

PRESENTATION OF THE ENGLISH PASSIVE
IN FOUR FINNISH UPPER SECONDARY
SCHOOL EFL TEXTBOOKS

Bachelor's thesis

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<p>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</p> <p>Kieliopin opettaminen on alusta alkaen ollut keskeinen osa nykyaikaista vieraiden kielten opetusta. Mielipiteitä siitä, kuinka kielioppi määritellään, kuinka sitä tulee opettaa ja onko sen opettaminen ylipäättään tarpeen, on esitetty lukemattomia. Tässä tutkielmassa on omaksuttu Thornburyn (1991:1) määritelmä kieliopista tietyn kielen erilaisten mahdollisten rakenteiden ja muotojen tutkimuksena. Kieliopin opetuksen historiaa tarkastellaan kolmen keskeisen vaiheen kautta.</p> <p>Tutkielmassani tarkastellaan neljän suomalaisen lukiotason A1-englannin oppikirjan osioita, joissa käsitellään passiivia. Tavoitteena on ollut löytää yhtäläisyyksiä ja eroja tavoissa, joilla passiivi esitellään opiskelijoille sekä tehtävissä, joiden kautta passiivin käyttöä harjoitellaan. Tutkimusmenetelmänä on käytetty laadullista sisältöanalyysia.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat, että passiivia harjoitetaan tutkituissa oppikirjoissa pääasiassa käännöslauseilla suomesta englantiin ja englannista suomeen, sekä niin kututuilla fill the gap -harjoituksilla, joissa oppilaat täydentävät muuten valmiisiin englanninkielisiin lauseisiin tietyn puuttuvan kohdan vihjeen perusteella. Lisäksi voidaan todeta, että käytetyt menetelmät eivät kannusta aitoon vuorovaikutukseen vieraalla kielellä; ryhmässä suoritettavien tehtävien määrä on lähes olematon ja suullisia tehtäviä on suhteellisen vähän. Autenttista kielimateriaalia hyödynnetään varsin rajoitetusti, ja deduktiivista oppimista tuetaan hyvin harvoin. Näin ollen voidaan todeta, että tutkitut kirjat osoittautuivat tarjottujen tehtävätyyppien valossa melko yksipuolisiksi ja vanhanaikaisiksi.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

Grammar and teaching grammar have been central to foreign language teaching throughout history. The role of grammar has been discussed widely, and grammar itself has been seen both as the basis for language learning and teaching and as something that need not be taught explicitly at all.

In this study, I discuss four Finnish EFL textbooks. My interest is in how grammar is presented in recent textbooks; what kinds of approaches are chosen and how grammar items are practised. I have decided to narrow the study down to one grammar item, the English passive. The reasons for this are practical, as I do not have the resources to study every grammar item presented in the textbooks thoroughly. By focusing on one item, I will be able to find out enough information to compare the textbooks and describe their approaches to grammar teaching. The reason for choosing the passive instead of some other grammar item is a personal belief that the passive can be taught and learned in many ways; using authentic materials and allowing learners to produce language relatively freely are, in my opinion, methods that could be used in teaching the passive, perhaps even more easily and effectively than in teaching some other grammar items such as articles or prepositions. In other words, the passive is the grammar item that I find the most interesting in terms of my study, and one I believe could be taught in a variety of ways in different textbooks.

The key concepts of my study are naturally grammar and different approaches to it, such as prescriptive and descriptive grammar etc. More specifically, the English passive as a grammar item is central to my study. Another important concept in my study are textbooks and different kinds of exercises in them.

Textbooks have been studied before rather extensively (see e.g. Hickman and Porfilio 2012), but it seems that grammar in textbooks has not been the most fashionable target of study lately. Instead, most of the recent textbook studies seem to focus on things such as the representation of gender, ethnic groups, taboo words etc. in textbooks.

English grammar and its different items, of course, have been studied thoroughly a number of times (see e.g. Wanner 2009). Having a relatively thorough understanding of, in this case, the English passive, validates the study of how the item in question is presented in different Finnish EFL textbooks. Quite similarly, there are numerous publications and views (e.g.

Thornbury 1999), on how grammar should be taught, which again appears to justify my study on how it actually is taught in Finnish EFL textbooks.

Textbooks studies and grammar studies have been conducted in numbers, as mentioned above. However, it appears that studies which would combine the two, i.e. studying how grammar is represented in textbooks, are not quite that common. There have been studies such as that by Ellis (2002), in which he discusses different methodological options for teaching grammar in textbooks. Ellis (2002:176) discovered that an obvious tradition can be seen in grammar teaching materials, which strongly relies on explicit description of grammar items and controlled production exercises. A study on Finnish EFL grammar teaching materials, however, is yet to be conducted.

In practice, what I aim at with this study is finding out what methods and views are used in presenting the English passive in EFL textbooks and how similar or different the textbooks in question are with regard to the question presented. This is important, as the methods and the quality of the recent Finnish EFL textbooks have not been studied very extensively. With this study, I hope to be able to describe the chosen methods in the textbooks in order to gain information on the approaches they take. This makes it possible to describe and compare the books themselves.

The approach I have chosen for this study is purely comparative. I do not wish to evaluate the books or their efficiency to a large extent, apart from perhaps commenting on the range of different methods or types of exercises in them. This is due to the fact that in order to evaluate how well the books serve their purpose, one would have to study how teachers actually use them and what kinds of results learners get with each of the books. With this comparative method, I intend to find out the most prominent characteristics, similarities and differences of the sections on passive in the four books.

In the following sections, I will firstly discuss the concept of grammar in relation to foreign language teaching, and, more specifically, define the English passive as a grammar item. Secondly, I will introduce the studied data and explain the methods used in analysing it. Thirdly, I will report on the results of my study, and finally, discuss these results and make some concluding remarks.

2 GRAMMAR AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

2.1 Grammar and rules

Defining the concept of grammar is not a simple task. The Oxford English Grammar (1996:22-23) starts to define the term by pointing out that grammar can refer to syntax, i.e. how words can be combined to form structures such as clauses and sentences, but it can also include other aspects such as morphology, word-formation, phonetics, phonology, orthography, vocabulary, semantics and pragmatics. Thornbury (1999:1) defines grammar as the study of the possible structures and forms of a certain language and as “a description of the rules that govern how a language’s sentences are formed”. Rules are indeed often associated with grammar. Rules, as well as grammar in general, can be divided into prescriptive and descriptive ones (Thornbury 1999:11) – prescriptive referring to rules which indicate how language should be used and descriptive to rules which describe how language is typically used. A third category for rules, and why not for grammar as well, are pedagogic rules. These, according to Thornbury (1999:12), are rules which are understandable to the student and enable them to produce language “with a reasonable chance of success”. Similarly, the Oxford English Grammar (1996:23) divides grammars into reference grammars and pedagogic grammars, the distinction being that reference grammars are often organized alphabetically, resembling dictionaries, and intended for individual consultation, whereas pedagogical grammars are textbooks that aim at teaching aspects of grammar to learners. It seems obvious that Finnish EFL textbooks are pedagogic grammars that should present grammar items through pedagogic rules which, although perhaps not revealing the full picture of the item in question (Thornbury 1999:12), would focus on the needs of the students in order to promote learning. In this paper, I have adopted Thornbury’s definition of grammar as it is perhaps the most practical one in terms of evaluating Finnish EFL textbooks – studying aspects of semantics, pragmatics etc. in relation to grammar does not seem relevant in this study.

2.2 Approaches to teaching grammar

Recent history has seen numerous approaches to teaching grammar, starting from the question of whether grammar should be taught explicitly at all. The role of the student has also been discussed in terms of input and output: for example, Krashen (1981:107) emphasizes the role

of input in language teaching and questions the significance of output, On the other hand, Swain (1993:159-160) defines four functions of output in arguing that input alone is not enough for students. These functions are 1) allowing the development of automatization in the pupils' speech 2) forcing pupils to recognize what they know, what they know partially and what they do not know, 3) allowing the pupils to try out their hypotheses of how language can be used and 4) generating feedback from the environment, which is helpful to the pupil. Roughly put, the major questions regarding how grammar should be taught seem to revolve around whether explicit description of grammar items is needed and whether learners can acquire grammar items to their language use without explicitly focusing on language forms; should grammar teaching focus on form, meaning or both – and how should this be done?

As Nassaji and Fotos (2011:2) explain, the history of teaching grammar can be seen through three general instructional approaches: grammar-based, communication-based and focus on form approaches. According to Nassaji and Fotos (2011:3), grammar has been central to all language teaching throughout history, and language was for a long time seen as a system created by grammar rules. Knowing these rules, then, would be essential and perhaps even sufficient for learners to be able to use a language. This is why the first methods of foreign language grammar teaching were strictly grammar-focused. I will now introduce two such approaches; the grammar-translation method and the direct method.

The grammar-translation method, according to Thornbury (1999:21) usually involves stating a rule explicitly and then practising the rule with exercises that involve translation between the mother tongue of the pupils and the target language. This method focuses primarily on written language. As Johnson (2001:10) explains, the grammar-translation method was more frequently used in the past, but still remains a method that is used in teaching languages in many parts of the world. Johnson (2001:9) criticizes the method for using language that only focuses on practising a grammar point rather than language that actually is or could be used in real life.

The direct method, on the other hand, focuses on oral skills and does not use explicit rules (Thornbury 1999:21). The theory behind this method is that grammar will be acquired by being exposed to the language, similarly to how children learn their first language. Audiolingualism, for example, is a method that developed from the direct method. In audiolingualism, grammar teaching is based on the ideas of behaviourism, such as habit formation and automatization. These can be achieved through drills, i.e. exercises in which

the item to be learned is practised through repeated use. Johnson (2001:10) describes audiolingualism as a method that focuses on a grammar point without explicit instruction or making use of the learners' first language. Habit formation is achieved by providing examples of the correct use of a grammar point and then practising the use with drills. Johnson (2001:167) explains that the popularity of audiolingualism as a teaching method decreased after the beginning of 1960's, as its effectiveness was questioned and new views on language learning challenged the ideas of behaviourism, the theoretical background of audiolingualism.

Nassaji and Fotos (2011:5) explain that grammar-based approaches such as the two discussed previously were eventually found insufficient as they failed to support the communicative needs of L2 learners. The views of language as a set of grammatical forms and rules were questioned and the role of language acquisition became more appreciated in language teaching, as well as the individual developmental processes of the learners; it had become apparent that not all learners picked up language at the same pace and in the same order through drills and repetition. A new school of thought emerged, one which no longer only focused on grammar forms but turned its attention to meaning. Nassaji and Fotos (2011:5) refer to these approaches as communication-based approaches, and whilst they do argue that "there are no established instructional procedures associated with it" and that it is perhaps more of a theory than actual methods, I will discuss one method that according to them has been strongly influenced by communication-based approaches.

As mentioned, Nassaji and Fotos (2011:8) argue that task-based teaching is a method that is mainly based on communicative language teaching. In task-based teaching, the emphasis is on meaning, as Johnson (2001:182) explains: "If, the argument goes, classroom activities succeed in concentrating learners' minds on *what* is being said (message) rather than on *how* it is being said (form), then ultimately the structures will become absorbed." Similarly, Nassaji and Fotos (2011:8) explain that the assumption in task-based teaching is that by performing tasks - meaning-focused activities which encourage learners to communicate in the target language – learners will also acquire forms. This seems to agree with Ellis' (2002:176) demands that grammar teaching materials should include inductive exercises or tasks and tasks which require the learner to process structured input, in order to raise grammar-awareness and enable the learner to discover how the target form can be used.

As Nassaji and Fotos (2011:8) argue, the exclusive focus on meaning in communication-based approaches has been questioned later on, as there is evidence to suggest that having the

learners pay attention to linguistic forms benefits learning and that being exposed to the target language will not lead to acquiring all of the aspects of the language that are provided in the input. For these reasons, some of the most recent views on grammar teaching emphasize the importance of form-focused instruction. According to Nassaji and Fotos (2011:10), this means explicit grammar instruction that exists in communicative contexts. An example of this is the focus on form approach, proposed by Long, as quoted by Nassaji and Fotos (2011:10). The name might be slightly misleading, but the idea behind the method, as Nassaji and Fotos (2011:10) explain, is to “draw the learner’s attention to linguistic forms in the context of meaningful communication”. This approach would therefore combine the strengths of the previously mentioned approaches whilst avoiding their weaknesses. The benefits of this method have been discussed widely (see e.g. Töllinen 2002).

In a previous study on methodological options in grammar teaching, Ellis (2002:160) discovered that two features dominate traditional EFL textbooks: explicit description of grammar items and controlled production exercises on the items. Inductive learning is rarely encouraged as textbooks do not allow learners to discover grammatical rules based on their own observations of the language. Ellis (2002:161) sees discovery learning as a more modern and perhaps a more effective way to teach grammar. Furthermore, he (2002:161) points out that grammar teaching in textbooks often relies on a very restricted number of methods, which may not be the best way to support learning. According to him, traditional grammar teaching views grammar as “a ‘content’ that can be transmitted to students via explicit descriptions and ‘skill’ that is developed through controlled practice – an amalgamation of the beliefs underlying the grammar translation and audiolingual methods”.

I have now summarized the recent history of grammar teaching and reported on Ellis’ study on methodological options in grammar teaching, a study that is similar to mine in many respects. In the next section, I will move from general discussion to more specific terminology regarding my study, as I briefly define the English passive and explain some of its characteristics.

2.3 The English passive

As Wanner (2009:12) explains, the passive is often defined by comparing it to the active in terms of morphology, syntax and semantics. For example, the Oxford English Grammar (1996:57) introduces the passive by discussing the changes that are required to turn an active

sentence into a passive one. These changes, then, would include adding an auxiliary verb, using the passive participle form of the main verb, turning the active object into a passive subject and possibly turning the active subject into a passive agent. The motivation for using the passive is often said to be the fact that it allows the omission of the agent, thereby allowing a more neutral tone (The Oxford English Grammar 1996:57). Even though Wanner (2009) argues that defining the passive is far from being this simple, this, admittedly rather straight-forward definition is suitable for my study, as I hardly expect to find detailed linguistic discussion, such as that by Wanner (2009), on different aspects to the passive in Finnish EFL textbooks.

According to Hinkel (2002:233), much of the teaching of the passive in grammar textbooks is based on drills in which passive forms are derivated from active forms. Furthermore, he claims that many learners at advanced level cannot use the passive correctly and appropriately. Hinkel (2002) recognizes the passive as one of the most challenging grammar aspects to teach and learn for L2 learners.

In the next section, I will introduce the data used in this study and clarify the methods used in analysing the data.

3 DATA AND METHODS

For this study, four Finnish EFL textbooks were chosen; *Grammar Rules!* (Silk, Mäki & Kjisik 2003), *Grammar Plus* (Kallela, Suurpää, Nikkanen and Kalliovalkama 1998), *In Touch 7* (Davies, Mäkelä, Nikkanen, Sutela, Säteri and Vuorinen 2006) and *Profiles 2* (Elovaara, Ikonen, Myles, Mäkelä, Nikkanen, Perälä, Salo and Sutela 2011). The studied books had to contain a section which teaches the passive, which already limited the selection of relevant books for my study significantly. With these books, I was able to get an exhaustive sample of books from the last 15 years of Finnish EFL teaching; each book is from a different year, *Grammar Plus* having already been published 15 years ago and *Profiles 2* being quite recent. Another criterion for my selection was that two of the books (*Grammar Rules!* and *Grammar Plus*) only aim at teaching grammar, whereas the other two (*In Touch 7* and *Profiles 2*) are course books with many other aims besides teaching grammar.

The nature of my study was qualitative. With a restricted number of studied textbooks, I did not aim at making generalizations or producing statistical information about grammar teaching in Finnish EFL textbooks. My focus was rather in studying a few textbooks, some slightly older than others, but nevertheless fairly recent ones, in order to find qualitative information about how they approach, introduce and represent a certain grammar item, that is, the English passive. The textbooks that I studied are all for high-school level, and two of them are exclusively grammar textbooks, whereas the other two are more general textbooks that do not focus only on grammar, but do introduce the passive explicitly within a unit in the book. The total numbers of exercises on the passive in each book were the following: 15 in *Grammar Rules!*, 8 in *Grammar Plus*, 3 in *In Touch 7* and 11 in *Profiles 2*, which means that the number of exercises varied significantly. One must note here, however, that in *In Touch 7* it is assumed that the learners have already been taught the passive and the section is only supposed to be used as a recap on the item.

The data that I looked for were the most prominent characteristics of each textbook in terms of representing the English passive. I studied them to find out the possible similarities and differences in how they introduce the passive, i.e. what information they give about it, and how they train pupils to use the passive. This means that I looked at the theory section as well as the exercises in order to define the types and characteristics of the exercises and find out what they reveal about each textbook's approach to teaching grammar.

The gathering of the data was completed by examining the sections on passive in each book individually and making notes based on the characteristics and categories described. Once I had examined each book, I had enough information to be able to compare the books and summarize what similarities and differences they had. In analysing the exercises of each book, I used a similar approach to that used by Ellis (2002:156-160), as introduced in Figure 1. In other words, I determined whether the data used in the exercises was authentic or developed for pedagogical use (i.e. "contrived"), whether the text samples in the exercises formed a continuous entity or were separate from each other, and whether the medium used in the exercises was written or oral. Furthermore, I examined what the students were expected to produce in the exercises in order to find out whether the production was free or controlled, i.e. whether the students were allowed to produce their own language creatively or provided with material that they had to work on in a controlled way. Ellis (2002:156-160) also analysed whether the description of the grammar item to be learned was explicit or whether the pupils

were expected to discover the rules on their own. I did the same, but not regarding the exercises but rather the whole sections on the English passive in each of the books.

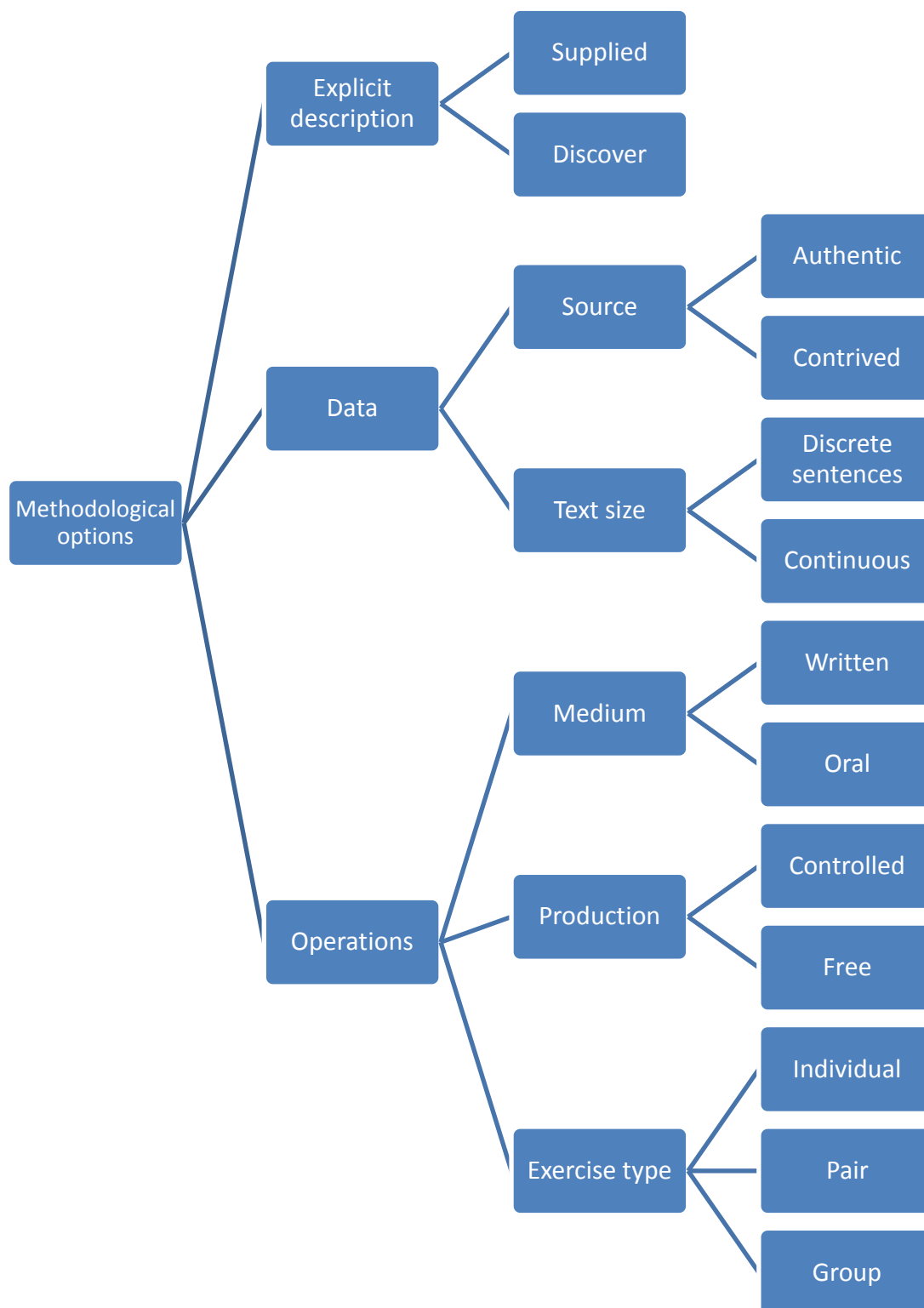


Figure 1. Methodological options to grammar teaching materials, adopted from Ellis (2002:158).

I did, however, decide to leave out Ellis' s (2002:156-160) categories under which he investigated whether the data reception in an exercise was controlled or free and whether judgment tasks only require learners to judge whether a sentence is grammatically correct, or to correct the incorrect sentences as well. In my study, these categories were simply not relevant; my selection of books did not involve judgment exercises or exercises in which learners would receive anything but written data. Such exercises, then, would by Ellis's definition always be controlled as the learners do not need to process data in real time, but rather, are able to control the speed and amount of processed input as they wish. I furthermore decided to add a category of my own to Ellis's classification, which I simply referred to as *Exercise type*. In this categorization I divided the exercises in the books into individual, pair and group exercises. I felt that this category was very relevant and necessary to my study, as it did create variation within and between the studied textbooks and as it is a good indicator of the amount of communication and interaction required in completing the exercises.

With this classification and method of studying the textbooks, I attempted to find answers to the following research questions: What kinds of teaching methods are chosen in the books for teaching the English passive? How do the books view grammar in general? What kinds of exercises are used and what are the prominent characteristics of the exercises? What do the books studied have in common and how do they differ from each other?

4 TEACHING PASSIVE IN FINNISH EFL TEXTBOOKS

4.1 Grammar rules!

Grammar Rules! was published in 2003. The book (Silk, Mäki & Kjisik 2003:3) introduces grammar as something that is not studied for itself or just to make learners frustrated, but rather because it is an underlying system that allows learners to develop colourful new ways of expressing themselves whilst using correct or upright language. Furthermore, the authors state that the aim of the book is to help learners produce correct and genuine contemporary English for practical use, with minimized use of grammatical terms.

Table 1. Analysis of the methods used in the exercises of the studied textbooks.

Feature	Grammar Rules	Grammar Plus	In Touch 7	Profiles 2
Explicit description:	Supplied	Supplied	Supplied	Discover/ Supplied
Data:				
Source				
Authentic	0	0	0	1
Contrived	15	8	3	10
Text size				
Discrete sentences	15	6	3	8
Continuous	0	2	0	3
Operations:				
Medium				
Oral	10	1	1	1
Written	5	7	2	10
Production				
Controlled	15	7	3	11
Free	0	1	0	0
Exercise Type				
Individual	5	7	2	10
Pair	10	1	1	4
Group	0	0	0	1
Total exercises	15	8	3	11

Grammar rules! defines the passive as a form, in which the action itself is more important than the subject. Finnish translations and comparisons with active sentences are used in demonstrating how the passive can be used.

A look into the exercises in *Grammar Rules!* already reveals that Hinkel (2002:233) has a point in claiming that the passive is often taught through drills in which active sentences are turned into passive ones. Out of the fifteen exercises on the passive in the book, five solely

require learners to transform active sentences into the passive or vice versa. The remaining ten other exercises include nine translation exercises from Finnish to English, and one fill in the table –exercise in which learners are expected to write down the correct passive forms of the phrase *to be loved* in different tenses.

An aspect in which *Grammar rules!* seems to differ rather significantly from the other three books studied is the high amount of oral exercises (see Table 1). The book includes fifteen exercises on the passive, which is by far the most in any of the studied books. Ten of these are oral exercises which are supposed to be completed orally in pairs, with one person checking the correct answer from a provided booklet and the other one orally translating Finnish sentences into English or deriving passive sentences from active ones. Even though this might not encourage any more genuine interaction in English between a pair than a written exercise, it is worth noticing that *Grammar rules!* uses oral exercises more than the other books.

4.2 Grammar plus

Grammar Plus is the oldest of the studied books, having first been published in 1998. The authors claim that their book brings joy, light and humour into studying grammar. According to them (Kallela, Suurpää, Nikkanen and Kalliovalkama 1998:3) the book introduces grammatical rules clearly and consistently, and the rules are then exemplified with varied, curiosity-provoking sentences of lively language use. The writers describe the exercises in the book as covering the range from oral to written expression, from independent to pair and group work and from controlled practice to free production.

Grammar Plus defines the passive as a form that is used when the subject is not known or when one does not want to emphasize the subject. In the passive form the attention would thus be drawn to the object of the action. Similarly to *Grammar Rules!*, *Grammar Plus* also uses comparisons to active sentences and Finnish translations to describe how the passive should be used. In an otherwise prescriptive introduction, the use of “get” as an auxiliary verb in passive forms is explained in a more descriptive manner, as being something that “is used especially in American English, but also in everyday spoken use of British English”.

As regards the exercises in the book, the authors’ promises can be seen as slightly exaggerated. The promised wide ranges of different types of exercises are, on the one hand, nominally covered. On the other hand, however, having one oral exercise versus seven written

ones, one free production exercise versus seven controlled ones and one pair exercise versus seven individual ones can also be seen as rather monotonous (see Table 1). More importantly, Hinkel's (2002:233) argument can be confirmed in this case as well; drills of turning active sentences into passive are very much prominent in the exercise section of this book as well, the other repeatedly used exercise type unsurprisingly being translation from Finnish to English. On the bright side, the book offers one free production exercise, which were found very rare in this study.

4.3 In touch 7

In touch 7 (Davies, Mäkelä, Nikkanen, Sutela, Säteri and Vuorinen 2006) differs from the two books discussed above in that grammar is only one of the aspects the book aims to teach; it also includes texts and exercises that do not focus on specific grammatical forms, but, for example, seek to improve learners' reading comprehension, listening comprehension or oral skills. Nevertheless, *In Touch 7* does include a specific grammar section, in which the passive is amongst the items introduced.

In *In Touch 7*, the general introduction of the passive seems to take a slightly more descriptive approach than *Grammar Rules!* or *Grammar Plus*. After stating that the passive is formed by using the verb *to be* and the third form of the main verb, the book goes on to point out that using the passive is typical in, for example, the news, official regulations and texts and reports on science, technology or economy. The comparisons between active and passive sentences are restricted to a few examples, after which it is mentioned that in spoken language, passive sentences are often replaced by active sentences with *we*, *you*, *they*, *one* or *people* as subject.

The amount of exercises on the passive in *In Touch 7* is restricted to three (see Table 1), which reveals that the students are probably expected to know the passive already or to learn the grammar item with help of other sources, not this book's section on the passive only. Since the book is for course 7 in high school A1-English, i.e. English as a foreign language that has been learned since the third grade of preliminary school, it is highly likely that the section on passive is only designed to serve as a revision on a grammar item that has already been learned earlier. With regard to the types of exercises, *In Touch 7* offers one with changing active sentences into passive, one fill the gap –exercise and one translation exercise from Finnish to English. Hinkel's (2002:233) argument about the popularity of drills with changing active sentences into passive ones seems, once again, correct. Similarly to the two

other books already discussed, the other popular exercise type is Finnish to English – translation, either with verb forms only (fill the gap -exercises) or with complete sentences.

4.4 Profiles 2

Profiles 2 (Elovaara, Ikonen, Myles, Mäkelä, Nikkanen, Perälä, Salo and Sutela 2011) is the most recent one of the four books studied. Similarly to *In Touch 7*, it is a course book with other teaching aims besides teaching grammar items. *Profiles 2* also has a separate grammar section in which the passive is introduced. The book differs from *In Touch 7* in that it is meant to be used on the second course of high school A1-English, which might explain why the passive section in *Profiles 2* includes a larger theoretical introduction and more exercises.

Profiles 2 explains the usage of the passive and how it is formed quite similarly to the three books already discussed – by pointing out that using the passive leaves the subject unstressed whilst emphasizing the object and that it consists of the auxiliary verb *to be* and the third form of the main verb. How *Profiles 2* differs from the other books in this study, however, is that before this introduction it offers learners a continuous text, which were quite rare in any of the studied books (see Table 1), and asks them to identify the passive forms in the text and determine what the forms have in common. In other words, *Profiles 2* makes use of inductive learning as the only book in this study.

As regards the exercises, *Profiles 2* seems to offer some more variation than the other three books (see Table 1). Despite having numerous controlled production exercises and none with free production, *Profiles 2* is the only book in the study which does not fulfil Hinkel's (2002:233) prediction of the passive mostly being taught through drills in which learners are required to turn active sentences into passive over and over again. On the other hand, it is obvious that translation is a central method in *Profiles 2*; five of the eleven exercises on passive require the learners exclusively to translate from Finnish to English and an additional four include translation from English to Finnish at some point of completing the exercise.

4.5 General findings on the studied books

In general, some findings can be made as regards all four studied textbooks (see Table 1). For example, altogether one exercise made use of inductive learning in which learners are allowed to investigate the passive on their own and notice how it is used. Instead, three out of four

studied textbooks provide a rather traditional introduction of explicitly stating the rules and then performing exercises on that basis. With regard to Ellis' (2002:161) suggestion that learning through discovering could be a more modern and effective way of teaching grammar, the lack of promoting inductive learning in the textbooks can be seen as a limitation of the studied materials.

It is obvious that authentic materials are very rarely used in the exercises; all of the data provided except for one text in *Profiles 2* are contrived - in other words, designed by the authors for pedagogical use. The lack of authentic materials can be seen as a limitation in the textbooks, as there is evidence for the benefits of using authentic materials in teaching. For example, Autio (2012:19-24) discusses these benefits in terms of the real-life proximity, readability, challenge and currency of the input as well as the effects on learner motivation and autonomous learning. Furthermore, most of the data consists of separate, discrete sentences which do not form a continuous text. The rationale for this remains unknown, but for some reason this can be identified as a dominant feature on the four textbooks studied.

As regards the mediums used in the exercises, it would appear that a majority of the exercises in the books are written ones, with the exception of *Grammar Rules!*, in which two thirds of the exercises are meant to be completed orally. One must note, however, that my judgment here is based on the appearances of the exercises in the books only, and some of the assumedly written exercises could be performed orally, as well. I am therefore reluctant to make too many conclusions based on this classification alone. Nevertheless, if one compares the possibility that the majority of the exercises are written ones with the fact that the books offer very few actual pair or group exercises, it can be suggested that the four books studied do not encourage too much genuine interaction between learners. This suggestion is strongly supported by the fact that in all four books together, there is only one free production exercise. In comparison with the 36 controlled production exercises, it is obvious that there is use for more free production in the studied textbooks. As can be seen in Nassaji and Fotos' (2011:2-10) description as well as Hinkel's (2002:233) arguments, only using controlled exercises or drills and focusing solely on form might not be the most up-to-date and effective way of teaching grammar.

5 DISCUSSION

The four studied textbooks did exactly what Hinkel (2002:233) suggests, namely taught the passive through drills of turning active sentences into passive (or vice versa). My own similar finding is that another of the most used exercise types in the studied textbooks were translation exercises from Finnish to English. Based on these two major findings it can be argued that the views on grammar teaching in the four books are slightly old-fashioned or at least very traditional; the methods used resemble the grammar-translation method more than any other method introduced in section 2.1. and are rather obviously strictly grammar-based (see Nassaji and Fotos 2011:2). Some of the disadvantages of using the grammar-translation method in foreign language teaching are nowadays generally acknowledged (see e.g. Niemi 2009:22).

Other dominant features in all four books were controlled production, contrived materials with discrete sentences, a lack of making use of inductive learning and lack of group exercises. With regard to Hinkel (2002:233), Autio (2012:19-24), Ellis (2002:161) and Nassaji and Fotos (2011:10), these features could be seen as negative ones. In any case, the lack of diversity within the exercises of the studied books is a feature worth recognizing, especially when using one of these books in teaching.

The limitations of this study, however, have to be acknowledged. First of all, the data is restricted to four textbooks and only one section in each of the books, which means that the results of this study alone are insufficient if one aims to make generalizations of grammar teaching in Finnish EFL textbooks. I have studied four textbooks from the past fifteen years as samples of how grammar sometimes is taught in Finnish EFL textbooks, but it is not possible to claim that my findings represent a dominant trend in Finnish EFL teaching. In order to validate such claims, more research is needed, both in terms of the number of studied textbooks and in terms of the depth of analysing a textbook; studying only the sections on passive in each book might not be sufficient to produce a reliable picture of how grammar in general is taught in the book in question. Another limitation of this study is that I have only analysed the textbooks without actually seeing how they are used in classrooms or whether the teachers' materials to the books provide more variation to teaching and practising the passive. This limitation can be exemplified by pointing out that some of the exercises in the books can be performed either as oral or as written exercises, and without studying how

teachers actually ask learners to complete the exercises, my divisions between written and oral exercises are only based on my assumptions and impressions based on the appearances and instructions of the exercises. Bearing this in mind, the claim that *Grammar rules!* uses significantly more oral exercises than the other textbooks can be questioned.

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