

GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION IN FINNISH UPPER
SECONDARY SCHOOL EFL TEXTBOOKS

Master's Thesis

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<p>Kieliopin opettaminen on aina ollut iso osa kielten opetusta ja nykyäänkin kielioppi nähdään osana laajempaa kommunikatiivista kompetenssia. Näkemyksiä siitä, kuinka kielioppia tulisi opettaa on runsaasti, mutta nykyään suositellaan perinteisempien suuntausten sijaan kommunikatiivisempaa ja toiminallisempaa oppimista. Kieltenopettajat kuitenkin usein tukeutuvat oppikirjoihin jolloin ne vaikuttavat oppilaiden kielen kehitykseen ja niiden sisältöä myös kieliopin osalta olisi hyvä tarkastella.</p> <p>Tutkielman tavoitteena oli selvittää millaisia metodologisia vaihtoehtoja ja tehtävyytyyppejä lukion oppikirjat hyödyntävät englannin kieliopin opetuksessa. Aineisto koostui viidestä oppikirjasta, jotka olivat kolmesta eri kirjasarjasta ja analyysimetodina käytettiin sisältöanalyysiä. Kirjoista analysoitiin kieliopin esittämistapoja, esimerkkejä ja tehtäviä lauseenvastikkeiden ja muodollisen subjektin osalta.</p> <p>Tutkitut oppikirjat olivat keskenään hyvin samankaltaisia. Esimerkit ovat pääsääntöisesti irrallisia lauseita ja autenttiset tekstit sekä puhekieli puuttuvat. Kielioppi esitetään sääntöinä vaikkakin rakenteiden lisäksi käyttöä ja merkitystä selitetään odotettua enemmän. Tästä huolimatta tehtävistä puolet ovat mekaanisia rakenteisiin keskittyviä erityisesti lauseenvastikkeiden kohdalla. Suurin osa tehtävistä on myös perinteistä kohdennettua tuottamista käännosten tai lausemuunnosten muodossa ja vapaamuotoisemmat, kommunikatiivisemmat ja yleisesti ottaen monisyisemmät tehtävät puuttuvat lähes täysin. Kielioppiasioiden välisistä eroista selkein oli, että muodollinen subjekti esitettiin huomattavasti lyhyemmin kuin lauseenvastikkeet ja yhdessä kirjasarjassa sitä ei opetettu lainkaan erillisenä kielioppiasiana. Tulevaa ajatellen olisi erityisen tärkeää laajentaa kielioppitehtävien monimuotoisuutta, jotta oppilaat saisivat monipuolisemman kuvan kielioppiasioista ja opettajilla olisi mahdollisuus kohdentaa opetustaan oppilaidensa tarpeiden mukaan. Erityisesti opettajan oppaissa voitaisiin tarjota huomattavasti enemmän lisämateriaalia. Jatkotutkimuksissa olisi hyödyllistä tarkastella kielioppiasioiden opettamista oppikirjoissa hieman laajempina kokonaisuuksina. Olisi myös hyvä tutkia missä määrin oppikirjojen sisältö todella heijastuu opetukseen luokkahuoneissa ja tuottavatko opettajat esimerkiksi itse kielioppimateriaalia.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

Despite the fact that grammar has been studied extensively as an area of linguistics and it is to this day a major part of foreign language (L2) teaching, there is surprisingly little research on how it is actually taught in classrooms and especially on what kind of materials are used for teaching. Over time, the field of language teaching has seen a variety of approaches to grammar teaching. The current approaches, supported by second language acquisition (SLA) research, and the more traditional approaches differ quite a bit on their view on grammar and how it should be taught. Although reality rarely follows the theories to the letter, it would be important to know whether L2 teaching materials reflect the changes in the theoretical field. It would be especially interesting to see how grammar is handled since one of the main differences between approaches is often their view on grammar and its role on language learning and teaching.

Textbooks can be a great help for a teacher, but they can also have a surprisingly heavy impact on teaching. Luukka et.al (2008: 67-68) found that teachers use textbooks to set objectives for their teaching and that generally language teachers in Finland rely heavily on textbooks (ibid 94-95; ToLP n.d.). In addition, Tergujeff (2013: 52-54) noted in a recent study on pronunciation teaching that the teaching methods and contents which were not covered in EFL books, were not covered by the teachers at all. This supports Thornbury's (1999: 8) argument that teachers use textbooks to guide what grammar is taught and in which order. Since there are clear indications of textbooks having a great impact on what is taught in classrooms and how, it would be essential to critically assess both aspects of textbooks: what they teach and how they teach. Of course textbooks do not equal a classroom pedagogy as teachers in Finland have a great deal of freedom to use them as they see fit, but modifying teaching materials in order for them to fit a pedagogy can use a considerable amount of time and energy of a teacher – both of which are limited to begin with. Moreover, teachers might not be aware of their own classroom practices or be able to rationalize them as Borg (2012)

found in his study so it would be important to see what kind of practices the textbooks bring into the classrooms. In a larger context the major reason for analysing textbooks is the change into a new national curriculum for Finnish schools which came in autumn 2016. A new curriculum means the need for new textbooks and as new series are already being designed, and some books already published, it would be useful at this stage to critically review what the current textbooks have to offer in order to give a point of comparison for the textbooks to be designed.

The aim of this study is to find out how English grammar is taught in Finnish upper secondary school textbooks of English and on a more theoretical level which approach or approaches to grammar teaching they support. Because of the limited scale of the study, the data is furthermore narrowed down to only two grammar items: the shortened clauses and the formal subject. The method of analysis is *qualitative content analysis* (QCA) which enables evaluating both the qualitative and, to a very limited extent, the quantitative aspects of the textbooks while taking into considerations the broader context of teaching English as a foreign language in Finland. The data consists of textbooks from three most recent series, each from a different publisher, especially designed to be used in Finnish upper secondary schools. The aim is to compare, not to rank, the textbooks in order to give a thorough description of how selected grammar items are presented in them and which theoretical approaches they support.

The most current approaches to grammar teaching essentially lean on Second language acquisition (SLA) theories which clearly differ from the traditional views on language and grammar. SLA emphasizes the connection between language and communication since not only is communication the purpose of language, but it also has a vital role in the learning process of a language (XXXX). Both communicative competences and communication are a major part of the *Common European framework of reference for language teaching* (2001) and they are also taken better into account in the newest National Core Curriculum (2015). The current view of the SLA field is that although explicit grammar

instruction is useful for learners, the focus should be in the meaning and use over the grammatical forms (see for instance Ellis 2006). However, it is difficult to say whether these current trends and recommendations based in research are practiced in teaching materials and classrooms. Furthermore, there are several approaches and methods based on SLA research and I will discuss two of them, Form-focused instruction and Task-based teaching, in more detail in section 3.3 and 3.4 in order to better explain the current views of SLA on grammar instruction.

Since the main focus of the current study is on grammar and how it is taught, in Chapter 2 I will first introduce some central views on grammar and its importance in language teaching and learning. Chapter 3 will focus on the theoretical side of grammar teaching by introducing some of the historically important approaches to grammar teaching and then discussing the currently prevalent Form-focused instruction and Task-based teaching. Chapter 4 will cover the more practical side of grammar teaching including some techniques, exercise types and earlier research on grammar in second language (L2) textbooks. Moreover, Common European framework of reference and Finnish national core curriculum for upper secondary school will be introduced since they are the guidelines for upper secondary school education in Finland and should therefore affect the textbook designing as well.

2 DEFINITIONS OF GRAMMAR

Although linguists generally agree that grammar is a fundamental part of any language agreeing on its definition is not as straightforward of an issue (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 1). Although most people might associate grammar with school and think of it simply as the rules of a language, for example Larsen-Freeman (2011: 518) says grammar is in fact “ambiguous” since it can be defined and explained from multiple points of views. Because of the ambiguity there can be said to be several different types of grammar such as prescriptive, descriptive, traditional, structural, pedagogical, discourse, reference, theoretical and universal

grammar (see for instance Cook 2001; Aart 2011; Tonkyn 1994). Next I will briefly introduce some of the major terms related to grammar, some already mentioned above, in order to give a picture of how varied the field is and to explain the view this study has on grammar.

To start off, grammar can be either *prescriptive* or *descriptive*. The main difference between the two is that *prescriptive grammar* gives rules for how language should be used whereas *descriptive grammar* aims to describe how language is actually used. In the field of linguistics prescriptive grammar has been shunned by the modern grammarians as it claims some linguistic forms to be better and more right than others and the basis is often on none other than social status (Cook 2001: 20). Descriptive grammar has then claimed to be describing of the real language use the way natural scientists describe the laws of nature, but as it stands, this way of describing the ever changing field of language use is not very useful for long term teaching of any language.

Traditional grammar is concerned with labelling parts of speech using technical metalanguage and as Thornbury (1999:1) puts it, it is “a description of the rules that govern how language’s sentences are formed”. Although Thornbury uses the word ‘description’, traditional grammar is the perfect example of a prescriptive grammar. Examples of the metalanguage which traditional grammar uses are terms such as noun, subject, passive and relative clause. According to Blake (1988), the main reason traditional grammar has faced a great deal of critique is its prescriptive nature, but also the fact that it is Latin based and mainly deals with written language. The fact that traditional grammar is Latin based causes some problems since for example English does not have the same kind of verb forms as Latin has, yet the labels are used (Yule 2006:77). When labelling causes problems with a language such as English, one can imagine it might cause confusion when Latin is applied to an even more distant language such as Finnish and then reconnecting these two applications to teach the grammar of one through the other.

Structural grammar is similar to traditional grammar in that it is descriptive and according to it sentences can be formed only in certain ways by connecting pieces called phrase structures. For example, in the sentence "The man fed the dog." there are three phrase constructions "the man", "fed" and "the dog". A sentence can therefore be seen as a collection of empty slots which need to be filled with proper items for the sum to work. (Cook 2001: 22-23). Structural grammar is an easy way to visualize grammar rules and according to Cook (2001) it is the main reason it has been popular in L2 teaching in the form of substitution tables, structural drills and pattern practice.

Discourse Grammar takes into account that grammatical decisions are often made on the discourse rather than sentence level in order to create instant organization and coherence (Hughes and McCarthy 1998; Thornbury 1999). The main point here is that language users have the freedom of choice over which grammatical forms they use since most grammar items do not have one simple meaning and use but several, and the understanding depends on the discourse and context they are used in. Hughes and McCarthy (1998: 268-269) have criticized sentence level based rules, since although the learners obtain a reason for using a certain form, they do not gain a proper understanding of when to use that form. According to Hughes and McCarthy (1998: 281), teaching through discourse grammar would enable learners to make grammatical choices and judgements based on what they want to say and make it appropriate to the context and register. Discourse-based grammar instruction also highlights the communicational aspects of language learning as it raises awareness that languages are not simply rules and formulas which must be done in certain way for it to be correct. However, the strength of discourse grammar is also its weakness as it is very complex in comparison to the traditional and structural grammars.

On a more concrete level a grammar can refer to a book which presents grammar of a language. The same way that there are a variety of dictionaries of English, there are several grammars of English and these grammars can be roughly divided into two: *pedagogical grammars* (or *learners' grammars*) and *reference*

grammars. Pedagogical grammars are the most relevant grammars for teaching since they use insights of linguistic theories, but instead focus on the more functional level of grammar (Larsen-Freeman 2011: 519). Leech (1995) defines pedagogical grammars as being specially designed for foreign language teaching and because of this they are based on simplified, generalized rules of a language called pedagogical rules. Also, pedagogical grammars are designed to be studied so they are sectioned and arranged accordingly whereas reference grammars are meant for fact checking much like dictionaries (Aarts 2011: 23). With this definition any foreign language textbook which has grammar explanations is at least partly a pedagogical grammar, so in this study the textbooks are looked at as pedagogical grammars. Simplification is essential in pedagogical grammars in order to give some starting point for learners and to prevent them from being overwhelmed by the complexity of grammar and the sheer amount of theoretical information and new metalanguage (Leech 1995). Since language teaching has traditionally leaned on the structural and descriptive grammars, pedagogical grammars have also been based on them and therefore revolved around metalanguage, rules and forms to explain the language. However, in the light of more recent Second language acquisition (SLA) research for instance Larsen-Freeman (2011: 521) has stated that pedagogical grammars should take into account the basic three dimensions of grammar: *form*, *meaning* and *use*. In a more positive note Ellis (2006: 86) believes that at present structural and descriptive grammars are no longer overwhelming and pedagogical grammars do give attention to the functions and meanings of language along with the form.

Despite which type of grammar is discussed, a learner can have two types of knowledge of grammar: *explicit* and *implicit knowledge*. *Explicit knowledge* means the facts about the language which a speaker is conscious of and can verbalise. There are two types of explicit knowledge: *analysed knowledge* and *metalinguistic explanation*. (Ellis 2006: 95-96). *Analysed knowledge* is the awareness of how a grammatical structure is formed and how it works while *metalinguistic explanation* is the understanding of the metalanguage which is used to explain the structure.

When dealing with theoretical grammar the metalinguistic explanation is essential, but then again in a more practical setting such as school, one can argue that analysed knowledge should be enough for learning a language. *Implicit knowledge* is the unconscious information which for example native speakers have on why and how language is used. Speakers can use implicit grammar knowledge with ease when communicating, but find it difficult to explain verbally the why and how to others. Grammar theories and reference grammars are there to make explicit and systematic what speakers know implicitly. However, Ellis (2011: 96) says that in the field of grammar instruction the relation between implicit and explicit knowledge has always been a controversial issue and we will touch upon that in section 3 when discussing approaches to grammar instruction

In this study grammar is looked at from the standpoint that it is a complex structure of a language which can be understood both explicitly and implicitly. It has been a common practice to teach grammar rules explicitly and, especially when it comes to pedagogical grammars, to focus on the linguistic elements on sentence level. Leech (1994: 21) notes that simplified rules are necessary for learners, but reminds us that a pedagogical grammar should not be taught as a fixed and whole truth on the subject. Since the data of the study will contain pedagogical grammars it is assumed that traditional and structural views of grammar as rules, and metalanguage can be found in the data. However, it is also important to remember that grammar is used to create meanings and there are for example discursive elements which affect its usage. This side of grammar needs to be remembered when discussing the different approaches to grammar instruction in the next chapter.

3 THE CHANGING FIELD OF GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION

3.1 Approaches to L2 grammar instruction

In this chapter, in order to describe the current situation of grammar instruction, I will briefly introduce the history of grammar in second language teaching by discussing some of the major theoretical and methodological approaches. It should be noted that due to the limited scope of this study it would not be possible, nor quite serve a purpose, to cover all existing approaches and methods of grammar instruction. The purpose is to give a general picture of the field of grammar instruction in order to show what have been the trends and to explain how the current predominant approaches.

As grammar is an essential part of any language, it has gained much attention in the field of teaching, yet how to teach grammar and to what extent has been a source of controversy in the teaching profession. The differing opinions on what, how and why have resulted in several approaches and methods to teaching grammar, but the division between them is not always clear. (Cullen 2012: 258). Nassaji and Fotos (2011) divide the approaches into three general instructional approaches: *Traditional grammar-based approaches*, *Communication-based approaches* and *Focus-on-form approach*. However, for example Ellis (2001) makes the main divide only between *Meaning-focused instruction* and *Form-focused instruction (FFI)*, and then further divides FFI into two: *Focus-on-Forms (FonFs)* and *Focus-on-Form (FonF)*. Approaches can therefore be grouped together in different ways depending on the view point and in this study I will discuss the approaches largely based on the divisions by Ellis (2001), Nassaji and Fotos (2011) and Van den Patten (2006). The approaches discussed in this study are *Traditional approaches*, *Communicative language teaching (CLT)*, *Form-focused instruction (FonFs)* and *Task-based language teaching*.

3.2 Traditional approaches

In the earliest days of foreign language teaching, teaching a language consisted only of the grammar of the language and that grammar was the *traditional grammar* and *structural grammar* introduced in section 2. The curriculums were organised around this view of grammar since it was assumed that the structure of a language

is the most difficult aspect to learn and therefore should receive the full attention of learners. (Tonkyn 1994: 2; Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 2). This intense focus on the grammatical form and the traditional view of grammar are the combining factors for the various approaches which are sometimes referred to as *grammar-based approaches* but in this study called *traditional approaches*.

Although all traditional approaches agree on the importance of grammar, they vary on their views on how that grammar should be taught. Some methods such as Grammar-Translation emphasized the importance of learning explicitly through translations whereas Audio-lingual method relied heavily on implicit learning through listen-and-repeat drills. In addition, there were others such as the Reading approach, the Silent Way and Total Physical response which had their own preferred methods for the classroom, but in the end were all strictly grammar-based. (Nassaji and Fotos 2011; Ellis 2001 :3).

A very popular traditional approach is the PPP (presentation-practice-production) which is a model for a standard classroom lesson and it consists of three main stages. The main idea of the model is that a grammar item is first *presented* so that learners become familiar with it and its usage. The second stage is where learners *practice* using the grammar item through various exercises which involve manipulating, repeating and reproducing the form. The aim on this stage is accuracy so that learners absorb the forms correctly. In the last stage which is *production* learners should be encouraged to use the form more freely in order to fully internalize it so that it becomes fluent. (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 3-4; Thornbury 1999: 128). The PPP model can also be used in more modern grammar instruction as for example the order of the presentations and practice stages can be switched and several types of activities can be used during the practice and productions stages. However, PPP has received criticism and Ellis (1992: 236-237) argues that the practice stage does not actually facilitate learning since controlled practice which aims at accuracy does not transfer well to the later production stage. The issue of excessively emphasizing forms over meaning and use is what drove

the forthcoming of approaches which are here generally discussed as communicative language teaching.

3.3 Communicative language teaching

To balance out the traditional approaches' obsessions with writing and the accuracy of grammatical forms, new more communicative approaches appeared in the wake of new sociolinguistic research and theories such as Hymes' (1972) theory of communicative competence. These new theories questioned, or even completely denied, the importance of grammar and suggested more functional ways of teaching in order for learners to gain a communicative competence rather than grammatical accuracy (Tonkyn 1994). Communicative language teaching (CLT) is not one coherent approach, but rather a way of seeing language as functional forms with social context instead of as structural, sentence level forms as in the more traditional approaches (Nunan 2004: 8). This means CLT is *meaning-based* as it focuses on the meanings of utterance over of forms. However, Littlewood (2013: 6-7) distinguishes two interpretations of CLT based on how learning and language are viewed. The 'strong' interpretation of CLT rejects grammar, both explicit and implicit, altogether as it claims that communicative learning in itself should be sufficient enough. The 'weak' interpretation focuses more on that language is a communicative competence and individual parts can be taught more formally in order to reach that competence.

CLT has faced quite a great deal of critique and a major argument has been that simply providing input of grammatical features and communicative production activities without cognitive processing or explicit attention is not enough for learners to acquire linguistic features (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 8). Since CLT is different from the traditional approaches, there has also been critique that it will not fit the school setting. Littlewood (2013) reports that in many studies students and their parents were more concerned of negative effects on examination results than achieving communicative competence and teachers also had difficulties fitting communicative instruction with syllabus and grasping their roles

as facilitators of learning. Van den Branden, Bygate and Norris (2009: 5) argue that despite the 'revolutionary' thinking of communicative language teaching in practice CLT has been reduced to simply offering large amounts of oral production activities and otherwise cohering to the structure oriented, traditional ways of teaching.

3.4 Form-focused Instruction

Form-focused grammar instruction (FFI) in all simplicity means that grammatical forms are explicitly covered when teaching L2, but there are a variety ways and phases to this. What sets form-focused instruction apart from traditional approaches and CLT is that in Form-focused instruction the attention given to the form should rise from activities which are primarily focused on meaning (Ellis 2001). There can be explicit instruction, but instead of it being the main focus it should be more intertwined with the input and activities. On top of this Nassaji and Fotos (2011) note that there should be variation to teaching and different available strategies should be used.

There are two main types of Form-focused instruction which one might come across in the field of language teaching: Focus-on-forms instruction (FonFs) and Focus-on-form instruction (FonF). Although these two are easy to confuse because of their similar names, they do somewhat differ in their aim and pedagogical executions. FonFs refers to the more traditional way where the aim is to teach grammatical forms effectively by going through grammar items one by one and grammar is very likely to be covered on separate grammar sessions. In comparison, FonF gives grammar a more secondary role through meaning-focused activities and grammar-tasks place value for social interaction between the learners. (Ellis 2011: 13-15). Nevertheless, in both FonFs and FonF grammar is taught with a degree of explicitness although the methods used in the classroom might differ. Since FonF and FonFs similar enough, in this study they are both discussed under the term Form-focused instruction (FFI).

Explicit instruction, also called formal instruction, is inherently part of FFI. However, Nassaji and Fotos (2011) explain that explicit instruction can be done deductively or inductively, and with or without prior planning. Grammar can also be either supplied, meaning the students are given the explicit descriptions, or discovered, meaning students need to make their own conclusions on the structures before given any 'correct' descriptions. A major reason for the growing popularity of Form-focused instruction after the CLT has been the growing number of studies (see for instance Alanen 1995, Robinson 1996) which show that learners do benefit from explicit instruction as opposed to only gaining enriched input as in CLT. Furthermore, Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Pawlak (2012: 151) suggest that a combination of both meaningful output practice and input-oriented instruction is the most beneficial for learners. Ellis (1990: 130-132) has also argued that although many studies on formal instruction (see for instance Long 1983) are too optimistic on the positive effects it has on L2 instruction; it is realistic to assume that explicit instruction paired with informal input does have great value in learning process.

3.5 Task-based language teaching

Another approach which has been developed in the most recent years is *Task-based language teaching* (TBLT) which can be considered to be part of Form-focused instruction. In this study TBLT is discussed here separately as it a very current approach and has some distinct characteristics. TBLT focuses on meaning and it largely agrees with the ideas of communicative language teaching (Nassaji and Fotos 2011). Much like in CLT the main idea in TBLT is that since language is meant for functional use then it should also be learned through functional use. Communicative language teaching and task-based language teaching have much in common to the extent that they might seem quite synonymous. According to Nunan (2004: 10), the main distinction between the two is that CLT is more of an overarching philosophy whereas TBLT is on the level of syllabus design and methodology. TBLT is in a way one member of the CLT family.

TBLT is holistic, learner-driven and meaning-focused (Van den Branden 2006). The idea of language consisting of several competences is also present as TBLT has a holistic view on language teaching. This basically means that several linguistic competences are meant to be used together while performing pedagogical tasks. Furthermore, TBLT is learner-driven since learners are expected to take responsibility of their own learning as well as interact with each other as well as the teacher. Last but not least TBLT is meaning-focused since learners practice meaning exchange in order to learn language as it is used in the "real-world" in authentic communication situations. (Van den Branden, Bygate, Norris 2009). However, Van den Branden (2006) also reminds that task-based instruction does not exclude teaching grammatical forms, but rather that communicative tasks should be used to able the learner to notice certain forms and make meaningful form-meaning connections. Carless (2012: 354) even argues that the acquisition of grammar is actually the heart of TBLT when meaning-focused activities are implemented. So although the overriding focus of TBLT lessons might be on meaning, the attention of students should also be drawn to the grammatical items as they incidentally, or seemingly so, arise during lessons.

When discussing TBLT it is important to understand its most central term *task*. Tasks are central to TBLT and one might consider them activities which fulfill specific requirements, so not just any exercise in a textbook is a task. Of course even in TBLT *a task* has been defined in slightly different ways, but for example according to Van den Branden (2006: 4) tasks should always have an obtainable goal which encourages the learners to engage in meaningful interaction. When it comes to learning grammar, the goal of a task should not be "learn this grammar item" but instead for example "solve this puzzle" and in order to solve the puzzle the learner needs to use the grammatical item. The grammar item could be seen as a sort of key used for cracking the code of meaning behind language rather than just as rules which are learned but not understood. Another, bit wider definition, for a task is by Nunan (2004: 4):

[A task] Involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning, and in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form. The task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right with a beginning, a middle and an end.

For this study it is important to note that according to this definition tasks in TBLT can very much be focused on grammar..

In TBLT tasks can be either focused or unfocused. During unfocused tasks learners are allowed to use whatever linguistic resources and competences they have in order to reach the goal. In focused tasks the learners are required to use particular structure to complete the task properly. A bit more specific type of focused task is what Ellis (2001: 9) calls consciousness-raising tasks, also known as awareness-raising. These tasks aim to enable learners to observe differences and commonalities within a language in order for them to become aware that certain linguistic features exist and that there are reasons for those grammatical choices (Stranks 2003: 334). A typical consciousness-raising task offers input data, for example a short text, to illustrate the use of a grammar point and the main point of the task is then to understand or describe the grammatical feature based on the input data. In this kind of task, the grammar is never first presented through explicit rules as in more traditional methods such as PPP but a task does not have to be communicative in the way activities in communicative language teaching would be.

Task-based language teaching as an approach promotes learner initiative and interaction between learners and although for example Moore (2012) found that learner-learner interaction during TBLT lessons in itself enhanced language performance, it should not be taken for granted. Simply providing opportunities for learner-learner interaction might not be enough and task design, teacher's role and feedback are important in order to direct and encourage the students to make use of their on-task interaction. Stranks (2003: 338) reminds that teachers should make sure to provide exercises which do not conform to the pedagogical grammar

thinking of right and wrong answers, and instead guide to the thinking of what is “most appropriate”. This means that tasks should require students to think about the meaning and context of the language. This also connects with the idea that teachers should not make exercises extremely controlled in the fear of students accidentally having to use language they have not ‘learned’ yet. Students do not necessarily learn through learner-learner interaction, but neither do they necessarily learn through strictly controlled traditional exercises such as transformation exercises.

4 TEACHING L2 GRAMMAR IN PRACTICE

4.1 Common European framework of reference for languages

Common European framework of reference (CEFR) was designed by the Council of Europe with the intention that it “provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe” (Council of Europe 2001: 1). In Finland, CEFR is in fact used as the basis for the Finnish national core curriculum (NCC) and therefore it is also an essential part of grammar instruction in the upper secondary school. The approach CEFR takes on language use is that language has several interrelated dimensions for instance communicative language competence, general competences, tasks and strategies, which should be taken into account in language teaching. Then again, it is noted that although all aspects of language and its use are connected, the objectives for learning and teaching can be separated and quite inevitably language teaching focuses only on individual components and sub-components of a language at a time. (Council of Europe 2001: 10). Although CEFR provides a framework for learning and teaching languages it clearly states that it does not favour any approach or methods to teaching over others as it is not meant to be a specific guideline of practice (ibid : 18).

In CEFR grammar is first briefly defined in terms of the traditional and structural grammar as "the assembly of elements into meaningful labelled and bracketed strings (sentences)" (CEFR 2001: 113) and then further discussed through the term *grammatical competence*. Grammatical competence is seen as a part of linguistic competence together with lexical, phonological, semantic, orthographic and orthoepic competences (CEFR 2001: 108). Grammatical competence is defined as "- - knowledge of, and ability to use, the grammatical resources of a language" (CEFR 2001: 112) and it is stressed that understanding and expressing meaning is the main focus as opposed to simply memorising grammatical resources as a fixed formulae and then mechanically reproducing them. (CEFR 2001: 113).

The common framework does not take a stand on what is the correct "grammatical organization" in other words which grammar should be taught, how items should be categorized and what kind of metalanguage should be used. Users of the framework are directed to consider: 1) on which grammar theory they use as a basis of teaching and 2) which grammatical elements are suitable for learners of certain levels. This might be due to the fact that the framework is meant to fit the teaching of all languages, not just English, and in all EU countries, so there is bound to be huge variation to teaching environments. A general scale for grammatical accuracy is provided for determining proficiency levels (C2-A1) and it can be used with any view of grammatical organization. The next chapter then will discuss the Finnish national core curriculum for upper secondary schools and what it has to say about grammar instruction on this day.

4.2 Finnish national core curriculum for upper secondary school

In Finland English is studied as a foreign language in school and according to Finnish national board of education (Koulutuksen tilastollinen vuosikirja 2014: 44) in 2008-2012 over 90% of students started English as their first foreign language, also called the A1, on the 3rd grade at the age of nine. At the age of sixteen students can choose to continue to either the upper secondary school (*lukio*) or to a

vocational school (*ammattikoulu*). For those who decide to go to upper secondary school there are six obligatory courses of English and a minimum of two voluntary specialisation courses. The two voluntary courses are the same nationwide, but other voluntary courses are more school specific. At the end of the upper secondary school the seniors take part in the matriculation exam in which they choose a minimum of four subjects to take an exam on, the Finnish language being the only obligatory one. One of the four exams must also be extensive (*pitkä*) and the only subjects which can be studied extensively are mathematics, English, Swedish and some other languages. English has been by far the most popular subject students take as the extensive exam for years now (Ylioppilastutkintolautakunta 2016).

For the past 15 years the Finnish upper secondary school has formed around *National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools 2003* (NCC 2003) by Finnish National Board of Education. It has guidelines for the contents and aims for teaching and learning, yet individual schools can further set their own curricula on the basis of the NCC. According to the NCC (2003: 100), the aim for those studying English as A1/2 language (first or second foreign language) the aim is to reach the B2.1 proficiency level on all four aspects of language: reading, writing, speaking and listening. The proficiency level is not explained any further as the more specific explanation for it can be found in the *Common European framework of reference for languages* (CEFR) on which the NCC is based on. In CEFR on B2.1 level the expected grammatical accuracy is described as: "Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical control. Does not make mistakes which lead to misunderstanding." (CEFR 2001: 114). As already discussed earlier in section 4.1, CEER does not provide any further instructions on which grammar structures, in which order and how they should be taught.

While working on this study the new curriculum for upper secondary schools was published and it is to replace the NCC 2003 on 1st of August 2016 latest. Everything that was discussed above with NCC 2003 is still relevant in this new *National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary school 2015* (NCC 2015). A noteworthy

difference is that the aim for all foreign language learning is to build the students' *multilingual competence*. In the NCC 2003 the focus of learning is on multiculturalism and self-assessment and the other aims include learning about the culture/s connected to the language and skills, strengths and strategies for learning (NCC 2003: 102). The new 2015 NCC build on this and adds that students should be encouraged to engage with multilingual and –cultural environments and to be able to transfer their communication skills and knowledge across languages. Furthermore, teaching should bridge the gap between 'language learned at school' and 'language used on freetime' and activities should be "meaningful, open and adequately challenging" (NCC2015: 178). In general, the new curriculum requires teaching to be varied, emphasizing transversal competences and involve phenomenon-based projects (2015: 14).

When it comes to grammar, the curriculums do not have much to say. Besides the goal proficiency level there are four other general objectives for language learning which are cultural knowledge, communication skills and assessment skills (NCC 2003: 102; NCC 2015: 178-179). Grammar is therefore part of the curriculum only through the proficiency level by CEFR. Since the subjects in upper secondary school are arranged into courses, each course also has its individual objectives and a certain theme, for example 'science and future' for course five, which guides the vocabulary and cultural issues to be covered on the course. In NCC 2015 (2015) the courses 1-2 are for solidifying learning strategies and communication skills whereas the courses 3-6 concentrate on text types and information gathering. Both of the NCCs also name learning strategies and other topics such as media competence in the course descriptions but grammar is not mentioned at all. In NCC 2003 the general guideline for the courses it is mentioned that on each course attention should be given to "expansion of the knowledge of the structures" (NCC 2003: 103), but even that can be agreed to be vague.

All in all, the NCC guidelines for upper secondary school are quite general regarding grammar. There are no clear statements as to which linguistic elements should be taught or how, which gives almost unlimited freedom for individual

schools and teachers to design teaching, but it also means great responsibility. In addition, the national core curriculums do not require the use of textbooks even though language teachers do lean on them heavily as discussed earlier.

4.3 Foreign language textbooks in Finland

Textbooks are a major part of language teaching. As already mentioned in the introduction, studies (see for instance Luukka et al. 2008; ToLP) indicate that L2 teachers in Finland rely heavily on textbooks when teaching. This in turn means that although teachers might be willing to implement new theoretical approaches, such as TBLT, in their teaching if the textbooks do not offer any support it might not happen. There are several reasons for the popularity of textbooks and according to Elomaa (2009: 31) one reason is that students like them because textbooks feel more grounded and have longevity which printouts or less physical resources lack. Elomaa also (2009: 31) explains that teachers often lack the resources, such as time, energy and proper training, to create their own teaching materials. Especially for novice teachers it might pose too great a challenge to create own materials on top of all the other energy consuming responsibilities required from a teacher. From personal experience as a student of pedagogy in the university I would also like to point out that novice teachers might have no experience in designing or adapting teaching materials.

Finland is a small country and this small market also means that the number of publishers and published teaching materials is small. For example, English textbooks for upper secondary school are developed only by Otava, SanomaPro and Tammi. This means that at any time there are only three English textbook series available for schools to choose from since each publisher has just one series at the market, or sometime two since older series usually overlap for some time with the newer ones. When the quantity is not great then the pressure is higher when it comes to quality. However, as pointed out in the previous chapter on CEFR and NCC, in Finland there are no specific requirements for what grammar should be taught in the upper secondary school. Even on a more general level,

there are no guidelines to how textbooks should be designed in order to support the national language policy. The fact that there are no national guidelines in Finland for textbook designing in turn means that textbook designers have a great freedom to choose the content and approach. On an international level Mares (2003: 132) and Tomlinson (2003: 7) have argued that teaching materials are still very traditional and not developed in the pace of pedagogical theories partly because publishers are conservative and reluctant to step away from what has been mainstream for so long.

In Finland several studies have been made on the actual contents of foreign language textbooks in for example learning styles, cultural issues, discourses, pronunciation and function of images (see for instance Tergujeff 2013) but published studies focusing on the grammar in them are few. Next I will discuss some of the most recent studies on foreign language textbooks and grammar practice books and what they have to say about the current approach to grammar instruction.

4.4 Grammar in L2 textbooks: Previous studies

One of the most cited studies on grammar teaching materials is a textbook analysis by Ellis (2002). In his study Ellis analysed six EFL grammar practice books to see what methodological options they offer for teaching the present continuous tense of English. Based on the results Ellis created what he calls '*a system of methodological options*' which is divided into of three main categories: *explicit description*, *data* and *activities* (ibid 2002: 158). This system of methodological options is discussed in more detail in section 4.4 of this study as it is the basis for the framework of analysis. The main findings were that explicit description of the grammar rules was very common and that the exercises were mainly about controlled production, in other words the exercises always had a right answer as opposed to freely talking or writing for practice. Furthermore, input-based exercises and judgement exercises (judging the correctness of utterances) were absent, which makes the books seem quite dull and unvaried. Ellis (2002: 176) concluded that the books

basically follow the traditional approaches to grammar learning by giving the grammar rules explicitly and then giving chance to practice those given rules by writing or speaking them in very a very predetermined manner. No chance for discovery, playing with language, testing out the boundaries or even having something to do with communication.

Fernández (2011) followed the analysis done by Ellis (2002) and analysed beginner-level Spanish textbooks for college students in the US. The analysis was done in a similar manner and the results were also similar. All of the books gave the same explicit explanations for the grammar rule without discovery activities but apparently there was some contextualisation as the explanations involved both discrete sentences and short paragraphs or brief dialogues. The average ratio of input-based activities to production activities was 7:20 and controlled activities were clearly more popular among both input-based and production-based activities. The prominence of explicit explanations and production activities points towards the traditional PPP way of teaching grammar although all of the books claimed in their prefaces to follow the communicative approach. However, Fernández points out that despite the strong presence of PPP, four out of the six books had instructions for using input-based activities and contextualization which is more than what appeared in Ellis' (2002) analysis.

Aski (2003) in turn analysed the grammar activities in seven textbooks of Italian for elementary school students. The aim of the study was to see whether activities in the textbooks require processing and negotiating of meaning. This was done by looking at which type of activities were the most dominant: mechanical drills, meaningful drills, communicative drills or communicative language practice. From these four the mechanical drills were overall clearly the most common type and language practice activities clearly the least used (Aski 2003: 63). Communicative drills were the second most common type but most of them were yes/no questions which Aski considers almost as mechanical drills. Mechanical drills are the least meaning focused out of all the activity types since they only require manipulation of grammatical form and have that one right answer.

Communicative language practice activities are task-based and have heavy emphasis on the context and meaning rather than explicit grammar.

A study by Millard (2000) focused on 13 grammar textbooks for adult learners of English in Canada. The purpose of the study was to see how well the notions of Communicative language teaching (CLT) and Focus-on-form (FonF) approach were incorporated into four aspects of the textbooks: contextualisation, activities, explanations and practicality. According to Millard (2000: 53), the lack of contextualisation was the main issue since only three out of the 13 in his study were positively contextualised. One of the main ideas of CLT is that students need a purpose to use their language in a meaningful way and that language should be more discourse level instead of individual, isolated sentences (Larsen-Freeman 2011). Millard found that, despite variation between the books, contextualisation was generally minimal as explicit explanations and activities were commonly just disconnected sentences rather than longer texts or even sentences with a connecting theme. The activities in the study rarely required communication and even in more communicative activities, the grammatical form was clearly emphasized over function and meaning. However, Millard (2000: 52) notes that the books which did provide the most communicative-based activities for grammar also contextualised the grammar item through longer texts.

In Finland the only studies on grammar in L2 teaching materials which I was able to find are Master's theses. In one of them Pylvänäinen (2014) looked at how certain verb tenses are taught in textbooks of English and Swedish for grades 7-9. The study focused on the methodological options used in the books as well the quality of the pedagogical grammar. The data included three English textbooks and found that they were quite traditional in the way they presented explicit grammar rules and focused on the form instead of meaning or use (Pylvänäinen 2014: 107). The exercises were most commonly controlled production though the most salient finding was that authentic data and exercises involving judgement were absent from all four series. Moreover, the two English textbook series

provided explicit grammar rules yet lacked discovery activities whereas the Swedish series had both options. (Pylvänäinen 2014: 103).

There is also a Bachelor's thesis by Vornanen (2014) which supports the findings of Pylvänäinen (2014). Vornanen analysed four EFL textbook series made for Finnish 7th graders, two of which were the same as in the study of Pylvänäinen, and focused on the English present perfect in them. The methodological options found in the books again pointed towards the traditional approaches as rules were given explicitly and the exercises were generally very controlled, mechanical and focused on the form over meaning or use. Grammar was also quite explicitly separated from the other exercises on to sort of "grammar pages" yet it was not completely disconnected from the other textbook readings or exercises. However, the examples were mostly discrete sentences and the longer texts in the books the not utilized with the grammar activities. (Vornanen 2014).

Another relevant Finnish study is by Sormunen (2013) which instead of textbooks focused on the opinions both students and teachers of upper secondary school have on grammar teaching. Sormunen (2013) found that students of upper secondary school have quite a traditional image of grammar teaching. Students were unsure of how grammar items related to real life language communication and rather associated grammar learning with "formal language learning situations, analysis of the language, terminology and school setting" (Sormunen 2013: 61). Grammar learning was not viewed negatively, but students valued oral activities over the grammar learning which was described writing centred (Sormunen 2013: 76). Sormunen also notes that students had surprisingly little ideas for how their grammar teaching could be changed. One explanation for this according to Sormunen (2013: 78) might simply be that students are not familiar with the variety of grammar instruction.

There is also a recent study, a Master's thesis by Hietala (2015), which surveyed how Finnish teachers of English view the current upper secondary school EFL textbooks. Although the study did not focus on grammar it is relevant since it gives an idea of how practicing teachers view textbooks in Finland. On a general

level 87 out of 131 teachers thought that the books represented the current pedagogical views of language teaching *well* or *very well*. In regards to grammar there were 103 teachers out of 131 who thought grammar was covered to the extent of *well* or *very well*. (ibid 2015: 56). However, it remains a mystery which ideas the teachers themselves considered the most pedagogical views and did teachers mean grammar was covered well in quantity or quality or both. With the open ended question one of teachers actually mentioned *Open Road 5*, which is also used as data in this study, and said it was narrow and one-sided with grammar (ibid 2015: 70).

In general, all of the studies discussed above agree that context, meaning and function are still being overshadowed in the grammar teaching materials despite being supported by SLA research. Instead, rules of grammar are central, explicit and based on structural grammar. The rules are practiced through repetition, patterns and writing exercises as opposed to discovery activities, meaningful and communicational or even simply oral activities. Learning the rules seems to be more important goal than understanding the context of use of grammar items. The fact that many sets of textbooks in the western world clearly follow the traditional approaches still on this decade makes one wonder on the reasons. Aski (2003:158) rationalises that one of the reasons must simply be methodologists' reluctance to change their old beliefs.

Of course there are clear limitations to all of these studies and one of them is that each of the studies only looked at small number of textbooks or grammar instruction books. Out of the studies above only Millard (2000) looked at the textbooks a whole, whereas the others limited their data to one grammar form which in all of the cases were tenses. In that way the target grammar item was similar although the textbooks above were made in variety of countries for different target groups and languages.

5 PRESENT STUDY

5.1 Aims and Research questions

This study aims to find out how grammar is presented and practiced in Finnish upper secondary school EFL textbooks and what kind of theoretical approach is central in them. The main research question is the following:

1. How do Finnish EFL books for upper secondary school teach formal subject and shortened clauses of English?

The main question is on a more general level yet emphasizes the fact that this is a qualitative study. The books are not expected to conform to one theoretical or methodological approach of grammar instruction, but the approaches introduced in the theoretical framework will be used to describe the way the textbooks are constructed. In order to more specifically answer the 'how' there are the following sub questions:

- 1.1 Which methodological options are used for the presentation and activities of the formal subject and shortened clauses of English?
- 1.2 What kind of activity types are most common in the textbooks?
- 1.3 Are there major differences between the series or between the grammar items on how they present the formal subject and shortened clauses of English?

The questions 1.1 and 1.2 focus on the methodological options and activity types. These terms refer to the characteristics of the explicit descriptions, example data and activities found in the textbooks and they will be explained and discussed in more detail later in the section 5.5.

The answers to these research questions will be provided by doing a qualitative content analysis on a set of EFL textbooks and the accompanied

teacher's materials. Each book will be browsed through and the relevant data in them will be analysed using the coding frame explained in detail in section 5.5. In the next chapter 5.2 I will first introduce the textbooks in more detail and explain the grammar items which I have chosen for closer examination. After that I will explain the framework or methodological options and typology of activities which are the basis for my content analysis.

5.2 Data

The data in this study consists of textbooks and teacher's material packages from three textbook series from different publishers: *Open Road*, *English United* and *Profiles*. *Open Road* from Otava, *Profiles* from SanomaPro and *English United* originally from Tammi, later prints from SanomaPro. All of the series are designed for upper secondary school students. Since this study focuses on only two grammar items of English, *the formal subject* and *shortened clauses*, all of the books in the three series were browsed, but only the books which contained explicit descriptions or activities on said grammar items were selected for the actual analysis. This includes *Open Road 2* and *Open Road 5*, *Profiles 2* and *Profiles 5* and *English United 2*. Since the textbooks themselves had less material on the chosen grammar items than expected, the corresponding teacher's material packages were also included in the data in order to see whether they had additional activities, or instruction for the teacher. This serves a purpose since the material packages are available for teachers and therefore it is highly likely that they use the packages if they use the textbooks. Moreover, the teacher's material packages were expected to include some explanations or additional instruction on how the teaching materials can be used in teaching.

The three series were chosen on the basis they were the most current EFL textbooks available on the market when this study was started. In Finland the market for textbooks is very limited and there are only three two major publishers, Otava and SanomaPro, which publish EFL textbooks for upper secondary level.

This means that on the market at the time of writing this there are, and for some years have been, always two series from each company, one current and one discontinued. It should also be noted that although the textbooks are aimed to be used in national education, the textbooks are commercial since they come from private publishing companies.

5.3 The formal subject and shortened clauses

Due to the limitations of this study the data was narrowed down to include only material containing two grammar items of English: *the formal subject* ('muodollinen subjekti') and *shortened clauses* ('lauseenvastikkeet'). These terms are the ones used in the data so they will be used in this study, but they are not commonly found as such in reference and pedagogical grammars written in English. For example, what in this study is called formal subject is referred to as *impersonal 'it', preparatory it, 'there' as a subject* and *introductory subject* whereas the shortened clauses mainly covers of what is called *reduced relative clauses* and *subordinate clauses replaced by a present participle* (see for instance *Collins Cobuild English Grammar; Swan 2005*). The main reason for choosing these two items is that they have not been covered in previous studies on grammar in L2 teaching materials which have concentrated on verbs and tenses. These items might pose a challenge since the formal subject does not have an equivalent in Finnish language and the Finnish 'lauseenvastikkeet' then again does not have as concise equivalent in English. In addition, according to Korpela (2016) the Finnish 'lauseenvastikkeet' is a commonly misused construction which can be difficult to understand and possibly more misleading than enlightening for students. Both the English shortened clauses and the Finnish equivalent are also not commonly used in spoken language and are part of more formal, often written language. (Alexander 1988: 30; Korpela 2016). These two items can also be argued to be on a more advanced level since they are not covered, at least not extensively, before the upper secondary school when the learners are to reach the upper intermediate level of English. All in all, both the formal subject and shortened clauses are covered in their own segments in the data and they are

linguistic items which have not yet been analysed in previous research on textbooks.

One half of **the formal subject** is the impersonal 'it' which main use is to take the focus off the subject and make some other information in the clause stand out. This is often done when describing a place or a situation, or when talking about the weather "*It will probably snow tomorrow.*" or time "*It is two o'clock already.*" These example sentences show that the basic structure of the formal subject is formed by placing either 'it' or 'there' in the subject position of the clause, followed by a verb which most often is 'be' which can be in any tense. Another use for the formal 'it' is what Swan (2005: 423-424) calls *preparatory it* which means it is used for introducing an experience or expression in order to avoid a long subject. In this case the form includes 'it', a linking verb, a complement and finally either a 'to'-infinitive clause "*It is lovely to see all those children playing at the beach.*" or a present participle "*It was nice meeting all of you.*" 'It' can also be used to introduce clauses starting with *if*, *as if* and *as though*: "It will not surprise me if they get lost on the way." (Swan 2005: 423-424).

The second part of the formal subject is 'there' which is used when introducing something new by stating the existence of something or describe a situation: "*There's a new sheriff in town.*" Since 'there' refers to something new, it is not used with definite subjects expect for when proposing a solution to a problem: "*There is the extra bed at the attic.*" As can be seen in the example sentences, the form of the formal subject with 'there' is basically 'there' + verb (most often 'be') + subject. (Swan 2005: 579-581).

The term **shortened clauses** as such is not a common term in English reference grammars and what it refers to can be mainly found under reduced relative clauses. Swan (2005: 84-85) explains that reduced relative clauses can be used if

- a) the verb is in the continuous tense
- b) otherwise expresses a habitual or continuous action

The dog who barks every night is driving me crazy.

→ The dog barking every night is driving me crazy.

c) is about feeling, thinking, wishing.

A shortened clause can also replace a main clause in cases when:

a) two actions take place at the same time

He ran away. He sang as he went.

→ He ran away singing.

b) two actions are immediately followed by each other

Mark sneezed suddenly and hit his head on the cupboard.

→ Sneezing suddenly Mark hit his head on the cupboard.

c) an action is part of another action.

Mark fired his gun and killed John.

→ Mark fired his gun killing John.

In all of the cases the shortened clause is formed by replacing the verb with a present participle, which in active clauses is -ing form of a verb and in passive clauses the 3rd form and by leaving out the subject, which in relative clauses is always the relative pronoun (Thomson Martinet 1986: 84-85). In some cases, other words besides the subject are omitted for example the words as, since and because if they start the clause (Thomson and Martinet 1986: 242).

5.4 Qualitative content analysis

The method used in this study to analyse the data introduced above is *qualitative content analysis* (QCA). The term content analysis is often used quite loosely to refer to simple gathering and summarizing of data (Cohen 2007: 475) and although it is often considered a quantitative method it can also be qualitative in nature. The main difference between these approaches is the amount and quality of the data. In quantitative content analysis the amount of data needs to be large so that comparisons and generalizations can be made. However, aiming for generalizations leads to losing specifics about the context of the data. In contrast, in QCA the amount of data can be smaller because the idea is to enable

interpretations and comparisons between sets of data while making sure that the context is taken into account as far as possible. Context in this case refers to both the immediate context, for example the textbook from which the grammar activities are gathered, but also the larger theoretical framework and social context, for example Finnish education system. (Schreier 2012: 29). Lastly, Cohen (2007:276) points out that qualitative content analysis can be used to uncover biases, prejudice or propaganda in a way simplified quantitative content analysis would not be able to.

There are three basic ways of conducting a QCA based on the starting point: *data-driven*, *concept-driven* and *method-driven* (Schreier 2012; Krippendorff 2013). *Method-driven content analysis* according to Krippendorff (2013) is motivated by an analytical technique which a researcher wants to use on a set of data. The method chosen will guide what kind of research questions can then be set instead of the other way around. *In data-driven* content analysis the research is motivated by a certain set of data and the analysis concentrates more on exploring the texts rather than searching for answers on predetermined research questions. A coding frame in this case is constructed during the analysis based on what emerges from the data. (Schreier 2012: 87-88). *The concept-driven* analysis is the one that has predefined research questions and its coding frame is based on theories, previous data and logic instead of the data as in the data-driven QCA. Nevertheless, Schreier (2012: 89) reminds that in QCA the analysis is rarely purely one of the other and that the coding frame can very well be both concept- and data-driven. An example of this would be that the main categories are drawn from theories whereas the subcategories emerge from the data. In this study the QCA is primarily concept-driven as the coding was done using a ready-made coding frame, but it is also partly data-driven since during the analysis I found some characteristics of the data interesting enough to create some extra categories in addition to the original coding frame.

Whatever the way of conducting the QCA, it is always systematic in nature and it has four basic steps: coding, categorising, comparing and concluding (Cohen

2003). According to Schreier (2012: 41), coding as a part of QCA, is both data- and problem-driven. This is because at least some codes are decided on the basis of the framework beforehand, but they can be adjusted accordingly based on the findings. In this study I will be using *a coding frame* in order to code the data and categorise it accordingly. As the categorisations have been made, it is possible to compare the textbooks with each other as well as with the theoretical background. Cohen (2003: 480) reminds that while coding and categorising data, the researcher must stay alert in order to not allow the categories predefine the results of analysis. If predefined categories are used in the analysis, as is the case in the current study, it is easy to stay within those limits and force findings into categories they might not properly fit instead of creating new categories altogether.

On top of being systematic Schreier (2012) highlights that QCA is also highly flexible and that it reduces data. As a qualitative research method QCA has emergent flexibility which means that it is normal to analyse the data cyclically more than once. This is an important feature of QCA to remember since it prevents supports reliability if done right. Whether the analysis is theory guided with a framework for analysis or completely data-driven, the coding and categorising are not done in one go. It is always important to go through the data more than once in order to make sure that the context is taken into account proficiently and also to check on the consistency of the analysis. Throughout the analysis process the researcher has to make interpretations and choices about the data. (Schreier 2012, Krippendorff 2013). Since QCA requires the researcher to make choices about the data it can lead to the data actually being reduced when many other qualitative research methods actually lead to the data being opened up further (Schreier 2012: 7). As an example take this study. To start off, I chose three textbook series but since I am analysing only the formal subject and shortened sentences, the data narrowed down to include only five books from the three series. After this I marked each instance of the formal subject and shortened sentences and coded them using the coding frame.

5.5 The Coding Frame

5.5.1 Methodological Options

The coding frame used for the analysis in this study can be seen in Table 1 below. The system of methodological options by Ellis (2011) is the basis for the coding in this study, but since it does not provide qualitative enough information about the data, the typology of exercises by Aski (2003) is used for more in depth analysis. The analysis is done by first browsing through each book and each occurrence of explicit grammar theory, example text and activity related to the formal subject and shortened clauses will be coded using the coding frame. Next I will explain each of these in more detail and describe the coding process.

First off, the system of methodological options by Ellis (2011) includes three main categories which are *explicit description*, *data options* and *activities* and each main category has subcategories as seen in Table 1. *Explicit description* refers to the descriptions of grammar rules and structures. As the data consists of textbooks which are be categorised as pedagogical grammars, the assumption here is that the data will have *supplied* and/or *discovered* explicit description. If explicit description is *supplied* it is provided in the material and, in order to make a clear distinction for coding, it is either clearly referred to or positioned in the close proximity of the grammar activities. Explicit description is *discovered* if there are activities in which the purpose is to discover or remember the rules first instead of simply reading them out.

TABLE 1. *The coding frame*

Explicit description	supplied	
	discovered	
Data options	source	authentic
		contrived
	text size	discrete

		continuous
	medium	written
		oral
		visual
Activities (n=)	production	controlled
		free
	reception	controlled
		automatic
	judgment	judge only
		correct
Activity types	Mechanical drills	
	Meaningful drills	
	Communicative drills	
	Communicative language practice	

Data options refers to the examples of the grammar points given along with the explicit descriptions and other texts which are used along with the activities to support the learning of the grammar point (Ellis 2011: 159). In this study texts were coded as data options if they included either one of the grammar points at focus in this study, but sentences which were part of the activities were not counted as data options for example fill-in-the-blank sentences. The subcategories for data options are: *source, text size and medium*. *Source* of the data options can be either authentic or contrived. The term authentic is a problematic one so in this study the data options are regarded as authentic only if there are clear indications that the text is originally made for other sources than the textbook at hand. For example, song lyrics and quotes from famous people are authentic texts. *Text size* is *continuous* if the text is a longer piece for example a letter, a recipe or a short story. *Discrete sentences* are individual sentences which are not connected to each other. *Medium* means simply whether the examples are given as *written* text or *oral* examples. Ellis (2011) does not explain what he refers to by oral data, but in this study only

examples which are marked to have recordings of them or are asked to read out loud were coded as oral.

Lastly the *activities* –category essentially covers all activities which appear in the books. In the original work by Ellis (2011) this category is called *Operations* but in this study the term *activity* is used instead for coherence. The term activity does not make a difference between exercises and tasks, but it has three methodological subcategories: *production*, *reception* and *judgement*. *Production activities* require students to produce output connected to the form at hand and they range from very controlled to completely free. In controlled activities students have to produce a correct answer and the way the activity can be done is very limited. In the other end of the spectrum are *free activities* in which students can choose what kind of language they want to produce and to use their creativity in order to complete the activity. Although activities can vary in how controlled or free they are, in my analysis I have coded them only as one or the other. The *reception* activities are activities which focus on simply recognising the forms or connecting them to their meanings. An example of this would be finding instances of formal subject from a text or connecting a sentence with a correct translation. Reception activities are *controlled* if the students can take their time to give the answers, but if the answers have a sort of a time limit, for example during a listening exercise, the reception activity is *automatic*. Lastly in *judgement activities* students need to evaluate given sentences or texts and either *judge only* whether they are correct or not in their context, or judge them and then *correct* them as they see fit. An example of such exercise would be choosing the correct form from given options.

5.5.2 Typology of activities

Besides the methodological options, another important part of the coding frame is the typology of activities by Aski (2003). This typology enables a more qualitative analysis of the activities provided in the textbooks. As there are number of resources and techniques which can be used when teaching grammar, there are also a number of different types of activities which Aski (2003) has roughly

divided into four: *mechanical drills* (MechD), *meaningful drills* (MeanD), *communicative drills* (ComD) and *communicative language practice* (CLP). All exercises and tasks in teaching materials can be placed into one of these categories although it is possible that a single exercise has multiple steps in which case it can be categorised as more than one. The major difference between the exercises in these categories is the amount of freedom students have, but more importantly how much meaning processing they require. Here are briefly the four types of activities and their main differences:

TABLE 2. *The Typology of Activities*

CATEGORY	FOCUS ON	CONTROLLED/FREE
Mechanical drills	form	controlled
Meaningful drills	meaning	controlled
Communicative drills	meaning	free
Communicative language practice (CLP)	communication, context	free

Although Aski (2003) notes that the categories do overlap to a degree I have categorized each exercise according to which type they are most inclined to. In exercises which clearly have several stages or steps which can be done completely independent from each other, I have counted them as separate exercises and then coded them accordingly. Next I will explain in more detail and give examples on each category.

Mechanical drills as Aski (2003) defines them are exercises in which learners need to repeat, substitute or manipulate forms without truly understanding the meaning of words or sentences. The exercises are highly controlled, meaning there is only one right answer, and the goal is to simply produce that correct form. An example of this would be a fill-in-the-blank -exercise which requires mechanic conjugation of given verbs into certain tenses. Mechanical drills usually do not

require pair work, but they can be done in pairs for example so that the students are responsible for correcting each other's mistakes.

Meaningful drills require understanding the meaning of the input and output, but like in mechanical drills there is still only one possible answer. A perfect example of this kind of exercise is a fill-in-the-blank exercises where learner must choose the correct prepositions to fit the context of the sentence. Another example would be simple translating of sentences and combining given phrases into sentences fall into this category since they require processing the meanings of sentences.

Communicative drills are similar to meaningful drills since they also require learners to process the meaning of the language, but the difference is that communicative drills are free activities in other words they do not have a single correct answer. For example, if a pair of students ask questions from each other and can be creative with their answers the exercise qualifies as a communicative drill. In case the students simply translate their answers or otherwise give out predefined 'correct' answers, the exercise would be a meaningful drill. However, simplistic yes/no questions are an example of an exercise which seems to involve both processing of meaning and freedom to choose the answer, but according to Aski (2003: 62) they should be considered mechanical drills. He argues that answering yes or no is too simplistic and does not give any indication whether the learner processes the meanings behind the questions or just goes through the motion of answering mechanically.

Communicative language practice could easily also be called tasks since according to Aski (2003: 61) the goal is to "--to immerse the learner in a meaningful context in which he or she is motivated to interact" and this way to force students to concentrate on something else entirely than the grammatical forms. All kind of information-gap, role-play and problem-solving activities are good examples of communicative language practice since in them learners do not have one right answer and they have the freedom to be somewhat more creative with language. However, communicative language practice is not required to be pair or group

work. Individual tasks such as writing a job application letter can be categorised as communicative language practice since the text type by nature is a communicative one for it has a real world communicative context and the goal is to write an understandable text which communicates the meanings students have chosen by themselves.

Next I will present the results of the analysis by first describing the explicit description and data options of methodological options in the whole data. Then the methodological options and task types for activities will be covered by book series in chapters 6.1-6.3 after which there will be a brief summary and comparison of the series in chapter 6.4.

6 RESULTS

6.1 Explicit Description

The first part of the coding frame for this study is explicit description which refers to the explanations of the form, meaning and use of a grammar item. The fact that the only original options in the coding frame for explicit description are *supplied* and *discovered* already implies that there must be explicit description in some form. This was expected since traditionally it has been major part of grammar instruction, but also since more current approaches support the use of explicit instruction in some form (Ellis 2011).

TABLE 3. *The Methodological Options for explicit description and data options*

Books			Profiles 2 (formal subject)	Open Road 2 (formal subject)	United 6 (formal subject)	Profiles 5 (clauses)	Open Road 6 (clauses)
Explicit description	supplied		x	x	x	x	x
	discovered		-	-	x	-	-

Data options	source	authentic	-	-	-	-	-
		contrived	x	x	x	x	x
	text size	discrete	x	x	x	x	x
		continuous	x	-	-	x	-
	medium	written	x	x	x	x	x
		oral	x	-	-	x	-

As can be seen in Table 3, each book in the data supplies explicit description, but only *English United 2* has an activity for discovering the rules, although quite a limited one. This discovery option as seen in Example 1 is an introductory operation which asks to look at some shortened clauses of English. It is not purely about discovering since first off, the use of the Finnish grammar terms '*relatiivilauseiden vastikkeet*' and '*lauseenvastikkeet*' shows the assumption that learners are already familiar with the Finnish grammar item and that they can transfer that information to English. Secondly, from the next page onwards there are six whole pages full of supplied explicit information and examples on shortened clauses, so learners can choose whether to go with the discovery route or to use the explicit information provided. The other textbooks also have brief introductory activities which direct students to focus to the meaning of the shortened clauses, but they are always followed by explicit description only after which come the rest of the activities.

Näin lyhennät lauseita

Lauselyhenteet – Shortened sentences

FIND OUT

Tarkastele alla olevia lauseenvastikkeita.

1. Mikä lauseista osoittaa a) syytä, b) myönnytyistä ja c) ehtoa?
Mitkä kaksi lauseista d) osoittavat aikasuhteita ja mitkä e) ovat
relatiivilauseiden (joka/mikä) vastineita?
2. Missä muodossa verbi on lauseenvastikkeissa? Keksitkö säännön?
3. Suomenna lauseet käyttäen lauseenvastikkeita, jos se vain on mahdollista.
Tarkkaile suomennoksia aina kaikissa kirjan esimerkkilauseissa!



Madeleine answered the phone, giving a deep sigh.

The caller was her manager, commanding her to show up in the studio the next morning.

Her video, released last year, had become number one in the Top of the Pops overnight.

Though being very successful, her videos had drained all her power and she felt exhausted.

She said that **unless** given a long period of rest, she wouldn't be able to make a new record.

Not having anything further to say, Madeleine hung up.

Having done so, she felt tremendous relief.

In the whole data the explicit descriptions of the grammar items, along with the examples and most activities, are very much isolated onto separate grammar pages at the end of each book. These separate sections are also semantically separated from the rest of the material by naming them explicitly to be about grammar. In the *English United* the section is called “The Rule Book”, in *Profiles* “KnowHow: Grammar section” and in *Open Road* “Highway code: Grammar”. There are no explicit descriptions outside the grammar sections and even the terms formal subject and shortened clauses are only in the contents menus and one activity in each *Profiles* -book within the unit. Although other grammar items were not analysed, it seems this might be the case with them as well. This certainly makes the sections feel like their own small pedagogical grammars instead of being integrated parts of the textbooks. Although Form-focused instruction can

have grammar teaching as a separate entity, the main idea of it is to have explicit instruction which raises from meaningful activities and communication and it should not be done in isolation (Millard 2000: 48).

Another trait which stands out, making grammar feel isolated is that the explicit explanations, as well as the instructions for each grammar operation, are given in Finnish. The books were not analysed throughout, but while browsing through the units in search for relevant data, it became apparent that Finnish is not used within the units in any form whereas it has a central role in the grammar sections. Furthermore, the metalanguage used is borrowed from Finnish grammar so that shortened clauses are called '*lauseenvastikkeet*' and the formal subject '*muodollinen subjekti*'. The explanations also use some other metalinguistic terms from Finnish such as *passiivi*, *infinitiivirakenne*, *konjunktio*, *sivulause* and *relatiivilause*. The hypothesis seems to be that the students are familiar with the terms and their meaning in Finnish. Connected to this is how in *Open Road 2 Teacher's manual* it is explained that the example sentences are translated into Finnish to make it easier for students to compare Finnish and English. Especially the formal subject is mentioned to need this kind of comparisons between the languages in order to be understood (Karapalo et al. 2008: 191). Although on this level, students could be expected to understand instructions given in English, it seems that Finnish as the L1 is deemed to have a positive transfer effect to utilise it in this way in grammar instruction. Another very likely reason which Elomaa (2009: 86) mentions, is to avoid unnecessary frustration over linguistic metalanguage and elements by giving students the "easy way out" by using their native language, in this case Finnish, and terms which they assumed to be familiar with.

Within the grammar sections the explicit descriptions are very short, simplified and accompanied by two or more corresponding data options as shown in Example 2. The simplicity of the rules was not surprising since according to Leech (1995) pedagogical grammars need to keep explicit descriptions neat in order to not overwhelm learners. In all of the books the actual explicit explanations are very short, usually only one or two sentences as in Example 2. However, space

usage is different in the books *English United 2* uses six pages for explanations and examples on shortened clauses while in contrast *Profiles 2* has dedicated only page for the formal subject. At first glance the amount of explicit description in *English United 2* seems somewhat too exhaustive, but in reality most of the space is used by example sentences and the rules stay short.

EXAMPLE 2. Explicit descriptions (Karapalo et al. 2008a : 127)

There

Muodollista subjektia **there** tarvitaan, kun ilmaistaan, että jossakin on jotakin uutta ja ennen mainitsematonta. Vertaa esimerkkejä.

Seuraavassa esitellään **there**-sanankäyttöön liittyviä sääntöjä.

1. Ei suomenneta

Uusi asia sijoitetaan lauseen loppupuolelle, ja lause aloitetaan sanalla **there**. Sitä ei suomenneta sanalla *siellä*. Jos paikan määre kuitenkin on *siellä*, sana **there** tulee lauseeseen kaksi kertaa.

The fox is in the garden.

Kettu on puutarhassa. (*sama kettu kuin ennenkin*)

There's a fox in the garden.

Puutarhassa on kettu. (*ennen mainitsematon tieto*)

There were lots of people at the party.

Juhlissa oli paljon väkeä.

There was nothing there.

Siellä ei ollut mitään.

6.2 DATA OPTIONS

The first subcategory for *data options* is *source* which can be either authentic or contrived. The textbooks in this study only have of contrived data options as seen in Table 1. Although, the term authentic can be defined in several ways in this study data options were coded as authentic only if they were texts clearly produced for some other reason than these textbooks. For example, song lyrics, movie quotes, magazine articles and newspaper headlines would be counted as authentic data, but there were no instances of such texts which would somehow connect to either the formal subject or the shortened sentences. It is understandable that due to copyright issues it is difficult to have authentic data in textbooks not to mention that finding authentic examples of specific grammar items can be challenging. However, there were data options which were borderline authentic as seen in Example 3 which is a short advertisement on Wisconsin Dells from *Profiles*

2. This text has a context outside the textbook since first off Wisconsin Dells is a genuine water park and secondly since the genre is advertisement one could imagine it being from a brochure or a website – an authentic context.

EXAMPLE 3. (Elovaara et al. 2011: 136)

The formal subject


Muodollinen subjekti
– näin kerrot asioista ilman tekijää

IT'S ALWAYS SUMMER IN WISCONSIN DELLS!

It's January, it's seven o'clock in the evening and it's freezing cold outside. There are two feet of snow on the ground. But in Wisconsin Dells Indoor Water Park it's always warm and sunny.

There is so much to say about the world under our massive glass roof that it's difficult to know where to begin. It was only last year that we were voted one of the top attractions in the state. There is year-round sunshine, of course, but you don't need to worry about sunburn or bugs. There are four-foot waves to surf in our wave pool, but we are also child-friendly. What's more, it's only a two-hour drive from Milwaukee and it won't cost a fortune to stay the night. But there's no point trying to describe it in words. There isn't an ad big enough.

SO ISN'T IT TIME YOU DISCOVERED WISCONSIN DELLS FOR YOURSELF?



The Example 3 from *Profiles 2* is also important since it is one of the two continuous data options found in the data. The other continuous example is a short enriched text on the actress Kate Winslet in *Profiles 5*. These examples reflect the themes of the units in the textbooks: *Profiles 5* which covers film, music and arts has a text on Kate Winslet and *Profiles 2* with topics such as travelling discusses Wisconsin Dells both as a chapter text and as an introduction to the formal subject. Both texts start the sections on their respective grammar items and there is introductory activity related to both.

Besides the two continuous texts discussed above, the data options in the textbooks are discrete sentences as seen in the Example 2 earlier. In *Open Road 2 Teacher's material package* (Karapalo et al. 2008b: 191) it is acknowledged that examples are only discrete sentences and it is explained that they are short and include only simple vocabulary because it makes it easier for students to see the forms and not be confused by the meanings of the sentences. It is also explained

that it is necessary to have Finnish translations besides the English examples in order to show the differences of form and meaning between Finnish and English. All of the books do have Finnish translations next to the examples although in *Open Road 6*, which has examples of both relative clauses and their respective shortened versions, only the shortened clause is translated.

The discrete sentences in the books are much more generic in nature, but there are clear differences between the series. The *Open Road* -series is the most generic and contextualised with sentences such as “The plays written by Shakespeare are still performed today.” and “Did you recognise the man in the grey suit?” (Karapalo et al. 2010a: 166) found in *Open Road 6* although the theme of the book is science and technology. In the *Profiles* -series there is slightly more attempt to contextualize for at least the discrete sentences in *Profiles 5* connect to the general themes of the book: music, art and film. In *English United 6* the examples again do not connect to the general theme of the book, though together they form a larger narrative since each sentence refers to the fictional singer Madeleine as seen in Example 4 below and also in the Example 1 earlier.

EXAMPLE 4. Narrative contextualisation (Daffue-Karsten 2006: 142)

<i>Laulaja, joka esiintyy nyt, on suuri idolini.</i>	The singer who is performing now is my great idol.
<i>Laulaja, joka esiintyvä on suuri idolini.</i>	The singer who is performing now is my great idol.
<i><u>Nyt esiintyvä</u> laulaja on suuri idolini.</i>	The singer performing now is my great idol.
<i>Lehdistö ylisti konserttia, joka pidettiin Arenalla.</i>	The concert, which was held in the Arena, was praised by the press.
<i>Lehdistö ylisti konserttia joka pidettyä Arenalla.</i>	The concert, which was held in the Arena, was praised by the press.
<i>Lehdistö ylisti <u>Arenalla pidettyä</u> konserttia.</i>	The concert, held in the Arena, was praised by the press.
<i>Melodiat, jotka suhteellisen tuntemattomat ihmiset ovat säveltäneet, tuntuvat tarttuvilta.</i>	The melodies, which have been composed by relatively unknown people, seem to go down well.
<i>Melodiat jotka suhteellisen tuntemattomat ihmiset ovat säveltämät, tuntuvat tarttuvilta.</i>	The melodies, which have been composed by relatively unknown people, seem to catch on well.
<i><u>Suhteellisen tuntemattomien ihmisten säveltämät</u> melodiat tuntuvat tarttuvilta.</i>	The melodies, composed by relatively unknown people, seem to catch on well.

All of the books have few instances of both the formal subject and shortened clauses within the texts in the units, for example the formal subject in *Profiles 2* can be found 1-3 times in almost every text. However, I have not counted these

instances as continuous data options since the input stays very much implicit and for instance Nassaji and Fotos (2011: 8) state that simply providing input of grammatical features without any cognitive attention to them is not enough. Cognitive attention here is lacking as first off, there is no textual enhancement of the forms such as bold typeface or underlining to draw attention to the them. Secondly, the input is not recycled as data options for the explicit descriptions and there is only one activity, found in *Profiles 5* and discussed in more detail in section 6.4., which uses data options from a unit text and therefore very much draws attention to it. Although some instructional approaches such as the audio-lingual method claim that implicit input-flooding is enough for acquisition (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 3), implicit and out of the immediate context input will go unnoticed in textbooks which provide strong explicit grammar instruction.

The last subcategory for data options is *medium* which can be either written or oral. None of the textbooks or teacher's materials provide data options which would be as recordings only and, yet again, *Profiles 2* and *Profiles 5* are the only textbooks which have recordings of written data options. These oral data options are the continuous texts which were already discussed above. It is not much of a surprise that the data options are only written since they are discrete sentences. The fact that there are any data options that can be counted as oral is a surprising one since the previous studies found none (Pylvänäinen 2014; Vornanen 2014; Millard 2000; Fernandes 2011).

6.3 Open Road -series

The formal subject is covered in *Open Road 2* and the shortened clauses in *Open Road 6*. Both *Open Road* -books along with their teacher's manuals have a separate grammar section at the end of each book called *Highway Code*. The forewords in the textbooks say that the study texts are accompanied by "a variety of comprehension, vocabulary, translation, listening and speaking exercises" (Karapalo 2008: 3) and grammar is only mentioned to be found in the *Highway code* section. The number of activities in all of the data can be seen in Table 2 below. *Open Road 2* has eight

activities and together with the *Open Road: course 2 Teacher's* there are ten activities overall. *Open Road 6* also has eight activities, but its teacher's manual has 17 activities, which makes the total of 25 for *Open Road 6*. In the Table 2 each activity belongs to one of the methodological options category at the top half of the table, and to one activity type category at the bottom half of the table.

TABLE 2. *Activities by methodological options and activity types*

Books		Profiles 2 (formal subject)	Open Road 2 (formal subject)	English United 6 (formal subject)	Profiles 5 (clauses)	Open Road 6 (clauses)	Total (n=)
Production	controlled	6	10	5	8	23	52
	free	2	1	0	0	0	3
Reception	controlled	2	0	1	0	1	4
	automatic	0	0	0	0	0	0
Judgement	only	0	0	0	1	1	2
	correct	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total (n=)		10	11	6	9	25	61
Mechanical drills		2	2	4	2	18	28
Meaningful drills		6	7	2	7	7	29
Communicative drills		0	0	0	0	0	0
Communicative language practice		2	1	0	0	0	3

As seen in Table 2, *Open Road 2* has only production activities and in *Open Road 6* there are 22 controlled production activities out of 25 total, which makes them by far the most common methodological option. The production activities are typically controlled ones and in *Open Road 2* they are mainly meaningful drills which are in this case translation exercises as seen in Example 5. Translations are an easy example of a production activity since they require the learners to produce the target form and they are very clearly controlled activities since the teacher's file offers only one 'correct' answer for each sentence. In the Example 5 the translations

are from Finnish into English, but there are also translation exercises from English to Finnish. In cases where the translation is from Finnish to English learners might have to concentrate more on producing the correct form whereas from English to Finnish they can concentrate on understanding the meaning of the English form. Despite these slight differences in the focus both types of translations do require understanding the meaning behind the words and the form in order to produce the correct equivalent in the other language.

EXAMPLE 5. Controlled production. (Karapalo et al. 2008a: 129)

Harjoitus 11

Käännä.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. New Yorkissa on miljoonia ihmisiä. | 5. Kello on puoli seitsemän Tokiossa. |
| 2. Los Angelesissa on jännittävää. | 6. Moskovassa on -3 astetta. |
| 3. Roomassa oli sadekuuroja (<i>shower</i>). | 7. Ei ole aikaa matkustaa maailman ympäri. |
| 4. Pietarissa satoi lunta. | 8. On aika mennä kotiin. |

The controlled production activities in *Open Road 6* differ from the ones in *Open Road 2* in that instead of being meaningful drills they are mostly mechanical drills. As can be seen in Table 2, there are altogether 18 mechanical drills which are all transformation exercises. In addition, there are four activities which have been coded as meaningful but have a b) part which is actually a transformation activity which is a mechanical activity. As seen in the Example 6, a transformation activity requires students to transform sentences into shortened clauses or vice versa. Transformation activities are coded in this study as mechanical since even with shortened sentences they can be done by concentrating on the sentence level items: find subject, remove it, transform the verb. Moreover, both Aski (2003) and Stranks (2003) consider transformations to be mechanical drills and Stranks (2003: 334) has criticised that they have no resemblance to real life communication. Therefore it is surprising to find so many transformation drills in *Profiles 5* because it specifically explained in the textbook that it is more important for students to understand the meaning of the shortened sentences than to be able to produce them (Ikonen et al. 2014: 154). For this purpose, one might think translation activities to be utilised,

but all of the books with shortened sentences, *Profiles 5*, *Open Road 6* and *English United 6*, have clearly more transformation activities than translations.

EXAMPLE 6. Transformation drill (Karapalo et al. 2010:)

Harjoitus 30

Kumpi on helpompaa, lyhentää sivulause lauseenvastikkeeksi vai muuttaa vastike takaisin kokonaiseksi lauseeksi? Kokeile ensin lyhennyksiä. Pari tarkistaa ja auttaa, koska muunnostapoja voi olla useita. Vastaukset s. 208.

1. When he arrived in Finland, Mathias was a little nervous.
2. After he had met his host family, he felt much better.
3. As soon as he saw his room, he knew he'd be all right.
4. Before he unpacked his bags, he phoned his family in Munich.
5. When he was asked to join the family in the kitchen, he realised how hungry he was.
6. Before he was introduced to the sauna ritual, he was shown around the house.
7. After he had been taken for a little sightseeing tour, he finished unpacking his luggage.
8. Since he had been chosen to represent his school in Finland, he was feeling very proud.

Although most of the production activities in the *Open Road* -books are clearly controlled ones, the *Open Road 2* has one rare free production operation which is also a communicative language practice activity. The only other similar activities are in *Profiles 2* with the formal subject and there are only two of them. The operation in *Open Road 2*, as seen in Example 7, is titled '*Tuning in*' and besides being the first operation under the title of formal subject, it does not explicitly mention the grammar item. The instructions ask the students to describe an imaginary place to their partners through the listed questions to which the natural answers use the formal subject. For example, the expected English answer to the question "What is the weather like?" is to answer "It is windy". There are four numbered pictures below the operation and although there are no instructions to use them, it is clear that they can be used as an inspiration.

EXAMPLE 7. Free production (Karapalo et a. 2008: 124)

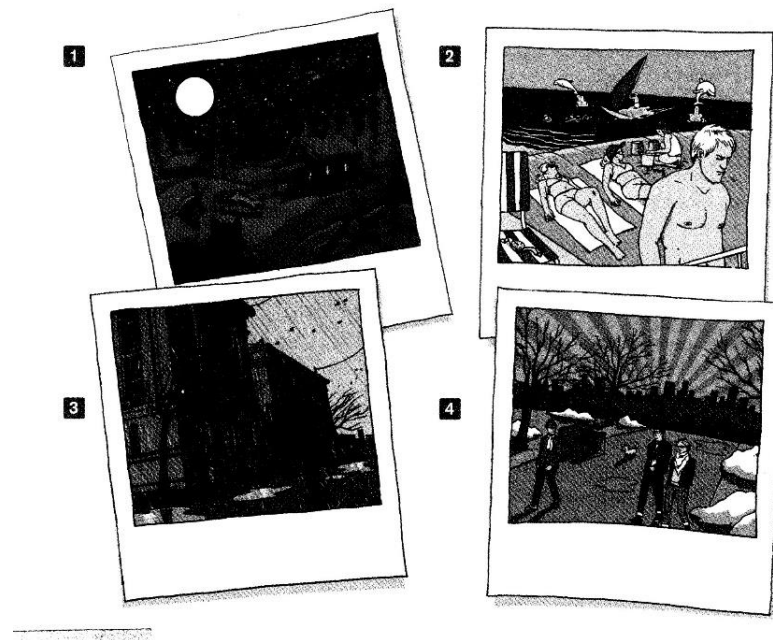
Muodolliset subjektit it ja there

Tuning in

It's time to call home! Tell your partner

- » where you are,
- » what time of the year it is,
- » what time of the day it is,
- » what the temperature is,
- » what the weather is like,
- » what exactly you can see around you,
- » what it is like to be there.

Take turns.



Open Road 6 has the most production activities out of all the books, but it also has one reception and two judgements activities. The reception activity is a controlled one and it is in the teacher's manual. The activity has eight sentences in English and students are simply asked to first identify the shortened clauses and then mark them as either active or passive. The judgement operation can be seen in Example 8 and it is used as a 'tuning in' activity for the section on shortened clauses. In judgement activities learner needs to make judge whether structures and forms are correct. In the judgements activity in Example 8, the focus is on the

meaning of the sentences so the students do not judge the form but the meaning of the sentences.

EXAMPLE 8. Judgement operation (Karapalo et al. 2010a: 164)

Lauseenvastikkeet

(Shortened clauses)

Tuning in

Shortened clauses can be tricky, as in the Finnish sentence *Poika avasi oven ilkeästi narahtaen*. What went wrong?

Can you spot similar blunders in the English sentences? Correct answers on page 209.

- a. Looking out of the window, the mountains seemed majestic to me.
- b. If served ice cold, the customers will enjoy their drinks more.
- c. After leaving the train and walking through the station, Helen's handbag was stolen.
- d. Although in need of reading glasses, vanity stops Jane from wearing them.
- e. Before being fed raw meat, the tiger's keeper warned the visitors.
- f. Unless painted a prettier colour, the owner can't expect to sell the house at all.

6.4 Profiles -series

Profiles 2 and *Profiles 5* both have contents -pages which show that the books are divided into four units, each with 2-3 text chapters, and each unit has both a theme and a suggested grammar point for study. In *Profiles 2* the formal subject is suggested to be studied during the second unit with the theme of travelling and in *Profiles 5* the shortened clauses are suggested for the art themed third unit. As with the *Open Road* the explicit descriptions, data options and activities are all placed at the end of the books in separate grammar section called *KnowHow*. The teacher's manuals for both books offer two extra activities.

The most common activity type in both *Profiles* -books is controlled production as it is in the rest of the data. What makes *Profiles 2* slightly unique is that it is the only book with more than one reception activity as well as two free production activities. The first reception activity here is also the introduction activity to the section of the formal subject in *Profiles 2*. The activity can be seen in

Example 8 below and it asks to find all formal subjects and their verbs from a connected example text, which can be seen in Example 3 in section 6.2 of this study. After identifying the formal subject they must be categorised by meaning to the given categories and then translated. Although the activity includes translation, it was not coded as production activity since the focus is foremost of the recognition of the form and its different meanings so the translation seems more a confirmation of whether the students has understood the meaning.

EXAMPLE 8. Reception activity (Elovaara 2011: 136)

Toisin kuin suomessa, englanninkielisessä lauseessa on aina subjekti. Jos aktiivilauseessa ei ole tekijää, käytetään niin sanottua muodollista subjektiä eli joko **it-** tai **there-**pronominia. Sitä ei käännetä suomeksi.

muodollinen subjekti: it, there

Alleiviivaa yllä olevasta tekstistä kaikki muodolliset subjektit ja niihin liittyvät verbit.

Kuten huomaat, lauseissa ilmaistaan aikaa, säätä, välimatkaa, etäisyyttä ja mielipidettä tai muodollista subjektiä käytetään korostamaan jotakin lauseenosaa. Yleinen rakenne on myös (jossakin) on jotakin.

Etsi jokaisesta tapauksesta yksi esimerkki ja käännä se suomeksi.

- | | | |
|----------|------------------------|-------|
| 1 | Aika | |
| 2 | Sää | |
| 3 | (Jossakin) on jotakin | |
| 4 | Mielipide | |
| 5 | Asian korostaminen | |
| 6 | Välimatka tai etäisyys | |

An example of a free production activity can be seen in Example 9. Only three free productions are found in the whole data, the second one is later in *Profiles 2* and the third in *Open Road 2*, as already discussed in section 6.3. Although the activity in Example 9 has clear instructions on what information should be produced, it does not require any specific correct answers. Instead, students are given the freedom to use their imagination and although the instructions guide towards the use of the formal subject, the students are not required have to use it in order to do the activity. The second example of a free production activity can be

seen in Example 10 which is quite different in that it is also a *communicative language practice* -activity (CLP). According to Aski (2003), CLP activities get students involved in a meaningful context which set producing the grammar item as secondary to some other, much more communicative goal. In Example 10 the goal is to describe a picture to a partner and to find out what is the difference between it and a partner's similar picture.

EXAMPLE 9. Implicit operation (Elovaara et al. 2011: 76)

Although you followed these tips on your weekend city break, your bag, containing your money and passport, was stolen when you were taking in the sights. You have to report the theft to your insurance company and they ask you to write a short account of what happened just before, during and after the robbery.

Your report should include answers to the following questions:

- What time of day was it?
- What kind of place was it?
- Was there anything that made you suspicious beforehand?
- Were there any witnesses?
- Were there any valuables in the bag?
- Was there anything you could have done to prevent the incident?

EXAMPLE 10. Free production activity (Elomaa et al. 2011: 139)

12

Yöskentele parin kanssa. Toinen käyttää harjoituksessa tämän sivun kuvaa, toinen kuvaa sivulla 186. Kuvanne ovat samanlaisia kahdeksaa pientä yksityiskohtaa lukuun ottamatta. Kysykää toisiltanne vuorotellen kysymyksiä selvittääksenne erot.

"Is there a man selling ice cream in your picture?"
 "No, there isn't."

"Are there any animals on the beach?"
 "Yes, there are."

The whole data has only two instances of the formal subject or shortened clauses outside the grammar sections. The two are activities in *Profiles* -series, one activity in each book. The activity outside the *KnowHow* -pages in *Profiles 2* is a more implicit exercise on the formal subject and also a free production activity. It is the writing task seen in the Example 9, with instructions to write a short report for insurance company and the report should give answers to the questions provided. Although the activity does not explicitly ask to use the formal subject, the way the questions are posed do coerce for it to be used. In addition, reports usually require a more formal style of writing it would be stylistically fitting to use the formal subject. This activity is one of the few coded as communicative language practice (CLP) and as close to an unfocused task as we get in this set of data. Despite the fact that the activity does not ask for pair or group work as tasks generally do, it does require free production and it has a communicative context. The task is

unfocused since even though the formal subject would be a natural way to complete the task, it is not a necessary requirement for the completion of the task. However, since even in the teacher's guide there is no explicit indication that this exercise could be used as part of practicing the formal subject, it depends on teacher whether they notice the opportunity or not.

The second activity outside the grammar section is a translation exercise in *Profiles 5*, seen in Example 11, which is placed in its suggested study unit. Moreover, this is the only activity in all of the data which utilizes the input found in a chapter text. In the operation students are instructed to translate shortened clauses taken from the unit's text into Finnish. Similar to the translation activities in the *Open Road* this one is coded as a controlled production operation and a meaningful activity. Although there are occurrences of formal subject and shortened clauses in the other study texts, this is the only instance in the whole data where the grammar items within the texts are explicitly named and utilised in an activity. The Example 11 is an also a good example of a production operation, since it is a translation activity which could also be considered a reception activity since it is input-based and the instructions emphasize understanding the meaning behind the form.

EXAMPLE 11. Activity within a unit (Ikonen et al. 2014: 82)



The text on Leibovitz has many different types of shortened clauses. You don't necessarily need to use them yourself, but you need to be able to understand them. Work in pairs and translate them into Finnish. For further guidance, see p 154.

- 1 Not content with anything ordinary, Leibovitz asked the couple... (line 7)
- 2 ...a naked Lennon lying curled in the foetal position... (line 10)
- 3 Born in 1949 in Waterbury, Connecticut, Annie Leibovitz enrolled... (line 23)
- 4 On returning to San Francisco that autumn, she began taking night classes in photography... (line 31)
- 5 ...Whoopi Goldberg shot from above and half-submerged in a bathtub of milk. (line 49)
- 6 Leibovitz courted controversy..., giving birth to a daughter... (line 94)
- 7 Some critics panned the book, claiming that it was... (line 107)

6.5 The English United -series

The most noticeable difference between the *English United* and the other two series is that the *English United* -series does not cover formal subject as a grammar item as the other two series do. In *English United 2* the use of 'it' in its passive use is briefly mentioned in the section of the passive, but otherwise it is not explicitly discussed. There are few implicit instances of the formal subject in the activities for the passive subject and within the chapters, though they are not textually enhanced or recycled in the examples or activities. The absence of the formal subject is quite an interesting find since in both *Open Road* and *Profiles* the formal subject is important enough to have its own section alongside grammar items such as the passive and personal pronouns. One explanation for this lack of the formal subject might be that it is deemed simple enough to be acquired through input without the need for formal instruction. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that both *Open Road* and *Profiles* have less explicit descriptions and activities on the formal subject than on the shortened sentences.

Another feature of the *English United 6* which stands out in the Table 2 is the small number of activities it has compare to the *Profiles* and *Open Road* -books. *English United 6* has five activities in total whereas the other series have 9, 10 and 25 and the reason for this is that the teacher's manual of *English United 6* does not provide any additional activities for the shortened clauses. The manual has a grammar section of its own, but for shortened clauses there are only answer sheets for the activities in the textbook. This small number of activities along with the absence of the formal subject makes the *English Untied* -series very narrow data for this study, but it also shows perfectly how the textbooks can have a huge impact in the classroom.

The grammar section for shortened clauses in *English United 6* starts off with a discovery activity which is already discussed in the section 6.1 and can be seen in Example 1 The activity provides shortened clauses in English and asks to code them based on their meanings, to name the form the verb is in and lastly to translate the clauses into Finnish. This activity is coded as a controlled reception as

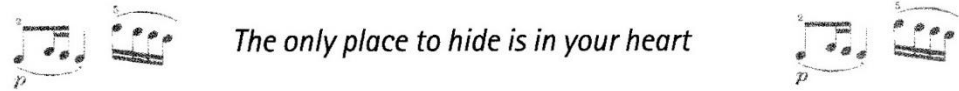
the first two steps of it require understanding meanings. It is interesting that after this receptive activity there is an extensive portion of explicit description, six pages all in all, after which come the rest of the activities which are all controlled production. So the book starts with focusing on the meaning and use through discovery, goes onto formal instruction and then moves on to require accurate production.

Five of the six activities in *English United 6* are controlled production activities and there are only slight differences between them. First off, only one of the five is a meaningful drill although a very different to the reception activity discussed above. This meaningful production activity is called 'test match' and it is a fill-in-the-blank activity which includes other grammar items besides shortened sentences. Students are required to write down correct verb forms of the given verbs and although there are no hints explicitly mentioning shortened clauses, the hints for shortened clause verbs are in English whereas the hints for other grammar items are in Finnish. The four other controlled production activities are mechanical drills because they are very much transformation drills, as the one in Example 12, and as already discussed with *Profiles*, transformations are the most mechanical activities in the data. However, the transformation drills in *English United 6* are interesting because for example the one in Example 12 shares a theme with both the discovery activity and the data options. This is also the only occurrence of song lyrics, although contrived, in the data and because of this it might be more appealing than the other sentence transformations. The other three transformation drills in *English United 6* are theme vice closer to the general theme of the textbook since they have narratives on British citizenship, Indian stockbrokers and the European union.

EXAMPLE 12. Transforming lyrics (Daffue-Karsten 2006: 148)

A Lyric style shift

Muuta Madeleinen uusimmassa hitissä esiintyvät lauseenvastikkeet kokonaisiksi lauseiksi.



- 1) **The world being cold around me,** 2) **not being so good,**
 the only place 3) **to hide** is in your heart.
 4) **Though being a strong survivor,** I can't live without you.
 5) **That said,** I feel relieved, 6) **lying** in your arms.

1. _____
 2. _____
 3

6.6 Activities in the textbooks

Most of the activities in the three series are categorised as either meaningful drills or mechanical drills. The mechanical drills are almost exclusively transformation exercises on the shortened clauses as can be seen in Table 3 below. The meaningful drills tend to be translation or fill-in-the-blank activities. None of the books have communicative drills, which in terms of methodological options would be free production activities. However, all of the free production activities in the data are communicative language practice (CLP) activities since they on top being free also included pair work and other goal than practising the grammar items form or meaning.

Profiles is the only series which has short continuous texts as examples accompanied by a 'tuning in' -activity to start off the grammar sections. Then again both *Open Road* books and *English United 6* also have 'tuning in' activities which focus on meaning and use of the grammar items before introducing explicit descriptions of them. If we do not count the 'tuning in' activities, most of the activities in all of the books are very much controlled production activities. There

are only four reception activities and two judgements activities in the whole data which aligns with the previous research (Pylvänäinen 2014; Vornanen 2015).

Although the original coding frame only included the methodological options and activity types discussed above, I did take note of some other prominent characteristics of the activities, seen in Table 3 Below, and categorised them in as they rose from the data. In the results section 6.3-6.5 I already discussed that some activities include translation and transformation of sentences, but I felt the need to visually show their representation in the data as well as to show some other characteristics of the activities which are not possible to discuss through the original coding frame. The term 'characteristics' is used as the loose general term to differentiate these from the methodological options and activity types. One activity can have several of these characteristics so for example a board game activity in *Profiles 2* has been counted into the category *game* while it also includes *translating* sentences and is designed as a *pair/group* activity. This explains why in Table 3 the number of characteristics in each book does not match the number of activities.

	Profiles 2	Profiles 5	Open Road 2	Open Road 6	United 6	Total (n=)
Activities (n=)	10	9	11	25	6	61
Translation	3	5	7	8	1	24
Transformation	0	2	1	17	3	23
Fill-in-the-gap	3	1	2	0	1	7
Find	2	2	0	3	1	8
Narration	2	0	1	0	0	3
Pictures	1	0	1	0	0	2
Game	1	0	0	0	0	1
Partner/group	2	4	4	2	0	8

7 DISCUSSION

The main aim of this study was to discover how EFL textbooks for upper secondary school and the methodological options used in the upper secondary school EFL textbooks when it comes to the formal subject and shortened clauses of English. The study is clearly limited in scope since it analysed only two grammar items and not the books as whole or even all of the grammar items in them. The methods also had limitations as for example the original coding frame gave out a limited view of the nature of grammar instruction by focusing on certain characteristics of the description and activities. Then again, due to the adaptability of Qualitative content analysis, for example other characteristics of the activities outside the original coding frame were taken into account. All in all, this narrow analysis does give us some insight into the grammar instruction in the textbooks and in this section these findings are compared to the earlier research and the theoretical framework in order to answer the research questions of this study.

The overall structure of the books was very similar in how they had explicit grammar quite clearly separated from the rest of the study material. This type of strong separations of the grammar does seem more typical of the traditional approaches, but more focused sessions of individual grammar items are not atypical of FFI either (Ellis 2011: 13-15). The separation of the grammar differs drastically from the upper comprehensive school textbooks which Pylvänäinen (2014) and Vornanen (2014) analysed. These lower level books generally had explicit descriptions, data options and activities in-between the units of the workbook and then separate reference grammar sections at the end of textbooks. One reason for this might be the that grammar in upper comprehensive school is considered more as a learning process whereas in upper secondary school it is supposedly revision of what is learned previously. Therefore, it might be seen redundant to give explicit grammar instruction as central a role in the upper secondary school books as it has on the lower levels. Moreover, the NCC for upper secondary school (2015) emphasizes the importance of communication skills and multiculturalism in addition to each individual course having an emphasis on a

certain theme. There is only so much that can be packed into one course of English so at least the textbooks have given grammar the backseat to all these other pieces of communicative competence.

Although the grammar as whole has been pushed to the end of the textbooks, the explicit descriptions were very common and a central part of the grammar sections. This was expected first of all as textbooks are considered pedagogical grammars. According to Larsen-Freeman (2011: 521), an important feature of pedagogical grammars is that they take into account the three dimensions of grammar: form, meaning and use. In the previous studies on textbooks grammatical form has clearly been emphasized over meaning and use (Millard 2000; Pänkäläinen 2014; Ellis 2002) so it was positively surprising that the textbooks in this study explain the use and meaning of the grammar items almost more than the form. For example, in both *Profiles 2* and *Open Road 2* the form of the formal subject was explained very briefly with only couple of sentences after which the focus was primarily on explaining when it is used through more discursive and functional meanings. This gives hope that textbooks can have something else than simplified sentence based rules which Hughes and McCarthy (1998) have criticised as they focus too much on the structural form and do not give learners more discursive ideas to when to use the form. One obvious reason for this might be the fact that the formal subject does not after all have a complicated form, but the main problem is that Finnish language does not have such structure. On the other hand, the shortened clauses had much more weight on the form of the grammar item as the 'when to use' was explained through structural grammar terms such as "when there is a preposition structure" (Karapalo et al. 2010a: 166). The shortened clauses also add much lengthier explicit description pages compared to the formal subject while, though for example in *English United* most of that space was used for the example sentences. Simply based on this one can say that out of the two grammar items, the shortened clauses are considered either more important to learn, more difficult or both. Then again the number of activities for both grammar items was very similar.

As can be seen in Table 2, most of the activities are categorised as controlled production. All in all, there are only three instances of free production, two judgement activities and five reception activities out of the 61 total. This was not a surprising find based on the findings of previous studies. Both Vornanen (2014) and Pylvänäinen (2014) showed the upper comprehensive school textbooks to have mostly controlled production activities with rare discovery activities. Judgement activities were completely absent in the data of Pylvänäinen (2014: 102) though Vornanen (2014: 10) found few while looking at the same books but different grammar item. In addition, Fernández found the input – production ratio to be 7:20 for Spanish EFL textbooks. From the activities in this study only the judgement and reception activities could be qualified as input activities, though most of them were not very constructive, which would make the ratio astounding 7:60. This is not at all what Mystkowska-Wiertelak and Pawlak (2012) suggest since according to them there should be a balance of constructed input- and output-based methods for instruction and production. Then again it is possible that the data in this study would show in a different light if we were to look at some other grammar items as happened with Vornanen (2014) and Pylvänäinen (2014) finding different number of judgement activities in the same books for different grammar items.

The findings on activity types was positively surprising as the meaningful drills were as common as the mechanical drills whereas Aski (2003) found the mechanical drills to be overtly popular in the textbooks. However, both meaningful and mechanical drills still seek to have that one correct answer which is exactly what Stranks (2003: 338) has criticised. According to Stranks (2003), teaching meaning and context of grammar structures should translate into activities so that they would seek ‘most appropriate’ answers or answers which make sense contextually for example in conversations. Activity types which would best work for this purpose are the communicative drills and the CLP activities since they are free activities which enable multitude of answers. Unfortunately, the data does not have any communicative drills and the CLP activities are as rare as they were in Aski’s study (2003: 63). Aski’s data comprised of elementary school

textbooks yet they had more communicative drills than the upper secondary school books in this study. I find this quite baffling since intermediate to advanced level students in upper secondary school would much benefit from more communicative and meaningful activities.

The analysed textbooks had both overall and individually very little variation to the activities. Out of the 61 activities 52 were controlled production, 25 were translation drills and 23 transformation drills. Looking at how small variety of activities the textbooks have and considering the fact that teachers in Finland rely heavily on textbooks (Luukka et al. 2008; Tergujeff 2013) this means a very narrow method of teaching. Therefore, it is no surprise that the students in the study by Sormunen (2013) were only familiar with the traditional PPP method of teaching and although they considered and grammar boring, they did not know of any alternative options in order to create more variety. In addition, this narrow variety does not support the ideology of Form-focused instruction since according to Nassaji and Fotos (2011) one of the main ideas of FFI is that there is variety to instruction in both contents of teaching and the methods. Larger variety would be beneficial also in that it would enable learning from different viewpoints and teachers would have more material to enable more individual teaching without having to spend extra effort to make extra materials for students with different skill levels.

Since CLPs are very much what Nunan (2004:4) defines as tasks, the absence of them in the data indicates strongly that the textbooks do not conform to the Task-based language teaching. There were also no communicative drills but meaningful drills were quite popular which suggests that some ideas of FFI about the importance of both forms and meaning is taken into consideration. However, the idea of Ellis (2011: 13-15) that FFI has grammar-tasks which place value for social interaction between the learners is most definitely not utilised effectively. There were also only eight activities which instructed to do oral work with a partner, not to mention there were practically no tasks which would require to be done in pairs or groups for them to work. This lack of encouragement for

communicative group work seems contrasting to the values of the National core curriculums (NCC 2013; NCC 2015) which are based on the idea of languages as communicative competences. The authenticity of the communication situations in these cases is also questionable since many of the exercises required simple translating of sentences, and it is the authentic communication and meaning exchange which Van den Branden, Bygate and Norris (2009) regard as an essential attribute of TBLT.

As this study aimed to answer how the EFL textbooks teach grammar it is important to consider how the series relate to the theoretical approaches to grammar instruction. As discussed in the theoretical background of this study, there are several theoretical approaches to grammar instruction, but in this study the four which are discussed are Traditional approaches, Communicative language teaching, Form-focused instruction and Task-based language teaching. Looking at the findings discussed above it is quite clear that the textbooks are not related to communicative language teaching nor the task-based language teaching. Although the textbooks could be seen to have some common features to the traditional approaches they do not represent the PPP model. All of the grammar sections in the books start with a small meaningful activity before continuing onto providing the explicit description, which is also in some cases more almost more meaning and use focused than form. The second stage is where learners *practice* using the grammar item through various exercises which involve manipulating, repeating and reproducing the form with the aim to absorb the forms correctly. All of the books had repetitive drills, which were often about manipulating (transformation drills) or reproducing the form. However, there were also quite a number of meaningful drills though in the last stage of *production* learners should have the opportunity to use the form more freely in order to fully internalize it and become fluent (Thorbury 1999: 128). None of the textbooks in this study had a stage such as this for free activities. The couple of books which had free production activities did not have those activities placed as the last ones.

In general, the data offered little contextualization for the grammar items although there were some differences between the series. The *Open Road* –books mirror Millard’s (2000) findings of textbooks having no contextualisation even on the level of having a theme to the discrete example sentences or some connecting narratives between the activities and examples. *Profiles* had slightly more contextualisation with two continuous texts to start of the grammar sections, two activities impeded outside the grammar sections and activities which used narratives and shared a common theme. The *English United* was the most contextualised out of the data since each activity had a narrative instead of being discrete sentences and couple of the activities shared a larger narrative with the data options. So although the books lack continuous texts as data options, the *Profiles* and *English United* have taken contextualisation somewhat into consideration which is more along the findings of Fernández (2001) who found textbooks to have connecting themes in the examples despite lacking more continuous texts as input. However, contextualisation in all three series was still lacking. Considering the fact that the new National core curriculum (NCC 2015) emphasizes phenomenon-based learning, it would be fitting to have textbooks take contextualisation more into consideration at least on the level of the themes the textbooks have.

8 CONCLUSION

This study shows is that there is not a huge variety to Finnish textbooks of English at the upper secondary school level. The small number of books is unfortunate though understandable in a country as small as Finland. However, there could be more variety within the books especially when it comes to the teacher’s materials which in this study were found to be surprisingly thin in content. One possible explanation as discussed earlier is that the formal subject and shortened sentences are not regarded as highly important grammar items to the learners and the results might be more varied for other grammar items. Moreover, one might argue that

having a larger number and variety of activities might cause some teachers to feel pressured to cover them all. However, having a large and diverse supply of material would in the end be mostly helpful to teachers since it would help appropriate the textbooks to different teaching methods and to offer students more individual instruction according to their skill level.

Although this study alone is too narrow for generalisations, the results overall align with the findings of other similar research, which is very interesting. The activities represented as small a variety as in the previous studies on textbooks and although each textbook without its teacher's manual had five to eight activities they were not quite similar to each other. This lack of variety is the main downfall of the books and taking some new ideas from the most current instructional approaches such as FFI and TBLT could very well be incorporated to be part of the grammar teaching. This is not just about following the trends but a possibility to give the teachers and students a new way of looking at grammar and making it part of the learning experience instead of seeing as something extra at the end of the textbook. There is a reason that grammar instruction has variety of approaches and it would be a waste to not apply them. In addition, I was surprised by the way and amount Finnish was deliberately distributed in the grammar sections. The role of L1 was not covered in the theoretical framework of this study, but since it rose from the data as such a salient feature it was briefly covered in the analysis.

For future research it would be interesting to see how different parts of the communicative competence are taught in comparison to each other. There are studies which have analysed different aspects of EFL textbooks and this study only looked at the formal subject and the shortened clauses. It would be useful to gain a broader picture of the methodologies in textbooks and whether there are significant differences between the approaches to for example grammar and vocabulary activities. Furthermore, since the arrival of the new National Curriculum and its more comprehensive and multidisciplinary stand on teaching it would be good to look at the new textbooks and whether they already differ from the books in the current study. Or to go even further, it might be more useful to do

a longitudinal study which looks at textbooks from a longer period of time to see whether theoretical trends on grammar instruction or the updates on national curriculum have affected the designs of the books. Another more practical idea would be to compare teachers' views on grammar instruction, how they find Finnish EFL textbooks to reflect those views and how they in reality practice grammar instruction in classrooms.

Grammar has had quite a bad reputation as the boring and difficult part of language learning so it would be important for teachers as much as students to know that grammar can be learned in a great variety of ways. Since textbooks have such a major role in language teaching in Finland it would be essential to have a high standard and critically assess them so that both teachers and students would benefit from them in the best possible way.

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