

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

**'PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT'-  
LEARNING TO LEARN IN SECONDARY SCHOOL EFL TEXTBOOKS**

A Master's Thesis in English

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<p>Tiivistelmä - Abstract</p> <p>Tutkielman tarkoituksena oli selvittää oppimaan oppimisen näkyminen yläkoulun englannin kielen oppikirjoissa. Tutkimuksessa tarkasteltiin, miten ja missä yhteyksissä oppimaan oppiminen tuli esille ja mitä kielitaidon osa-alueita painotettiin. Oppimaan oppimista on tutkittu Euroopassa ja Suomessa parina viime vuosikymmenenä. Hautamäki määrittää oppimaan oppimisen uskomuksiin ja taitoihin. Uskomuksia voivat liittyä oppijaan itseen tai ympäristöön. Taitoihin liittyvät oppimisstrategiat, ongelman ratkaisukyvyt sekä sosiaaliset taidot.</p> <p>Tutkimuksessa analysoitiin kahta yläkoulun 7.-luokan A-englannin oppikirjasarjaa. Aineistoa lähestyttiin kvalitatiivisesti sisällönanalyysin kautta. Aineisto lajiteltiin oppimaan oppimisen teorian ja kielitaidon osa-alueiden mukaan eri kategorioihin.</p> <p>Tulokset osoittivat, että oppimaan oppiminen näkyi oppikirjoissa jonkin verran, mutta kokonaisvaltaisia ja kaikenkattavia ohjeita oppilaille ei kumpikaan kirjasarja tuottanut. Kaikkia kielitaidon osa-alueita ei ollut painotettu tasapuolisesti. Oppimaan oppimisen neuvot keskittyivät lähinnä ohjeistamaan oppilasta siitä, miten sanoja voi oppia paremmin, mutta esimerkiksi lukustrategiat jäivät vähemmälle tai kokonaan pois.</p> <p>Tulokset herättivät pohdinnan siitä, että oppimaan oppimisen integrointiin oppikirjoihin yläkouluissa pitäisi kiinnittää enemmän huomiota, samoin itsearviointien suunnitteluun. Ilmiötä tulisi mielestäni tutkia enemmän ja tutkimuksessa heräsikin ajatus ilmiön tutkimisesta oppilaan näkökulmasta eli miten he kokevat kirjan sisältämät neuvot.</p>	
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Learning languages is a complex process which requires considerable amount of effort from the learner. Moreover, the Finnish curriculum of basic education states that in addition to learning new information and skills, the student needs to acquire means and skills for learning to ensure that they will have the possibility of life-long learning (NCCBE, 2004:16). Furthermore, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the European Union has also agreed, for example, in the Lisbon framework that learning to learn is essential and should be taken more into account. This has led to the development of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (henceforth CEFR) of key competences. According to Kalaja and Dufva (2008:6), it has become more and more crucial to provide students with the tools for learning to learn since second/foreign language learning is nowadays viewed as a life-long task. Therefore, more and more schools and institutions are arranging courses to teach students how to learn. In many secondary schools in Finland, learning to learn, or in other words, learning techniques are taught to 7<sup>th</sup> graders combined into student counselling courses.

For some years, because of the influence of the Common European Framework, the English textbooks used in the upper secondary schools in Finland have included advice and information to boost the student's skills to learn the language. In some textbooks, for example, there are effective strategies mentioned in order to help the learner to absorb vast amounts of vocabulary and grammar. However, this has not been the case in lower secondary school English textbooks. This might be because the upper secondary school textbooks are up-dated more frequently as the students have to pay for them themselves. Therefore, lower secondary

school textbooks do not share as rapid development as upper secondary school textbooks.

Before studying English as a foreign language (henceforth EFL) textbooks, one should consider the guidelines the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (henceforth NCCBE) in Finland has set on secondary school English. This is crucial as the guidelines have a great impact on the textbooks that have been published. Therefore, if learning to learn is emphasised in the NCCBE it will probably be the case in textbooks as well. There were no studies found that researched the effects of learning to learn on textbooks and therefore research into this subject is needed. Moreover, Hoskins and Fredriksson (2008) pointed out that since learning to learn has been the focus of discussion in educational policies as well as developing scales for measuring it, more research on this field is needed.

The starting point for the present study was my interest in learning material research and the fact that I was already working as an English teacher in lower secondary school. The new EFL textbook *Spotlight 7* interested me as studying the book for my teaching I noticed a remarkable change to earlier EFL textbooks in terms of the book providing students with helpful tips and clues to aid their language learning. Moreover, I was interested in the concept learning to learn not only from my previous university studies but also because of my work as an English teacher in lower and upper secondary school.

The goal of the study was to find out how learning to learn is reflected in EFL textbooks and what language competences in particular were emphasised. Moreover, the context in which learning to learn appeared in the book was the focus of the present study. Two EFL textbooks aimed at the 7<sup>th</sup> grade in Finland were analysed with the help of content analysis.

The research report at hand consists of seven sections. After the introduction, section 2 focuses on the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004 and what is written in there about learning and the goals for English as A-language<sup>1</sup> in lower secondary school. After that, section 3 provides insight into learning to learn and its development including previous studies on the matter in Europe. Section 4 deals with textbooks as a learning material as well as an object of research. In turn, section 5 introduces the present study in terms of research questions and data as well as explains the content analytical path for the present study. Section 6 presents and discusses the findings in a thematically organised way. Finally, section 7 concludes the study with discussion and implications of the findings with suggestions for future study.

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<sup>1</sup> Language that is begun to study in grades 1-6 in basic education.

## **2. NATIONAL CORE CURRICULUM FOR BASIC EDUCATION 2004**

This chapter explains the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education. This was chosen to be included in the study as it is the basis on which textbooks are designed but also because it is crucial to discern what kinds of conceptions of learning and of learner it encapsulates. The National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (henceforth NCCBE) is a national framework on which regional curricula are based. According to NCCBE (2004), the education providers have the responsibility of assembling and developing the curriculum. In other words the municipalities write their own curricula on the basis on the NCCBE.

NCCBE (2004:12) states that basic education is needed to ensure educational security. Moreover, it has two fundamental missions which are educational and instructional (NCCBE, 2004:12). According to NCCBE (2004:12), basic education has to offer opportunities for versatile growth, learning and for the development of healthy self-esteem in order for the pupils to learn skills and knowhow that is needed in life. This is done to ensure equal opportunities for further education and to encourage the pupils to become active members of society to develop the democracy (NCCBE, 2004:12).

NCCBE (2004:16) regards learning as individual and communal process where learning new skills are viewed as building on knowledge and skills. The learning process is situated in many different kinds of situations where learning happens independently although under a teacher's guidance while interacting with the teacher and peers. Moreover, learning is seen as purposeful study and in addition to learning new skills and knowledge the students are expected to learn both study and work skills that will ensure life-long learning (NCCBE, 2004:16).

According to NCCBE (2004:16), learning results from pupils' active and purposeful process where they interpret material on the basis of their previous knowledge. Moreover, it is stated (NCCBE, 2004:16) that learning principles are the same for everyone but, learning depends on the learner's previously constructed knowledge and also motivation, and study and work skills also have an impact on learning. Learning is seen as problem solving which is an active and goal-oriented process.

The learning environment is a crucial factor when learning is concerned. According to NCCBE (2004:16), the learning environment must support the pupil's growth and learning. The aim is to support the pupil's studying motivation, curiosity and to promote their active participation, self-direction and creativity by offering interesting challenges and problems to be solved (NCCBE 2004:16). The learning environment should be designed so that it will guide the pupils to set their own goals and to evaluate their actions.

It is stated in NCCBE (2004:17) that pupils' learning is enhanced by using versatile working approaches and methods that are characteristic for each subject in question. The purposes of these working approaches are to develop social, learning, thinking, working and problem-solving skills and to encourage active participation (NCCBE, 2004:17). Moreover, these methods should also:

- "excite a desire to learn
- take the process and purposeful nature of learning into account
- motivate the pupils to work purposefully
- further the formation of organized knowledge structure, the learning of skills and practice in those skills
- develop skills for acquiring, applying, and evaluating information
- support learning that occurs through interaction among the pupils
- promote social flexibility, an ability to function in constructive cooperation, and the assumption of responsibility for others
- develop capabilities for taking responsibility for one's own learning, for evaluating that learning, and for seeking feedback for purposes of reflecting one's own actions
- assist the pupils to become conscious of their learning and their opportunities for affecting that learning



- develop the pupil's learning strategies and skills for applying them in new situations" (NCCBE, 2004:17-18).

In conclusion, there are a great deal of factors that are related to learning to learn in the first three sections of NCCBE. The key concepts of learning to learn that were mentioned in the NCCBE were that pupils' take responsibility of their own studies, problem-solving, awareness of how their own actions influence their learning and motivation. Also self-assessment was explained in the NCCBE (2004:262), where it is stated that developing pupil's capability of self-assessment is one of the tasks in basic education. This is important because it will support the pupils' knowledge and development of their study skills (NCCBE, 2004:262). Moreover, self-directedness, active participation, awareness of one's own learning, study and work skills, and life-long learning, are concepts relating to learning to learn that were mentioned in the NCCBE 2004. These concepts will be discussed greater in detail in following sections in this thesis. However, before moving on to learning to learn, one must consider what is written about studying English in the NCCBE 2004.

## **2.1. A-language: English**

In the Finnish educational system A-language is the first foreign language that pupils learn at school. Usually it is English and the studies start in the third grade but one can also start learning the A-language from the first grade on. Thus, by the 7<sup>th</sup> grade the pupils have usually studied English at least four years. According to NCCBE (2004:136), the adoption of good studying habits creates the basis for later language studies. Moreover, during the A-language studies the pupils start to develop intercultural competence (NCCBE, 2004:138).

In the NCCBE (2004:138-143), the goals in language learning in different stages in basic education are written down. They are categorised as goals in language skills, culture and learning strategies. For this study the learning strategies are the most relevant part, and therefore, they are discussed here.

During the grades 3 to 6, the goals for learning strategies are that the pupil will learn to

- “function responsibly and enterprisingly in language learning situations
- exploit one-on-one and small group situations in language learning
- use a textbook, dictionary, and other information acquisition tools independently
- use new words and structures in their own output
- recognize their own strengths and weaknesses as language learners, and to evaluate their work and language skills in different areas, in relation to the objectives” (NCCBE, 2004:139).

In addition to these skills, language learning strategies that the pupils are supposed to learn during grades 7 to 9 include the following:

“the pupil will learn to

- use various working approaches and learning strategies effective from the standpoint of language study and learning, and to utilize them in learning in their native languages
- make use of information and communication technology in communication and information acquisition
- carry out small-scale projects independently or in a group
- evaluate their own work and language skills in different areas, in the relation to the objectives, and to change their working approaches as needed” (NCCBE, 2004:142).

In conclusion NCCBE 2004 clearly points out the importance of language learning strategies and again the students’ responsibility of their own learning. Moreover, evaluating one’s own work and also their own language skills are pointed out. What is interesting to notice is that students are also required to change their ways of studying and working if they do not provide the desired outcome. Moreover, social skills and co-operation was also emphasised. In that sense it should be expected that the EFL textbooks in Finland, which are based on the NCCBE should, in fact, entail a great deal of learning to learn aspects and language learning strategies.

### **3. LEARNING TO LEARN**

According to Hirsijärvi (1990), learning can be characterized as certain kinds of permanent changes in a person's behaviour that come from interaction with the environment. This interaction can either be systematic when it has a purpose or a goal or then it can be accidental. This interaction with the environment, when systematic can be made more efficient and target-oriented with the help of different tools and strategies. In today's economic climate, not even education can escape certain terms like effective, qualitative and productive. This has boosted the discussion on learning to learn. In language learning, for instance, the European Commission produced the Common European Framework for Language Learning (henceforth CEFR), which is written on the idea of how to support individuals to become life-long learners of which learning to learn is a key aspect.

Before going into more detail about learning to learn one must consider what language learning really is. This section first focuses on describing the socio-cultural approach to second language learning and moves on from there to explaining in more detail the theories behind learning to learn.

#### **3.1. Socio-cultural approach to second language learning**

The socio-cultural approach to second/foreign language learning has been the focus of research in the last decade (Alanen, 2000:102). According to Alanen (2000), socio-cultural approach sees second language learning as interaction. This includes the interaction that the learner has, for example, with his/her environment, other learners, the teacher as well as with themselves in a sort of inner dialogue. Language learning is also seen as a data system that the learner takes into possession and constructs consciously, which will have a positive influence on their language competence (Alanen, 2000:103). In terms of the present study, this view on language learning is

crucial as learning to learn is based on the perspective that learning itself can be taught.

The socio-cultural approach to second language learning originates from the Vygotskyan ideas of co-operation and self-direction in conscious language learning (Alanen, 2000). Self-direction in learning has a crucial role in learning to learn which emphasises the learner's responsibility for taking action in improving, evaluating, and time-managing their studies. In the next section learning to learn is explained in more detail. Then I will move on to describe previous research on learning to learn.

### **3.2. What is learning to learn?**

According to Hautamäki et al. (2003:21), learning to learn has been analysed in literature since the late 1970s. Stringher (2006, as cited in Hoskins and Fredriksson 2008:16) states that there are over 40 different definitions of learning to learn, which include different concepts such as metacognition, socio-constructivism, socio-cognitive and socio-historical approaches. When talking about learning to learn, research has developed from two separate approaches. These approaches are the cognitive psychological perspective and social/cultural perspective (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:16).

In addition to discussing what learning to learn is, it is important to take into consideration what it is not. According to Hoskins and Fredriksson (2008:22), there are a number of concepts that are similar or overlap with the concept of learning to learn. These concepts include intelligence, problem solving and learning strategies. Hoskins and Fredriksson (2008:22) argue that because learning to learn includes an affective dimension, learning to learn cannot be the same as intelligence. Also problem solving is distinguished from learning to learn since it can be seen as getting the tools to solve problems. However, learning is not always problem solving. For example, when considering

language learning, memorising words is a task that does not involve problem solving abilities at all. The third aspect that is similar to learning to learn is learning strategies. Learning strategies can be considered to be any behaviour or thoughts that a learner engages in and which are meant to support the learning process. Thus learning strategies are (especially in terms of language learning) an important part of learning to learn but not the entire concept (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:24).

In conclusion, learning to learn is a collection of different abilities, emotions, strategies and actions that overlap and complete each other. Learning is seen as constructive but also life-long and the individual has the responsibility of their learning. However, learning is also seen as co-operational and interaction between learners and their environment is also crucial. The next section discusses the different definitions of learning to learn by different researchers.

### **3.3. Different definitions of learning to learn**

There are various definitions of learning to learn since it has become a political priority in the context of education in the past decade or so, as mentioned above. Learning to learn has been studied in Europe, especially by the EU, Hautamäki et al. and Deakin Crick et al. (Hoskins and Fredrikson, 2008). Therefore, the definitions of what learning to learn is and how it can be measured differ in some aspects according to who conducted the study. Thus, the definitions are discussed next.

According to Hoskins and Fredriksson (2008:17), the European Union (European Council 2006) defines learning to learn as one of the eight key competences.

“Learning to learn is the ability to pursue and persist in learning, to organise one’s own learning, including through effective management of time and information, both individually and in groups. This competence includes awareness of one’s learning process and needs, indentifying available opportunities, and the ability to overcome obstacles in order to learn successfully. This competence means gaining, processing and assimilating new knowledge and skill as well as seeking and making use of guidance. Learning to learn engages learners to build on prior learnig and life experiences in order to use and apply knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts: at home, at work, in education and training. Motivation and confidence are crucial to and individual’s competence.”

(Education Council, 2006 annex, paragraph 5)

In the EU definition both the cognitive and social aspects are taken into account. The cognitive approach can be seen in the ability to ‘organise one’s own learning’ and within ‘effective management of time and information’. This means that the learner needs to gain process and assimilate the information at hand. The ‘organisation of one’s own learning’ can be thought to refer to effective learning strategies. Moreover, the learner must take responsibility of one’s learning process in terms of time management as well as deciding which piece of information is relevant to one. ‘The ability to overcome obstacles can also be categorised to the cognitive dimension. However, the social skills that can be noticed in the definition are ‘motivation’, ‘confidence’ and the ability to work in a group.

Another definition of learning to learn has been established by Hautamäki et al. (2002, 2003). This has been done as a part of a lager research project on learning to learn. Hautamäki et al. (2002) define learning to learn as the “ability and willingness to adapt to novel tasks, activating one’s commitment to thinking and the perspective of hope by means of maintain one’s cognitive and affective self-regulation in and of learning action” (Hautamäki et al., 2002:39). This means that when pupils are presented a task they have not done before but have, in fact, completed similar tasks they should be able to solve the problem, or in other words, complete the task as they have been taught the ways to solve it. Moreover, the selection of the word *willingness* refers to a positive attitude towards school and learning as well as motivation.

Hautamäki et al. (2002) divide learning to learn into cognitive skills and abilities and affective control skills and abilities. They continue the definition by stating that the cognitive skills and abilities “could be considered to refer to Klauer’s subject confined specific strategies and general strategies, to Piaget’s processes of accommodation and assimilation, to Carroll’s fluid and crystallised intelligence or to Snow’s procedural and declarative knowledge” (Hautamäki et al., 2002:41). However, Hautamäki et al. extend the definition by referring to the affective skills and abilities as “the control of emotions in tasks situations, measured here in the context of assessment tasks but presumed to reflect the pupil’s use of them for any cognitively challenging task at school or later in sphere of work” (Hautamäki et al., 2002:41). In other words, Hautamäki sees learning to learn consisting of three different sets of beliefs or competences. He argues that it is crucially important how the learner and their environment view themselves. This is as crucial as the actual learning competences that the learner possesses (Hautamäki et al., 2003:35).

Deakin Crick et al. (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:18) have developed the Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory (ELLI), which concentrates on defining and measuring a person’s aptitude towards effective lifelong learning (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:18). Learning power, which is the capacity that needs to be achieved, is defined as a set of characteristics, lived experiences, social relations, values, attitudes and beliefs that merge to form the nature of individual’s engagement with any learning opportunity (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:18). Moreover, the term learning power has been further defined as consisting of seven dimensions which are growth orientation, critical curiosity, meaning-making, dependence and fragility, creativity, and strategic awareness (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:18). Deakin Crick et al. define learning to learn on the idea that learning is a process which involves social and environmental factors. These social and

environmental factors consist of values, desires, behaviours and willingness (to learn) and cognitive processes (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:18).

In conclusion, the three definitions mentioned above differ from each other quite remarkably. For example, the EU definition does not take into account the learner's environment nor co-operation with others. This is quite the opposite to Hautamäki et al. who claim that the environment and especially other people have the equal amount of influence on learning to learn as learning competences. Also, in the Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory social relations, values and beliefs are taken into account.

According to Hoskins and Fredriksson (2008:19), there have been other attempts trying to define learning to learn by different instances or researchers. However, these definitions have more limitations and are not as comprehensive as the previously discussed ones and therefore, are not included in this study. The present study focuses on the definition of learning to learn that was studied by Hautamäki et al. However, also definition of learning to learn by the EU is taken into account. The next section describes the learning to learn framework by Hautamäki et al.

### **3.4. Learning to learn framework**

According to Hautamäki et al. (2003:4), the National Board of Education considers learning to learn to be a key competence for lifelong learning. However, it was interesting to notice that learning to learn was not mentioned in the NCCBE 2004, although certain aspects of what learning to learn consists of, such as self-assessment, and learner's responsibility of one's studies, were found in NCCBE 2004. Hautamäki et al. (2003:22) state that the Finnish framework for assessing learning to learn competences is a combination of the socio-historical approach and psychological aspects.



As mentioned above, Hautamäki et al. (2002, 2003) define learning to learn as “the ability and willingness to adapt to novel tasks, activating one’s commitment to thinking and the perspective of hope by means of maintaining one’s cognitive and affective self-regulation in and of learning action” (Hautamäki et al., 2003:39). This means the learner’s ability to solve new problems on the basis of previous knowledge and experiences. In other words, Hautamäki (2002, 2003) implies that learning to learn consist of two different aspects; beliefs (perspective of hope) and study skills (activating one’s commitment to thinking). The beliefs are divided into two different categories, which are Context-Related Beliefs and Self-Related Beliefs (Hautamäki et al., 2003:38). Study skills are named under the heading of Learning Competences (Hautamäki et al., 2003:38).

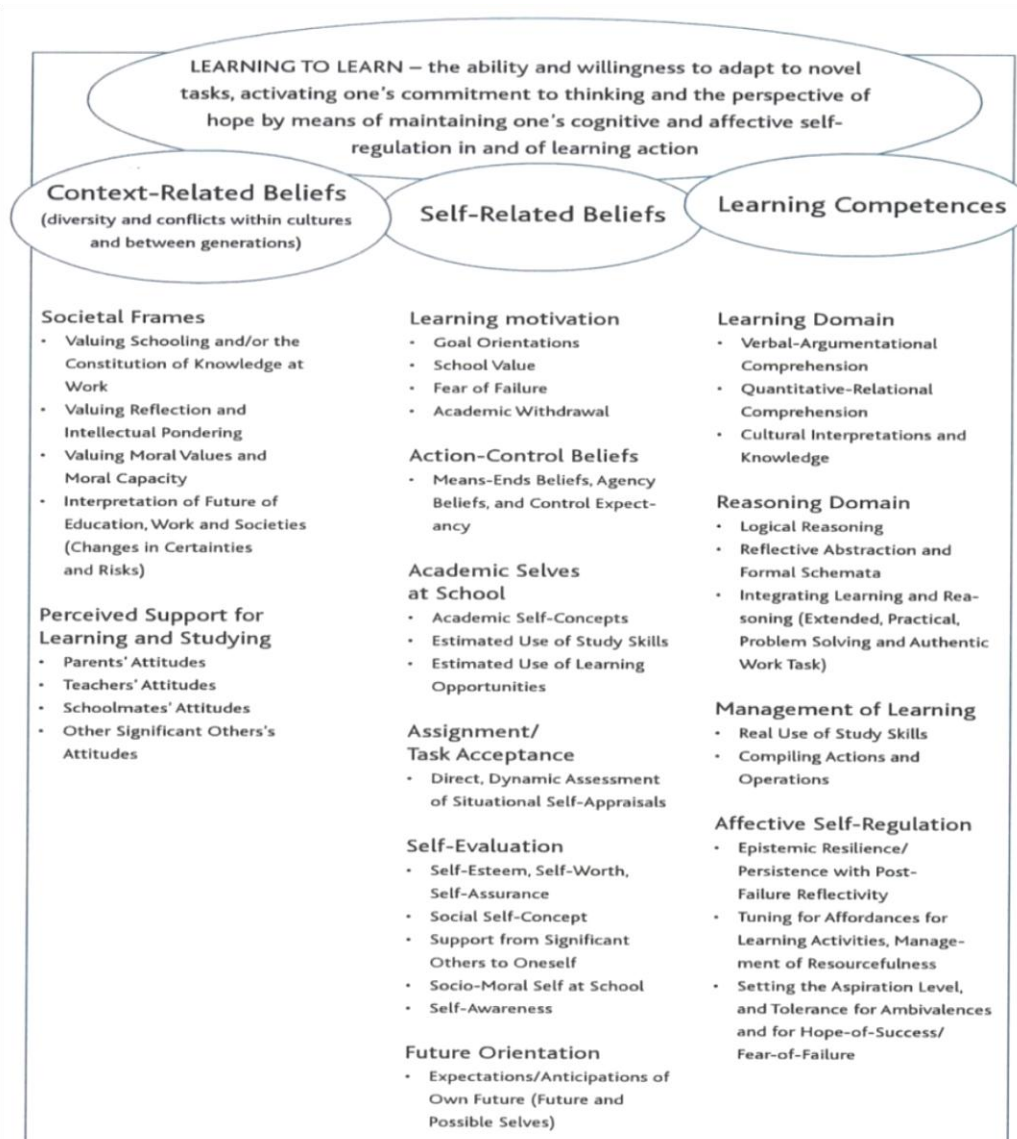
As mentioned above, Hautamäki et al. (2003:28) divide learning to learn into three different sections. The first one is called Context-Related Beliefs (ibid.). This consists of societal frames and of the perceived support for learning and studying (Hautamäki et al., 2003:38). The societal frames are a combination of values and moral. The values include individual’s values of schooling, reflection and intellectual thinking as well as valuing moral values and moral capacity (ibid.). It also consists of the individual’s thought about the future of education, work and societies (ibid.). The perceived support for learning and studying, on the other hand, consists of attitudes - the attitudes of a pupil’s parents, teachers, schoolmates or other significant people (ibid.). In other words, Context-related beliefs refer to the beliefs that support and reflect the learner’s relationship with different social contexts (school, family, friends) and also the learner’s views on values and interpretations of different phenomena in those contexts. According to Hautamäki et al. (2003:46), these values and the personal interpretations of the learners have an effect on learning and on other factors that are connected to task commitment.

The second section of the learning to learn concept consists of the individual's Self-Related Beliefs. According to Hautamäki et al. (2003:44), these beliefs maintain or protect the learner's personal identity when they are facing different situations at school whether as a learner or as a human being. This section is a combination of learning motivation, action-control beliefs, academic selves at school, assignment or task acceptance, self-evaluation and future orientation (Hautamäki et al., 2003:38). In this section, motivation, self-image and self-esteem are important.

The third and probably the most interesting part of learning to learn when considering the present study, is learning competences. This section consists of the learning domain, reasoning domain, management of learning and affective self-regulation (Hautamäki et al., 2003:38). The learning domain consists of skills like verbal-argumentational comprehension, quantitative-relational comprehension and cultural interpretations and knowledge (ibid.). The reasoning domain consists of logical reasoning and integrating learning and reasoning. This is the part that is focused on in the problem solving aspect. Management of learning consists of the real use of study skills (ibid.). The final part of this section concentrates on the learner's psychological aspects.

Both the Self-Related beliefs and Context-related beliefs as well as Learning competences can be seen in the figure below which shows the conceptual framework for assessing learning-to-learn.

FIGURE 1. *The conceptual framework for assessing learning to learn* (Hautamäki et al., 2003:38).



In conclusion, learning to learn consists of both cognitive and affective factors that influence learning and control one's actions in completing a new task. Learning to learn is seen as a collection of competences and beliefs that either rise from the learner itself or from their environment. The present study differs on how learning to learn can be assessed from Hautamäki et al. studies as the object of the assessment is not a person but a textbook. Therefore, Context related beliefs, as well as certain aspects of Self-related

beliefs and Learning competences cannot be measured as such. However, this definition and division to three different categories (Context-related beliefs, Self-related beliefs and Learning competences) of learning to learn forms the basis for the analysis in the present study.

### **3.5. Previous studies on learning to learn**

This section will focus on the previous studies on learning to learn. The concept of learning to learn has been under research in many projects in Europe in the past decade. There are several reports by the European Council where learning to learn has played a significant role. For example CRELL (Centre for Research on Lifelong Learning) was founded in 2005 and began to study development of indicators and benchmarks in Education and training and especially in learning to learn (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:9).

According to Hoskins and Fredriksson (2008), a number of research projects have been carried out in order to establish the concept of learning to learn and how it can be measured. Some of the studies have concentrated on the psychological cognitive perspective, whereas others have concentrated more on the social cultural perspective (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:25).

The reason for creating tests that measure the competence of learning to learn (the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values for lifelong learning) has arisen from the fact that testing knowledge is becoming more and more impossible since the realization that the world is changing so fast (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:36). It is no longer possible to know what information or knowledge is relevant in the future. That is why the European Commission together with its member states has been developing a European test on learning to learn (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:36). Thus, learning to learn

test by Hautamäki et al., the Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory by the Deakin Crick et al. and the cross-curricular skills tests by Elshout-Mohr et al. were identified on the basis of which the European framework was created and tested (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:36). According to Hoskins and Fredriksson (2008:37), the European learning to learn test combines the cognitive psychological aspects (Hautamäki et al. tests) and social cultural aspects (Deakin Crick et al.). Next, these tests are described in more detail.

In 2007, eight dimensions for indicators including key competences were proposed by the European Commission. These indicators included Literacy in reading, mathematics and science, Language skills, ICT skills, Civic skills and Learning to learn skills (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:9). Moreover, in 2005 the European Commission asked the European Network of Policy Makers for the Evaluation of Education Systems to come up with a proposal on how a pilot survey on measuring learning to learn could be carried out across the EU (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:9). Thus, four different indicators were established. The learning to learn test by Hautamäki et al., The Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory (ELLI) by Deakin Crick et al., the test on cross-curricular skills by Elshout-Mohr et al. and the test on metacognition by Jimenéz et al (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008). In tandem with the development of these tests the development of the concept of learning to learn was needed. This was achieved through the creation of a European research network on learning to learn.

The Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory (ELLI) created by Deakin Crick et al. tests on seven learning power scales as mentioned before (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:27). According to Hoskins and Fredriksson (2008:28), these power scales can be used by the teacher to articulate with their students what it is to learn. After the first studies conducted by using this inventory, several schools have used the Learning Power Profile in formal learning contexts (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:28). The Learning Power Profile is a spider

diagram showing the learning profile of a person to those who complete the test (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:28). It is said to have been used by thousands of learners from the age of 7 to 21 since 2003 and benefited of the feedback (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:28).

Deakin Crick et al. have developed tests for cross-cultural skills as a result of curricula reforms in the Dutch education system. These cross-cultural skills consist of eight skills which are conductive observations, selecting and ordering information, summarizing and drawing conclusions, forming opinions, recognising beliefs and values in opinions and actions of oneself and others, distinguishing opinions from facts, working together on assignments (cooperation) and finally requiring quality of one's own work (process demands and product demands) (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:26). Tests were set to measure these skills as it was argued that these skills are educable (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:26). It was stated that if the scores of the test of cross-cultural skills would correlate highly with intelligence tests then the test of cross-cultural skills measures nothing new (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:26-27). Thus a hypothesis was created, which stated that because these skills are teachable and depend on a positive attitude towards learning, the test results will correlate with academic achievement more than with IQ tests (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:27). The hypotheses were tested in a study of secondary education students in 1993 and in 1996. Generally speaking the results were that the studies confirmed the hypotheses that were created (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:27).

Hautamäki et al. have conducted a number of studies on learning to learn under the Finnish project 'Life as Learning' (LEARN) (Hautamäki et al., 2002). This started in 1995 as Finland's National Board of Education began to develop testing to measure learning to learn (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:25). A framework for testing was developed and it was tested on different stages in basic education (grades 6 and 9) as well as in secondary

education (Hautamäki et al., 2002 and 2003). This framework consisted of three major elements, which are context-related beliefs, self-related beliefs and learning competences. This was demonstrated in Figure 1 in the previous section (Hautamäki et al., 2002:38). The tests consist of several different tasks that measure the three major elements. Hautamäki et al. have completed four studies on learning to learn. The first ones were a national study of 6<sup>th</sup> graders in 1996 and a national study of 9<sup>th</sup> graders in 1997 which created the national norm to which future studies are compared to (Hautamäki et al., 2002:62). In 2000, Hautamäki et al. tested secondary education students. Both students from high school and vocational school were tested. Altogether 6692 9<sup>th</sup> graders were tested again in 2002 and the results were compared with the 1997 test. The students completed partly the same tasks; however, a portion of students filled out two versions of the test – one in pencil and the other on the internet (Hautamäki et al. 2003:63 and Hautamäki et al. 2002:62). According to Hautamäki et al. (2003:87), the standards of learning to learn have increased during the four year period between the testing. When looking closely at the results, it is clear that differences between students' know-how have decreased (Hautamäki et al., 2003:87).

In conclusion, different scholars in Europe have carried out studies in attempt to define and to establish means for measuring learning to learn. Some of the studies have concentrated on the cognitive psychological aspects (Hautamäki et al. tests) and others on social cultural aspects (Deakin Crick et al.). However, Hoskins and Fredriksson (2008:37) state that more research into learning to learn is clearly needed. They argue that a study that would examine “the learning environments and practitioner’s pedagogical approaches towards developing the competence of learning to learn” (Hoskins and Fredriksson, 2008:37-38) is needed. Thus, it is crucial and justified that textbooks would be analysed from the perspective of learning to learn as they are in a way a part of the learning environment.

## 4. TEXTBOOK

This section first discusses how textbooks are defined. Then it moves on to what kinds of texts EFL textbooks contain and thirdly discusses what is learned through textbooks.

### 4.1. What is a textbook?

As long as there have been schools there have been textbooks (Hummel 1988:13). Hummel (1988) states that the first classrooms were in Mesopotamia and the very first textbooks were written on clay tablets in the Sumerian language. In that respect textbooks have developed a great deal from the very first clay tablets into modern day multi-media textbooks with CDs, DVDs and online exercises and activities. Furthermore, textbooks have a crucial role in today's educational system. This is partly because traditionally textbooks have had an important role in education. Nowadays the textbook industry in Finland is constantly developing textbooks to meet the needs of the Finnish national curriculum and to improve textbooks and additional material provided by the publishing houses for the schools. According to Karvonen (1995:11), the school textbooks have gained a permanent status among other teaching media as a central tool for both learning and teaching (see also Lähdesmäki 2004:217).

The EFL textbooks in Finland are designed so that the teacher can rely a lot on the textbook and there is no obligation for the teacher to provide additional material as that would require a lot more work from the teacher. In fact, the teacher merely can just pick the activities, texts and tasks that they feel the most important and essential for the group that they are teaching (Johnsen 1993:17). However, Hummel (1988) states that even though textbooks have been a central element for both teachers and pupils, there has not been much research conducted on textbooks. Therefore, more research is



needed especially nowadays as the teachers of secondary schools in Finland have the autonomy to choose the textbooks they use in their classes.

The definition of a textbook varies quite a lot. Some argue that a textbook is published for educational purposes or that it can even be any book used in the classroom (Johnsen 1993). The term textbook can refer to all the teaching material that the publishers provide. This may include, especially in language learning, in addition to the traditional textbook and workbook or exercise book such materials as the teacher's material which includes correct answers to the exercises as well as suggestions for exercises, lesson plans and exams, audio tapes, videos or DVDs and exercises on-line for the students. However, in the present study, the textbook refers to the actual books themselves (textbook and work/exercise book). This was decided because the study aimed to find out what learning to learn aspects are emphasised for the students. The students have access to the textbooks and only in some cases when the school has purchased the online licence, the students can access the online material. Thus only the textbooks are included in this study.

A more suitable definition of a textbook could be that a textbook is a type of literature that is combined together by different parties, for example, writers, specialists, publishers and authorities. The textbook is aimed at many different groups, for example, teachers, students, parents, whose motives for using the textbook are not the same (Johnsen 1993). According to Karvonen (1995), the essential parts of naming a book a textbook are terminology, anonymity, compactness and the formal style of writing. In addition to the content of a textbook, the interpretation or the assumption of the situation that will be done with the text in the classroom is important. Karvonen (1995) claims that a text contains a reading about who are the readers and writers of that particular text. In this study, a text refers to actual written texts on the textbooks, not pictures, photos nor other graphics. In this study, a textbook is a book that is used in schools in Finland and is especially designed to meet

the requirements of the national curriculum of secondary schools' English teaching and learning.

The most significant feature of a school textbook is that it teaches the students to read and learn by reading (Hummel 1988:15). However, according to Hummel (1988), the school textbooks convey values and they also try to influence the reader's attitudes. Moreover, he states that "textbooks also adopt a certain pedagogical approach". This has an influence on how different subjects are taught in the class and therefore influences the educational process (Hummel 1988:17). When considering language teaching, it is very interesting in terms of language learning strategies to see what kind of pedagogical approach the textbook has adopted and which kinds of language learning strategies it emphasises if any.

According to Lähdesmäki (2004), the texts in textbooks can be viewed as a genre of their own. Often important words to which students should pay attention are in bold type or italics, for example (Karvonen 1995:24). Moreover, usually texts are followed by vocabulary lists and different types of exercises in order to make sure that the learner has learned to contents, structures and vocabulary. This includes all the different language skills such as reading, listening, interacting and writing. Moreover, Lähdesmäki (2004:54) points out that in EFL textbooks many types of texts are included in the textbook genre compared to other textbooks such as history or psychology. In other words, EFL textbooks contain many types of texts that are not necessarily connected to each other but represent different genres and topics. The difference between a history textbook and an EFL textbook is due to the fact that the texts in a history book are designed to provide information, whereas in EFL textbooks the purpose is on both the content and the various linguistic aspects of the texts (Lähdesmäki 2004:272).

Lähdesmäki (2007:54-55) states that the texts in EFL textbooks can be labelled into three different categories; authentic texts, modified texts and self-written texts. Authentic texts have been extracted from their original contexts, for example from magazines or radio programmes. Modified texts, on the other hand, are texts that are adapted from the original context but have been modified to meet the needs of the educational situation. The self-written texts are those that the textbook writers have composed themselves for the specific needs of the language learner. All of these types of texts can be found in one textbook.

In conclusion the definition of a textbook varies from any book or material used in a classroom to a specifically for learning purposes designed book or material. Moreover, the texts that are included in textbooks can also be written to the particular textbook or it can either be authentic or modified from the authentic text. As mentioned above, in the present study the term textbook is used to describe EFL textbooks that are used in Finland and written, particularly to meet the needs of NCCBE. No additional material such as online exercises, CD or teacher's material is included in this study.

#### **4.2. Textbooks and teaching**

When learning or teaching languages, the textbook plays a significant role. In practice in Finland it means that the students in secondary school have two school books in English – a textbook and a workbook or exercise book. In the case of learning languages, the textbooks serve another purpose in addition to providing information – practice. The pupils can first see how the language is used in the text (textbook) and then practice the use themselves (workbook). According to Karvonen (1995:110), schools that do not use textbooks have traditionally been seen as exceptional schools. Textbooks have a crucial role in today's education, even though some teachers think that they can survive without textbooks or find textbooks even frustrating

and irritating or limiting as they have a huge influence on teaching (Lähdesmäki 2004:271).

Hummel (1988) claims that school textbooks determine to a great extent what goes on in the class. A textbook is an instrument for the pupil to help individual study (Hummel 1988:17). Moreover, it has many functions. However, nowadays it is not the only source of information and does not have the dominant role that it once had, due to the Internet and the on-going information flow. However, teachers rely a lot on the textbooks nowadays, since they have developed and are multi-media textbooks.

According to a survey by Luukka et al. (2008:94), teachers still rely heavily on textbooks as a teaching material. In this study, 740 mother tongue teachers and 324 foreign language teachers in Finland were asked about their textbook use. The results showed that 95% of the foreign language teachers use textbooks often. Moreover, 98% of the foreign language teachers included textbooks as their top five teaching materials. As mentioned above, one of the reasons why using textbooks is as popular as it is compared with the teacher producing their own teaching material is that it makes the workload easier for the teachers. Another reason might be perhaps that the students find the use of textbook somewhat permanent and they can rely on it. When a student learns to use a particular textbook series, for example, they learn where to find information when completing their homework. Thus a textbook can create a sense of security for both the teacher and learner.

According to Luke et al. (1989:251), what the students actually learn in the classroom depends on how teachers teach and approach the texts. Although the students' personal appreciations, interests and motivation also impact learning, it is not as striking as how the texts are handled. Teachers will select which points they emphasise and which texts, exercises or facts they will

exclude from their teaching (Luke et al. 1989:252). Thus teachers make a lot of decisions about what is worth teaching or for the students to know. These kinds of decisions affect the students' learning as they learn to make conclusions about the contents of the textbook as in what will be tested in the exam. These decisions may be based on the teacher's preference and/or on the exam packages that are included in the teacher's material (Johnsen 1993:15).

Lähdesmäki (2004:273) points out that publishing EFL textbooks is a big business in Finland. Therefore, the publishing houses spend a great deal of time and money marketing the books to teachers. Because the publishing houses spend such a huge amount of money on the marketing, the textbooks are planned to suit as large groups as possible. Elomaa (2009:48) states that textbooks are designed so that they meet a lot of different expectations. They should follow the guidelines set by national curriculum, take into account all the hopes and needs of teachers and learners and moreover, make sure that they are fit to the actual purpose they were designed for – language learning. According to Lähdesmäki (2004:271, 273), when learning a language, many concepts need to be taken into account. The language learner needs to focus on vocabulary, structures, grammar and interaction at the same time. Therefore, the textbook also needs to be diverse and comprehensive and thus not everything can be included in the textbook and not all the aspects can have an equal part in the book.

In conclusion textbooks can limit or at least have a huge impact on what is studied and how in the classroom. This is because teachers rely a lot on textbooks nowadays, although it is not the only source of information. The teachers also have a great influence on what is emphasised in the textbook and thus affect students learning. However, textbooks are designed to meet not only the needs of teachers, but also the needs of students.

## **5. THE PRESENT STUDY**

The starting point for the present study was my interest in learning to learn and how it is reflected in EFL textbooks. The general goals and research questions for the present study are described in section 5.1. Next the data and methodology are introduced in section 5.2.

The textbook industry has grown tremendously in the past decade. The National Board of Education (NBE) no longer inspects the textbooks first as it used to but lets the schools decide which textbooks or textbook series they prefer to use. This has led to a huge number of different textbook series by different publishing houses who then try to appeal to the teachers and schools to choose their materials. Therefore, the publishers are all the time doing minor changes in the textbooks in order to increase the sales, whereas before textbooks had to go through a process to pass the NBE before they could be used in schools. Nowadays, this process has been abolished and the teachers and schools can choose from a wide range of textbooks and the NBE does not recommend any.

However, the publishing houses are obviously following the guidelines that the Finnish national curriculum appoints to the secondary school education. Therefore, paying more and more attention to the idea of life-long learning and how to provide the students with the abilities, skills and means to ensure them the best possible chance to strengthen their learning has now been taken into account by the publishers, when publishing new textbooks for lower secondary school. Thus, learning to learn and teaching learning techniques to students have become more important.

### **5.1. Research questions**

The general objective of the present study is to examine how learning to learn has been represented in the EFL textbooks used in Finnish lower secondary school. In other words, the present study explores the ways in which learning to learn is portrayed in EFL textbooks and which language learning competences (listening, reading, speaking or writing) they emphasise.

The first research question contains the general aim of the study and creates an overall study base for the present study.

*1. How learning to learn is reflected in the textbooks?*

As previously mentioned the Common European Framework and the National Curriculum has stated learning to learn to be an important part of language education in Europe. This raises the question of how this development has been taken into account in textbook design. The first general research question hence influenced the following questions to cover qualitative aspect of data.

*2. What kinds of learning competences are emphasised?*

The second question contains the idea of different branches in language learning. According to Oxford (1990: 5-6), language skills can be divided into four different skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. This question therefore aims to find out which of the following competences are highlighted and perhaps which are not considered important by the authors.

*3. In which kinds of contexts is learning to learn highlighted?*

This is interesting as it shows how much emphasis has been put on learning to learn in the sense that have they placed the learning to learn advice so that

the students can easily access it or is it just a necessary addition to fill the book.

The present study aims to find out how learning to learn is presented in EFL lower secondary school textbooks. Next, the methodological framework and research questions of the present study will be explained more in-depth.

## 5.2. Data and methods

For the present study two EFL 7<sup>th</sup> grade textbooks for Finnish secondary school were analysed. The books analysed were *Spotlight 7* (2009) by WSOY and *Smart Moves 1* (2009) by Otava. These are the two main publishing houses in Finland when EFL textbooks are concerned and therefore, it was crucial to include textbook series from both publishing houses. Both of the books actually consist of two books. In the case of *Spotlight 7*, both the *Textbook* and *Workbook* were included and also in the case of *Smart Moves 1* the analysis consisted of both the *Texts* and *Exercises*. These books were chosen as they represented two fairly new textbook series for the lower secondary school and were published by different publishing houses and therefore, of course, had different authors. Studying the textbooks was a natural choice as I have already been working as an English teacher in lower secondary school and therefore, was somewhat familiar with the other textbook series. Moreover, the language is more versatile in EFL textbooks in lower secondary school compared with primary school EFL textbooks.

Both *Smart Moves 1* and *Spotlight 7* are currently used in Finnish secondary school education with 7<sup>th</sup> graders. *Spotlight 7* was chosen because I have myself used this book in teaching and I find it interesting in terms of teaching learning to learn skills. *Spotlight 7* concentrates more on interaction



in language teaching compared to earlier textbook series that I have used and therefore, brought an interesting aspect for the study. *Smart Moves 1* was chosen because I wanted to carry out a comparative study and it was the newest book from the rival publishing house.

After I had chosen my research material, I started with reading the books through. The criterion of the selection of the texts (or phrases) was that they had to give out direct advice for the learner on how to study English or they had to be related to one of the aspects in learning to learn. As mentioned in section 3.4. Hautamäki et al. (2002, 2003) divide learning to learn into beliefs and competences. Beliefs consist of Self-related beliefs, which include self-evaluations and self-esteem for instance and Context-related beliefs which consist of the beliefs that the environment has for the learner (friends, teachers, parents) (Hautamäki et al. 2002, 2003). Moreover, Hautamäki et al. (2002, 2003) continue that learning to learn also consist of Learning competences such as learning strategies, problem-solving and logical reasoning. Thus, after choosing the texts, I started categorising them whether they belong to Context-related beliefs, Self-related beliefs or Learning competences. After that the texts were also categorised after which language skill they were connected to or they advised for. It was not meaningful to analyse only single words but rather to concentrate on the whole text itself. Therefore, content analysis was chosen as a research method.

Content analysis can be used in qualitative research (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2009:91). It is one of the most common methods as it can be quite flexible to different forms of research. Usually content analysis is used when analysing written texts as in this case EFL textbooks used in lower secondary schools in Finland. According to Krippendorff (2004:18), content analysis is a research method which aims at making valid and reliable conclusions from the content of the texts being examined. The aim of content analysis is to organise the data into summarized and complete form by using different

kinds of content categorisations suitable for the study in question (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2009:108).

According to Johnsen (1993:23, 26), there is no general agreement on how textbooks should be analysed and the researcher ought to select and combine the methods and approaches which suit them best. The present study was set to find out how learning to learn and language learning strategies have been taken into account in EFL textbooks. According to the UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision, both quantitative and qualitative research methods need to be applied in order to achieve reliable research outcomes. Pingel (2010:67) emphasizes the fact that different methods provide answers to different questions. Quantitative methods are designed to determine 'how many times a term is used or a person or people are mentioned' (Pingel, 2010:67). This information can tell us a lot about how much the authors have emphasized the learning to learn phenomenon and how important they consider it to be. Qualitative research, on the other hand, provides us with answers to questions such as 'what does a text tell us, what messages does it transmit?' (Pingel, 2010:68). As Pingel (2010:67) puts it, both methods complement each other and therefore both quantitative and qualitative content analysis are used in the present study. Johnsen (1993:144) argues that typical textbook research sees these two approaches as opposites. Their benefits and drawbacks are discussed in the research reports after which one report over the other is chosen as a solution. However, in the present study the two approaches do not rule out the other but support the findings.

However, content analysis is not a perfect way of conducting a study and therefore the criticism that has arisen must be taken into account. According to Gilbert (1989:62), content analysis might lead to oversimplification of how the readers participate in the production of meaning. Moreover, he states that there is not enough attention paid to the text sequencing and

organization as the units of analyses are often explained and treated as isolated elements of the text and not in its context. Furthermore, interpretative and productive processes of the reader are often not included. Fiske (1993:179-180) points out that content analysis is quantitative in nature as its fundamental idea being to recognize and count the occurrence of certain, carefully selected units in the communication system. Therefore, the researcher can decide what the units are as long as they can be easily recognized and their frequency is sufficient. These points of criticism were taken into account when this study was conducted.

According to Eskola and Suoranta (2008:187), content analysis is a relevant choice for research method especially when no single existing method completely fulfils the needs of the study. In content analysis the actual analysis can be done in many different ways, i.e. using different kinds of categorisations or classifying, describing and organising the data in different ways. There are no strict rules on how the analysis should be done and therefore, the researcher has the freedom of organising their own systems for categorising the data according to how it is best suited for the particular study (Eskola and Suoranta 2008:187). The aim of the analysis is to create a systematic and all-inclusive description of the particular phenomenon that is being studied.

There are different types of approaches when content analysis is used. According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2009:108,113), content analysis can be either inductive or deductive. Inductive content analysis means that the data is analysed without any presuppositions or theoretical framework and the theory and findings arise from the data that is being analysed. Deductive content analysis, on the other hand, adopts a certain theoretical approach that guides the analytical process and categorisation. Huckin (2004:14) points out that content analysis can be divided into conceptual and relational analysis. The conceptual analysis means that the data are analysed and

categorised according to a specific concept or concepts, and it aims at establishing its existence and frequency in the data, whereas the relational analysis not only identifies the concept or concepts but also studies the relationships between the concepts. In this study the deductive and conceptual approach are used as the data are categorised according to different language skills. The aim is to study their existence and frequency.

The data were analysed by examining each book page by page and collecting all the tips and advice that were directly aimed at the language learner. The basic criterion was to pick up anything that was directed to the learner to help with their studies, and moreover, all the texts (this in the present study meaning actual written texts) that fulfilled the definition of learning to learn by Hautamäki et al. (2000 and 2003) or by the definition that was provided by the European Commission. At first it seemed like both of the books had taken learning to learn into account. Both of the books seemed to have placed the instructions in similar places and it appeared that they had indeed provided a significant amount of beneficial information for the learner.

However, after all the data were collected for analysis, the data were categorised by Hautamäki et al. (2003) framework for assessing learning to learn. This meant that the data were categorised under three sections: Context-Related Beliefs, Self-Related Beliefs and Learning Competences (Hautamäki et al., 2003:38 see also Hautamäki et al., 2000 and 2002). Moreover, the data were also categorised in terms of which language skill they supported – reading, writing, speaking or listening. At this stage it became clear that the information that the two textbooks had provided was rather fragmented and had not taken the whole concept of learning to learn too seriously.

This section prepared the ground for the analysis. It first described the research questions and then introduced the research material as well as

content analysis as an analytical tool. Finally, the steps of the analysis were explained. In the next section the findings of the present study are explained and discussed.

## 6. ANALYSIS

The analysis was themed in two ways. Firstly the data were categorized after Hautamäki et al. (2003) definition of learning to learn consisting of three different branches: Context-Related Beliefs, Self-Related Beliefs and Learning Competences. After that it was themed by the different branches in language learning. As stated earlier Oxford (1990: 5-6) claims that language skills can be divided into four different skills. These skills are listening, reading, speaking and writing. Therefore, the data was categorized under these skills within Hautamäki's et al. first categorisation. Another concept that was related to learning to learn but did not fall under these language skills was efficient use of the learning material which in this case is the textbook. This was mentioned in the EU definition of learning to learn, and therefore, was not divided under the four language skills.

The tips for learner were organized in the two textbook series quite differently. *Smart Moves 1* had concentrated their advice under different headings. These included such headings as pronunciation, listening, vocabulary and structure, homework, and studying texts. Under these headings different strategies and help or guidance was written in *the Smart Moves 1 Exercises* -book. Only one of those headings was written in the inside cover of the other book *Smart Moves 1 Texts* and that was homework.

*Spotlight 7* had quite a different approach for informing the learner about different language learning strategies or other study skills. Instead of writing comprehensive instructions under different headings they had concentrated more on giving short tips or instructions for the learner in different parts of the book. For example, "If the exercise has words that you don't understand ask them from your teacher or pair before the listening". This particular tip was written next to a listening comprehension exercise. All in all *Spotlight 7* had 19 pieces of advice that were categorized under listening, reading, speaking

or writing. Some of these were suitable for several categories, for example, reading and writing. In those cases they were counted in both categories. In addition to these categories *Spotlight 7* had also instructions for more efficient textbook use. Five different instructions were found, although one of these was written five times in the workbook. *Spotlight 7* as well as *Smart Moves 1* had also some of the small instructions written inside the front cover of *Spotlight 7* textbook.

It was interesting to note how the two textbooks differed in the placement of the instructions given to the learner. *Spotlight 7* had situated their advice on several pages throughout the workbook, actually tips were found on 25 different pages whereas in *Smart Moves 1 Exercises* instructions were found only on 6 pages. In addition to these, both of the books had some instructions on the inside cover of their textbooks. In *Smart Moves 1* the instructions were very comprehensive and written in great detail. This was quite a remarkable difference compared to *Spotlight 7*. Moreover, *Smart Moves 1* did not advice the learner on one of the language skills and that was writing.

The textbooks varied quite significantly on which language skill they emphasized. The following sections will concentrate on explaining how the different language skills and the learning to learn tips were presented in the two textbooks.

### **6.1. Context-Related Beliefs**

As mentioned in section 3.3., Context-related beliefs consist of societal frames and perceived support for learning and studying (Hautamäki 2002, 2003). This support includes parents', teachers', schoolmates' and other significant people's attitudes that have an influence on the learner's ability and willingness to learn (learning). Moreover, Hautamäki et al. (2002) point out that Context-Related beliefs refer to the beliefs of the learner's relationships

with different social contexts. This entails their values and personal interpretations of different kinds of phenomena. These interpretations have indirect influence on beliefs (Hautamäki et al., 2002). In other words, this means that a learner's personal perceptions and attitudes can influence his/her commitment to learning. These personal attitudes and beliefs that come up from different social contexts were not found in the analysis.

Hautamäki et al. (2002:44) had distinguished the learner's social skills from Context-Related beliefs to Learning Competences and thus, advice or tips concentrating on encouraging students towards co-operation, pro-sociality and group activities are not categorised under Context-Related beliefs in the present study. However, these have been taken into account in Learning Competences.

## **6.2. Self-Related Beliefs**

As mentioned above, according to Hautamäki et al. (2003:38), Self-Related Beliefs consist of learning motivation, action control beliefs, academic selves at school, assignment/task acceptance, self-evaluation and future orientation. The only part of the Self-Related Beliefs that could be found in the textbooks were the self-evaluation questionnaires. The expectations of one's own future or one's fear of failure are obviously more subjective and therefore, not included in textbooks. However, the individual's estimated use of study skills or learning opportunities could be included as a part of self-evaluation.

There are sections in *Spotlight 7* and *Smart Moves 1* that are dedicated to self-evaluation. In *Spotlight 7 workbook* (2009) there are altogether 6 self-evaluation forms/questionnaires for the students to fill in. Each of them is situated at the end of each studying unit. There are two courses in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade English curriculum. In *Spotlight 7* each course consists of 3 units. In *Smart Moves 1*



*Exercises* there are altogether 18 study texts and also 6 self-evaluation forms for the learner.

In *Spotlight 7 workbook*, there is a small questionnaire for the students before the table of contents and any exercises. This is titled as “*Spotlight on learning*”. It asks when and where one needs foreign languages the student would want to learn. There are also 10 statements that they can tick about how they feel about learning languages. At the bottom of the page, the student is asked who will help them with their learning of the English language and what they would like to learn during the school year (*Spotlight7 workbook*, 2009:3). This type of questionnaire could be considered to be a part of academic selves at school as it clearly points out the various learning opportunities that one can have outside the classroom as well as it asks the learner about the way they study languages. It also asks the learner whether they have used English in certain situations or if they will need it in the future. Therefore, this questionnaire according to Hautamäki et al. (2003:38), could be considered to be a part of future orientation as well. The future orientation consists of one’s expectations or anticipation of one’s own future (Hautamäki et al. 2003, 38).

The two textbooks had approached the self-evaluation questionnaires quite differently. Both of the books had superficially similar kind of approach as in both textbooks they had the end-of-the-course self-evaluations which were different from the other questionnaires. In terms of placement, all the self-evaluation forms in both books were situated in the work- or exercise book and after all the text-based and grammar exercises that belonged to a certain study unit. However, this is where the similarity ends.

*Smart Moves 1 Exercises* had two different self-evaluation questionnaires. The first one appears in the book four times. The other one is the end-of-the-course self-evaluation which appears twice. In *Smart Moves 1 Exercises* the

self-evaluation sections are simply titled as “Self-evaluation” (Itsearviointi, in Finnish). The end-of-the-course self-evaluation questionnaire is situated after each course of English which in the National Curriculum in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade means two. However, this questionnaire differs quite remarkably from the other four as in this one the authors have categorised the questions under the different language skills. In each language skill, there are 3 or 4 statements. The questions are discussed more thoroughly under the language skills.

In addition to the statements that were categorised according to the four language skills, the learner is asked to evaluate his/her work or effort. In this section there are two statements and the learner is asked which grade they aim at and which points they need to improve in order to make their studying English more effective. The only difference that the end-of-the-course self-evaluations have in *Smart Moves 1 Exercises* is that the first one is on one page, whereas the second is spread on two pages (Smart Moves 1 Exercises, 2009:99 and 207-208).

The end-of-the-course self-evaluation form in *Smart Moves 1 Exercises* is completed with a teacher’s and also parent’s signature. This is rather interesting. Why would the teacher or the parent have to sign it? To establish that they have seen it? Or are the signatures asked just to make it worth more. So, that the students would pay more attention and put more thought and effort of completing the self-evaluation more thoroughly? This is interesting because Hautamäki et al. (2003) distinguish self-evaluation to Self-Related Beliefs from Context-Related Beliefs where parent’s and teacher’s attitudes for learning and studying are. The function of self-evaluation dramatically diminishes as parents and teachers are asked for their approval. Are the students completing the self-evaluation for themselves anymore or is it just to seek someone’s approval, and therefore, their thoughts about the studies might not be as honest as they could. This could section could be thought to be a part of Context-related beliefs,

however, Context-related beliefs according to Hautamäki (2002:44) have more due to the differences in learner's world view, personal interests depending on their social class, gender and generation.

In the other self-evaluation questionnaire in *Smart Moves 1 Exercises*, there are 14 statements and the learner is asked to choose the answer from four different smiley faces. The first seven statements concentrate on the learner's actions and participation in class. The next five statements concentrate on learning vocabulary and new words and the final two deals with learning grammar. After the statements the learner is asked to grade him/herself as a language learner. S/he is asked to choose from three statements what suits him/her best. The options are: "1) Studying English is fun and interesting, 2) Studying English is mostly interesting or 3) Studying English is not interesting nor do I feel like putting an effort to it". In *Smart Moves 1 Exercises* four, out of six self-evaluation forms are the same. So, the form that was described above appears in the book 3 more times (on pages 47, 77,134 and 167).

### **6.2.1. Listening**

In *Smart Moves 1 Exercises* listening was taken into account very briefly in self-evaluation forms. Listening was mentioned in two statements that were statements 3 and 4 (Smart Moves 1, 2009:77).

*3 I listen to the teaching and the teacher's instructions.*

*4 I listen to others' answers.*

In the-end-of-the-course self-evaluation form, there were three statements that dealt with listening comprehension. These were:

*1 I understand the teacher's English instructions and what he/she usually says.*

*2 I understand when discussing familiar topics.*

*3 I understand the substance of the texts listened in the classroom.*

These two sets of statements were quite different. The latter clearly concentrating on the listening comprehension aspect of language learning as the former had more due to the aspect of behaving in the classroom.

### 6.2.2. Reading

In terms of reading *Smart Moves 1* had only statement including reading in the self-evaluation forms.

*9 I read the text that has been given as homework.*

The-end-of-the-course self-evaluation on the other hand had three statements.

*1 I can answer to the questions about the texts in the textbook in Finnish.*

*2 I understand short texts and messages.*

*3 I understand the main points in longer texts.*

Again understanding is emphasised in the statements.

### 6.2.3. Speaking

Speaking was mentioned clearly only in the-end-of-the-course self-evaluation questionnaire. However, reading aloud could be categorised under speaking although it is more technical task compared with the usual productivity that is involved in speaking foreign languages. In the end-of-the-course self-evaluation form speaking was included in four statements.

These were:

*1 I can enquire how other people are doing and tell them about myself.*

*2 I can pronounce the most common words correctly and interpret the pronunciation key.*

*3 I have the courage to speak although I'm not sure if I can use grammar and choose the words correctly.*

*4 I try to use new words and phrases when I speak.*

It was interesting to notice that the statements about speaking did not concentrate solely on productivity compared with listening and reading in which case the statements only dealt with aspect of comprehension and understanding the spoken and written aspects of language. In speaking, however, the learner's courage to use the language was also taken into account. Moreover, pronunciation and a learner's effort was also considered important.

#### **6.2.4. Writing**

Writing as well as speaking was connected in four statements in *Smart Moves 1* the-end-of-the-course self-evaluation questionnaire.

*1 I can write about myself and about my family.*

*2 I can write a brief report on familiar topics.*

*3 I use the alphabetical vocabulary pages.*

*4 I can spell the most common words correctly.*

In the other questionnaires writing was mentioned only once.

*I can write in my own words sentences that include words from the vocabulary that has been given as homework.*

This again was different compared with reading and listening. It did not only involve the learner evaluating his/her skills to produce written English but it also asked about his/her studying habits, for example, using the vocabulary pages.

In conclusion, *Smart Moves 1* emphasised three different aspects in their self-evaluation forms; vocabulary learning, grammar learning and participation in classroom. The only aspect that was in both questionnaires (end-of-the-course and in the others) was the learner's effort and input on their language

studies. Moreover, *Smart Moves 1* made it easier for the learner to approach their questionnaires since the student needed only to choose from the smiley faces instead of open-ended or multiple choice questions. This on the other hand may also reflect the idea that self-evaluation was not to be taken too seriously.

The self-evaluation sections in *Spotlight 7 workbook* are called "*Spotlight on learning*". The first actual self-evaluation questionnaire is on page 40 and asks the learner to tick '*always*', '*usually*' or '*sometimes*' according to how the statements describe them. The first 13 statements deal with participation in the classroom and the last 4 deal with homework. In the first 13 statements there are three statements that are concerned about working with others. After the statements there are 4 open-ended questions for the learner. First they are asked to state what they are good at, second what they could improve in their studying, third what grade is their goal and finally how they will reach that goal (*Spotlight 7 workbook*, 2009:40).

The "*Spotlight on learning*" after unit 2 is quite different from the previous one. Now the learner is asked to do a multiple-choice evaluation. The first 4 questions deal with homework. How often they do their homework, is the homework difficult or easy, how long it takes them to complete their homework and how they feel about the amount of homework they are given. Next they are asked about their participation in the classroom. There are 6 statements to choose from. They start from working hard and helping others in not paying attention to teaching that much. It has not been stated in the instructions but one could possibly choose couple of statements to describe them. There is also a question of whether the students use the book's online exercise to help them with their learning. There is also a question about how the learner prepares for an English language exam. Finally the learner is asked to write a message to their teacher. It can be written about participation in the classroom, homework, exams or something else related

to their English studies (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:76). Clearly, the self-evaluation concentrated on two different aspects – participation in class and homework. It is interesting that these two aspects were emphasised instead of the student evaluating their English language skills or competence.

The third “*Spotlight on learning*” differs quite remarkably from the previous two. For the first time the learner is asked to evaluate their language skills in terms of how well they can tell things about themselves, their family, spare time, hobbies or pets and school. These topics are concentrated on in units 1 to 3. The learner is supposed to choose whether they can tell *much, some, at least a little* about these topics. The second part of evaluating language skills deals with how well the student has learned the grammar introduced in units 1 to 3. These are also marked in a scale of 3 – the student has learned it well, some parts or at least a little. In addition to language skills the students are asked to evaluate their studying skills. They are asked how well they have participated in classroom, done homework or online exercises, concentrated on studying or co-operated with others. As mentioned above Hautamäki et al. (2002) categorises social skills under learning competences and thus are not taken into account in this part of the analysis. This is also marked in a scale of 3 – *well, something to improve, a lot to improve*. Finally the student are asked to grade themselves and give a reason for that particular grade (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:106). The questionnaire does not make a distinction in whether they mean oral or written. The learner is simply asked to mark whether they can ‘*tell*’ these things about themselves and thus it is unclear if they mean it to be written or spoken. Therefore, it was impossible for the analysis to categorise the questions according to the four different language skills and thus the self-evaluation questionnaires are discussed separately. However, it was interesting to notice that language learning strategies were under evaluation as well. This clearly demonstrates that the authors have taken into account the fact that the language learning strategies

and competence were both listed in the NCCBE English as an A-language section.

The fourth "*Spotlight on learning*" which is the first self-evaluation form in the second course of English in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade focuses on the learner's homework. The questionnaire asks about when and how they do their homework. How they make sure that they have learned the vocabulary. Who checks that they have learned the vocabulary or how they do it themselves. Finally the questionnaire asks about how they can improve their learning (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:140). There are both open-ended questions as well as statements that can be chosen or completed in the questionnaire. It is interesting to notice that the whole self-evaluation form concentrates on homework rather than taking into account other important aspects in language learning such as study skills or learning strategies and language competence.

The "*Spotlight on learning*" which is situated after the fifth unit deals with learning vocabulary. The learner is asked to tick the statements that suit how they learn words and phrases. There are altogether 15 statements of which 3 focus on practicing words orally, 8 concentrate on practicing them with writing and one deals with practicing online. There are also 3 statements that focus on other ways to learn words, for example, associating words with pictures, other languages or using gestures of movements to learn new words. At the end of the page, there are couple of lines reserved for which of the statements are useful and which are worth to try (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:170). This was asked to discuss with a partner. So, it also involved discussing about language learning. This is a remarkable difference since it is the first time that students are asked to share their views on language learning with someone else by a textbook.



The final “*Spotlight on learning*” section is after the 6<sup>th</sup> unit. It is similar to the third “*Spotlight on learning*” but obviously focuses on the topics learned in units 4 to 6. Again language skills and studying skills are evaluated and the learner is asked to grade themselves and write down reasons for the particular grade (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:206). Again, no distinction between written or spoken abilities is made. However, perhaps that is the point. The learner needs to consider and ponder about their language competence from all the different aspects. When they evaluate themselves they need to think whether they can express what is asked both in writing and spoken language. Therefore, the authors have chosen the phrase “I can tell...”. What was interesting to notice, however, was that these end-of-the-course self-evaluations did not ask anything about co-operation nor homework which strongly dominated in the previous self-evaluation questionnaires.

In conclusion, the self-evaluation sections in *Spotlight 7* emphasised participation in the classroom, which included co-operation with others and homework. Also goals and more interestingly how they could be reached were asked several times. In one of the self-evaluation forms the learner was asked to write a message to the teacher about anything connected to their English studies. That was quite different from the other self-evaluations and also a rather inspiring way to make sure that the learner communicates with their teacher and perhaps opens up to let them know if there is something bothering him/her. Since it is written down, the learner does not have to express it aloud in the classroom, which could result in being embarrassing for the learner as they are teenagers.

To sum up the following points of the textbooks could be made. In both of the books a similar strategy had been used when planning the self-evaluation forms, as in both *Spotlight 7* and *Smart Moves 1* there were two similarly structured self-evaluation questionnaires, which acted as the end-of-the-

course evaluations. Although the two textbooks differed remarkably on what they asked the learner to consider, they still had some similar aspects. In both textbooks the self-evaluations asked about homework and participation in class. However, *Smart Moves 1* was more concentrated on asking the learner to evaluate their vocabulary or grammar learning whereas *Spotlight 7* was more focused on making a difference between language competence and study skills. Both textbooks asked the student what their target grade was and what they could do to improve. In addition to these *Spotlight 7* asked about how the students prepare for exams and whether they use the internet and particularly the book based exercises on the publishing house's webpage. *Smart Moves 1* had used a different approach and did not make the difference between study skills and language competence but had divided the questions according to the four language skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening). Moreover, *Smart Moves 1* asked the self-evaluation to be signed by both the teacher and parents.

According to Hautamäki et al. (2002:36), Self-related beliefs consist of the learner's insight of themselves as a person and as a learner. Therefore, Self-related beliefs include the self-esteem of the learner, their self-concept in different academic disciplines, goal orientation as well as self-evaluation (Hautamäki et al., 2002:36). Hautamäki et al. (2002:45-46) continue that self-evaluation consists of scales of self-esteem, the social self-concept, experienced support from significant others and also the learner's views of themselves as a learner as well as self-awareness. In other words this means that the students view themselves as learners (good student vs. sluggish) and what they need to do in order to influence the situation they are in (how to improve their language skills, for instance). These aspects could be seen to some extent in the self-evaluation forms in both textbooks. For example, goals and how to reach them as well as what to improve were asked in the self-evaluation forms. Moreover, both of the textbooks had included other

people in the self-evaluation questionnaires in ways that emphasised helping others as well as how to get help in terms of the learner's English studies.

However, the self-evaluation forms were not designed for the learner to gain an understanding of how they view themselves as learners of English language. It did not cover self-esteem nor the support from significant others but rather encouraged the learner to realise that they could be of help to their classmates. However, the self-evaluation questionnaires did include factors that support learning to learn as it also clearly encouraged learners to set goals and to think how they could be reach as well as how to improve their language skills. Moreover, *Spotlight 7* asked learners in addition to their language skills, to also think about their study skills. Also homework and effort were both emphasised in *Smart Moves 1* as well as *Spotlight 7*. However, as mentioned above, the self-evaluation questionnaires leave room for development in terms of taking into account all the aspects of learning to learn in self-evaluation.

### **6.3. Learning Competences**

Learning competences were the most emphasised learning to learn concept in the textbooks. According to Hautamäki et al. (2002), Learning Competences consists of cognitive skills and abilities and affective control skills and abilities (ibid.). According to Hautamäki et al. (2002), affective skills and abilities refer to control of emotions and the learner's use of these emotions in cognitive tasks. Affective control skills and abilities are not beliefs and thus do not fall under the two categories of Context- or Self-related beliefs. Hautamäki et al. (2002:41) points out that these emotions are more like experiences that occur during cognitive action. In terms of language learning, when the learner completes a certain task he/she might

have a fear of failure due to previous experiences with similar tasks. Thus, this affects the learning process.

Furthermore, learning competences are divided into four different categories (Hautamäki et al., 2002) The first one, called *Learning domain*, deals with the application of what is learned and reading comprehension (ibid.). This means that it consists of reading comprehension as well as applying previously learned information. From language learner's perspective, this might occur with completing, for example, text-based exercises. The learner needs to be familiar with the text in question in order to complete the exercises in the workbook successfully. Usually, the learner is asked certain words or phrases that occurred in the particular text. Thus, applying new information is important.

The second part, called *Reasoning domain*, consists of reasoning skills for creating new information (Hautamäki et al., 2002). This part is where problem solving is located. The *Reasoning domain* is involved with reasoning and deduction in order to construct new information. In terms of language learning, this would probably entail, for instance, word formation. The process in which the learner realises that by adding *-ly* in the end of adjective it changes into an adverb, would be an example of logical reasoning and deduction.

The third part is called *Management of learning* (Hautamäki et al., 2002). This deals with managing learning as an action in different contexts. This is where learning strategies have a crucial role. *Management of learning* consists of the real use of study skills during a task (Hautamäki et al., 2002). As for learning a language, this would mean that the learner uses, for example, memorising techniques when learning new words. Such techniques might include elaboration or grouping words.

The final part of Language Competences is called *Affective self-regulation* (Hautamäki et al., 2002). This means one's cognitive and emotional control in demanding and challenging tasks. *Affective self-regulation* consists of setting the aspiration level as well as tolerance for ambivalences (Hautamäki et al., 2003). In other words, this means that the learner during a certain task sets goals for him-/herself. The tolerance for ambivalences refers to the use of compensation strategies. In terms of language learning, the learner might be able to finish a task, although he/she does not know each and every word. According to Hautamäki et al. (2002, 2003) *Affective self-regulation* also consists of persistence with post-failure reflectivity and management of resourcefulness. In terms of language learning, this means that even though the learner makes mistakes he/she should accept that no one is perfect and move on from that and use all the deductive abilities and resources that one can find within a certain context to complete a task. In other words, use the context to figure out a certain word, for example.

Hautamäki et al. (2003) had added a fifth category under *Learning competences* that was not included in the previous studies. This is called *Social skills* (Hautamäki et al., 2003). According to Hautamäki et al. (2003:44) *Social skills* consist of "interpersonal skills that could be expected to contribute to learning competence". In terms of language learning this includes co-operation with other learners as well as the teacher during, for example, a speaking exercise.

In the present study mostly learning strategies were found as it would be hard to find one's thoughts of how they feel about certain tasks since the object of the study is textbooks. In the textbooks attention was mostly paid to speaking and reading. However, it was interesting to note that *Smart Moves 1* had given no advice on writing tasks besides mentioning writing briefly during instructions for reading. This section first focuses on listening and moves from there to reading, speaking and writing.

### 6.3.1. Listening

In both *Spotlight 7* and *Smart Moves 1* all the tips for helping the learner in listening were situated in the workbook. In *Spotlight 7* all the tips were written next to a listening comprehension exercise, listening comprehension and pronunciation exercise or next to an oral speaking exercise. The same goes with *Smart Moves 1*. In *Smart Moves 1* there was only one set of instruction that was situated before a listening comprehension exercise. It was truly thorough and it gave the learner very clear instructions on what to do in a listening comprehension exercises. It instructed the learner to

- find out what the listening comprehension was dealing before the listening
- read aloud the vocabulary related to the exercise before with a partner and check the pronunciation
- read the questions before the listening
- concentrate on listening what is said related to the questions or statements in the exercise
- not to panic if they don't understand everything but to concentrate on the listening
- leave their partner some privacy when completing the exercise (*Smart Moves 1, Exercises 2009:10*).

In *Spotlight 7* the tips were situated on several pages throughout the workbook. Instead of one longer set of instructions the learner was advised to

- ask their teacher or partner the words they don't understand before the listening
- read the instructions of the exercise carefully and to focus on listening
- not to get worried if they don't understand every word
- pay attention to the phonetic alphabet since correct pronunciation will help to understand speech

- listen to their partner and to help them with difficult parts and to correct their mistakes (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009: 20, 56, 68, 99).

Both of the textbooks advised the student what to do before listening. *Smart Moves 1* stated that the learner should find out what the listening comprehension task was about first whereas *Spotlight 7* advised the student to ask their teacher or a friend any words they did not know. Both of the textbooks asked the learner to read – *Spotlight 7* the instructions and *Smart Moves 1* the questions and check the vocabulary and pronunciation. Moreover, both of the textbooks had situated all their advice concerning listening in their exercise or workbooks. Again, both of the textbooks asked the learner to just concentrate on listening and not to panic if they do not understand every word. However, there was some different advice as well. *Smart Moves 1* told the learner to concentrate on their own task and not to interrupt their partner's work, whereas *Spotlight 7* asked to pay attention to the phonetic alphabet as it will help one with the listening. Also listening was pointed out next to a speaking exercise as the learner was asked to listen carefully what their partner is saying and correct their mistakes.

In both of the books *Management of Learning* and *Affective Self-Regulation* was taken into account with the instructions that was provided for listening. According to Hautamäki et al. (2002:43), *Management of Learning* category deals with how the learner plans their learning activities before a certain task. In terms of listening both of the books obviously instructed the learner on what to do before a listening comprehension exercises. *Affective Self-Regulation* on the other hand, consists of the learners hope for success versus fear of failure, their persistence and their ability to stay mentally and intellectually focused during a certain task in spite of temporary confusion or frustration. This could also be seen in both textbooks advising the learners not to panic during listening comprehension exercises if one does not remember or understand every single word. However, that could also be

thought to be a learning strategy which is trying to teach the learner that one can guess the word's meaning from the context even though they have never heard that particular word before. This could be considered to be part of logical reasoning as well since it is trying to teach the learner how to complete a task without having every word translated. In language learning, learning to learn plays a very crucial role. It is impossible for a learner to learn by heart each every word and their multiple meanings in a foreign language since there are hundreds of thousands of words to remember. Thus these kinds of methods are especially important.

Hautamäki et al. (2003:44) also include social skills under the heading of Learning Competences. These skills consist of interpersonal skills that will help the student to learn through co-operation (ibid.). Hautamäki et al. (2002) continue that the learner's self-confidence, pro-sociality, withdrawal and task orientation in group assignments will have an influence on their learning to learn. In terms of listening, only *Spotlight 7* had pointed out co-operation and *Smart Moves 1*, on the other hand, strictly instructed the learner to leave their partner alone and not to bother them during an exercise. Obviously *Spotlight 7* did not encourage their learners to interfere with their classmates listening comprehension but rather to advance them to ask unclear points before the listening.

### **6.3.2. Reading**

In *Spotlight 7* five different sets of instructions connected to reading were found. They were situated in quite different places in the workbook. Two of the instructions were mentioned twice in different parts of the book. The first one dealt with what the learner should do at home in order to help to learn vocabulary: "*Texts in the textbook are worth reading aloud at home. It will help you to recall the words*" (*Spotlight 7 workbook*, 2009:48, 84). In both times this was placed next to text-based exercises that were designed to teach vocabulary.



The other piece of advice that was mentioned twice, dealt with learning irregular verbs in English. *“Learn the irregular verbs properly. They are the most common verbs in the English language.”* (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:54, 90). Both times this was situated next to a grammar exercise. That piece of advice was categorized under reading because in order to learn the irregular verbs one must read them and because neither writing or speaking (aka reading aloud) were mentioned.

Two out of the three pieces of advice included in *Spotlight 7* were placed in similar contexts. The first one was situated next to an oral exercise. It stated that *“A/B exercises are useful when revising for exams”* (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:55). The other one was also situated between an oral exercise and a writing assignment. It stated that *“You can get a lot of help to your writing task from the texts you read. However, do not copy the text directly”* (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:88).

The third one was placed on the text-based vocabulary section and it advised the learner about the pronunciation. *“When studying words, look closely at the pronunciation key. In this book the British pronunciation is used”* (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:8). This piece of advice was categorised to be both reading (as it clearly instructs you to read the phonetic transcription) but also speaking as it deals with how you can improve your pronunciation.

In *Smart Moves 1* reading was the most covered language skill. Reading was covered in three different parts of the books, two of which were situated in the exercise book under the headings of vocabulary and structure, and studying texts. The first heading – vocabulary and structure advised the learner in the following way: *“If there is a word you don’t know read on and see what kind of context it appears. You might be able to figure out what the word means. At least you can conclude if it describes an action (verb) or thing or an item (noun) etc.”* (Smart Moves 1 Exercises, 2009:94).

The other more comprehensive set of instructions was placed in the exercise book as well. This was titled studying texts and it dealt with what to do at home after studying the text in classroom. It advised the learner to:

- first read the text quietly and to make sure that you understand the contents of the text
- to read the text-based vocabulary list aloud and to make sure that you pronounce the words correctly
- having done that the learner should read the text again and this time aloud
- to learn the words from the vocabulary list by first covering the Finnish translations and reading the English words and having done that to do the same again but this time cover the English words to learn them with the help of the Finnish translations
- finally do the exercises that were given as homework with the help of the text-based vocabulary (Smart Moves 1 Exercises, 2009:11).

The final suggestion for the learner to complete the exercises that were given as homework could be considered as a part of writing task as well. However, one cannot conclude whether the teacher has actually given the learner any exercises that include writing at all. Maybe the teacher gives them speaking exercises or something else and therefore, this part was not included in the writing section at all.

Another section where reading instructions were given for the learner was situated in the inside cover of the *Smart Moves 1 Text*. It was titled as Homework in English whereas the other sets of instructions were titled in Finnish. This section was divided into two different sets. The first section instructed the learner in the following way:

- When studying a new text one should first glance at the text. Read the title and look at the pictures. Think what the text will be about.

- Then read the text quietly and think what is the key issue and with the help of the text-based vocabulary check the parts that you did not understand.

The second part dealt with what to do when you have a text as homework. This section was almost identical to the one in the exercise book that was mentioned earlier. It had all the same points but they were expressed differently.

As mentioned above Hautamäki et al. (2002) include study skills and what learner's do prior to a certain task under the heading of Management of Learning. This was again the most appeared part of Learning Competences. In conclusion, *Spotlight 7 textbook* tried to appeal to the learner's logical reasoning and to study skills (Management of Learning) as well. However, *Spotlight 7* had not paid so much attention to reading comprehension whereas *Smart Moves 1* had clearly demonstrated reading strategies when foreign language is concerned. Moreover, *Spotlight 7* supported reading with logical reasoning as they referred with the irregular verbs that it is practical to learn them by heart. The same goes with the using spoken exercises to help with exam revision or reading texts helps the learner with their writing tasks. However, *Spotlight 7* did not instruct their learners directly about reading comprehension but was rather concentrated on learning vocabulary, using reading to help in writing tasks or with pronunciation. *Smart Moves 1* had quite a different approach. They introduced learning strategies to in order to help the learner with foreign language texts. Firstly, learning domain was the most emphasised part of Learning Competences in *Smart Moves 1* which clearly demonstrated to the learner the importance of reading comprehension and how it could be achieved. They connected the reading of texts with studying vocabulary and introducing reading strategies. Overall, the books had quite a different view when reading was concerned. *Smart Moves 1*, clearly gave instructions on how to approach the text and how to study the context so that it will be effective whereas *Spotlight 7* settled for

much more fragmented instructions that mainly concentrated on studying words instead of complete articles, for instance.

In terms of social skills neither of the books had mentioned co-operation connected to reading as a language competence. As mentioned above in *Smart Moves 1* the instructions regarding to reading were placed in both books; *Exercises* and *Texts* whereas in *Spotlight 7* all the instructions were placed in the *Spotlight 7 workbook*. This is probably why they instructed their learners in such a different manner. *Spotlight 7* did not concentrate on giving neither their learners helpful reading strategies nor what to do prior to reading a text or if one does not understand every word. Instead, it focused remembering vocabulary by heart and using reading to aid in other language competences. *Smart Moves 1* on the other hand had a bigger picture in mind when advising their learners and instructed on useful strategies to approach new study texts and improve one's learning of English.

### **6.3.3. Speaking**

Speaking was the part that was most emphasized in *Spotlight 7*. However, in *Smart Moves 1* this was not the case. In *Smart Moves 1* there was the mentioning of reading aloud when studying texts and vocabulary at home and pointing out how important it is to know the phonetic alphabet. The learner was asked to practice with a partner and correct each other's mistakes as they read vocabulary (*Smart Moves 1 Exercises*, 2009:21). Besides those two instructions, speaking was not advised at all.

In *Spotlight 7* there were all together 8 sets of instruction for the learner which were categorized as relating to speaking as a language skill. Some of these instructions belonged to another category as well, which was either reading or writing. Three out of eight were placed in the inside cover of *Spotlight 7 textbook*, the others were in the workbook. The instructions on the

cover guided the learner to read aloud as it will improve one's pronunciation, to study words together (this was thought to include speaking as two or more people are involved) and to write the difficult word in your notebook and make up your own sentences that will include the word as it will help you to speak better, too. The latter was the piece of advice that was also categorized under writing and the two before that under reading.

The sets on instructions that were placed in the workbook were situated in different contexts. Two of them were situated on the spread together with text-based vocabularies. They dealt with reading the words aloud and paying attention to pronunciation and working with a partner to revise vocabulary. *"You can recall words better if you revise often. Ask words from your partner, either orally or ask them to write the words down. Give your partner feedback and point out those parts that they need to revise"* (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:108). *"When you study vocabulary look at the pronunciation key. In this book, the phonetic transcriptions are in accordance with British English"* (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:8).

There was also a piece of advice written next to text-based exercises. It instructed the learner to ask for advice from the teacher or one's partner. However, it also reminded of helping other learners in the classroom. *"While completing the exercises, don't hesitate to ask for help from your teacher or partner. Also, remember to help others"* (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:146). Another instruction was placed between listening comprehension exercises. It stated that *"Correct pronunciation helps with understanding spoken English. When learning new words, remember to pay attention to the phonetic alphabet"* (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:56). This was categorized as listening and speaking.

The final instruction that was categorized as speaking was also categorized as reading. As mentioned earlier it was placed next to oral exercise and it

stated that one should also pay attention to these type of exercises when revising for an exam. "*A/B exercises are useful when revising for exams*" (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:55).

To sum up in *Spotlight 7* only four out of eight tips instructed the learner to study with a partner and in *Smart Moves 1* co-operation was mentioned only once. This is significant since speaking is probably one of the only areas in language learning that it is crucial to have a partner as speaking alone is rather pointless. Also, half of the tips (four out of eight) concentrated on vocabulary learning. Pronunciation was mentioned in three sets of instructions. It was interesting to notice that co-operation was mentioned only in half of the advice and the emphasis was on vocabulary learning, pronunciation and correcting your partner's mistakes. Why was the learner not given advice on what to do if one does not remember a certain word, or about intonation since that is important as well, or how to react in English conversations to what is said in the conversation. Most interesting point was not to include any advice on compensation strategies as they had already advised how to use compensation strategies in listening and reading. Moreover, logical reasoning was the only learning competence that was emphasised and this was only as the authors tried to appeal to the learner on how important it is to learn new words. The tolerance for ambivalences was left out as several other aspects in learning competences by Hautamäki et al. (2003:38).

In conclusion neither of the books provided comprehensive advice for the learner on speaking as a language skill. They concentrated only on appealing their students' logical reasoning in terms of how learning vocabulary will help them with speaking. It demonstrates rather limited view on speaking as a language skill. Co-operation was mentioned but not emphasised to the point of actually having a conversation with someone. The instructions of speaking concentrated merely on reading aloud or correcting one's partner's

mistakes. Both of the books had situated these tips on both books; exercises or workbook and texts or textbook.

#### 6.3.4. Writing

The final language skill is writing. What was interesting to note was that this only appeared in *Spotlight 7*. In *Smart Moves 1*, however, there were no instructions for the learner to practice or improve their writing skills. In *Spotlight 7 workbook* five of these instructions were written on spread that also contained text-based vocabularies. These all involved help for learning new words. They included the following advice:

- *“Mark down the words that are new to you. Learn them especially. Write them into your notebook and use them in your own sentences”* (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:8).
- *“Drawing a mind map is a good way to learn new words”* (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:143).
- *“Associating words with pictures helps learning. Create your own picture dictionary to your notebook”* (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:172).
- *“You can recall words better if you revise often. Ask the words from your partner orally or in writing. Give him/her feedback and point out those parts that they need to practice on”* (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:108).

Two writing tips were situated next to different exercises. The first one was placed next to a drawing exercise and it stated that *“Associating words to pictures makes it easier to learn them”* (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:45). The other one asked the student to group the words according to their part of speech: *“Grouping the word helps to memorize them. You can categorize words in your notebook, for example, in terms of theme or part of speech (verbs, nouns, adjectives)”* (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:175). Again this was placed next to an

exercise that asked the student to categorize the words under different headings (adjectives, nouns, verbs).

One of the other instructions was written next to a writing task. It informed the learner to make up word lists. *“Create your own word lists that are connected to the questions in a writing task. They will work as the body of your text”* (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:184).

There were two other instructions that were also categorized as reading or speaking. The first one was already mentioned earlier as a part of speaking and it was written on the inside cover of *Spotlight 7 Textbook*. It asked the student to write down the difficult words and make up their own sentences as it will also improve one’s speaking. The other dealt with reading and was placed next to an oral exercise. It stated that *“The texts you read will help you with your writing. However, do not copy the text from word to word”* (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:88).

In conclusion *Spotlight 7* concentrated on providing students with useful study skills. As mentioned above, according to Hautamäki et al. (2002:43), study skills fall under the category of Management of Learning which also concentrates on what the learners should do before a certain task. This was pointed out in the advice that asked the learner to write down a list of words before completing a composition. Social skills which Hautamäki et al. (2002) also include under Learning Competences, was again connected with vocabulary learning and not particularly to improve one’s writing competence. Moreover, co-operation was mentioned only once. The rest of the advice concentrated mainly on writing single words or sentences, not small stories or longer tasks such as compositions apart from the one mentioned above. The instructions mainly focused on memorising techniques such as mind maps, picture dictionaries, elaboration or in other words writing your own sentences. These are categorised as study skills that



fall under the topic Management of Learning according to Hautamäki et al. (2002:35). However, logical reasoning and affective self-regulation were not mentioned. The most crucial note was that writing as a language competence was not mentioned at all in *Smart Moves 1* which is very interesting as why. Maybe the authors do not consider advising students how to write to be that important. However, the four different language skills were distinguished in the end-of-the-course self-evaluations including writing which had its own questions in the form. It is rather surprising that the authors did not see the need to advise the student on this skill but still asked them to evaluate themselves accordance to writing English and asked how they could improve their English skills (presumably also writing) without giving any advice on how.

#### **6.4. Other concepts relating to learning to learn**

Other concepts relating to learning to learn that did not fall under the different language skills category was the effective use of the studying material. This point came up with the European Union's concept of learning to learn. They include in their definition of learning to learn the effective management of time and information (Educational Council, 2006 annex, paragraph 5). This type of advice was only found in *Spotlight 7 workbook*. In *Smart Moves 1* there was no advice for the learner on how to use the learning material provided effectively or how to use it at all. There were five different tips in *Spotlight 7 workbook*, however, one of them was mentioned five times. Three of the tips were aimed for the learner to use the internet exercises that the publishing house has provided for that book series. The internet exercises were mentioned seven times. This could be considered to instruct the learner for the revision exercises or that it actually is a marketing technique as the online exercises for this book are actually charged for. Hence the sincerity of this advice is controversial. However, there was some advice that was actually beneficial for the learner in terms of how to use the books. The first

one appeared in the front cover of the *Spotlight 7 textbook* and it stated that the text-based vocabulary is actually situated in the workbook and one can get a lot of help for the texts from there. The second beneficial advice was about the vocabulary in the workbook. It said that those verbs that are marked with asterisk (\*) are irregular and that the second form is in the simple past. Also among the text-based exercises a piece of advice was written that stated *“When you are completing the exercises in the workbook, make sure that you will have your textbook open too”* (Spotlight 7 workbook, 2009:14). This helps the learner to complete the text-based exercises more easily.

In conclusion these instructions could be considered to fall under three different categories in Learning Competences. Firstly, Management of Learning, which according to Hautamäki et al. (2002), consist of study skills and orientation to different tasks, was emphasised the most. Opening the textbook, for completing exercises in the workbook definitely fall under this category. Persistence which is included in the Affective Self-Regulation category could be seen in the encouragement of advising learners to practice online also. Comprehension could be considered to be covered in the advice of where the text-based vocabulary is situated. However, co-operation was not included in terms of advising the learners on how to use the book efficiently.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

The present study was set to find out how EFL textbooks used in secondary schools in Finland reflect learning to learn as defined by Hautamäki et al. (2000, 2002, 2003) and the European Union. The research questions aimed to find out how and in which contexts learning to learn occurs in EFL textbooks. Moreover, the study was designed to find out which language competences (writing, speaking, listening and reading) were emphasised by the advice given to the learner in terms of improving their study skills. Thus the analysis was not restricted to one or two specific issues beforehand.

Previous research on learning to learn has mainly focused on finding out how learning to learn can be measured and the object of these studies have previously been the learners. However, how learning to learn is incorporated in textbooks has not been a subject of research before. Thus, it was interesting to study textbooks from this angle.

Overall two textbooks that were aimed at lower secondary school students (7<sup>th</sup> graders) were analysed. First content analysis was used to evaluate all the tips and pieces of advice that was provided for the learner. This stage involved categorising all the tips under the different language competences and analysing the collected data in terms of learning to learn. The second stage included analysing all the data that was not categorised under language competences such as self-evaluation sections and other data that did not fall under these categories.

At a tentative reading both textbooks seemed to have taken learning to learn into account to some extent but at places it seemed rather shallow. This means that the textbooks had not paid attention on the whole perspective on how learning to learn was presented in the textbook but either had printed fragmentary tips on learning a language or written a few sets of instructions

more thoroughly but forgotten a certain language competence e.g. writing. Moreover, there were significant changes on how the two textbooks approached the subject and the number of tips and advice were remarkably different in the textbooks. For example, in terms of the textbooks providing useful tips for the students that included speaking and writing *Smart Moves 1* had from one vague mentioning to none advice on those matters, whereas *Spotlight 7* had more balanced approach to providing studying information to learners on the four different language skills.

The results indicated that learning to learn is a phenomenon that was clearly present in both of the textbooks. However, not all aspects were covered and to some extent it seemed like the books had only scratched the surface. The tips and advice were somewhat fragmented and neither of the books gave comprehensive instructions on all the areas connected to learning to learn nor on all the language competences. For example, *Smart Moves 1* did not put much effort into advising the learner on how to improve their writing skills in English nor did *Spotlight 7* include much advice on reading. Mostly, the textbooks had concentrated on learning competences in regarding learning to learn and even then they had not included much problem solving tips or explaining useful reading techniques for the learner.

No Context-related beliefs were found which was to be expected since they deal with the attitudes and support for the learner from other people or how the learner's personal experiences and background affected his/her learning. However, an attempt to include this in the self-evaluation questionnaire was made when the learners were asked about who could help them with their studies. This however, was only asked once and does not really give any insight on the perceived support for learning and studying.

Self-related beliefs, on the other hand, were found, then again only in the forms of self-evaluation. Not all the aspects of Self-related beliefs, for

example, future orientation. The self-evaluation forms differed quite remarkably on what they emphasised and how they were structured. The questionnaires merely just scratched the surface and did not offer any motivational tools or insight of how the learner sees him-/herself as a language learner. To some extent the self-evaluations were focused on asking the learner to choose whether they had done their homework or participated in the classroom.

The final aspect of learning to learn, which is Learning competences, were probably the most visible in the two textbooks. This includes all the study skills, problem-solving, deduction and what is to be done before a certain task. Mostly study skills were emphasised and even then the information provided was not remotely comprehensive although some good points were made in both textbooks. Thus, the results indicate that learning to learn had been noticed by the textbook authors but quite light-heartedly. At points it seemed that some features had been just added there, because it was necessary but they had not really looked into how to develop these issues to the full potential in order to support and help the learner to learn more efficiently.

One of the goals of the present study was to find out in which contexts learning to learn was placed in the books. At first, both of the books had placed the data in question in the same places in the book: inside cover of the textbook but mostly in the workbooks. More in-depth analysis revealed, however, that in the workbook the placement of learning to learn advice was placed in quite different places. *Smart Moves 1* had placed their advice under different headings in the beginning of the book. For example, the first advice on listening was before the first listening comprehension task in the workbook. As they had covered all the points in the very first unit there was no advice written in the latter units whereas *Spotlight 7* had written smaller tips throughout the book. However, mostly both of the books had placed the

advice in a context that was somehow connected to it. For instance, tips connected to vocabulary learning were situated in the vocabulary section of the book.

In retrospect I could have put more effort in the analysis in terms of categorising the data more thoroughly. Some pieces of advice and tips could have been categorised under two different categories and the analysis could have been more detailed and more profound. Despite the criticism, I think that the present study succeeded in combining the method and theory and the research material in question. Moreover, I have acquired a more critical approach to reading textbooks and I intend to use the experience and knowledge that I have obtained in my career as a teacher.

There are actually no limitations to further studies. As mentioned above, Hoskins and Fredriksson (2008) pointed out that it is crucial to develop the research regarding learning to learn further. Instead of focusing on learning to learn in lower secondary EFL textbooks, it would indeed be interesting to find out, for example, how learning to learn appears differently in upper secondary school textbooks and in the national curriculum for secondary education. Moreover, research could be extended to cover all the material provided for the students and teachers. A comparison with the lower and upper secondary school textbooks in regarding how learning to learn is reflected in them would introduce an interesting aspect for future study. Furthermore, the contexts in which learning to learn appears in the books could be analysed further. For example, is there a cartoon where someone is saying learning tips instead of just a written list of what is beneficial for the learner? This would make it interesting as to study what appeals for the learners. Also the analytical toolkit used in the present study could be extended to, for instance, interviews of learners and teachers on how they feel about the material provided in regarding to the aspects of learning to

learn. The importance of studying learning to learn and its effects on EFL textbooks should be taken into account by developing the research further.

Textbooks have been studied previously to some extent and the research in regarding learning to learn has been in focus in Europe in the past few decades. However, no previous studies on how learning to learn is reflected in textbook were found. During the past few decades, learning to learn has been discussed in educational policies, particularly in Finland, and in the European Union but also throughout the world. Thus, it was not surprising that elements of learning to learn were present in the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004 although it did not use the term learning to learn as such. Therefore, it was to be expected that the modern textbooks that followed the guidelines of NCCBE 2004 would indeed have these issues integrated in them.

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