonomous communicative grammar tasks and the exchange of information in the group was rather mechanical.

In textbooks, grammar is often presented out of context with contrived, discrete sentences (Fortune 1998; Ellis 2002a; Celce-Murcia 2007). The presentation aims to explain to a learner how the grammar feature in question is formed (form), what it means (meaning) and when and why it is used (use) (Larsen-Freeman 2003: 38). In addition, the exercises following the presentation involve repetition and manipulation of the form and provide the learner with declarative, explicit knowledge and skills (Nunan 1998: 102). If learners are also given an opportunity to explore the communicative value of alternative grammatical forms in authentic discoursal contexts in which they naturally occur, they will learn not only to form structures correctly but to express their intentions and attitude by choosing an appropriate form to communicate intended meanings (Nunan 1998: 108).

Integrating a corpus-driven approach into a discourse context creates opportunities to inductive or deductive lexicogrammatical learning using an extensive corpus database (Liu and Jiang 2009: 67). The learner is exposed to frequent encounters to a target structure, which has positive effects on language awareness, develops a better command of rules and patterns, promotes the

importance of context in grammatical choices, increases critical understanding of grammar, promotes discovery learning and makes learning interesting and effective (Liu and Jang 2009: 67-69). An L2 textbook or a teacher may provide learners with a combination of functional information, structural presentation and real-life examples of a grammar point to encourage a focus on the relationship of form and meaning (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 53-54).

Interaction- and output-based options. When language learners have taken in properties of the target language, they will eventually start producing output. To bring about target structures in a learner's output, controlled and/or free communicative production activities are used to help him/her acquire structures more fluently and accurately. Output-based activities can be individual, pair or group work.

The role of output and negotiation of meaning are considered important in language acquisition (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 107). Research on group work shows that peer interaction is effective and beneficial to language learning provided that the group is engaged collaboratively to a form-focused task and the talk in the group is beneficial to everybody (Ellis 2012: 190). Task-based language teaching is an approach with a number of different versions, it promotes a communicative approach to teaching and the aim is "using English to learn it" (Ellis 2012: 196-197). Various kinds of tasks can be used, such as information- and opinion-gap activities where a group of learners usually focus on what is talked about than how language is used. An ideal task pushes learners to produce output collaboratively and requires them to negotiate meaning and form, self-correct and help each other (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 108-109).

One way to focus on form in output is to push learners with clarification requests to reformulate utterances and thus make their output more comprehensible (Takashima and Ellis 1999: 174, 185). This kind of striving for modified, that is, precise, coherent and appropriate, grammatical forms gives learners an opportunity to produce enhanced output and have greater control of the forms they already have acquired. There is evidence that also listeners, in a

classroom or in group work, gain grammatical accuracy since they are exposed to input while speakers, performing a meaning-focused task, are pushed to self-correct.

Corrective feedback options. As already seen in the previous example about clarification requests during meaning-focused tasks, corrective feedback is provided to help learners to notice their incorrect use of structures and to compare their own production to the teacher's or another correct example of the structure. There are a number of ways of doing this either using input-providing or output-prompting strategies in an implicit or explicit manner: corrective feedback is often classified to six categories: recast, repetition, clarification request and explicit correction, metalinguistic clue and elicitation (Ellis 2012: 139). Corrective feedback is supposed to result in a learner's modified output either by contributing to acquisition through the input it provides (input-providing strategies) or by developing the learner's performance skills (output-prompting strategies) (Takashima and Ellis 1999: 186).

The aim of feedback can be either conversational or pedagogical (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 73). Conversational feedback involves negotiation of meaning to enhance comprehension and pedagogical feedback negotiation of form in an attempt to correct a learner's utterance. Teachers' beliefs vary on the timing of the corrective feedback: should it be provided instantaneously or can it be delayed and what type of corrective feedback is most beneficial. Research has not been able to provide definite answers to these questions (Ellis 2012: 135).

General suggestions. In addition to these options in different phases of the acquisition, here are some views and statements how grammar should and also how it should not be taught. First, a learner cannot typically focus on meaning and form simultaneously (van Patten 1996, cited in Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 21) and there is therefore a need for a variety in activities to practice these both separately. Second, sentence-level drills cannot provide a learner with pragmatic competence (Celce-Murcia 2007: 2, 5); they focus strictly on sentence-internal grammar rules, which are rare in authentic discourse. More contextualized, meaningful and authentic activities enhance a learner's pragmatic skills,

especially if the learner has to complete an interesting task or otherwise achieve a goal. Third, grammar and vocabulary should not be separated (Thornbury 2004: i); it hinders learning since excellent language learners remember sentences and sentence fragments which retain regularities and patterns, which, in turn, can quickly be put into use. Fourth, authenticity is also required in order the input to be useful since a learner needs authentic input to develop implicit knowledge; authentic language input gives examples how grammar functions in real-life discourse, how grammatical forms convey meaning and how a grammatical choice is determined by context and purpose (Nunan 1998: 105, 107). Moreover, if authentic literary texts are used as a source of comprehensible input for inductive grammar instruction, a learner has an opportunity to explore and analyse genuine texts and discover linguistic patterns using the same input (Paesani 2005:18-19).

The different views of grammar and options of form-focused instruction have considered by many pedagogues and consequently they have authored L2 textbooks which provide grammar in context, combine grammar and vocabulary, use authentic language samples etc. Some of these are introduced in the next section.

2.4 Some practical applications of teaching L2 grammar

L2 textbook writers often claim to base their approach on current SLA theories and real-life experiences but the abundance and diversity of these and the different notions of grammar has inevitable consequences to teaching materials: which grammar items are covered, how they are presented, how the learner is supposed to discover, uncover or recover the items and how these different items are practiced. In this section some Swedish and English grammar books are reviewed and discussed in order to expand the vision and prospects of grammar instruction. The purpose is to introduce a variety of practical applications available and spell out their underlying notions of language, language learning and grammar instruction. The books are intended for various

target groups and purposes and are therefore not comparable with each other in these respects.

Mainstream grammar textbooks. A significant amount of grammar textbooks, authored by native and non-native L2 language teachers and practitioners, are available for intermediate and advanced L2 learners. The uniformity of the notion of grammar and the arrangement of grammar items are salient in these books; regardless of the year of publishing or the language, the books present grammar points one part of speech or a word class at a time with explicit descriptions or a rules, with contrived discrete sentences to illustrate and with controlled production exercises to practice them. This is true (in publishing order) of *Beskrivande svensk grammatik* (Lindberg 1976), *Ruotsin kielioppi* (Nikander and Jantunen 1979), *A practical English grammar* (Thomson and Martinet 1986), *Deskriptiv svensk grammatik* (Holm and Nylund 1988), *Grammatik från grunden* (Andersson 1993), *Grammar rules* (Silk, Mäki and Kjisik 2003) and *Fullträff igen* (Fiilin and Hakala 2011). Typical of these books is that they promise to **focus on particular uses** of a grammatical pattern (such as *will + -ing*) as in *Advanced grammar in use* (Hewings 2005: viii) or claim to **give clear rules** for grammar as in *Grammatik Galleri* (Kaunisto, Paasonen, Salonen and Vaaherkumpu 2009: 4).

Fortunately there are authors who have considered also other notions of grammar, methods of presenting grammar items or types of activities they provide their learners with. *Kanal Grammatik och praktik* (Harkoma, Lilius, Kaunisto, Ihalainen, Aho, Bengloff and Väyrynen 2004) provides intermediate learners with an introductory exercise to each grammatical area the book covers. It uses input enhancement to draw learners' attention to this particular grammatical feature. These exercises consist of text paragraphs from which learners are asked to underline certain forms, categorise them and infer when and how they are used. *Funktionell svensk grammatik* (Bolander 2001a, 2001b: 3) for advanced learners uses a more holistic approach to grammar: it emphasises that each and every grammatical form is used to build meaning in communication and therefore grammatical classifications or metalanguage

explanations are not enough for understanding the multifaceted, powerful and living tool a language is. The book views phonological, morphological, semantic and syntactic aspects of Swedish grammar and provides learners with activities that ask them to contemplate grammatical features, to analyse texts or phrases, to motivate their answers, etc.

In addition to these two books that depart from the mainstream, seven English L2 grammar textbooks will be introduced in more detail to illustrate different options in teaching EFL grammar: *Grammar dictation* (Wajnryb 1990), *Impact grammar* (Ellis and Gaies 1999), *Exploring grammar in context* (Carter, Hughes and McCarthy 2000), *Uncovering grammar* (Thornbury 2001), *Natural grammar* (Thornbury 2004), *Teaching grammar creatively* (Gerngross, Puchta and Thornbury 2006) and *The anti-grammar grammar book* (Hall and Shepherd 2008). Particularly their notion of grammar, what grammar items they cover and what their approach to grammar instruction is will be discussed.

Notions of grammar. Many of the writers of novel and alternative approaches explicitly state their notion of grammar or refer to underlying theories, and these can also be inferred from the classroom activities and exercises the books contain. For example, Thornbury (2001: vi) defines his notion of emerging grammar clearly in *Uncovering grammar* and assumes that “grammar is a kind of organic process that, in the right conditions, grows of its own accord and in its own mysterious way”, and thus, uncovering grammar means engaging learners in the process and encouraging them to notice what is going on in a language.

In *Natural Grammar* Thornbury (2004) advocates for a lexical approach in teaching and states that the grammar of English can be learned naturally through its words by building words to phrases and meaningful utterances since that is what happens in language acquisition. Particular words and chunks tend to re-occur in comparable patterns and through repeated use and association, words create and can be found in predictable combinations and contexts; thus the grammatical system is a creation of semantic associations and collocations. The key principle of a lexical approach is that language consists of grammaticalized lexis, not lexicalized grammar. To derive insights from L2, a

learner is provided with a text from which he/she makes sense instead of presenting structural patterns with arbitrary example phrases (Willis 1994: 56). This method allows the learner to process the text for meaning from his /her own understanding of grammar and draw useful insights of the use of the target language. *Natural grammar* connects grammar and vocabulary studies by introducing the most frequent words in the English language with natural collocations and is therefore suitable for learners who seek to polish up their "traditional grammar" whilst expanding their vocabulary use.

In *Teaching grammar creatively*, Gerngross, Puchta and Thornbury (2006: 6) present evidence that many learners are unable to transfer good formal knowledge of grammar to effective use regardless of their age or learning style. In *Impact grammar* Ellis and Gaies (1999) claim the same by ways of example and theory but warn of abandoning grammar instruction altogether; by contrast, they concentrate on adapting grammar teaching to the way how learners acquire grammar. They, along with the authors of the other textbooks, are inclined to use holistic methods of teaching grammar in which structures are acquired if not subconsciously but inferred by the learner from given language data. Ellis and Gaies (1999: 4) note that in the light of recent studies grammar is learned through noticing and understanding the grammar point instead of the traditional focus on practice and production; the production is a result of acquisition rather than a way to learn.

What to teach. Hardly any L2 textbook attempts to present a comprehensive grammar, that is, to cover all possible grammar items of the target language, but they often focus on structures that are considered to be particularly difficult to internalize successfully as stated in *Teaching grammar creatively* (Gerngross et al. 2006:5). *Natural grammar* presents 100 most frequent words in the English language with their natural grammar patterns, collocations and set phrases; *The anti-grammar grammar book* (Hall and Shephard 2008) concentrates on verb forms; grammar points in *Impact grammar* are said to reflect the most common problematic areas for L2 learners (Ellis and Gaies 1999: 3); *Exploring grammar in context* (Carter, Hughes and McCarthy 2000) unfolds core grammatical features

in use both in written and spoken discourse; *Uncovering grammar* (Thornbury 2001: xx) alleges that the teacher and the learner are the best resources to “free the grammar”, and finally, *Grammar dictation* (Wajnryb 1990: 14) also supports the idea that teaching is a needs-based reactive process, although the book presents preselected structures to begin with. The contents of grammar instruction and the role of a teacher is changing to less traditional: the teacher is expected to dynamically adapt the content of teaching according gaps he/she notices in learners’ knowledge (Wajnryb 1990: 6), to refrain from providing ready-made answers and solutions (Hall and Shephard 2008:8) and to delay corrective feedback until the end of the lesson (Wajnryb 1990: 8).

How to teach. The main approach to grammar instruction, exploited in the books introduced here, is the inductive approach. In this approach learners’ focus moves from observation and noticing of patterns to broader generalizations and understanding of the use of the language; learners are asked to infer the rules from example texts, and, thus, they are the centre of the class and responsible for their own learning. The role of a teacher is therefore more facilitative than leading, more reactive than pre-emptive. The learner’s independence and ability to learn the use of the structure through practice of the language in context, and to realize the rules from the practical examples is respected, and the teacher is available when the learners need help to do this. Thus, the teacher’s role is to select texts, prepare exercises and give feedback in the form of error correction. The advantages of the inductive approach are inviting: first, students can focus on the use of the language without being held back by grammatical terminology and rules that can inhibit fluency, and second, it promotes increased student participation and practice of the target language in the classroom in meaningful contexts.

These seven practical applications exploit a variety of techniques and activity types: first, *Natural grammar* tests how well the learner memorizes the collocations and phrases presented; second, *Impact grammar* and *Grammar dictation* utilize listening comprehension where a learner’s initial encounter with the grammar point is a meaning-focused listening task, which is an unusual

choice for an exercise and perhaps more challenging than reading exercises, and then the same text is recycled in the next exercise and the learner's attention is directed to the forms, which according to Ellis and Gaies (1999: 4) is required for learning to take place. Third, *Anti-grammar grammar book* provides learners with problem-solving tasks to discover grammatical rules and meanings and to gain an understanding of English verb forms from a sample of written English. Fourth, in *Teaching grammar creatively* and *Exploring grammar in context* the initial stage of learning is awareness-raising, including learner-led actions for the learner to notice and discover the grammar pattern or a rule of use in some language data, that is, examples in context, followed by various practice and production activities as in most of the approaches. To give the learner an opportunity to analyse patterns and regularities that exist in real-life communication, most of the practical applications emphasize presenting grammar in context and using authentic or slightly adjusted (written or spoken) texts for grammar instruction.

In all of these practical applications the classroom procedure has several steps: first, usually some warm-up, awareness-raising or discovery exercises to make the learner notice and understand the grammar point; then, in *Teaching grammar creatively* the learner is allowed to experience a period of silence before putting the newly learned forms into use; next, a variety of practice and productive exercises follows; and finally, exercises to check whether the learner has understood the grammar point, discussion and/or a summary exercise to make sure the learning objectives have been met. During communicative exercises the teacher notes down errors and gives feedback and discusses them afterwards with students, now concentrating on form.

To sum up, language learning does not have to be dull; quite the contrary, using a wide range of techniques and strategies in teaching creates variation and provides learners with an opportunity to find learning exciting and to discover learning methods that are suitable for themselves. In addition, inductive activities engage learners with the learning process, and with time and practice they learn to refine and develop their own linguistic resources in relation to

what they already know and to take responsibility of their further development. Finally, frequent exposure to authentic or slightly adapted spoken and written language data helps learners to notice regularities and patterns in natural contexts and to choose and use appropriate structures in real-life situations, which is the ultimate purpose of language learning (Carter, Hughes and McCarthy 2000: viii).

The current section has described the notion of grammar and practical application of grammar instruction in a selection of L2 grammar books but in the next section, an effort is made to investigate how language teaching materials can be systematically evaluated and analysed and what kind of studies have been carried out to examine grammar instruction in particular in L2 teaching materials.

2.6 Previous studies on L2 teaching materials

Textbook research is by no means a new phenomenon; already shortly after the First World War comparative analyses of textbooks were initiated in order to revise texts that were biased or flawed (Pingel 2010: 8-9). Scholars, such as Williams (1983: 251) and Ellis (2002a: 176), have stressed the importance of evaluating teaching materials in order to make the most of them and they have developed frameworks or criteria for evaluating and analysing grammar instruction in L2 textbooks.

This section introduces various alternatives to study L2 textbooks and these studies in turn illustrate the multi-faceted nature of grammar instruction. As discussed before, there are different ways of looking at grammar, various suggestions when and how grammar should be taught and diverse insights into L2 acquisition. Studies of grammar instruction therefore reflect the different approaches, methods and ideas alike. Thus, varied suggestions for evaluation criteria, methodological frameworks and questions for assessing L2 textbooks will be found.

The studies that will be reviewed provide understanding of: first, criteria for evaluating textbooks, targeted to any teacher (Williams 1983); second,

classifying and categorising the methods used in the descriptions, exercises and data to illustrate grammar items (Fortune 1998; Ellis 2002a; Fernandez 2011); third, finding out whether a specific approach, a theory of grammar instruction or an SLA principle can be found (Macias 2010; Millard 2000; Masuhara and Tomlinson 2008); fourth, analysing the data used to illustrate grammar points (Cullen and Kuo 2007; Sokolik 2007; Alemi and Sadehvandi 2012). Finally, this section concludes with a list of recent studies on L2 textbooks done by undergraduates at the University of Jyväskylä.

Developing criteria for textbook evaluation. Williams (1983: 251-255) compiled a list of criteria for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of English L2 textbooks and developed a framework for teachers to devise their own criteria and checklist of items for evaluating L2 textbooks. He reminds that no textbook should master a teacher, quite the contrary, a teacher should always assess teaching materials based on the valid curriculum, target group needs and classroom setting and only after that make the most of the material by his/her own judgement.

The evaluative scheme included four assumptions about teaching which should be used when a checklist of items is generated. Each of these four assumptions (up-to-date methodology in L2 teaching; guidance for non-native speakers of English; need of learners; relevance to the socio-cultural environment) were matched with seven criteria: general, speaking, grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing and technical. By doing so a list of principles by which a textbook is assessed can be created. In textbook evaluation, each of these principles are given weight and rating and thus a mathematical calculation can be done how well the principles are fulfilled in a specific textbook.

The sample checklist for grammar assessment included the following four principles: the book 1) stresses communicative competence in teaching grammatical items, 2) provides adequate models featuring the structures to be taught, 3) shows clearly the kinds of responses required in drills (e.g. substitution) and 4) selects structures with regard to differences between L1 and L2 cultures (Williams 1983:255). These principles reflect the time and theories of

the early 1980s so if one were to make a checklist for English language textbooks today, the principles would probably be different. But the idea of evaluation criteria and a checklist that any teacher could use is reasonable.

Survey of the quality of pedagogic grammar and activities. Fortune (1998: 67-80) conducted two surveys of EFL grammar practice books at ten years' intervals. In the introduction of the review from 1998 he first summarises the survey he made in 1988. The results of this earlier study identified three primary features in grammar practice books: "isolated, uncontextualised sentences; manipulation of the unmarked form of a lexical item (usually a verb) in brackets; and, most characteristic of all, gap filling" (Fortune 1998: 68). The study also confirmed that only the deductive approach to grammar teaching was present in these books from the 1980s.

In 1998 Fortune (1998: 67-80) conducted a new survey and again studied six grammar practice books for the intermediate learners, published during 1995-1997, for the following seven aspects which he applied to each book:

1. the learners for whom the book were intended,
2. the quality of pedagogic grammar,
3. the quality and variety of grammar activities,
4. the theoretical principles behind those activities,
5. the approach to learning employed,
6. the use of tests, and
7. the design.

To make sure that the results were comparable and consistent he studied the same grammatical items or areas in each book. These were: conditional sentences, the passive voice, verb forms to express future meanings, present simple vs. progressive and count and uncount nouns. While describing grammar instruction he repeatedly referred to six design criteria for a pedagogic grammar by Swan (1994: 46-51) "truth, demarcation, clarity, simplicity, conceptual parsimony, relevance" (see section 3.3).

The results of the study showed that the quality of the pedagogic grammars varied: in some books the explanations were clear, accurate and simple while in others oversimplified or even misleading. The activities in these books varied from mechanical, isolated, decontextualised, sentence-level gap-filling exercises and mildly innovative activities, such as correcting errors to more consciousness-raising, such as dictation and inductive “do it yourself” activities with authentic texts.

Methodological options in grammar teaching materials. Ellis (2002a: 155-179) claimed that relatively few methodological analyses of grammar instruction in L2 textbooks had been conducted and he, therefore, studied the methodological features of six grammar practice books and created a framework which could be used for describing and designing materials for L2 grammar teaching. According to him the key questions in analysing L2 teaching materials are: what methodology is used for teaching grammar and what the empirical or theoretical justification for it is.

Ellis chose one particular grammar point, namely, the present continuous tense, and studied it in each book making notes of the options used. In the end, he classified and categorised all the options to create a system for others to use in both analysing existing and designing new grammar teaching materials.

The six grammar practice books studied showed evidence that as a rule grammar instruction consists of explicit explanation of the target grammar point and controlled production activities, although some of the books exploited more features. Ellis (2002a: 161) claimed that the underlying theory in all of these books were a traditional one: grammar is a) knowledge that can be transferred to learners and b) skills that can be practiced with exercises originating from the grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods.

Ellis (2002a: 176) concludes that although the knowledge of experienced teachers is important in designing teaching materials, a greater emphasis should be placed on methodological options identified by SLA theories and research than repeating the traditional “good practices”. He challenges the future authors of

grammar practise materials to consider the following options: first, a discovery-based approach for learners to discover the rules by themselves might better engage them in the learning process and help them to investigate language autonomously. Second, providing learners with data that promotes noticing the target grammar point will create a “condition for input to become intake” (Ellis 2002a: 166). Finally, Ellis calls for reception-based options to promote input processing and gives guidelines for the input-processing approach in teaching materials in three-steps: first attention to meaning, then attention to noticing the form and finally noticing the gap in learners’ use of the structure and the target structure.

Methodological options in grammar teaching materials revisited. In her recent study, Fernandez (2011: 156) studied approaches to grammar instruction in six L2 beginning-level Spanish textbooks, published in 2006-2009, and the research questions were: what are the approaches to grammar instruction and how do these approaches reflect current perspectives on grammar teaching. She conducted her study by using a similar process as Ellis (2002a:156-159): she examined one grammar point, namely, the Spanish preterite, in each book, took note of the features used and classified and categorised them according to the methodological options framework by Ellis (2002a: 158).

It was found that the primary features of grammar instruction included explicit grammar explanation and controlled production practise. Thus, most textbooks did not sufficiently reflect current perspectives of grammar teaching. However, four out of the six books had contextualised, input-based activities which adhere to the idea of exposing learners to comprehensible, meaningful input, which is essential to L2 acquisition.

A three-dimensional grammar framework. Macias (2010) studied the presentation of the passive voice in two English L2 textbooks. The starting point for the study was “the three dimensions of grammar”, that is, form (phonology, graphology, semiology, morphology and syntax), meaning (semantics) and use (pragmatics) adopted from Larsen-Freeman (2003: 34-35). These three dimensions were first

thoroughly introduced and then several aspects of the English passive voice were discussed based on reference grammar books.

In this study the method was to describe in a detailed manner how the form, meaning and use were illustrated in the two textbooks. Swan's (1994: 45-55) design criteria for pedagogic language rules (truth, demarcation, clarity, simplicity, conceptual parsimony and relevance) were used similarly as in the study by Fortune (1998) to discuss the quality and sufficiency of grammar description and the problems with balancing between truth and simplicity.

It was found that one of the books focused more on form than use and meaning and it had a deductive approach, while the other focused more on use and meaning and employed an inductive approach with consciousness-raising and discovery activities where learners infer the grammar rules by themselves through the examples and context. The latter book also had activities in which learners were expected to use linguistic metalanguage in answering questions.

Form-focused instruction in communicative language teaching. Millard (2000) examined 13 ESL grammar books for adults to analyse how well they integrated focus-on-form in CLT. He designed a checklist with twelve statements in four categories: the use of context in activities and examples; the communicative focus of the activities; dimensions of grammatical explanations; and the practicality, that is, teacher-friendliness of the book. In the study, the present progressive aspect was examined in each book and a five-level scale was used to assess each question.

The results showed relative consistency between textbooks regarding category variation: some books had high scores in all four categories and some had low scores in every category. A general impression was that the low-scoring books were designed to give explicit grammar instruction without contextualization or a communicative approach in activities. The results suggests that grammar instruction concentrates mainly on sentence level and more emphasis should be put on illustrating the function and pragmatic use of grammar points.

Critical view to language learning materials: are textbooks for teaching or for learning. Tomlinson (2008) edited a book which includes findings from 16 studies of EFL and ESL textbooks conducted by different scholars. The L2 textbooks studied were used for different purposes and in different parts of the world. In a provocative manner, Tomlinson (2008:4) hypothesises that many of these materials are actually designed for teaching linguistic items rather than for providing opportunities for L2 learning and acquisition and the learning outcomes would therefore not be the best possible. His ideas of effective teaching material encompass first, the use of authentic language and second, activities that help the learner to pay attention and notice language and discourse features.

One of the sub-studies reported was a survey conducted amongst teachers and learners of seven General English textbooks published during 2001-2006 (Masuhara and Tomlinson 2008: 17-37). The books were evaluated using 14 criteria based on principles drawn from recent SLA studies (Ellis 2008; Tomlinson 1998; Cook 2001, cited in Tomlinson 2008: 17). The criteria concentrated on evaluating the material mainly from the learner's point of view:

1. To what extent do the materials provide exposure to English in authentic use?
2. To what extent is the exposure to English in use likely to be meaningful to the target learners?
3. To what extent are the texts likely to interest the learners?
4. To what extent are the activities likely to provide achievable challenges to the learners?
5. To what extent are the activities likely to engage the learners affectively?
6. To what extent are the activities likely to engage the target learners cognitively?
7. To what extent do the activities provide opportunities for learners to make discoveries about how English is used?
8. To what extent do the activities provide opportunities for meaningful use of English?
9. To what extent do the materials provide opportunities for the learners to gain feedback on the effectiveness of their use of English?
10. To what extent are the materials likely to sustain positive impact?
11. To what extent do the materials help the learners to make use of the English-speaking environment outside the classroom?
12. To what extent do the materials help the learners to operate effectively in the English-speaking environment outside the classroom?

13. To what extent do the materials treat English as an international language?
14. To what extent do the materials provide opportunities for cultural awareness?

The study did not claim to provide an objective analysis of the books evaluated but rather to give a subjective but systematic impression of them. The summary of the results reported several shortcomings which were found in the textbooks (Tomlinson 2008: 319-320): the materials often underestimated learners intellectual and emotional maturity by providing too simplistic texts, they tended to overuse the PPP approach and thus shifted the focus from learning to teaching, the language items were insufficiently recycled and should have occurred in the material before and after they were focused on, they focused on preparing learners for examinations by providing activities that are likely to occur in tests, and finally, they failed to encourage learners to experience language outside the classroom.

Studies on the data. Studies on data may concentrate analysing for example, how authentic the language in the texts is, whether spoken language exists and whether the texts are biased, incorrect or unsuitable for their intended audience. Cullen and Kuo (2007: 361-386) studied 24 EFL textbooks for adult learners at five proficiency levels, which were published between 2000 and 2006, to find out which common features of spoken grammar could be found in the textbooks and what their purpose was. Their result showed that informal conversational English, which usually is marked as colloquial style in reference grammars or incorrect in prescriptive grammar books, was only randomly present in EFL textbooks. Nevertheless, the authors assured that teaching spoken grammar is essential; otherwise not even advanced language learners would sound natural in everyday conversation.

Sokolik (2007: 3) drew example sentences from recently published grammar textbooks and studied if the texts and example sentences had some racist, sexist or socio-economic bias, stereotypes or factual errors. Her observations showed that people in example sentences tended to present social classes who were well-paid, had vacations, made journeys and bought plenty of products. She also pondered the double-edged sword of using brand names in texts and

illustrations: they make the data more authentic but may impair local economies in the extreme.

A study on English L2 textbooks by Alemi and Sadehvandi (2012: 64-74) reported various deficiencies, pointing out for example, that practice for developing speaking skills was not sufficient and also that European culture the book represented is not suitable for the Iranian context. The results showed that the textbooks available in Iran did not meet the teachers' expectations either from the pedagogical or cultural point of view.

Studies in the University of Jyväskylä. In Finland L2 teaching materials, that is, L2 textbooks and exercise books from the most eminent publishers, have been widely studied by undergraduate students to investigate how they present and teach various aspects of language. Studies conducted recently in the University of Jyväskylä include, for example, evaluating what skills the textbooks present for learning to learn (Heikkilä 2013), how different learning styles are utilised in textbooks (Pänkäläinen 2012) or how culture is portrayed in textbooks (Lamponen 2012; Lappalainen 2011). In addition, writing exercises (Kivilahti 2012), formulaic sequences (Ylisirniö 2012) and pronunciation (Salenius 2011) have been examined.

Grammar instruction, however, has not inspired undergraduate scholars since 2009 when Kopsa and Loikkanen studied the role of constructivism in recent Finnish as L2 and Swedish L2 teaching materials. Their study on three Swedish exercise books showed that the majority of grammar exercises were based on translating between the source and the target language. Despite the 22-35 per cent of translation exercises, 9, 7-11 per cent of all the grammar exercises were parroting after a given example and 6 per cent were listening exercises. The ideas of constructivism were incorporated in 23-27,8 per cent of all grammar exercises.

Conclusions of the previous studies on L2 grammar instruction. In most of the studies reviewed, particular grammar points were chosen and systematically examined in each L2 textbook. The authors' approach to grammar instruction and L2

acquisition was analysed by exploring how each grammar point was presented and which kind of illustrative data and activities were provided. Quite surprisingly the findings in the recent studies on grammar instruction in L2 textbooks were in line with the older ones (Fernandez 2011; Ellis 2002a; Fortune 1998): the most prominent features included explicit grammar explanation and controlled production practice. A considerable proportion of the textbooks seemed to adhere to the conventional PPP method (Fernandez 2011; Tomlinson 2008) which is more teacher than learner-centred. The efficiency and practicality of the PPP method has been challenged by more novel perspectives on L2 teaching which emphasize input-processing and tasks for rules discovery, awareness raising and noticing the gap, in addition to contextualized, communicative activities; features that were, however, present in some books (Millard 2000; Ellis 2002a; Macias 2010; Fernandez 2011). Nevertheless, greater emphasis on the meaning and pragmatic use of the grammar items should be incorporated in grammar instruction in L2 textbooks (Millard 2000; Macias 2010).

Generally speaking the new textbooks resemble each other (Fernandez 2011: 165) and continue to utilise traditional ways of teaching grammar instead of incorporating newer perspectives. Reasons for this noticeable conventional behaviour could be that teachers are not willing to adopt new ideas for grammar teaching or rely on past experience due to a lack of professional development. Publishers do not dare therefore release too novel books to the market for the fear of reducing their market share. Some of the books show, however, signs of utilizing methods that perhaps suggests a shift towards more learner-centred approaches. The NCC for basic education in Finland states that in teaching a dichotomy is always present: on the one hand education has the task of transferring cultural tradition from one generation to another but at the same time it has the mission “to create new culture, revitalize thinking and acting” (NCC 2004: 12). It will be interesting to see how these two approaches are present in current L2 teaching materials: what kind of balance there is between traditional and novel ways of looking at grammar and grammar instruction.

3 THE PRESENT STUDY

This chapter discusses the starting point for the present study: first, the reasoning, aims and the research questions; second, the sample of L2 textbook series chosen and the NCC according to which the teaching materials should have been designed; and finally, the methods to analyse the series and introduction of the present and past perfect grammar points for reference in analysis.

3.1 Aims of the present study

The aim of the present study is to analyse commonly used teaching materials for Grades 7 to 9 in basic education in Finland with a specific focus on how grammar and structures are presented, how their use is illustrated and how they are practiced. The idea for the study has risen from my personal experiences in L2 learning which are also recognised by scholars: first, there is a noticeable chasm of grammar teaching approaches and options available and the ones that are commonly used in teaching materials (see section 2.6). Second, studies show that both learners and teachers consider grammar boring but necessary (Jean and Simard 2011: 475) and finally, many learners find grammar instruction difficult but a mandatory part of L2 learning (Boström 2004: 78).

I agree with Williams (1983: 254) that language teaching materials should be carefully analysed before they are used and with Ellis (2002a: 175-176) that when new material is designed, some insights and possibilities provided by SLA theories and research should be used in addition to teachers' practical experience. This is based on three hypothesis: first, teaching and learning grammar has an important role in building up sufficient knowledge for functioning L2 skills; second, of Finnish L2 teachers, 70 % state that textbooks are the most important means in their teaching (Luukka et al. 2008: 68) and third, teaching materials not only teach what they claim to teach but also shape learners' views of human beings and society (Karlsson 2011: 44).

Given that every few years, new textbook series are launched to the educational market of which the most recent ones have not been systematically evaluated

and the lack of grammar instruction analysis in L2 textbooks in particular, I decided it is time to take an analytical look at the L2 teaching material for Grades 7 to 9 in basic education in Finland to see whether they have incorporated grammar teaching methods and techniques promoted by researchers in the field of SLA or if they persistently conformed to the L2 textbook traditions of using deductive approach, PPP method and grammar-translation exercises.

Research questions

The probing question is: which approaches to grammar instruction do contemporary 21st century teaching materials exploit. First, do they employ inductive or deductive methods, the PPP method or the communicative form-focused grammar instruction approach; and which of the three dimensions of form, meaning and use do they emphasise. Second, is authentic or spoken data used to illustrate the use of grammar structures and third, are activities receptive or productive, how much control does a learner have, how do activities reflect on consciousness-raising and noticing purposes and are they contextualized. Thus, the overall research question of the present study is:

1. What are the approaches to grammar instruction in current English and Swedish teaching materials for Grades 7 to 9?

To answer the question it is further divided into sub-questions:

- a) What is the quality of pedagogic grammar, that is, what kind of explicit description of grammar does the materials exploit?
- b) What kind of language data is used for illustrating the use of grammatical features?
- c) What kinds of operations, that is, activities, are used for practicing grammar?

In order to answer these questions a selection of English and Swedish L2 textbooks and exercise books will be studied and reported using the framework

of methodological options by Ellis (2002a), which is detailed in greater detail in section 3.3.

3.2 Data

In the present study a selection of teaching material for English and Swedish L2 teaching in secondary school will be analysed. The English textbook series are *Spotlight* 7-9 and *Top* 7-8 and the Swedish textbook series *På gång* 7-8 and *Premiär* 7-9 (see table 1). The criteria for choosing these series is that they are relatively new, published during 2006-2012, so they should have the latest and most advanced approaches available on the teaching material market. These series are published by two most notable teaching material publishers in Finland: *SanomaPro* and *Otava* and it is therefore justifiable to suppose they are in widespread use. *Spotlight* and *På gång* are the latest English and Swedish L2 series from *SanomaPro* and *Top* from *Otava*. *Otava* is currently working on a new series, *Megafon*, for Swedish L2 but so far only material for Grade 7 has been published and *Premiär*, which is a somewhat older series was therefore selected to this study.

Table 1. The series studied in the present study

Series	Language	Grades	Publisher	Published
Spotlight	English	7-9	SanomaPro	2010-2012
Top	English	7-8	Otava	2011-2012
På gång	Swedish	7-8	SanomaPro	2011-2012
Premiär	Swedish	7-9	Otava	2006-2009

Each teaching material series, *Spotlight*, *Top*, *På gång* and *Premiär*, consists of several items: a textbook and an accompanying exercise book for the pupil, a teacher's material, aural material either downloadable on the net or on CD for both pupils and teachers, additional material on the net and so on. Currently *Top* (published in 2011-2012) and *På gång* (published in 2011 and 2012) only have teaching material for Grades 7 and 8. *Spotlight* is published in 2010-2012 and it also has some e-learning material and some grammar exercises for pupils on the net. *Premiär* series is somewhat older, published in 2006-2009, but it is nevertheless used in basic education and has a wide selection of materials.

The textbooks and exercise books of each series will be used as primary sources of the present study, the supplementary materials will only be sporadically addressed if they provide some additional value. Each series has a guide for teachers, and they will be examined to find out if the authors explicitly comment or state the justification or intentions for their choice of approach, methodology and techniques used. Material on the net may also be referred to occasionally.

3.2.1 Aims of L2 teaching in basic education in Finland

Often the L2 textbooks used in basic education in Finland have been authored by practicing language teachers who should be aware of both the objectives set by the curricula and the best practices in classroom. The objectives, core contents and expected outcomes of teaching English and Swedish in Grades 7 to 9 are outlined in the Finnish national core curriculum for basic education (NCC 2004) and will be addressed in this section.

English, A language. English is the most popular L2 learned in Finland. Of all pupils at Grades 7 to 9 in basic education, 99 per cent study English (Kumpulainen 2011: 50). The NCC (2004: 141-143) emphasises capabilities for functioning in foreign-language communication situations: these include that pupils can understand main ideas and key points in clearly organized texts (written or spoken) which contain general information, can cope in informal conversational situations and notice some of the key differences between different varieties of English.

The objectives concerning grammar or language structures include basic declension of verbs and key tenses, use of nouns, adjectives and the most common pronouns and prepositions and main rules of syntax with conjunctive structures. The expected outcomes in English after Grade 9 (see Table 2) defined according to a language proficiency scale which is an application of CEFR proficiency scale for language learning, teaching and assessment (NCC 2004: 278-295).

Table 2. Final-assessment criteria for a grade of 8 in English (NCC 2004)

Listening comprehension	Speech	Text comprehension	Writing
B 1.1 Functional basic language proficiency	A 2.2 Developing basic language proficiency	B 1.1 Functional basic language proficiency	A 2.2 Developing basic language proficiency

The level of language performance in listening and text comprehension is expected to be already on *B1.1 Functional basic language proficiency* level at the end of Grade 9 whilst a learner's own production in speech and writing are on *A2.2 Developing basic language proficiency* level. Thus, to get a good grade (8 on a scale of 4 to 10) the learner is expected to have independent language skills in listening and reading comprehension.

Swedish, B1 language. Most often Swedish studies begin at Grade 7. For this *B1 language*, the NCC (2004: 123) emphasises basic communicative competence and oral interaction in particular. Moreover, intercultural competence and skills and strategies for studying languages are part of the objectives. Objectives concerning Swedish language structures include the most essential verb structures, declension of nouns and adjectives and main rules of syntax including conjunctive structures.

Expected learning outcomes in Swedish at the end of Grade 9 (see Table 3).

Table 3. Final-assessment criteria for a grade of 8 in Swedish (NCC 2004)

Listening comprehension	Speech	Text comprehension	Writing
A 2.1 Initial stage of basic language proficiency	A 1.3 Functional elementary language proficiency	A 2.1 Functional elementary language proficiency	A 1.3 Initial stage of basic language proficiency

The expected level of language performance varies from *A1.3 Functional elementary language proficiency* to *A2.1 Initial stage of basic language proficiency* depending on the skill. In other words, to get a good grade (8 on a scale of 4 to 10) the learner is expected to have elementary skills in speech and written

production but have already reached a basic language proficiency level in listening and text comprehension.

In conclusion, the language learning objectives in the English and Swedish language expect that listening and reading comprehension skills develop faster and further than speech and writing skills. However, since after Grade 9 most pupils have studied English for five to seven years (and up to nine years) and Swedish for only three years, the expected proficiency level is higher in all skills areas in English than in Swedish.

An extensive study was carried out to find out the attitudes and conventions of L2 teaching and learning of Finnish L2 teachers and learners in Grade 9 (Luukka et al. 2008). Of L2 teachers, 60 per cent consider the NCC to be very important in setting objectives in teaching (Luukka et al. 2008: 67). Since each municipality or even individual schools has its own curricula for L2 teaching, teachers state that these also have an important role in setting objectives for teaching. However, no less than 98 per cent of Finnish teachers use L2 textbooks in their teaching very often, and almost as many, 95 per cent, also use the accompanying exercise book as often (Luukka et al. 2008: 94). In other words, although teachers recognize the significance of the curricula, they seem to rely on ready-made teaching materials and hence there is a need to evaluate the textbooks and exercise books that are currently used in L2 teaching.

3.3 Methods

Different perspectives, such as procedural, structural or functional, can be used to analyse teaching materials (Ammert 2011: 28-33). The **procedural** perspective explores a teaching material as part of a procedure in a social context: the development from its inception until the completion of the product, which is then consumed by teachers and learners. It sees the origin, consumption and influence of the product in society. Studying the impact of politics, the national core curriculum, contemporary understanding of teaching or authors' personal perceptions of a teaching material are examples of procedural aspects in analysis of teaching materials; how and what kind of imprint these forces leave on a teaching material in a general level. Structural and functional perspectives are

more concrete; the **structural** perspective analyses how circumstantial factors, such as current pedagogical trends, a valid curriculum or the publishing company, impact the author and the final product in a given situation. A **functional** perspective is interested in what kind of impact the final product, the teaching material, has on the learner and on what she/he learns.

In the present study, a structural analysis of a sample of teaching materials for Grades seven, eight and nine in basic education in Finland will be conducted. Factors that are considered in this analysis are the current insights of SLA and grammar instruction (sections 2.2 and 2.3) and the Finnish NCC (section 3.2.1). Cultural or social elements are only considered in relation to data used for examples, that is, to illustrate the use of a grammar point. Other factors, such as traditions in designing teaching materials, authors' personal experiences or business economics, are not considered. The functional aspect is not analysed in the present study either; research on learners' attitudes towards a chosen teaching material or the impact a chosen teaching material has on learning outcomes are subjects for other studies.

A system of methodological options by Ellis (2002a) provides a systematic way to explore grammar instruction in teaching materials and it is used in the present study as a framework to describe the elements of grammar instruction manifested in the series studied. This system approaches the methodological options used in a teaching material from three different aspects, which form, as a matter of fact, three main categories or common denominators according to which all the methodological options can be grouped. These categories are titled: explicit description, data and operations (see figure 2).

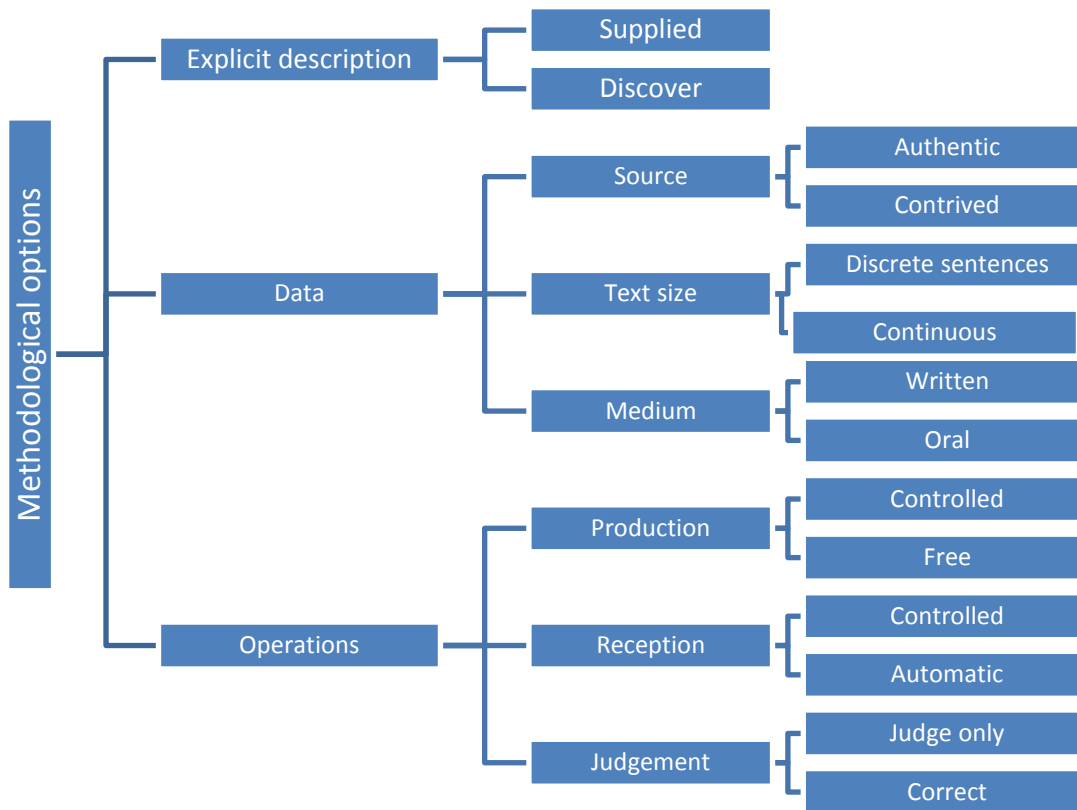


Figure 2. A system of methodological options by Ellis (2002a: 158)

Explicit description includes the option of supplying explanations of the grammar point in the material (supplied) and the option which lets the learner to discover how the target structure is constructed and used and thus create his/her own understanding of the grammar point (discover). The **data** is used for illustrating the form, meaning and use of the target structure. The data options considered in the framework are first, the source of the data, which may be either authentic or contrived by the authors; second, the size of the text, which may vary from discrete sentences to continuous text and third, the medium of the examples, which may be written or oral. Data that is used in operations is not included. **Operations** refer to the production, reception and judgement activities provided for the learner to internalise and practice the grammar point. Each of these options can be further divided into two sub-options. Controlled production operations require the learner to produce the target structure in ready-made sentences, such as in gap-filling, translating and sentence completion exercises. Free production operations give the learner an opportunity to freely construct his/her own sentences or texts. Receptive

operations test if the learner has noticed and understood the meaning of the target structure without actually having to produce it. Controlled receptive operation refers to an activity where the learner can control the speed of the activity and the time spent on it him/herself whilst an automatic receptive operation refers to an exercise where the speed is automatic, such as a listening exercise. The last type of operations, judgement, involves the learner in identifying ungrammatical sentences and even in correcting them.

The terminology in Ellis' system may cause confusion since both productive and receptive operations have controlled options which are very different in meaning; controlled production operations option refer to the fact that the learner has little control over the activity while in controlled reception operations the learner is in control of the speed of the data processing. Another important point to remark is that the terminology in the framework is purely descriptive and is not meant to be evaluative or ranking (Ellis 2002a: 157).

In the present study, each textbook and exercise book will be browsed through and the presentation of the grammar theory items, the texts for language examples and the types of grammar activities will be noted down, identified, classified and grouped according to the main categories of Ellis' framework. To ensure the comparability between the different series of books, particular grammar points which can be found in all the series, namely, the **present perfect** and the **past perfect**, have been chosen for investigation and the units or chapters of each series which contain these grammar points will be focused on. An additional reason for choosing the present perfect is that the English present perfect, in particular, is a grammar point that many learners have problems with and yet the authors of L2 textbooks do not seem to explain it clearly enough (Underwood unpublished: n.p.). English and Swedish L2 textbooks traditionally present these grammar points in the seventh and eighth Grade books, respectively. Additional grammar points and areas may also be used to illuminate the variety of elements and options each teaching material has in general.

Since the system of methodological options by Ellis (2002a) does not evaluate the quality of options, additional means adopted from the previous studies will be used. Explicit description has a special function to help learners to gain explicit knowledge of grammar and it is often called pedagogic grammar. The quality of pedagogic grammar in the series will be evaluated using the three dimensions of grammar by Larsen-Freeman (2003) and the six design criteria for pedagogic language rules by Swan (1994).

In any piece of language, there are three dimensions present: the form, meaning and use (Larsen-Freeman 2003: 34). Knowing the **form** of a grammar structure, such as the present or the past perfect, is not sufficient for a learner to be able to understand its **meaning** or to **use** it properly in different contexts. A pedagogic grammar therefore needs to describe and illustrate a grammar point from these three perspectives by answering three questions: "How is the structure formed?", "What does it mean?" and "When and why is it used?" Teaching may address only one or two of these areas at the time, but a learner has to accumulate understanding in all three dimensions to achieve proficiency in L2. The three dimensions are learned and consequently taught differently (Larsen-Freeman 2003: 42): to learn a form may need vigorous practice but to understand the semantic meaning of the same structure may only need a few examples. Then again, the use might be so varied that no pedagogic grammar can list all the possible uses in different contexts. The emphasis in teaching is therefore dependent on the target structure; which of the three dimensions is considered to be most challenging for the learners: the form, meaning or use.

The six design criteria for pedagogic language rules by Swan (1994: 45-53) are: truth, demarcation, clarity, simplicity, conceptual parsimony and relevance.

Truth presumes that the rules are inferred from and correspond to linguistic facts and do not reflect authors' own prescriptive attitudes. In addition to truth, **demarcation** is needed to show the limits on the use of a given form. In a **clear** rule, information is presented in an orderly fashion, examples are used constructively and the focus is on the most important information, and this is done using understandable metalanguage. In comparison to clear wording of

the rule **simplicity** reduces the amount of information to make it more digestible for learners. **Conceptual parsimony** refers to learners' conceptual framework, that is, previous knowledge of grammatical concepts and terminology; rules should be described with familiar terminology and only minimal new concepts added when necessary. The **relevance** of the rule takes into account learners' L1 and their interlanguage level and focuses on giving answers based on their needs.

The different methodological options for grammar instruction and the way they are visible in the series studied will be described in section 4.1 – one series of books and one set of options (explicit description, data, operations) at the time. To answer the first sub-question about the quality of the pedagogic grammar, the explicit description in each series studied will be analysed using Swan's (1994) criteria for pedagogic grammar, Larsen-Freeman's (2003: 34-35) three dimensions (form, meaning, use) and the summaries of the target grammar points drawn from some reference grammar books (see section 3.4) as a baseline. To answer the second sub-question about the data, the methodological data options, the register and motifs of the data and the use of spoken data will be described. The variety of grammar activities will be described according to Ellis' options to answer the third sub-question. In section 4.5, the series will be compared with each other based on the range and variety of the methodological options in each series.

3.4 The present perfect and the past perfect

As already established in section 2.1 the view of grammar can differ significantly and also the practical application in grammar instruction as seen in section 2.4. However, to establish a common ground and a baseline for evaluating the quality of explicit description of the grammar points chosen for the analysis in the present study, a brief introduction to the form, meaning and use of the present perfect and the past perfect is drawn from reference grammar books authored by native speakers and it is provided in this section.

The reference grammar books consulted are as follows: *Basic English usage* by Swan (1984), *A practical English grammar* by Thomson and Martinet (1986),

Longman student grammar of spoken and written English by Biber, Conrad and Leech (2002), *The grammar book* by Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999), *Explaining English grammar* by Yule (1998), *Svensk grammatik* by Thorell (1973), *Grammatik från grunden* by Andersson (1993), *Funktionell svensk grammatik* by Bolander (2001a), *Svenska Akademiens språklära* by Hultman (2003) and *Grammatik* by Dahl (2003).

The form, meaning and use of the English present perfect and the English past perfect will be summarised separately, but since the convention in Swedish grammar books usually is to describe and explain the Swedish present and past perfect all at once, this will be done in the following summary, too.

3.4.1 The English present perfect

Form

The present perfect is formed with the present tense of *have* + the past participle (see table 4). The past participle has the same form as the simple past (regular verbs) or it varies (irregular verbs). The negative is formed by adding *not* to the auxiliary. The interrogative is formed by inverting the auxiliary and subject.

Table 4. The present tense forms

Affirmative	Negative	Interrogative	Negative interrogative
<i>I have worked</i>	<i>You haven't worked</i>	<i>Has he worked</i>	<i>Haven't we worked?</i>

Have/has and *have not/has not* can be contracted: *What's happened?* Affirmative contracted forms are often inaudible in speech.

Meaning

The present perfect most often describes an action or an event that started in the past and either finished just before or continues up to the present time or beyond it. It is used when talking about something that is in the past but is connected (implies a connection) with the present and that the past and the present are thought at the same time. The present perfect can be replaced by simple present: *I've broken my leg* → *My leg is broken now*. The present perfect

cannot be used when the past event does not have a connection to the present: *I saw Lucy yesterday* → **I have seen Lucy yesterday.*

Use

The present perfect is often used in conversations, letters, newspapers and television and radio reports. The most common verbs used in the present perfect are: *has/have been, has/have got, has/have had* and other common verbs, such as *gone, done, made, seen, come, said, taken, become, given, shown, thought, called.*

Different cases when the present perfect is used:

1. for actions and states that started in the past but still continue
2. for recent actions whose time is not mentioned
3. with *just* for referring to a recently completed action
4. for finished actions which have present consequences or results in the present
5. for finished actions that have or have not happened up to now using adverbs *never, ever, before, since, already* etc., as in *I've never been late for work* or with constructions like *This is the easiest/the first/the best job I've ever had.*
6. repeated actions up to the present, often with adverbs *occasionally, often, several times, always*
7. for actions occurring in an incomplete period of time, such as *I haven't seen Tom this afternoon* if the time of speaking is still *this afternoon* or *Has he been here recently* meaning during the last week/month etc.
8. for actions lasting throughout an incomplete period of time, such as actions that begin in the past and continue through the present *We have waited all day* or finish at the time of speaking *I haven't seen you for ages* (but I see you now)
9. with *for* and *since* to insinuate a continuing action to the point of speaking as in *She has been here since six o'clock.*
10. With verbs in subordinate clauses of time or condition: *If you have done your homework, you can watch TV.*

The choice between the past perfect and the past simple (see table 5) is not dependent on the time at which the event took place but what its relation to the present is.

Table 5. The use of the present perfect versus the past simple

The present perfect	The past simple
an action or state that continues up to the present time	an event that took place at a particular time in the past
adverbials: <i>already, since, yet</i>	adverbs of finished time: <i>then, yesterday, at that moment, during those two weeks, 1990 etc.</i>
closeness to the present	remoteness to the present
an incomplete historical period	a completed historical period
indefinite query: <i>have you ever gone...</i>	definite query: <i>did you go...</i>

The past simple tense is often used in conversation in American English when the present perfect is used in British English (see table 6).

Table 6. The difference in the use of the present perfect and the past simple

AmE conversation	BrE conversation
<i>Hey, did you read through this yet.</i>	<i>Have you read it yet?</i>
<i>No not yet I didn't.</i>	<i>I haven't sold it yet</i>
<i>We already gave him a down payment</i>	<i>They've given me that already.</i>

3.4.2 The English past perfect

Most reference grammar books use considerably less space for introducing the past perfect than the present perfect; this may imply that the latter structure is considered more comprehensible to learners or that learners who are familiar with the present perfect are expected to apply their understanding to the past perfect. It also may relate to the fact that the present perfect is much more common than the past perfect in real language use.

Form

The past perfect tense is formed with *had* and the past participle (see table 7).

Table 7. The past perfect forms

Affirmative	Negative	Interrogative	Neg. interrogative
<i>I had worked</i>	<i>You hadn't worked</i>	<i>Had he worked</i>	<i>Hadn't we worked?</i>

Meaning

The English past perfect tense is used for a 'before past' – for events that had already happened before the past time that is being talked about. The past perfect refers to an action or event in the past that was completed at or before a given point of time (or another action or event) in the past. It therefore combines the past tense with the perfective aspect to indicate finished actions in a past time.

Use

The past perfect is used to 'go back' to a 'second past', when already talking about the past; it is used to talk about events that had *already happened* at the time we are referring to. The actual time is often specified, for example, with a time clause. The most common verbs used in the past perfect are: *been, gone, taken, come, left, given, got, said, told, seen, heard, and known*.

The past perfect is used:

1. for an action completed at the time of reference in the past or before it: *By the time of the 1920s, women in the US had won the right to vote*
2. for an action which began before and is continuing at the time of reference in the past *He had owned a Rolls Royce since 1987*
3. often with a time adverbial: *already, years ago, when: When he returned, the bus had already gone*
4. in time clauses with *when, till, until, before and after*
5. in dependent clauses when the main clause has the past simple tense: *When I had sorted that out, I shrugged*
6. sometimes to mark the later of two events in a two-clause sequence: *I answered before she had asked.*
7. imaginative conditional in the subordinate clause (referring to past time): *If Sally had studied harder, she would have passed the exam.*

The past perfect is especially common in fiction, in indirect speech or in a past narrative: when a reference to a past action before a past point of time is needed

3.4.3 The Swedish present perfect and the past perfect.

In Swedish, the present and the past perfect reflect simultaneously time (before the present or before a certain point of time in the past) and a perfective aspect (realisation or fulfilment). The main function of the verb tenses is to show connection with the time of action or event and the time of reference, not to indicate an exact time expression of the past, present or future.

Form

A present or past form of a temporal auxiliary verb (*har / hade*) and the main verb in an infinite supine form are used to compile the periphrastic tense forms of the present perfect and the past perfect in Swedish (see table 8).

Table 8. The present and past perfect forms

<i>det</i>	<i>har</i>	<i>varit</i>	<i>vackert</i>	<i>väder</i>
<i>det</i>	<i>hade</i>	<i>varit</i>	<i>vackert</i>	<i>väder</i>
	temporal auxiliary verb	main verb in supine		

The supine form of the verb is compiled by adding an inflectional ending *-t*, *-tt* or *-it* to the supine stem of the verb depending on whether the verb is a 'svag', 'stark' or an irregular one (see table 9).

Table 9. The inflectional endings of the supine

	'Svaga' verbs	'Starka' verbs	irregular verbs
Supine	<i>-t, -tt</i>	<i>-it, -itt</i>	<i>-t</i>
Examples	<i>kallat, trott</i>	<i>bitit, gått</i>	<i>kunnat</i>

The auxiliary verb *har/hade* can be left out in subordinate clauses but then the supine form holds up the tense: *Han trodde att han sprungit flera timmar* instead of *han trodde att han hade sprungit...* Sometimes a 'double-supine' is used instead of an infinitive especially in spoken language: *hade kunnat gjort det* instead of *hade kunnat göra det*.

Meaning

The temporal auxiliary verb *har/hade* is used to connect an action or event to the time of speaking or more precisely to a time reference which is used in the text (or by a speaker) and to which the actions and events have some relevance. The present perfect and the past perfect indicate time (before present, before a past time reference) and aspect (perfection) at the same time. The present perfect implies that the action happened or started before the time of speaking but its result has some connection to the present or the action is still on-going. The past perfect indicates that the action happened or was completed before a given time in the past.

Use

The present perfect and the past perfect are used to talk about past events and actions. The present perfect refers to an action which has started in the past (*då-tid*) but continues to present time (*nu-tid*) and the past perfect refers to an action before another action or time reference in the past (*då-tid*). Thus, the present perfect is used:

1. to connect a past action or event to the time of speaking: *Hon har bakat en kaka*
2. when an action or event has been finished before the time of speaking: *Jag har just skrivit ett brev till NN*
3. when the result of the past action or event is still valid: *Hon har inte läst dagens tidning*
4. when an action started in the past but is still on-going: *Pernilla har bott i Japan i tolv år*
5. if a past action or event is thought of from the present perspective: *Nu har han kommit.*

The present perfect can also indicate an event in future time for example in a subordinate clause where the main clause is in the present simple: *Så snart jag har fått min biljett, reser jag härifrån* to. In a narrative, the present perfect and the

simple past take turns depending on how the action is connected and what its relevance is to the present (to the time of speaking).

The past perfect is used in the same way as the present perfect, but now the time of reference is not the present but some point of time in the past. Thus, the past perfect is used:

1. to connect a past action or event to a past point of time: *Tomas hade börjat längta hem redan efter en vecka*
2. when a past action or event has occurred before a past point of time: *Den hade inte kommit när hon var på kiosken*
3. when an action that started in the past is still on-going in a past point of time: *Jag hade dragit upp tre abborrar, innan min bror kom*
4. to imply something which is improbable or unreal: *Om jag hade varit du, hade jag nog köpt kjolen nu.*

In Swedish, the past simple, the present perfect and the past perfect can be used in a narrative depending on how the event or state in the past is related to the time of speaking and to the time of reference. The speaker may also make choices between these forms to create a more dramatic effect, even the present simple can be used for a past narrative for this purpose.

To sum up the use of the English and the Swedish present and past perfect tenses, a timeline can be used to show how the choice of the verb tense is dependent on the speaker's (writer's) remoteness (level of connection) of the action or event he/she describes; the actions and events at the present are non-remote but the ones in the past and future are more remote. Thus, the choice of tense, the past perfect, the past simple or the present perfect can be interpreted as the speaker's intention to mark the relative remoteness of the event with the tense: the past perfect being most remote and the past simple more remote than the present perfect (see figure 3).

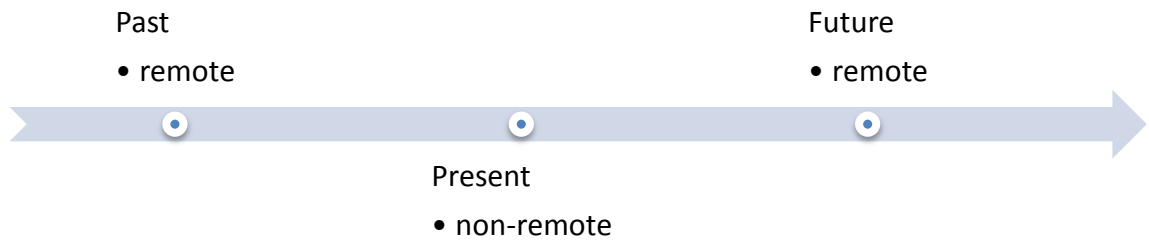


Figure 3. The speaker's perspective with time reference

In English, less than 10 % of verb phrases are marked with a perfect aspect (Biber et al. 2002:158). They are used in news, fiction, conversation and academic texts, more commonly in fiction and especially in news. British English uses the perfect aspect more than American English which uses the past simple tense especially in sentences that include *yet* or *already* and in news. The present perfect is more common than the past perfect in conversation and news. The core meaning of the perfect aspect is 'before' and it relates to a particular point in time; the present perfect is used to refer to an event or state that took place before now and the past perfect to a completed event or state before a point of time in the past.

The above description is by no means a full account of these grammar points and it is not meant to be considered an inclusive or a perfect way to present them. It does, however, illuminate the way how native speakers of English and Swedish understand the form, meaning and use of the present perfect and past perfect tenses. In pedagogic grammars, the 'simplicity' and 'relevance' criteria have an impact on how much and which parts of this information is considered important and sufficient to convey the 'truth' and 'demarcation' that are needed for the learners to build up their knowledge of these grammar points. Authors of pedagogic grammars also need to decide how much and which linguistic concepts and terminology they include in their explanations to achieve a 'clear' pedagogic grammar.

4 FINDINGS

The present study investigates what approaches *Spotlight*, *Top*, *På gång* and *Premiär* series exploit in grammar instruction. The options used for the present perfect and past perfect will be grouped according to the categories of Ellis' (2002a) framework (see section 3.3) and described one series and one category at a time in sections 4.1-4.4. Each of the research sub-questions will be answered parallel to describing the options in each category: the first question of the quality of the pedagogic grammar will be addressed under the title Explicit description; the second question about the language data under the title Data and the third question, the variety of activities under the title Operations.

In section 4.5, a conclusive summary of the methodological options shows the variety and range of options that are used. Finally, the series will be compared with each other by describing the similarities and differences between the series based on the methodological options used, the realisation of the three dimensions of grammar (Larsen-Freeman 2003) and the six design criteria for pedagogic grammar (Swan 1994).

4.1 Spotlight series

Spotlight series has elements of explicit description, data and operations both in the textbooks and the exercise books. In the textbook, there is a main text with examples of the target structure and a *Grammar talk* activities spread in each unit. In addition, a grammar game (*Spotlight 7*) and a grammar reference section can be found at the back of the book (*Spotlight 8* and *9*). The exercise book presents the pedagogic grammar in half-page or full page boxes with accompanying activities in each unit. Furthermore, grammar revision exercises with an answer key can be found at the end of the exercise book. The table of contents (1) clearly points out which grammar points are introduced in each unit of *Workbook Spotlight 7* (Haapala et al. 2009b: 4-5):

(1)

SISÄLLYS		Spotlight on learning.....sivu 3		Hello, Finland!.....sivu 6		
Vocabulary		Log on		Text A		
U1	Keeping in touch Jackin parhaat kaverit muuttivat alakoulun jälkeen eri puolille maailmaa. Mitä heille nyt kuuluu?.....sivu 7					Grammar
1 A sanasto	8	Hi, I'm Jack!	10	1 A On the net	12	🎵 Hiphoppii englantii.
				In. to, from	16	BE, HAVE
				Viikonpäivät	17	Presens
				Kuukaudet	18	
U2	Free time Bryanille jääkiekko on kaikki kaikessa. Onko sinulla suosikkiharrastus?.....sivu 41					🎵 O Canada.....
2 A sanasto	42	Hobbies and pastimes	44	2 A Brothers and sisters	46	WAS, WERE, HAD
				Kenen? (s-genetiivi)	50	Imperfekti
				(omistuspronominin)	52	
U3	@school Avery on aloittanut koulunkäynnin USA:ssa. Miten sinun koulusi on muuttunut viime vuodesta?.....sivu 49					🎵 Wonderful world.....
3 A sanasto	78	What school do you go to?	80	3 A Question time	82	Perfekt!
				Kellonajat	86	Pluskvamperfekti
						90
						98

The contents page of *Textbook Spotlight 7* also refers to the grammar topic of each unit but without grammatical terminology by giving an example of the structure in question (2) as in unit 3 (Haapala et al. 2009a: 4-5):

(2) "I have studied hard"

A learner might perhaps use the contents pages to find quickly a structure she / he needs to revise. Both the present and the past perfect are introduced in *Spotlight 7*, Unit 3 and revised in *Spotlight 8* and 9, Unit 1. The explicit grammar description, the data and the operations of *Spotlight* will be described next and a round-up of them will follow in section 4.5.

4.1.1 Explicit description

Spotlight series provides learners with an explicit explanation of grammar points firstly, in the exercise book, which has clearly marked grammar pages in each unit and secondly, in the textbook which has a grammar reference section at the back of the book. In *Workbook Spotlight 7* **the present perfect** is presented step by step extending over several pages with some activities for each step. The first step (3) gives example phrases of the present simple, the past simple and the present perfect tenses with translations into Finnish in *Workbook Spotlight 7* (Haapala et al. 2009b: 90):

(3)



It continues with an explanation (4) in Finnish when this structure is used (Haapala et al. 2009b: 90, emphasis original, for a translation into English see appendix 1):

- (4) Kun kerrot, mitä **on ollut** tai mitä joku **on tehnyt** tai mitä **on tapahtunut**, käytät aikamuotoa nimeltä **perfekti**.

and finally states that two verbs, an auxiliary verb and a main verb, are needed for the form (5) like in Finnish (Haapala et al. 2009b: 90, emphasis original, for a translation see appendix 1):

- (5) Sekä suomessa että englannissa tarvitset **perfektissä kaksi verbiä**: apuverbin ja pääverbin.

Minä olen kirjoittanut...
I have written...

The explanation approaches the form and meaning of the present perfect Finnish as a starting point, implying that this is more a matter of translation than a specific structure of the English language.

The explicit explanations in the following steps illustrate when to use *have* or *has* as an auxiliary verb and how to compose negative and interrogative present perfect clauses. Contracted forms are used from step two forward. The explicatory metalanguage uses grammatical terminology moderately; words, *affirmative*, *negative* and *question clause*, *auxiliary verb* and *main verb* are already familiar from the Finnish language. Only a few other words (6): *regular* and *irregular verb*, *basic form*, *2nd form* and *3rd form* are used to refer to the different sentence elements or other grammatical concepts (Haapala et al. 2009b: 92):

(6)

perusmuoto	2. muoto	3. muoto
use	used	used
I have always used English with my dad.		
	apuverbi	pääverbi
perusmuoto	2. muoto	3. muoto
speak	spoke	spoken
Avery has usually spoken Finnish with her mom.		
	apuverbi	pääverbi

I've usually
spoken Finnish
with my mom.



The layout and text of the pedagogic grammar are clear, simple and conceptually understandable. The **form** is explained explicitly and comes clear through the example phrases, which are translated into Finnish. The truth and demarcation of the meaning and uses of the present perfect are, however, questionable. The **meaning** is only referred to with a general remark: *mitä on ollut tai mitä joku on tehnyt tai mitä on tapahtunut*. It does not point out the two aspects of the English present perfect: whilst the action, event or state in question has happened before the present time, it has a connection to the present time. Many of the example phrases bear the idea of an action or event 1) having a connection to the present, such as *I have joined the girls' basketball team*, which implies that the person still is a member of the team or 2) being repeated in the past by using adverbials *always and usually*. But none of the **uses** (see section 3.4 for the uses in the reference grammars) are explicitly mentioned. One example phrase is ambiguous: *Avery has usually spoken Finnish with her mom*, and leaves the reader wondering: what language does she now speak with her mother: Finnish or something else?

Workbook Spotlight 7 supplies the explanation of **the past perfect** (7) quite the same way as the present perfect but more briefly; the explanation of the meaning, an example sentence illustrating its use and instructions for composing the form are placed in a box (Haapala et al. 2009b: 98):

(7)

**Mitä oli ollut, mitä oli tapahtunut, mitä joku oli tehnyt:
pluskvamperfekti**

Muistatko, mitä Bryanille oli tapahtunut?

Kun kerrot, mitä **oli ollut** tai mitä joku **oli tehnyt** tai mitä **oli tapahtunut**, käytät aikamuotoa nimeltä **pluskvamperfekti**.

Pluskvamperfekti: HAD + 3. muoto

I didn't find my hockey stick. Mari **had hidden** it. oli piilottanut

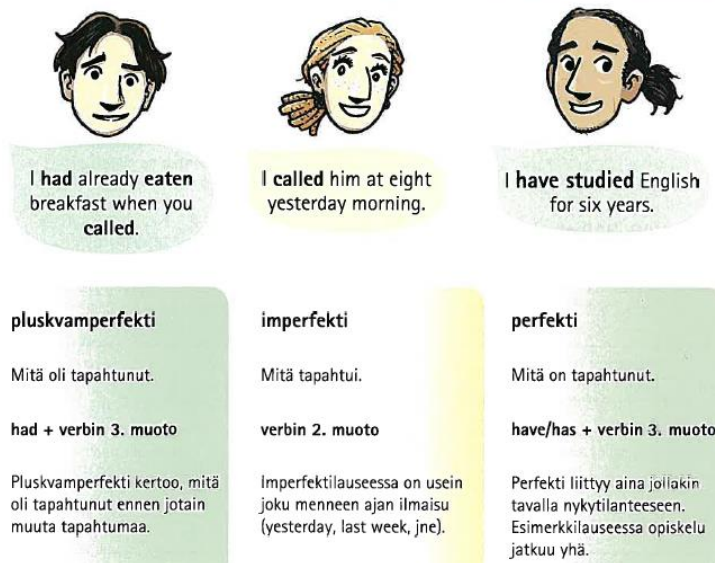
This explanation states the **meaning** through the Finnish concept of the past perfect: “what had been, what had happened, what someone had done” (translation by me), but does not mention the perfective aspect of this structure; all this had happened and was completed before the time of reference, that is, the point of time in the past that is talked about. The example sentence, however, presents the **use** of the past perfect as an action which has happened before another action.




The form, meaning and use of the present and the past perfect in *Spotlight 7* is given with minimal explicit description; the structures will become familiar to a learner as Finnish equivalents, but the meaning of these structures, for example, the perfect aspect ‘before’ will remain unknown to them and the possible uses, such as the difference between the past simple and the present perfect are not addressed.

At the back of the textbooks for 8th and 9th Grade there is a grammar reference section, which gives a compact presentation of grammatical structures with tables of verb tenses and timelines. The timeline *Menneestä ajasta kohti nykyhetkeä* (8) in *Textbook Spotlight 8* contrasts the different structures of the past perfect, the past simple and the present perfect and gives hints for choosing the correct structure. This somewhat complements the deficiency found in *Spotlight 7* since it states that the present perfect is always somehow linked to the present and that the past perfect happened before another event (Haapala et al. 2012a: 200) but does not add much information of the uses of these tenses:

(8)

menneisyys (in the 20th century, ten years ago, in 2010, last week, yesterday...)



 I had already eaten breakfast when you called.	 I called him at eight yesterday morning.	 I have studied English for six years.
pluskvamperfekti Mitä oli tapahtunut. had + verbin 3. muoto Pluskvamperfekti kertoo, mitä oli tapahtunut ennen jotain muuta tapahtumaa.	imperfekti Mitä tapahtui. verbin 2. muoto Imperfektilauseessa on usein joku menneen ajan ilmaisu (yesterday, last week, jne).	perfekti Mitä on tapahtunut. have/has + verbin 3. muoto Perfekti liittyy aina jollakin tavalla nykytilanteeseen. Esimerkkilauseessa opiskelu jatkuu yhä.

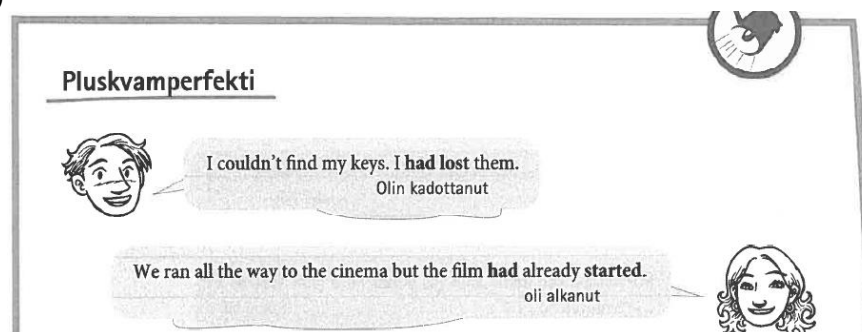
The first statement (9) on this page is, however, somewhat imprecise (Haapala et al. 2012a: 200, for a translation see appendix 1):

(9) Englanninkielisessä lauseessa verbin muoto kertoo tapahtuman ajankohdan: menneisyys, nykyhetki vai tulevaisuus?


The reference grammars (see section 3.4) state that it is not the form of the verb that indicates the time of an action or event but more likely an adverbial expression or some other time reference.


Both *Spotlight 8* and *Spotlight 9* series begin with a review of the verb tenses; *Workbook Spotlight 8* has a grammar box with two example phrases of both the present and the past tense. These past perfect sentences (10) include the idea of the action taking place before something else had happened (Haapala et al. 2012b: 28):

(10)



Pluskvamperfekti


 I couldn't find my keys. I **had lost** them.
 Olin kadottanut

We ran all the way to the cinema but the film **had already started**.
 oli alkanut
 

as do the example phrases (11) in *Workbook Spotlight 9* too. They manifest the past perfect with a *when* clause and the present perfect with the time expression *now* and a suggestion that the action still continues (I still live in this town) or has got a result today (the house) (Haapala et al. 2012d: 26):

- (11)
- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| I had just got up when the phone rang. | olin noussut |
| I have now lived in this town for seven years. | olen nyt asunut |
| Has Dad really bought a house in Spain? | onko ostanut |

To sum up, the only methodological option exploited in *Spotlight* series is **supplying** explicit description of each grammar point the series introduces. The pedagogic grammar is neatly put into distinct boxes. The text is short, concise and clear and it avoids using superfluous grammatical terminology. The balance between truth, demarcation and simplicity may, however, cause problems since the explanations in *Spotlight 7* only parallel the meanings with Finnish structures and essential points when to use the present and the past perfect are not mentioned at all. Moreover, the difference in using the simple past tense and the present perfect in the US and in Britain is not mentioned. Fortunately *Spotlight 8 and 9* somewhat rectify the situation by contrasting different tenses and mentioning some basic facts about them.

4.1.2 Data

There are two kinds of data in the series: first, a main text with several occurrences of the target structure in each unit and second, example sentences or phrases in the grammar reference section and in grammar boxes in the exercise books. In *Textbook Spotlight 7*, Unit 3, the lead of the main text (12) introduces the present perfect with 3 occurrences in 5 sentences (Haapala et al. 2009a: 50):

- (12) Avery has been in her new high school for about four months. She's in the 8th grade because American students start school when they are six. She has just given a talk about Finnish schools to her classmates. She has explained the school subjects, school rules and schedules. Now, it's question time.

The main text, a dialogue depicting an interview in a classroom has frequent occurrences of the present perfect (21 occurrences in 45 sentences of which 14

affirmative, 3 negative and 4 interrogative), but none of the past perfect. Many of the examples in the pedagogic grammar, in the exercise book, recycle the phrases and sentences in this text.

Both *Spotlight 8* and *Spotlight 9* series begin with a review of all verb tenses, although the main text of the first unit of *Spotlight 8* does not manifest this; it only has 1 occurrence of the present perfect and none of the past perfect. *Spotlight 9*, unit 1 has some occurrences of the present perfect (5 interrogatives) amongst interview questions and some of the past perfect (3 affirmative) in a narrative among past simple forms.

Topics of the data, both in the main texts and the example sentences, mostly deal with school or activities related to hobbies, such as writing emails, playing basketball, studying and speaking different languages. All the data is contrived, the main texts are continuous and the example sentences in pedagogic grammar are discrete sentences. The number of examples of the target structure in the main text is a sign of textual enrichment; a learner is supposed to notice and pay attention to the structure due to its frequent occurrence. Furthermore, input enhancement with typographical devices is used in example phrases and sentences.

A dash of spoken grammar can sometimes be found in dialogues (13); interjections, contracted forms, incomplete utterances and colloquial expressions are added as in *Spotlight 8*, unit 1, (Haapala et al. 2012a: 15):

(13) Shauna: Horses, you jackass! I ride horses! It's a great pastime. And I like postcrossing, too. It's fun. So there!

The methodological options used in *Spotlight* series are as follows: first, the source of data is **contrived**; second; text size is **continuous** in the textbook and **discrete** sentences in the workbook and the reference grammar section and third, the medium is **written**. Learners may also listen to the main texts since audio files are provided on the net but no additional aural data is provided. The fact that the perfect aspect is more common in fiction and news than in conversation (Biber et al. 2002: 158) has not been considered in the choice of the

data register. The frequency of the present perfect versus the past perfect is correctly marked.

4.1.3 Operations

Operations are also distributed to both the textbook and the exercise book. In *Spotlight 7* textbook, immediately after the main text there are 3 pair activities for understanding the meaning of the text; learners are in the first two of them expected to ask (read aloud) questions and find the answers in the text and in the third, ask each other similar questions and answer them. One of the 4 questions in the first activity (14) includes the new grammar point (Haapala et al. 2009a: 53):

(14) How long have you been in your new school?

but several of the answers will unavoidably include the new structure. In these activities learners do not have to manipulate the new grammar structure, they just find the phrase (answer) in the text and say it aloud. Text comprehension activities continue in the workbook where there is a total of 10 activities which ask a learner to find various answers, words or phrases in the main text in the textbook to demonstrate he/she has understood the text. Of these activities 6 include present perfect forms. Many of these activities could be seen as receptive since learners are required to find expressions in the text and either orally or in writing repeat them or to translate them into Finnish but not to produce the target forms themselves, except sometimes read them aloud.

The *Spotlight* textbooks have sets of activities pre-eminently designed to introduce new grammar points to learners without explicit explanation; each unit has a *Grammar talk* spread, that is, two pages of oral activities. These activities resemble audio-lingual structure-based oral drilling and they gradually move on from parroting phrases (15), that is, listening and repeating aloud (Haapala et al. 2009a: 52):

(15)	<p>Avery has been in her new school for about four months. They have had many tests there.</p>	<p>... Avery on ollut... ... Heillä on ollut...</p>
------	--	---

and reading aloud phrases one after another with a partner to finally asking questions and answering those using the given phrases (16) as in *Spotlight 7* (Haapala et al. 2009a: 53):

(16)

Kysy ja vastaa parin kanssa.

<p>Have you... Have your friends... Has Avery...</p>	<p>had many tests? had too much homework? joined the basketball team? found this school easier than your old school? been very busy with after-school activities? given a talk on Finnish schools? asked lots of questions in the lessons?</p>	<p>Yes, I have. Yes, she has. Yes, they have. Yes, many times.</p> <p>No, I haven't. No, she hasn't. No, they haven't. No, never.</p>
---	--	---

Some of the phrases in *Grammar talk* activities are highlighted with **bold** text type to make the new structure more salient to a learner.

In the workbook, the explicit description of the grammar point is followed by a variety of activities, 14 in total, including parroting irregular verb forms, translating isolated, decontextualised phrases and sentences from English into Finnish and vice versa, choosing a correct auxiliary verb for a phrase, filling in blanks with present perfect forms, completing sentences, creating discrete sentences of one's own and solving a puzzle. There are additional grammar exercises on the net which include more puzzles, fill-in-the-gaps and putting jumbled sentences into the correct order.

The explicit explanation of the past perfect is followed by 2 activities: first, a translation of phrases from English into Finnish in isolated sentences and then, a fill-in-the-gap exercise (17) where discrete sentences should be completed by adding verbs in the past perfect form. Neither of these exercises exhibit sentences to illustrate the use of the past perfect as describing something that had already happened at the time that is referred to (Haapala et al. 2009b: 98):

production in the form of completing or writing isolated sentences; second, mainly learner **controlled reception** activities (finding English equivalents in text for Finnish phrases and sentences and vice versa) but also **automatic** in the form of parroting and third, no **judgement** activities are included.

The activities in *Spotlight* series are many but have a fairly narrow range of activity types consisting of first, oral activities (questions-and-answers) in pairs, reading aloud and parroting after an aural example and second, written activities exhibiting gap-filling, translating and writing or completing discrete sentences. Non-linguistic devices, such as images, charts, diagrams, or authentic texts are not used at all. The text comprehension, *Grammar talk* activities and input enhancement may raise learners' consciousness and learners with good linguistic aptitude and skills might therefore notice the form, derive the meaning and learn some uses of a target structure already during them, but learners are not deliberately guided to focus on form. The series does not exploit the inductive approach for the learners to discover rules on their own.

Despite the numerous activities, CLT is not clearly present in the series; only one of the oral text comprehension activities is communicative as learners should ask questions and give their own answers or opinions. Furthermore, most of the grammar activities consist of decontextualised discrete sentences; only 1 out of 13 written exercises is in the form of a continuous dialog.

4.2 Top series

Top 7 has 16 chapters and it introduces a new grammar point in almost every chapter; the present perfect is introduced in chapter 10, revised in chapter 12 with one grammar activity and the past perfect is introduced in chapter 14 as can be noted from the table of contents (20) of *Top 7 Texts* (Blom et al. 2011b: 5):

(20)

Sivu	Teksti	Kielioppi	Sanasto
105	Itsearviointi 3		
106	9 Online Oscars	epäsäännölliset verbit, s. 113	britti- ja amerikan-englannin erot
112	Bonus The Simpsons		
116	10 Gonzales palace	perfekti, s. 125	asuminen
124	Bonus How to live like a movie star		
130	11 Born in the USA	artikkelit, s. 136	musiikki
135	Bonus Luke's movie reviews		
138	12 Lost in New York	perfekti (kertaus)	paikat kaupungissa
147	Bonus Graffiti battle		
148	13 Nature's top 7	it is, there is, there are s. 156, paikan prepositiot (kertaus)	luonto
155	Bonus Death Valley ghost town		
158	14 High-tech hide-and-peek	pluskvamperfekti, s. 166	

Elements of grammar instruction run through in both textbooks and exercise books. In the textbook, the main text, which is enriched with the target structure, is followed by text comprehension activities, oral ones in the textbook and written in the exercise book. At the end of the textbook, there is a grammar reference section where all the grammar points are introduced one by one and followed by oral activities. Specific grammar activity pages in each unit of the exercise book are clearly marked and each has a page reference to the textbook's grammar reference section. The explicit grammar description, the data and the operations of *Top* will be described next and a round-up of them will follow in section 4.5.

4.2.1 Explicit description

The **present perfect** is introduced in the grammar reference section in *Top 7 Texts*. The presentation begins with a cartoon strip (21) to illustrate the use of the structure (Blom et al. 2011a: 118):

(21)



and is followed by an explanation of the meaning (22), which states the meaning of *perfekti* in the Finnish language (Blom et al. 2011a: 118, emphasis original, for a translation see appendix 1):

(22) Perfekti kertoo, mitä **olet tehnyt** tai mitä **on tapahtunut**.

As examples of affirmative, negative and interrogative phrases it repeats the ones in the cartoon strip with Finnish translations, shows how the affirmative, negative and interrogative **forms** are compiled and the way to contract the affirmative and negative (23) forms (Blom et al. 2011a: 118):

(23)

<table style="border: none;"> <tr> <td style="border: none;">} + pääverbin 3. muoto</td> <td style="border: none; padding-left: 10px;"> <p><u>haven't</u></p> <p><u>hasn't</u></p> </td> </tr> </table>	} + pääverbin 3. muoto	<p><u>haven't</u></p> <p><u>hasn't</u></p>	<p>HUOM! have not been → haven't been</p> <p>has not been → hasn't been</p>
} + pääverbin 3. muoto	<p><u>haven't</u></p> <p><u>hasn't</u></p>		

Finally, marked as extra information, *Top 7* gives two example sentences and explanations (24) for the difference of the simple past and the present perfect structures, pointing out that the present perfect is used when the action is unfinished or has some connection to the present (Blom et al. 2011a: 119, emphasis original, for a translation see appendix 1):

(24) **Perfekti:**

Tekeminen on kesken tai liittyy jotenkin tähän hetkeen.

Imperfekti:

Tekeminen alkoi ja päättyi. Se ei jatku enää.

In the exercise book, the first activity (25) asks a learner to fill in the present perfect forms in sentences that once more repeat the example sentences from the grammar reference section and to complete rules how to form the present perfect. This has an element of discovery activity but can be completed by copying the sentences directly from the textbook (Blom et al. 2011b: 125):

(25)

1. I _____ it. Asha _____ the shampoo.
olen (apuverbi) kadottanut (pääverbin 3. muoto) on (apuverbi) juonut (pääverbin 3. muoto)
2. I _____ it.
en ole (apuverbi) ottanut (pääverbin 3. muoto)
3. _____ you _____ your hair already?
Oletko (apuverbi) pesseyt (pääverbin 3. muoto)
- _____ you _____ my shampoo, honey?
Oletko (apuverbi) nähnyt (pääverbin 3. muoto)

Perfektissä apuverbinä on _____ tai _____.

Säännöllisillä pääverbeillä on ____-päätte.

Epäsäännöllisistä pääverbeistä käytetään _____ muotoa.

The pedagogic grammar shows the **form** clearly by highlighting the verb forms with bold text type in the example sentences and by showing how the affirmative, negative and interrogative phrases are formed. The forms in the cartoon are not contracted although they usually are in a conversation. The **meaning** is first explained through Finnish but in the explanation of the difference between the past simple and the present perfect, the ideas of an unfinished action and connection to the present are mentioned. Different **uses** of the present perfect are not introduced nor do any of the example sentences include typical adverbials, any time reference or subordinate clauses to indicate the possible uses.

The past perfect is introduced similarly with a cartoon strip, repeating its sentences as examples of affirmative, negative and interrogative clauses and giving a formula (26) how these **forms** are compiled (Blom et al. 2011a: 120):

(26)

(kysymyssana +) **had** + tekijä + **pääverbin** + ?
3. muoto

The **meaning** is stated with one clause and it points out that the past perfect tells what had happened or what had been done. No possible **uses** of the target structure are explicitly mentioned nor does any of the example sentences, for example, *How had the children behaved with the babysitter?* give a time reference or any other point of reference in the past to indicate that the action had been finished before it.

In *Top 8 Texts* reference grammar section, all the tenses are reviewed. Three sentences (27) in a cartoon strip illustrate the difference between the simple past, simple present and present perfect tenses (Blom et al. 2012a: 126-129):

(27) "I packed bananas for lunch today."
"I like bananas."
"You have eaten my lunch."

Here the context, a cartoon strip with a boy and a monkey, supports the use of each structure with non-linguistic cues. The boy had packed bananas for lunch; the finished action is in the past simple. The monkey likes bananas and eats them, which can be seen in the cartoon. So, the present perfect can be used to

communicate a finished action which has present consequences (no bananas left for lunch since the monkey ate them). This particular use of the present perfect is not explicitly mentioned though.

To sum up, *Top* **supplies** explicit grammar description of every grammar point the series covers. Completing the rules for forms of the target structure could be interpreted as one type of **discovery** activity. This activity, however, leaves little room for a learner to really discover what the target structure means and how it is used. The pedagogic grammar in *Top* series is clear and simple to the core; it does not even mention the word auxiliary verb in the reference grammar, though it is mentioned in the rule a learner is supposed to fill in in the exercise book. The basic fact of the present perfect being connected to the present is mentioned, but no specific uses of the structure are introduced. No particular cases are specified where the past perfect should or could be used. The example sentences do not provide extra information either.

The pedagogic grammar is short; less than a page and a half is used to explain the present perfect form, meaning and use, even less for the past perfect. The layout of the grammar reference pages are clear; two shades of blue are used as background colours to create separate areas for the affirmative, negative and interrogative **forms**. The target structure is highlighted with bold in the example sentences and pictures are used to create a context to the example sentences (in the form of cartoon strips). Red colour is used to highlight the auxiliary verbs *have / has* and contracted forms are highlighted by an exclamation mark. Thus, the different forms of the present and the past perfect are clearly marked. Regarding the **meaning** and **use** of the target structures, what is gained in clarity, simplicity and conceptual parsimony is lost in truth and demarcation when the contents of the pedagogic grammar is compared to the ones in the reference grammars (see sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.2).

4.2.2 Data

The data in *Top* series consists of a continuous main text in each chapter and discrete sentences in the reference grammar section. The main text in each chapter of *Top 7 texts* (Blom et al. 2011a) has several occurrences of the particular

structure it introduces. The main text in chapter 10 is a dialogue of 51 sentences and it has 9 occurrences of the present perfect of which 2 are interrogatives but none negative. All the forms in affirmative sentences are contracted (*I've, you've*). Chapter 12 has 6 present perfect forms also in a dialogue. Chapter 14 has 9 past perfect forms in a 9 sentence narrative, which is a notably unnatural frequency for it (Biber et al. 2002: 158-9). All these three chapters depict dialogs where American teenagers discuss with each other in different situations. In chapter 10, a boy is interviewing another boy about the movie-themed decoration of his trailer-home. In chapter 12, three friends are lost in New York public transport and in chapter 14, they go geocaching. Some features that are characteristic of conversation are present, such as frequent references to contextual cues (28) which the readers only have to imagine (Blom et al. 2011a: 56):

(28) *Welcome to Gonzales Palace, this is the garden.*
Wow, it's huge.

The conversations also include fragmentary components and discourse markers, such as *Okay – no, wait!* and *Gross, Hmph* and contracted forms *I've, he'd*. Nevertheless, the texts in the dialogs differ from natural spoken language since they lack typical dysfluencies an informal conversation would have: repetitions, pauses, hesitations, low frequency of nouns and lack of precision.

The data in the reference grammar is context-bound by a series of pictures in a cartoon strip. The example sentences are part of a dialogue and they are repeated with Finnish translations and once again in the exercise book. These sentences do not have contracted but full forms *Have you, I have, They had* and they do not therefore resemble a real-life conversation. The reference grammar intends to be humorous and common topics are school, family and pets in *Top 7* and adventures of a boy and a talking monkey in *Top 8*. The reference grammar section offers only a few example sentences to introduce the present perfect (6 sentences) and the past perfect (3 sentences).

To sum up, methodological options used for data are **contrived continuous** text in main texts and **discrete sentences** in the reference grammar section. *Top 7 Texts* includes 2 authentic songs but they are not utilised in grammar

instruction. The medium of the data is **written** and all the main texts are available in audio files. The authors of *Top 7 Texts* have not acknowledged that the present perfect is more common in news and in fiction, but they use it in a conversation. The text does not provide learners with examples of its use in negation. The past perfect is used in a narrative with a time reference *Two hours later, Gonzo and Olivia had finished* (Blom et al. 2011a: 75) and it takes turns with the past simple.

As mentioned, in each chapter of *Top* there is a continuous text in the textbook but there is also a clear tendency to use continuous texts or at least connected sentences also in the reference grammar section and in the activities. In addition, a visual context is given to connect the example sentences together in the grammar reference section.

4.2.3 Operations

Top has oral text comprehension and grammar activities in the textbook and more written text comprehension and grammar activities in the exercise book. After the main text, the *Top* textbooks have a *Talk to me!* section with pair activities, which consist mainly of finding given expressions or sentences in the text, translating them and asking questions about the text. In *Top 7 texts* some of these activities include sentences in the present perfect (7 out of 14; 3 out of 10) and the past perfect tense (2 out of 16). For example, the first *Talk to me!* activity (29) in chapter 10 asks a learner to say the given sentences in English. The learner, however, does not have to literally produce translations since the sentences can be found directly in the text and read aloud (Blom et al. 2011a: 58):

(29)

Talk to me!

1 Lue lause parillesi. Parisi sanoo sen englanniksi. Vuoroteikkaa.

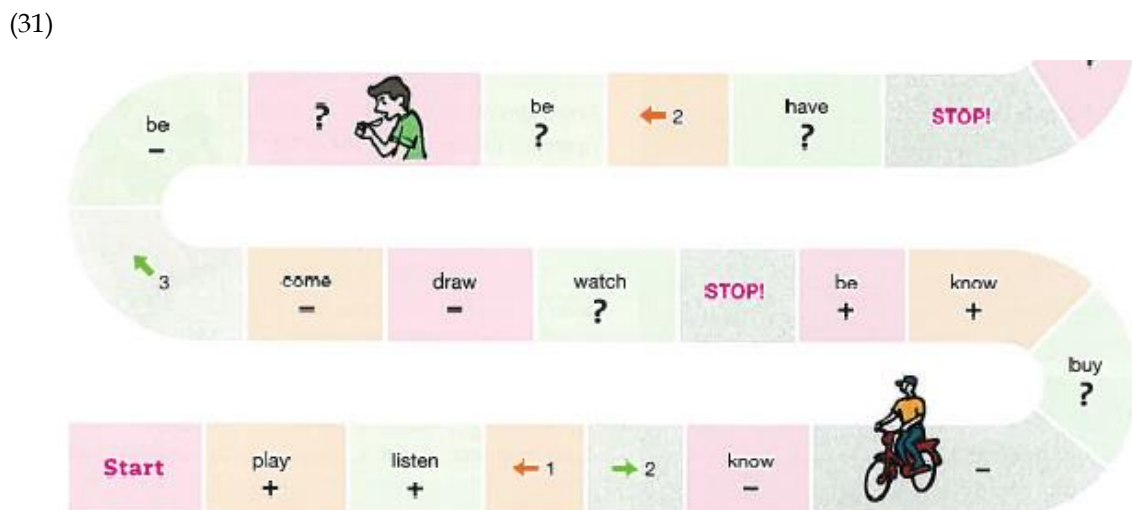
1. Olet saanut sen näyttämään asuntovaunualueelta.
2. Miten kauan olet asunut täällä?
3. Olen juuri vasta muuttanut tänne.
4. Olen jo valinnut teeman kodilleni.
5. Ole hyvä ja astu kaksi askelta oikealle.
6. Olen laittanut makuupussin lattialle, jos haluat jäädä yöksi.
7. Anteeksi, nyt en kuullut. Voisitko toistaa sen?

One *Talk to me!* activity type is a judgement activity for text comprehension in which a learner is asked to correct incorrectly translated sentences. These

sentences do not include the present perfect structure, though. The reference grammar section has also some *Talk to me!* pair activities of which the two most common activity types are to ask learners to play a game to practice the target structures and an oral question-and-answer activity (30) where learners can give genuine answers based on their own experience (Blom et al. 2011a: 58):

- (30)
7. Have you bought new jeans?
 8. Have you read any comics lately?
 9. Have you seen any good movies?

Top 7 has 6 and *Top 8* 8 grammar games in total. Some of these games can be used for several structures, for example, one of them (31) asks learners to form affirmative, negative and interrogative sentences with a given verb and can be played with different verb tenses (Blom et al. 2011a: 115):



The games are rather mechanical asking learners, for example, to say three forms of a verb or adjective, form plurals based on picture cues or compile discrete sentences based on a verbal cue. The learners are not required to cooperate or communicate to reach the goal; throwing a dice and moving his/her piece forward is enough.

The exercise books have clearly marked grammar activity pages in each chapter. *Top 7 exercises*, chapter 10 has 12 activities for the present perfect ranging from fill-in-the-gaps, “listen and check if you hear these phrases”, true/false sentences, a puzzle, choosing the correct form (auxiliary verb) and translating

sentences from Finnish into English. In chapter 12, there is one fill-in-the-gap exercise for revising the structure. In chapter 14, there are 5 activities to practice the past perfect. *Top 7* has receptive activities, which do not include translation, for example, one with a picture prompt (32) asking learners to mark statements true or false (Blom et al. 2011b: 126):

(32)



What has Asha done?

1. Asha has broken the window.
2. Asha has drawn pictures on the wall.
3. Asha has eaten her sandwich.
4. Asha has brushed her hair.
5. Asha has found her Christmas presents.

O	V
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

And another (33) with statements to which learners are asked genuinely to take a stand by marking Yes or No (Blom et al. 2011b: 126):

(33)

1. I have woken up.
2. I have brushed my teeth.
3. I have forgotten my school books.

The topics in all the activities are related to the example sentences in the grammar reference section and they sometimes constitute a story or a continuum. For example, in one activity (34) Asha's brother tells about his lively sister and a learner is asked to fill in the auxiliary verbs (Blom et al. 2011b: 127):

(34)

1. I _____ told about my sister, Asha, haven't I?
2. This week she _____ been very busy.
3. Today she and her best friend, Samantha _____ played hairdressers.
4. Asha _____ cut Samantha's hair short on one side – and they _____ painted her hair fire engine red – using Mum's nail polish!

In the next activity, Asha's mother tells about one day (35) during which Asha has really tested her mother's patience and the learner should fill in the present perfect forms (Blom et al. 2011b: 127):

- (35)
1. This a terrible day!
 on ollut
 2. Asha naughty things all day.
 on tehnyt
 3. I my nerves a hundred times today.
 olen menettänyt
 4. She my mobile phone in the dishwasher.
 on pessyt

Finally, Asha writes to the Santa (36) understating her bad behaviour, and the learner should choose the correct auxiliary verbs in negative sentences (Blom et al. 2011b: 129):

- (36)
- Dear Santa, This year...
1. I **haven't / hasn't** been a bad girl.
 2. My room **haven't / hasn't** been messy – at least not all the time...

Top 8 texts and *Top 8 Exercises* (Blom et al. 2012a, 2012b) revise all the verb tenses in the first chapter. The grammar section in the textbook has a concise presentation of the present and the past perfect and a game to practise them (Blom et al. 2012a: 128-129). It also advises learners to rehearse irregular verb forms with their partner. *Top 8 exercise book* has fill-in-the-gap, sentence completion, puzzle and translation activities to revise different verb tenses and again a completion of the rule activity (37) (Blom et al. 2012b: 17):

- (37)
- PERFEKTI
- Myönteinen lause**
- I the bananas.
 olen pakannut
 (apuverbi) (pääverbin 3. muoto)
- Coco all the bananas.
 on syönyt
 (apuverbi) (pääverbin 3. muoto)
- Kysymyslause**
- you all the bananas?
 Oletko syönyt
 (apuverbi) (pääverbin 3. muoto)
- she the bananas?
 Onko syönyt
 (apuverbi) (pääverbin 3. muoto)
- Kielteinen lause**
- I lunch.
 en ole syönyt
 (apuverbi) (pääverbin 3. muoto)
- She me any bananas.
 ei ole jättänyt
 (apuverbi) (pääverbin 3. muoto)
- Perfektin apuverbi on tai .
- Säännöllisten verbien päätte on .
- Epäsäännöllisistä verbeistä käytetään muotoa.
1. / 2. / 3.

In conclusion, the methodological operation options used for grammar instruction in *Top* comprise of **controlled production**, both **controlled** and **automatic reception** activities and no **judgement** activities. The themes and topics of the grammar activities are not connected to the main text but to the example sentences in the grammar reference section. The grammar activities proceed from completing the rule and aural and written receptive activities to controlled production activities such as gap-filling, matching, true/false statements, puzzles, choosing the correct form and translation activities. *Talk to me!* text comprehension activities which enable a learner to make form-meaning connections combined with receptive activities comprise a considerable amount of input processing operations. Several of the question-and-answer activities aim to create authentic communication since learners are encouraged to give genuine answers to the questions and thus bring their own experiences into the classroom. Since a context is given to some of the activities, such as *Asha's mom is telling her husband about her day* and the sentences in some gap-filling activities form a continuous text, they create a sense of a text which conveys meaning. The grammar games are the only group activity provided but they do not contribute to CLT since learners are usually asked to throw a dice, proceed on the board and utter words or discrete sentences; meaningful communication between the learners is not needed to complete the game.

4.3 På gång series

In *På gång* series, the textbooks include a grammar reference section at the back of the book and a grammar section *Nu pluggar vi* in most of the chapters in the exercise books. The majority of the data is in the textbooks; there is a picture dictionary, a comic strip, a dialog, blog posts, cultural information etc. in each chapter. The dialogue is positioned as the main text of each chapter and it is enriched with target grammar structures. In the textbooks, there are no activities and none of the activities in the exercise book are marked especially as grammar exercises, although the activities clearly lead a learner to practice grammar in each chapter as well as in the revision section at the back of the book. In both *Texter På gång 8* textbook and *Övningar På gång 8* exercise book, the table of

contents (38) states which grammar points are covered in each chapter; the present perfect is taught in chapter 6 (Ahokas et al. 2012a: 4-5):

(38)

	TEEMA	SANASTO	ENNAKOINTI	VIESTINTÄ	RAKENNE
0	Kom i gång! s. 6-17	s. 16-17		Henkilötietojen antaminen	Kertaus: Kysymyssanat Substantiivit
1	Koll på Göteborg s. 18-35	s. 20-21	Asumisesta	Avun tarjoaminen ja kiittäminen Esittäytyminen ja tutustuminen	Persoonapronominien omistusmuodot
2	Koll på hobbyer s. 36-51	s. 38-39	Verbikertausta	Tapaamisesta sopiminen Viikonlopusta kertominen	Imperfekti
3	Koll på kläder s. 52-69	s. 54-55	Vaatteita Värejä	Ostoksen vaihtaminen Vaateostoksilla	Osoittavat pronominit
4	Koll på stan s. 70-87	s. 72-73	Kaupunkisanastoa	Tien kysyminen ja neuvominen	Imperatiivi
5	Koll på maten s. 88-103	s. 90-91	Ateriat Ruokia ja juomia	Ruokapaikasta sopiminen Ruoan tilaaminen ja maksaminen	
6	Koll på medier s. 104-119	s. 106-107	Perfektin tunnistaminen	Vastaantulijan pysäyttämisen ja haastattelemisen	Perfekt

The explicit grammar description, the data and the operations of *På gång* will be described next and a round-up of them will follow in section 4.5.

4.3.1 Explicit description

The present perfect is introduced in *På gång 8*, chapter 6 but the past perfect is not introduced in either *På gång 7* or *På gång 8*. As already noted (see chapter 3.2), material for the 9th Grade has not yet been published in *På Gång* series. It is not therefore possible to study the grammar instruction of the past perfect or even to know whether this grammar point will be introduced in *På gång 9*.

Övningar På gång 8 initially introduces **the present perfect** with a series of activities that allow a learner to discover the rule for the grammar point on his/her own. The first activity (39) lists 29 phrases with a supine form of a verb in each, and the learner is asked to check those phrases that describe an activity he/she has never done. In the following pair activity, learners form mini-dialogues with a negative statement using the present perfect *Jag har aldrig...* and a reply with affirmative or negative statement. Example phrases illustrate how to compose the sentences (Ahokas et al. 2012c: 104):

(39)

Jag **har** aldrig busringt till någon.
En ole koskaan soittanut pilareita kenellekään.

Inte jag heller!
En minäkään!

Jag **har** busringt!
Minä olen soittanut pilareita!

betalat med kronor.
X busringt till någon.
bytt lampa.
chattat på svenska.
dejtat en tjej / en kille.
druckit Mumin-lemonad.
fikar på Starbucks.

These activities urge the learner to first process the data for meaning and then pay attention to the form in a communicative context. Finally, the learner is asked to fill in two sentences (40) that explain the meaning of the present perfect and the way to compose it (Ahokas et al. 2012c: 105):

(40)

- Perfekti on verbin aikamuoto, joka kertoo mitä _____
T A P A H T _____
- tai mitä joku _____ T E H _____.
- Ruotsin perfektin muodostamiseen tarvitaan apuverbiä _____ ja
verbin neljättä muotoa, joka loppuu kirjaimen _____.

These sentences state that the present perfect is a verb tense that tells what has happened or what someone has done. It explains that the present perfect is composed with an auxiliary verb and the 4th form of the verb that ends with a letter *T*. To help a learner to notice the form, the auxiliary verb *har* has been bolded in the example sentences (38) and the letter *t* in each supine form. Finnish translations under the example sentences create a connection to the Finnish 'perfekti' structure.

After some text comprehension activities, an explicit description of the present perfect structure (41) follows concentrating only on the **form** of the present perfect; the way to compose an affirmative and negative present perfect structure is illustrated with pieces of a jigsaw representing the elements of these structures. Neither the **meaning** of this structure nor the way how it is **used** is explained nor are any example phrases to illustrate the meaning or use provided (Ahokas et al. 2012c: 110):

(41)

PERFEKTI

Sivulla 105 todettiin, että perfekti muodostuu kahdesta osasta:

HAR VERBIN 4. MUOTO

Kieltosanojen **inte** ja **aldrig** paikka on har-apuverbin jäljessä:

HAR INTE VERBIN 4. MUOTO

Verbin 4. muoto on **HALLÄI!**
nimeltään **supiini**.
väntä, väntar,
väntade, väntat

In the reference section of the textbook, an explicit explanation includes a list of rules (42) related to the form of this grammar point (Ahokas et al. 2012a: 106):

(42)

Perfekti

Perfekti ilmaisee, mitä on tapahtunut tai mitä joku on tehnyt.

Perfekti muodostetaan kahdesta osasta: **har + verbin 4. muoto** eli **supiini**.

Säännöllisten (I, II, III) verbien supiinin päätte on **-at, -t** tai **-tt**.

Epäsäännöllisten (IV) verbien supiini on opeteltava ulkoa.

These rules are accompanied with only one affirmative example sentence *Daniel har ringt mamma* to illustrate the grammar point. Composing negative sentences or questions is not explained nor are any examples of these given. An explanation (43) of why the supine form of the main verb is called **the 4th form** is provided; in lexicons there is a list of four different forms of verbs and supine is the last one of them (Ahokas et al. 2012a: 106):

(43)

Sanastoissa supiini on verbin viimeinen eli 4. muoto.

ringa, ringer, ringde, **ringt** || soittaa, soittaa, soitti, soittanut

To sum up, both the **supplied** and **discover** methodological options are used for explicit description in *På gång* series; an explicit description is supplied for every grammar point and some of them also have discovery activities. The pedagogic grammar is simple and the concepts used are already familiar to learners except for the supine and the 4th form, which are explained (41, 43). The **forms** of affirmative and negative structures are illustrated clearly in the exercise book

but the forms of a question or negative question are not covered at all. Neither the possibility to leave out the auxiliary verb in subordinate clauses nor the use of a 'double-supine' is mentioned. The basic ideas of the present perfect being connected to the present and having happened before the present are neither explained nor illustrated with examples. Since the explicit grammar explanation only includes one example phrase (an affirmative) to illustrate the grammar point the **meaning** or **uses** of the structure do not emerge from the examples either. In conclusion, simplicity is achieved at the expense of the truth and demarcation in the pedagogic grammar.

4.3.2 Data

The data in *På gång* series is multifaceted and varied; it consists of picture dictionaries, comic strips, dialogues, blog posts, boxes of cultural and other information, songs and so on. The themes deal with popular music, films, hobbies, food, fashion, favourite places, media, travelling and holiday plans mainly describing teenagers attending these activities. The picture dictionaries in each chapter depict items that relate to the theme of each chapter, such as modern, high-tech gadgets and social media related activities in chapter 6. The series exploits authentic texts; both *Texter På gång 7* and *Texter På gång 8* have 5 songs, comic strips and also images of dvd and book covers, front pages of newspapers etc.

The theme of chapter 6 in *Texter På gång 8* is media. The main dialogue portrays an interview for the radio. It consists of 24 sentences and has 13 occurrences of the present perfect including affirmative, negative and interrogative clauses. The context clarifies that the present perfect is used for actions that are still on-going *När har du kommit hit?, Men nu har jag bott tre år i Oslo* or have consequences at the present *Konserten har varit slutsåld länge. Jag har inte fått biljetter* and for action that has or has not happened in the past *Har du varit i Göteborg förut? Nej, det har jag inte.* A blog narrative uses the present perfect (8 occurrences in 16 sentences of which one is negative) mainly to describe recent actions without an exact time reference.

The dialogues in *Texter På Gång 8* have a number of conversational characteristics. They consist of short clauses, include chunks, such as *Ha en trevlig kväll, Säger du det?* and *Jag håller inte med*, and also feature other elements that are typical of spoken language, such as interjections (*Precis!*), hesitations (*Tja*), incomplete (*Och så söt.*) and interrupted utterances (*Intressant...*), addressing the interlocutor (*Men du,*) and colloquial expressions (*tokbra*).

The grammar reference section in *Texter På gång 8* uses only one affirmative phrase *Daniel har ringt mamma* to illustrate the present perfect, and the grammar explanation in the exercise book none whatsoever. These sections do not therefore add any further value to illustrating the meaning or use of the grammar point in addition to the main text and dialog in chapter 6.

To sum up, the methodological options used for data in *På gång* series are as follows: first, most of the data is **contrived**. Authentic sources are also exploited but not for grammar instruction. Second, the text size is mainly **continuous**, with a few **discrete sentences** and third, the medium is **written**, and no oral material is provided in addition to the main texts that are available on the net and some activities with aural input. The data in *På gång* is diverse and illustrates various uses of the present perfect structures in two registers: conversation and fictive narration. The themes comply with the subject areas and situations mentioned in the NCC (2004: 123-124). The exclusion of the auxiliary verb *har* or the use of the 'double-supine' are not present in the data.

4.3.3 Operations

The exercise book *På gång 8* does not use explicit means to mark off grammar exercises; some of the activities are clearly meant to practice the target structures but the themes and vocabulary of all the activities relate to the theme of the chapter and therefore they all benefit several skills areas at the same time. The activities may, however, be grouped to orientation, text comprehension, grammar, advanced and supplementary activities. The activities include fill-in-the-gaps, jumbled sentences, writing a postcard and a blog post, answering questions in Finnish, writing sentences based on picture cues and repeating

aloud sentences. Oral pair activities are either asking and answering questions or reading and translating a dialogue from Finnish into Swedish.

As already described (see 4.3.1), *Övningar På Gång 8*, chapter 6 begins with a series of activities to process input for meaning, make form-meaning connections and use the present perfect forms to convey meaning. They are followed with a receptive activity (44) which asks a learner to match present perfect phrases in Finnish to the ones in Swedish and then read aloud the phrases (Ahokas et al. 2012c: 105):

- (44)
- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1 on asunut | <input type="checkbox"/> har bott |
| 2 on katsonut | <input type="checkbox"/> har fått |
| 3 on kierrellyt | <input type="checkbox"/> har gjort |
| 4 on käynyt tervehtimässä | <input type="checkbox"/> har gått runt |
| 5 on ollut | <input type="checkbox"/> har haft tur |
| 6 on ostanut liput | <input type="checkbox"/> har hälsat på |

After the orientation activities, there are 8 text comprehension activities of which 5 contain present perfect structures. These activities include: memorising and reciting the phrases of a comic strip in the textbook, correcting sentences which are incorrectly translated into Finnish, translating sentences into Finnish, choosing a suitable ending for a sentence, putting adverbials of time and place into two groups and a receptive listening activity.

In *Nu pluggar vi!* grammar section, the explicit grammar instruction explaining how the present perfect is formed is followed by a list of verbs (45) in the basic form, present and past simple tenses and a learner is expected to fill in the present perfect form that can be found in the main text (Ahokas et al. 2012c: 110):

(45)

	infinitiivi	presens	imperfekti	perfekti
I	planera suunnitella	planerar suunnittelee	planerade suunnitteli	_____
	titta katsoa	tittar katsoo	tittade katsoi	on suunnitellut on katsonut
• Verbeillä, joilla on imperfektissä päätte -ade , on perfektissä päätte <input type="text"/> .				
II	ringa soittaa	ringer soittaa	ringde soitti	<u>har ringt</u> on soittanut
	köpa ostaa	köper ostaa	köpte osti	_____
• Verbeillä, joilla on imperfektissä päätte -de tai -te , on perfektissä päätte <input type="text"/> .				

The verbs are grouped according to the four conjugations of Swedish verbs and the learner is also expected to fill in the supine ending for each group, respectively. How to form each structure (affirmative, negative and interrogative) using the appropriate elements is practiced with pieces of a jigsaw (46) (Ahokas et al. 2012c: 111):

(46)

2 biljetter till Robyns konsert.
Daniel ei ole saanut lippuja Robynin konserttiin.

3 slutsåld länge.
Konsertti on ollut loppuunmyyty kauan.

4 för idag?
Mitä sinä olet suunnitellut tänksi päiväksi?

A traditional fill-in-the-gaps activity (47) resembles a somewhat authentic, communicative situation since learners are expected to ask the questions from their partner and answer them truthfully (Ahokas et al. 2012c: 112):

(47)

- 4 Har du _____ vegoburgare? Oletko syönyt kasvishampurilaisia?
- 5 Har du _____ kläder? Oletko ommellut vaatteita?
- 6 Har du _____ filmen Bitchkram?
- 7 Har du prao _____ ?
- 8 Har du _____ gott på natten?

This activity also induces the learner to gradually move on from mechanical filling-in to process the sentences for meaning in order to complete the exercise since translations are not provided for all of the sentences. One type of activity (47) recurs in each chapter of *På gång*: reciting key phrases of the main text, that

is, the dialogue with cues in Finnish. The activity is relatively mechanical but requires learners to memorise the phrases by heart and not just read them aloud or parrot after an aural example (Ahokas et al. 2012c: 114):

(48)


 Milloin tullut tänne?

• toissapäivänä

 Mistä kotoisin?

• Östersund

• nyt asunut 3v Oslossa

 Mitä tehnyt täällä?

• kierrellyt &  kaupunkia

In conclusion, the methodological options used for operations in *På gång* series comprise mainly **controlled production** operations, but also some **free** production activities, such as writing their own blog, are provided for more advanced learners. Both types of **reception** operations are present: **automatic** aural and learner **controlled** written activities. No judgement operations of ungrammatical structures are included but there is one activity with incorrect semantic content for learners to correct.

Since all the activities exploit the theme and vocabulary of the corresponding chapter, the lexis and the target structures are recycled a number of times during the operations. Only few activities require spontaneous communication, such as writing a postcard or a blog post; oral pair activities include asking questions and answering them and translating (reciting) continuous dialogues from Finnish into Swedish thus being rather mechanical. No context is given to most activities to provide meaningful communication situations. Some activities encourage learners to give genuine answers to discrete questions, though. Thus it is obvious that CLT is not widely employed in grammar instruction.

4.4 Premiär series

In *Premiär* series, there is a reference grammar section at the back of the textbook and a piece of pedagogic grammar in every chapter in the exercise book. There are a number of items of data, such as a dialogue, a picture dictionary, a **text**, a song and information concerning pronunciation and culture in each chapter of the textbook; the text is enriched with the target grammar point. All the

operations to practice listening and text comprehension, grammar and pronunciation can be found in the exercise book since no activities are included in the textbook. At the back of the exercise book there is a grammar revision section. In the exercise book *Premiär studiebok 2*, the table of contents states that the present and past perfect grammar points are introduced and practised in chapter 5. The explicit grammar description, the data and the operations of *Premiär* will be described next and a round-up of them will follow in section 4.5.

4.4.1 Explicit description

In *Premiär* series, the explicit description of the grammar has a specific theme for each Grade, which is used in the accompanying images and example phrases to illustrate the use of the target structures; the 7th Grade theme is music, the 8th romance and the 9th history. The introduction of each new grammar point spans over one or two pages in the exercise book. It always begins with an image and an example phrase of the structure with its Finnish translation. The form of a new structure is highlighted with a pale blue background colour and a bold text type. In addition to the ones in the image, one or two more example sentences might be provided to illustrate the form of the structure. A concise grammar reference section at the back of *Premiär textbook 2* and *3* textbooks is intended for revision purposes. It briefly explains each grammar point the series covers, shows the form and sometimes illustrates them with example sentences.

Premiär Studiebok 2 begins the introduction of the present and the past perfect with a dialogue (49), which unfortunately fails to sound the way a natural conversation does. It presumably takes place in a shared context but still the girl's response *Ja* to the boy's mild reproach *Jag har ringt till dig många gånger* seems unsuitable or even indifferent and her next insert *och jag hade fått blommor av dig* unconnected. Furthermore, without any time reference the past perfect tense sounds ill-placed (Ihalainen et al. 2008b: 102):

(49)



The explicit description first introduces the supine **form** with a verb conjugation table (50) and remarks it being the fourth form of each verb (in a lexicon). It also reminds a learner that IV conjugation and irregular verb forms need to be learned by heart. Despite providing the verb conjugation table *Premiär* does not further explain the form of the supine that it, for example, ends with *-t*, *-tt* or *-it* depending on the conjugation or even that it always ends with a *t* (Ihalainen et al. 2008b: 102):

(50)

Konj.	Perusmuoto	Preesens	Imperfekti	Supiini	Suomennos
I	tala	taiar	talade	talat	puhua
II	ringa	ringer	ringde	ringt	soittaa (puhelimella)
	läsa	läser	läste	läst	lukea
III	bo	bor	bodde	bott	asua
IV	vara	är	var	varit	olla
ep.	få	får	fick	fått	saada

Next, **the present perfect** and **the past perfect** are introduced with a simple explanation of the meaning (the present perfect indicates what someone has done or what has happened) and a presentation of the form in affirmative and negative (51) clauses. The elements of the phrase (negative, auxiliary and main verb) are not named (Ihalainen et al. 2008b: 102):

(51)

Inte-sanan paikka on ennen supiinia.

HAR + INTE + SUPIINI

Tina har inte ätit leverlåda.

The grammar reference section at the back of each textbook is intended for revision purposes. The presentation of the present and the past perfect is concise: first a table of verb conjugations with example verbs and then a short paragraph of each tense. Each of these paragraphs includes an explanation of the meaning (with the same familiar phrase as every series), lists the elements of the form and gives a couple of example sentences. It also reminds the learner of the word order in a negative sentence. The example sentences (52) of the present perfect in *Premiär textbok 2* illustrate how the structure is used for a repeated action *Tre Kronor har drömt om VM-guld många gånger* and *De har inte fått medalj alla år* (Ihalainen et al. 2008b: 87):

(52)

Perfekt ilmaisee, mitä joku on tehnyt tai mitä on tapahtunut.

Perfektissä on kaksi osaa: **har** ja **pääverbin supiini**.

Supiini on sanastoissa verbin **neljäs** muoto. drömma, drömmer, drömde, **drömt** II

Tre Kronor **har drömt** om VM-guld många gånger. Tre Kronor on uneimoinut MM-kullasta monta kertaa.

Kieltosana **INTE** on verbin osien välissä. De har **inte** fått medalj alla år.
He eivät ole saaneet mitalia joka vuosi.

In both *Premiär textbok 2* and *Premiär textbok 3* (53), the paragraphs for the past perfect tense provide an affirmative and a negative example sentence which illustrate how the past perfect is used for an action or an event that either did or did not happen before another action *Björn Borg hade gjort mycket PR för Sverige innan han slutade med tennis*, before a time reference in the past *när hon var 16 år* or before an event *blev katolik* (Ihalainen et al. 2009a: 91):

(53)


Pluskvamperfekt ilmaisee, mitä joku oli tehnyt tai mitä oli tapahtunut.

Pluskvamperfektissä on kaksi osaa: **hade** ja **supiini**.

Kristina **hade lärt** sig många språk när hon var 16 år.
Kristiina oli oppinut monia kieliä, kun hän oli 16-vuotias.

Kieltosana on verbin osien välissä.

Drottningen hade **inte** fyllt 30 år när hon blev katolik.
Kuningatar ei ollut täyttänyt 30 vuotta, kun hänestä tuli katoilainen.



Drottning Kristina

None of the underlying reasons for using the past perfect in these sentences are explained. The concept of **supine** is explained as being the fourth verb form in lexicons and **conjugation** as a grouping system for verbs. The convention of using Roman numerals for conjugations is also mentioned and consistently used.

To sum up, **supplying** the explicit description of the target grammar points is the only methodological option used in *Premiär* series. The pedagogic grammar in this series is clear and simple and all concepts are explained. In regard to metalanguage, *Premiär* differs from the other series studied; it reduces the number of concepts by not labelling the auxiliary and main verb in the introduction of the target structures. The layout of the grammar description is spacious and clear; the invocation of a background colour and a bold text type highlights the **forms**. The interrogative and negative interrogative structures are neither mentioned nor are example phrases of them given. There is no comment on the tense of the auxiliary verb *har/hade* in relation to the present or the past perfect, respectively. *Premiär* does not mention the possibility to leave out the auxiliary verb in subordinate clauses or explain the use of a 'double-supine'. The **meaning** of the present and the past perfect is explained with similar phrases as in the other series. The connection to the present time or to a past time reference or the perfective aspect of these tenses are not mentioned. None of the **uses** of these structures are explicitly listed (see 3.4.3) but some of them become apparent through the example sentences in the reference grammar sections. Hence, the truth and demarcation of the target grammar points is not totally compromised by the demands of simplicity.

4.4.1 Data

Premiär textbooks have a variety of both written and aural data elements in the textbooks and some in the exercise books. In *Premiär textbok 2*, each chapter begins with a leading radio play to which no written text is provided for pupils, only a brief vocabulary list and some pictures to support the listening. A number of written elements follow: a dialogue, a picture dictionary, **a text**, a song and information of pronunciation and culture. The leading aural data and

the text are used to introduce the grammar point in each chapter. In *Premiär textbok 2* textbook, in chapter 5, the leading aural text has 4 occurrences of the present perfect of which 1 is *har varit* and 3 are *har ringt* in affirmative or negative clauses. The text (54) is an email of 19 sentences, which has 5 occurrences of the present perfect and 2 of the past perfect, all but one in affirmative clauses. The present perfect and the past perfect verb phrases take turns in this narrative text (Ihalainen et al. 2008a: 42):

(54) Moi Eva!
 Jag kom just hem. Då såg jag att du hade ringt. Jag har varit på ishockeyläger i Tammerfors.
 Jag hade glömt mobilen hemma. Därför har jag inte ringt.
 Veckan har varit rolig men jobbig.

The first occurrences of the past and the present perfect illustrate the basic uses of these structures; the past perfect is used for an action that had been done before a mentioned past time (*då*). The present perfect is used to describe an action or a state that has just ended; Santeri (the author) had been on a camp but he just had come home. The text has only one past simple verb phrase, although it is usually the past simple and the present perfect that take turns in a narrative. It might therefore in some further cases sound more natural to use the past simple, for example, in *Jag hade glömt mobilen hemma*.

The explicit grammar description in the reference grammar section and in the exercise book contain some discrete sentences; the former illustrate the use of the target structures with a clear point of time or another reference (an action or event) as already established in 4.4.1, the latter describe actions that occurred in undefined time before the present *Eva har ätit leverlåda*.

The *Premiär* series introduces authentic texts with images of book covers, front pages of newspapers and songs. None of them is used for grammar instruction though. The topics of the data in *Premiär textbok 2* deal with home, school, friendship, relationships, sports, food, travelling and shopping; the subject areas and situations comply with the ones mentioned in the NCC (2004: 123-124): normal everyday life, people, objects and functions relevant to the learners.

To sum up, the methodological options for data in *Premiär* series are: first, both contrived and authentic sources of data are present but only **contrived** text is used for grammar instruction. Second, the text size ranges from **continuous** texts to **discrete sentences** for illustrating the grammar points. Both **aural** and **written** media options are used as input. The register, fictive narration, used in the text is appropriate for the present and past perfect tenses.

4.4.2 Operations

The exercise book, *Premiär studiebok 2* has clearly marked grammar explanation pages *Grammatik med romantik* in chapter 5, but the present and past perfect forms are used in several activities already prior to these pages. The activities in *Premiär studiebok 2* include listening and reading comprehension activities, making up dialogues, dictation, answering aural questions in writing, translating sentences, fill-in-the-gaps and devising sentences based on a picture cue or key words (55) (Ihalainen et al. 2008b: 111):

(55)



Different types of grammar activities recycle phrases from the main text in the textbook. For example, the verb ring (*ringa*) is used in 7 of the 9 grammar activities in different ways: a learner is asked to find a sentence in the main text *Siksi en ole soittanut*, translate a sentence into Finnish *Men han hade inte ringt till Eva*, fill in the verb's four forms in a table, devise oral sentences based on a picture prompt where a written note states: *Jag ringde inte till mormor*, write sentences based on the same picture, orally ask favours and decline *Kan du ringa till farmor? Jag har redan ringt* and finally translate Finnish sentences into Swedish *Sinä olit soittanut minulle*. Employing the same verb in many activities

reduces the amount of verbs that are practiced, but at the same time lets a learner to focus on form instead of having to process a large amount of data.

A learner is provided with a context in some of the activities. For example, in one oral activity the introduction asks learners to discuss what some teenagers have and have not done while their parents have been away (picture prompt) and in another it tells one learner as a mother to ask another to do a chore but he/she replies that it has already been done. In one activity, learners are asked to tell something they have already done or have not yet done on the day they do the activity.

At the back of *Premiär studiebok 3*, there is a grammar revision section in which an activity is provided for each grammar point that is covered in the series. The present perfect activity asks a learner to compose sentences in the present perfect tense. Although the sentences are isolated, a context has been created by stating that Carl X Gustav, the king of Sweden, is bragging with his achievements. Similarly, the past perfect activity has a context which asks a learner to write down what Mikael Agricola had done before he translated the New Testament into Finnish. Again a learner should write isolated sentences describing these achievements based on verb phrases given in Finnish.

To sum up, the methodological options used for operations in *Premiär* series are mainly **controlled production**, only in one activity are learners asked **freely** to devise sentences using a given structure and in one write sentences using one given word. There are several **automatic receptive** listening activities, mainly requiring a learner to process the input for meaning and answer questions or repeat the story they heard in Finnish. *Premiär* has no judgement operations.

For some activities a context is given, which highlights the use of the target structure in a particular situation and may promote the communicative aspect of the structure. The recycling of the same verbs and other vocabulary in several activities might benefit the learner since he/she may focus on forms when the meaning is already clear. Pair activities usually involve making statements or asking questions and answering them; learners' own experience is slightly

exploited but the activities do not link to real activities outside the classroom. Grammar instruction does not exploit group activities and learners are not asked to interact to solve any task or problem thus the operations have minor communicative value

To sum up sections 4.1-4.4, some shared features were found in the series studied. In every series, the chapters or units where the present perfect and the past perfect are introduced are clearly marked in the table of contents. They all have an explicit explanation of the grammar point either in a separate grammar reference section or preceding the activities in the exercise book or both. Textual enhancement with colours and/or a bold typeface is used to make the forms more salient to learners.

Each series has an enriched main text with some occurrences of the target structure followed by text comprehension activities done orally and/or in writing. During these exposure-based activities a learner processes the input for meaning and that enables him/her to make form-meaning connections. These activities make the input comprehensible for a learner, draw his/her attention to a new form in a meaningful context and induce the building of a mental representation of the grammar point in the learner's interlanguage.

All the series have a variety of activities to practice the target structure after explicit explanation, most notably controlled production activities, such as translation and fill-in-the-gap exercises. In the next section, a more detailed comparison of the methodological options and the approaches in the series will be given.

4.5 Comparison of grammar instruction in the series

The aim of the present study was to find out the approaches to grammar instruction in the current English and Swedish L2 teaching materials. The methodological options that *Spotlight*, *Top*, *På gång* and *Premiär* series exploit in grammar instruction of the present perfect and the past perfect were described in sections 4.1 – 4.4 one series at a time. In this section, comparisons of the approaches to grammar instruction in the series will be made based on three

selected aspects. First, all the methodological options for explicit description, data and operations are summarised and the similarities and differences between the series described. Second, to answer the first sub-question (a) about the quality of the pedagogic grammar, the three dimensions of grammar (Larsen-Freeman 2003: 34) and the six design criteria for pedagogic language rules by Swan (1994: 46-51, see section 3.3) will be used to compare the approaches in the series. The sub-questions (b and c) about the data and the activities will be further discussed in chapter 5.

The methodological options. The results of the analysis are summarised in table 10 according to the framework by Ellis (2002a, see section 3.3 for more details). If the series exploits a certain option a cross (x) is used, if it does not, the cell is left blank.

Table 10. Methodological options used in each series

Series	<i>Spotlight</i>	<i>TOP</i>	<i>På gång</i>	<i>Preniär</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Explicit description					
Supplied	x	x	x	x	4
Discover		x	x		2
Data, source					
Authentic					0
Contrived	x	x	x	x	4
Data, text size					
Discrete	x	x	x	x	4
Continuous	x	x	x	x	4
Data, medium					
Written	x	x	x	x	4
Oral				x	1
Operations, Production					
Controlled	x	x	x	x	4
Free	x		x	x	3
Operations, reception					
Controlled	x	x	x		3
Automatic		x		x	2
Operations, judgement					
Judge only					0
Correct					0
Total features per book	8	9	9	9	

Most of the series exploit the same methodological options: they all supply explicit description of the target structure. The data in all the series is contrived and continuous text is used in the textbooks (the main texts) but discrete phrases or sentences in the reference grammar sections and exercise books. Most of the production activities are controlled and the learner typically fills-in the gaps or translates sentences. Each series (except *Top*) has one or two free production activities; they exhibit a continuum of somewhat free (complete a sentence) and medium free (formulate a sentence using a given word or structure) to almost free activities (write a postcard or a blog post describing your journey).

In addition to the methodological options the series have in common, they exploit other options differently. *Top* and *På gång* exploit the inductive approach: a learner infers the form and meaning for the target structure based on a particular activity. The activity in *Top* can be completed by copying but the series of activities in *På gång* enables the learner really to discover on his /her own how the target structure is formed and what it means. Although the main texts of the textbooks are available on CD or on MP3-files in every series, *Premiär* has additional aural data in each chapter. *Spotlight*, *Top* and *På gång* have learner controlled written receptive operations, such as True/False statements with picture prompts or matching phrases in Finnish and in English. In *Top* and *Premiär* there are also automatic receptive operations, which are typically listening activities.

Three methodological options of the framework by Ellis (2002a) have not been used at all; none of the series have exploited authentic data or the two judgement operations options in grammar instruction. Both *På gång* and *Premiär* have various authentic materials, such as a song in each chapter, but they are not used for grammar instruction. *Top* and *På gång* have a judgement activity type which is used for text comprehension; a learner is asked to find errors and correct incorrectly translated sentences. However, none of the errors is related to the target structures; all the errors occur in content words.

Three dimensions of grammar. In all the series studied, the explicit description of a grammar item mainly focuses on explaining and illustrating its **form**, if

measured by the space or text that is used to introduce it. Each series demonstrate how the affirmative and negative structures are formed, *Spotlight* and *Top* also introduce the interrogative form but none of them the negative interrogative form. Contracted forms of the auxiliary verb *have/has, had* ('ve, 's, 'd) are explained but not consistently used in conversational example phrases either in *Spotlight* or *Top*. The omission of the auxiliary verb and the use of a 'double-supine' in Swedish phrases are neither explained nor used in *På gång* or *Premiär*.

The ambiguous concepts of *the 3rd form* and *the 4th form* of the verb are used for the English and Swedish verb forms, respectively, but only the Swedish series *På gång* and *Premiär* explicitly explain why it is called the 4th form. Learners using *Spotlight* and *Top* series need to infer the meaning of these concepts (1st, 2nd, 3rd form and basic, 2nd, 3rd form, respectively) from a verb form table where they are used as column headings. This classification of verb forms (1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th form) has no equivalence in the grammars authored by native speakers (see section 3.4).

The Swedish series have conjugation tables, but only *På gång* points out how the supine is formed in each conjugation. All the series have a list of irregular verbs and learners are advised to learn them by heart. *Spotlight* motivates learners to do this by pointing out that they constitute the most common verbs in English.

All the series explain the **meaning** of the target grammar point briefly with simple statements instead of giving an elaborate explanation of the true essence of the English or the Swedish present and past perfect; the present perfect conveys *what someone has done* or *what has happened* (also *what had been* in *Spotlight*) and the past perfect conveys *what someone had done* or *what had happened*. This brevity implies either that the meaning of these structures is a matter of translation from Finnish to L2 and vice versa or that learners are expected to have adequate understanding of the Finnish *perfekti* and *pluskvoamperfekti* structures and they are able to apply their knowledge to the present and past perfect in English and Swedish. Thus, the underlying

hypothesis seems to be that the meanings of the Finnish, English and Swedish tenses are similar enough.

In other words, a learner is supposed to know and remember that the Finnish tenses express time from the speaker's perspective and in relation to the time of speaking, to a time of reference and to the time of action (Savolainen 2001: n.p.). The Finnish *perfekti* expresses an action that happened before but has relevance to the present and the form of the structure does not state any specific time (Vilkuna 2008: n.p.). An action continuing up to the present and an on-going action are also expressed with *perfekti* and so may also an action that will take place before a time in the future. Of the meanings of *pluskvamperfekti* learners are supposed to know and apply the facts that it expresses an action that happened before another action in the past and that it is used to chronologically organise past events or to emphasise the reverberations of a past event. How likely does a 7th or 8th grader remember all this is difficult to say.

The **uses** of the present perfect and the past perfect are not explicitly explained or systematically listed in any of the series; *Top* is the only one to point out a difference between the use of the past simple and present perfect tenses. Fortunately, the example sentences that are used in explicit description and data implicitly illustrate some of the uses of the target grammar points. For example, the adverbials *always, usually, yet, already, many times, never* are used with the present perfect and another past action or event as a past time reference with the past perfect. There is variation between the series, though, on the number of example sentences and the number of different uses they express; some examples illustrate the use clearly *Tre Kronor har drömt om VM-guld många gånger* but some are confusing *I've usually spoken Finnish with my mom*.

In regard to the most common verbs that are used in the present perfect tense *been, got, had, gone, done, made, seen, come, said, taken, become, given, shown, thought, called* (Biber et al. 2002), *Spotlight* uses *been, had, given* and *taken* in the main text with a number of occurrences of *been* and *had*. *Top* only uses *made* in the main text but *seen* and *taken* in the example sentences. *På gång* exhibits *varit, haft, gjort, sett, kommit, fått* in the main texts, whilst *Premiär* only has *varit* and *gett*. Thus the

texts in *På gång* and *Spotlight* comply with linguistic facts and resemble most an authentic text in regard to the use of the target grammar items.

None of the series mention any difference in meaning or use of the present perfects in Finnish and in English. Even more surprisingly the difference in use of the present perfect and the past simple American and British English is not mentioned either although the NCC (2004: 141) presumes that the key differences between the different varieties of English are addressed.

The quality of the pedagogic grammar. None of the authors explicitly state their aims or intentions for grammar instruction either in the learner's books or in the teacher's guidebooks. Therefore the quality of the pedagogic grammar has to be analysed purely based on the elements of grammar instruction in the textbooks and the accompanying exercise books.

Compiling a pedagogic grammar is making compromises between the six criteria for pedagogic grammar (Swan 1994: 45): truth, demarcation, clarity, simplicity, conceptual parsimony and relevance; a piece of grammar instruction cannot fulfil all the criteria at the same time. On the one hand, since a language changes continuously, what appears to be the truth and appropriate demarcation at one occasion may not be that on some future occasion. On the other hand, simplicity calls for reducing the amount of information and terminology to compile a clear presentation at the expense of truth. Furthermore, a thorough or too a simplified presentation of a grammar point would certainly not be relevant to learners in a certain level and with a particular L1.

The layout of the grammar pages, the means to highlight the forms and reduction of the amount of information imply that clarity, simplicity and conceptual parsimony have been considered in the series studied. The conjugation of verbs, with attached tables to illustrate them, makes the grammar instruction in the Swedish series somewhat broader and thus less simple than in the English series. In all series, most of the terminology used is already familiar to the learners and most of the few new concepts are explained.

Then again, the truth and demarcation regarding the meaning and use of the target grammar points is questionable in comparison to reference grammars (see section 3.4). All the series avoid superfluous explicit explanation or list of rules hence the text comprehension activities are probably designed to reveal the meaning of the structures to a learner. The scarcity of explicit explanation emphasises the importance of the examples in illustrating the use of the target grammar points. It is therefore unfortunate that many of the example sentences do not manifest any specific use of the target structures but their main object seems to be to introduce the form in a clear and simple way.

Again the reasons for this understatement of the uses of the target grammar structures can only be guessed since no information from the authors is available; have the authors considered detailed information to be irrelevant to learners in Grades 7 to 9 in basic education in Finland or do they expect learners to accumulate their understanding later on during their further studies. In general, the reference grammar sections in the 8th and 9th Grade books supplement the grammar instruction with more illustrative example sentences.

In conclusion, regarding the first research sub-question, the quality of pedagogic grammar and the kind of explicit description of grammar the materials exploit, the explicit description mainly focuses on the form of the target structures and the pedagogic grammar, although being clear and simple, does not disclose meanings of the target grammar points or point out when they should be used. If this is a conscious choice the authors have made, it may imply that first, the form is considered the most demanding learning challenge to Finnish learners; second, Finnish learners are supposed to have appropriate and sufficient knowledge of the meaning of the target grammar points based on Finnish grammar or third, learners are supposed to implicitly acquire the uses of the grammar points through the main texts and the example sentences.

In the next chapter, the overall research question about the approaches in the series studied will be further discussed according to different options in form-focused grammar instruction (see 2.3) and by comparing the findings to the findings of some previous studies. The areas of data and activities in the series

will be particularly addressed to further elaborate the sub-questions b and c: what kind of language data is used for illustrating the use of grammatical features and what kinds of activities are used for practicing grammar.

5 DISCUSSION

In the present study, grammar is seen as explicit knowledge of grammatical features of a language and as implicit knowledge of it in a learner's mind which the learner can use in communication. A learner's interlanguage develops in a subconscious process while the learner processes input, interacts in a communicative context and produces output. Thus pedagogic intervention in the form of form-focused grammar instruction is considered beneficial to a learner in supporting acquisition by enhancing the learner's explicit and implicit knowledge of grammar.

In this chapter, the findings of the analysis will be further discussed and measured against the definition of grammar from two angles: first, which form-focused instructional options do the series exploit (see section 2.3); second, are the approaches in the series studied similar or different compared to the findings of the previous studies reviewed in section 2.6. Finally, the implications for teachers and future authors of L2 textbooks will be discussed.

5.1 Form-focused instruction

Form-focused instructional options can be grouped into four main categories, though these overlap (see section 2.3): input-based, interactional and output-based, explicit instructional and corrective feedback options. In this section, the exploitation of these options in the series studied will be discussed in order to find out which options were used to accelerate a learner's interlanguage development and how this was done.

Input-based options. All the series have acknowledged the role of input being important in language acquisition by using input-based options in several ways; there are attempts to support a learner to process the input for meaning, attend to linguistic forms, notice the target structures and thus register them in

memory. However, none of the series employs interpretation tasks or processing instruction to the point that learners would be given an opportunity to notice the gap between their own use of the structure and the way it is used in the input.

First, all the series use **input flooding**, that is, have specially contrived data that is enriched with a number of instances of the target grammar point in different forms. The intention is to make learners notice the new structures that occur frequently in the text by including the affirmative, negative and interrogative forms of the present perfect in the data. Furthermore, repeating the same verb phrases such as *har ringt* several times in different forms lets a learner to concentrate on the form and memorise the one phrase, once they have learned the meaning.

Second, all the series provide text comprehension activities during which learners process data (the main texts) for meaning. These activities complement exposure-based instruction and they implicitly guide a learner to attend to linguistic items; the target structure is not explicitly mentioned or explained but several of the activities include sentences with the target grammar point.

Typically these **consciousness-raising** activities engage learners to find phrases in the text, correct sentences that have errors and translate phrases from English into Finnish. Many of these are pair activities which encourage learners to take turns or cooperate to complete the activity.

In addition to the text comprehension activities, *Top* and *På gång* also have reception activities that explicitly guide a learner to identify and comprehend the meaning of a new structure without having to produce the form. These activities include matching verb phrases in English and Finnish or making True/False judgements. These two types of activities, the ones for text comprehension and the reception ones focusing on the target grammar points complement each other since they involve a learner in using both top-down and bottom-up processes; the former in understanding what is said and the latter in attending to particular structures.

Spotlight employs more implicit activities for consciousness-raising. During the oral grammar activities a learner attends to the target structures while parroting and reading aloud phrases. These activities also exploit a third input-based option, namely, **textual enhancement** to highlight the forms and thus draw a learner's attention to them. Other series also use colours, bold text type and symbols such as an exclamation mark in the explicit descriptions to make the forms more salient to a learner.

Explicit instructional options. All the series use explicit instructional options directly but also indirect ones have been considered. The **direct** options consist of explicit explanation of the form of the target structures and rules to compose it giving thus a learner metalinguistic knowledge about the language. The form, meaning and use of the target grammar point are illustrated with contrived, discrete example sentences which are out of context. *Spotlight* recycles some of the phrases from the main text in explicit grammar instruction thus providing a learner a possibility to examine the example in the context too. As an **indirect** option, *På gång* exploits an inductive approach and lets learners to analyse verb phrases and discover on their own how the structure is formed. *Top* also uses this approach but in a more mechanical way.

None of the series uses corpus data or authentic texts for grammar instruction, but a learner is exposed to a number of examples of the target structure in contrived main texts which somewhat resemble authentic texts and real-life discourse. This is done by using contracted forms in the dialogues and by employing several times verb phrases *has/have been*, *had*, *given* and *taken* which are the most common verbs to appear in the present perfect (Biber et al. 2002: 159-160), thus exposing a learner to frequent encounters of a common structure. Furthermore, some characteristics of conversation, such as contextual cues, discourse markers and fragmentary components have been added to the dialogs in each series. The dialogues in *På gång* manifest even more features of spoken grammar: the clauses are short and they avoid elaboration, they include lexical bundles and other elements that are typical of spoken language, such as interjections, hesitations, incomplete and interrupted utterances, vocatives and

colloquial expressions. *På gång* and *Premiär* also have enriched both conversation and narrative texts, thus providing a learner an opportunity to explore the target structures in two genres.

Interaction- and output-based options. After several activities for comprehending the meaning and an explicit description of the grammar point, every series contains several **production** activities to practise the target structures. Only few of the activities have aural input but most of them a learner is supposed to complete in writing by him/herself. The approach to free production activities differs between series; *Top* has no free production activities while the others have one or two. In *Workbook Spotlight 7* a learner is asked to complete discrete sentences with first words given whereas in *Övningar På Gång 8* he/she is asked to write a postcard from Stockholm and tell what he/she has seen and done during his/her trip. The difference in approach is significant since a learner has been studying English for four years and Swedish only for one year before this activity.

All these activities provide learners with declarative, explicit knowledge and skills to form the target structures. Activities which would require learners to use their implicit knowledge of the language, such as interaction-based tasks where learners work collaboratively to solve a problem in a form-focused task, do not exist. Some of the activities include speaking with a partner, but mainly in a fairly controlled manner, such as reading aloud sentences or translating a dialog, which leaves scarcely room for authentic communication in L2. None of the series have authentic activities apart from questions-and-answers activities in which learners may give genuine answers based on their own life and experience. Not even the games are designed to create cooperation or authentic communication. In some activities, however, a mini-context is created with a picture or a sentence explaining the situation and thus they have more communicative value.

Corrective feedback options. Corrective feedback is most likely to occur during the lessons initiated by the teacher. In the series studied, very few activities are designed to provide a learner with corrective feedback, most often from peers.

One such example is a series of activities in *På gång 8*: first, a learner is asked to fix jumbled sentences, then to listen and repeat them and finally, to ask them from his/her partner. In this series of activities, the second phase, parroting the correct sentences, works as a **recast**, and asking the question from a partner gives a final opportunity to get conversational feedback in the form of a **clarification request** or even an **explicit correction** if negotiation of form is still needed. This particular series of activities also helps the learner to notice the gap between his/her own production and the correct target structure.

The other series have also some activities that could provide a learner with peer feedback but in these cases it is up to the partner's linguistic skills. For example, sometimes learners are first asked to complete a fill-in-the-gap or a translation activity on their own and then read it to a partner, but since no correct model is given, the feedback is fully dependent on the partner's observation and skills. Activities that would provide learners with conversational feedback in situations where negotiation of meaning is needed do not exist.

In conclusion, the series studied have a skills based approach to grammar instruction; L2 learning is considered a cognitive skill which is developed through a systematic study and practice. Input-based, explicit instructional and output-based options are used in all series but interaction-based and corrective feedback options are not in frequent use. They take into account that learners are not able to focus on meaning and form simultaneously and therefore first provide text comprehension and only after that form-focused grammar description and production activities. Some of the series also attempt to offer activities with continuous text or mini-context, instead of only ones with sentence-level drills, to resemble authentic discourse which gives learners some opportunities to increase their pragmatic competence.

5.2 Comparing and contrasting the results with previous studies

this section addresses the question whether the findings of the L2 teaching materials of English and Swedish for Grades 7 to 9 in Finland are similar to those found in the previous studies examining different L2 textbooks used in various countries around the world (see section 2.6). The perspectives are first,

the variety of methodological options used for explicit description, data and operations; second, communicative instruction and finally, the learner-centred approach in teaching materials.

The methodological options. The study by Fernandez (2011) showed that the two most prominent features in L2 Spanish textbooks according to the system of methodological options by Ellis (2002a) were supplied explicit description and controlled production operations and current perspectives on grammar teaching were not incorporated. Fortunately, the findings of the present study show that although the authors of these series strongly adhere to the grammar instruction tradition in relying on explicit description and production activities they have also probably considered the current perspectives on grammar learning. All the series studied also provide reception operations and most of them also include other options. The lack of judgement operations was, however, surprising; if the authors have considered input processing methods why not include activities that help a learner to notice the gap between the target structure and his/her own language use (as advocated by Ellis 1995, see section 2.3).

Explicit description. Macias' (2010) findings showed that grammar textbooks stress differently the three dimensions of grammar: form, use, and meaning. In the present study, regardless of the language, all L2 series emphasised the form and introduced it in a relatively thorough way while meaning and use were given less attention. Compared to the reference grammars (see section 3.4) the grammar description or example data did not attempt to produce accurate or inclusive information of the meaning and use of the chosen grammar points.

Data. Several studies on data have been concerned how consumerism and middle-class values (Sokolik 2007), biased cultural references and stereotypical youth culture (Alemi and Sadehvandi 2012) impact and shape a learner's world view, and how the spoken language in L2 textbooks is perverted and does not give adequate models for language use (Cullen and Kuo 2007).

In Finland, the topics of L2 teaching are defined by the NCC but the authors of the textbooks of course decide themselves how to deal with them. Judging by

the textbooks: financial resources are endless and everyone has friends and modern equipment. Thus the suggestion that many teaching materials are biased towards presenting middle class, wealthy people, their interests and lifestyle (Sokolik 2007) proved right; the texts were biased to middle class activities including travelling, shopping and a great deal of hobbies.

The data in the series studied was always contrived whether used as main texts, as examples to illustrate the use of the target structures or in the exercises. Authentic materials included in the textbooks were not used for grammar instruction purposes at all, which seems like a wasted opportunity. Authentic literary texts as a source of comprehensible input for inductive grammar instruction is, however, considered useful for a learner to explore, analyse and discover linguistic patterns (Paesani 2005:18-19). Corpus data or spoken discourse could be used in a number of ways instead of or in addition to contrived texts (see section 2.4).

Grammar activities. In her study, Fortune (1998) coined the notorious concept of “the gang-of-three”, that is, three primary features found in grammar practice books: isolated, uncontextualized sentences; manipulation of the unmarked form of a lexical item (usually a verb) in brackets; and, most characteristic of all, gap filling. Since the focus of the present study was on the present perfect and past perfect structures, the manipulation of verbs in brackets was an obvious finding but also the other two were present. However, the amount of text comprehension and oral pair activities was substantial. Particularly the former indicates that consciousness-raising and building form-meaning connections approaches have gained ground in recent teaching material and the authors have strived to show the structures in a meaningful communicative context.

In the present study, no quantitative analysis of the activities was made and it is therefore impossible to compare the ratio of translation, listening and repetition exercises to the study by Kopsa and Loikkanen (2009). Translation did, however, play a major role in many types of activities in the series studied, listening activities were rare amongst the grammar exercises but parroting sentences and words and oral pair activities were relatively common.

All the series studied had a moderately wide range of activities for practice but for some reason not many of these had been contextualised. Learners could be more motivated to achieve a goal or complete an interesting task if it had a meaningful context or perhaps an authentic discourse and thus grammar instruction could be more effective (Celce-Murcia 2007: 5).

A lack of meaningful authentic tasks in L2 textbooks in Finland has earlier been identified by Hildén (2011: 14) who claims that using them would make the learning more sensible and interesting. The same applies to the findings of the present study; free production activities, such as writing a postcard or a blog post, which let a learner use creativity or pair activities where learners are supposed to give genuine answers are rare. Furthermore, if the latter activity type includes very artificial entries, such as *Har du drukit röd mjölk?*, *Have you ever had lots of money?* or *Have you woken up today?* authenticity is lost.

Focus-on-form in CLT. Millard's (2000) study on how focus-on-form was integrated in CLT showed that some textbooks succeeded in using context in activities and examples and having communicative focus in the activities and some did not. Regarding L2 English in Grades 7-9, the NCC (2004: 141) emphasises that learners should acquire sufficient capabilities for functioning in L2 communication situations: these include that pupils can understand main ideas and key points in clearly organized texts (written or oral) which contain general information and can cope in informal conversational situations. Regarding L2 Swedish in Grades 7 to 9, the NCC (2004: 121) emphasises learners' basic communicative competence and oral interaction in particular in simple social encounters and service situations.

In the series studied, the majority of the activities and examples did not resemble real-life communication situations although a context is added to some of them. The majority of the activities are decontextualised, monotonous, drilling- and translation-based – even the oral ones are hardly communicative. None of the series has discovery activities or grammar tasks which could be done in groups and during which learners could communicate with L2. Although the texts in the series introduced a number of communication

situations, the lack of communicative activities and opportunities for authentic and oral interaction in particular suggest that the objectives of the NCC may be difficult to achieve.

Learner-centred teaching materials. Masuhara and Tomlinson (2008) used several questions to examine how the SLA principles chosen realised in L2 textbooks. They were especially interested in the use of authentic language, activities that helped a learner to pay attention to and notice language and discourse features and how learner-centred the textbooks were. In the present study, an overall impression is that the series have attempted to be learner-centred by providing texts that should interest teenagers, but they have not included any authentic texts and learners are not directed to find them by themselves either.

Due to a lack of problem-solving and discovery activities, the most challenging activities are translating Finnish sentences into English and that hardly counts as an interesting task to a teenager or to any language learner in reality. Despite some isolated decontextualised sentences or questions learners are asked to answer orally or in writing in their notebooks, no major opportunities for meaningful use of the structures is provided.

In conclusion, the series studied use a wider range of methodological options than found in the previous studies. The explicit explanation primarily concentrates on form. Data exhibits consumerism and middle-class values and no authentic spoken dialogues or written texts are present. The range of activity types outstrips the gang-of-three but contextualised or authentic tasks that would require negotiation of meaning or form do not exist. Thus, none of the series stresses communicative competence in teaching grammatical items or provides opportunities for real-life communication. The learner-centred approach is not present in the series studied and thus the books seem to be designed more for teaching than learning.

5.2 Implications for authors of future L2 textbooks and teachers

Authors of future teaching materials should consider alternative notions of grammar (see section 2.1) than they do today and be more systematic in

introducing the form, meaning and especially the uses of the target grammar points. In addition, they should enhance the variety of form-focused instruction. Here are some suggestions of approaches that were not used in the series studied but which could accelerate L2 acquisition.

First, input-based options could be supplemented with interpretation tasks and processing instruction options to further support a learner to notice target structures and give him/her an opportunity to notice a gap between his/her own use of the structure and the way it is used in the input. Instructing a learner to process input would be even more beneficial than mere input flooding (van Patten and Cadierno 1993: 54).

Second, since the NCC (2004) emphasises communicative competence and oral skills in L2, interactional options should be utilised in the form of activities that require negotiation of meaning, for example communicative consciousness-raising grammar tasks. These activities also create opportunities for corrective (peer) feedback when negotiating meaning and form is done. Interaction-based activities, such as group work, where learners need to make swift choices which structures to use in authentic communication require them to use their implicit knowledge of the language. Furthermore, authentic activities where learners have a problem to solve would interest and thus engage learners more than very artificial ones.

Third, inductive grammar instruction which lets a learner to examine the structures of grammar items and the patterns of a language and to infer the rules by him/herself should be used more. The indirect way of grammar instruction could be realised by exploiting a lexicogrammatical approach with corpus-driven examples and discovery activities. Authentic texts, spoken discourse and corpus-driven evidence could be used to introduce the target grammar points in a natural environment, for example, to show which the most frequently used verbs are that we use in the present and past perfect and in which genres they typically occur. Furthermore, it should be relatively easy to compose activities to encourage learners to explore how the structures are used in real life for example, on the net on the subjects that they are interested in.

However, including authentic spoken dialogues in a teaching material might also present a dilemma. On the one hand, authentic language input gives examples how grammar functions in real-life discourse, how grammatical forms convey meaning and how a grammatical choice is determined by context and purpose (Nunan 1998: 105, 107). On the other hand, spoken data often lacks forms that are considered to be core features of grammar in written text (Hughes and McCarthy 1998: 276). As a result, the authors need to decide to what extent spoken grammar and dysfluences that are present in authentic dialogues assist a learner to achieve good communication competence.

How to choose an L2 textbook? Many teachers face the process of textbook selection and their ability to evaluate and choose suitable textbooks for their class is therefore important. In order to be able to make conscious decisions on teaching material, a teacher should be aware of his/her own assumptions and perceptions of language, grammar and learning which he/she has adopted during teacher training or afterwards. He/she should also adopt a systematic way to evaluate textbooks, that is, to assess their suitability to the curriculum, learners and him/herself. Several scholars have suggested checklists or other techniques to support textbook evaluation and thus give support for making this important decision.

A four-part selection routine for choosing textbooks by Garinger (2002) suggested: first, analysing them according to operative curriculum and course targets; second, reviewing the skills presented and their progression in the material; third, reviewing whether the activities and exercises contribute to a learner's language acquisition in a balanced and progressive manner and provide sufficiently variation and challenges. Finally, also practical issues must be met, for example, the books are available at a reasonable price.

The criteria for evaluating L2 textbooks by Williams (1983) were already discussed in section 2.6. For evaluating the grammar instruction of an L2 textbook he advised to pay attention to the development of communicative competence, models of the target grammar structures, clarity of activities and the selection of the target grammar points.

If a teacher is concerned about what kind of impact the data has on learners he/she might consider using a framework for assessing possible bias in texts compiled by Zittleman and Sadker (2003: 7). Several forms of bias may exist in texts, such as invisibility, stereotyping, imbalance and selectivity, unreality, fragmentation and isolation or linguistic bias, and they may apply to a number of issues, such as gender, ethnic groups and social classes. The same framework may also be used with learners to raise their awareness of these matters.

In summary, if every trainee teacher in Finland were taught the principles of textbook evaluation, more pressure would be put on authors of future L2 textbooks to meet their expectations and learners' needs. Then again, the authors would also benefit from these principles and evaluation checklists. The evaluation of L2 textbooks could show the strengths and weaknesses of each series, not just in the area of grammar instruction but also others such as how the material measures up with the current curriculum. Only after a thorough evaluation may a skilled teacher use a textbook based on his/her own judgement, adjusting its contents consciously to his/her own linguistic and pedagogical principles and to learners' needs and objectives.

6 CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to find out the approaches to grammar instruction and the methodological options used for explicit description, data and operations in in four recent English and Swedish L2 textbook series: *Spotlight*, *Top*, *På gång* and *Premiär* for Grades 7 to 9 in basic education in Finland.

The present study was rather limited in a number of respects. First, it only analysed two textbook series of each language although a number of L2 books are used in basic education in Finland. Second, it only described grammar instruction in the textbooks and did not take into account the whole of the teaching material, for example, texts and other activities that were not explicitly marked as grammar instruction. Third, it only examined the potential of the teaching material; it did not attempt to relate the approach of the grammar

instruction in the textbooks to practicing teachers' working methods in the classroom. All of these areas could be addressed in further research.

The methods used in the present study also had their limitations; the system of methodological options by Ellis (2002a) had clear categories by which the options could be grouped. However, the number of options used in each series does not enlighten the variety of means that were used for grammar instruction. For example, every series had operations that could be classified as free production according to recommendations by Ellis, but the grade of freeness varied significantly. Furthermore, the framework did not help to evaluate the quality of grammar description and thus the three dimensions of grammar (Larsen-Freeman 2003) and the six design criteria for pedagogic language rules (Swan 1994) had to be used to complement the analysis.

Despite these limitations the present study succeeded in identifying a number of approaches that were used in the current L2 textbooks and several that were not. Based on the findings some general conclusions and recommendations could be made. The analysis showed that the notion of grammar was based on grammar as rules and structures. The authors of the series relied on providing explicit grammar description and production activities to build learners' language skills. However, the benefit of input processing had also been acknowledged; all the series had activities that directed a learner to make form-meaning connections. All but one of the series recycled the input in the textbook in the example sentences and activities for grammar instruction; the exposure to the input (the enriched main text) with accompanying text comprehension and receptive activities let the input release its grammar over time. Thus, a learner could focus on form during explicit grammar instruction since he/she was already familiar with the meanings of the data samples.

The value of discovery activities and authentic texts and their full potential had not been acknowledged and exploited in the series. Authors of future L2 textbook series could try using an inductive approach, receptive activities, authentic material as source for the activities and perhaps judgement activities every now and then. Most important of all they need to consider new methods,

such as authentic tasks or adding context to activities and add communicativeness into the teaching materials.

Exploiting various approaches in grammar instruction is not just a question of following trends or pleasing the audience. Although the grammar-translation method is considered to be “the traditional method”, the pedagogical trends have fluctuated over the centuries (Fotos 2005: 653-670); meaning-focused situational and functional dialogues, oral-based inductive and interactive communicative approaches have also been used in the past. None of these approaches is superior but a balance needs to be found regarding the rule-oriented and communicative approaches and eclectic methodology used in the L2 classroom. Furthermore, according to research findings, the use of a particular grammar instruction approach or methodological option in a L2 textbook gives no guarantee that a learner actually learns the given grammar points (Ellis 2006: 86).

For the present, research cannot give definite answers or recommendations how durable learning outcomes, that is fluent and accurate communicative competence outside a classroom setting, can be achieved (Ellis 1998: 49, 57; Ellis 2012). The learning outcomes of grammar instruction are difficult to measure since explicit grammatical knowledge can be measured but it is not a direct indicator of a learner’s implicit knowledge (Ellis 2006: 86). In addition, a learner’s attention may vary greatly in the classroom and may not focus on the grammar teaching provided (Alanen 2000: 160-161). Furthermore, non-language factors, such as age, aptitude, motivation or attitude, also have an effect on success in language learning (Gass and Selinker 2008:395).

The present study can therefore give no recommendations of the practical implementation of the grammar instruction in a classroom, that is, how grammar instruction could be realised or what kind of scaffolding should be provided or to what degree learners would pay attention to teaching. It is a teacher’s responsibility to ensure that learners have opportunities to encounter and engage themselves to grammar items in the classroom and teachers should therefore employ a variety of pedagogical tools and techniques in their teaching

to create a balanced language learning environment. Diversified L2 textbooks can significantly help them to do this.

Since there are the many uncertainties on grammar teaching and learning, there are plenty of opportunities for further study. First, more research on L2 textbooks could be done by studying how the different books are used in the classroom and what additional methods and techniques teachers use in grammar instruction. Another interesting area could be employing alternative approaches (see section 2.4) in a classroom and analysing what kind of an impact they have on learning outcomes or learners' attitudes to grammar.

A recent large-scale survey (Luukka et al. 2008: 68) showed that language textbooks are the most prominent source for L2 learning at school and they also have an indirect impact on learning objectives. In their free time, students encounter foreign languages, especially English, in popular culture, internet and games and they acknowledge it as an aid for learning (Luukka et al. 2008: 178-184). A study on university students showed, however, that in retrospect students consider themselves more consumers than language users outside the school environment (Kalaja et al. 2011: 70). In case of the Swedish language learning the situation is even more dismal: most students do not acknowledge either consuming or learning Swedish much outside school although the Swedish language is present in our society (Palviainen 2012: 26-27). All this places heavy pressure on the shoulders of L2 textbook authors; if the books are the main source of learning they have great authority in presenting the language to learners and in practicing communicative competence.

The present study contribute to the L2 language teaching in Finland by providing an analysis of the approaches exploited in the L2 textbooks that are the main source of L2 learning for numerous pupils in basic education in Finland and by introducing alternative approaches to form-focused grammar instruction in CLT. It has been delightful to notice that the authors of the series studied have made attempts to widen the range of options used in L2 grammar instruction. Hopefully, the present study encourages authors of future L2 textbook series to be even more innovative while utilizing the findings of SLA

research in grammar instruction and consider a more modern notion of grammar. The learner would be the ultimate winner; he/she will benefit while he/she encounters a wide range of creative, interesting and challenging grammar instruction options in teaching materials. Perhaps in the future, grammar instruction will not be boring or difficult after all.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Translations of the texts from the textbooks and exercise books

Spotlight 7, example (4)

“When you’re telling what **has been** or what somebody **has done** or what **has happened**, you use the present perfect”

Spotlight 7, example (5)

In present perfect you need **two verbs** both in Finnish and in English: an auxiliary verb and a main verb:

Minä olen kirjoittanut ...

I have written ...

Spotlight 8, example (9)

In an English sentence the form of the verb tells the time of the event:
past, present or future?

Top 7, example (22)

The present perfect tells, what **you have done** or what **has happened**.

Top 7, example (24)

The present perfect:

Action is unfinished or has something to do with the present

The past simple:

Action started and ended. It no longer continues.