

# Pronunciation exercises in Finnish EFL activity books

## A content analysis and comparison of two activity books

Bachelor's thesis

Hanna Kuusirati

University of Jyväskylä  
Department of Language and Communication Studies  
English  
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Tiivistelmä – Abstract <p>Ääntämisen opetus on oleellinen osa kielenopetusta ja sen painotus kielenopetuksessa on vaihdellut vuosien varrella paljonkin. Silti se tuntuu yhä jäävän kieliopin sekä sanaston opetuksen varjoon. Tämä tutkimus pyrki selvittämään englannin kielen ääntämisen opetuksen asemaa sekä sen opetuksen muuttumista Suomessa.</p> <p>Lähestyin aihetta kouluissa yleisesti käytetyn materiaalin, eli tehtäväkirjojen kannalta, jotta selviäisi, mitä materiaalia ääntämisen harjoitteluun on tarjolla. Tutkimuksen aineistona toimi kaksi seitsemännen luokan englannin kielen tehtäväkirjaa samalta kustantajalta, joista ensimmäinen on julkaistu vuonna 2007 ja toinen vuonna 2016. Tutkimuksessa selvitettiin tehtäväkirjoissa esiintyvien ääntämistehtävien osuus muihin tehtäviin verrattuna, sekä vertailtiin ääntämistehtävien tyyppisiä, sekä niiden yleisyyttä. Sen lisäksi näiden seikkojen muutoksia vertailtiin kirjojen välillä, jolloin selviäisi myös, miten ääntämisen opetus on mahdollisesti muuttunut viime vuosina. Tutkimuksessa ääntämistehtäviksi lukeutuivat vain yksiselitteisesti ääntämisen harjoitteluun keskittyvät tehtävät, ei siis tehtävät, jotka ovat kommunikatiivisia; kaikkia suullisia tehtäviä ei siis laskettu mukaan ääntämistehtävinä.</p> <p>Tutkimustulosten mukaan ääntämistehtävien määrä on lisääntynyt huomattavasti ja uudemmassa tehtäväkirjassa ääntämistehtäville on myös annettu selkeä osio joka kappaleessa. Myös tehtävätyyppien yleisyys erosi aineiston tehtäväkirjoissa selkeästi. Sen lisäksi uudemmassa tehtäväkirjassa esiintyi ääntämistehtäviä, joissa oli käytetty hyväksi teknologiaa, kuten videoita sekä itsensä äänittämistä.</p>	
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# 1 INTRODUCTION

Since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century the teaching of pronunciation has become systematically studied (Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996) and the teaching of pronunciation has been a part of English as a second language (ESL) or English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching for over 150 years. Nowadays the teaching of languages emphasises the importance of the communicative purposes of learning a language (for example Cook 2016). One could assume that important factors considering the communicative aspects of language use include for instance grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. However, it seems that many Finnish people feel that pronunciation training was neglected in school and learning grammar and vocabulary were the main foci in EFL classrooms. Since teaching pronunciation in a classroom context and the emphasis on the communicative aspects of language learning are not exactly new ideas, one could imagine that pronunciation training shared the status of learning grammar and vocabulary. Thus, the assumptions of the importance of pronunciation in language learning and the commonly shared feeling of pronunciation not being taught as much as the other major factors of language are contradictory. For those reasons, I am interested in, firstly, discovering if and to what extent there is material provided for pronunciation training in one of the most common materials for EFL teaching, namely activity books used in EFL classrooms in Finland. Secondly, this paper aims at examining the development of the pronunciation exercises by investigating two activity books published nine years apart. In addition, nowadays multiple studies have been conducted in the area of second language acquisition, pronunciation training and the materials used in EFL classrooms; however, fewer studies have been conducted in Finland, as also mentioned in Henderson et al. (2012: 6). Moreover, the studies have not compared the development of pronunciation exercises both in quality and quantity in Finnish EFL activity books. Finally, this study also attempts to give a notion of the status of pronunciation training in EFL teaching in Finland.

In this thesis I will first introduce background literature concerning the history of pronunciation teaching and the different methods and techniques of pronunciation teaching in chapter 2 *Theoretical Background*. In chapter 2 I will also discuss previous findings of exercises in EFL activity books used in Finnish classrooms. In the third chapter I will introduce the data, aims and methods of the present study. Chapter 4 will present and discuss the results of the present study.

## 2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In this chapter I will first introduce background information concerning the history of teaching pronunciation, as this thesis focuses on the changes that have happened in the EFL activity books in relatively recent years. In the following sections, an overview of the different techniques of teaching pronunciation in general will be given as well. Finally, categories of pronunciation exercises in Finnish EFL activity books will be presented, for this thesis will explore the different types of exercises provided for pronunciation training in Finnish classrooms.

### 2.1 Pronunciation teaching in the past and present

In regard to the history of pronunciation teaching, it should be taken into account that no concrete evidence of the pronunciation teaching practices has been recorded in any form before the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as Murphy and Baker (2015) mention. However, according to Murphy and Baker (2015), there is reason to believe that pronunciation training in L2 classrooms was not of importance before the 1850s and that the *Grammar Translation method*, which focused mostly on grammar and written language, was the dominant trend in classrooms. In addition, according to Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996), teaching grammar and vocabulary used to be the main focus of language teaching whereas pronunciation as an aspect of language teaching only became an object of research shortly before the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in the 1890s. According to Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) the approach used in pronunciation teaching in the late 1800s and early 1900s used to be the *Direct Method*. This method refers to an approach where the students' pronunciation is improved by them being provided with native-like speech, which they then listen to and imitate (Hismanoglu and Hismanoglu 2010). The time period starting from the 1890s was referred to as the *Reform movement* in language teaching (Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996). Around this time the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) was created by Henry Sweet, Wilhelm Victor and Paul Passy, who also formed the International Phonetic Association in 1886. The phoneticians of this movement promoted the following aspects in language teaching (Celce-Murcia et al. 1996:3):

- The spoken form of a language is primary and should be taught first
- The findings of phonetics should be applied to language teaching
- Teachers must have solid training in phonetics

-Learners should be given phonetic training to establish good speaking habits

For instance by promoting these aspects this association had an impact on how pronunciation and language teaching in general are being taught even nowadays (Celce-Murcia et al. 1996).

In the 1940s and 1950s, likely as a consequence of the *Reform Movement*, the main approaches in pronunciation teaching were the *Audiolingual Method* in the United States of America and the *Oral Approach* in Britain (Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996; Hismanoglu and Hismanoglu 2010). According to Celce-Murcia et al. (1996), pronunciation became an important part of language teaching and information from phonetics was applied to the teaching; teachers started using the minimal pair drill technique, for instance. In a minimal pair drill exercise the teacher compares, for example, two words consisting of a minimal pair difference (such as *sheep-ship*) by pronouncing the words and the students should then tell if they spot a difference. In addition, visual aids, such as articulation charts, became used as parts of pronunciation teaching in the 1940s and 1950s.

In the 1960s the *Cognitive Approach* emerged in the teaching of pronunciation (Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996). Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) state that this approach put the emphasis back on grammar and vocabulary, as it was believed that native-like pronunciation could not be achieved. Thus, teaching grammar and vocabulary were favoured over teaching pronunciation, as they can be learnt and perfected more easily.

In the 1970s there were two main approaches: the *Silent Way* and *Community Language Learning* (Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996). In regard to the *Silent Way*, the emphasis was on the accuracy of sounds and on how words, thus also sounds and intonation, for instance, combine in an utterance. However, unlike in the *Audiolingual Method*, the teaching did not focus on linguistic information of pronunciation, such as the phonetic alphabet (Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996). The *Community Language Learning* approach, on the other hand, was largely student initiated: the student expressed what they wished to learn and the teacher provided the utterance in the target language. Once the student mimicked the utterance correctly it was recorded, enabling the student to further practice the particular utterance (Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996).

From the 1980s until today the *Communicative Approach*, which emphasises the goal of pronunciation and language teaching – communication, has been the dominant approach (Celce-Murcia et al. 1996). Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) explain that the aim is to have sufficient enough pronunciation skills in order to not have problems with communication even with native speakers. They add that the techniques of the *Communicative Approach* include for instance listening and imitating, tongue twisters and reading aloud.

## 2.2 Methods and techniques used in pronunciation teaching

According to Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) there are two main approaches to the teaching of pronunciation, namely the *intuitive-imitative* and the *analytic-linguistic* approach. Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) define the intuitive-imitative approach as an approach where the students listen to and imitate the target language, thus also requiring adequate models to listen to. This approach could be considered as the “listen-and-repeat” approach. However, in this approach there is no explicit information presented regarding certain language learning aids, such as the phonetic alphabet. The analytic-linguistic approach is the second main approach of pronunciation teaching that has formed throughout the years. In this approach, unlike in the intuitive-imitative approach, pedagogical aids are being used to assist the listening to and imitating the target language. As Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) continue, it should also be mentioned that the aim of this approach is not replacing the intuitive-imitative approach; the aim is to complement it.

The approach of pronunciation teaching that the teacher chooses to follow, consequently, affects the teacher’s choice of the methods and techniques they apply in their classes. In the previous section I have already provided some examples of a few methods and techniques used in pronunciation teaching; in the following paragraphs I will give a more thorough overview of different types of techniques and methods typically used in the teaching of English pronunciation. The techniques can be divided into two categories: traditional techniques and modern techniques (Hismanoglu and Hismanoglu 2010). The traditional techniques include for instance dictation and reading aloud, as well as dialogues, whereas the modern techniques are computer- and internet-based. Hismanoglu and Hismanoglu’s (2010) study shows that language teachers prefer traditional techniques and that teachers are almost reluctant to use modern techniques. I will introduce and categorise the techniques in more detail with the help of Tergujeff’s (2013) classification of them, as the categorisation of the

English activity book exercises of the present study will be based on her categorisation. The focus will also be on classroom- and activity book based techniques of pronunciation teaching.

The first technique that Tergujeff (2013) introduces is the category of *imitation and drilling* exercises. These exercises include for instance minimal pair drills and tongue twisters, as well as reading aloud and recording oneself. The second category out of the seven categories that Tergujeff (2013) has created is *phonetic training*. The exercises of this category utilise phonetic terminology, the IPA or draw the attention to physical articulation. For instance, teaching the students IPA would provide them with a way to learn the pronunciation of unfamiliar words, with the help of a dictionary. The third category is *awareness-raising* tasks. The goal of these tasks is to raise the students' phonological awareness, which can include becoming aware of the variation in the English language, for instance. The next category is *ear training*. This category refers to exercises that "train one's ear" as Tergujeff (2013) puts it; in other words, such exercises familiarise the learners with the target language's sounds and listening comprehension through listening exercises. The exercises can include for instance differentiation of sounds or accents. The fifth of Tergujeff's (2013) categories is *creative techniques*. According to her, creative techniques are techniques that originate from other disciplines, such as drama. One example of such exercises is learning to control the volume of speech. The next category is *corrective feedback*. Corrective feedback, as the name suggests, refers to the feedback that the teacher can give. As Morley (1991: 33, cited in Tergujeff 2013) points out, corrective feedback "should not cause negative feelings in pupils, and they should not feel as if they were being punished". The last category of pronunciation teaching techniques that Tergujeff (2013) has identified is *materials, tools and technology*. The materials may include published materials, such as textbooks, a tool might be for instance a picture and for example the internet can provide a lot of material for teaching and learning pronunciation. In addition, Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (2010) have listed for example audio, video and the internet as possible technological tools for pronunciation training. They mention recording and replaying one's speech, visual material of examples or oneself, and the benefits that the internet offers as beneficial tools that can support pronunciation training. Also Hummel (2013) mentions many advantages of using technology in classrooms, as for instance samples of spoken language.

## 2.3 Pronunciation exercises in English activity books



In Finnish EFL classes, textbooks and activity books, alongside with the teacher's book and CDs, are usually used extensively. For instance, Tergujeff (2013) has found that 97.8% of the teachers interviewed for her study utilise textbooks in their classes. As the focus of this paper is on pronunciation exercises in EFL activity books in Finland, I will introduce some categories of pronunciation exercises that commonly occur in Finnish EFL activity books. Tergujeff (2010) has identified a list of eight categories of pronunciation-specific materials found in EFL textbooks used in Finnish schools and her categorisation will serve as a model for the categorisation of the present study. Her categorisation is as follows:

1. Phonetic training
2. Read aloud
3. Listen and repeat
4. Rhyme & verse
5. Rules & instructions
6. Awareness-raising activities
7. Spelling & dictation
8. Ear training

Some of these categories - *phonetic training*, *read aloud*, *listen and repeat*, *awareness-raising activities* and *ear training* - have already been introduced in 2.2 *Methods and techniques used in pronunciation teaching*. The category *rhyme & verse* refers to exercises including finding rhyming words, for instance. *Rules & instructions* is a category of pronunciation exercises where concrete instructions or rules for the pronunciation of a certain sound have been given. According to Tergujeff's (2010) study, peer spelling and dictation exercises are not common in Finnish EFL activity books, yet they occur occasionally. This category of exercises include for instance lip-reading and spelling one's name.

The findings of Tergujeff's (2010) study show that the most common category found in Finnish EFL textbooks was *phonetic training*, for instance with the help of the IPA. The second most frequently found category in her study was *read aloud* and the third one was *listen and repeat*. These

pronunciation exercise types are according to Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) also fundamental and commonly used throughout the history of pronunciation teaching. In addition, similarly to Hismanglu and Hismanglu's (2010) findings, in Tergujeff's (2010) study the most preferred techniques are traditional. The category with the least exercises found in Finnish EFL textbooks in Tergujeff's (2010) study was *ear training*.

### 3 PRESENT STUDY

In this chapter I will first present the aim and the research question of the present study. Following the aim and the research question, I will describe the data of the present study and give reasons for choosing the particular data. Finally, the methods of analysis of the present study will be introduced.

#### 3.1 Aim and Research Question

As discussed in the previous chapters, the aspect of pronunciation training in language teaching has developed and had dissimilar statuses throughout the years. The focus of the present study is on relatively recent years and the aim is to see if and how pronunciation exercises in EFL activity books used in Finnish classrooms have changed in that time. Especially since the *Communicative Approach* has been the main approach in pronunciation teaching from the 1980s (Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996), I am interested in seeing how the most commonly used materials in EFL classrooms - activity books - offer pronunciation exercises both in quantity and quality and whether there are differences in the most recent activity books in comparison to the previously used ones. The research questions of the present study are:

1. What kinds of exercises for pronunciation training have been provided in activity books used in Finnish EFL classrooms?
2. How have the exercises changed in both quantity and quality in relatively recent years?

#### 3.2 Data

The data consists of two English as a foreign language activity books aimed at the seventh grade pupils of Finnish schools. The seventh grade in Finland is the first grade of the upper comprehensive school which is also a part of the compulsory school education in Finland. The seventh grade pupils are usually around 13 years old. The two activity books are from the same publisher, Sanoma Pro Oy, which was previously (until 2011) called WSOY Oppimateriaalit. Activity books from this publisher were chosen as it is, according to their web page, “the leading provider of learning solutions in Finland” (Sanoma Pro. n.d. Tietoa meistä. Briefly in English). The first activity book was published in 2007 and the second one was published in 2016, meaning that there is a nine year gap between the publishing of the two most recent EFL activity books from Sanoma Pro Oy. The two activity books are:

1. *On The Go 1*. (2016). Daffue-Karsten, L., Haapala, M., Ojala, A-M., Ojala, S., Peuraniemi, J., Rappold, P. and Semi, L. Helsinki, Sanoma Pro Oy.
2. *Key English 7, courses 1-2*. (2007). Haavisto, A., Kangaspunta, R., Lehtonen, E., Peuraniemi, J. and Westlake, P. Helsinki, WSOY Oppimateriaalit.

Choosing two consecutively published activity books from the same publisher will give a good indication of the development of pronunciation exercises in Finnish EFL activity books. The choice to pick two books aimed at the seventh grade pupils is based on the age of the pupils, as it enables the activity books to include exercises which use computers and other technological devices as tools, unlike the activity books aimed at lower comprehensive school pupils. I also wanted to choose activity books that are being used in the compulsory school education in Finland, as they are designed to be the material for all Finnish pupils, despite of the children's level of competence in English or their level of interest towards language learning, for instance.

### 3.3 Methods of Analysis

The method of analysis of the present study is content analysis of the two activity books. The content analysis was both quantitative and qualitative in nature, as I compared both the amount of exercises and the types of exercises within a unit as well as within the books, but the findings are also discussed more profoundly. The focus of this paper is on the pronunciation exercises in the activity books but the books as a whole have been taken into consideration as well. The other materials related to pronunciation training, such as vocabularies including phonetic alphabet, have not been considered as exercises; nevertheless, they have been included and introduced in this paper, the emphasis still being on the exercises.

As mentioned above, the focus of the present study was on the exercises that are directly related to phonetic training; however, it should be noted that not all oral exercises have been included as pronunciation exercises in this study. If an oral task is communicative in style, it has not been considered as a pronunciation training exercise. Hence, for instance exercises in which one is asked to interview one's partner, even with questions that have been provided for them, are not included, since those exercises are communicative in nature, instead of specifically aiming at pronunciation training. It should also be noted that many exercises in both activity books include more than one task

per exercise (such as fill in the gaps and then read the sentences aloud). In regards to the amount of pronunciation exercises compared to the amount of other exercises, this paper focuses on the publishers' idea of what one exercise includes, meaning that the tasks that have been put together under one exercise number have been considered as one exercise. In other words, when comparing the amount of pronunciation exercises and the other exercises, the analysis does not focus on exercise types, instead the focus is on exercises as a whole. However, the few exercises that in the activity books have been divided into tasks A and B, for instance, have been considered as separate exercises. This is due to the fact that often in such exercises pupils can decide whether they wish to do task A or task B. However, the exercises that include a subtask, which is focused on pronunciation training (such as read aloud), have been taken into consideration in the results when applicable. If this is the case, it will be mentioned during the analysis.

Since the focus of this paper is on pronunciation exercises, the analysis will also separately focus on the pronunciation-specific exercises with all their subtasks considered as individual exercise types, as well as the subtasks in other exercises which include pronunciation training, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the pronunciation exercises provided and of how the amount and types of pronunciation exercises may have changed over time. The types of pronunciation exercises were categorised based on Tergujeff's (2010) categorisation of pronunciation-specific material in English activity books used in Finnish schools. As introduced in the section 2.3, Tergujeff was able to identify eight categories of pronunciation training material, whereas in this study only six of those categories were found. The categories of pronunciation exercises found in the present study are:

1. Phonetic training
2. Read aloud
3. Listen and repeat
4. Rules & instructions
5. Awareness-raising activities
6. Ear training

## 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section I present the findings of the present study. Section 4.1 discusses the quantitative changes of the pronunciation exercises in comparison to all the exercises. Section 4.2 focuses on the changes in the exercise types found in both activity books, and in Section 4.3 the other materials related to pronunciation training have been mentioned and discussed. The following sections will both present the findings of the present study and include discussion on the topics.

### 4.1 Pronunciation exercises and other exercises

The activity book *Key English 7. Courses 1-2* by Haavisto et al. (2007) consists of eight units. The term unit in the activity books refers to entities that have been constructed around one theme. Each unit in both activity books include one main text, to which for example a lot of exercises have been attached. In addition, the units consist of different parts such as learning grammar rules, vocabulary and filling in a self-assessment. As already the name of the activity book suggests, the activity book *Key English 7* has been divided into two courses, consisting of four units per course. In practice, however, the division into two courses is most likely not taken into consideration at the upper comprehensive school level. The activity book by Daffue-Karsten et al. *On The Go 1* (2016) has not been divided into courses but it should be noted that the activity book consists of six units, which is two units less than in *Key English 7*. The activity books are of quite similar length though, as *On the Go 1* is 220 pages long and *Key English 7* is a 216-page activity book. As the activity books include approximately the same amount of pages, it is fair to compare the total amounts of pronunciation exercises in each activity book. In the following paragraphs I will focus on the amount of pronunciation training exercises compared to the amount of all the exercises in the activity books.

In the activity book *Key English 7* there are altogether 398 exercises. This includes every exercise from each unit despite of their exercise type, as well as all the exercises from the revision part, which includes additional exercises to each unit. The revision section can be found at the end of the book. Each unit has 36 to 54 exercises, and the average of exercises per unit is 42.5. Out of those 398 exercises 11 are specifically aimed at pronunciation training, making it 2.76% of all the exercises. Additional 14 exercises include a subtask which is specifically aimed at pronunciation training, even though the main goal of the exercise is not related to pronunciation training. If all the exercises that

at least as a part of the exercise include pronunciation-specific material are added up together, the total is 25 exercises, which is 6.28% of all the exercises. The division of the pronunciation-specific exercises is one or two exercises per unit. In addition, there are zero to four exercises in each unit in which a pronunciation-specific task is included, on average 1.75 of those exercises per unit.

The more recent activity book *On the Go 1*, on the other hand, consists of 387 exercises. Each unit has 51 to 77 exercises, the average being 64.5 exercises per unit. There are 29 exercises which are solely aimed at practicing pronunciation, which is 7.49% of all the exercises. The 29 pronunciation-specific exercises have been divided into the units so that four to eight of such exercises can be found in each unit, with the average of pronunciation-specific exercises per unit being 4.8. These exercises can most often be found from the “Pronunciation” section of each unit. In addition, a pronunciation specific subtask is included in five exercises, even though the exercises consist of another task or tasks that are not aimed at pronunciation training. There are zero to two exercises that partly include pronunciation-specific tasks in each unit, on average 0.8 per unit. If also these exercises are considered as exercises that include pronunciation training, it makes 34 exercises altogether, which means that 8.79% of all the exercises include pronunciation training.

The number of all exercises is, hence, quite similar in both activity books. It should be recognized that on average there are more exercises per unit in *On the Go 1*, which is arguably due to the fact that it has two units less than *Key English 7*. As the percentage of pronunciation training exercises is 2.76% in *Key English 7* and 7.49% in *On the Go 1*, it is evident that in the more recent activity book, *On the Go 1*, a greater proportion of exercises is devoted to pronunciation training than in the activity book *Key English 7* which was published in 2007. In *On the Go 1*, most of the pronunciation exercises per unit are grouped together at the end of the unit, the only part of the unit following them being the additional texts. They are also always presented under the heading “Pronunciation”, which will likely guide the pupils attention to the fact that the focus is now on the language learning aspect of pronunciation. In *Key English 7* the exercises that solely focus on pronunciation training are amongst other exercises. However, many of such exercises are also accompanied with a *Key Info* box including phonetic symbols. Nevertheless, the fact that in *Key English 7* there are no headings stating that an exercise is in fact a pronunciation exercise, could be one reason for why pupils who used that activity book might think that pronunciation was not taught extensively in school, as they may not have paid attention to an exercise being a pronunciation-specific one.

## 4.2 The types of pronunciation exercises

The pronunciation exercises found in both activity books were categorised based on their types, in order to answer the first research question of this paper. The categories are based on Tergujeff's (2010) categorisation of pronunciation-specific materials, although not all categories found in her study were found in the data of this study. The categorisation led to six categories of pronunciation exercise types, namely *listen and repeat*, *read aloud*, *phonetic training*, *ear training*, *awareness-raising activities*, and *rules and instructions*, which were introduced in sections 2.2 and 2.3. This section will also discuss the results concerning the first research question of this paper, as well as answer the second research question in terms of the qualitative changes.

The amount of pronunciation specific exercises in *Key English 7* is 11, whereas in *On the Go 1* it is 29. However, many of the pronunciation specific exercises have subtasks in them (as for example translate the phonetic alphabet and then listen and repeat). Thus, for the purpose of this paper, the exercises which concentrate on pronunciation training have been divided into all their subtasks in order to analyse them more thoroughly. In the following paragraphs I will further investigate the pronunciation exercises by taking into account all the subtasks of the pronunciation exercises as separate pronunciation exercise types in order to see how the exercise types might have changed, even though in the activity books they might not all be individual exercises.

Hence, the 11 exercises in *Key English 7* can be further divided into 23 different tasks, when all the subtasks are taken into account as separate tasks. As mentioned above, there are 14 exercises in *Key English 7* that partly include a pronunciation task. Those exercises only include one pronunciation specific subtask, which is always either a read aloud (12 tasks) or a listen and repeat type of a task (two tasks). Hence, altogether there are 37 smaller tasks that construct the pronunciation exercises. On the other hand, in *On the Go 1* the corresponding number of pronunciation training exercises divided into individual tasks is 50 tasks in total. In addition, in *On the Go 1* the amount of pronunciation tasks as a part of an exercise is five tasks. Four of those tasks are read aloud exercises and one of them is a listen and repeat one. All in all there are therefore 55 tasks, when one divides the exercises according to the different exercise types found in them.



In both activity books, the read aloud types of pronunciation exercises are the most frequent ones. The second most common pronunciation exercise type in *Key English 7* is listen and repeat, whereas in *On the Go 1* it is ear training. Phonetic training is the third most often occurring exercise type in *Key English 7*, and in *On the Go 1* the third most common type is language awareness activities. The least common exercises in *Key English 7* are both awareness-raising activities and rules and instruction exercises, as only one of each were found in the activity book. In *On the Go 1* the least common exercise type is listen and repeat. The frequency of the occurrence of the pronunciation exercise types has been presented in Table 1. I will further introduce the pronunciation exercise types found in the data in the following paragraphs.

TABLE 1. The frequency of occurrence of the pronunciation exercise types

	<i>Key English 7</i>		<i>On the Go 1</i>		Total	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Read aloud	12	32.43%	25	45.45%	37	40.22%
Ear training	5	13.51%	12	21.82%	17	18.48%
Listen and repeat	11	29.73%	2	3.64%	13	14.13%
Awareness-raising activities	1	2.7%	10	18.18%	11	11.96%
Phonetic training	7	18.92%	3	5.45%	10	10.87%
Rules and instructions	1	2.7%	3	5.45%	4	4.35%
Total	37	100%	55	100%	92	100%

The read aloud pronunciation exercise type is the most common one in both activity books. These exercises include reading aloud sentences and dialogues with a partner, for instance, often also concentrating on, for example, intonation or other aspects of pronunciation as well. The requirement for a task to be a read aloud type in this study is that the focus of the task is specifically on pronunciation training instead of it having a communicative purpose, such as first creating and then reading aloud meaningful sentences from given words or interviewing one's partner, for instance. However, in *Key English 7* in particular a task is rarely only a read aloud one and in most cases reading aloud is only a part of an exercise. It should also be noted that in *Key English 7* all of the read

aloud types of exercises are only subtasks to exercises that are not otherwise aimed at pronunciation training. In *On the Go 1* the read aloud types of pronunciation exercises are often accompanied by a possibility to listen to the sentences or dialogues as well; however, if the instructions of an exercise do not explicitly tell the pupils to listen and repeat after the audio, the task was considered as a read aloud one. The read aloud exercises in *On the Go 1* often include reading aloud sentences with a partner and the instructions also suggest that the pupils may record themselves while they are reading the sentences aloud. Recording oneself was also mentioned in Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) as a beneficial technological tool that can be used to support pronunciation training.

The second most common category of pronunciation exercises in *On the Go 1* is ear training exercises. Ear training exercises found in both activity books include exercises in which the pupils have to discriminate which pronunciation of the past tense ending *-ed* they hear or to discriminate between different sounds, usually minimal pairs and for instance choose from the given options which sound they believe they hear. In addition, exercises on word stress and intonation, as well as hearing examples of different sounds, such as [θ] have been counted as ear training exercises. In *Key English 7* ear training exercises may only be found in relation to word stress exercises and one past tense ending *-ed* pronunciation exercise. In *On the Go 1*, on the other hand, ear training exercises cannot only be found in similar exercises to *Key English 7*, but they can also be commonly found in videos related to pronunciation training. Under the heading “Pronunciation” in all but one unit one exercise always includes watching a video. Those videos can be found in the online material of the activity book but as they are mentioned in the activity book, and watching the videos are presented as exercises, they were included in the analysis. The videos are in Finnish, apart from the given examples of words or accents, for instance, which are in English, but the topics are related to English pronunciation, often in the shape of phonetic training, instructions, and examples. Parts of the videos represent ear training material as well, as for instance examples of different sounds, intonation and word stress are given. In the activity book *Key English 7* videos are not a part of the material.

The third category of pronunciation exercise types found in the data is awareness-raising activities. These exercises include self-assessment (within the exercises) and knowledge about differences in the pronunciation of English language, as well as differences within languages. In addition, if information including awareness-raising is provided alongside the exercise, it was counted as a part of the exercise. Awareness-raising exercises are not common in *Key English 7*, as only one *Key Info*

box includes information on the differences between the word stress in Finnish and English. In *On the Go 1*, on the other hand, awareness-raising exercises are quite common; in fact, they are the third most common exercise type when all the subtasks were taken into account. Awareness-raising exercises are a part of each unit, as at the end of each “Pronunciation” section there is an exercise which includes self-assessment and assessing one’s pair’s pronunciation. In these exercises the pupils can either record themselves or read sentences aloud to their partner, after which they are asked to assess their partner’s and their own pronunciation. In many of the videos awareness-raising material is also provided, for instance in the form of examples of foreign accents.

Listen and repeat types of exercises are almost as common as read aloud exercises in *Key English 7*. On the other hand, in *On the Go 1* they are the least common type of pronunciation exercises. However, it should be taken into consideration that in *On the Go 1* there often is a possibility to listen and repeat the words, sentences or dialogues in question, but in the exercise instructions only listening to the tape and practising with a partner are mentioned, not repeating after the audio. Listen and repeat types of pronunciation exercises in the data include listening to and repeating words (often with the focus being on word stress) and sentences.

The fifth category of pronunciation exercises found in the data is phonetic training. These types of exercises include tasks where the phonetic alphabet is used and examples of physical movements are given. In the first four units of *Key English 7*, a common pattern of the pronunciation exercises is that the main task is to interpret what has been written using the phonetic alphabet and translating it into the Latin script, which is the alphabet used in Finnish. In these exercises also a *Key Info* box is provided, where two to four phonetic symbols related to the exercise are introduced. After writing the words or sentences the pupils have then been asked to listen and repeat the sentences. In *On the Go 1* phonetic training exercises can be found in the form of information on the phonetic alphabet as a part of an exercise. Phonetic training is also present in some of the videos, as the pupils are asked to practise their aspiration with the help of a paper sheet in front of their mouth, making the air flow from their mouths move the papers. In addition, the pupils’ attention is drawn to the movement of their mouths when practising the [θ] and [ð] sounds with the help of the videos.

The last category of pronunciation exercise types found in the two activity books is rules and instructions. In *Key English 7* rules and instructions are only provided as a part of one exercise in the form of a *Key Info* box. In *On the Go 1*, on the other hand, rules and instructions are presented in the videos and alongside one exercise as information on intonation.

Reading aloud exercises are, thus, the most common ones in both books, at least as parts of pronunciation and other exercises. However, it should be noted that in *Key English 7* the difference in the amount of exercises between the first and second most common exercise types is only one exercise, as there are 12 read aloud exercises and 11 listen and repeat exercises. In *On the Go 1* the read aloud exercises are clearly the most common ones. The change in the amount of listen and repeat types of exercises is also quite drastic, as in *Key English 7* they are nearly as common as the most common exercise type, whereas in *On the Go 1* there are only two occurrences of listen and repeat exercises. It should be noted though, that in many exercises the pupils are asked to listen to the sentences before reading them aloud, and it is also a possibility for the teacher to treat such exercises as listen and repeat ones. Another quite a clear change is that in *On the Go 1* there are no transcribing exercises involving interpreting and transcribing the phonetic alphabet into the Latin script, whereas in the first four units of *Key English 7* such exercises form the basis of nearly all the pronunciation-specific exercises. These changes could indicate that different types of exercises, and ways of learning and teaching are currently more popular than they were nine years ago.

In addition, these results show that in both activity books most of the pronunciation training techniques in the data are traditional ones, similarly to Hismanoglu and Hismanoglu's (2010) findings. However, as the more recent activity book *On the Go 1* also includes online material such as videos, there has been a shift towards more modern techniques as well. The findings of the activity book *Key English 7*, which was also a part of Tergujeff's (2010) data, were very similar to Tergujeff's (2010) findings. The three most common exercise types in this paper are the same three most commonly found exercise types in her study as well, in a slightly different order though. However, compared to Tergujeff's (2010) findings the results found from *On the Go 1* are quite different. Only read aloud exercises can be found in both of the three most common exercise types in *On the Go 1* and in her data. In addition, Tergujeff's (2010) results list the ear training exercises as the least common ones, whereas in this activity book published in 2016 it is the second most commonly found

category. In addition, awareness-raising tasks are the third most common exercise type in *On the Go 1*, whereas in Tergujeff's (2010) study they are the third least common exercise type.

Tergujeff (2010) was also able to identify eight categories of pronunciation-specific material from a wider range of data, whereas in this paper only six of those categories were found. The missing categories in the data of this paper are rhyme and verse exercises, as well as spelling and dictation exercises. According to Tergujeff's (2010) findings rhyme and verse exercises are the fourth most common exercises in the EFL books used in Finland that she had as her data and spelling and dictation exercises are the seventh most common ones. As rhyme and verse exercises occur quite commonly in her data, it was interesting to see that in the data of this paper there are no rhyme and verse exercises, even though it should be taken into consideration that her data was considerably larger.

### 4.3 Other materials related to pronunciation training

The focus of this study is on the pronunciation exercises of the activity books; however, other material related to pronunciation training can be found in the activity books as well. In order to give a more thorough overview of the status of pronunciation training, this section introduces the other materials related to pronunciation training found in the data of the present study. When looking at the activity books as a whole, one gets a good idea of them by looking at the books' tables of contents. In *Key English 7* the table of contents is provided as a list, and in *On the Go 1* it has been provided as a table. In *Key English 7* the list has varying topics in each unit, whereas in the table of contents in *On the Go 1*, all the topics of the blocks in the table are consistent. In regards to the aspect of pronunciation, the table of contents in *On the Go 1* has subheadings called "Talk" and "Pronunciation" in the table in each unit, under the heading "Talk". It could be worth mentioning, though, that the "Talk" and "Pronunciation" exercises are placed nearly as the last exercises of each unit, following them only the "Your Choice" section which includes exercises to additional texts. In *Key English 7* there is no consistent place for pronunciation related topics in the table of contents. However, a subheading "Äänmerkit" ("Phonetic symbols") can be found from the first three chapters in the table of contents, under the heading "Info". These "Infos" on phonetic symbols refer to relatively small *Key Info* boxes, which in this activity book include examples of two to four phonetic symbols, such as [æ], [dʒ] and [θ] with examples of words in which they occur. The shift from not having a consistent

section for pronunciation to having one in each unit under a heading could indicate that pronunciation has a more prominent place in language learning today.

Other materials related to pronunciation training in the activity books include self-assessments and vocabularies, in addition to the information boxes, which in these activity books are always connected to the exercises; therefore, considered as parts of the exercises. In *Key English 7* there are self-assessment pages in each unit, meaning that there are eight self-assessments, which are one or two pages long. Out of those eight self-assessments four contain questions or claims specifically about pronunciation; in other words, questions or claims about speaking English in different situations have been considered to be communicative in style; thus, they have not been considered to be claims or questions about pronunciation. Altogether there are four questions or claims about pronunciation in the self-assessments in *Key English 7*. In *On the Go 1* there are five self-assessments, the fourth unit being the only one without a self-assessment section apart from the small self-assessment task in the pronunciation exercise, which can be found as the last exercise of each “Pronunciation” section. Out of those five self-assessments two contain questions specifically on pronunciation. Each of the self-assessments in *On the Go 1* has a different theme, such as speaking English or working with a pair. As the theme of some of the self-assessment is speaking English, there are multiple questions about speaking English; however, specifically about pronunciation there are 4 claims or questions altogether in all the self-assessment pages in *On the Go 1*. The self-assessments can also be categorised as awareness-raising tasks.

In addition to the self-assessments, each unit in both books includes vocabulary lists as well. The units focus largely on the main text of the unit, for which the vocabulary lists are included in the activity books. These vocabularies were not counted as exercises, since there are no exercise instructions, even though in *On the Go 1* the lists are under an exercise number. However, in both activity books there are suggestions, such as tips on how to learn the words on the vocabulary lists, but they are not presented as actual exercises. The vocabulary lists in both activity books also always include the words written in the phonetic alphabet. Moreover, in both activity books there are also vocabulary lists for some additional texts that can either be found from the textbook or the activity book, which also includes the words written in the phonemic alphabet. The vocabulary lists could be treated as phonetic training exercises and listen and repeat exercises, for instance, even though there are no explicit instructions. As vocabulary lists with the words written in the phonemic alphabet can

be found in both books, there is not much change there, and there are four questions or claims specifically on pronunciation in each activity book. Thus, the other materials for training one's pronunciation have not changed significantly in recent years; nevertheless, they provide useful material for pronunciation training.

## 5 CONCLUSION

Pronunciation has not gotten as much attention as grammar and vocabulary in the history of language teaching (Murphy and Baker 2015); however, today the dominant approach to teaching languages has been the “communicative-based approaches” (Hummel 2013). This study aimed at investigating the development of pronunciation exercises in Finnish EFL activity books in relatively recent years. The first research question and aim of this study was to discover the different types of pronunciation exercises that have been included in the activity books. The results of this study reveal that six different types of pronunciation exercises are present in both activity books. The second research question of this study focused on the changes in the quality and quantity of the pronunciation exercises. As an answer to that research question, according to the results of this study, it can be concluded that the amount of pronunciation exercises has changed in the sense that there are considerably more pronunciation exercises in the more recent activity book, even though there are less units in that activity book. In addition to the quantitative changes, different types of pronunciation exercises are common in the more recent activity book than in *Key English 7*, which suggests that different ways of teaching and learning pronunciation may currently be considered more efficient than the ones emphasised in 2007. In this study it was also noted that in *On the Go 1* pronunciation exercises had been given a section of their own, where there were more than one pronunciation exercise under the heading “Pronunciation”, guiding the pupils’ attention directly at pronunciation training and making them explicitly aware that the aspect of language learning that is being practised in that section is pronunciation. Most likely due to the development in technology also the possibility to use technological devices in class has increased, since in the more recent activity book also recording oneself and watching videos are parts of pronunciation exercises. On the other hand, in *Key English 7* exercises that are otherwise not related to pronunciation include reading aloud or listening and repeating as a subtask much more frequently than in *On the Go 1*. In *On the Go 1* only five exercises have a subtask related to pronunciation as a part of them, whereas in *Key English 7* the number of such exercises is 14. The findings are also similar to other studies conducted on the same area. Most of the exercises represent traditional techniques, even though in the more recent activity book also modern techniques are present. However, in comparison to Tergujeff’s (2010) findings concerning the most common exercise types in EFL activity books, the results from the activity book *On the Go 1* were quite different, suggesting that there has been a change not only in terms of increased quantity but also in the types of the exercises.



It should be taken into consideration that not all oral exercises and oral exercises as subtasks were included in this study. It could be argued that in every oral exercise the aspect of pronunciation training is also present; however, in this paper only exercises that explicitly focused on pronunciation training were included. Thus, the pupils may to some extent get to train their pronunciation skills in relation to other exercises as well, increasing further the amount of exercises as a part of which pronunciation is practised. In addition to the exclusion of oral exercises, it should be taken into account that this study focused on finding out what kind of material for pronunciation training has been provided in the activity books, which, however, does not directly indicate that all that material will be used in class. It is still up to the teacher whether all this material is utilized or not. Moreover, it is also up to the teacher how they choose to treat the material, in case they choose to utilize it at all. For instance as far as listen and repeat exercises are concerned, the teacher may choose to play a tape (usually including native speakers' speech) after which the pupils repeat, or they may provide the model of the pronunciation of the words or sentences in question themselves. In addition, the teacher may also add the aspect of pronunciation, for instance in the form of listen and repeat, to exercises where the activity book has not mentioned it as a task.

In addition, the amount of data in this paper was relatively small and only activity books from one publisher were included; thus, the results cannot be generalised. For instance, other publishers might have different types of ideas as to how important a factor pronunciation is in language learning and how many exercises should be devoted to training one's pronunciation in comprehensive school. Nevertheless, for instance teachers and publishers could benefit from the findings of this small-scale study. Moreover, the findings and restrictions of this study could inspire future research; for instance more publishers and a wider range of data from a variety of grades could be included in future studies. All in all, the results of this paper give some insight as to how pronunciation exercises in the EFL activity books that have been used and are being used in Finnish schools have changed; at least in this data there was a visible change with regard to pronunciation exercises in activity books and at present more space has been devoted to pronunciation exercises at least in terms of the provided material.

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