

Recent Changes in Teaching English Pronunciation in Finland

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<p>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</p> <p>Ääntäminen on olennainen osa kielenoppimista, mutta opettajat ovat perinteisesti nähneet sen opettamisen vaikeana ja käyttäneet siihen vähemmän aikaa kuin muihin kielen osa-alueisiin. Opetuksen vähydestä huolimatta opetuksessa on käytetty monipuolisia opetusmetodeja, kuten ääneen lukemista ja minimipareja. Aihetta on tutkittu Suomessa verrattain vähän ja aiempi tutkimus sijoittuu edellisten opetussuunnitelmien ajanjaksolle. Siksi viime vuosien muutosten, kuten uusien opetussuunnitelmien ja teknologian kehityksen vaikutuksia ääntämisen opetukseen tulee tutkia ääntämisen opetuksen nykyisen tilanteen ymmärtämiseksi.</p> <p>Tutkielma käsittelee muutoksia, joita suomalaisten koulujen englannin ääntämisen opetuksessa on tapahtunut viimeisten kymmenen vuoden aikana. Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on selvittää, onko ääntämisen opetus muuttunut kymmenen vuoden takaisesta, millaisia muutoksia on tapahtunut, sekä löytää muutoksiin johtaneita syitä. Tutkimusdata kerättiin sekä monivalintakysymyksistä että avoimista kentistä koostuneen internet-kyselyn avulla. Kyselyyn osallistui 44 englanninopettajaa, joista 42:n vastaukset huomioitiin kaikissa tutkielman osissa.</p> <p>Tulokset osoittavat, että ääntämisen opetuksen metodit ovat pysyneet suhteellisen samankaltaisina, mutta metodien yleisyydessä voidaan havaita muutoksia. Ääntämisen opetukseen käytetty aika on kasvanut tai pysynyt samana kuin kymmenen vuotta sitten. Yksi suurimmista muutoksiin vaikuttaneista tekijöistä on ollut teknologian kehitys, joka näkyy esimerkiksi puheen äänittämisen merkittävänä yleistymisenä. Muita merkittäviä muutoksiin vaikuttaneita tekijöitä ovat olleet muun muassa oppikirjat, digitaalinen oppimateriaali, sekä yhteiskunnalliset syyt, kuten globalisaatio ja englanninkielisen median yleistyminen.</p> <p>Näiden tulosten avulla saadaan tietoa ääntämisen opetuksen nykytilanteesta ja havaitaan opetuksessa tapahtuneita muutoksia ja niiden taustalla vaikuttavia syitä. Tutkielman suppeudesta johtuen tutkimus toimii pohjana mahdolliselle jatkotutkimukselle.</p>	
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. BACKGROUND	2
2.1 The recent history of pronunciation teaching	2
2.2 Previous studies on English pronunciation teaching in Finland	3
2.3 The new curricula	5
3. THE PRESENT STUDY	8
3.1 Research aims	8
3.2 Data and methods.....	8
4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....	10
4.1 Time spent on pronunciation teaching	10
4.2 Pronunciation teaching methods	11
4.3 Reasons for change	13
5. CONCLUSION	18
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	20
APPENDIX 1: THE QUESTIONNAIRE.....	22

1. INTRODUCTION

The teaching of pronunciation has endured multiple phases, ranging from purely listening and repeating to the use of e.g. visual aids, tape recorders and tongue twisters (Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 2010:3–11). It has always been affected by trends and recommendations and with globalisation and the development of technology, it is likely that pronunciation teaching has continued its development and change. In addition, many changes that affect schools, such as new curricula, digitalisation, and new teaching material, have an impact on pronunciation teaching among other subjects and areas of language teaching.

Research on English pronunciation teaching in Finland is relatively scarce and has been done mainly in the era of the former national curricula, hence presenting a gap in research on the current situation. The national curricula offer general guidelines that are to be followed in all schools, while municipalities and schools have the possibility to create their own detailed curricula. The new national curricula (Finnish National Agency for Education 2014, 2015), published in 2014 and 2015, place higher emphasis on pronunciation and oral skills than the previous versions, thus likely having prompted changes in how pronunciation is taught. Furthermore, the rapid development of technology is prone to have affected pronunciation among other areas of teaching, as previous research shows that technology has been one of the leading causes for changes in pronunciation teaching (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010:7).

The present study focuses on the current situation of pronunciation teaching in Finland in comparison to its position ten years ago. The study will be implemented by using a questionnaire and it aims to discover teachers' empirical knowledge on the possible changes that have happened and the reasons behind them, thus forming an overall view of the current situation. The aims of the study are to discover whether English pronunciation teaching has changed in the past ten years, and if so, how and why. This will be achieved by considering the changes individual teachers have made in their teaching. Both time spent on pronunciation and teaching methods will be researched and discussed, as well as the factors affecting these changes.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The recent history of pronunciation teaching

Several pronunciation teaching methods have been used throughout the ages and currently the most dominant method of language teaching is Communicative Language Teaching (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010:8), which creates many challenges for pronunciation teaching.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) rose in the mid to late 1970s and laid focus on communication and how it should be central in all classroom language instruction. Therefore, it resulted in the de-emphasis of pronunciation teaching, as learners were expected to learn pronunciation purely by being in contact with the target language (Carter and Nuna 2001:57, Derwing and Munro 2015:22). Many techniques and materials for teaching pronunciation were rejected due to the incompatibility of their contents and CLT's focus on communication (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010:11). In addition, the emphasis of pronunciation teaching has been largely on producing words correctly in isolation and in very controlled environments, which might result in one's pronunciation skills not improving in spontaneous speech (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010:10–11).

Pronunciation teaching has generally focused on either the segmental level, meaning individual sounds, or the suprasegmental features, which include word and sentence stress, rhythm, and intonation. However, teaching is currently moving towards a more balanced view of suprasegmental and segmental features and it aims to identify the most important features of communication and comprehensibility, taking into account the learner's L1 (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010:11, Zielinski 2015:399). Despite CLT's negative effect on pronunciation teaching, a variety of traditional methods have been used continuously. Some of the most common ones include listening and imitating, minimal pair drills, reading aloud, and recordings of the students' speech (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010:9–10). Many of these methods have been enhanced and developed by the arrival of new technology.

2.2 Previous studies on English pronunciation teaching in Finland

The most prominent previous studies on the topic in Finland include Ilola (2018) and Tergujeff (2013). In Finland, the teaching of English pronunciation is dominated by traditional techniques, such as phonetic training, imitation, and reading aloud. Tergujeff (2013) notes that general oral skills tasks are frequent, but that they do not focus on pronunciation specifically. Not much research on pronunciation teaching in Finland before the CLT era exists, but it is assumed that the amount of mechanical pronunciation teaching has decreased after the rise of CLT. Current English pronunciation teaching focuses mostly on the segmental level, especially the sounds that are known to be difficult for Finnish-speakers, such as affricates and sibilants (Tergujeff 2013). This view is supported by the idea that a learner's L2 typically reflects some aspects, such as the phonological characteristics, of their L1 (Derwing and Munro 2015:3, Volín et al. 2018:20). Tergujeff (2013) states that suprasegmentals are taught mostly implicitly, such as by imitating speech to learn word and sentence stress and rhythm. However, more training in the suprasegmental features, such as intonation, should be provided, since Finnish-speaking learners often find them more difficult than the segmental features (Tergujeff 2013).

In Henderson et al. (2012), it is stated that English teachers in Europe generally rate their training on teaching pronunciation as poor, 2.91 on a five-point Likert scale, but interestingly, they assess their own pronunciation skills as quite high (4.64). The results in Finland follow those of many other European countries. However, when asked about the quality of pronunciation training, Finland had the highest average score. In Finland, the teachers had often received training on improving their own pronunciation, but had not been guided in how to teach it (Tergujeff 2012). The same phenomenon was found to be true in other European countries (Henderson et al. 2012), proving this to be an international shortcoming in teacher training. A similar problem has been faced in English-speaking countries such as Canada, Australia, and the USA, as many teachers who teach pronunciation wish they had had more training on the area (Breitkreutz et al. 2001, Foote et al. 2012, Macdonald 2002, Murphy 1997). However, teachers are often of the opinion that being able to pronounce English correctly correlates to being able to teach pronunciation (Henderson et al. 2012).

In Kirkova-Naskova et al. (2013), the methods for learning pronunciation and differences between countries were explored further. When asked about the methods that were used for

pronunciation training, Finnish participants named multiple methods, such as minimal pairs, stress and intonation exercises, and phonetic transcripts. Similarly to France and Germany, it can be said that the teachers have utilised a myriad of methods to improve their own pronunciation. Thus, they are familiar with a variety of methods that could be used when teaching, but might not be able to utilise them to their full potential due to a lack of training.

When comparing teaching methods, it is revealed that teaching students to recognise phonetic symbols is very common in Finland when contrasted with other European countries (Henderson et al. 2015). However, teaching students to write the symbols is relatively rare, as only 23% of the Finnish participants report on teaching their students to write phonetic symbols, compared to the 96% that teach them to recognise the symbols (Henderson et al. 2015).

The topic has been studied in Finland mostly in the era of the former national curricula, and thus the contrast between the impacts of the old and new curricula has yet to be researched. Although pronunciation has been included in the curricula of 2003 and 2004 as being a part of assessing students' language skills, teaching pronunciation is not explicitly mentioned in them, and thus the methods and frequency of pronunciation teaching have been decided mainly by individual teachers and instructed by English textbooks.

Textbooks often guide the teachers in how much pronunciation is taught and how. Tergujeff (2013) notes that nearly all teachers use textbooks in their teaching and the books are regarded as important by the learners. The books are designed to follow the national curricula and publishers update their books whenever new curricula is published (Luukka et al. 2008:64, Tergujeff 2013). The contents of teaching often reflect those of the textbooks, which have traditionally had a strong role in the Finnish school system and have even been described as a form of hidden curricula (Luukka et al. 2008:64).

Tergujeff (2013) found that teachers would like to devote more time to pronunciation and that the recommendations for pronunciation teaching are not fully applied during the lessons. This could be linked to the fact that English teachers often find teaching pronunciation difficult and thus they tend to focus more on other skills, such as reading and writing (Iivonen 2005). Therefore, it is possible that similar results will be acquired in this study.

Despite the scarceness of pronunciation teaching, Tergujeff (2013) reports on teachers using several methods to teach pronunciation. Some of the most common methods were listening and repeating, the teacher correcting or pointing out pronunciation errors, and reading aloud. Phonetic script is used relatively rarely. Pronunciation teaching seems to often be connected to listening tasks, which have traditionally been popular in Finland, although the focus is often on the contents, not pronunciation models (Tergujeff 2013).

Ilola (2018) has researched pupils' opinions on pronunciation teaching and learning English oral skills. These results support those of Tergujeff (2013), as similar learning methods are mentioned several times. In accordance with CLT's view of learning pronunciation through exposure to the target language, some students in Ilola's study (2018) mention television and listening to English as one of their primary methods of learning English pronunciation. Other methods include for instance speaking with native English-speakers or others who do not speak Finnish and using the language outside of school hours. Repeating words and sentences after the teacher, asking for help, and following the teacher's instructions are also mentioned frequently. Thus, it is shown that teachers have a remarkable impact on students' pronunciation learning and development, which encourages further research on the topic. Over half of the students regard textbooks as useful, but the books' focus on grammar and writing is criticised. Tergujeff (2013) also reports that Finnish EFL books lack explicit exercises on connected speech, rhythm, and intonation, although many traditional exercises focusing on pronunciation were found.

With the previous studies having been done in the era of the old curricula, researching the current situation can provide information on how teachers perceive the new recommendations concerning pronunciation, as well as on whether the development of technology and globalisation, among other factors, have affected the students' pronunciation skills and how pronunciation is taught in Finland.

2.3 The new curricula

The current National Core Curriculum for Basic Education in Finland was published in 2014 and implemented in all schools in 2016 at the latest (Finnish National Agency for Education 2014). The role of the national curricula is to offer general guidelines to be followed in all schools, with schools and municipalities having the possibility to create their own, more detailed, curricula.

Compared to the previous National Core Curriculum for Basic Education, published in 2004 (Finnish National Board of Education 2004), oral skills have received more attention. In years three to six, one of the aims is to observe and practise pronunciation, word and sentence stress, rhythm, and intonation in abundance (Finnish National Agency for Education 2014:220). Furthermore, recognising phonetic script is practised. The objective is that by the end of primary school, the students' speech would be on level A2.1 on the Finnish, more detailed, implementation of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Finnish National Agency for Education 2014:222–223). This includes being able to put some of the basic rules of pronunciation into practice in non-rehearsed utterances. Compared to the national curriculum of 2004, where pronunciation is not explicitly mentioned and the target level for students' oral skills is A1.3, the change has been remarkable.

The target level for lower secondary school students has also changed. While in the old curriculum the target for oral skills is A2.2, the new curriculum demands the level B1.1. This can also be seen in the contents of the curricula, as in the 2004 curriculum pronunciation is not mentioned and the main foci of teaching lay on grammatical structures and learning strategies. In contrast, the new curriculum instructs teachers to support and deepen the skills learnt in primary school and to introduce different varieties of English. In addition, the pupils should be instructed in the production of both written and spoken text for different purposes, as well as correct pronunciation.

A similar change can be seen in the curricula for upper secondary schools, even though the change is less drastic. The new curriculum was published in 2015 and it states that students should be able to place stress on the correct syllables and use some intonation patterns that are typical of the target language (Finnish National Agency for Education 2015). In the former curriculum published in 2003 (Finnish National Board of Education 2003), it is said that pronunciation should be clear and natural, and thus individual teachers are trusted to be able to recognise clear speech as such. In addition to these changes, the 2015 curriculum encourages self-assessment in relation to the CEFR and following one's progress. The target level for oral skills has, however, stayed as B2.1 in both curricula.

With the introduction of the new curricula, the targets for students' pronunciation skills have been set higher than before. However, no research on the implementation of these requirements exists. Moreover, the possible changes in pronunciation teaching at primary, lower secondary,

and upper secondary schools should be studied in order to see whether they reflect the contents of the corresponding curricula.

3. THE PRESENT STUDY

3.1 Research aims

The aims of the present study are to discover whether English pronunciation teaching in Finland has changed in the past ten years, and if so, how. In addition, reasons for the possible changes will be identified and analysed.

These aims can be outlined in the following two research questions:

1. How has English pronunciation teaching changed in the past ten years, as indicated by teachers?
2. What are the reasons behind the possible changes?

3.2 Data and methods

The data were collected using a questionnaire that was shared in a Facebook group for English teachers in Finland. The data were gathered in May 2019 and the questionnaire consisted of several types of questions, such as multiple-choice, 3-point questions, and open questions. The survey focused on how much time teachers spend on English pronunciation teaching, how they teach it, and how their teaching has changed in the past 10 years. 44 teachers answered the questionnaire, with 42 of them answering all the questions.

The study was conducted by using an online questionnaire in order to gather a wide variety of responses and to be able to collect responses efficiently (Denscombe 2010:14). The method was also chosen in order to gather standardised data (Denscombe 2010:156). An anonymous questionnaire also increases the chances that the teachers answer the questions as truthfully as possible, in contrast to an interview where the presence of the interviewer and the possible tense atmosphere of the situation could easily lead the interviewees to answer the questions in a certain way. Using interviews as the research method could have offered more in-depth answers, but a questionnaire was deemed more suitable, as a variety of responses provides the most trustworthy answers. One of the problems with the study is that teachers who are reluctant towards teaching

pronunciation might decide not to answer the questionnaire, as has happened with earlier studies (Derwing and Munro 2015:78).

It was required that the respondents had at least 10 years of work experience to be able to reflect on the changes in pronunciation teaching, and the questions were formulated to only focus on English pronunciation teaching, despite many teachers also teaching other languages. The teachers were either basic education or upper secondary school English teachers, with 26 teaching at primary schools, 21 at lower secondary schools, and 9 at upper secondary schools. It should be noted that some teachers teach English on multiple levels. As the questionnaire was shared in a Facebook group, it was a self-completion questionnaire and was open for three weeks.

The first part of the questionnaire introduced what the questionnaire was for and asked the teachers how long they had worked as teachers and which school level they currently work at. Secondly, they were asked to choose in percentages how much time they devote to pronunciation teaching and whether the amount has changed in the past ten years. In the third part they were asked to select methods that they use to teach pronunciation, with an option to add their own methods, and to tell whether they use the methods less, more, or the same amount as ten years ago. They were also asked to select whether and why they had changed their pronunciation teaching, and lastly in an open-ended question, whether they thought digitalisation had affected pronunciation teaching.

Due to the different types of questions, the data were analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively, using the mixed method approach (Denscombe 2010:138). The closed questions were analysed using quantitative analysis methods, and a median answer of each question was presented. The data that were received in the closed questions were organised into tables to create a clear view and understanding of the answers. Averages were used to describe for instance the amount of work experience the teachers have. The data were first studied as a whole, and quantitative analysis was used to create a holistic view of the current state of pronunciation teaching in Finland. After this, the responses concerning each school level were studied independently and contrasted to the answers of the other levels to see if major differences between teaching different age groups existed.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Time spent on pronunciation teaching

When asked how much time they devote to pronunciation during their lessons, 19 teachers stated that they spend approximately 10-20% on pronunciation teaching and practice. The second largest group, 10 participants, spend 20-30% on pronunciation, and 9 participants report spending 0-10%. Only five people stated that they spend over 30% of their teaching time on pronunciation teaching, with one person stating over 50%. Next the respondents were asked to reflect on the amount of pronunciation teaching they gave 10 years ago and to compare it to the current situation. The changes in time spent on pronunciation are presented in Figure 1. In this part the answers of 42 participants are observed, as one respondent had been working as a teacher for less than ten years and another left the question unanswered. Most people stated that the amount had stayed the same (19 respondents) or increased (16 respondents). Only seven teachers reported that the amount had decreased. An especially notable change has happened in primary schools, where 52% of teachers stated that the amount of pronunciation teaching had increased. There are many possible reasons for this, as later in the survey it was revealed that textbooks, digital teaching material, the learners' needs, and the teachers' own interest in the topic have all had a remarkable impact on pronunciation teaching especially in primary schools.

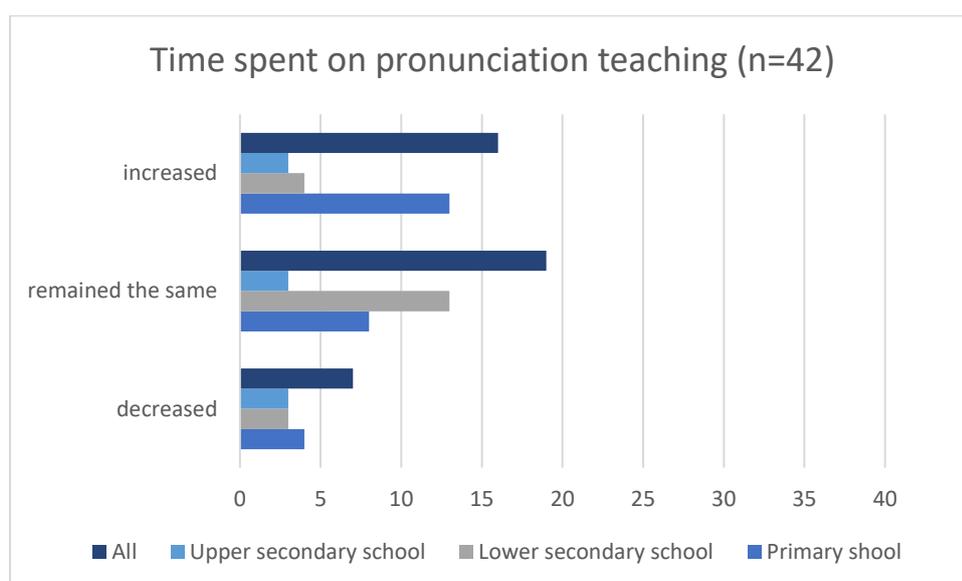


Figure 1. Changes in time spent on pronunciation teaching as compared to ten years ago

4.2 Pronunciation teaching methods

The second part of the survey focused on teaching methods and the changes that they have undergone in the past ten years. The participants were first asked to report which methods they currently use in their lessons. All 44 respondents reported using listening and repeating during their lessons, and thus this proved to be the most common teaching method. Reading aloud was the second most common method, with 42 teachers using it. All in all, the most common methods tend to coincide with those described in Celce-Murcia et al. (2010:9–10).

Although not a common method, some teachers reported using tapping or walking to help the learners understand and practise the concept of word and sentence stress, and one teacher stated that the learners use a mirror or a phone's camera to demonstrate and practise certain movements of the mouth to produce difficult sounds. Thus, it can be said that teachers focus on both the segmental and the suprasegmental features of English pronunciation. Three teachers mentioned using music and songs in teaching pronunciation, with singing being a popular method especially in primary schools. Another method that was found to be common in primary schools was reading aloud in pairs or on top of a recording, whereas minimal pairs proved more popular at upper secondary schools.

38 people reported using the phonetic alphabet in their lessons, but the survey did not specify whether they taught their students to write or recognise the alphabet or how detailed or frequent the use of the IPA was. It is probable that learners are taught to recognise the symbols, not to write them themselves, as found in Henderson et. al (2015). This could be a result of the phonetic alphabet being used in many English textbooks in Finland (Tergujeff 2013). The use of the phonetic alphabet is equally common among all three school levels and the results seem to follow those of earlier years.

The use of some teaching methods had undergone noticeable changes in the past ten years. As can be seen in Figure 2, recording one's speech has increased enormously on all school levels, with 33 participants stating that they use the method more now than ten years ago. This is likely due to digitalisation and the methods of recording one's speech becoming more available to everyone. This is an excellent example of the influence of digitalisation on teaching methods.

Recording learners' speech has been used as early as the 1970s (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010:7), but it has grown more and more popular with the development of digital appliances.

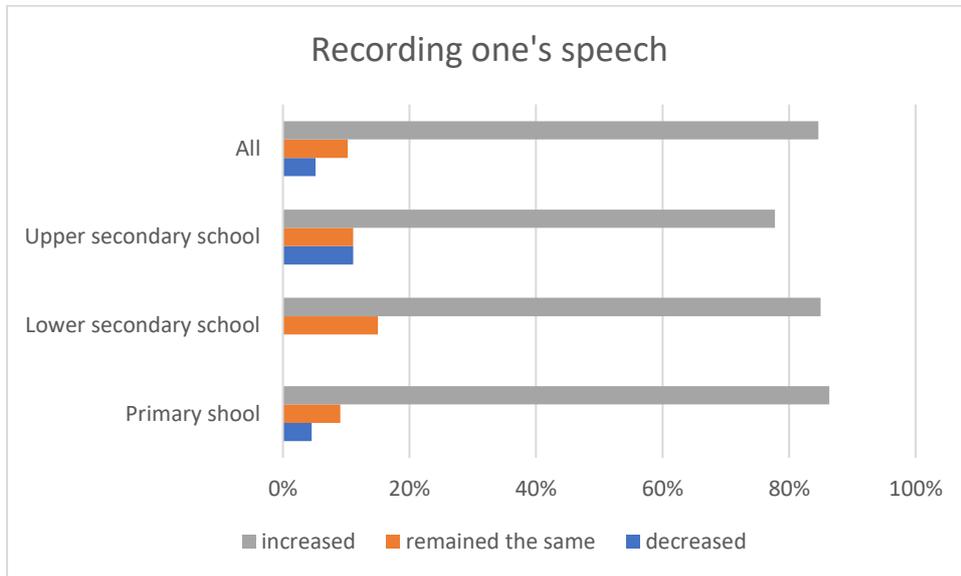


Figure 2. Changes in recording one's speech as compared to ten years ago

Other methods that have gained popularity among all school levels within the last ten years are listening and repeating, the phonetic alphabet, and reading aloud with a recording or in pairs. In the open-ended field, some teachers stated that exercises that are done in pairs have become more common, likely as a result of new textbooks. However, it is unclear whether these exercises focus on pronunciation exclusively, or whether they fall in the category of general oral skills tasks, which are often more frequent than specific pronunciation exercises (Tergujeff 2013).

No method had decreased significantly, although some patterns could be detected. Half of the upper secondary school teachers claimed that the use of tongue twisters had declined, which could possibly be explained by the changes in the teaching material or more focus on other methods or areas of language learning. The changes in time spent on tongue twisters are presented in Figure 3. The method has previously received criticism for being difficult even for native speakers and for causing possible frustration to struggling learners (Derwin & Munro 2015:106), which might explain its unpopularity. Tongue twisters also place significant focus on the segmental features of language, and thus might have become less common with the increased focus on the suprasegmental level.

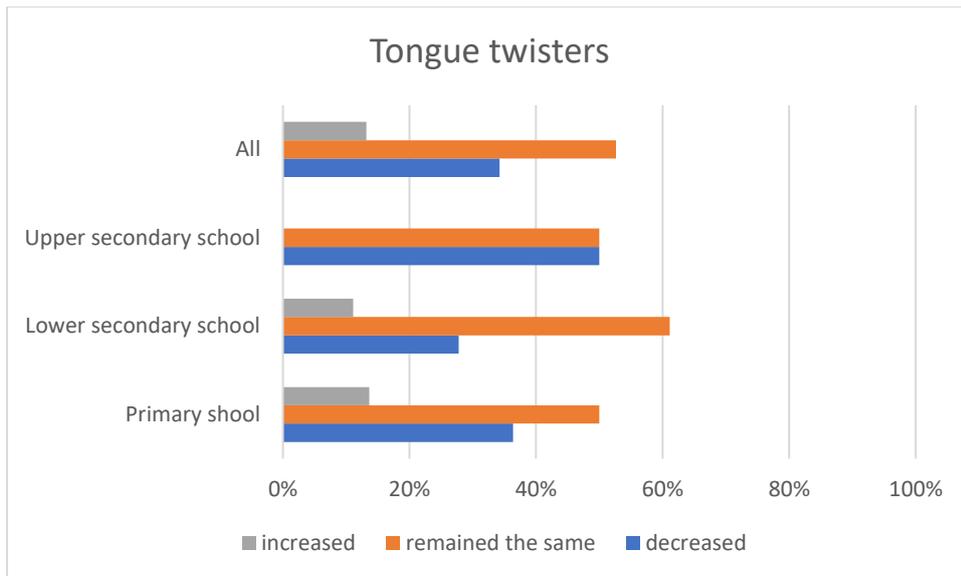


Figure 3. Changes in the use of tongue twisters as compared to ten years ago

Interestingly, reading aloud has decreased in upper secondary schools, both when reading aloud alone and together with a recording or in pairs. Instead, recording one's speech had increased greatly. Thus, it seems that reading aloud without recording the speech has been replaced by recording one's speech, and it is possible that the learners still read texts aloud but record them more often.

None of the teaching methods have drastically decreased in use, instead it seems that some of the time that was before spent on a variety of different teaching methods is now being used on more common methods, such as recording one's speech, reading in pairs, listening and repeating, and the phonetic alphabet. In addition, it is likely that the teachers utilise online materials such as videos and games more, as this was mentioned in the open-ended fields.

4.3 Reasons for change

When asked for reasons for changing one's teaching methods, only four people claimed to not have changed their teaching. Thus, visible change has happened in the past ten years despite most changes being quite small. The most common reasons for changing one's teaching style are textbooks, digital teaching material, and the needs of the learners. 22 teachers also state that they have changed their pronunciation teaching due to their own interest in the topic. Digital teaching material seems to have had the greatest impact on primary school teaching, as 72% of the

primary school teachers regard it as one of the reasons behind the change. Similarly, changing the teaching due to the teachers' own interest has been the most common in primary school, despite it being a significant factor on all school levels. Experience is also a significant factor, as teachers feel that they have gained experience on which methods work effectively and continue using them frequently.

With textbooks having affected the teaching of 27, and digital material 26 of the respondents, it can be said that teaching materials are one of the most significant factors in choosing how and how much pronunciation is taught. However, several factors can influence the contents of the materials. Some of the changes in the teaching materials are likely a result of changes in the national curricula, as the textbook providers form their materials according to the current national curricula (Luukka et al. 2008:64). Thus, it could even be said that the textbooks guide the teachers in implementing the curricula. Likewise, the changes in the textbooks and other teaching material can be a result of changes in society, as they often aim to provide authentic material and include themes such as the media and current events.

The curricula have influenced teaching on all school levels but have had the greatest impact in upper secondary schools, where 44% of the teachers name them as one of the factors that have impacted the change in their teaching. In the open-ended field, some upper secondary teachers mention the matriculation examination's role in changing their teaching, as demonstrated by Examples 1 and 2 below.

Example 1

YO-koe ei vieläkään testaa ääntämistä ja koe on muuttunut yhä teoreettisemmaksi ja haastavammaksi. Aikaa ääntämiselle ei ole paljon, kun muu on yo-kokeessa olennaisempaa. Lisäksi englannin yo-kokeen merkitys on kasvanut jatko-opinnoissa (Pronunciation is still not tested in the matriculation exam and the exam has become increasingly theoretical and challenging. There is not much time for pronunciation when everything else is more essential in the exam. In addition, the importance of the English matriculation exam has grown in tertiary education.)

T1

Example 2

Suullisen kielitaidon mahdollinen testaus yo-kirjoituksissa (The possibility of testing oral skills in the matriculation examination)

T2

Interestingly, the exams have affected teaching in two very distinct manners. One teacher states that the possibility of pronunciation being tested in future matriculation examinations has increased the amount of pronunciation teaching, whereas another participant expresses that finding time for pronunciation is difficult due to the matriculation exams consisting of different types of exercises that do not assess pronunciation. In Finnish upper secondary schools, the matriculation examinations play a significant role in prioritising and deciding which areas should be focused on and it often guides the teachers in addition to the curriculum and teaching material. The role of the matriculation examinations is extensive, as they are the only existing national examinations in the Finnish school system. Their role has grown even more within the last couple of years, as higher education providers have started focusing on the exam results more when choosing applicants (Ministry of Education and Culture 2019). Therefore, it is highly probable that the examinations place expectations on both students and teachers, thus guiding what is being taught.

In the open-ended field, several teachers mention iPads and the availability of digital teaching material and applications as having affected their teaching. Recording one's speech has gained popularity as it has become easier, and teachers utilise these recording possibilities both in class and when giving the students homework. A language laboratory is no longer needed in all schools, since the same aims can be reached by using computers, phones, and tablets. In addition to more traditional sound recording, some teachers report using video recording, recording on top of already existing videos, and applications that turn speech into text to practise pronunciation with their students. These relatively new methods are excellent examples of how the availability and development of technology has affected teaching. Digitalisation has continued to make the practice and assessment of pronunciation easier and more versatile, following an already established pattern (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010:7, Derwin and Munro 2015:23). It is also mentioned that the possibility of recording oneself at home has made pronunciation exercises easier for shy learners, who might be intimidated by practising together with their classmates.

Listening and repeating has become more common on all school levels, which could also be a result of digitalisation and the possibility of listening and repeating words and sentences guided by an application. In addition to being able to record one's speech, digital appliances have made accessing information and pronunciation models easier for both the teachers and the learners. As stated by one teacher, the correct pronunciation model is available at all times if one has an

appliance with them. It seems that the availability of technology and authentic models continues its influence on pronunciation teaching, as it has before with phonograph records, language laboratories, videocassettes and so forth (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010:2). Some of the sources mentioned by the teachers are online dictionaries, Quizlet, and mobile applications such as Arttu by Sanoma Pro, which are made by the textbook publishers. These changes have also made it easier for learners to listen and repeat the texts and vocabularies at home.

According to some answers in the open-ended fields, both digital sources and textbooks offer more material for pronunciation teaching than they did ten years ago. One teacher reports using different games and exercises found online, and another states that the digital materials offered by textbook publishers have great exercises and models for pronunciation, but that they often do not have enough time to use them. The lack of time used on pronunciation has been noticed in earlier studies, and focusing on various areas of language teaching has sometimes led to ignoring pronunciation teaching (Iivonen 2005, Tergujeff 2013).

The lack of time can easily result in ignoring some parts of language teaching, and there are multiple reasons behind it. For instance, group sizes are mentioned as one of the reasons for the decline in pronunciation teaching, as a greater number of learners per teacher leads to the teacher not being able to instruct everyone and not having time to assess everyone's pronunciation skills adequately. Although digital appliances have made listening to everyone individually easier, in some schools there are not enough appliances for each student, nor quiet places to record in. Thus, sometimes the appliances are not being used to their full potential due to external factors.

In the open-ended questions teachers also state their worries on societal changes that have affected pronunciation teaching, such as the learners' short attention spans. This can be linked to some of the consequences of digitalisation, as one teacher states that technology and digitalisation have brought with them new opportunities but that the pupils are no longer interested in tasks that demand focus, such as reading aloud. In some teachers' experience, fewer learners read the texts aloud at home and they seem to lose focus on certain slow-paced or demanding exercises in class.

Societal changes such as digitalisation, globalisation, and the rise of social media can also be seen in the learners' skills and knowledge levels, which in turn affects the teaching remarkably. The depth and extent of the learners' English skills has expanded greatly, and the learners are

constantly exposed to authentic material as they consume and contribute to different forms of media in English. A similar phenomenon has been detected earlier for instance in Ilola (2018), where students mention television and listening to English as some of their primary methods of learning pronunciation. The teachers also mention that the learners' consciousness of pronunciation and different varieties of English has expanded. With hearing and using English every day, the learners' attitudes have changed and their motivation for learning pronunciation has grown exponentially, especially among boys.

Some changes depend greatly on the school and the opinions of individual teachers, as some teachers have completely different experiences on certain methods and factors. In Finland, teachers have a great amount of freedom in planning their teaching (Niemi, Toom, and Kallioniemi 2012:168), which might contribute to the differing results. However, there are some changes that are common to nearly all of the participants. It could be said that the most significant changes are due to technology development, societal changes and the media. The learners' everyday experiences of English tend to affect their pronunciation and thus the methods that are used to teach pronunciation at school.

As expected, no dramatic change has happened within the last 10 years, but both digitalisation and societal changes have affected pronunciation teaching among many other areas of teaching. It could be argued that some of the changes in the curricula and teaching materials, which are also mentioned by many teachers when asked about reasons for changing their teaching, are also related to the aforementioned factors, as the teaching material and the curricula are formed considering the needs' of the learners and the society around them.

5. CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to discover how English pronunciation teaching has changed within the past ten years, and to reveal reasons behind the changes. On the whole, it can be concluded that the teaching of pronunciation has undergone changes in the past ten years, albeit most changes being relatively minor. However, some differences between the current situation and the situation ten years ago could be perceived in both the time used on pronunciation teaching and the teaching methods. Some reasons for the changes that have happened in the past ten years were also discovered. Thus, the research aims of the current study were met.

The total amount of pronunciation teaching has mostly remained the same as it was ten years ago or increased, but differences in the use of teaching methods were discovered. The most prominent changes have been due to the advancement of technology, which has also been one of the leading reasons for earlier development and change in pronunciation teaching (Celce-Murcia et al. 2010:2), and was thus to be expected. The impact of technology can be perceived for instance in the notable rise of recording one's speech, which proved a popular method and had increased on all school levels. Another noteworthy cause for the changes were factors connected to the media and society, with the current study proving that globalisation and the media continue their impact on perhaps surprising areas of education. The role of English textbooks was proved to have remained strong in guiding the teachers in what and how they teach, with digital teaching material also affecting these factors greatly.

All in all, the results tend to follow similar patterns on all school levels, although slight differences could be detected. Similar teaching methods to those described in Kirkova-Naskova et al. (2013) and Tergujeff (2013) were found, thus confirming that the situation has remained relatively steady. A variety of pronunciation teaching methods continue to be used, although some methods, such as recording one's speech and tongue twisters, have undergone changes in their popularity. Perhaps worrying results, such as a lack of time spent on pronunciation were noted. The phenomenon is not new, as teachers have expressed their wish to spend more time on pronunciation in earlier studies (Tergujeff 2013). However, as most participants reported that the time spent on pronunciation has either remained the same as ten years ago or increased, the situation seems to be improving.

With the participants consisting of teachers from primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary levels, a diverse view of the current situation could be achieved and slight differences between the levels discovered. Furthermore, the implications of technological development and societal changes could be observed on multiple levels, further proving their significance.

Due to only 44 participants, 42 of whom answered all the questions, a wider study with more participants would offer more generalisable information on the topic. A similar study could be carried out using interviews in addition to a survey, thus gaining more material that could be analysed qualitatively and attaining a deeper understanding of the topic. It could also be studied whether there are differences between large and small schools, or different areas of Finland. Thus, the current study presents opportunities for further research on the topic.

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APPENDIX 1: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Recent Changes in English Pronunciation Teaching

Tämä kysely kartoittaa englannin ääntämisen opetusta ja sen muutoksia viimeisen 10 vuoden aikana. Kysely on suunnattu vähintään 10 vuotta englannin opettajana peruskoulussa tai lukiossa toimineille ja on osa englannin kielen kandidaatin tutkielmaa Jyväskylän yliopistossa. Kyselyyn vastaamiseen kuluu aikaa noin viisi minuuttia ja vastaukset kerätään anonyymisti. Jos sinulla herää kysymyksiä tai kommentteja kyselyyn liittyen, minuun saa yhteyden sähköpostitse: noora.h.uotila@student.jyu.fi

1. Kuinka kauan olet työskennellyt englannin opettajana?

 vuotta

2. Millä kouluasteella työskentelet?

- alakoulu
 yläkoulu
 lukio

3. Paljonko opetusajasta käytät keskimäärin englannin ääntämisen opetukseen?

- 0-10%
 10-20%
 20-30%
 30-40%
 40-50%
 yli 50%

4. Mitä antamallesi ääntämisen opetuksen määrälle on tapahtunut verrattuna 10 vuoden takaiseen?

- vähentynyt
 pysynyt samana
 lisääntynyt

5. Mitä menetelmiä käytät ääntämisen opetuksessa?

- kuuntele ja toista
- ääneen lukeminen
- foneettiset aakkoset
- minimiparit/minimal pairs
- tongue twisters
- riimit
- puheen äänittäminen
- äänitteen päälle tai parin kanssa yhteen ääneen lukeminen
- säännöt ja ohjeet, esim. monikon päätteiden ääntämistavat
- sanapainon merkitseminen
- intonaatiokäyrän piirtäminen
- sanelu
- kazoo-pilli
- käveleminen tai taputtaminen puheen rytmissä
- taktiilliset harjoitukset, esim. aspiraation tunteminen kämmenselässä
- kirjallinen työ tai esitelmä ääntämisasiheesta
- muita, mitä?

6. Mitä menetelmien käytölle on tapahtunut verrattuna 10 vuoden takaiseen opetukseesi?

	vähentynyt	pysynyt samana	lisääntynyt
kuuntele ja toista	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ääneen lukeminen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
foneettiset aakkoset	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
minimiparit/minimal pairs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
tongue twisters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
riimit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
puheen äänittäminen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
äänitteen päälle tai parin kanssa yhteen ääneen lukeminen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
säännöt ja ohjeet, esim. monikon päätteiden ääntämistavat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	vähentynyt	pysynyt samana	lisääntynyt
sanapainon merkitseminen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
intonaatiokäyrän piirtäminen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
sanelu	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
kazoo-pilli	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
käveleminen tai taputtaminen puheen rytmissä	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
taktiilliset harjoitukset, esim. aspiraation tunteminen kämmenselässä	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
kirjallinen työ tai esitelmä ääntämisaiheesta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
muuta, mitä?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="text"/>			

7. Mitkä tekijät ovat vaikuttaneet muutoksiin siinä, miten opetat ääntämistä?

- en ole muuttanut opetustani
- opetussuunnitelmien perusteet
- opetussuunnitelmien tukimateriaalit
- oppikirjat
- digitaalinen opetusmateriaali
- täydennyskoulutus
- oppijoiden tarpeet
- oma kiinnostus
- muu, mikä?

8. Onko digitalisaatio mielestäsi muuttanut ääntämisen opetusta? Miten?
