

PLUSKVAMPERFEKTI, PLUPERFECT OR PAST PERFECT?

Presenting English tenses in upper secondary school books

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<p>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</p> <p>Aloitettaessa uuden kielen opiskelu opeteltavaa on valtava määrä ja aikamuodot ovat yksi tärkeä opittava asia. Kun opitaan ilmaisemaan tapahtuman aika oikein, monilta väärinkäsityksiltä voidaan välttyä viestin välittämisessä. Todennäköisin lähde aikamuotojen muodostamisohjeille on kirja, jota koulussa käytetään ja siirryttäessä asteelta toiselle, on sillä merkitystä miten aikamuodot on kyseisessä kirjassa esitetty.</p> <p>Tämä tutkimus lähtikin selvittämään juuri tätä yhteyttä aikamuotojen esityksessä siirryttäessä lukiosta ylemmälle tasolle ja se oli luonteeltaan kvalitatiivinen sisällön analyysi. Tutkimuksella haluttiin selvittää kuinka aikamuodot on esitetty lukion oppikirjoissa verrattuna ylemmän tason oppikirjoihin ja mitä mahdollisia eroja niiden välillä oli. Tarkemmin tutkimuskohteena olivat mahdolliset erot aikamuotojen terminologiassa, kirjojen eksplisiittisen tai implisiittisen aikamuotojen oppimisen painotus ja tarjoavatko kirjat oikeiden muotojen muodostamisohjeita enemmän aikamuotojen oikean käytön oppimisen sijaan.</p> <p>Suurimpia eroja löytyi aikamuotoihin liittyvässä terminologiassa, kun vain yksi lukion kirja käytti samoja termejä kuin ylemmän tason oppikirja. Muissa termit oli joko käännetty suoraan suomen kielestä tai englanninkielistä vastinetta ei ollut ollenkaan. Yleensä kielioppiasioiden esityksessä on sekä harjoituksia että yleisempiä ohjeita, eikä mikään tutkimuksen kirjoista tehnyt tähän poikkeusta. Tosin painotuksessa oli jonkinlaisia eroja. Eroja löytyi myös siinä, kuinka laajasti muodostamisohjeita tai aikamuotojen käyttöä esiteltiin. Ylemmän tason kirjassa käyttö oli selkeästi pääosassa kun taas lukion oppikirjoissa painotus oli melko tasaista. Yhdessä lukion oppikirjassa kuitenkin käytön esittely ja harjoittelu olivat selkeästi pienemmässä osassa kuin kahdessa muussa.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittivat, että eroja löytyy monellakin tasolla kahden eri asteen oppikirjojen välillä. Terminologiaa voisi yhtenäistää eri lukion oppikirjojen välillä, jotta väärinkäsityksiltä välttyttäisiin ylemmillä tasoilla. Lisäksi esimerkkien määrää voisi lisätä, jotta mahdollisimman moni käyttötapa tulisi jo lukiolaisen tietoon.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

Learning a new language involves acquiring many kinds of new information. One must become acquainted with the cultural factors, learn new vocabulary and how to use the acquired knowledge. Every language has its own set of rules on how to organise the words in order to make a meaningful sentence and these rules are called grammar. Through grammatical knowledge many of the possible misconceptions when expressing oneself can be avoided. One thing one learns fairly early on when learning a new language is how to express time in that language. In English, the verb is inflected to indicate the time in which a particular action happened and these verb forms are called tenses (Cambridge Advanced English Dictionary (CALD) 2008).

In different languages there are different tense systems which may prove to be a problem for a learner, as indicated in Duan (2011) and Çakir (2011). Duan (2011) explained that Chinese does not actually have a particular tense system as English and many other languages have. This can lead to many problems faced by the Chinese English learners as they are not familiar with the concept of tenses in their own language. Çakir (2011) found out that different kinds of tense systems, in this case Turkish and English, may cause problems for learners as they do not fully understand what something means. Finnish and English tense systems also differ from each other and certain tenses in Finnish do not always have the same meaning and usage they have in English. As learners move from one level to another, the possible misconceptions created by the differences in the tense systems may move along with learners.

As the likeliest main source of tense instructions are textbooks used in class, the present study is trying to discover if there are differences between three Finnish upper secondary school books, English United (Daffue-Karsten, Luukkonen, Moilanen, Pollari, Venemies and Vincent 2004), Open Road (McWhirr, Mäki, Päckilä, Riite and Silk 2008) and ProFiles (Elovaara, Mäkelä, Myles and Ikonen 2012) and a more advanced level book. There are not many studies on tense teaching or presentation in general but particularly few on the Finnish environment and this is the gap the present study is trying to fill.

The present study firstly illustrates what kind of previous research has been done of grammar and tense teaching and furthermore delves into possible problems therein. Secondly, the data collection and methods of analysis are explained after which the results and discussion of the present study are presented, which are followed by conclusions.

2 WHY TEACH GRAMMAR?

Learning grammar is probably one of the most prominent parts of second or foreign language learning. Without correct grammatical knowledge one may fail to convey the message one means and wants to convey. The present study looks at one specific part of grammar in the English language, tenses, and how they are presented in upper secondary school textbooks (Open Road, English United and ProFiles) in a Finnish environment. This chapter consists of three parts which establish the previous research done on the subject and furthermore, forms the basis for the present study. Firstly, this chapter aims at answering the question of what grammar is and what tenses exist in the English language. Secondly, this chapter will discuss how grammar could be taught and what kind of factors the teacher has to take into account when teaching grammar. Finally, this chapter delves into the possible problems that may occur when teaching and learning tenses generally and in Finnish in particular.

2.1 Grammar and tense

We use language every day as our primary means of communication. When we speak or write, we form sentences and when forming these sentences, we set the words in them in their places according to a certain set of rules. In linguistics this set of rules is called grammar. There are multiple ways in which to define the word 'grammar'. For example, CALD (2008) defines grammar as rules according to which words change their form and combine with other words to form sentences. Britannica (2013) includes the rules of interpretation of the different combinations of sounds, words sentences in its definition of grammar. Oxford English Dictionary (OED) (2013) outlines grammar as the study of language's inflectional forms and other ways of conveying the relations between words in a sentence. OED (2013) includes the established rules of using these words in sentences in its definition. From this point of view one can safely say that grammar has a relatively big role in people's mundane communication.

The word 'grammar' can also be used to describe a book or some less concrete compilation of rules – an entity that includes grammar rules. These “grammars” can in turn be divided into pedagogical and descriptive grammars (Dirven, 1990 as cited in Wang 2003).

Pedagogical grammars are further divided by Dirven (1990, as cited in Wang 2003) into learning (e.g. *Advanced Grammar in Use*, AGU), teacher (e.g. *A Practical English Grammar*) and reference grammars (e.g. *The Cambridge Grammar of English Language*). The learning grammar usually includes instructions for second language learners (Odlin, 1994) whereas a teacher grammar displays the elements of the target language system explicitly as a part of teaching methodology (Little 1994). A reference grammar in turn tries to describe language as a phenomenon as fully as possible (Greenbaum 1987, as cited in Wang 2003). As the present study analyses textbooks meant for upper secondary school students, it is using AGU (2005), a pedagogical learning grammar, as its point of reference for advanced level.

The word 'tense' is used for the inflectional form of the verb that indicates the time in which the action happened (Alexander 1988, CALD 2008). When one wants to use tenses correctly, grammatical knowledge is needed again. The English language knows two tenses, present and past (AGU 2005). Some also include future as the third tense, but the present study focuses on the two more widely accepted ones. The tenses are adapted according to aspect; that is to say whether the action in question is completed, repeated or continuing (CALD 2008) (simple, continuous, perfective). For example, when we focus on a completed event in the present tense, we use the present simple form of the verb (e.g. *She works, she jumps*) and when the focus is on an activity that happened over some period in the past, we use past continuous (e.g. *She was working, She was jumping*) (AGU 2005: 8, 16). So learners of English have to learn altogether eight different combinations of tenses and aspects and in addition, the usage of these combinations in order to master the usage of tenses in English.

2.2 Grammar teaching

As stated in the beginning of this chapter, learning grammar and tenses can be seen as one of the first grammar subjects of second language learning. The learning of grammar itself can happen through various ways but traditionally it happens in a classroom with a teacher. The main goal of grammar teaching can be assumed to be that after receiving it, the students have a fairly good level of knowledge of English grammar and the rules of its

usage. However, there has been controversy whether grammar should be explicitly taught at all and what could be the best way to do it. Traditionally, grammar teaching has included the presentation and practice of certain grammar subjects (Ellis 2006: 84). Grammar teaching can also exclude either of them (i.e. the teaching involves only the presentation or the practice) or both of them (i.e. students find certain structures by themselves in the examples given) (Ellis 2006: 84). Of course, also a mix of these is possible. Ellis (2006), however, reports that learners can also learn grammar through more naturalistic and implicit approaches. They may not be as aware of the explicit rules of grammar as the learners who have had explicit grammar instruction, but they can use them correctly. (For an example, see the Natural approach by Krashen and Terrell (1983)).

Grammar teaching can also be categorised by its focus point. Focus can be on formS (note plurality), form or on meaning (Long 1991). Focus being on formS, the sole focus of the teaching is on forms whereas focus being on form, the teaching takes occasional interest in the use and meaning of the forms in question (Long and Robinson 1998, as quoted in Burgess and Etherington 2002). When the focus is on meaning, which can be linked to the Natural approach, the classroom communication does not delve into grammatical forms at all (Burgess and Etherington 2002) and so, they are learned implicitly. Ellis (2001) adds that when the focus of the grammar teaching is on forms, language is seen as an object whereas focus being on meaning means seeing language as a communicative tool. Of course, these methods of grammar teaching may not be purely one or the other, but a mix of different methods. The present study specifically examines whether the textbooks used in Finnish upper secondary school clearly are either form- or meaning-focused or a mix of both.

Teaching grammar involves many kinds of decisions to be made regarding the focus and how to teach it. When making these decisions, the teacher also has to take the learners into account. Gladys and Simard (2011) discovered that students do appreciate explicit teaching of grammar because they want to be as accurate as possible when producing language and that they want to be as close to a native speaker as possible in their accuracy. Furthermore, Loewen et al. (2009) illustrate that students have a tendency to ask for specific grammar instructions. Textbooks can be a great source of those instructions since

every student should have access to them. However, a teacher cannot trust that these sets of instructions are always comprehensible and comprehensive. If that is the case, the teacher should be able to provide another source for the instructions. What is more, the teacher should take into account that not everything can be taught and thus the textbooks will always be somewhat incomplete.

2.3 Teaching tenses

Learning how to express time in which an action happens (CALD 2008) is usually learnt rather early on when starting a new language. Each language has its own system regarding time expression which makes it even harder for some students to learn to express time in English. For example, Chinese does not have tenses at all (Duan 2011). As Chinese lacks a tense system altogether, it is hard for Chinese students of English to understand the concept of tenses or use the different forms correctly (Duan 2011). Another common problem English second/foreign language students could face is a completely different system of expressing time in their first language. The students may mix up the rules of expressing time in the two languages (=negative transfer). Çakir (2011) found that to be the case when investigating English university students in Turkey. The tense with which the students had the most difficulties was the present perfect tense as it was often thought to be an alternative for simple past (Çakir 2011). For clarification, simple past is used of a completed action (e.g. She worked) and present perfect is used when action has started and continues (e.g. She has worked) (AGU 2005).

In the Finnish context, negative transfer is the problem many students are facing. For example, Finnish names for the different tenses include the word 'perfekti' which can be confused with 'perfect' in English tenses. What is more, the tenses in Finnish do not always have a straightforward counterpart in English. For example, 'perfekti' in Finnish refers to something that has happened in the past time, but has also some reference to the present time (Finnlectura 2001). In English there is no one specific tense which means the same as 'perfekti' in Finnish but it can be linked to present perfect. Furthermore, when the Finnish textbooks use in their instructions translations of Finnish terms that are too straightforward (e.g. "pluskvamperfekti" in Finnish to "pluperfect", McWhirr et al. 2008),

they can mislead the student to think that will be the case in a more advanced level too. In books meant for a more advanced student, they move on to use terms according to the verb's aspect (simple, continuous, perfect), for example, past simple and present perfect (AGU 2005). This might lead to confusion when students move from upper secondary school to advanced level, where it is assumed they already know these things. The present study examines how textbooks used in Finland could be improved in terms of their tense presentation. Of course, as said above, the books cannot be exhaustive in their tense presentation.

In Finland, teaching tenses or grammar of the English language have not been points of interest for previous research. There has been research on writing in English and Swedish secondary school textbooks (Kivilahti & Kalaja 2011) and on various other subjects, such as culture and pronunciation in textbooks (e.g. Hietala 2013, Lamponen 2012, Lappalainen 2012, Kopperoinen 2011). On a wider scale, different grammar subjects have been examined. For example, Durán et al. (2012) examined modal verbs and Yoo (2009) definite articles (see also, e.g. Hashemnezhad & Maftoon 2011, Macías 2010).

3 THE PRESENT STUDY

As discussed above the terminology regarding English tenses can be somewhat misleading which may lead to confusion among EFL learners. The main aim of the present study was to provide a view of what differences tense presentation in Finnish upper secondary school English textbooks have when comparing them to an advanced level textbook and what possible problems it may produce when moving from upper secondary school level to advanced level. As mentioned in the previous section, the area of grammar or tenses has not been a point of interest in the Finnish research on textbooks – a gap the present study is trying to fill. Furthermore, the present study aims to discover what kind of these differences are in, for example, the language of presentation in these books.

The precise research questions are

- How are English tenses presented to upper secondary school students in book series used in Finland?
- What kind of differences can one find between tense presentation in upper secondary school books and advanced level books?

The data for the present study was collected from three upper secondary school book series used in Finland: Open Road, English United and ProFiles. The present study does not delve deeper into how the books are used in teaching but rather how the tenses are presented in them. These books chosen for the present study are in use at the moment in Finnish upper secondary schools which makes them relevant. The upper secondary school books were selected because their presentation of tenses is most likely the latest source of tenses for English language students before they move on to more advanced level studies. That is why the present study does not take comprehensive school books into account. As its point of reference and comparison, the present study uses a pedagogical learning grammar for advanced level, *Advanced Grammar in Use (AGU)*. AGU was selected because it is meant for similar purposes as the upper secondary school books but in the more advanced level. The books were printed between 2004 and 2012.

The present study is a qualitative content analysis in its nature. Content analysis was considered to be the most suitable method of analysis since the present study looked at, as Flick (2007) puts it, certain parts of the data, and this data was analysed by comparing it to other data. Firstly, the book series were examined to find out which of the volumes included the explicit instruction of tenses. In all three series, the book was the first volume of the series and they all had a specific grammar section at the end of the book. In addition, AGU also had the tense section in its first few sections (or “units” as AGU calls them). Secondly, the books were analysed one by one starting from the upper secondary school books’ tense sections and ending with AGU’s tense section.

Thirdly, the sections were analysed from three different perspectives: language and terminology of presentation, the order in which tenses (time or aspect) and exercises were presented and furthermore, where the focus was (formS, form, meaning). The first point was the language choice and terminology in the upper secondary books. This makes a difference because they are not always unified and this may mislead the learner into thinking that the same forms, such as pluperfect, are also used in the more advanced level which is not the case. The second point, the order – what comes first – of exercises and tense presentation was also investigated. It illustrated whether the main point is in learning how tenses work by using them in the exercises (inductive) or is the book suggesting that tenses could be learnt through fact based learning (deductive). The final category somewhat overlaps with the second one, but it is more concerned with how much space is dedicated to tenses and how elaborately the books provide facts on tenses or do they provide purely meaning-focused exercises. Finally, the upper secondary school books were compared with AGU and further conclusion were made.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the analysis part of the present study which was executed through three different perspectives: language and terminology in section 4.1, explicit/deductive versus implicit/inductive learning in section 4.2 and finally, whether the book focused on formS, form or meaning in its tense presentation in section 4.3. Additionally, the chapter discusses the meaning of the results from each perspective.

4.1 Language and terminology

Finnish upper secondary school text books use English to varying degrees in their tense presentation. What can be said generally is that the upper secondary school books used English mainly in their examples and to varying degrees in terms. Finnish was used to explain the usage of tenses.

The upper secondary school book that is the closest to AGU's English terms of tenses is English United. It uses the same terms such as 'present perfect continuous' and 'simple past'. These terms are presented right after the Finnish versions. Otherwise English United uses mostly Finnish in its presentation of tenses and English is used in examples whereas AGU uses only English in its whole presentation. What can also be noted as a similarity to AGU is that English United provides far more elaborate explanations on how to use tenses correctly than the other two upper secondary school books. This is addressed in more detail below section 4.3.

Instead of including both the tense and aspect part in its terms for tenses, Open Road uses straightforward translations of tenses, such as "pluperfect" and "simple perfect", right after the Finnish ones. Both these words include the part "perfect" which is a tense in Finnish, 'perfekti' and so it can induce negative transfer from Finnish to English. In addition, the terms used in Open Road do not have a straightforward counterpart in AGU's terms. Open Road explains the usage of "simple perfect" by stating that it refers to an event that happened before and has some connection to the present moment. AGU does not have a term called "simple perfect" but it can be linked to "present perfect" but also to "present perfect continuous". AGU explains the first tense by defining it as activity

that has recently finished but results of which we can still observe. The second one is also used to refer to activity that is still ongoing. From this example one can see that the straightforward translations of tense terms from Finnish to English can be somewhat problematic if the learner chooses to continue one's English studies on the more advanced level.

ProFiles is different from Open Road as it partly uses tenses by the names AGU uses them. However, these terms are marked in the upper corner of the page, not right after the Finnish terms are provided, and they may well be left unnoticed by the learner. What is more, when using these terms, ProFiles does not provide translations of tenses with aspect. It does mention the aspect in Finnish (e.g. 'kestopreesens') but that does not show in the English version. The only term that can be found in AGU's terms is "past perfect", which in this case refers to the same form AGU uses it for: something that happened before another event in the past. Generally speaking the language mainly used in ProFiles is Finnish. If one has used ProFiles in upper secondary school, one may be completely unaware of the translations for tenses in English.

In conclusion, one can say that the upper secondary school books use English quite varyingly in terms for tenses. Open Road used the straightforward translations from tenses' Finnish counterparts whereas ProFiles did not provide terms for tenses with aspect. English United made an exception when it used the terms for tenses with both their time and aspect and was in that way the closest to AGU's use of terms for tenses. This varying use of language and terminology may pose difficulties when moving on to the advanced level and to using books meant for that level. One might notice that one has never encountered the terms used in that level. At this point it is left to the teacher in upper secondary school or even to the learner himself to investigate what the correct terms are and how they are used. The teachers are usually in charge of this since they have been educated to evaluate the materials they use in their teaching and so should be able to provide extra material. As Gladys and Simard (2011) mentioned, learners do appreciate more elaborate instructions and, as reported by Loewen et al. (2009), learners tend to ask for these kinds of instructions. So it would probably be highly appreciated if the teacher could provide accurate terms if and when the learners ask for them.

4.2 Explicit and deductive versus implicit and inductive learning

The order of tense instructions and exercises provided were investigated to discover which of these the books held as more important. It was assumed that the most important part came first. The order indicated whether the book embraced a more implicit or explicit way of learning tenses. According to Ellis' (2006) definition, traditionally grammar teaching involves first the presentation and then the practice of the subject at hand. Ellis (2006) also presents the option that either presentation or practice or both are excluded, but in the books for the present study looked into this was not the case. Open Road, ProFiles, English United and AGU all included instructions and provided exercises. All the upper secondary school books presented one tense at a time but AGU presented two tenses under one unit due to comparison purposes and connections in the time they refer to. Some of the books clearly put more emphasis on the instruction part and some on the exercises but all in all the books were quite similar.

Differentiating itself not only from the two other upper secondary school books, ProFiles and Open Road, but also the advanced level book, AGU, English United first presents the instructions for all the tenses and only after that moves on to exercises. Although this may seem like the book is prompting a more deductive way of learning, English United's preference in inductive learning can be seen through various examples throughout the presentation of tenses. The examples are, for example, clause comparisons and different types of clauses (i.e. questions, declarative, negative) and they are very similar to what AGU uses in its tense presentations. AGU uses clause comparisons which demonstrate the difference between the two tenses presented in the particular unit. For example, when presenting "past simple" and "present perfect", AGU clarifies the difference between the completeness of the two tenses by using clauses such as the two given below

- (1) "I **didn't shave** *this morning.*"
- (2) "I **haven't shaved** *this morning.*"

What is more, the exercises in English United make the learner use tenses quite diversely as they have oral, narrative and some drilling exercises. AGU's exercises are quite similar to those provided by English United, but AGU does not provide oral exercises.

Open Road is a bit different from the other books, including AGU, as it first provides a “tuning in” exercise which is meant to make the learner implicitly think about the tense at hand. For example, when presenting the “present continuous”, Open Road asks the learner to describe what is happening in the picture. After finishing this exercise, the learner can read about the usage of tenses and only then is instructed to form the tense properly. The order of things makes one presume that Open Road wants to embrace a more inductive way of learning as the usage is presented before the specific instructions on tense formation. AGU also emphasises the inductive and implicit way of learning as it does not provide any kind of instructions on tense formation and only gives the learner instructions on the correct usage of tenses. What is more, the exercises provided by AGU are made for testing and practicing how to use the tense(s) at hand, not for example how to write them correctly or how to form them. Exercises provided by Open Road are more drilling of the form in their nature but do also provide opportunities to use the tenses although not in the same extent as AGU. For example, one exercise for nearly all tenses was “Express the following clauses in English.” In addition to those exercises, Open Road provided hearing comprehension and form and usage drilling. In conclusion, Open Road did not clearly emphasise either the explicit or implicit form of learning but provided opportunities for both kinds of learning whereas AGU is clearly leaning more towards the implicit way of learning.

ProFiles differs quite a lot from English United, Open Road and AGU. Firstly, ProFiles provides instructions on how to form the particular tense at hand and secondly, presents quite simplistic instructions on how to use that tense. Finally, ProFiles gives the learner exercises which drill the correct form of the tense. As an example of an exercise, ProFiles asks the learner to add the verbs in the right tense into gaps in the text. This type of exercise recurs for every tense. ProFiles clearly embraces the more deductive way of learning, which means that the learner is assumed to learn the correct usage of tenses by knowing how to form them. Comparing ProFiles to AGU, one can notice at first glance that the two books are quite different. AGU provides quite a significant amount of details on how to use tenses whereas ProFiles explains one tense with one clause. For example, ProFiles explains the usage by stating that ‘kestopluskvamperfekti’, which is closest in meaning to “past perfect”, is used when talking about an action before another action in

the past. AGU gives instructions on how to use the “past perfect” including the explanation given by ProFiles but adds, for example, use of past perfect in reported speech and the structure “it was the first/second/last time”. One can notice that AGU uses far more elaborate explanations in general than ProFiles. In conclusion, comparing the order of instructions and exercises between ProFiles and AGU is quite difficult since they differ so much.

All in all, there was not one single upper secondary school book that significantly stood out from the other two when they were compared to AGU. The order of tense formation instructions and exercises were quite similar to AGU although English United used a slightly different approach when it presented all the tenses before presenting the exercises. The books did not straightforwardly emphasise either a purely explicit or purely implicit way of presenting tenses but all, AGU included, presented tenses through a mix of these two methods. They also mixed the deductive-inductive ways of learning. The inductive way mostly came through the exercises and the extent of examples used in which AGU and English United were the closest to each other. In conclusion, the order was quite similar in all four books examined in the present study.

4.3 The focus - formS, form, meaning

The third and the last category was a part of the present study because it is important to know if there is any notable difference between the focus point of the upper secondary school books and in the advanced level books. This section investigated whether the focus of the books was on formS - the formation of tenses only, form - formation and the usage of tenses or meaning - the usage of tenses only (Burgess and Etherington 2002, Long and Robinson 1998, as quoted in Burgess and Etherington 2002,). Moreover, Ellis (2001) has also illustrated that when the focus is on form, it means that language is seen as an object whereas focusing on meaning implies that language is seen as a communicative tool. If one, for example, imagines a situation where one has read formS focused instructions on tenses in upper secondary school with very little contact with the real usage of them, one can guess that it might be quite difficult to learn how to use them. Generally one can say

that the books analysed for the present study were again quite similar and did not have a definite focus point. Some clear differences could still be noticed.

Analysing English United's focus point was rather difficult since it could not be deciphered whether the focus point was form or meaning. Focus being on formS could be ruled out right in the beginning due to the many usage examples provided. English United first presents short instructions on how to form tenses after which it presents instructions on how to use them. As stated in the previous section, English United is the closest to AGU when it comes to comparing the extent of usage explanations. It provides significantly more explanations for one tense when compared to the other two upper secondary school books. For example, when compared to AGU, English United provides roughly the same explanations unlike the other two books.

Similarly to English United, the focus point of Open Road could not be defined clearly to being on formS, form or meaning as it had indicators of both form and meaning focused presentation. However, as in English United, the focus on formS was ruled out due to the examples given. Tense presentation in Open Road does provide instructions on tense formation and the exercises were quite drilling in their nature, which are signs of focus on form although they drilled listening, writing and oral skills. However, making the learner do a "tuning in" exercise before tense formation instructions and presenting the usage rules before the formation rules indicates that Open Road wants the learner to learn the correct usage of tenses. Compared to AGU, Open Road is the more form focused of the two. AGU's exercises make the learner think about why one should use the particular tense whereas Open Road's exercises emphasise the correct formation of tenses more although a few exercises were similar to AGU's. Of course, at this point it must be noted that when the learner uses AGU, her level of English is probably higher than the level of the Open Road user and so, she needs more intricate examples. The Open Road learner may not yet need the level of examples AGU learner needs and that is why Open Road does not provide as many examples as AGU.

ProFiles differs from Open Road and English United because where these two books focus more on form and meaning, ProFiles leans in a different direction. ProFiles clearly emphasises more the formS and form of tenses. Although it does tell the learner how to

use tenses, it does it in quite a simplistic way as discussed in the previous sections of the present study. Compared to AGU, the number of usage explanations in ProFiles are very few. AGU explains tenses in a few full sentences whereas ProFiles does the same with only one or two. For example, ProFiles gives two examples on how to use 'kestoperfekti' whereas AGU gives six different ways of using "present perfect continuous". However, one should at this point again take notice that ProFiles is a book meant for lower level learners and it cannot be assumed that it explains the usage of each tense to a similar extent as AGU. The language level of a learner using ProFiles is probably not the same as the language learner using AGU and so the lower level learners do not need as many examples as more advanced level learners.

All in all, in this category there were a lot of differences between the upper secondary school books and AGU. Open Road and English United were quite similar with each other as they both relied more on form/meaning rather than formS. As ProFiles relied more on form/formS, it differed the most when it was compared to AGU. Using the categorisation by Ellis (2001), the upper secondary school books saw language and so, tenses, more as a communicative tool than as an object whereas AGU saw language solely as a tool for communication. In conclusion, if one has used Open Road or English United in upper secondary school, one is closer to knowing the extent to which tenses and their usage are explained in the advanced level.

5 CONCLUSION

Differences between grammar sections of books may result from differing opinions between different authors or the book could be meant to be used with a more specific grammar book. The present study discovered a rather non-cohesive line of presenting tenses in upper secondary school books. The use of Finnish and English and terminology varied rather a lot as English United used the same terms as the advanced level book AGU, Open Road used straightforward translations of the English terms AGU and English United used and ProFiles only provided one term for a particular tense. The non-cohesive line continued when investigating whether the books embraced a more explicit and deductive or implicit and inductive way of learning. Ellis (2006) noted that traditionally both presentation and exercise are a part of grammar teaching and the books in the present study embraced that approach although somewhat differing in the emphasis. AGU provided quite a large number of examples whereas ProFiles provided only the basic explanations on how to use the tense at hand. The number of examples provided by English United was closest to that in AGU whereas Open Road was in the middle. Finally, the focus of the tense presentation provided a slightly more cohesive line in the upper secondary school books when they were compared to AGU. Two books, English United and Open Road, focused on form and meaning and were closer to AGU's meaning-focused tense presentation than ProFiles. ProFiles was clearly different from all three books as it provided formS and form focused tense presentation.

All in all, it is hard to make any wide generalizations about how the Finnish upper secondary school books present tenses. It can, however, be said that they are different from what the more advanced level books present and some improvements could be made. For an example, the terminology could be unified between the upper secondary school and the more advanced level books and the amount of usage examples could be extended. Cakir (2011) found out that Turkish students sometimes confused the present perfect tense with past simple tense and as Finnish also has a term called 'perfekti', this may be the case also with Finnish students.

There were no major obstacles during the execution of the present study. The books were easily accessible and the tense instruction sections easily found. What could have been

done better is the execution of the data collection. It could have been planned and executed more carefully at the first try because one had to go back several times to check things one did not notice the first time. Moreover, as there have not been virtually any studies on tense teaching and learning of English in Finland, some further research should be made. A wider array of both more advanced level books and upper secondary school books would have provided results that would have been more easily generalised. In addition, a study on how the tenses are actually taught on both levels, including the teacher and opinions of the students, would provide a more comprehensive picture of the differences of tense teaching in upper secondary school and the more advanced level. Based on textbooks only it is very hard to say how learners actually learn tenses but as the present study has shown, some points need reassessment.

The main aims of the present study were to assess how English tenses are presented in the upper secondary school books used in Finland and moreover, to discover possible differences in the presentation between upper secondary school and a more advanced level books. The presentation of English tenses in upper secondary school books varied in terminology but was otherwise quite similar to each other. However, a difference between the upper secondary school books and the more advanced level book, AGU, was clearly visible as it provided far more meaning and usage focused presentation of tenses than the upper secondary school books.

Books certainly are important teaching tools and in Finland they are used quite widely in language teaching. However, in Finland a teacher can also choose not to use a textbook at all or use it only partially in one's teaching. A teacher may do that in order to keep their teaching material authentic or just because the book in use does not provide comprehensive instructions or is outdated. It all depends on what kind of book the school is using and to what degree the teacher chooses to use it.

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