

Active Learning and Grammar Exercises in EFL Workbooks

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<p>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</p> <p>Toiminnallisuus (active learning) on ollut paljon esillä nykyajan tutkimuksissa sekä alemmilla että korkeammilla kouluasteilla parempien oppimistuloksien takia. Toiminnalliset työtavat ovat perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman (2016) mukaan tärkeitä opetusmenetelmiä, joita korostetaan englannin kielen opetuksessa. Suomessa valtakunnallinen opetussuunnitelma määrittää englannin kielen opettamisen keinoja ja tätä opetussuunnitelmaa päivitetään tietyin aikavälein vastaamaan nykyaikaa, jolloin kieliopin opetusmenetelmätkin muuttuvat.</p> <p>Oppikirjat ovat Suomessa hyvin laajasti käytettyjä oppimateriaaleja. Niiden tutkiminen tarjoaa tietoa opetuksesta Suomessa yleensä, koska viimeaikaisten tutkimusten mukaan suurin osa vieraan kielen opettajista käyttää usein oppikirjoja opetuksessaan. Uusimpien oppikirjojen tulisi noudattaa uutta opetussuunnitelmaa, jossa korostetaan toiminnallisia työtapoja englannin kielen kohdalla.</p> <p>Oppikirja-analyseja kielioppitehtävistä on tehty vain muutamia Suomessa, mutta ei toiminnallisten (active learning) kielioppitehtävien näkökulmasta aikaisemmin. Tämä antoi motivaation tutkimuksen tekemiselle yhdessä oppikirjojen jatkuvan arvioinnin tarpeen kanssa. Tutkimuksessa analysoitiin kahden englannin oppikirjasarjan, <i>On the Go</i> ja <i>Spotlight</i>, kielioppitehtäviä 7.–9. luokan tehtäväkirjoista. Aineistosta tutkittiin tehtävien määrät ja tehtävätyypit kussakin oppikirjasarjassa. Tutkielman päämääränä oli selvittää millaisia toiminnallisia (active learning) työtapoja tehtäväkirjojen kielioppitehtävissä esiintyy. Analyysimenetelmänä käytettiin laadullista sisällönanalyysia. Tehtäväkirjat luettiin läpi useampaan kertaan, ja kaikki kielioppitehtävät kategorisoitiin.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat, että puhtaasti toiminnallisia (active learning) kielioppitehtäviä <i>On the Go</i> ja <i>Spotlight</i> kirjasarjoista löytyy viidestä eri toiminnallisuuden kategoriasta: pelit, ristikot, päättelytehtävät, tutkimustehtävät ja pari-/ryhmätyöskentely. Tulokset osoittavat myös, että perinteisiä kielioppitehtäviä, kuten käänöslauseita, esiintyy kuitenkin edelleen enemmän kuin toiminnallisia tehtäviä. Jatkotutkimusta voitaisiin tehdä esimerkiksi oppilaiden näkökulmasta, sillä olisi tärkeää saada selville oppilaiden näkemyksiä toiminnallisista kielioppitehtävistä.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

In an ideal world, language learning and teaching ought to correspond students' needs, in other words, the different learning styles of students. In Finland, teachers rely heavily on textbooks in teaching (Luukka et al. 2008: 94-95) and they use textbooks to set objectives for their teaching as well (ibid: 67-68). Therefore, published materials such as textbooks and workbooks are undeniably valuable assets for teachers of English as a foreign language (hereafter EFL). In addition, the quality of teaching materials is of utmost importance for the language learners since teachers in Finland tend to follow the teaching materials when choosing, for example, exercises and texts for classes. Thus, it could be argued that in Finland textbooks and workbooks often form the core of an EFL course.

The updates in the pedagogical approaches in the new national core curriculum (2016) emphasize the need for implementing more active learning working methods in language teaching. In fact, studies have shown that a suitable learning environment is an active one, not passive. Therefore, it is important to study active learning in textbooks and workbooks as they are the primary teaching materials in Finland. Active learning is a broad concept as it includes, for example, the participation of students, engaging students in an activity that will make them think and analyse the information being taught, and interaction with each other. In other words, active learning deals with engaging the students in the subject being learnt by consciously and actively participating in exploring language and the rules (Attaran, A., Gholami, V. & Moghaddam, M. 2014). Moreover, active learning caters for different learning styles as its techniques form a long list of different methods to choose from (Farrell 2009, Koskenkari 2013). Often the juxtaposition between traditional teaching and active learning is discussed when looking into active learning more closely. In the former, information is transmitted to the students from the teacher, which makes the role of the students purely passive, whereas in the latter, the students build their knowledge themselves, which gives the students a bigger role in the learning process (Prince 2004). Furthermore, active learning has been proven to benefit learners in several ways, which makes it a valuable asset to language teaching and learning.

While it can be argued that both the role of active learning and teaching materials is important, there is a gap in the research field of active learning and grammar exercises. The present study

was conducted to fill this gap and to shed light on the topic. Moreover, the updated national core curriculum, which emphasizes active learning, and the updated teaching materials which claim to follow the new national core curriculum also prompted to study active learning and grammar activities.

This study focuses on active learning from the point of view of grammar exercises. In short, the aim is to analyse commonly used teaching materials for grades 7 to 9 in basic education in Finland with a specific focus on how grammar is practiced. The data in the present paper consists of altogether six workbooks from two different series from the same publisher; *On the Go* and *Spotlight* from Sanoma Pro. These series were chosen for this study because they are new and designed to follow the updated national core curriculum (2016) and they advertise the workbooks with accommodating slogans. The data was analysed using qualitative content analysis.

Chapter 2 is divided into four sections, first I will discuss what active learning is and define the term “active learning” for this study, then I will present the benefits of active learning. After this, previous studies on active learning are discussed. Chapter 3 will present approaches to L2 teaching that mirror the active learning approach and the traditional approach, discuss the role of grammar as well as foreign language textbooks in Finland, and then present previous studies done on grammar in L2 textbooks. Chapter 4 focuses on active learning in the Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (hereafter referred to as NCC). Chapter 5 outlines the aims and research questions of the present study, and, elaborates the data and the method of analysis. Then, chapter 6 will present the results of this study. Finally, chapter 7 will answer the research questions by concluding the findings of this study. Chapter 7 will also discuss strengths and limitations of the study, and then concludes by discussing the implications of this study and giving suggestions for further research.

2 ACTIVE LEARNING

In this chapter, I will first introduce the term “active learning” and discuss what active learning is. Then I will define the term used for this study. After that, I will discuss the benefits of active learning. Lastly, I will present previous studies done on active learning.

2.1 What is active learning?

The term “active learning” is a term that has not been precisely defined. In fact, there are many different definitions of active learning in educational literature, but one that has been widely accepted is Prince’s definition, which is drawn from foundational work done by Bonwell (2000) and Eison (2010). Prince (2004: 223) defines active learning as follows: “Active learning is generally defined as any instructional method that engages students in the learning process. In short, active learning requires students to do meaningful learning activities and think about what they are doing”. Another definition of active learning describes it as follows: “Active learning engages students in the process of learning through activities and/or discussion in class, as opposed to passively listening to an expert. It emphasizes higher-order thinking and often involves group work.” (Freeman et al. 2014: 8413-8414). In addition, some general characteristics are commonly associated with active learning. First, students are engaged in activities and involved more than listening. Second, students are involved in higher-order thinking and less emphasis is placed on transmitting information and more on developing students’ skills. Third, student motivation is increased (Bonwell 1991:2).

Active learning is a broad concept already in the sense that it includes, for example, the participation of students, engaging students in an activity that will make them think and analyse the information being taught, experiential learning, and interaction with each other. In other words, active learning deals with engaging the students in the subject being learnt by consciously and actively participating in exploring language and the rules (Attaran, A., Gholami, V. & Moghaddam, M. 2014). Active learning has also been described as “a process wherein students are actively engaged in building understanding of facts, ideas, and skills through the completion of instructor directed tasks and activities. It is any type of activity that gets students involved in the learning process.” (Bell and Kahrhoff, 2006: 1). Often you

encounter the juxtaposition between traditional teaching and active learning when active learning is examined more closely. In the former, information is transmitted to the students from the teacher, which makes the role of the students purely passive, whereas in the latter, the students build their knowledge themselves, which gives the students a bigger role in the learning process (Prince 2004).

The theoretical basis of active learning is built on traditional educational theories such as constructive approach and cognitivism, where the learner develops abilities with regards to reasoning and problem-solving. Constructivist learning theory shifts towards a student-centred method in which, rather than traditional lectures, the focus is on student engagement. In other words, it focuses on the belief that students learn through building their own knowledge, associating new information to existing knowledge leading to a better understanding (Bransford et al. 1999). In addition, active learning generally grasps the use of cooperative learning, which is a constructivists-based practice that emphasizes social interaction. Lev Vygotsky's work supports the relationship between social activities and cognitive processes thus suggesting that learning occurs when students solve problems with the support of a peer or instructor (Vygotsky 1978). Hence active learning strategies, which rely on group work, rest on this sociocultural branch of constructivist learning theory.

In active learning students are actively involved in learning. In addition, students are seen as active agents who actively process the information being taught rather than being passive listeners. Active learning is by no means a new approach to teaching. It has been used for many decades now. However, only in the last several decades it has been promoted in higher education, where the struggle is often about students who lose attention during class and cannot focus on lectures. For example, according to Johnson, Johnson, & Smith (1991), when students are passive recipients during lectures, they acquire facts more than develop higher cognitive processes. I would argue that this is as true in basic education as it is in higher education. Moreover, if you think about grammar learning, the development of higher cognitive processes is more crucial than acquiring facts.

In my opinion, active learning works better than the traditional teaching setting where the teacher lectures and the students are passive listeners. Based on my own experiences I have gained a better understanding of classes where the working methods were active rather than, for example, lecturing and what is more, research has proven this to be the case (see chapter 3).

Even though the benefits of using active learning are undisputed, there has not been an extensive use of it in the teaching world. The reason behind this could be that active learning requires more from the teachers in a sense that the activities can take more time and effort to plan and therefore require more preparation of the classes. Therefore, some teachers might consider it to be too troublesome a method. In addition, it might require more willingness to change from a teacher who is used to teach in a traditional way, such as lecturing, or respectively has been taught only in that way him- or herself.

Active learning techniques form a long list of different methods to choose from. For example, games, plays, debates, groupwork, drama, presentations, crossword puzzles, hands-on projects, small group discussions, role playing, research, deduction, cooperative learning, teacher driven questioning and learning by the aid of exercise (Farrell 2009, Koskenkari 2013, Shetgar & Thalange 2018, Kojo, Laine & Näveri 2018). However, it is worth mentioning that by adding one of the above listed methods to teaching, the method must not be the main goal but rather a good bonus to the teaching. For example, adding exercise has proven to enhance learning results, but again we must remember that adding exercise to other subjects should be considered as a bonus not as a main goal (Koskenkari 2013). Thus, activity is utilized to achieve the learning objectives. In addition, active learning charts (see Figure 1 and 2) list writing as a tool to reflect and/or think, however, there is a clear distinction between writing that is considered active learning and writing in general. The dividing line seems to be between free writing and controlled writing, such as translating sentences or writing sentences using specific structure, whereas free writing can be considered to be exactly what the name suggests, such as a one-minute paper or essay written freely, in other words without restrictions. It also has to be noted that active learning activities differ in their complexity and thus, in classroom time commitment as any other strategy (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. Spectrum of some active learning activities arranged by complexity and classroom time commitment.

By Chris O’neal & Tershia Pinder-Grover, Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, University of Michigan

2.2 Defining the term “active learning” for this study

Defining the term used in this study, active learning, is somewhat difficult as it was mentioned above that active learning does not have a precise definition but rather multiple definitions by different scholars. Hence, in this study active learning is treated as any kind of activity that engages students in the process of learning, as opposed to passively listening to the teacher. The main point is participation. In other words, students are involved more than just first listening the rules of the grammar aspect at hand and then practicing the rules, for example, by translating sentences. In my opinion, active learning does also include having meaning in a sense that if doing something active leads to a student understanding the subject being taught better, it does have a bigger meaning to the activity than rather just doing something active during the classes. I believe that the combination of action and thinking results in learning, and it is supported by

a new Harvard study (Deslauriers, McCarty, Miller, Callaghan & Kestin 2019), which showed that students in active learning classrooms learned more than students in traditional lectures.

I want to emphasise that active learning in this study means the Finnish term ‘toiminnallisuus’, since it might be confusing because the term ‘toiminnallisuus’ does not have one established equivalent in English. Rather, it has different English translations, which are present in the NCC (2016). For example, the NCC (2016) translates it in different contexts as “active learning”, “functional approach”, “learning by doing” and “functionality”. In addition, CEFR (2001) explains the same phenomenon using terms such as “the action-oriented approach” and “the action-based approach” (CEFR 2001:9). Since this study is based on the NCC (2016), I will use the term active learning as a translation to ‘toiminnallisuus’ because the majority of the working methods listed in the NCC (2016) are active learning methods. CEFR (2001) and NCC (2016) will be covered more in detail in chapter 4.

2.3 Benefits of active learning

Using active learning as part of teaching is justifiable because research has shown us that it is an effective teaching method. In fact, research (Attaran 2014, Prince 2004, Farrell 2009, Koskenkari 2013, Petersen & Gorman 2014) has shown that when using active learning, students remember the information taught longer, learn more profoundly, enjoy the class more, develop their critical thinking skills and interact with each other more, when compared to traditional teaching methods such as lecturing. However, using active learning strategies does not mean that you have to omit the lecture format. Rather, lecturing can be made more effective for student learning by adding small active learning strategies to the lecture. In addition, Edgar Dale’s Cone of Experience that he developed in the 1960s (see Figure 2) supports active learning strategies as he theorized that by doing students retain more information than by hearing or observing (Anderson n.d.).

ACTIVE LEARNING & STUDENT PERFORMANCE

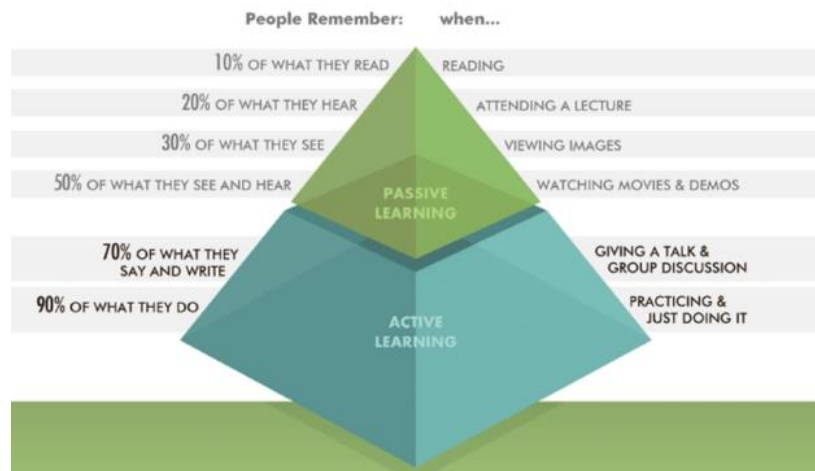


Figure 2. Active learning & Student performance. By Falconproducts.com
<http://www.falconproducts.com/files/images/active-learning-infographic.png>

Active learning takes all kinds of learners into account by accommodating a variety of learning styles, and allows students to show their abilities, even students who struggle to show them in traditional ways (Koskenkari 2013). Other benefits of active learning are cognitive benefits, for example, higher order thinking, such as evaluation, analysis, and creation (Bonwell 1991: 2). Due to the fact that active learning encourages students to engage directly with the course material instead of only passively listening to it, it is not surprising that research has shown that active learning leads to increased content knowledge (Anderson et al. 2005). In addition, active learning encourages students to produce content, which forces students to retrieve information from memory rather than just recognition. Students also receive more immediate and frequent feedback in active learning, whereas in a passive learning environment such as a lecture, students usually do not receive feedback often, which makes it difficult for the learners to self-assess. What is more, active learning encourages collaboration where students can acquire strategies for learning by observing their classmates. It also promotes the development of critical thinking and problem-solving abilities in comparison to traditional lecture (Anderson et al. 2005). Besides the cognitive benefits, active learning also promotes better interaction

among peers (Thaman et al. 2013), which can lead to a greater sense of community in the class. Active learning can also limit student anxiety because students have time to process and talk about the information being taught, instead of being overloaded with the content without anything to do with it. The last non-cognitive benefit of active learning is that it increases enthusiasm for learning in both students and instructors (Thaman et al. 2013) and positive attitudes towards learning (Anderson et al. 2005). I believe that most students consider it to be more motivating to be active than passive during class, which makes the learning process more fun.

Active learning is summed up fairly well by Farrell (2009), who voices that learning is an act of participation. In my opinion, all learners should have the opportunity to feel greater sense of community in class, which would make it easier to motivate them into the subject being learned. As I see it, a teacher's role is to help the students learn, not just leave them to figure it out themselves. As a future English teacher, I aspire to use active learning in my classes because I want to provide a learning environment, in which the students feel that they have a big role in it and time to process and talk about the information being taught. However, I am aware that active learning also requires the students to be open to the change from the passive traditional teaching to the more active way of teaching. Therefore, students need to be ready to take responsibility of their own participation and thus learning.

2.4 Previous studies on active learning

There has been plenty of research on active learning and its benefits have been supported by many scholars. In other words, the empirical support for active learning is extensive. I will present three of these studies below and discuss them in more detail.

Freeman et al. (2014) meta-analysed 225 studies in the United States on failure rates and examination scores when comparing student performance in undergraduate science, engineering, mathematics and technology courses using traditional lecturing versus active learning. Their study focused on two questions: Does active learning boost examination scores? Does it lower failure rates? The results indicated that student performance on examinations improved when using active learning, and that students were more likely to fail under traditional

lecturing than were the students who were taught using active learning. In addition, the results indicated that active learning is effective across all class sizes. This study voiced concerns about the continued use of traditional lecturing as the main approach to teaching and gave support to active learning as the preferred and empirically validated teaching method.

House (2008) conducted an ethnographic study in Japan, in which he studied 4006 9-year-old students who were engaged in cooperative learning activities and active learning strategies. The hypothesis was, based on previous research findings, that more frequent use of active learning strategies and cooperative learning activities would be positively associated with achievement. The results from this analysis of science classrooms indicated that students who were taught using cooperative learning activities during classes increased their knowledge and attitudes about science. These findings led the author to conclude that active learning strategies and cooperative learning activities are positively associated with achievement. In other words, the results support the active learning benefits in boosting content learning.

Lancor & Schiebel (2008) conducted a project in the United States, in which they paired college students with second graders in order to execute science lessons using active learning strategies. The physics students were divided into groups of 3-4 and asked to choose one simple machine to teach for the second graders and to plan a 15-20 minute lesson. They focused on four questions that were investigated throughout the whole project: Will the college students be able to effectively present a lesson/activity on simple machines to the second graders? Will they see the connection between how simple machines work and the physics we have studied in class? Will this project enhance college students' understanding of physics? Will the second graders learn something about simple machines? The results indicated that both the second graders and the college students experienced deeper learning of science content while they enjoyed their collaboration. In addition, Lancor & Schiebel concluded that these active learning strategies improved reflective skills and critical thinking when the college students reflected on the processes of learning and teaching at the same time they were increasing their knowledge of science concepts. However, as they did not provide the number of participants for the study, it is difficult to determine whether this study can be generalised or not.

Taken together, the studies of Freeman et al. (2014), House (2008) and Lancor & Schiebel (2008) provide considerable support for active learning strategies. They all support that using active learning leads to a better understanding of the subject being learned, which in my opinion

is very important and crucial when learning a foreign language and especially its rules. In addition, Lancor & Schiebel (2008) argued that active learning strategies improved the students' critical thinking and reflective skills and on top of that active learning enhanced social interactions. I believe that active learning is effective across all class sizes, which was supported by Freeman et al. (2014). Furthermore, I believe that it is effective at all educational levels as well.

In summary, considerable support exists for the benefits of active learning. Active learning yields significant cognitive benefits such as greater understanding, increased engagement and the development of thinking and application skills. Furthermore, it promotes high levels of social development. In my opinion, all of these are beneficial in today's society, which requires individuals who can think critically, solve problems, multitask and cooperate with others.

3 THE CHANGING FIELD OF GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION

In this chapter, I will first briefly present the approaches to L2 teaching that mirror the active learning approach and the traditional approach in section 3.1 before continuing to discuss the role of grammar in section 3.2. It should be noted that due to the limited scope of this study it is not possible to cover all existing approaches of L2 teaching, and more specifically grammar teaching, but rather give a general picture of the field. Then I continue to foreign language textbooks and especially the grammar aspect of them, because textbooks carry a significant role in teaching in Finland. Moreover, it is relevant to discuss grammar in foreign language textbooks since it is in the scope of the present study. At the end of this chapter, I will present previous studies on grammar in L2 textbooks.

3.1 From passive to active

In the light of this study, it is relevant to discuss the extremities of the approaches to L2 teaching that mirror the active learning approach and the traditional approach, even though they are not

merely grammar approaches. These are the learner-centered approach and the teacher-centered approach.

The learner-centered approach is based on constructivism, as is active learning (see chapter 2), as the constructivism theory is “the learning concept in which learners construct their own knowledge through their personal experience. Learners are encouraged to engage effectively in the organized learning activities. They will explore, discuss, negotiate, collaborate, cooperate, investigate, and solve real life problems in social learning environment” (Schreurs & Dumbraveanu 2014: 37). Thus, there is a shift in the education approach as the focus shifts from the teacher to the learner as the role of the teacher is to engage learners in activities, which will result in achieving learning outcomes (ibid). I believe that to be the reason behind the success of learner-centered approach as it develops autonomy, problem-solving skills and independent critical thinking. The learner-centered teaching methods include active learning, cooperative learning and inductive teaching and learning. To recap, active learning includes learners discussing, solving problems, debating, brainstorming, explaining and answering and formulating questions (see chapter 2 for more). Cooperative learning includes, for example, learners working in groups on problems and projects. Inductive teaching and learning include, for example, problem-based learning, inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, case-based learning and discovery learning (NC State University n.d.).

In the teacher-centered approach the focus is on the teacher and learners passively listen to the teacher. Thus, this approach is associated mainly with the transmission of knowledge (Brown 2003: 50). Teacher-centered methods include, for example, direct instruction, flipped classroom, PPP method and grammar translation method. Direct instruction is the common term for the traditional teaching method, in which the students are seen as “empty vessels” and the teacher transmits the knowledge to them by for example lecturing, in other words, this approach utilizes passive learning (Teach n.d.). The idea behind flipped classroom is that teachers record their live lectures and learners can watch them at home. In my opinion, the only benefit of flipped classroom is that it allows learners to work at their own pace. However, it is still very teacher-centered, as the teacher still holds the role of the instructor who speaks and learners passively listen even if it is through the medium of video. The PPP method, presentation – practice – production, is very teacher-centered also, as the teacher provides the information needed and then learners try to mimic the rules given (Teachingenglish n.d.). The grammar translation method techniques include, for example, translation exercises, fill in the gap

exercises (filling in gaps in sentences with new words or items of a particular grammar), use words in sentences (learners create sentences to illustrate that they know the meaning and use of new words) and reading comprehension questions (Asl 2015: 18). This method sees grammar learning through presenting rules and learners practicing the rules via translation exercises (ibid: 19).

As learner-centered methods have again and again been proven to be superior to the traditional teacher-centered methods (NC State University n.d.) thus, it is no wonder in my opinion, that teaching grammar has gone towards more active approach over the years. I believe that it is the right direction when you consider all the benefits that active learning has been proven to offer, so why not implement them into grammar teaching as well and simultaneously get rid of the reputation of grammar teaching to be boring. The following section will discuss these matters more in detail.

3.2 From tedious to engaging

Teaching grammar has always been a part of foreign language studies. Grammar still holds its place in language proficiency and provides the skillful learner the ease of communication even at demanding situations of interaction. However, the views of how grammar should be taught have varied significantly over centuries, but nowadays the views are shifting towards more active learning instead of traditional learning.

Even though many twenty-first century classrooms have started to move towards teaching that favours more active learning, grammar lessons are found boring and using traditional teaching methods even nowadays. An unpublished bachelor's thesis by Sormunen (2013 as quoted in Vornanen 2016) revealed that upper secondary school students in Finland have a traditional image of grammar teaching. According to Sormunen (2013: 61 as quoted in Vornanen 2016: 28) students were not sure how real life language communication related to grammar items. Moreover, it was mentioned that students did not have many ideas of how their grammar teaching could be altered. Sormunen (2013: 78 as quoted in Vornanen 2016: 28) argued that one possible explanation for this could be that the range of grammar instruction is unknown to students. The results of her study do not surprise me since they fit perfectly my own thoughts and experiences of foreign language grammar lessons when I was a student. Other studies

support the boringness of grammar as well, for example, according to Jean and Simard (2011: 475), a common attitude by both learners and teachers is that grammar learning and teaching is important but simultaneously boring. This, in my opinion, is alarming since grammar is such a big part of language proficiency and plays a crucial part of conveying the message. I believe that grammar teaching nowadays should be about the engagement with the material being learned rather than just pouring the information and rules into the students' heads, which is commonly identified with traditional teaching, where the teachers speak and the students listen. Nowadays, it is common to see active tasks being used when teaching vocabulary but while that may be the case for texts and vocabulary teaching, it is not the case for grammar teaching. It makes one wonder why grammar teaching is still generally treated differently from, for example, vocabulary teaching. By this I mean the lack of active learning strategies implemented to grammar teaching and learning. Furthermore, why is it that grammar and vocabulary are separated into their own units in the first place? Should teaching not be based on evidence rather than tradition? In other words, if a more active approach has been proven to be more beneficial for the students, would it not be practical to use that approach in teaching rather than using traditional approach only because it is tradition? As it was mentioned above, the words 'grammar teaching/learning' and 'boring' are, unfortunately, often associated and one possible explanation for that may be because traditional grammar teaching and learning fail to engage students in active and lifelong learning, since for many L2 learners, learning grammar often means learning the rules of grammar. Ellis (2006: 84) argues that "Grammar teaching involves any instructional technique that draws learners' attention to some specific grammatical form in such a way that it helps them either to understand it metalinguistically and/or process it in comprehension and/or production so that they can internalize it". If we were to draw a conclusion from this, we could argue that traditional grammar teaching and learning does not fill the requirements of how Ellis (2006) defines grammar teaching since traditional grammar teaching fails to provide internalization. I would argue that active learning offers a solution to this by helping students learn grammar in a foreign language classroom with more enjoyable and engaging ways, in other words, using active learning strategies.

Studies show that learners who were taught grammar using active learning strategies reach higher grammar achievement than students who were taught using traditional learning. For example, Liao (2006) studied the effects of cooperative learning, which is a variety of active learning, on EFL students in Taiwan and designed an experiment which took 12 weeks and included a pre-test as well as a post-test. Liao studied 84 college students who were divided

into two classes, 42 students in each, and the other class received grammar instruction through cooperative learning, whereas the other through whole-class teaching. While whole-class teaching can mean, for example, a lecture, a discussion or a debate, here in this study the author describes Taiwanese whole-class grammar lessons to be “teacher-centered rote grammar-translation” (Liao 2006: 59) and focusing on grammatical rules and sentence structures using translation exercises, which equals the traditional learning approach and is precisely in the scope of this study. Three research questions were looked at in the study. The first focused on motivation and what effects cooperative learning has on it. The second focused on what effects cooperative learning has on out-of-class strategy use, and the third focused on grammar achievement. The data were collected through pre-test and post-test scores and it was analysed with simple effects, one- and two-way ANCOVAs, MANCOVAs, and Pearson correlations. Liao (2006) found that cooperative learning had large positive effects on all three and what is more, grammar achievement was affected positively. The author concluded that the findings were in favour of cooperative learning over whole-class instruction in teaching English grammar. The author’s description of whole-class teaching, in my opinion, corresponds the general grammar instruction used in Finland, because the rote grammar-translation tasks have been all too common throughout my school history, which was one of the reasons that prompt me to conduct this research in the first place. In addition, Liao (2006: 59) describes the typical Taiwanese English lesson to be one, where the students sit in straight rows with only a little opportunity to interact with one another if at all, and that quiet classrooms are reinforced. In my opinion, silence is not an aid to learning, at least in a foreign language classroom, where talking and using the language is essential in order to learn the new language. Similarly, my own school history is filled with memories of students sitting in rows forbidden to discuss with peers and translating the grammar sentences from Finnish to English after hearing the rules of the particular grammar aspect from the teacher. Yet, even nowadays, the textbooks to which teachers in Finland heavily rely on, are filled with active tasks for vocabulary teaching, but not for grammar teaching. Grammar tasks have still mainly consisted of translation exercises, which is somewhat baffling since if active learning strategies are acknowledged in vocabulary exercises, why are grammar exercises treated differently? Accordingly, if studies have shown that grammar lessons are found boring and students in Finland cannot imagine any alternative ways of teaching grammar, as it was found out in the study of Sormunen (2013 as quoted in Vornanen 2016), it indicates that grammar lessons mainly consist of, in fact, rules and translation exercises in general.

Another study conducted by Beydoğan and Bayındır (2010) in Turkey supports the superiority of active learning to traditional learning when teaching grammar. However, it is important to note that Beydoğan and Bayındır (2010) in their study, focus on sample-to-rule and rule-to-sample teaching approaches, therefore not specifically on active learning. However, they describe the sample-to-rule approach to be one, where students participate in an active manner and they have contrasted this group to two other groups, which are taught in a traditional way, where the teacher tells the grammar rules to the students (Beydoğan & Bayındır 2010: 3954). Therefore, we can assume that sample-to-rule approach in this study is similar to active learning, because in sample-to-rule approach the students have to define the rules of grammar themselves from samples. What is more, the authors describe this sample-to-rule approach to be similar with problem-based learning (Beydoğan & Bayındır 2010: 3955) and problem-based learning is, in fact, an active learning activity (University of Leicester n.d.).

Beydoğan and Bayındır (2010) studied the effect of approach from rules-to-sample and sample-to-rules to the teaching of grammar. Semi-experimental research was conducted to find out, which method is more effective, and the authors examined 96 fourth grade students who were divided into three groups. The first group, consisting of 30 students, participated in the rules-to-sample group, the second group, consisting of 33 students, participated in the sample-to-rules in an active manner group, and the third group, which consisted of 33 students, continued to traditional teaching. The authors found out that the group that was learning in an active manner rather than listening to the teacher telling them the rules, the sample-to-rules group, achieved long-term remembrance and deeper thinking, which increased their participation and interest to the class. As was discussed above (see chapter 2.3), the benefits of active learning are similar as the achievements discovered in Beydoğan and Bayındır (2010) study. In addition, the authors argue the sample-to-rule teaching to have helped the students gain more self-confidence as well. All these are major factors, which I believe lead to a greater enjoyment of grammar lessons. In contrast, in the rule-to-sample group, students did not internalize the knowledge of the grammar being taught, but rather stored the information to short-term memory and afterwards forgot it (Beydoğan & Bayındır 2010: 3963). This study supports my earlier statement about how teaching should be based on evidence rather than tradition.

Even though grammar is considered boring and students have a traditional image of grammar teaching and learning, research tells us that there is no one superior approach to grammar teaching (Ellis 2012: 70). In other words, there is still no absolute right or wrong way of

grammar teaching. However, it is important for the teacher to make informed choices of how to teach, and in more detail, what activities and materials to use. In addition, I believe that a successful method is a combination of several methods and my view is supported by Ur (2011: 520), who claims that there is not any particular successful teaching method that would work for all teachers, but rather that a combination of several methods makes a successful one. This is precisely what I believe grammar teaching ought to be nowadays; grammar tasks ought to be mostly active with only few traditional tasks amongst them, for example, translation tasks, in order to benefit from the positive learning results from active learning. Furthermore, the increased enjoyment of grammar lessons, which is one the benefits of using active learning, is not only regarded as a welcomed bonus but also as a major factor affecting motivation and thus learning results.

In conclusion, learning grammar does not have to be tedious, but rather the exact opposite; using active learning techniques in grammar teaching creates variation to the dull lessons and offers the students an opportunity to discover active learning methods in the grammar world as well, and find learning more enjoyable. As Morelli (2003: 33-34) has argued, students need to learn grammar through various methods in order to take their individual learning styles into account, and teachers ought to consider students perceptions when making the decision of how to teach grammar. Therefore, traditional learning with, for example, translation exercises is not enough to cater for students individual learning styles. In my opinion, active learning offers a solution for this by containing a wide variety of different techniques.

3.3 Foreign language textbooks in Finland

The majority of foreign language teachers use textbooks in their teaching and therefore textbooks carry a meaningful role in the development of students' language proficiency. Thus, it is relevant to study how grammar is taught in textbooks. While textbooks are heavily relied on in Finland and therefore at the centre of this study, it is also important to note the role of the teacher because they are the ones who decide what materials to use and what materials not to use.

The teacher has a significant role in learning and guiding the students to the subject being learnt, and thus the books designed to be used in specific classes should help and guide the teachers

provide also active tasks for learning and teaching grammar, especially because the newest NCC (2016) states how important it is to use active learning strategies in teaching (see chapter 4). Hall (2011:90 as quoted in Takala 2016:14) points out that teachers are regarded as “enablers or facilitators who assist learners in their self-discovery rather than instructors who ‘transmit’ knowledge to learners” according to humanistic language teaching. This supports my argument that teachers ought to employ a variety of different teaching methods in order to take students more into account and cater for their different learning styles. One example of a very helpful tool to assist teachers to accomplish this, is a diversified L2 textbook. In my opinion, the teachers’ goal is to create opportunities for students to learn by choosing activities that cater for the students learning styles. I believe that the best possible way to accomplish this is by using active learning strategies, because these strategies have diversity amongst them, therefore catering for different learning styles. However, it is important to note that teachers must give enough time for students to adapt to active learning strategies in order for these strategies to start working, because it may well be that active learning methods in grammar lessons are not familiar to the students, as pointed out above in the study of Sormunen (2013 as quoted in Vornanen 2016) that upper secondary students in Finland have a traditional image of grammar teaching and did not know how grammar teaching could be altered.

As mentioned above, a very helpful tool to assist teachers to offer varied teaching and therefore cater for the students’ different learning styles, is an EFL textbook. In fact, EFL textbooks are valuable assets for teachers because in Finland, an EFL course is usually designed around the textbook. Thus, textbooks guide teachers to decide, for example, in which order to represent the grammar items and what exercises to choose.

Teaching in Finland is guided not only by the national core curriculum (see chapter 4) but also by textbooks. In fact, textbooks are considered to guide practical teaching so much so that they are seen as the underlying, hidden curricula. Publishers react to new national core curriculums by updating textbooks to correspond the new NCC. Thus, it is guaranteed that the ideas and emphases of the new NCC are transmitted to practical teaching. Textbooks create a framework for teaching and as institutional texts they strongly affect the ideas of what is important in learning a language. In addition, textbooks have an effect on both the contents of teaching and what kind of activity happens in the class. When reading and doing exercises from textbooks, students get used to a certain way of doing so. In other words, the exercises in the textbooks limit the aims of the activities in class (Luukka et al. 2008: 64). This study conducted by Luukka

et al. (2008: 95) shows the significance the textbooks carry in Finland as it confirms that a majority of foreign language teachers rely heavily on textbooks; of the 324 foreign language teachers who answered the survey, 98 % use textbooks often in their teaching and 94 % use an exercise book often as well. Accordingly, the results of the study conducted by Tergujeff (2013: 52) indicate the same unambiguous image of the role of textbooks in Finland, as they reveal that out of the 103 Finnish EFL teachers, 97.8 % use textbooks in their teaching. In addition, students see the use of textbooks in classes in a similar manner, as 94 % of them responded that textbooks are used often in foreign language classes and 90 % answered that exercise book was used often as well (Luukka et al. 2008: 96). However, only 54 % of foreign language teachers thought that textbooks correspond the national core curriculum well (Luukka et al. 2008: 98). Inevitably, we can conclude that foreign language textbooks are the most prominent source for L2 learning at school. In addition, they have an indirect impact on learning objectives as well. Therefore, this poses a heavy pressure on the shoulders of L2 textbook authors.

There are several reasons behind the popularity of textbooks as the main source for L2 learning. For example, I believe that the amount of time spent on planning lessons can be reduced when using a familiar textbook in your teaching. In other words, it becomes easier to plan lessons around a specific textbook the more you use it. However, there are pros and cons when using textbooks as an aid to plan lessons and teachers should take these limitations that textbooks might have into consideration. These limitations can be, for example, in the designers' view of foreign language learning, in the functionality of the tasks or in the layout of the textbook. Therefore, it is important for teachers to carefully decide how to use a specific textbook; which parts to include and which to omit. In my opinion, it is understandable to plan teaching around a textbook if it caters for the students' needs. In fact, Rubdy (2003: 53) argues that one significant element of a textbook is whether the book can be used on its own or whether the teacher has to come up with extra material to make it work. Unfortunately, that was exactly what I had to do in my teacher training year if I wanted to have active grammar exercises instead of traditional translation exercises the books were full of. From teachers' perspective, it would be more beneficial if textbooks had active grammar exercises in them to begin with because it would save time. Furthermore, it should not be a presumption that all foreign language teachers are able to compose active grammar exercises themselves.

Two other studies worth mentioning in the light of this study, are the two master's theses by Hietala (2015) and Pänkäläinen (2012). Hietala (2015) surveyed how upper secondary school

EFL teachers view the current EFL textbooks. It has to be noted that as the study did not focus on grammar, it gives a relevant picture of how grammar and different learning styles are viewed in the EFL textbooks. In the case of grammar, out of 131, 103 teachers answered that grammar was covered to the extent of well or very well in the Finnish upper secondary school EFL textbooks (ibid 2015: 56). However, it is not clear whether the teachers mean that grammar was only presented well or whether the teachers thought that grammar exercises were good as well. In the case of learning styles, 66 teachers out of 131 answered that different learning styles are taken into account in the Finnish upper secondary school EFL textbooks not at all or inadequately (ibid 2015: 62). Similarly, the study of Pänkäläinen (2012), in which she studied the role of perceptual learning styles (auditory, visual, kinaesthetic, tactile, group and individual) in Finnish third grade EFL textbooks, showed that kinaesthetic, tactile and group activities were highly infrequent due to the low number of these activities (ibid 2012: 95). These learning styles, kinaesthetic, tactile and group, are included in the active learning strategies as, for example, kinaesthetic and tactile learning include learning by doing, pantomime and drama.

To summarize, EFL textbooks ought to go through constant assessment for teachers and teaching material publishers to better take different learning styles into account and understand the role of textbooks as the dominant teaching material in EFL classes in Finland. I agree with this importance of using textbooks judiciously and evaluating teaching materials in order to make the most of them that has been stressed by Ellis (2002: 176) and Williams (1983: 251). Accordingly, as language teaching materials ought to be carefully evaluated prior to usage (Williams 1983: 254) also insights from second language acquisition theories and research ought to be taken into account in addition to teachers' practical experience when designing new material (Ellis 2002: 175-176) because in Finland teachers rely heavily on textbooks in their teaching as stated by Luukka et al. (2008).

3.4 Grammar in L2 textbooks: Previous studies

The common presumption of grammar exercises is that they are traditional translation exercises and gap filling exercises as is shown in the studies of Fortune (1998) and Vornanen (2016). Even studies conducted in the 21st century still show an alarming correspondence with these traditional grammar exercises.

Fortune (1998: 67) studied six EFL grammar practise books in the United Kingdom and he conducted two studies at ten years' intervals; the first study done in 1988 and the second in 1998. More accurately, he studied the quality of pedagogic grammar and activities of six different books from an elementary to an intermediate level of English. The results of the first study discovered three main features in grammar practice books, these were "isolated, uncontextualised sentences; manipulation of the unmarked form of a lexical item (usually a verb) in brackets; and, most characteristic of all, gap filling" (Fortune 1998: 68). In addition, his study confirmed that in the books he studied, only the deductive approach to grammar teaching was present. In the second study Fortune (1998: 67-80) surveyed again six grammar practise books and applied seven aspects to each book of which one is very meaningful in the light of this study: the variety of grammar activities. The results showed that the activities varied from decontextualized, isolated, mechanical, sentence-level gap-filling exercises to more consciousness-raising, such as dictation, activities.

Ellis (2002) studied six EFL grammar practice books to see what methodological options they offer for teaching the present continuous tense of English. He created a system of methodological options, which is divided into three categories of data, explicit description and activities (ibid 2002: 158). The results confirmed that explicit description of the grammar rules was more a rule than an exception and the exercises were controlled production activities. In other words, there was always a right answer to the exercises instead of, for example, freely talking. Moreover, the complete lack of input-based exercises, in my opinion, make the books unvaried and, quite frankly, tedious. According to Ellis (2002: 161), the books he studied all had a traditional underlying theory that grammar is knowledge that can be transferred to learners, and also a skill that can be practised with tasks originating from the grammar-translation methods. He (ibid 2002: 176) concluded that as the books followed the traditional approaches to grammar learning, there were no opportunities to play with language, discover, or anything to do with communication, only activities to practice the given rules by speaking or writing in a very predetermined manner. Ellis (2002: 176) suggested that a greater emphasis ought to be placed on methodological options discovered by SLA research and theories while acknowledging the importance of teachers' practical experience, rather than always continuing with the traditional practices.

Fernández (2011: 155) conducted a similar study as done by Ellis (2002) and used a similar process as Ellis (2002) and analysed one grammar item in six L2 textbooks. She studied

approaches to grammar instruction in teaching materials and analysed beginner-level Spanish textbooks, published in 2006-2009, for college students in the United States. Her results were similar to Ellis' (2002) as the studied books indicated the same explicit explanations for grammar rules and controlled production activities. Fernández (2011: 164) found that in all textbooks there were more controlled activities than free production activities and the average ratio of input-based activities to production activities was 7:20. The results indicate towards the traditional PPP approach to grammar teaching even though all the books claimed to follow the communicative approach in their prefaces (ibid 2011: 160).

Similar results were discovered by Aski (2003: 57) who studied grammar activities in foreign language textbooks and whether the textbooks were keeping pace with the instructed SLA research. She analysed seven Italian textbooks for elementary school in the United States. She looked at what type of activities were the most dominant: mechanical drills, meaningful drills, communicative drills or communicative language practice. The results showed that mechanical drills were the most dominant activities (ibid 2003: 63). Aski (ibid: 63) concluded that these grammar activities confirm that Italian textbooks lie behind current research on teaching methods, and that teachers ought to consider findings in SLA research in order to bring practice into line with theory. This way, teaching would reflect the theories generated by SLA research, once teachers use the recommended methods and indicate their preference for materials that reflect these findings to publishers.

Tomlinson (2008) reports the findings of 16 studies conducted by different scholars. It is a research collection that presents a critical review of the materials used for learning English around the world. Tomlinson (2008: 3-4) argues that many of these materials are designed for teaching rather than learning English and therefore learning outcomes are not the best possible. He believes that effective teaching materials engage students cognitively and affectively (ibid: 4), which are exactly the proven benefits of using active learning in teaching (see chapter 2 above). The results indicated many shortcomings that were identified in the textbooks and two of them are worth mentioning in the light of this study. First, the PPP approach tended to be overused in the materials and therefore the focus was more on teaching than learning. Second, they provided activities that are likely to occur in exams, thus the focus was on preparing students for examinations (Tomlinson 2008: 319-320). This raises the question, at least for me, which is more valid, to focus on activities that might occur in an exam, or to focus on activities

that are meaningful and can lead to a better understanding of the subject being learned. In other words, active learning tasks.

In Finland, the focus of the research done to investigate grammar in EFL teaching materials has been mostly on grammar instruction rather than activities. However, Pylvänäinen (2013) studied how specific verb tenses are taught in commonly used textbooks of English and Swedish for grades 7-9. The study focused on how grammar and structures are presented, how their use is illustrated and how they are practised (Pylvänäinen 2013: 45). The data included English textbook series *Spotlight 7-9* and *Top 7-8*. The results showed that traditional teaching was dominant because of the way they presented explicit grammar rules and focused on the form instead of meaning or use (ibid: 107). Furthermore, the activities were most notably controlled production, such as translation and fill-in-the-gap exercises (ibid: 101).

The findings of Pylvänäinen (2013) are supported by Vornanen (2016) who studied how English grammar is taught in Finnish upper secondary school textbooks of English and which approach or approaches to grammar teaching they support. The data consisted of five books from three textbook series from different publishers (Vornanen 2016: 31). The results identified a lack of variety in the grammar activities (ibid: 69) and separation of the grammar from the rest of the study material (ibid: 63). As the grammar activities were mostly controlled production, Vornanen (2016) found a positive surprise in the types of activities as the meaningful drills were as common as the mechanical drills (ibid: 65). However, the mechanical drills were almost exclusively transformation activities and the meaningful drills tended to be translation or fill-in-the-blank activities (ibid: 61).

One explanation for the lack of active learning strategies in grammar exercises might be that publishers are afraid to publish materials that are not mainstream or for economical reasons. For example, Mares (2003: 132 as quoted in Hietala 2015: 10) argues that usually publishers are unwilling to provide non-native-speaker teachers with teaching materials that are not mainstream. He explains that the market is competitive as well as conservative and therefore new, not mainstream, teaching materials that do not resemble the existing ones, are at risk of being rejected. Moreover, Mares (ibid) explains that publishers generally look for teaching materials that are traditional but at the same time increasing their market value with twists often involving current buzzwords that appear in the promotional materials but are not addressed meaningfully in the materials. According to Mares (2003 as cited by Hietala 2015: 10), current

pedagogical knowledge is not of importance when publishing new commercial teaching materials. Similarly, Tomlinson (2003: 7) argues that there is “nothing much new going on in materials development and that in the area of commercially produced materials there is even a sort of principled going back” and that publishers justify this with their classified research of what teachers and students want. He argues that the actual reasons behind the almost non-existing development in the field are, in fact, economical; the publishers dare not produce a radically different type of textbook due to the cost and the financial risk of it. Thus, they rather copy elements of previous best-selling textbooks (*ibid*). Tomlinson brings out the fact that this has an unfortunate washback effect on non-commercial materials as well as on teaching as teachers try to imitate the approaches of the best-selling textbooks because teachers mistakenly assume that textbooks represent the recent pedagogical trends and the current needs of students and teachers (*ibid*). In my opinion, as the textbooks have an undeniable impact on EFL teaching, they ought to represent the current knowledge of foreign language teaching and learning.

In general, all the studies discussed above support the view that grammar lessons are found boring and students in Finland cannot imagine any alternative way of teaching grammar. One explanation for this might be because textbooks are filled with translation exercises and gap filling exercises rather than active learning tasks. In addition, the studies mentioned above agree that grammar learning is seen as focusing on the rules and the rules are practised through controlled, mechanical activities such as translation exercises and/or gap filling exercises as opposed to active tasks. The surprising outcome of the above discussed studies, which indicates that textbooks all over the world, still on this decade, follow the traditional approach to grammar teaching and learning makes one wonder the reasons behind it. I hope that this matter has been taken into consideration by now, especially since the new NCC has been published and the textbooks designed after it claiming to contain active tasks have, in fact, taken grammar into account as well. However, it has to be noted that most of the above discussed studies concentrated on only a few grammar forms rather than on all of them, whereas the present study looks at the grammar section of the textbooks as a whole rather than concentrating on only one grammar item.

4 ACTIVE LEARNING IN THE FINNISH NATIONAL CORE CURRICULUM FOR BASIC EDUCATION

As it was mentioned above, in Finland teachers rely heavily on textbooks in their teaching, and textbooks tend to follow the national core curriculum. As textbooks still are the primary source of EFL teaching and learning in Finland, they are a meaningful and relevant subject to study. However, as the national guidelines for language teaching in Finland are based on the principles discussed in the Common European Framework of References (2001) (hereafter referred to as CEFR), it is worth mentioning that CEFR is a common basis for language syllabuses throughout Europe. Moreover, the CEFR's (2001: 9) approach to language teaching and learning is an action-oriented approach, which is defined as "the action-based approach therefore also takes into account the cognitive, emotional and volitional resources and the full range of abilities specific to and applied by the individual as a social agent." Even though this is defined rather generally, it can be argued that CEFR discusses a similar approach to language teaching and learning that is referred to as active learning in the present study.

The Finnish National Agency for Education (hereafter FNAE) released a new version of the Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education in 2014 and it was taken into effect in August 2016. The FNAE (2016) argue in an article about the new national core curriculum for basic education that when considering how to best promote learning the answer is "The active involvement of pupils, meaningfulness, joy of learning and school cultures that promote enriching interaction between pupils and teachers are at the core of the new curriculum." (FNAE 2016). In addition, they argue that "The aim is a school that functions as a learning community that systematically promotes versatile working approaches as well as cooperation and interaction" (ibid). Hopefully these claims apply for grammar teaching as well rather than, only for vocabulary teaching.

The National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (NCC 2016) provides guidelines for language teaching in Finland and takes a stance on the preferred approach. The adopted view on language education is articulated rather indirectly by saying that "The basic principle of language instruction at school is using the language in different situations" (NCC 2016: 170). In addition, the NCC states that "The National Core Curriculum for Basic Education is based on a conception of learning that sees the pupils as active actors" (NCC 2016: 17). Thus, it can be argued that the active role of students is a central principle in learning and therefore ought

to be carefully considered when planning teaching. Consequently, the NCC (2016: 43) examines pedagogical approaches, which are considered to activate students and suggests that a learning community “encourages experimentation and gives space for active learning”. The NCC (2016) uses different forms for the Finnish word ‘toiminnallisuus’ and this indicates that the term is lacking an established English translation, in fact, it has been translated into English in the NCC (2016) as ‘active learning’, ‘learning by doing’ or ‘functionality’. Thus, it can be concluded that the Finnish word ‘toiminnallisuus’ does not have a word to word English equivalent, at least not yet. Therefore, it will be referred to as active learning in the present study.

The meaning of active learning is not defined in the NCC (2016). Thus, it can be interpreted in multiple ways. However, the NCC (2016) does give examples of various working methods and activities to be used in teaching and most of these activities, if not all, are active learning techniques (see chapter 2). These examples of active learning techniques are stated both in chapters discussing general guidelines for secondary school teaching and in chapters dealing with specific subjects. Of course, in the light of this study, I will concentrate specifically on the EFL chapter.

Firstly, it is worth noting that active learning is also mentioned in the general guidelines for teaching in addition to EFL chapters. For example, in chapter 4.3, which is about learning environments and working methods, it is suggested that when planning teaching, facility solutions of the school “can be used to support the pedagogical development of instruction and active participation of the pupils” (NCC 2016: 48). In addition, the general working methods list drama, engagement of different senses and the use of movement to also strengthen motivation of the students (ibid). These methods can be argued to be included in active learning (see chapter 2). Moreover, it is stated that, for example, physical activities, playing and gameful learning “promote the joy of learning and reinforce capabilities for creative thinking and perception” (NCC 2016: 22). However, the responsibility for exploring and using these ideas in teaching falls down to teachers’ as there are no specific explanations for what these examples mean in practice and how they ought to be implemented to teaching.

Secondly, and most importantly, the foreign languages chapter 15.4.3, which emphasizes the use of varying and functional working methods in the beginning (NCC 2016: 593) and as said above about the lack of the established English translation of the term ‘toiminnallisuus’,

functional working methods are treated as active learning strategies in the present study. More specifically, in the section of English for grades 7-9, where objectives related to the learning environments and working methods are discussed, the NCC (ibid: 596) emphasises work in pairs and small groups in the schoolwork. In addition, the NCC (ibid) lists gamification, drama and music to be used in the section of English, and that “pupils are guided to become active actors”. Moreover, self and peer assessment are also given importance in the NCC (ibid: 598). All of these methods that the NCC (2016) lists in the EFL section; pair and/or group work, gamification, drama, music and self/peer assessment are included in active learning techniques (see chapter 2).

5 PRESENT STUDY

In this chapter I will first present the aims and the research questions of the present study. Second, the sample of EFL workbooks chosen for this study is discussed and finally, the methods to analyse the grammar activities in the workbooks are discussed.

5.1 Aims and research questions

The aim of the present study is to analyse commonly used teaching materials for grades 7 to 9 in basic education in Finland with a specific focus on how grammar is practiced. More specifically, the aim is to examine if these new secondary school textbooks have any active learning strategies in their grammar exercises instead of the traditional, for example, translation exercises that have been, unfortunately, all too common for grammar tasks for the past decades as was discussed above (see chapter 3). The idea for the present study has risen from the gap in the research field to which this study aims to provide answers for. Even though active learning has been widely researched in terms of learning outcomes (Deslauriers, McCarty, Miller, Callaghan & Kestin 2019) and one can see it used in vocabulary exercises, active learning still remains to be studied from the point of view of grammar exercises. This is important, in my opinion, because grammar holds its place in language proficiency, thus making it essential to study what kind of grammar exercises there are in workbooks, and more specifically, whether there are active learning techniques in them. Another reason behind the idea for the present

study are my personal experiences in EFL learning, which are also recognised by scholars, as was discussed in chapter 3. Firstly, the dominance of traditional translation and gap filling grammar exercises, and secondly, the personal experience that if you want variety in the grammar exercises, you have to design the material yourself or search the internet for it. In addition, I want to conduct a research that will be useful for English teachers and learning material publishers (for example, Sanoma Pro) to discover what is missing from the grammar materials and what improvements there are to be done to these materials in the future. Thus, it would be beneficial for the EFL teachers to have better textbooks in the sense of more versatile grammar tasks, providing the opportunity to take different learners into account as all learners learn in different ways. The gap is that while there is plenty of research in the field of active learning, there seems to be none from the point of view of grammar exercises, which makes this study a novelty. Furthermore, since textbooks carry a significant role as teachers rely heavily on them in their teaching in Finland as was discussed in chapter 3.3, it is relevant to study how grammar is taught in workbooks because it offers information about teaching in general as well. As these new secondary school workbooks that were chosen for this study claim to follow the new NCC (2016), which emphasizes active learning, I'm interested in finding out how active learning is supported in the grammar activities of the workbooks.

Research questions

I'm interested in finding out how active learning strategies are supported in the grammar activities of the chosen workbooks, or whether active learning is supported at all in grammar activities. In addition, it is interesting to see whether the theoretical trends on grammar instruction and the updates on the NCC have affected the designs of the grammar activities of the workbooks or not. Thus, the main research question of the present study is the following:

1. What kinds of active learning strategies are supported in the grammar activities of the secondary school workbooks in *On the Go-* and *Spotlight* -series?

To fully answer the main research question, it is further divided into sub-questions:

- 1.1. What is the proportion of active learning exercises compared to all grammar exercises in the workbooks?

1.2. What working methods emphasized in the English section of the new national core curriculum are used in the grammar activities of the workbooks?

The main question focuses on the activity types, whereas the question 1.1 focuses on the percentage of active learning activities compared to all grammar exercises. Question 1.2 will be discussed through the first two questions in addition to chapter 4, where the emphasized working methods for grades 7-9 in English were discussed. In order to answer these questions a selection of EFL workbooks for grades 7-9 was chosen and will be presented in the following section.

5.2 Data

The data in the present study consists of workbooks from two textbook series from the same publisher: *On the Go* and *Spotlight* from Sanoma Pro. Both of the series are designed for secondary school students and I chose the workbooks from each series making the total of six workbooks (see Table 1).

The criteria for choosing these series is that they are new and designed to follow the updated NCC (2016), which emphasises the importance of active learning in working methods (see chapter 4). In addition, they advertise the workbooks with slogans such as “Aktiivista kielen oppimista!” (Active language learning!) and they claim to have ”Tehtävissä lisää viestinnällisyyttä, valinnaisuutta, aktiivisuutta ja haasteellisuutta” (More communicative, optional, active and challenging exercises), which are exactly in the scope of the present study. The chosen workbooks are published by Sanoma Pro, the largest learning material publisher in Finland. Thus, it can be argued that they are commonly used in Finland because the market for textbooks is very limited. In addition, the chosen workbooks have been published in 2018, so in terms of current Finnish EFL material they are relevant samples.

Both teaching material series, *On the Go* and *Spotlight*, consists of several items: a workbook and an accompanying textbook, a teacher’s material and e-learning material. However, as the present study has its limits, and more importantly, since the focus of the study is only on the grammar activities of the workbooks, only workbooks were selected for this study. Furthermore, since the grammar sections of both series were covered only in the workbooks

and the textbooks included only the texts to be listened or read and as the teacher's materials provide additional material, it was relevant to select only workbooks for this study. The grammar sections of both series are isolated from other sections, such as vocabulary, talk, listen or write. The grammar section in *On the Go* series is labelled as *Learn*, and in *Spotlight* series the grammar section is labelled as *Grammar*.

Table 1. The series studied in the present study.

Series	Grade	Publisher	Published
On the Go 1	7	Sanoma Pro	2018
On the Go 2	8	Sanoma Pro	2018
On the Go 3	9	Sanoma Pro	2018
Spotlight 7	7	Sanoma Pro	2018
Spotlight 8	8	Sanoma Pro	2018
Spotlight 9	9	Sanoma Pro	2018

5.3 Qualitative content analysis and the coding frame

In the present study, the method used to analyse the above introduced data is qualitative content analysis (QCA), as QCA can be applied to a wide range of materials, such as textbooks (Schreier 2012: 3) and as the research question is descriptive (Schreier 2012: 42).

One problem of qualitative data analysis is the reduction of data to a manageable proportion (Cohen et al. 2013: 559), and one common way to reduce the data so that it attempts to respect the quality of the qualitative data is content analysis: a process where the words of texts are classified into categories and these categories often stem from areas of interest created beforehand or theoretical constructs (ibid). The term content analysis is often used loosely to refer to summarizing and reporting data (ibid: 563).

There are three ways of conducting QCA: concept-driven, data-driven and the combination of the two strategies (Schreier 2012: 84). In the present study, a combination of the two strategies is used and will be discussed more in detail in this chapter. Whatever the way of conducting QCA, it is always flexible, systematic and reduces data (Schreier 2012: 5). QCA is very flexible as the coding frame will be tailored to your material, thus the coding frame will be reliable and valid (Schreier 2012: 7). QCA is also systematic as you examine all your material, you use the same sequence of steps and you check for consistency, which is one way of assessing the reliability of your coding frame (Schreier 2012: 6). In addition, QCA has eight steps: deciding research question, selecting material, building a coding frame, dividing material into units of coding, trying out the coding frame, evaluating and modifying the coding frame, main analysis, presenting findings (ibid). QCA reduces data as it focuses the analysis on specific aspects. This is done by limiting the analysis to the specific aspects that are relevant to your research questions and with the help of the coding frame (Schreier 2012: 7). Similarly, Cohen (2013: 551) suggests that a very effective way to organize data is by research question because it “draws together all the relevant data for the exact issue of concern to the researcher, and preserves the coherence of the material” (ibid: 552). As to the tools for analysing qualitative data, Cohen et al. (2013: 558) continue that one tool is typological analysis, in which data are put into groups on the basis of a criterion, such as activities. What is more, QCA can also involve numbers, for example, when presenting results in a frequency format. This can be done by providing the coding frequencies for all the categories (Schreier 2012: 36).

There are three main ways for presenting the results in qualitative studies, and these are: using continuous text, using matrices to describe the coding frame, and doing additional data exploration and analysis (Schreier 2012: 220). However, as the present study focuses on what kind of active learning techniques there are, in other words, as the focus is on the categories of the coding frame, using continuous text to describe and illustrate the findings was the most suitable choice for the present study.

The Coding Frame

The units of analysis are the grammar activities of the chosen workbooks. To analyse these activities, a coding frame was created by using a mixed strategy that is part concept-driven and part data-driven, which will be discussed more in detail in this section. Furthermore, since there were no existing coding frames for active learning, which would have been useful for the

present study, a coding frame was created specifically for the present study. Even though the coding frames of Ellis (2002) and Aski (2003) (see chapter 3) are often used when analysing grammar activities in foreign language textbooks, neither of these coding frames were suitable for the present study as the focus of the present study is on active learning techniques.

The criteria, which were used to determine if the grammar activity was active learning or traditional learning are the following. First, the definition of the term for this study (see chapter 2.2) was taken into account. As it was defined in chapter 2.2, in this study active learning is treated as any kind of activity that engages students in the process of learning. The main point is participation. In other words, if the activity engaged students more than just by practicing the rules, for example, by translating sentences, then the activity was classified as active learning. Second, theory was taken into account by selecting the strategies of active learning listed in theory (see chapter 2). Third, the traditional techniques were determined on the basis of theory. In addition, the traditional techniques were looked as mechanical drills. Aski (2003) characterizes mechanical drills as activities, which make students manipulate, repeat or substitute forms without needing to understand the meaning of sentences or words. The traditional techniques were also looked at as controlled activities meaning that there is only one right answer and the goal is to produce that right answer, for example, word, form or sentence. An example of an activity, which requires mechanic conjugation of given verbs into certain tenses, is fill-in-the-gap. This is supported by the study of Vornanen (2016: 40) as well. In a mechanical drill, students only need to, for example, manipulate forms and there is only one right answer. Aski (2003: 59) identifies typical examples of mechanical drills as substitution, transformations, and pattern practice. Furthermore, Fernandes (2011: 155) defines traditional grammar teaching to use the presentation-production practice model (PPP). She continues that this PPP-model first presents the grammar rules and then students manipulate them through drills or decontextualized production practice (*ibid*). In contrast to active learning, this traditional way of teaching grammar that Fernandes (2011) describes, does not engage the cognitive processes crucial to grammar acquisition.

A major feature of QCA is coding; coding enables the identification of similar information. A code refers to a label or name given by the researcher for a piece of text, or in this case activities, which contain information or an idea (Cohen et al. 2013: 563). In addition, codes can be seen as a categorizing system and coding can be performed on activities. Furthermore, codes are part concept-driven and part data-driven strategy in QCA (Schreier 2012: 41).

The complexity of the coding frame depends on the research question (Schreier 2012: 63). In other words, it depends on the number of main categories and subcategories used in the coding frame. Therefore, the coding frame of the present study is of medium complexity as it consists of four main categories that reach down to one level (Schreier 2012: 66), thus it has two levels altogether. The main categories form the first level and the sub-categories form the second level.

In addition, coding frames are supposed to meet four requirements: undimensionality, mutual exclusiveness, exhaustiveness and saturation (Schreier 2012: 71). Undimensionality means that each main category of the coding frame ought to capture only one aspect of the material (ibid: 72). In the present study, the mixing of main categories has been avoided by setting up the coding frame so that the subcategories can count as examples of the main categories. Mutual exclusiveness means that the subcategories of the coding frame mutually exclude each other, in other words, each segment of the material can be assigned to only one of the subcategories (Schreier 2012: 75). In the present study, this was accomplished as each activity was assigned to only one of the subcategories of the coding frame. Exhaustiveness means that the coding frame captures all that is relevant in the material. In other words, each segment of the material can be assigned to at least one subcategory (ibid: 76). The coding frame of the present study accomplished this by assigning each segment of the material to one of the subcategories. Finally, saturation, which means that there are no empty subcategories in the coding frame. The coding frame ought to be designed in a way that each main and subcategory will be used at least once (ibid: 77). However, this criterion applies differently in concept-driven and in data-driven coding frames. In the case of data-driven coding frame this is met by definition, whereas in the case of concept-driven coding frame, it is completely possible to not use all of the categories of the coding frame and it might be an important finding that some categories were left empty by the material (ibid). In the present study, as the coding frame was designed with the concept-driven strategy as a basis and then later modified in the pilot phase with the additions of four exercises found in the data (Deduce, Mark the correct place/sentence/word, Active Learning & Traditional & Miscellaneous Techniques, and Grammar instruction), a mixture of both, concept- and data-driven strategy, was used to create the coding frame. However, as the main analysis show (see chapter 6) not all subcategories were used, and this is in fact, an important finding, which will be addressed in chapter 7.

The first step before creating the coding frame was to decide what material is relevant and what is irrelevant for the present study. As the focus of the present paper is on grammar exercises alone, the exclusion of other exercises, such as vocabulary exercises, was made. Thus, only grammar exercises, which were located in the grammar sections of the workbooks, were analysed. The coding frame for the present study is built from exercise types.

The coding frame for the present study is a mixture of both concept-driven and data-driven strategy, which is very common in QCA (Schreier 2012: 89). The concept-driven strategy is used as a basis since the first step in creating the coding frame was to make use of topics already known from the theory, previous research and everyday experience before looking at the data. The main categories and the subcategories for active learning techniques were drawn upon theory and previous research (see chapters 2 and 3), and the subcategories for traditional techniques and mixed techniques were drawn upon previous research and everyday experience (see chapter 3). The second step, the data-driven part of the strategy, in creating the coding frame was to add the four above mentioned additional subcategories based on the data. In other words, not all subcategories were established from theory, but the four additional subcategories rose from the data when conducting the pilot phase, which will be discussed more in detail below.

The main categories of the coding frame are: **active learning techniques**, **traditional techniques**, **mixed techniques** and **miscellaneous techniques**. The subcategories for each main category can be found in Table 2 below. The use of miscellaneous categories in every level of the coding frame is essential as qualitative data is often surprising and it is possible to encounter material that is relevant to your research question but what you did not anticipate when creating the categories (Schreier 2012: 93). Therefore, it was important to include these miscellaneous categories for the coding frame of the present study to capture unanticipated information that is relevant for the study but cannot be captured by any other category of the coding frame.

Creating the coding frame for the present study helped to focus on the relevant material, as the coding frame combines the active learning techniques, traditional techniques, mixed techniques and miscellaneous techniques.

Table 2. The coding frame of the present study.

Active Learning Techniques	Drama
	Role play
	Debate
	Presentation
	Game
	Crossword puzzle
	Play
	Hands-on project
	Small group discussion
	Research
	Deduce
	Teacher driven questioning
	Learning by the aid of exercise
	Free writing
	Self-assessment
	Pair/Groupwork
Miscellaneous	
Traditional Techniques	Listen
	Translating sentences/words
	Fill in the gap
	Parroting forms
	Connect the correct sentences
	Choose/Underline/Write the correct form
	Writing disjointed sentences using specific structure
	Putting jumbled words/sentences into the correct order
	Mark the correct place/sentence/word
	Creating sentences from discrete words
	Completing sentences
	Miscellaneous
Mixed Techniques	Several Active Learning Techniques
	Several Traditional Techniques
	Active Learning & Traditional Techniques
	Active Learning & Miscellaneous Techniques
	Traditional & Miscellaneous Techniques
	Active Learning & Traditional & Miscellaneous Techniques
Miscellaneous	
Miscellaneous Techniques	Grammar instruction

Before starting to code all my material, I conducted a pilot phase, in which I tried out the coding frame of the present study as it was newly developed instrument and therefore it was essential to discover possible shortcomings. Conducting a pilot phase is necessary as it gives you the chance to adjust the coding frame (Schreier 2012: 146). I selected two workbooks, one from each series and for different grades, for the pilot phase (*On the Go 1* and *Spotlight 9*) because of variability. In other words, it is important that all the differences in the material are adequately represented in the selection of the material for the pilot phase (Schreier 2012: 149). In addition, selecting two workbooks out of six (33,3%) for the pilot phase constitutes more than a reasonable trade-off between variability and practicability, as it is common in the pilot phase to include 10%-20% of the material for the reasonable trade-off (Schreier 2012: 151).

All the grammar sections of these two workbooks were carefully read through and the grammar exercises were coded with the help of the coding frame. Both series have isolated the grammar sections under headings 'learn' and 'grammar', therefore it was easy to find and focus on the relevant material. What is more, Spotlight 9 has included additional exercises in its 'grammar' section in the table of contents, thus I coded those as well, even though these additional exercises are not marked as grammar exercises, for example as G22, but as regular exercises, for example as 22. However, these additional tasks were clearly grammar exercises and therefore needed to be included in the coding.

I recoded the material myself after 10 days to check the consistency and assess the quality of the coding frame because double-coding helps to assess the validity of the coding frame (Schreier 2012: 34). In the case of concept-driven coding frame and content validity, the coding frame can be determined valid regardless of the distribution of the coding frequencies. In other words, even if some categories are left empty after the coding, because the categories are created before you look at the data and because the focus is on the presence of these specific concepts in the material (Schreier 2012: 190). As the results of the double-coding coincided, the coding frame of the present study was determined reliable.

In addition, as it was important to do recoding in the pilot phase, it is important in the main analysis phase as well (Schreier 2012: 198-199). However, if you are working on your own, it is not practical to recode the whole material, thus you can recode the material from the pilot phase (ibid). This is exactly what was done in the present study. I recoded the material from the pilot phase with the final version of the coding frame to check the consistency of the coding

frame once more. This additional recoding confirmed the completion of the main coding with the final version of the coding frame. The main coding will be presented in the next chapter.


6 RESULTS



In this thesis, the units of analysis are workbook exercises. Since the focus of the present study is on active learning, I will give examples of active learning exercises representing the categories in my analysis of the results. The findings are presented below in three sections, first, I will present the findings from *On the Go* - series in section 6.1, and second, the findings from *Spotlight* - series will be presented in section 6.2. Lastly, a summary of both series will be presented in section 6.3.

6.1 *On the Go* – series

The workbooks start with the introduction of eight symbols, which you can encounter throughout the workbooks. Three out of the eight symbols are relevant for the present study and therefore introduced in Table 3. These symbols give additional information on activities (see Table 3). After the symbols, comes the table of contents, which shows the separate grammar sections that have been labelled as a ‘learn’ unit. In addition, the grammar activities are under the same unit as well. The table of contents points out which grammar aspect is being introduced in each grammar section. The number of activities in all the *On the Go* -series can be seen in Table 4 below.

Table 3. The Symbols

 Työskentele parin kanssa.	Work with a partner.
---	----------------------

 Esittele työsi.	Present your work.
 Etsi tietoa.	Search for information.

In general, the *On the Go* - series had more traditional techniques than active learning techniques or mixed techniques as you can see in Table 4 below. These traditional techniques included: listening exercises, translating isolated, decontextualised phrases and sentences from English into Finnish and vice versa, choosing a correct auxiliary verb for a phrase, filling in blanks with present perfect forms, completing sentences, creating discrete sentences of one's own, fill-in-the-gaps, putting jumbled sentences into the correct order, writing disjointed sentences using specific structure, translating discrete sentences from Finnish into English, and choosing the correct form. The criteria for determining these traditional techniques (see chapter 5.3 for more detail), in short, were activities, which make students manipulate, repeat or substitute forms without needing to understand the meaning of sentences or words. They were also looked at as controlled activities meaning that there is only one right answer and the goal is to produce that right answer, for example, word, form or sentence. In addition, the definitions for traditional grammar teaching of Aski (2003) and Fernandes (2011) were considered when determining the traditional techniques. Therefore, substitution, transformations, pattern practice and decontextualized production practice were classified as traditional techniques.

The reason behind the bigger number on activities coded as miscellaneous in the *On the Go* - series than in the *Spotlight* - series is that in *On the Go* - series, the grammar instruction has been marked as one of the activities with accompanying activity number on it. Therefore, these grammar instructions had to be coded in the miscellaneous - category.

Table 4. The number of activities in *On the Go* -series.

On the Go -series		On the Go 1	On the Go 2	On the Go 3	Total (n=)
Active Learning Techniques	Drama				
	Role play				
	Debate				
	Presentation				
	Game		1		1
	Crossword puzzle		1		1
	Play				
	Hands-on project				
	Small group discussion				
	Research		1	2	3
	Deduce	1			1
	Teacher driven questioning				
	Learning by the aid of exercise				
	Free writing				
	Self-assessment				
	Pair/Groupwork	2	9	2	13
	Miscellaneous				
Total (n=)	3	12	4	19	
Traditional Techniques	Listen		3	1	4
	Translating sentences/words	3	5	11	19
	Fill in the gap	9	23	14	46
	Parrotting forms				
	Connect the correct sentences		1	2	3
	Choose/Underline/Write the correct form	2	4	4	10
	Writing disjointed sentences using specific structure	1	5	7	13
	Putting jumbled words/sentences into the correct order	1			1
	Mark the correct place/sentence/word	2	2	2	6
	Creating sentences from discrete words				
	Completing sentences	9	8	8	25
	Miscellaneous				
Total (n=)	27	51	49	127	
Mixed Techniques	Several Active Learning Techniques	1			1
	Several Traditional Techniques	1	9	5	15
	Active Learning & Traditional Techniques	28	23	27	78
	Active Learning & Miscellaneous Techniques				
	Traditional & Miscellaneous Techniques	1		1	2
	Active Learning & Traditional & Miscellaneous Techniques	2			2
	Miscellaneous				
Total (n=)	33	32	33	98	
Miscellaneous Techniques	Grammar instruction	6	16	15	37
	Total (n=)	6	16	15	37
Total (n=)	69	111	101	281	

6.1.1 Active Learning Techniques

On the Go - series had 19 grammar activities that could be coded as purely active learning. By this I mean that they fell into the category of active learning techniques and not into the mixed techniques. The active learning techniques that were found in the *On the Go* - series are: game, crossword puzzle, deduce, research and pair/groupwork. All these active learning techniques are presented by Examples 1-5 below and discussed more in detail.

Examples 1-3 are the only activities in their category. Example 1 represents the subcategory of game in active learning techniques. In this game (see Example 1) students are instructed to play tic-tac-toe in groups of three. Two members of the group play and the third is a judge. The judge gets the correct answers from the teacher. The winner is the one who succeeds in placing three of their marks in a horizontal, vertical, or diagonal row. There are three (A, B, C) platforms to play tic-tac-toe in order to make role changing possible, meaning that each member of the group has the opportunity to be the judge. The reason why this exercise is coded as active learning is because it is clearly a game and games are one technique of active learning (Farrell 2009, Koskenkari 2013). Example 2 represents the subcategory of crossword puzzle in active learning techniques. It (see Example 2) shows the crossword puzzle about irregular verbs. The exercise instructs students to fill in the missing forms. Crossword puzzle is an active learning strategy (Shetgar & Thalange 2018) and the reason, which makes it active learning is because it is a kind of word game helping students to extend their knowledge of vocabulary and it is useful for students to memorize spelling, key concepts, terminology, pairing and definition (Shetgar & Thalange 2018: 1317). In addition, crossword puzzle plays an important role for solving multiple choice type questions (ibid). Example 3 represents the subcategory of deduction in active learning techniques. It instructs students to deduce what irregular imperfect tenses they can get if they add one letter to the front. In other words, it instructs students to solve a kind of a problem. In fact, deduction is one of the most common strategies of problem-solving, which is active learning (Kojo, Laine & Näveri 2018: 22). Examples 1-3 are great representatives of active learning techniques because they all promote the development of critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, which are benefits of active learning (Anderson et al. 2005).

Example 1. Game (*On the Go 2* page 87)

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Pelataa risti-nollaa kolmen hengen ryhmissä. Kaksi pelaa ja kolmas on tuomari. Hän saa vastaukset opettajalta. Voittaja on se, joka saa kolmen suoran allekkain, vinottain tai vaakasuoraan.

A

1 Would you like to have _____? (lasi vettä)	2 Could you please close _____? (ovi)	3 I don't know _____ of this street. (nimi)
4 I bought _____ (sukkia ja t-paitoja)	5 It's possible to see both _____ at the same time. (aurinko ja kuu)	6 They have _____. (keltainen auto)
7 Everyone stared at _____ in black. (miehet)	8 It took us _____ to get there. (tunti)	9 _____ in the stall looked delicious. (Ruoka)

B

10 This is not _____. (helppo kysymys)	11 The checkout is _____. (oikealla)	12 _____ in the lake was very cold. (Vesi)
13 Do you prefer _____ to _____? (junat, bussit)	14 I want _____. (rehellinen vastaus)	15 This is _____. (toinen varoitus)
16 Why didn't you turn off _____? (valot)	17 What do you think of _____ of that shirt? (väri)	18 He bought _____. (uusi takki)

C

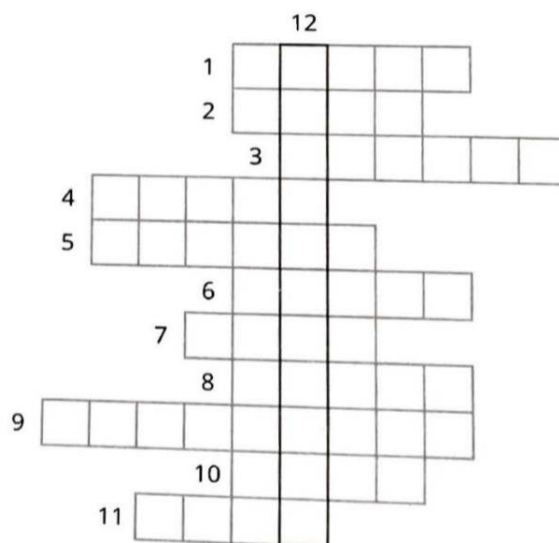
19 What's the capital of _____? (Yhdysvallat)	20 Does _____ freeze in winter? (Itämeri)	21 His family has a summer cottage by _____. (Vesijärvi)
22 Would you like to sail across _____? (Atlantin valtameri)	23 Have they come back from _____? (Kanariansaaret)	24 Sam's gone skiing in _____. (Alpit)
25 A lot of climbers go to _____ in spring. (Himalaja)	26 _____ runs through _____. (Thames-joki, Lontoo)	27 I have never swum in _____. (Välimeri)

Example 2. Crossword puzzle (*On the Go 2* page 20)

133

Epäsäännöllisillä verbeillä on kolme muotoa. Kolmatta muotoa tarvitset esimerkiksi perfektiin (on tehnyt). Täydennä puuttuvat muodot.

- 1 draw, drew, ___
- 2 go, went, ___
- 3 catch, caught, ___
- 4 drink, drank, ___
- 5 teach, taught, ___
- 6 eat, ate, ___
- 7 come, came, ___
- 8 spend, spent, ___
- 9 forget, forgot, ___
- 10 wear, wore, ___
- 11 see, saw, ___



i Epäsäännölliset verbit ovat tekstikirjan sivulla 188-190.

- 12 A city in Queensland where Libby and her family sometimes go: _____

Example 3. Deduce (*On the Go 1* page 20)

123+

Mitä epäsäännöllisten verbien imperfektimuotoja saat, jos lisäät eteen yhden kirjaimen? Imperfektimuodot ovat aakkosjärjestyksessä.

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------|-------------------|
| 1 ___ OUGHT | 5 ___ AVE | 9 ___ HOT |
| 2 ___ UT (UT) | 6 ___ OT | 10 ___ ANG (ANG) |
| 3 ___ ROVE | 7 ___ NEW | 11 ___ OLD (OLD) |
| 4 ___ ELL | 8 ___ AN | 12 ___ OOK |

Example 4 represents the subcategory of research in active learning techniques. The activity (see Example 4) instructs students to search for correct answers to the exercise number 438 and write them down in English. The exercise 438 is a traditional translation exercise, in which students are instructed to translate four sentences from Finnish to English. These four sentences

are: What currency is used in South Africa? When is Nelson Mandela Day celebrated? Are cars driven on the right or the left side of the road? What is the traditional food chakalaka made of? The reason why this activity was coded as active learning, and more specifically, as research, is due to the instruction of the exercise to search for information. In addition, the picture of the globe stands for the symbol “etsi tietoa”, which means search for information (see Table 3). I believe this means that students have the possibility to use, for example, the internet to search for information. Altogether there were 3 activities in *On the Go* - series that fell into the research category of active learning.

Example 5 represents the subcategory of pair/groupwork in active learning techniques. This exercise instructs students to interview their partner and to keep those answers in mind, because after the interviews the students are instructed to tell another student in class what answers their partners gave to those questions in English. This activity instructs the students to use reported speech. As was discussed above (see chapter 5.3), one of the main points in determining if the activity is active learning or traditional technique, was participation. This activity (see Example 5) makes the students participate in many ways, as it first instructs the students to interview their partner, and then to report those answers to another student. Moreover, this activity combines both working in pairs and then working in groups, which are active learning techniques (Farrell 2009, Koskenkari 2013). All in all, there were 13 activities that fell into the pair/groupwork category. These activities included instructions to interview your partner, come up with sentences using comparative adjectives with your partner, discuss with your partner what similarities the given places have, describe to your partner what makes you happy or angry, describe famous places and famous people to your partner and count how many your partner can guess right (similar to Alias), and to describe an unlikely situation to your partner. These kinds of pair/groupwork, in which students get to discuss with their partner, and more specifically ask personal questions about their partner, promote better interaction among peers (Thaman et al. 2013), which can lead to a greater sense of community in a class, as was discussed above in chapter 2 about the benefits of active learning. I believe that a greater sense of community in a class can assist grammar learning as it creates an unstressful environment for learning.

Example 4. Research (*On the Go* 3 page 106)

439+

Etsi vastaukset tehtävän 438 kysymyksiin. Vastaa englanniksi.

Example 5. Pair/Groupwork (*On the Go* 3 page 198)

733

Haastattele pariisi. Paina vastaukset mieleesi.



- 1 What's your favorite piece of technology?
- 2 Which inventions have made the world worse?
- 3 What do you think robots should be used for?
- 4 How do you think people will move from one place to another 100 years from now?

Kerro jollekin toiselle henkilölle luokassa englanniksi, mitä parisi vastasi kysymyksiin. Aloita johtolauseella ja jatka epäsuoralla esityksellä mallin mukaan.

Emma told me she...

Tomi mentioned that he...

Juho pointed out...

6.1.2 Mixed Techniques

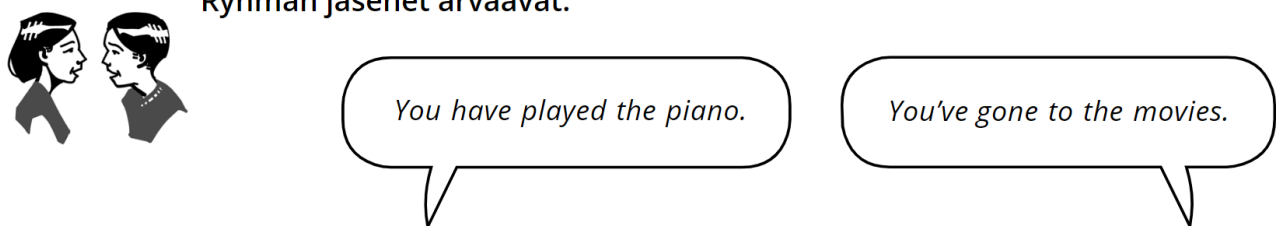
On the Go - series had 98 grammar activities, which fell into the mixed techniques category. The mixed techniques that were found in the *On the Go* - series were: several active learning techniques, several traditional techniques, active learning and traditional techniques, traditional and miscellaneous techniques, and active learning, traditional and miscellaneous techniques. In the light of the present study, the following subcategories will be discussed more in detail below, and these subcategories are; several active learning techniques, active learning and traditional techniques, and active learning, traditional and miscellaneous techniques. In addition, three examples of borderline cases are introduced after the mixed techniques.

6.1.2.1 Several active learning techniques

On the Go - series had only one activity that fell into the several active learning techniques category. Example 6 represents this particular activity, which instructs the students to work in groups and to act what they have been doing lately. The members of the group will guess in English and take turns in acting. The reason why this activity was coded as several active learning techniques is that it employs both groupwork and drama, which are active learning techniques (Farrell 2009, Koskenkari 2013). Furthermore, this activity (see Example 6) makes students participate in the activity in two ways: groupwork and drama. As was discussed above, participation was one of the main points in determining if the activity was active learning (see more in chapter 5.3).

Example 6. Several active learning techniques (*On the Go* 1 page 55)

231 Muodostakaa ryhmiä. Näytelkää vuorotellen, mitä olette tehneet viime aikoina. Ryhmän jäsenet arvaavat.



You have played the piano.

You've gone to the movies.

6.1.2.2 Active learning & traditional techniques

On the Go - series had 78 activities that fell into the active learning and traditional techniques category. The reason behind the extensive number of activities under this category is that the majority of these activities were strongly traditional techniques but they had the symbol to work with a partner (see Table 3) accompanying them, which made these activities fall into the mixed techniques category, and more specifically, to the active learning and traditional techniques

category. For example, the instruction was for the students to translate sentences from Finnish to English and then there was the symbol to work with a partner, which apparently guides students, for example, to read the finished sentences aloud with a partner or to discuss about the sentences with a partner, thus making it both active learning and traditional technique. The 78 activities in this category included instructions, for example, to rehearse irregular verb forms with their partner, practice orally in a dialogue, mainly with prefabricated questions and answers, writing disjointed sentences using specific structure, and reading aloud the sentences they just wrote. Without the accompanying symbol to work with a partner, many of these activities filled the criteria for traditional techniques, which was discussed above in chapter 5.3. However, amongst these 78 activities in this category, there were couple of activities, which were more than just a traditional translation exercise with the accompanying symbol to work with a partner. Two examples (see Examples 7 and 8) are provided and discussed more below.

Example 7 represents the subcategory of active learning and traditional techniques in mixed techniques. This activity (see Example 7) includes three different parts (A, B, C). The first part (A) instructs students to form questions in a similar manner as has been done with the sentence number 1. The second part (B) instructs students to move around the classroom asking their peers the questions from part A, and writing down the name of the student, who has done the specific activity asked. The last part (C) instructs students to tell their pair what answers they got. The reason why this activity is a representative of this subcategory is because the first part (A) uses a traditional technique, in which students are instructed to write disjointed sentences using specific structure. The last two parts (B, C) use active learning techniques, which are pair/groupwork and using exercise (Farrell 2009, Koskenkari 2013) when making the students move around the classroom asking questions from their classmates. The act of participation is clear in parts B and C, which supported these parts to be coded as active learning.

Example 7. Active learning & traditional techniques (*On the Go 1* page 54)









230

i

Epäsäännölliset verbit on merkitty tähdellä. Ne ovat tekstikirjan sivulla 114.

A

Muodosta kuvista kysymyksiä mallin mukaan.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>①  Have you swum this week?
Name: _____
*swim</p> | <p>②  _____
Name: _____
watch TV</p> |
| <p>③  _____
Name: _____
play soccer</p> | <p>④  _____
Name: _____
*read a magazine</p> |
| <p>⑤  _____
Name: _____
play the guitar</p> | <p>⑥  _____
Name: _____
*eat pizza</p> |
| <p>⑦  _____
Name: _____
listen to music</p> | <p>⑧  _____
Name: _____
*do your homework</p> |

B

Kiertele luokassa ja kysy luokkakavereiltasi A-kohtan kysymyksiä. Kun saat myöntävän vastauksen, kirjoita nimi viivalle.

i

Muista, että englannin kielessä kysymyksiin vastataan yleensä kokonaisilla lauseilla, ei vain Yes tai No.



Have you swum this week?

Yes, I have.

No, I haven't.

C

Kerro parille, mitä sait selville.



Lasse has played the guitar.

Anna and Leo have swum.

Example 8 represents the same subcategory of active learning and traditional techniques in mixed techniques, as Example 7. It is an activity, in which students are instructed to first translate the questions from Finnish to English and after that to search for the correct answers to these questions, using for example the internet, and to write down the answers in English (see Example 8). The reason why this activity was coded as active learning and traditional techniques is the following. The part of translating sentences from Finnish to English fills the criteria for traditional techniques as was discussed above (see chapter 5.3), but the part of doing research to find the answers for these questions is active learning (Koskenkari 2013). In addition, students are asked to do the self-assessment at the end, which is also an active learning strategy. In fact, self-assessment does not take long to execute during lessons, which we can see in Example 8, thus it is a simple active learning strategy (see Figure 1). As was discussed above (see chapter 4), self- and peer-assessment are given importance in the new NCC (2016: 598). However, there was only one other activity in the *On the Go* - series that employed self-assessment in the grammar activities. Therefore, it has to be noted that in the scope of the present study, the *On the Go* - series might employ more self-assessment than is seen from the results of this thesis, because the present study only focuses on grammar activities.

Example 8. Active learning & traditional techniques (*On the Go* 3 page 229)

830+

Kirjoita kysymykset englanniksi.

- 1 Onko Tasmania osa Australiaa?
- 2 Kuinka paljon asukkaita siellä on?
- 3 Kuka oli ensimmäinen eurooppalainen Tasmaniassa?
- 4 Mitä Tasmania tarjoaa turisteille?
- 5 Aiotko viettää seuraavan lomasi Tasmaniassa? Miksi? Miksi et?
- 6 Satuitko näkemään pussiahmaa kun olit siellä?



Kirjoita kysymyksiin vastaukset englanniksi.



Tasmanian devil pussiahma

6.1.2.3 Active learning & traditional & miscellaneous techniques

On the Go -series had two activities that fell into the subcategory of active learning, traditional, and miscellaneous techniques.


Example 9 represents the subcategory of active learning, traditional, and miscellaneous techniques. This activity (see Example 9) includes four different parts (1-4). The first part

instructs students to translate the discussion from English to Finnish with a partner. The second part instructs students to underline the possessive pronouns. The third and the last part are only grammar instruction. The reason why this activity was coded as active learning, traditional, and miscellaneous techniques is because the first part utilizes pair work, which is an active learning technique (Farrell 2009, Koskenkari 2013). The second part fills the criteria for traditional technique (see chapter 5.3) as there is only one right answer and the goal is to produce that right answer. In this case, it is clearly said that there are 10 correct possessive pronouns, and the goal is to underline all the ten correct possessive pronouns. The third and the last part were coded as miscellaneous techniques because they are grammar instruction.

Example 9. Active learning & traditional & miscellaneous techniques (*On the Go* 1 page 195)

IT'S NOT YOURS, IT'S MINE!

627 Kuuntele, kun sisarukset Anna ja Bea siivoavat huonettaan.



Anna: Have you borrowed my T-shirt again?
Bea: It's not yours, it's mine. Your T-shirt is red and mine is pink.
Anna: Oh, right. Why did your friend Sarah leave her hoodie here?
Bea: Is that hers? I guess she just forgot it.
Anna: Why's our room always such a mess, Bea?
Bea: Ours is not so bad. You should see Sarah's room. Now that's a real mess.

- 1 Suomenna keskustelu parisi kanssa.
- 2 Alleiviivaa kaikki omistuspronominit. Niitä on yhteensä 10.
- 3 Omistuspronomineilla on kaksi eri muotoa.

my	your	his	her	its	our	your	their
mine	yours	his	hers	its	ours	yours	theirs
minun	sinun	hänen (miehestä)	hänen (naisesta)	sen	meidän	teidän	heidän

- 4 Taulukon ylärivin pronomineja seuraa substantiivi, esim. **my T-shirt** ja **your friend**. Taulukon alarivin muodot esiintyvät yksinään, niiden jäljessä ei ole substantiivia. Esim. It's **mine**. Is that **hers**?

6.1.3 Borderline Cases

Couple of the activities in the *On the Go* - series were somewhat difficult to code, because the line between active learning techniques and traditional techniques in some activities was slightly blurry due to the instruction of the activity. For example, Example 10 below was coded as traditional technique and under the subcategory of writing disjointed sentences using specific structure because it is specified to write down six sentences using a specific structure, in this case the present continuous. The instruction is: “Look around in the classroom. Write six sentences about what another student is doing at the moment”. This kind of specification makes the activity rather controlled, which was one of the criteria for traditional techniques discussed in chapter 5.3. The reason why this is a borderline case is that if the instruction would have been, for example, “look around you and write what you see” this would have given students more possibilities to write using a variety of different structures of their own choosing, because this kind of instruction allows writing to be more free rather than concentrating on specific structure. Therefore, the activity could have been coded as active learning and under the subcategory of free writing.

Example 10. Borderline cases (*On the Go 2* page 18)

128+

Katso ympärillesi luokassa. Kirjoita kuusi asiaa, mitä joku oppilas tai jotkut oppilaat tekevät parhaillaan.

Another borderline case had to do with pair/groupwork. Two examples rose from the data and these are exercise 720 on page 200 (*On the Go 2*) and exercise 120 on page 18 (*On the Go 3*). Moreover, these two exercises are completely identical to one another. In other words, the same exercise appears two times in the data (see Example 11). This activity instructs students to: “You are a tourist in New York. Say the questions from exercise 719 in English to your pair. Your pair will answer. The answers for these questions can be found in the box below”. Both of these activities were coded as active learning and under the subcategory of pair/groupwork

because they utilize pair work and it is an active learning strategy (Farrell 2009, Koskenkari 2013). However, this activity is included in the borderline cases due to the unspecified nature of pair/groupwork in active learning theory. In other words, if we were to treat pair/groupwork as writing, free versus controlled (see chapter 2) , then in that case these activities could be coded as mixed techniques and under the subcategory of active learning techniques and traditional techniques because the sentences are controlled in a sense that students are instructed to practice orally in a dialogue with prefabricated questions and answers. However, since the theory of active learning does not specify on free or controlled pair/groupwork, thus the coding to mixed techniques cannot be done.

Example 11. Borderline cases (*On the Go 2* page 200)

720

Olet turisti New Yorkissa. Sano parillesi lauseita tehtävästä 719.
Parisi vastaa. Vastaukset löytyvät laatikosta.


- Of course. It's open every day from ten till quarter to six.
- It should be here in less than ten minutes, depending on the traffic.
- It's a public park above the streets in Manhattan. It's built on a rail line that isn't used anymore.
- Sure it is. There're bike rentals not far from the park. Let me show you one place on the map.
- Yes, you can. Madison Square Garden is on top of Pennsylvania Station.
- Yes, they do. But you have to book the tickets early. The tours are very popular.

6.2 *Spotlight* – series

Similarly to *On the Go* – series, the workbooks of the *Spotlight* - series start with the introduction of four symbols and the table of contents. Out of these four symbols, one is of relevance for this study and therefore introduced in Table 5 below. This symbol gives additional information on activities, meaning that if this symbol is to be seen for example in a traditional translation exercise, the translated sentences are to be read aloud with a partner as well. The

table of contents show the separate grammar sections, which have been labelled as a ‘grammar’ unit. The workbook introduces the pedagogic grammar in either full page or half a page boxes with accompanying grammar activities in each unit. Furthermore, grammar revision activities with an answer key can be found at the end of the workbook. The number of activities in all the *Spotlight* - series can be seen in Table 6 below.

Table 5. The Symbol

 = Parikeskustelu.	Discuss with a partner.
---	-------------------------

Similarly to *On the Go* – series, in general, the *Spotlight* - series had more traditional techniques than active learning techniques or mixed techniques as can be seen in Table 6 below. These traditional techniques included, for example, translating isolated, decontextualised phrases and sentences from English into Finnish and vice versa, fill-in the gaps, putting jumbled sentences into the correct order, writing disjointed sentences using specific structure, choosing the correct form, and completing sentences. As was discussed above (see chapter 5.3), the criteria for determining these traditional techniques, in short, were activities that make students manipulate, repeat or substitute forms. They were also regarded as controlled activities meaning that there is only one right answer and the goal is to produce that right answer, for example, word, form or sentence. In addition, the definitions for traditional grammar teaching of Aski (2003) and Fernandes (2011) were considered when determining the traditional techniques. Therefore, substitution, transformations, pattern practice and decontextualized production practice were classified as traditional techniques, as was discussed also in chapter 6.1 of *On the Go* – series.

Table 6. The number of activities in *Spotlight* -series.

Spotlight -series		Spotlight 7	Spotlight 8	Spotlight 9	Total (n=)
Active Learning Techniques	Drama				
	Role play				
	Debate				
	Presentation				
	Game	1			1
	Crossword puzzle	1			1
	Play				
	Hands-on project				
	Small group discussion				
	Research				
	Deduce				
	Teacher driven questioning				
	Learning by the aid of exercise				
	Free writing				
	Self-assessment				
	Pair/Groupwork			2	2
	Miscellaneous				
Total (n=)		2	0	2	4
Traditional Techniques	Listen				
	Translating sentences/words	6	5	8	19
	Fill in the gap	15	16	7	38
	Parrotting forms				
	Connect the correct sentences		1	3	4
	Choose/Underline/Write the correct form		1	4	5
	Writing disjointed sentences using specific structure	7	1	11	19
	Putting jumbled words/sentences into the correct order		1	1	2
	Mark the correct place/sentence/word		1	2	3
	Creating sentences from discrete words				
	Completing sentences	4	12	18	34
Miscellaneous					
Total (n=)	32	38	54	124	
Mixed Techniques	Several Active Learning Techniques		1	1	2
	Several Traditional Techniques	6	6	8	20
	Active Learning & Traditional Techniques	31	26	21	78
	Active Learning & Miscellaneous Techniques				
	Traditional & Miscellaneous Techniques			2	2
	Active Learning & Traditional & Miscellaneous Techniques				
	Miscellaneous				
Total (n=)	37	33	32	102	
Miscellaneous Techniques	Grammar instruction				
	Total (n=)	0	0	0	0
Total (n=)		71	71	88	230

6.2.1 Active Learning Techniques

Spotlight - series had only four grammar activities that could be coded as purely active learning. The active learning techniques that were found in the *Spotlight* - series are: game, crossword puzzle, and pair/groupwork. All these active learning techniques are presented by Examples 12-14 below and discussed more in detail.

Examples 12 and 13 are the only activities in their category. Example 12 represents the subcategory of game in active learning techniques. It is an exercise, in which students are instructed to play a game of imperfect tense with a partner (see Example 12). Students are asked to form positive and negative sentences as well as questions, by rolling the dice and moving on the board. The reason why this activity is active learning is because games are one technique of active learning (Farrell 2009, Koskenkari 2013) as was discussed above. Furthermore, this game supports the participation of students as they are instructed to come up with sentences and questions of their own. As was discussed above, one of the main criteria for determining active learning grammar exercises was participation (see chapter 5.3).

Example 13 represents the subcategory of crossword puzzle in active learning techniques. This activity instructs the students to solve the crossword puzzle using the imperfect forms of the verbs in the box (see Example 13). An advice is given that the first three are irregular forms and the rest regular forms. As was discussed above, crossword puzzle is an active learning technique (Shetgar & Thalange 2018) due to its qualities of being a kind of a word game, which helps students to extend their knowledge of vocabulary. In addition, crossword puzzles are useful for students to memorize spelling, key concepts, terminology, pairing and definition (Shetgar & Thalange 2018: 1317). Moreover, crossword puzzles play an important role for solving multiple choice type questions (ibid) as was discussed above.

Example 12. Game (*Spotlight 7* page 62)



Pelaa imperfektipeliä parisi kanssa. Heitä noppaa ja etene.

Tee myönteisiä (+) tai kielteisiä (-) imperfektilauseita ja -kysymyksiä (?).

START	+ 1 is	- 2 has	+ 3 want	? 4 borrow	+ 5 come	+ 6 steal	? 7 find
	+ 14 work	- 13 walk	? 12 watch	? 11 like	+ 10 hear	+ 9 say	+ 8 help
	+ 15 leave	+ 16 put	+ 17 hide	? 18 go	+ 19 need	? 20 play	- 21 see
FINISH	- 28 work	? 27 walk	? 26 help	+ 25 are	+ 24 have	+ 23 am	+ 22 ask

Example 13. Crossword puzzle (*Spotlight 7* page 59)

G1

Ratkaise ristikko laatikon verbien imperfektimuodoilla. Kolme ensimmäistä on epäsäännöllisiä, loput säännöllisiä. Mikä sana muodostuu pystyriville?

hide find come like want play

7

1 Mari **H I D** Bryan's hockey stick.

2 Mia **F O U N D** her iPod.

3 Bryan **C A M E** home early.

4 They **L I K E D** their life in Canada.

5 Bryan **W A N T E D** to go camping.

6 Bryan's dad **P L A Y E D** hockey in a Finnish team.

Example 14 represents the subcategory of pair/groupwork in active learning techniques. This activity instructs students to: “The student A chooses a word from the box and describes the word by choosing a suitable follow-up from the other box. The student B says what comes to mind from the student A’s description”. This activity was coded as active learning firstly because it utilizes pair work, which is an active learning strategy (Farrell 2009, Koskenkari 2013), and secondly because this activity makes students participate, which was one of the main criteria in determining if an activity is active learning (see chapter 5.3). Pair/groupwork promote better interaction among peers (Thaman et al. 2013) and in this activity (see Example 14) it can be seen, as the students get to know each other better based on the answers they provide for the questions asked.

Example 14. Pair/Groupwork (*Spotlight* 9 page 103)

G1



**A sanoo jonkin asian laatikosta ja kuvailee sitä valitsemalla sopivan jatkon.
B kertoo, mitä hänelle tulee asiasta mieleen.**

A: a game **that** you like a lot

B: football

a game	a vehicle	THAT	you like a lot	can bite you
a bird	an animal		can't fly	can be dangerous
a show	a shop		lives in a jungle	sells sports equipment
a book	a film		is very popular now	sells food and drink
food	a drink		makes you laugh	flies high in the sky
a phone	a sport		you are good at	most of your friends like
a language	a song		sometimes eats people	can swim well
a school subject	a country		is your favourite	is great fun
a joke	a singer		is difficult	is easy
a filmstar	a video clip		makes you cry	is fantastic

6.2.2 Mixed Techniques

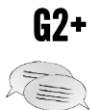
Spotlight – series had 102 grammar activities that fell into the mixed techniques category. The mixed techniques that were found in the *Spotlight* - series were: several active learning techniques, several traditional techniques, active learning and traditional techniques, and traditional and miscellaneous techniques. Furthermore, as the focus of the present study is on active learning, only the subcategories that involve active learning will be discussed more in detail below. These subcategories are; several active learning techniques, and active learning and traditional techniques. In addition, two examples of borderline cases are introduced after the mixed techniques.

6.2.2.1 Several active learning techniques

Spotlight - series had two grammar activities that fell into the several active learning techniques category. Example 15 represents the subcategory of several active learning techniques in mixed techniques. The activity instructs students to: “Work with a partner. Come up with an interview of a celebrity, which includes at least six questions and answers. Present the interview to the class”. In addition, the circle with an exclamation point instructs students to video the interview.

This activity (see Example 15), in my opinion, is an excellent grammar exercise, in which the student really gets an active role in learning the word order of questions. The reason why this activity was coded as several active learning techniques is that it employs pair/groupwork, as students are asked to come up with an interview of a celebrity, as well as presentation, as students are asked to give an presentation of the interview to the whole class in front of them or via video. Both of these, groupwork and presentation, are active learning techniques (Farrell 2009, Koskenkari 2013). In my opinion, this is exactly the kind of grammar activity that increases enthusiasm for learning in students as well as in instructors (Thaman et al. 2013) and positive attitudes towards learning (Anderson et al. 2005) as was discussed in chapter 2 above.

Example 15. Several active learning techniques (*Spotlight* 8 page 51)



Työskentele parin kanssa. Laatikaa englanniksi julkisuuden henkilön haastattelu, jossa on ainakin kuusi kysymystä ja vastausta. Esittäkää haastattelu ryhmälle.



6.2.2.2 Active learning & traditional techniques

Similarly to *On the Go* - series, *Spotlight* - series had 78 grammar activities that fell into the active learning and traditional techniques subcategory as well. Once again, similarly to *On the Go* - series, the reason behind the extensive number of grammar activities under this subcategory is that, the majority of these activities were strongly traditional techniques, but they had the symbol to discuss with a partner (see Table 5) accompanying them. That is why these activities fell into the mixed techniques category, and more specifically, to the subcategory of active learning and traditional techniques. Similarly to *On the Go* - series, ample activities were traditional translation sentences from Finnish to English with the accompanying symbol to discuss with a partner (see Example 18 below). However, the symbol is not acknowledged in

any way other than it apparently guides the students to discuss with their partner with its presence. The 78 grammar activities in this category included instructions, for example, to write disjointed sentences using specific structure, and to read aloud the sentences they just wrote with a partner. However, amongst these 78 activities in this subcategory, there were couple of activities that differed from the traditional translation exercises with the accompanying symbol to discuss with a partner, in some small way. Two examples (see Examples 16 and 17) are provided and discussed more below.

Example 16 represent the subcategory of active learning and traditional techniques in mixed techniques. This activity is a traditional translation exercise, in which, students are instructed to translate the questions from Finnish to English (see Example 16). However, there is the symbol to discuss with a partner as well (see Table 5). The symbol is not explained further, therefore making it a little confusing to determine if the symbol means that students are expected to read the translated sentences out loud with a partner, or if the symbol refers to the instruction at the end of the activity, which instructs students to: “Think about a person. Your partner will try to guess who you are thinking about with the help of the questions of exercise G6, which your partner will ask you. Change roles”. On the other hand, the symbol might refer to both. In my opinion, it is up to the teacher to determine how exactly to use this symbol; students could first read out loud the sentences in English, practicing pronunciation, and then continue to the instruction at the end that resembles a game called guess who. The reason why this activity was coded as active learning and traditional techniques is that, firstly, it employs traditional translation exercise, in which students are instructed to translate the given questions from Finnish to English. In other words, students are expected to produce the correct translated sentence, which fills the criteria in determining the traditional techniques, as was discussed above in chapter 5.3. Secondly, it employs also pair work with its accompanying symbol to discuss with a partner and with the additional instruction at the end of the activity resembling a game called guess who. Pair work as well as games are active learning techniques (Farrell 2009, Koskenkari 2013), as was discussed above.

Example 16. Active learning & traditional techniques (*Spotlight 9* page 32)

G6



Kirjoita kysymykset englanniksi.

- 1 Missä hän asuu? _____
- 2 Milloin tapasit hänet ensimmäisen kerran?

- 3 Kuinka kauan olet tuntenut hänet?

- 4 Pitääkö hän asuinpaikastaan?

- 5 Tunnemmeko me molemmat hänet?

- 6 Onko hän asunut jossain muualla?

- 7 Mikä on hänen unelmatyönsä?

- 8 Haluaisiko hän olla kuuluisa? _____

Ajattele jotain henkilöä. Parisi yrittää saada selville, ketä ajattelet ja esittää tehtävän G6 kysymykset sinulle. Vaihtakaa osia.

Example 17 is another representative of the active learning and traditional techniques subcategory. This activity includes three parts (A, B, C). The first part (A) instructs students to fill in the gaps according to the tips. The second part (B) instructs students to write down the correct form with the help of the tips. The third part (C) instructs students to write down the sentences in the passive voice. All these three parts (A, B, C) fill the criteria for traditional techniques discussed above (see chapter 5.3), as there is only one right answer and the goal is to produce that answer. In addition, these three parts make students to transform and substitute forms, which was also one of the criteria for traditional techniques discussed above. This activity would have been coded as traditional techniques without the tiny box at the end of the activity. This tiny box made the activity to be coded as mixed techniques, and more specifically, to the active learning and traditional techniques subcategory. The box at the end instructs students to self-assess how well they are doing with the passive. Self-assessment is one of the

many active learning techniques (see Figure 1) and it is a very welcomed addition to grammar activities as it gives students a change to reflect on their own language proficiency, and more specifically, reflect their know-how on the particular grammar aspect at hand. Furthermore, as self-assessment is one of the simplest active learning strategies (see Figure 1) and as we can see from Example 17, self-assessment does not have to be time-consuming. Thus, in my opinion, it is only beneficial to include self-assessment in grammar activities as has been done in Example 17.

Example 17. Active learning & traditional techniques (*Spotlight* 9 page 69)

Test yourself

G12

A Täydennä lauseet vihjeiden mukaisesti.

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1 The walls in my room _____ painted last week. 1 p | maalattiin |
| 2 _____ Halloween celebrated in your family? 1 p | vietetäänkö |
| 3 My new bike _____ stolen yesterday! 1 p | varastettiin |
| 4 American TV shows _____ all over the world. 2 p | näytetään |
| 5 This video clip _____ over a million times. 3 p | on katsottu |
| 6 The first smartphones _____ in the early 2000s. 2 p | tehtiin |
- _____ / 10p

B Kirjoita vihjeen mukainen muoto.

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1 Why _____ Chinese _____ in our school? | ei opeteta |
| 2 Where _____ this video _____? | filmattiin |
| 3 Good photos _____ quite easily these days. | voidaan ottaa |
| 4 Something _____ to help homeless people. | täytyy tehdä |
| 5 _____ you _____ to the party? | onko kutsuttu |
- _____ / 10p

C Kirjoita lauseet passiivissa.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 They tested this game carefully. | This game _____ carefully. |
| 2 They make lots of cameras in Japan. | Lots of cameras _____ in Japan. |
| 3 Our neighbours have sold their house. | Our neighbours' house _____. |
| 4 J. K. Rowling wrote the Harry Potter books. | Harry Potter books _____
J. K. Rowling. |
| 5 Great artists have painted these pictures. | These pictures _____
great artists. |
- _____ / 10p

Valitse sopiva vaihtoehto:

- a) Osaan passiivia hyvin.
b) Osaan passiivia keskinkertaisesti.
c) Tarvitsen lisäharjoitusta.

Yhteensä: _____ / 30 p

Example 18 also represents the subcategory of active learning and traditional techniques in mixed techniques. The activity instructs students to translate the questions from Finnish to English. Therefore, this activity is a traditional translation exercise with the accompanying symbol to discuss with a partner (see Example 18). The reason why this activity was coded as active learning and traditional techniques is twofold. First, students are instructed to translate the given questions from Finnish to English. In other words, students are expected to produce the correct translated sentence, which fills the criteria in determining the traditional techniques, as was discussed above in chapter 5.3. Second, the symbol to discuss with a partner makes it active learning as pair work is one of the active learning techniques (Farrell 2009, Koskenkari 2013), even though the symbol is never further acknowledged. As was mentioned above, there were ample activities similar to Example 18, thus raising the number of active learning and traditional techniques extensively.

Example 18. Active learning & traditional techniques (*Spotlight* 8 page 150)

G5+

Kirjoita lauseet englanniksi.



- 1 Mitä minun pitäisi tehdä, jos haluaisin tulla hyvin kuuluisaksi?

- 2 Voisitko tulla tapaamaan meitä, jos muuttaisimme Hollywoodiin?

- 3 Mitä ostaisit, jos voisit ostaa mitä tahansa haluaisit?

- 4 Missä asuisit, jos voisit asua missä tahansa maailmassa?

6.2.3 Borderline Cases

Similarly to *On the Go* - series, couple of the activities in the *Spotlight* - series were somewhat difficult to code, once again due to the blurry line between active learning techniques and traditional techniques in some activities caused by the instruction of the activity.

For example, Example 19 was coded as mixed techniques under the active learning and traditional techniques subcategory. The activity instructs students to: “Translate the questions 1-3 from Finnish to English. Use your imagination to fill the speech bubbles: what does the girl ask and how Larry responds to her question?”. The reason why this activity was coded as mixed techniques under the active learning and traditional techniques subcategory is because, in addition to the traditional translation sentences, students are given the freedom to use their imagination to fill the speech bubbles, which in my opinion can be regarded as free writing, which is one of the active learning strategies (see chapter 2.1). However, had the instruction been stricter about what to write, for example, providing a specific grammar structure to be used in the speech bubbles, then this activity would have been coded as a traditional technique.

Example 19. Borderline cases (*Spotlight* 9 page 31)

65+ Kirjoita lauseet englanniksi. Keksi ja kirjoita puhekupliin englanniksi, mitä tyttö kysyy ja mitä Larry vastaa hänelle.

- 1 Kuka ei ole vielä käynyt kirjastossa?

- 2 Miksi et aio lukea tätä kirjaa?

- 3 Etkö halunnut pitää esitelmää lukemastasi kirjasta?



Another example is Example 20, which instructs students to: “Imagine you are a radio journalist. Write down at least six questions in English to the celebrity visiting your broadcast”. After ten beginnings of questions the instruction continues: “Conduct an interview of a celebrity to be broadcasted in radio with your partner. The other will play the role of the journalist and the other the celebrity. Record the interview”. This activity was coded as mixed techniques and under the subcategory of active learning and traditional techniques because the beginnings of the questions have already been provided to students controlling the questions to go a certain way, thus eliminating the possibility of free writing, and using the traditional technique of completing sentences. However, if students are given the freedom to come up with their own questions and not having to use the already given beginnings, then this activity would have been a great example of several active learning techniques as it would have included only active learning techniques; pair/groupwork and role play (see chapter 2.1).

Example 20. Borderline cases (*Spotlight 9* page 32)



G6+

Olet radiotoimittaja. Kirjoita lähetyksessäsi vierailevalle julkkikselle ainakin kuusi kysymystä englanniksi.

- 1 What's _____ ?
- 2 Do you _____ ?
- 3 Where were _____ ?
- 4 When did you _____ ?
- 5 Have you ever _____ ?
- 6 What has _____ ?
- 7 What are you going to _____ ?
- 8 When will you _____ ?
- 9 How often _____ ?
- 10 Why _____ ?

Tee parisi kanssa julkkiksen haastattelu radioon. Toinen teistä on toimittaja ja toinen julkkis. Äänittäkää haastattelu.

6.3 Summary of both series

In this section, a brief summary on the findings of both series will be made and considered as whole. Firstly, *On the Go* - series had remarkably more purely active learning techniques than *Spotlight* -series. *On the Go* – series had 19 grammar exercises in the active learning techniques category, whereas *Spotlight* - series had only four grammar exercises in the active learning techniques category. However, the number of active learning techniques is still rather small compared to the number of grammar activities in traditional and mixed techniques. These comparisons will be discussed in chapter 7 below, as they provide answers to the research questions of the present study. Both series had game, crossword puzzle, and pair/groupwork techniques from active learning utilized in the grammar activities. In addition to these three techniques, *On the Go* - series used deduction and research from active learning techniques as well in grammar activities.

The category of traditional techniques in *On the Go* - series included 127 grammar activities out of the 281 grammar activities in the whole series. Similar numbers were found from the *Spotlight* - series as it had 124 grammar activities in the traditional techniques category out of the 230 grammar activities in the whole series. If we consider these numbers in percentages, it means that *On the Go* -series had 45% of its grammar activities fall into the traditional techniques category. Similarly, *Spotlight* - series had 54% of its grammar activities fall into the same category. The traditional techniques that both series utilized were: translating sentences, fill in the gap, connect the correct sentences, choose/underline/write the correct form, writing disjointed sentences using specific structure, putting jumbled words/sentences into the correct order, mark the correct place/sentence/word, and completing sentences. *On the Go* - series utilizes one more traditional technique, in addition to the above mentioned techniques, and that is listening. Furthermore, one traditional technique is utilized the most in both series as can be seen from the number of activities (see Tables 4 and 6), and that is the subcategory of fill in the gap. The second most utilized traditional technique, in both series, is completing sentences (see Tables 4 and 6). It was surprising at first, in my opinion, that the most utilized traditional technique was not translating sentences, but as it was discussed in sections 6.1 and 6.2 the majority of the mixed techniques, and more specifically, the subcategory of active learning and traditional techniques were traditional translation sentences with the accompanying symbol to

work or discuss with a partner, which made it to be coded into the mixed techniques, thus not showing in the number of grammar activities in traditional techniques.

The mixed techniques category in *On the Go* - series included 98 activities out of the 281 grammar activities in the whole series. *Spotlight* - series had 102 grammar activities in this category out of the 230 activities in the whole series. Therefore, the percentage of this category for *On the Go* - series is 35%, and for *Spotlight* - series 44%. The mixed techniques that both series utilized were; several active learning techniques, several traditional techniques, active learning & traditional techniques, and traditional & miscellaneous techniques. In addition to these four mixed techniques, *On the Go* - series uses active learning & traditional & miscellaneous techniques as well. Clearly the most utilized mixed technique in both series is active learning and traditional techniques (see Tables 4 and 6). As it was discussed above, the extensive number of grammar activities in this subcategory for both series stems from the extensive number of traditional translation sentences, which had the accompanying symbol to work or discuss with a partner, which had to be coded into the active learning and traditional techniques subcategory.

To summarize, the techniques found in these two series are somewhat in accordance with the new updated workbooks that Sanoma Pro advertises as a means to put prejudice aside as groupwork and active learning are part of the new workbooks (Sanoma Pro n.d.). Sanoma Pro voices that often the image of a workbook is dated, but in fact, their modern workbooks include lot of active exercises, games, practicing interaction, pair/groupwork and assessing learning (ibid). Furthermore, Sanoma Pro says that the improvement of pedagogy shows in the contents, and more specifically, in foreign languages it shows as active exercises, such as, discussions (ibid). In addition, their workbooks have been designed by the experts of the field, thus taking into account the latest trends in pedagogy (ibid). As the results show, there are active learning techniques used in the workbooks of both series (see Tables 4 and 6), which supports the suggestion to put prejudice about dated workbooks aside. However, the number of active learning grammar activities is still very low compared to the number of traditional grammar activities. It has to be noted, that as the present thesis focuses only on grammar activities, excluding all the other activities of the workbooks, there is a possibility that the number of active learning activities would be remarkably higher if taking all the activities into account. In addition, the results also support the elaboration of discussion exercises in foreign languages, as it was mentioned above that the majority of the activities were traditional translation

exercises with the accompanying symbol to discuss with a partner, which then made it to be coded as mixed technique. Therefore, discussion exercises are present in the series, however, I believe that there could be more variety in the exercises, for example, using other active learning techniques as well, as the range from which to choose from is broad (see chapter 2.1). It is beneficial, in my opinion, that the traditional translation exercises are not purely translation exercises, but rather exercises using mixed techniques as there is the usage of the accompanying symbol to discuss with a partner. Even so, adding more variety from the active learning techniques to the grammar activities would be a welcomed addition as it would benefit the students in their learning in many ways (see chapter 2.3).

The results of the present study are not completely in accordance with previous studies done on grammar in L2 textbooks (see chapter 3.4) because the present study found active learning techniques utilized in the grammar activities either purely or with mixed techniques. Therefore, if we consider the number of active learning grammar activities from the point of view of purely active learning techniques and mixed techniques (where the other technique is active learning) then the number of grammar activities that are using active learning in one of the two ways mentioned above, is more extensive in the present study than in the previous studies done on grammar in L2 textbooks discussed in chapter 3.4. In addition, another aspect, which is not completely in accordance with previous studies is that of mainstream teaching materials. As was mentioned in chapter 3.4, Mares (2003: 132 as quoted in Hietala 2015: 10) voices that publishers are unwilling to provide non-native-speaker teachers with teaching materials that are not mainstream. This seems not to be entirely the case in the present study as the number of grammar activities using active learning techniques one way or the other, as was discussed above, is quite extensive. However, the number of grammar activities using purely active learning techniques or mixed techniques (where the other is active learning technique) is not even half of the grammar activities. Furthermore, as was discussed in chapter 3.4, Mares (2003: 132 as quoted in Hietala 2015: 10) explains that publishers look for teaching materials that are traditional but at the same time increasing their market value with twists usually involving current buzzwords appearing in the promotional materials but in truth are not addressed meaningfully in the materials. This is not the case in the present study as the results indicate that pedagogy is improved with new trends, which was the statement of Sanoma Pro's new workbooks (Sanoma Pro n.d.), and it seems to hold its place at least to some extent. However, as the focus of the present study is only on grammar activities, no generalization can be made.

Moreover, the results of this study indicate that, even nowadays, the traditional techniques outrun active learning techniques, at least in grammar activities. Therefore, the present study seems to be on the same track as Hietala (2015: 62), Pänkäläinen (2012: 95) and Vornanen (2016: 31) in the sense that there is a lack of variety in the grammar activities and different learning styles are therefore not taken into account adequately in EFL workbooks in Finland.

7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I will first give a brief summary of the present study and answer the research questions based on the findings of the present paper. Second, I will evaluate the present study for its strengths and weaknesses, and finally, consider the possible implications of the results and provide suggestions for further research.

7.1 Summary and the research questions

The main aim of the present study was to analyse commonly used teaching materials for grades 7 to 9 in basic education in Finland with a specific focus on how grammar is practiced. More specifically, the aim was to examine if these new secondary school workbooks have any active learning strategies in their grammar exercises. In addition, I was interested to see whether the theoretical trends on grammar instruction and the updates on the national core curriculum have affected the designs of the grammar activities of the workbooks or not. Thus, the main research question of the present study was the following:

1. What kinds of active learning strategies are supported in the grammar activities of the secondary school workbooks in *On the Go-* and *Spotlight* - series?

To fully answer the main research question, it was further divided into sub-questions:

- 1.1. What is the proportion of active learning exercises compared to all grammar exercises in the workbooks?
- 1.2. What working methods emphasized in the English section of the new national core curriculum are used in the grammar activities of the workbooks?

As the results discussed in chapter 6 show (see Table 4 and 6), the active learning techniques supported in the grammar activities of the two series are: game, crossword puzzle, research, deduction, and pair/groupwork. An important finding of the study was that not all subcategories of the coding frame were used. Especially, 11 out of 16 active learning subcategories that were created from theory, were left empty. As Schreier (2012: 77) suggests, this kind of situation, in which some subcategories of a coding frame are left empty, is in fact, an important finding of a study. For the present study, this is important because it shows the lack of variety in active learning techniques used in the grammar activities of both series.

As for the 1.1 sub-question, the answer is clear: in the *On the Go* - series, the proportion of active learning exercises compared to all grammar exercises is 19 out of 281, which in percentage is 6.8%. In the *Spotlight* - series, the proportion of active learning exercises compared to all grammar exercises is 4 out of 230, which in percentage is 1.7%. However, as the numbers are alarming, it has to be noted that only the purely active learning techniques were included in answering the question 1.1. Thus, if we were to look at the mixed techniques as well, which utilize active learning techniques, the numbers would not be as alarming as they are with purely active learning techniques.

As for the 1.2 sub-question, the results indicate that the grammar activities of the analysed workbooks use pair/groupwork, games, and self-assessment of the emphasized working methods in the English section of the new NCC. As the answer to the main research question lists game, crossword puzzle, research, deduction and pair/groupwork of the active learning techniques that were supported in the grammar activities, out of these, the new NCC (2016: 596) emphasised work in pairs and groups, specifically in its section of English for grades 7-9. This can be seen from the results as the majority of grammar activities using active learning techniques fell into the subcategory of pair/groupwork in both series (see Table 4 and 6). Moreover, gamification and self-assessment are given importance in the section of English of the new NCC (2016: 596-598). Both series had game as one of the active learning techniques used in the grammar activities as well as self-assessment included in the mixed techniques (see Example 8 and 17). In addition, when we consider the results of the present study from the point of view of active learning techniques and mixed techniques that uses active learning, the number of grammar activities (either using purely active learning techniques or mixed techniques where the other one is active learning) in *On the Go* - series is 100 out of 281 (36%), and in the *Spotlight* - series 84 out of 230 (37%). Hence, a fairly better result can be seen

compared to focusing only on purely active learning techniques. As was discussed above, the use of the symbol to work with a pair was extensive in the grammar activities analysed. Therefore, it can be argued that the emphasized working method to work with a pair is used extensively in the grammar activities of the chosen workbooks as the use of this symbol was considerable.

7.2 Strengths and limitations of this study

This study succeeded in shedding light on the active learning techniques used in grammar exercises in current teaching materials and as the chosen workbooks were published in 2018, they are relevant samples in terms of current Finnish EFL material. In addition, another strength of this study is that it can be regarded as a novelty in a sense that there was a gap in that field of research as active learning techniques were not studied from the point of view of grammar activities before.

Moreover, the coding frame of the present study was designed specifically for this study using the theory of active learning and the data of this study together. As the coding frame was newly developed instrument it had to be tried out multiple times in the pilot phases, therefore increasing the validity of this study, as the coding frame was adjusted to suit this particular study (Schreier 2012: 146). Another strength of the coding frame is that as I recoded the material myself several times, in the pilot phase and in the main analysis phase (see more in chapter 5.3), and as the results coincided, the coding frame of the present study was also determined reliable.

The present study had also its limitations, as only the two textbook series were chosen for the present study. Therefore, no greater generalizations can be made as the scope of this study is too narrow. However, due to the limited market for textbooks in Finland, it can be argued that the two series chosen for this study, published by the largest learning material publisher in Finland, are commonly used in Finland. Thus, a cautious generalization can be made about the situation in Finland. In addition, as the focus of the present study was only on grammar activities, which were located in the workbooks, it did not take into account the whole of the teaching material.

7.3 Implications of this study and suggestions for further research

The findings of the present study point towards several important implications. Firstly, the important finding that only 5 out of 16 active learning techniques, of the coding frame, were used in the six workbooks analysed. This implicates that there is room for improvement in designing teaching materials, and more specifically, grammar activities, as the active learning techniques form a long list of different methods to choose from.

Furthermore, as teachers in Finland rely heavily on textbooks (Luukka et al. 2008), this implicates a rather narrow method of teaching grammar as the traditional techniques outrun the active learning techniques in the grammar activities of the present study. Thus, in my opinion, it is not surprising that the study done by Sormunen (2013 as quoted in Vornanen 2016) found that students considered grammar to be boring but also that they did not know any alternative options to teach grammar other than the traditional way. I believe that a greater variety in grammar activities would be beneficial as it would enable learning from different viewpoints, thus, taking more students into account as they learn in different ways. The variety in grammar activities would also be beneficial to teachers as they would not need to spend extra time and effort making extra materials to accommodate different learning styles.

The lack of variety from the active learning techniques used in the grammar activities of the present study implicates that perhaps the implementation of active learning into grammar is difficult. Or could it be that there is not enough information on active learning used in grammar activities out there. In my opinion, the implementation of active learning into grammar activities is not just about following the trends, but rather, benefiting both students and teachers with the broad range of techniques active learning holds, thus taking different learning styles better into account. Moreover, it is also about looking at grammar teaching in a more versatile way than from the traditional way students describe boring. It would be a waste to see active learning only as something extra and not to apply it into grammar teaching as there is a reason for grammar instruction to have variety in its approaches. This implementation of active learning, in my opinion, would help to improve the reputation of grammar to be boring by letting teachers and students know that grammar can be taught in various different ways.

Finally, the findings of the present study implicate that it would be beneficial to critically evaluate workbooks from the point of view of grammar activities in order for students as well as teachers to benefit from them in the best possible way, since in Finland workbooks have a major role in language teaching. Furthermore, the findings point towards the importance of designing the most suitable workbook. It is clear that textbook designers face a great deal of demands when designing new material and as textbooks or workbooks are never perfect, it would be important to strike a happy medium between the extremes at least.

I hope that more effective approaches, such as active learning, to grammar teaching are making their way into the mainstream. Although the slow pace with which textbooks and workbooks adopt newer perspectives on language teaching was discussed (see chapter 3), it is not always clear why it is so. In my opinion, it is puzzling that recent textbooks are innovative with the presentation of texts and vocabulary but not with their approaches to grammar teaching. It raises a question of why grammar teaching has been neglected in workbooks, in spite of the new perspectives of grammar teaching in the last twenty years. Could it be that EFL teachers are not willing to let go of traditional ways of teaching grammar thus affecting how grammar is taught in the workbooks.

This study contributes to the EFL teaching in Finland as it provides an analysis of the grammar activities, which utilize active learning techniques in the two L2 textbook series that are commonly used in basic education in Finland and designed to follow the new NCC (2016). It has been delightful to notice that the authors of the series studied have made attempts to widen the variety of techniques used in grammar activities. Hopefully the current thesis encourages designers of EFL textbook series to utilize even more active learning techniques in grammar activities as the benefits of active learning are undeniable as was discussed in chapter 2.

In the future, this type of study could be conducted on upper secondary textbooks in Finland as well, because it would be interesting to see if the benefits of active learning are also utilized in upper levels of education as active learning has been proven to benefit students despite the level of education (see chapter 2). Yet another interesting aspect for further research is that it would be truly interesting to study students' opinions on active learning grammar activities and what their take on the matter is, as it was discussed above that students consider grammar to be boring but also that they did not know how else grammar could be taught.

Moreover, it would be interesting to hear the designers' take on the grammar activities of the series and what aspects they consider when designing and choosing the grammar activities to the workbooks. Another aspect of research could be to study what combination of, for example active learning techniques and traditional techniques in grammar activities is the most optimal for learning and teaching English as a foreign language. Finally, it would be interesting to study the grammar activities utilizing active learning in practice, for example, whether they are difficult to execute or whether they require something extra from the students or the teachers.

A need for further research is evident. As it is difficult to predict how teaching materials will change over the years, it was delightful to see that the attempts to improve grammar activities to be more in accordance with the emphasized working methods of the new NCC (2016) are already present. To conclude, hopefully studies such as the present thesis are to be considered when publishers update their teaching materials to be in accordance with the new NCC (2016), as they provide insights on the current situation of teaching materials.

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