INTRODUCING STRESS AND RHYTHM: A MATERIAL PACKAGE FOR TEACHING ENGLISH WORD STRESS, SENTENCE STRESS, AND SPEECH RHYTHM TO FINNISH COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL PUPILS

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Abstract

Tämä maisterintutkielma keskittyi siihen, mitä englannin kielen ääntämisen opettamiseen liittyen olisi tärkeää opettaa, ja miten. Taustateoriaan perehtyessä kävi ilmi, että prosodian opettamiseen liittyviä materiaaleja ei esiinny Suomessa käytettävissä oppikirjoissa juurikaan ja yksittäisten äänteiden opettaminen on materiaaleissa suuremmassa roolissa. Tämä on kuitenkin ristiriidassa joidenkin tutkimusten päätelmien kanssa, sillä esimerkiksi Tergueff (2013b) ja Celce-Murcia, Brinton ja Goodwin (1996) toteavat, että prosodisilla piirteillä on mahdollisesti suurempi vaikutus puheen ymmärrettävyyteen, kuin yksittäisillä äänteillä ja niiden mahdollisella väärin ääntämisellä. Näin ollen tämän maisterintutkielman tavoitteena oli luoda materiaalipaketti, joka pyrkii tarjoamaan opettajille ideoita ja tehtäviä prosodisten piirteiden opettamiseen kolmannen luokan englannin kielen oppijoille, sillä prosodisten piirteiden opettaminen tulisi aloittaa jo aloittelevien, mahdollisesti nuorten oppilaiden kanssa.

Tämän tutkielman rajatun laajuuden takia tarkemmiksi aiheiksi valikoituivat sana- ja lausepaino, sekä puherytmi. Näiden prosodisten piirteiden opettamiseen keskittyviä tehtäviä ei tämän tutkielman taustakirjallisuuden (esimerkiksi Tergujeff 2013b) mukaan löydy suomalaisista englannin oppikirjoista lähes ollenkaan, mutta niillä on keskeinen rooli ymmärrettävän puheen tuottamisessa, sekä muiden puheen ymmärtämisessä. Sen lisäksi Suomessa tapahtuvaa opetusta peruskouluissa ohjaavassa dokumentissa *Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteet 2014* nämä piirteet on mainittu osana englannin kielen opetuksen tavoitteita. Esimerkiksi Tergujeff (2010) on todennut, että Suomessa oppikirjoilla on keskeinen asema opetuksessa ja sen sisällöissä, joten tässä on selkeä ristiriita teorian ja käytännön välillä. Näistä syistä tämä materiaalipaketti pyrkii tarjoamaan tehtäväideoita prosodisten piirteiden opettamiseen suomalaisissa peruskouluissa. Materiaalipaketin tehtävät etenevät kontrolloidusta yhden piirteen opettamisesta vapaampaan tuottamiseen ikä- ja taitotasoluokka huomioon ottaen. Jokainen tehtävä sisältää myös esimerkiksi orientoitumista aiheeseen sekä ideoita aiheen soveltavampaan jatkoharjoitteluun.

Keywords English, EFL, material package, pronunciation, prosody, word stress, sentence stress, speech rhythm	

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1 INTRODUCTION

Learning languages has commonly been divided into learning four different skills, which are speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Out of these, speaking and listening, and reading and writing, can be seen as two sides of the same coin – one is a more receptive skill and the other is a more productive skill (for example Sadiku 2015: 29). A part of the larger skill sets of speaking and listening is pronunciation – one should not confuse the words speaking and pronunciation to mean the same skill. Speaking a foreign language includes utilising grammar and vocabulary knowledge as well, whereas pronunciation, as Cruttenden (2014: 4) defines it, includes phonetics, phonology and prosody. Derwing and Munro (2015: 2) define pronunciation as one using one's "articulatory apparatus to create speech", which includes single sounds (vowels and consonants), also known as segments or segmentals, and prosody, also known as suprasegmentals. Prosody refers to, for example, rhythm and intonation, and how they are created – to *how* something is said (Cruttenden 2014: 4-5).

Speaking, or producing language in another form than writing, is a very central part of knowing a language. One example of this is that one's first language is primarily learnt in its spoken form whereas written language is representative of spoken language and used when spoken communication is not possible (Tergujeff and Kautonen 2019: 12). Tergujeff (2013b: 9) also states that one's pronunciation is often seen as a depiction of one's personality, and one's pronunciation may affect the listener's first impression of the speaker, both in the case of one's first and second or foreign language. In addition, both in one's personal and working life oral language skills are essential (Tergujeff and Kautonen 2019). However, Tergujeff and Kautonen (2019) argue that in formal foreign language teaching contexts explicit teaching of oral skills and pronunciation is often less common than teaching grammar and new vocabulary. They suggest that this may be due to second and foreign language teaching being textbook oriented, and the assessment relying heavily on written products.

Tergujeff (2012b: 34) also found that teachers value great oral skills but in reality, do not spend much time on teaching them. In addition, the teachers participating in her survey, who represented many different levels of education (primary to upper secondary school level, and

some university teachers), did not rate pronunciation as high in importance as other language skills. Still, teachers wished that they could spend a bit more time on teaching pronunciation as they currently did. When watching teachers hold classes, Tergujeff (2012a) made similar observations: teaching segmentals, meaning individual sounds, was more prominent in class than teaching suprasegmentals, or in other words prosody. In addition, textbooks, which in Finland are the main source of teaching material, lacked activities for teaching prosody (Tergujeff 2010). Another implication of the status of oral skills in the Finnish education system is that they are not being tested as a part of the English matriculation examination, which is a nationwide examination taken at the end of upper secondary school education in Finland, despite all the other major skills: reading, writing, and listening are (The Finnish Matriculation Examination Board 2022: 4)

As teaching pronunciation seems to not get as much attention in classrooms as it perhaps should, for example due to the lack of teaching materials for it, this thesis focuses on teaching pronunciation and facilitating the teaching of it by supplying materials. The research questions of this study are:

1. What should the objectives of English pronunciation teaching be and on what elements of pronunciation should the focus be in order to reach those objectives?
2. How to design materials for teaching those elements, and what kind of a material package would support the teaching of those elements?

In Finland English is often the first mandatory foreign language that pupils learn in comprehensive schools (Statistics Finland 2020), meaning that they will start learning English and its pronunciation at a young age. Thus, the target group of this study is comprehensive school pupils in Finnish comprehensive schools. Many pupils start learning English already during early childhood education or in the first grade; however, the teaching of a foreign language is not very explicit yet at those stages and the pupils are not expected to be able to read and write (Finnish National Agency for Education 2019). This study and material package focuses on more explicit teaching of pronunciation, therefore choosing the third grade as a target group.

As some aspects of English pronunciation are universal and some tied to the speakers' first language, also called L1, the sources utilised in this thesis are both Finnish and international. The structure of this thesis is as follows: firstly, the section below discusses the objectives of teaching pronunciation. That section focuses on the objectives of pronunciation teaching broadly and then moves on to discuss how those objectives can be met: what should be taught in order to reach those goals? Section 3 explores how pronunciation should be taught, and how one can create high quality materials for teaching. The present study section discusses the material package and its aims, whereas in the last section, in the conclusion, the main findings and how this material package managed to achieve the aims and objectives are discussed. The material package can be found at the end of this document as an appendix.

2 PRIORITIES IN TEACHING ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

As discussed in the introduction, pronunciation was chosen as the subject of this material package. To further identify the main priorities and objectives for pronunciation instruction, and thus, to narrow down the topic of this material package, this section explores previous literature and research on what should be taught and why with regard to English pronunciation. This section investigates, for instance, what the ultimate, broader goals of pronunciation teaching are, and how they can be reached. The following section elaborates on how pronunciation should, according to academic literature on the topic of this Master's Thesis, be taught and how one could create quality materials to facilitate the teaching of pronunciation.

2.1 The ultimate aims of teaching and learning English pronunciation

Before contemplating what is relevant to teach regarding speaking skills and pronunciation in particular, it is first important to consider the goals of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) and pronunciation on a broader scale. Teaching EFL refers to English being taught in contexts where English is not spoken in the local community, whereas teaching for instance, ESL (English as a second language) means that English is being widely spoken in the local community, which often is the case for immigrants, for example (Cumming 2001: 207-208). As for instance Lintunen and Dufva (2019: 51-55) state, sometimes people may confuse the

terms *aims* (or *goals* or *objectives*) and *models*. In their article the term *goal* refers to concrete plans or steps, whereas a *model* is present throughout the learning process as an example of appropriate language use. There can be different types of goals and aims. For example, The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe 2020) and the national core curricula in Finland provide some officially set formal and common objectives for language learning (also for pronunciation). Another types of goals and objectives for learning pronunciation can, for example, be the goals that the learners may set for themselves (achieving understandable enough pronunciation skills, for example), and the objectives that the teacher has set for the individual activities done during lessons (Lintunen and Dufva 2019).

To name some aims from the official documents regarding pronunciation, for example the CEFR (Council of Europe 2020) includes a table as an appendix (called "Qualitative features of spoken language (expanded with phonology)"), in which the common reference levels of the qualitative aspects of spoken language use have been defined. These levels and their descriptions can serve as desired objectives as well. The scale is from A1 to C2 and the different qualities have been divided into six categories: range, accuracy, fluency, interaction, coherence, and phonology. The phonology section, for example, states the following (p. 183):

> Can employ the full range of phonological features in the target language with a high level of control – including prosodic features such as word and sentence stress, rhythm and intonation – so that the finer points of their message are clear and precise. Intelligibility is not affected in any way by features of accent that may be retained from other language(s).

Another official document for the goals of language learning (including spoken competency) in Finnish context is the National core curricula, as for example the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (NCC2014) (Finnish National Agency for Education 2014). One objective stated in it with regard to English pronunciation is, for example, providing pupils with some guidance on the basic rules of pronunciation, but the NCC2014 will be discussed in more detail in the chapter "Finnish context".

Another broader topic of discussion with regard to the aims of pronunciation is the intelligibility versus the nativist principle (Derwing 2010: 29). Derwing (2010: 29) defines the term *intelligibility* as referring to how well the listener understands the speaker and the term

comprehensibility as how challenging or easy it is to understand one's pronunciation. *Accentedness* in Derwing's (2010: 29) article, on the other hand, is related to how different one's pronunciation is from the locally used variant. Levis (2005) adds that the goal of the intelligibility principle is to help learners be understandable, which means that instruction should focus on aspects that help create understandable pronunciation, and the aspects that are less vital for intelligible pronunciation do not need to be given as much attention in classrooms.

According to the nativist principle, on the other hand, Levis (2005) summarises that it is possible to learn nativelike pronunciation, and achieving that is the goal of pronunciation teaching. However, he adds that it is nowadays considered to be unrealistic and it may also not be of importance to (some) learners to hone their pronunciation skills to match those of native speakers, and to lose their accent. Identity is also shown through one's pronunciation – for some it may even be desirable to have an accent that represents their background (Levis 2005). In addition, if one's pronunciation is "too good" it can be viewed as not natural or humorous (Lintunen and Dufva 2019). The native speaker as a model is discussed in more detail in the following chapter but it may already be worth mentioning that the term *native speaker* is a controversial one, especially in the case of English as it is such a widely spoken language worldwide – for example Faez (2011: 378) mentions that there is no adequate definition for native speaker that satisfies all scholars. Thus, it is difficult to define what nativelike pronunciation is and what it sounds like. Another similar term is "L1" English (or any other language) speaker, which refers to English being the person's first language. However, this is also a very heterogeneous group of people and, thus, potentially problematic in the context of language learning, particularly from the point of view of pronunciation goals and models.

For example Derwing (2010: 29), Tergujeff (2013b), Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996), and Lintunen and Dufva (2013: 51-55) state that intelligibility and comprehensibility are the desired goals for pronunciation teaching, and mention that focusing on achieving intelligible pronunciation is currently commonly preferred over focusing on accentedness. For example Lintunen and Dufva (2019: 51-55) argue that intelligibility and comprehensibility are more realistic goals, as the idea of achieving nativelike spoken communication skills is often compared to speaking "perfectly", which is a problematic thought, as even native speakers can, and do make different types of mistakes, such as grammar mistakes or mispronouncing words.

Lintunen and Dufva (2019: 51-55) continue that focusing on achieving "perfect" pronunciation and other language related skills can lead to emphasising error correction too much and be so detail oriented that it hinders the learning of pronunciation. Some mistakes are not even obstacles for successful communication, although some can be seen as irritating ones (Lintunen and Dufva 2019: 51-52). Sajavaara and Dufva (2001: 244) suggest that errors, such as wrong placement of word stress or incorrect pronunciation of individual phonemes become problematic when they negatively affect comprehension or irritate the listener.

In addition, Munro and Derwing (1995) found that accentedness did not hinder comprehensibility, when native speakers listened to L2 speakers speak English, meaning that one can speak with an accent without it affecting the intelligibility and comprehensibility of the message they are conveying. L1 English speakers are, however, not the only potential listeners, as also non-native speakers can and do communicate together using English (for example Jung 2010). This means that ensuring intelligible and comprehensible communication skills between ESL and EFL speakers should be a goal as well, not only achieving nativelike pronunciation skills or focusing on intelligibility regarding contexts where L2 and L1 speakers communicate with one another. Also learners in Tergujeff's (2013a) study did not view nativelike accent as their goal. However, it is good to keep in mind that learners are individuals and some may set nativelike pronunciation as their goal, which should be respected as well. Thus, the aim of pronunciation teaching in this thesis is considered to be seeking to achieve intelligible and comprehensible pronunciation, or as Lasnier et al. (2000: 26) put it: "Being able to understand and express oneself in a foreign language is the ultimate goal of communicative language teaching and learning". As the overall goal of pronunciation teaching for this thesis has been set, the following chapter explores how one can choose a model or models for achieving this goal.

2.2 Pronunciation models

Closely related to the aims of teaching pronunciation is what the ideal models for pronunciation are. Intelligibility and comprehensibility, as has already been established in this thesis, can be seen as the most important goals for pronunciation (Lintunen and Dufva 2019). Thus, the model

for pronunciation is often standard language with the intent that as many people as possible can understand the speaker, and one's language use will evoke neutral reactions or at least not extreme ones. In addition, it could sound odd if a foreign language learner learnt a very strong local variant of the target language. Lintunen and Dufva (2019) continue by saying that choosing a variant that highly educated people speak as the model could make the speaker appear trustworthy. However, a potential image of the person speaking a standard variety is that they are very official and not easily approachable or not emotional. Another criterion for choosing the model is often geographical location (Lintunen and Dufva 2019: 46). Relevant to this thesis is that the closest English as a native language speaking countries to Finland are the United Kingdom and Ireland, which could be a reason for the emphasis on British English or Received Pronunciation (RP), in English textbooks in Finland (Tergujeff 2013b: 18).

According to Tergujeff (2010), RP is the most often used model in English textbooks in Finland. Dimitrova and Chernogorova (2012: 209) and Dimitrova (2010) state that the two traditionally most used models for teaching English pronunciation to foreign language learners have commonly been RP, which is a standard British English pronunciation model used in media, for example, and General American (GA). GA is often the main model in areas near the United States of America, and RP similarly where British English is usually the main variant. In addition, when one takes a look at different dictionaries, the IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) transcriptions and examples of pronunciation mainly include one or both of these standard varieties, but not others (for example Cambridge Dictionary). The pros of using one or both of these as models is that most listeners can understand these variants and they are relatively easy to learn (Dimitrova and Chernogorova 2012: 209). However, as Dimitrova (2010) describes, few L1 English speakers actually speak RP. In addition, as has been mentioned above, trying to achieve an accent and pronunciation that are modelled after L1 speaker standards is not always realistic or even desirable. Lima Jr. (2021) also reminds us that in the United Kingdom, or even Britain alone, there are many different accents, varieties, and pronunciation features, as well as in the United States. It is good to keep this in mind as a standard variety of a language does not portray the language as a whole. Non-native speakers also often communicate with other non-native speakers of English. Since intelligibility and comprehensibility among all speakers of English is considered to be the goal of this material package, also non-native speakers and a potentially simplified English that one may speak with

them and hear from them can serve as models (Dimitrova and Chernogorova 2012). However, Dimitrova and Chernogorova (2012) found that at least the university students who were their participants reported to prefer native speakers as models, especially speakers of RP. By contrast, Tergujeff (2013a) found that Finnish learners did not have strong preferences for the models, and did not usually aspire to achieve nativelike pronunciation skills.

Lintunen and Dufva (2019: 47) acknowledge that the choice of the model/s may not be easy to make. Quite often the model has been chosen for the teachers and learners already in the learning materials. It has been mentioned in their article, though, that mixing variants does not lead to communication breakdowns and teachers should be aware of the multitude of different varieties of English, particularly in the case of receptive skills. Kennedy and Trofimovich (2017) come to the conclusion that pronunciation models should be chosen based on their appropriateness to the contexts of language learning and the real life usage and needs of the learners. Lima Jr. (2021) also gives direct suggestions for teaching pronunciation and choosing the model/s. When aiming for great pronunciation skills related to production, he suggests that a teacher could choose one variety as the main model in order to create consistency, even though the teacher should point out that that particular variant is or must not be the target for the learners own production. If the country in which teaching takes place is a country or an area in which the target language is not spoken as an L1, the model may represent any variety, Lima Jr. (2021) suggests.

Lima Jr. (2021) also differentiates perception from production in the sense that for production one model should be chosen. However, in the case of perception, meaning listening comprehension, he suggests exposing learners to as many varieties as possible, including both native and non-native speakers and explicitly teaching the learners about the characteristics of different accents and varieties, in order to help the learners understand them better. This is relevant, as even if the learners never meet native or non-native speakers of the target language, it is likely and possible that they will encounter different accents on different types of media, such as television shows or social media, especially in the case of English.

Accents and different varieties of English are not a topic in this thesis per se, meaning that they will not be explored and covered in the material package explicitly. This thesis and material package does, however, utilise different accents and varieties as models according to what has been discussed in this chapter. Thus, for producing the different prosodic elements in question RP and GA are the recommended models, as they may ensure that most people despite their background will understand the speaker, even though there can be cons to choosing these varieties as models as well. However, if the teacher wishes to use another model/s based on the pupils' wishes, for instance, that is encouraged. For listening discrimination activities this thesis and material package recommends using multiple different accents and varieties as models.

2.3 Approaches for teaching pronunciation

As established above, the goals of pronunciation should focus on achieving intelligible and comprehensible pronunciation instead of "perfect" nativelike pronunciation. Some more precise but still broader scale goals included in official documents include teaching some basic rules and achieving pronunciation skills related to range, accuracy, fluency, interaction, coherence, and phonology, with the help of some prosodic features, for example. This chapter is devoted to exploring literature on what should be taught in more detail and what the main focus of pronunciation training should be in order to achieve these goals.

One starting point for approaching teaching pronunciation is whether to start top-down or bottom-up. The bottom-up, also called the narrow approach, focuses on first teaching individual sounds, also known as segmentals, after which the teaching of suprasegmentals, meaning for instance intonation, will be added (Tergujeff 2013b: 27-28). The top-down or the broad approach, oppositely, highlights teaching suprasegmental features over individual sounds (Tergujeff 2013b: 27-28). It could be argued, though, that both segmental and suprasegmental features are important parts of pronunciation with regard to intelligibility, and Tergujeff (2013b) suggests that maybe the best option would, thus, be the balanced approach, which takes both sides into account. This balanced view is also what Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996: 10) predict to be the future of teaching pronunciation.

As discussed in the Introduction, Tergujeff (2010, 2012a) found that in Finland the materials and teachers focus mostly on teaching segmentals with regard to teaching pronunciation. Prosody, however, was given very little attention. More recently, Mäkinen (2021) confirmed that this is still the case in Finland, as she discovered in her Master's Thesis that activities in English textbooks for different levels (including the third grade) focus more on teaching individual sounds than prosody. Some activities can surely be speculated to train both aspects as in sentence or phrase level activities prosody is inevitably present. However, for example in a third grade English textbook that she analysed, only one activity focused solely on teaching prosody, according to her categorisation (pp. 64-65). In another textbook for the same grade there were no activities focusing on practising prosodic elements explicitly (p. 67). Thus, in Finland the bottom-up approach seems to be favoured. However, both a good command of segmentals and suprasegmentals is important and studies have been conducted on the topic of what features are more relevant in order to achieve intelligibility and comprehensibility – prosodic features or individual sounds and which ones more specifically. For example in Kuronen's (2019: 71) article pronouncing prosodic features correctly has been considered to be more vital for intelligibility than individual sounds. According to him, mispronouncing individual phonemes rarely leads to communication breakdowns, even though it is possible if deviances occur frequently, for example. Prosodic features that are particularly important to learn, according to him, are word stress, length of syllables, and speech rhythm. Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996: 131) agree and state that from the point of view of communicative competence, some teachers believe that teaching prosodic elements can be more purposeful than teaching individual phonemes. In addition, they mention that errors in suprasegmental features may lead to the listener perceiving the speaker as rude, for example, and it may be frustrating for the listener to listen to stress and rhythm patterns that are too deviant from how L1 speakers would produce them.

Saito, Trofimovich and Isaacs (2016) also found that segmentals affect accentedness, but prosodic elements, such as word stress and intonation, affect comprehensibility. As Munro and Derwing (1995) suggest, even a heavy foreign accent (meaning an accent that L1 speakers recognise as including non-native sounding aspects (Halonen 2019: 75)) may not be a problem for intelligibility and comprehensibility, even though it can also affect them negatively. This

means that if the goal is aiming for comprehensible and intelligible speech, getting rid of one's accent does not have to be in the focus of teaching. Thus, Saito, Trofimovich and Isaacs (2016) suggest starting the teaching of pronunciation from prosody and as the learners proceed from beginners to more advanced learners, segmentals could be given more attention. Teaching prosody is important throughout one's education but especially recommended for beginners in order to reach the goal of comprehensibility (Saito, Trofimovich and Isaacs 2016). Also Lintunen and Dufva (2019: 54) suggest that a good option as the starting point is focusing on learning prosodic features, since for example by utilising intonation one can turn simple sentences into questions, even if their vocabulary is limited.

As for instance Kuronen (2019: 70) summarises, erroneous production of prosodic features of a foreign language can cause more problems than that of individual phonemes. Thus, either the top-down approach or the balanced approach seem to be recommended, but as Tergujeff (2010, 2012a) reported: teaching pronunciation in Finnish classrooms in practice, as well as the commonly used materials – textbooks, lack suprasegmental features. This means that even the balanced approach does not take place in Finland in reality; therefore, the focus of this material package is on teaching suprasegmental features of English to Finnish speakers and the material package seeks to provide support and materials for teaching some prosodic features of English. As summarised in this chapter, some researchers also suggest that teaching prosodic features at the start of learning a language in particular is recommended. Thus, the target group of the material package is younger learners of English in Finland.

2.4 Suprasegmentals

As discussed above, every spoken utterance contains prosody: the term refers to *how* something is said and it includes the suprasegmental features (as for example word and sentence stress, speech rate, and loudness) of utterances (Mennen and de Leeuw 2014). Sometimes prosody and suprasegmentals have been used to refer only to intonation, or solely intonation has been referred to as prosody or suprasegmentals (Wells 2006: 2). Mennen and de Leeuw (2014) also point out that some definitions of prosody include the attitude, emotions and overall identity of

the speaker that are potentially present in the utterance, while some definitions only focus on the linguistic aspects of it.

The prosodic elements that were consistently particularly recommended to be taught in the background literature are intonation, word and sentence stress, and speech rhythm (for example Kuronen 2019: 71; Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996: 131). Due to the scope of this thesis word and sentence stress, and speech rhythm were chosen as the suprasegmentals that this thesis and material package focuses on. Intonation, even though highly recommended, was cut, as English textbooks for third graders in Finland do include some – not a sufficient amount – but some activities that focus on intonation (Tergujeff 2010, Mäkinen 2021), whereas stress and rhythm seem to not be explicitly taught or mentioned. In this chapter the chosen prosodic elements are defined in more detail. Many other aspects, such as intonation, speech rate, loudness, or components of connected speech such as pausing, reduction, and linking could have been in the focus as well, but as already mentioned, some aspects had to be prioritised and some cut. The chosen suprasegmentals are defined, and some relevant information on the differences between Finnish and English features are discussed with regard to the suprasegmental features in the following chapters. In addition, some suggestions for teaching these aspects based on previous research are presented. The order of the chosen aspects follows Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin's (1996: 193) suggestion of starting with word stress, and then continuing to sentence stress and speech rhythm, in this chapter but also in the material package. Sentence stress is created similarly to word stress; however, it is so closely intertwined with the rhythm of English speech that in the material package they are combined as one category, instead of word and sentence stress being a category. In the following chapter sentence stress is discussed regarding both topics, as it is created similarly to word stress but taught together with speech rhythm.

It is good to keep in mind, though, that prosodic features of a language are rarely used in isolation, instead they are interconnected and occur at the same time as other prosodic features (and segmental features). For instance, English word and sentence stress also contribute to intonation, and they function together; for example, intonation units have one main stress

(Kucukoglu 2021). In addition, stresses are used to create rhythm (Fudge 2015) which will be covered in more detail in the chapter "Speech rhythm".

2.4.1 Word and sentence stress

Cai (2008) explains that every word with more than one syllable has one syllable that is stressed more than the other one or ones. Similarly, in sentences some words are stressed more than others. These phenomena are called word stress and sentence stress respectively. Word stress is usually always on the same syllable of a specific word (Fudge 2015). It is noteworthy to mention that in English the contrast between stressed and unstressed syllables is much more noticeable and greater than in many other languages (Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996: 132), including Finnish. However, when a word is placed in a sentence, it may also not get much emphasis or stress at all, if it is not an important one in the particular sentence and context. Sentences and words with multiple syllables also often include secondary stresses. In sentences secondary stress may be placed on any word depending on the context and information that needs to be highlighted, whereas in the case of individual words, word stress (both main and secondary stresses) stay on the same syllables of a particular word (Fudge 2015). This suprasegmental feature can also be found in many IPA transcriptions, often pointed out with the symbols ˈ (primary stress) and ˌ (secondary stress) (Fudge 2015).

According to Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996) English stress has three levels: strongly stressed, lightly stressed, and unstressed. Word and sentence stresses in English are created by saying the stressed syllable louder, higher and longer than the unstressed parts (Tergujeff 2019: 170; Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996: 131). Checklin (2012) discusses the acoustic features of stressed and unstressed syllables too. In addition to what Tergujeff (2019) mentions, he points out that unstressed syllables often contain the *schwa* sound, or other weaker vowels, and in stressed syllables vowels are fuller. Yurtbaşı (2015: 93) also mentions that an aspect of English stress is saying the stressed syllables slower and the unstressed syllables quicker. This also connects stress and speech rate, even though in some areas English may generally be spoken quicker and in some areas slower (Yurtbaşı 2015: 93). Cai (2008) similarly specifies that unstressed syllables take roughly the same amount of time

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as stressed syllables, even if there are multiple unstressed syllables between stressed ones, meaning that for example if there are many unstressed syllables in a word or sentence between stressed syllables, they are said quicker. In Finnish stressed syllables are also longer in duration than unstressed syllables, but not necessarily to the same extent as in, for example, English (Suomi and Ylitalo 2002). Stress in Finnish has not been found to alter vowel quality, and speech rate does not play a significant role regarding word and sentence stress (Suomi, Toivanen and Ylitalo 2008).

Some rules on the placement of word stress in English have been discovered, even though the placement is not fixed. Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996) explain that the placement of word stress depends on the origin of the word. They claim that English words come, for instance, from Germanic, Latinate and French origins, and the origin of a word may for example affect the stress pattern of words with prefixes. In addition to the origin and prefixes, they state that there are some rules with regard to suffixes, numbers, and compound words, for example, regarding the placement of word stress. However, it is important to point out that word stress rules are and can be different in different varieties and dialects of English. According to Berg (1999: 132-133) some examples of words that are stressed differently in RP and GA are some compound words (in RP primary stress can also be on the second item whereas in GA it is on the first regarding compound words that are stressed differently in these two varieties) and for instance the suffix -*ess* is sometimes stressed in RP and never in GA. To make some generalisations, which may be relevant for this thesis due to its target group, for example, often in the case of two-syllable words, that are nouns or adjectives, word stress is on the first syllable, whereas regarding two-syllable verbs it is on the second one (Hammond 2000, cited in Checklin 2012: 6). Stress also often falls on syllables with long vowels or endings with multiple consonants (Chomsky and Halle 1968).

Thus, to summarise some differences between English and Finnish stress, in English word stress can land on any syllable of a word, and one may have to learn the placement of the stress with each new word. In Finnish, however, word stress is fixed: primary stress falls on the first syllable of each word (Suomi and Ylitalo 2002: 73; Sajavaara and Dufva 2001: 251). Thus, English word stress placement may be a new concept and phenomenon for L1 Finnish speakers.

Stress is also created differently in English and Finnish. For example for these reasons word and sentence stress were chosen as a topic for this material package. Another reason is that if word stress is placed on a syllable it does not belong, it can affect intelligibility negatively or even change the meaning of the word (Tergujeff 2019: 170). Also Checklin (2012) agrees that it is important to teach word stress, in order to achieve intelligibility and comprehensibility, which is also the main goal of the present study. For example Heinonen (2021) found that Finnish people speaking Swedish as a second or foreign language that lacked sentence stress and stressed each syllable similarly were more difficult to understand for L1 speakers of Swedish. It made understanding new information or the most important words difficult, as well as made it more difficult for the L1 speakers to identify the endings and beginnings of sentences.

How can word stress be taught then? Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996) suggest starting with a discussion about the history of English and the origins of English words and then explaining and introducing different, common word stress rules that are relevant to the class. The rules that they present in their book are from the point of view of GA (or what they call North American English) and the word stress patterns of some individual words may differ from, for example, British English (such as verbs ending in *–ate* and the days of the week) (Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996: 367-368). The rules that teachers wish to present to their class may vary, based on the chosen model/s, for example. As the next step they suggest doing a listening discrimination task, which is a task type that focuses on listening comprehension and/or receptive skills – can the pupil hear the aspect being learnt being used in practise? Listening discrimination can be done with nonsense words or syllables first, the learners can, for example, try to hear the difference between *la LA* and *LA* la (Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996: 367-368). Checklin (2012) states that word stress is specific to each word and hence it could be taught as a part of learning vocabulary.

As discussed above, even though there are some rules and common word and sentence stress patterns, it may be difficult to teach and explain them to learners, as the rules may vary from one variant or context to another, and include exceptions (Checklin 2012; Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996). However, one idea that can help learners feel less frustrated with

having to learn the placement of word stress with every single word is Checklin's (2012) suggestion of using words that the learners already know that have similar word stress patterns as a new word to be learnt, as examples. In addition, words that contain particular suffixes such as *-ian*, for example, often include a similar word stress pattern, which could also be pointed out explicitly to facilitate learning word stress (Checklin 2012). A concrete example of a task that can be utilised to teach such rules or similarities is "Odd one out", with the focus on word stress patterns: the learners are asked to identify which word out of a few words has a different stress pattern than the rest.

In addition, Lin, Fan and Chen (1995) give many concrete suggestions for teaching different aspects of pronunciation. They give suggestions especially for Chinese students of English, but their ideas are suitable for L1 Finnish learners of English too. With regard to stress, they suggest comparing and contrasting syllable and stress-timed rhythms and their word and sentence stresses visually. In their example a picture of marching soldiers represents the even-length syllables of syllable-timed languages, and a picture of children and adults represents the noticeable differences between stressed and unstressed words and the quicker pace of the unstressed words of a sentence. Visual effects can also be used to teach word stress: the stressed syllable could be written with capital letters, or it could be underlined or circled, for example. They suggest also using a rubber band to visualise the stressed syllable or tapping or clapping according to the stressed and weak syllables. One game that they suggest for teaching word stress is called "Stress matching game" in which the learners get a list of vocabulary items, and in pairs or groups one claps the rhythm or stress pattern of a word, and the listeners try to match the rhythm to the word that has the same stress pattern. As Checklin (2012) states in his literature review that covers students from many different language backgrounds, stressed syllables and vowels are fuller, meaning that they also require more mouth movement, which learners could practise by looking at videos of themselves or other speakers, or by looking at themselves in a mirror when practising.

2.4.2 Sentence stress and speech rhythm

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According to Cai (2008), sentence stress has two main functions: indicating the most important words of an utterance, and creating the rhythm of English speech. Fudge (2015) explains that that means picking a word or a phrase within a sentence or an utterance that is given additional emphasis. That word or phrase may include important information in a specific situation, and it can be any of the words or phrases of the sentence, depending on what kind of information needs to be emphasised or highlighted. Thus, the rhythm of English speech includes sentence stresses. Goswami (2019) explains that broadly speaking, speech rhythm is modulations in loudness that follow the overall pattern of a language. Tergujeff (2019: 170-171) adds that in English the rhythm of speech is created with the variation of stressed and unstressed syllables. Cai (2008) also includes intonation, pauses and continuants, in addition to stressed and unstressed syllables, as the constituents that create the rhythm of English. Szczepek Reed (2012: 73) adds that these stressed syllables occur "at regular time intervals". Wells (2014: 3), however, includes pitch, loudness and speech rate as the constituents of rhythm of speech. In addition, rhythm has an interactional role in speaking, as it can be seen as a part of turn-taking: the previous speaker's rhythm is often matched when a turn is taken. For example when a person starts speaking after someone else, they usually place the first stressed syllable where the previous speaker's next beat would have been (Szczepek Reed 2012) in stress-timed languages. Rhythm can also be seen in the duration of pauses between speakers; thus, rhythm is an aspect that affects intelligibility (Szczepek Reed 2012).

Similarly to rules on word stress placement, some rules for sentence level have been discovered; however, the context and situation can affect the placement of sentence stress. Sentence stress in English is usually on content words, whereas function words such as pronouns, articles, prepositions and conjunctions are unstressed (Tergujeff 2019: 170). Cai (2008: 63) also gives a list of word categories that are usually stressed or unstressed in sentences and the usually stressed ones are content words:

- nouns
- adjectives
- numerals
- notional verbs
- adverbs
- demonstrative, interrogative, indefinite pronouns and possessive pronouns functioning as nouns

and the commonly unstressed ones are form words:

- auxiliary and modal verbs
- verb "to be"
- monosyllabic prepositions
- monosyllabic conjunctions
- articles
- personal pronouns
- possessive pronouns (except absolute ones: mine, hers...)
- reflexive pronouns,
- reciprocal pronouns
- relative pronouns (Cai 2008: 63, bullet points added)

However, any word can be stressed if it needs special attention, for example if it implies emphasis or contrast; Tergujeff (2019: 170) similarly reminds that stressing some words can carry and/or change meanings. She also states that auxiliary verbs are usually only stressed when they indicate negation (for example: He isn't happy).

As this thesis focuses on the Finnish context, it is necessary to discuss the differences between Finnish and English prosodic elements. With regard to sentence stress and speech rhythm it is noteworthy to mention that English is a stress-timed language (Yurtbaşı 2015: 87), whereas Finnish includes characteristics of both syllable and stress-timed languages (Sajavaara and Dufva 2001: 251). In syllable-timed languages each syllable is devoted more or less the same amount of time unlike in stress-timed languages, in which stresses recur at relatively regular intervals or beats (Puppel 2011). This division into stress and syllable-timed languages has been seen to be quite simplistic and too black and white but it still serves to give an idea of the differences regarding the rhythms of languages. Nevertheless, Fudge (2015) states that finding the correct rhythm may be challenging for L1 Finnish speakers, and wrong stressing will also lead to wrong rhythm. Lin, Fan and Chen (1995: 5) state that some learners with a syllable-timed L1 give equal emphasis and stress on every syllable and word also in their L2 too, leading to unnatural sounding English.

Sentence stress and rhythm were chosen as aspects to be taught with the help of the material package as they are different from Finnish and may, therefore, be challenging to learn, but also because they are factors that can affect intelligibility and comprehensibility. For example Polyanskaya, Ordin and Busa (2017) come to the conclusion that differences in speech rhythm contribute to the perception of accentedness and foreign accent, as well as affect the

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comprehensibility and intelligibility of the L2 speaker. In their study, the difference in speech rhythm made a greater impact on native speakers viewing the speech samples as more accented than differences in speech rate, for example, even though accentedness has not been seen to lead to great difficulties. However, they also suggest that combined with intonation contour (meaning the intonation patterns of the rises and falls of pitch) the differences may become less perceivable.

For starting the process of learning sentence stress, Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996) suggest utilising what the learners already know about word stress, and informing the learners on which words are usually stressed in a sentence. Similarly, Lin, Fan and Chen (1995) suggest starting by teaching the concept of content words. The learners could then, for example, underline the stressed words of a sentence and emphasise them when saying the sentence aloud. Cai (2008) suggests pointing out that not every word is stressed in a sentence (maybe think that the person listening to you cannot hear you well – what words would you emphasise?). The teacher should also provide some basic information regarding stress-timed languages, as learners may think that stressing every word makes them more comprehensible, even though that is not the case (Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996). One concrete idea is comparing short utterances (such as *do it*) to individual words that the pupils are already familiar with and that have a similar stress pattern as the utterance or sentence (such as *mother*). The teacher could also introduce an utterance that includes only stressed words and then start adding unstressed words in between, showing that there is still the same amount of time between the stressed words, even if there are multiple unstressed words in between. In addition, Cai (2008: 62) mentions that the learners could look at a transcript of what the teacher is reading or another model is saying, and focus on the "lowering, rising, loudness, pause, slowing of sounds."

One important notion with regard to teaching not only speech rhythm but all of the chosen aspects is that learners must be able to identify, hear and recognise the phenomenon first, before they can actually learn it (for example Goswami 2019). Similarly to learning word and sentence stress, Goswami (2019) suggests using nursery rhymes or poems when teaching speech rhythm, which can be combined with tapping or drumming the rhythm, for example. Cai (2008) suggests emphasising stressed syllables and weakening unstressed ones in the classroom, as well as

organising the constituents of utterances or sentences into "sense groups" with pauses and for example beating the rhythm with one's hands: the stressed syllables get a beat and each beat occurs at the same pace, noticing that if there are many unstressed words within stressed syllables, they are pronounced quicker to maintain the rhythm. Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996) suggest starting by teaching rhythm patterns without actual words or sentences and then matching the practised patterns with words and sentences that represent such patterns.

Lin, Fan and Chen (1995) suggest using rhymes and jazz chants for teaching both the rhythm and sentence stress of English. Lin, Fan and Chen's (1995) article focuses on teaching Chinese students but the ideas presented can also be adapted to Finnish context. The rhythm and stresses of a nursery rhyme could also be used with more "regular" sentences. Millington (2011) discusses the benefits of using songs as educational tools overall, but mentions that, for example, when teaching speech rhythm they can be beneficial, particularly with younger learners. Songs can help establish the "feeling" of a stress-timed language and its rhythm – the rhythm of songs can be similar to the rhythm of spoken English. He continues that songs can be turned into tasks and as an example he picks the song "Wheels on the bus", which includes long pauses, only monosyllabic words, and the rhythm of it is similar to spoken English. The steps of turning a song into a task includes first creating a preparation task (which can focus on activating vocabulary for example, so that learners can sing the song and understand it), and then moving on to the core stage: singing the song more than once, by varying the pace and/or volume of the song, or performing actions at the same time. Lastly, also the follow-up stage should be taken into account; the learners should use the learnt vocabulary in other contexts, for example. Songs should be chosen so that they include the aspect being learnt – for example rhythm – as some songs for example do not have a similar rhythm as natural spoken English.

3 FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN DESIGNING THE TEACHING OF PRONUNCIATION

As established above, the goals of teaching pronunciation revolve around learning intelligible and comprehensible pronunciation skills as defined in the NCC2014 and other background

literature. This may be done and one's pronunciation skills improved if the focus of pronunciation teaching is on both the prosodic and segmental features of a language, and out of these two teaching prosodic features seems to be suggested to be emphasised particularly at the beginning of learning a new language. Many English textbooks in Finland focus mainly on segmental features, leaving suprasegmental features (apart from some intonation tasks) neglected (Tergujeff 2010), even though it has been studied that prosodic features of a language are important for achieving intelligible and comprehensible pronunciation (for example Heinonen 2021; Kuronen 2019). Thus, this thesis focuses on creating materials that can aid the teaching of some English prosodic features: word stress, sentence stress, and speech rhythm. Next, it is important to take a look at how one can create materials that would be effective for the teaching of the chosen aspects. In the following section the factors that one should consider with regard to teaching pronunciation broadly are discussed, after which the focus shifts to discussing teaching the target group of this thesis: what should be taken into account when teaching young, low language proficiency pupils, whose L1 is Finnish? After that the aspects of material design, and common pronunciation teaching activities in teaching materials are presented with the help of background literature. Finally, the following section takes a deeper look into the Finnish context, in which this material package is assumed to be used.

3.1 Common factors to take into account regarding teaching pronunciation

This chapter discusses some potential challenges that may affect language learning and learning pronunciation skills in particular, from the point of view of designing language classes and materials, as not everything suits every single learner or learner group. Pronunciation as a learning objective is already not as straightforward as learning grammar, for example, in the sense that one cannot necessarily first learn one aspect and then move on to the next one (as for example one first learns present tense and then past tense) (Lintunen and Dufva 2019: 54).

One major factor in predicting the difficulties in pronunciation learning is the learner's first language and how different it is from the target language (for example Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996). These differences refer to, for example, the differences between the sound systems and pronunciation patterns of the languages, and English prosodic features are different

from Finnish prosody. For example Ullakonoja and Dufva (2019) mention the transfer that may happen from one's first language: L1 Finnish speakers may for example transfer the word stress pattern of primary stress always being on the first syllable, the relatively level intonation, or the more syllable-timed rhythm of their mother tongue to the target language, which in this case is a very differently functioning English. Kuronen (2019) also names the differences between the L1 and L2 as sources for difficulties for learners: the target language may include prosodic features that do not exist in the learner's L1, or be similar but be realised differently. Learners may also not be able to hear or perceive the differences of prosodic elements in their L1 and L2 and, thus, they will not be aware of them and not be able to imitate and learn them (Kuronen 2019).

Apart from the differences between one's mother tongue and the target language, different factors regarding the learners may affect the learning process of pronunciation. For example, Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996), and Ullakonoja and Dufva (2019) mention the learners' age (which will be discussed more in the following chapter), aptitude (including for example one's memory), attitude, and motivation towards learning the target language as factors to consider when designing materials for teaching pronunciation. Ullakonoja and Dufva (2019) also ponder whether the sex of the learners affects their learning, and mention that girls or women have been found to perform better as speakers of a foreign language than boys or men. Similar results were found by Trisnawati (2022) – female participants got better scores in terms of the accuracy of their pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and comprehension when speaking a foreign language than male participants. However, even though females in their study got slightly better scores, the male participants showed more confidence and enthusiasm, for example, when speaking a foreign language. In addition, individual participants' scores differed between males and females – both individual male and female participants got high and low scores, indicating that the sex of the learner does not necessarily define individual learners' capabilities as speakers of a foreign language.

Not only the differences between languages and factors related to the learners and their personalities, but also the setting and the learning environment can affect the learning process. Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996) point out that the learners' previous and potential

present and future exposure to the target language (particularly regarding English due to its lingua franca position and its status as the international language of entertainment, business, media, and social media; which is also evident in Finland), as well as the amount and quality of prior pronunciation instruction should be taken into account by the teacher when designing materials. Already young Finnish pupils may well have been, for example, listening to music, playing (online, video and/or mobile) games, and watching television shows in English, and will likely be exposed to English similarly in the future as well. In addition, learning environments, even formal ones such as schools, have different types of possibilities and hindrances with regard to the provided equipment, for example.

3.2 Children as EFL learners

As stated in the previous chapters, many studies suggest that it may be beneficial to begin the learning of pronunciation by learning prosodic elements. In addition, Moilanen (2019: 136) states that at the beginning of learning a new language at lower grades a long period of oral communication teaching is obvious. In Finland, the foreign language that people first start learning in schools is usually English. For example, according to Statistics Finland (2020), 83 per cent of pupils learnt English in grades one to six in 2019. In addition, some pupils may have had experiences of language showering or learning some basics during early childhood education and care, and/or during pre-primary education but this is not mandatory (Finnish National Agency for Education 2014b). Thus, in Finland people often start learning English at a young age and the target group of this material package is third grade pupils. In this chapter some common factors with regard to teaching younger learners are discussed.

Cameron (2001) discusses children as learners of a foreign language and how they differ, for example, from adults as learners. All learners are individuals, but maybe some generalisations about children as learners need to be made when designing learning materials. Children are often lively, they want to please their teacher, and are eager to participate in different activities even if they do not fully understand the aim or purpose of it (Cameron 2001). This is why Cameron (2001: 36) states that "meaning must come first", meaning that if the learners do not understand what is being said they will also not learn it; thus, the teacher has to make sure that

the pupils understand everything. Children may also lose interest and motivation quicker than adults, for example, and lack the skills of metalanguage, which means talking about language in theory. Cameron (2001) also emphasises "learning-centred" teaching that focuses on maximising learning. In addition to Cameron (2001), the NCC2014 (p. 17) states that the pupil is an active participant in their learning, but also the social context shapes their learning.

Uysal and Yavuz (2015) suggest doing activities or tasks that only take five to ten minutes because of children's shorter attention span. It is also a good idea to switch up the task type every now and then: some tasks could be done individually, some in pairs and some in groups, for example. Some activities can be quieter and some noisier. It is also good to keep in mind that progress is often slower with children than with school age, adolescent, or adult learners (Cameron 2001). Uysal and Yavuz (2015) state that concrete objects can help young learners grasp abstract concepts better (such as speech rhythm: the concept may be difficult to grasp on a theoretical level but showing a picture that concretises the rhythm, or building the stress structure or a sentence with Lego blocks may make it easier to understand it for young learners), and also physical activities are great (as for example moving in different ways such as running or jumping). They add that practising fine motor skills is also a good idea, and it can be done by drawing or cutting and pasting, for example. Practising children's fine motor skills is important for example because great fine motor skills have been found to predict success and achievement later in school (Cameron et al. 2012: 1229). Millington (2011) also encourages using songs as materials with young learners, as songs can be motivating and more interesting than drilling, which, for instance, refers to repeating and memorising a pattern, structure, or a word after the teacher or another model, which can be effective but monotonous.

3.3 Creating materials for teaching pronunciation

The goal of this thesis is to create a material package for teaching the chosen prosodic features according to guidelines and suggestions based on background literature. This chapter is devoted to exploring the theoretical background for creating high quality materials for teaching languages. The main sources are Lasnier et al. (2000), and Howard and Major (2004), as for example they have created guidelines for creating such materials. They discuss creating

materials for all language learning purposes instead of just pronunciation but their suggestions can be adapted to materials for pronunciation in particular as well. After their guidelines also some pronunciation specific ideas for materials, methods, and techniques are presented.

3.3.1 Quality in terms of materials

Lasnier et al. (2000) define the term *quality* with regard to language teaching materials by dividing the concept into nine general principles and their sub-principles. The nine general principles are:

1. Relevance
2. Transparency
3. Reliability
4. Attractiveness
5. Flexibility
6. Generativeness
7. Participation
8. Efficiency
9. Socialisation (Lasnier et al. 2000: 12)

The first principle*, relevance* is related to the appropriateness of the material with regard to, for example, the needs of the learners. The next principle presented in Lasnier et al. (2000), which is *transparency*, includes for example clear aims and objectives, as well as instructions and rationale – it should be transparent to the teachers and learners what is meant to be learnt and how. *Reliability* refers to the internal construction and coherence of the material, and the material should actually improve the skills it is meant to improve, meaning for example, that the teacher or the person creating the materials should already think about the assessment of the chosen skills when creating the materials. The principle of reliability also includes, for instance, factual and linguistic integrity: the facts presented and the models of the target language, for example, should be accurate. Lasnier et al. (2000) state that the principle of *attractiveness* is related to the user friendliness of the materials, and it can also have an effect on the motivation

of the learners. *Flexibility*, as Lasniers et al. (2000) describe, includes individualisation, meaning taking different learners into consideration.

The next principle that Lasnier et al. (2000) introduce is *generativeness*. According to this principle the material should enable learners to move from controlled to freer activities, and then be able to apply the learnt knowledge to contexts outside of the classroom. In addition, the content should build onto existing knowledge and develop language awareness, as well as raise awareness about the learning process. *Participation* is the next principle that Lasnier et al. (2000) present. This principle states that both the cognitive and affective dimensions of learning should be taken into account, and also the learners can make some decisions related to their learning. The second to last principle introduced is *efficiency*, which includes the relationship between the investment put into the realisation of the materials and results. Finally, the last principle is *socialisation*. In addition to all the linguistic skills learnt with the help of the materials, also learning social skills and intercultural awareness should be encouraged in the materials. These principles should be put into effect by the teacher and the learners, and shaped by the context, and the means.

3.3.2 Designing materials

Lasnier et al. (2000) move then on to discuss the design stage of creating materials, which is the focus of this MA thesis. At this stage the learners' needs leading to the specification of the contents and the presentation of the materials are central, with regard to creating efficient, high-quality materials (Lasnier et al. 2000: 20). Lasnier et al. (2000) divide the design stage into four sections, which are content, activities, organisation and presentation. These and the suggested guidelines related to them will now be described in more depth.

Content comprises what is supposed to be learnt and the texts and themes chosen to facilitate that (Lasnier et al. 2000). Thus, in terms of this thesis, the content refers to the chosen prosodic elements, as well as all the texts and themes included. Firstly, with regard to content, it is important to define the context, including the learners and the learning environment.

Contextualisation is also the first guideline that Howard and Major (2004) offer. They state that the local curriculum, and the learners and their needs and experiences (including their first languages, for example) play a major part in the shaping of the content of the materials. In addition, the materials should cater for different learning styles and paces. Lasnier et al. (2000) also mention the need to identify the learning environment and the possibilities and hindrances it may offer, including for example appliances, the size of the learner group, and the facilities.

Both Howard and Major (2004) and Lasnier et al. (2000) agree that the topics and themes should be chosen based on the interests of the learners and provide meaningful possibilities for using the target language. The topics and themes should also not remain stereotypical and they should reflect the everyday life of the learners. All the linguistic and factual information should naturally be up to date and correct. Texts in terms of language teaching material refer to both spoken and written language. In this material package texts may also be for example videos or audio tracks. Lasnier et al. (2000) highlight that the texts included should represent many different themes, text types, and genres (for example music, and culture, and be in the form of stories, cartoons, song et cetera) and offer possibilities for practising different skills, as well as actually facilitate the learning of the skill or skills in question. Another notion that Lasnier et al. (2000: 33-36) point out is that the vocabulary and grammar included in the materials (as for instance in the chosen texts) should be checked to be suitable for the learners' language proficiency level. In terms of pronunciation, a variety of authentic materials (meaning texts that are not created for educational purposes (for example Ciornei and Dina 2015)) including different genres and sources should also be included.

Lasnier et al. (2000) also discuss the activities in the materials. The term activity in their article refers to the different types of tasks and exercises in the materials. They again point out the importance of taking the learners and their experiences and needs into consideration. The objectives and purposes of each exercise, as well as the instructions of them, should be clear, and the tasks should be possible to perform in practice. Lasnier et al. (2000) also include the different skills to be learnt in the activities section. Each activity should take the learners' characteristics into account: their age, level, interests, and learning experience and styles. The materials should also help the learners use and practise the different skills outside of the

classroom. Hence, the materials should include encouraging the transfer of techniques, meaning transfer to, for example, real life situations. In addition, the material should include opportunities for both receptive and productive skill practice and for the learners to have the chance to affect the different methods of learning.

Lasnier et al. (2000) discuss the different skills related to learning languages separately, and the sections about speaking and listening are relevant for this paper. Speaking involves many other skills than just pronunciation, but also pronunciation contributes to fluency and comprehensibility of one's oral skills. Lasnier et al. (2000: 41) state that some activities should be designed to help automatize the learnt skills (as for example intonation patterns), but some tasks also need to guide the learner to combine many different skills. With regard to speaking they name different aspects of learning a new skill, as for example achieving a fluent command of the aspect, for which they suggest activities such as warm-up tasks, pair work with given or improvised dialogues, roleplays, and games or quizzes. In addition, it is important to integrate the aspect to the learners' repertoire of language skills with for example information gap exercises, problem solving tasks, or roleplays with different (social) roles. In addition, developing sensitivity to different contexts and the appropriate language use for them is another idea that they suggest for teaching speaking skills, and it can be done with language awareness activities that are mindful of different contexts, statuses and roles of the speakers. Lastly, they mention that it is important to connect speaking tasks to other exercises, by for example using a listening task as a prompt for a speaking exercise. Howard and Major (2004: 106) name integrated language use as one of their guidelines as well: the material should not solely focus on one aspect but also on integrating different skills, such as speaking and listening. In addition, compensation strategies, for instance in the learners' own mother tongue, should be taken into consideration.

As mentioned above, speaking and listening are two sides of the same coin (for example Tergujeff 2013b: 33); thus, this material package includes listening discrimination and comprehension activities as parts of learning the prosodic elements as well. Listening practice should include activities that allow the learner to practise the decoding process of heard language (Lasnier et al. 2000: 43). Lasnier et al. (2000: 43) state that for example recognising

sounds and minimal pair differences (meaning words or phrases that only differ by one sound, for example Purwanto 2019) and training to "chunk" text are central for learning to decode text. The material should also provide pre-listening tasks that can help the learner anticipate what is to be heard, and post-listening assessment. It is, again, important to include many different genres and authentic texts. They also differentiate listening and viewing, as in terms of viewing the learners also get visual cues. Similarly to listening, viewing a video, for example, should include pre and post-task activities, and the video should be relevant in terms of the course curriculum.

The next category related to the design stage that they discuss is pedagogic tasks. They define pedagogic tasks as tasks that have pedagogic goals instead of real-life ones, and an example of such exercises is filling gaps in sentences. They introduce two different models for pedagogic tasks, from controlled to free:

(a) presentation

(b) repetition

(c) practice

(d) transfer

(e) free practice in a more holistic activity (Lasnier et al. 2000: 47, here presented as a list)

and an alternative:

(a) undertake holistic activity

(b) feedback on performance, with presentation of relevant language

(c) practice

(d) transfer

(e) next holistic activity (Lasnier et al. 2000: 47, here presented as a list).

Regardless of the chosen model, the material should include controlled, guided and free tasks. Examples of controlled activities can include for example matching exercises, whereas automaticity aiding tasks may be conventional drills.

In addition to pedagogic tasks Lasnier et al. (2000) also mention the so called real life tasks that can help connect what is being learnt in the classroom with language use in real life contexts. These types of tasks require the learners to use language similarly to how they would use it in situations outside of school and an example of such exercises is projects and gathering information from different sources such as written on recorded texts or informants. Another subject related to the activities is learning strategies. Howard and Major (2004: 105) have also devoted one of their ten guidelines to discussing the importance of materials providing opportunities for the learners to develop their learning skills and strategies. This means that materials should include activities that focus on how to learn, both with the help of a teacher and independently, for example, by utilising materials and sources outside of school (Howard and Major 2004: 105). Lasnier et al. (2000: 49-50) also point out that learners should be aware of what learning strategies they use and what other options are possible, and they should be taught how to use the most efficient strategy with regard to a certain problem. In practice, Lasnier et al. (2000: 49-50) point out that materials could include questions about learning strategies, as well as suggestions for using new ones (such as ways of using different media to help listening). Both Howard and Major (2004: 105) and Lasnier et al. (2000: 49-50) link self-assessment and differentiation strategies closely with learning strategies. Learners should both set themselves objectives and assess their performance at different stages of the learning process. The material should, thus, include opportunities for these, in the form of checklists, for example. Howard and Major (2004: 105) also point out that self-evaluation can be done in the learners' first language.

The next category related to the design stage that Lasnier et al. (2000: 50-59) discuss is the *organisation*, meaning the structure, of the materials. Organisation also involves grouping different elements together, "matching activities and content" (p. 50), presenting the contents in a logical order, and showing how individual parts relate to one another and to the bigger picture. It is also important to ensure that nothing important has been left out. When designing the course curriculum, one must take into account the time and resources available, and for example how many hours a week one has dedicated for the course or the material. Ensuring progression is another aspect to consider when planning the organisation. This means taking into account what one should learn first in order to be able to learn the following aspect/s. In

addition, activities should progress from simpler to more complex ones. Lasnier et al (2000: 52) also point out that learning is not necessarily a straight line, where once something has been dealt with it is learnt; thus, it is important to include recycling and extension. Howard and Major (2004) agree, and state that the materials should be created to be coherent and the activities should be connected, also by providing opportunities for repetition.

The target group naturally also shapes the planning of the organisation. The amount of what is to be learnt (during one session and during the whole process) should be appropriate and realistic. This means for example that some prioritising must take place (Lasnier et al. 2000: 53). The organising principles should be clear to the teacher and the learners to make the relevance of the activities clear as well as give an overview of the whole material. Lasnier et al. (2000: 54) suggest that a "how to" manual for teachers would be an important part of the materials, and it could for example include suggestions for preparation or follow-up tasks, as well as ideas for differentiation. Not only the capabilities of the learners but also those of the teachers should be taken into consideration; thus, the material should include guidance to teachers that are not that experienced (Lasnier et al. 2000: 57).

Lasnier et al. (2000) then discuss the design and organisation of each unit. Units are self-standing components of a course, as Lasnier et al. (2000: 54) explain. The goals of each unit should be clear and the units should be distinguishable from one another. The main exercises of each unit should be clearly pointed out and include optional or complimentary activities. Within one unit it is also important to take into account different learning modes: different inputs, text types, and activity types (Lasnier et al. 2000: 55).

Interaction has also been mentioned in both Howard and Major (2004) and Lasnier et al. (2000). It is first of all important that the materials create possibilities for interaction and communication and include a balance between different types of it. The main types of interaction that Lasnier et al. (2000: 56) mention are "teacher-directed class work; interaction in the target language in small groups, pair work, individual work [and] presentation by learners". Also this material package takes into account these different types of interaction.

Lasnier et al. (2000) have devoted a section for planning assessment. Assessment should be systematic and take place in different forms at different stages of the course or the materials, for example after each unit. In the case of assessment it is also important to ensure the validity of it: does the assessment truly measure the objectives of the materials? As already mentioned above it is good to include the learners into the assessment process, by for example giving them a summary of the objectives and providing opportunities for self-assessment (Lasnier et al. 2000: 58-59).

Lastly, Lasnier et al. (2000) focus their attention on the *presentation*, or the appearance, of the materials. According to them the presentation has an aesthetic as well as a functional dimension. Howard and Major (2004: 106-107) agree that the materials should be attractive, meaning the physical appearance, but also user friendly, and the materials should be durable and easy to reproduce. Lasnier et al. (2000) give practical tips on how to make the materials physically appealing: one can use different colours and fonts, and Howard and Major (2004: 106) mention the cohesiveness of layout as well as how much text is put on a page as factors to consider. Symbols and illustrations may also make the materials more user friendly. Colours and illustrations can make the materials more appealing, as Lasnier et al. (2000), and Howard and Major (2004) state, but in real life it should be taken into consideration that for example taking colour copies may not always be possible. Virtual materials may allow for more options, but if the material is supposed to be printed, the creator of the materials should consider how to make the materials appealing and user friendly also in black and white. Navigation is the last point with regard to presentation that Lasnier et al. (2000: 63-64) present. For example a clear table of contents and supporting icons and colours can help.

3.4 Techniques for teaching pronunciation

Some suprasegmental specific ideas for teaching have already been presented in the chapters that focus on the chosen suprasegmentals. This chapter further discusses some commonly used approaches, techniques, materials, and activities for teaching pronunciation. The ideas

presented in this chapter are not necessarily age-specific but they could be used with the target group of this thesis. For example, there are two general approaches to teaching pronunciation, namely the intuitive-imitative and the analytic-linguistic approach (Kelly 2000, cited in Purwanto 2019: 82). As the name suggests, the intuitive-imitative approach refers to the learner imitating what they hear, for example, whereas the analytic-linguistic approach makes use of information related to the different aspects of learning pronunciation and explicitly informs the learners of what is being learnt and how the aspect is being produced, for example. Purwanto (2019) also points out that these two approaches are complementary to one another and comes to the conclusion that pronunciation should be taught according to the guidelines of communicative approach, which is an approach that highlights the importance of communication skills as a goal for language learning.

For example Tergujeff (2013b: 31-35) has discussed some pronunciation teaching techniques. The first technique she introduces is *imitation and drilling*. Tergujeff (2013b: 31) notes that even though it may be seen as old fashioned, drilling is a beneficial technique. Reid (2016) adds that drilling is a very controlled exercise, which makes it suitable for beginners – they do not have to worry about trying to communicate something, instead they can just focus on the aspect being learnt. Drilling can also be done alone or in groups, and there are different types of drills (namely "repetition drills, transformation drills, substitution drills, chain drills and probably the most attractive are the Jazz Chants" (Reid 2016: 24)). It is important to note, though, as also Lasnier et al. (2000) mention, that drilling can be one of the first steps of practising an aspect, but it should not be the end of it – the goal should be moving from controlled to free language production.

Phonetic training is the second category that Tergujeff (2013b: 32) introduces. The activities that represent this category include phonetic terminology and the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Also some prosodic features are presented in the IPA transcriptions. Tergujeff (2013b: 32) points out that these activities can also include comparing the phonetic systems of two or more languages, such as English and Finnish, with the help of intonation contours for example. This idea also supports what the NCC2014 states, as teaching the symbols of phonetic transcriptions and rules related to pronunciation have been mentioned as objectives already for

grades three to six. With regard to the topic of this thesis for example word stress is usually indicated as a symbol in phonetic transcriptions, which can be taught to pupils.

The third type of pronunciation teaching techniques presented in Tergujeff's (2013b) publication is *awareness-raising* tasks: learners have to be aware of a phenomenon before they can learn it. With regard to English these activities may also include awareness of the different varieties (such as dialects and models) of English. Raising awareness of linguistic phenomena is not the only type connected to this technique, instead also the learners becoming aware of different learning styles and their own preferred ones can be seen as an awareness raising activity. Cameron (2001) similarly points out that it is particularly important for young learners to understand everything that they are supposed to learn, how they can learn, and what the purpose of an activity is, in order for them to learn it. As discussed previously, when learning pronunciation it is also important to take into account the receptive aspects of it. Tergujeff's (2013b) next category of activities, *ear training*, is related to practising these receptive language skills. With regard to prosodic elements, ear training can involve for example distinguishing word and sentence stress as well as getting used to different varieties of English.

The next category is *creative techniques*. Tergujeff (2013b: 33) attaches for example drama techniques to this category: for instance speech volume and rate can be practised with drama activities. The sixth category in Tergujeff (2013b: 33-34) is *corrective feedback*, which refers to feedback from teacher to learners for example. This technique is mostly used in classrooms during the lesson, and even though this material package does not focus on assessment, which includes feedback, it is important to keep in mind the importance of encouraging corrective feedback. *Materials, tools, and technology* have been introduced as the last category of pronunciation teaching techniques in Tergujeff's (2013b: 34-35) article. Tools can be simple household items, such as rubber bands, or pictures, as suggested for teaching stress in Lin, Fan and Chen (1995), for example. Tergujeff (2013b: 34) also praises the use of kazoos when teaching intonation, however not every school may possess these. Authentic materials are another source for teaching pronunciation: for instance songs and poetry may be utilised in classrooms. Purwanto (2019) adds that materials for, for instance, reading aloud tasks that are meant for practising pronunciation or speaking skills should be texts that are also intended to

be spoken. Computer-mediated pronunciation teaching can also be beneficial, however not all schools have access to beneficial applications, and computers may not always be able to process non-native speakers' pronunciation of English appropriately. However, for example immediate feedback is a benefit of using computer programmes (Tergujeff 2013b).

Technology can provide many opportunities for pronunciation teaching. For instance Yoshida (2018) has discussed using technology as a part of teaching pronunciation. She has not focused on young learners, instead she discusses the matter broadly, but the ideas can be adapted to be utilised with young learners as well. She states similar criteria for choosing suitable materials as Howard and Major (2004) and Lasnier et al. (2000): appropriateness, quality and accuracy, practicality, and cost. Technological tools can provide models of different aspects related to pronunciation, learners can record and listen to their own production, and also teachers can listen to those recordings (Yoshida 2018). With regard to recording one's own pronunciation, Yoshida (2018: 201) suggests that the goal may be learners analysing their own recording or the teacher receiving the recordings and giving feedback. Smartphones usually include a built in sound-recording system, and many recording programs can be found online as well. A recording task may also be a video or multimedia project that the pupils can share with the rest of the group, or they can create a narrated story with a slideshow program (Yoshida 2018: 201). There are also "talking head" websites that can change the speaker's voice when playing it back, which can make speaking more engaging and less intimidating for some learners. The next theme that Yoshida (2018) discusses is how to collect and respond to the learners' recordings. One platform for submitting the recordings relatively easily is learning management systems, such as Moodle or Google Classroom, that may be used in some schools. Some ideas for practising independently are for example automatic speech recognition platforms, as for example Siri, which is a speech-to-text application, or sending voice messages (to the teachers work phone, for example) (Yoshida 2018).

In addition, there are many different websites for learners to practise their pronunciation skills independently. Yoshida (2018) mentions for example the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and YouTube as sources for authentic materials and models for connected speech. An example of a task that can be utilised with these sources is shadowing, as she calls it. This task

type refers to the learners watching a video multiple times and then repeating after the speaker trying to imitate their pronunciation (including intonation, and word and sentence stress, for example). Yoshida (2018: 200) also gives a reminder saying that the audio or video clips should be chosen based on the goals of the activity – is the aspect being practised evident in the chosen audio? In addition, the clip should be suitable for the specific learner group – is it age appropriate, what are the pupils' interests, and is the language used relevant regarding, for example, the pupils' language proficiency level?

3.5 Finnish context

As this material package is aimed mainly for Finnish EFL teachers and Finnish pupils, the exercises in it are based on the NCC2014 and its values and statements. The National Core Curriculum for Basic Education directs and provides a basis for school education in Finnish comprehensive schools (Finnish National Agency for Education 2016), which include grades one to nine. This Master's Thesis focuses on the information related to grades one to six, as the chosen target group is within those grades. The NCC2014 states, for instance, the values underlying education, the conception of learning and the subjects taught in different grades, as well as their objectives. The target group of this material package is third grade pupils but at least some of the activities can be utilised with pupils in other grades as well, especially if modified.

In the NCC2014 some objectives for foreign languages (as for example English) have been specified for grades three to six. Some guidelines for grades three to six that have been mentioned are for example including playfulness, joy and creativity in the lessons. How to apply these into practice has, however, not been defined in more detail, which could be argued to mean that teachers have the opportunity to interpret them as they wish. Another point mentioned in the NCC2014 (p. 127, 219) with regard to language education is encouraging pupils to communicate in authentic contexts. Language teaching in Finland has undergone some changes in recent years, and pupils now start learning their first foreign language in the first grade, whereas previously the most common grade to start a foreign language was the third grade. Due to these changes a more recent document containing information and objectives

related to language teaching has been created, and some more detailed information about language teaching for the lower grades have been given. For instance, varying teaching methods, functional working approaches and oral communication have been emphasised in this document (Finnish National Agency for Education 2019: 25).

For grades three to six the objectives and assessment of English as a foreign language education have also been determined in the NCC2014 (pp. 218-223). The objectives have been divided into five categories: "growing into cultural diversity and language awareness", "language-learning skills", "evolving language proficiency, interaction skills", "evolving language proficiency, text interpretation skills", and "evolving language proficiency, text production skills" (NCC2014: 219-220). With regard to teaching pronunciation and suprasegmental features, in the section "evolving language proficiency skills, text production skills" the curriculum states "to offer the pupil opportunities for producing speech and writing on a wider range of topics, also paying attention to essential structures and the basic rules of pronunciation" as an objective. Thus, some rules related to pronunciation are presented to pupils also as a part of this material package.

In addition to the objectives, some key content areas related to them have been defined in the NCC2014 (p. 220). Relevant points to mention with regard to the topic of this Master's Thesis is for example "the pupils observe and get plenty of practise in pronunciation, stressing words and sentences, the rhythm of speech and intonation. They practise recognising the symbols of phonetic transcription of English" (p. 220). Also these themes are reflected in the material package. Some topics and themes have been suggested in the NCC2014 for grades three to six. For example, I and my family, school, hobbies, and free time have been presented as potential topics for this age and language proficiency group, as well as the pupils' interests and everyday life. The NCC2014 also states some objectives related to the learning environments and methods. For instance, pair and group work in different types of learning environments has been emphasised and drama, songs, and playing have been mentioned as examples of the teaching methods for providing the pupils with opportunities for language learning and using languages. Thus, in this material package there are opportunities for individual work but also pair and group work, and for example songs and playing are utilised.

4 THE PRESENT STUDY

As Tergujeff (2013b) mentions, teaching pronunciation in Finland mostly focuses on segmentals and English textbooks lack materials for teaching prosodic elements. However, the best option for teaching pronunciation according to literature on this field is suggested to be the balanced approach, meaning teaching both prosody and segmentals. Due to these reasons, this material package seeks to provide materials for facilitating the teaching of prosody and thereby promotes adding teaching prosody to English lessons.

The teaching of prosody is recommended to be started early on in the process of learning a new language, so the target group for this material package is third grade teachers and pupils in Finnish comprehensive schools (meaning that the learners are generally approximately nine years old). Even though there are pupils in Finnish schools whose first language is not Finnish, the assumed target group of this material package is L1 Finnish speakers. In addition, for example, learning difficulties are not addressed in great detail in the material package. Third grade pupils have already learnt some English and the pupils are also assumed to be able to read and write at this stage. Even though third grade was chosen as the target group, many, if not all of the tasks can also be used with other language competency level pupils and age groups, especially if the activities are modified to suit the group. Even with the target group the activities are encouraged to be modified to fit the particular group of pupils and their needs. All schools are equipped differently, but this material package assumes that teachers have access to online resources, and there is a blackboard, whiteboard, smart screen, or something similar in the classroom. Group and class sizes can also vary drastically; however, the activities in this material package can be used with many different group sizes with some modification.

As this thesis is limited in scope, the topic had to be limited to only some aspects of prosody. Eventually stress, both on word and sentence level, as well as speech rhythm were chosen. These aspects have an effect on the main goal of this thesis and of pronunciation teaching, which is considered to be intelligibility and comprehensibility. In addition, there seems to be a lack of materials for teaching these aspects in the textbooks that are currently being used in EFL

classes in Finland. This material package aims to teach some basic information and skills related to the chosen prosodic elements. The material package is a collection of activities that I have personally collected, modified and/or created. The activities are mostly based on suggestions found in background literature and credit to the creators of the tasks is given, as the original sources are mentioned when relevant.

The material package is divided into two units: word stress, and sentence stress and rhythm, which were grouped together as sentence stress and rhythm are closely related to each other. The units are constructed around theme vocabularies, meaning that the activities include words from that certain vocabulary. However, the vocabulary can be changed to fit the group and the learning objectives. The material package follows the order that Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996) have suggested: first the focus is on word stress, and then on sentence stress and speech rhythm because understanding word stress will help the pupils create and understand sentence stress and speech rhythm. Some basic information on the prosodic elements chosen for this material package has also been provided for the teachers. The activities have been constructed to include a pre-task activity and a post-task activity in addition to each main activity. In addition, the objectives of each activity have been mentioned, as well as some suggestions for modifying the activities. The activities within a unit start with controlled activities and towards the end of the unit the activities are freer in nature. The activities take into account different teaching techniques and methods, for example some activities are suggested to be done individually and some in pairs or groups. Comprehensive school teachers in Finland, who are the intended readers and users of the material package, would perhaps not use many consecutive lessons for only teaching prosodic elements; thus, the material package has not been created in the form of lesson plans. Instead the activities serve as suggestions that can be used whenever the teacher sees suitable to enrich the teaching of pronunciation skills from the point of view of prosody. This material package focuses on providing word stress, sentence stress and speech rhythm activities, and explicit homework, learning strategy, and assessment activities, for example, have not been created. However, some activities are suitable for homework and/or assessment as well, which has been pointed out and the teacher is encouraged to add self-assessment and information about learning strategies to the activities and their teaching as well.

This material package does not cover every aspect related to the chosen features, as it is an introductory one for a particular age and language proficiency group. In addition, it is noteworthy to mention that doing all the activities in the material package does not guarantee a great command of word and sentence stress, and speech rhythm. Instead, repetition is important and the different topics of this thesis should be practised throughout one's language learning journey. The activities chosen for this material package serve as suggestions for introducing some prosodic elements, and familiarising pupils with the concepts. It is also good to keep in mind that all prosodic elements are connected with one another and they appear simultaneously in words and sentences, even though the aspects are treated as separate categories in this material package.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This thesis and material package aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. What should the objectives of English pronunciation teaching be and on what elements of pronunciation should the focus be in order to reach those objectives?
2. How to design materials for teaching those elements, and what kind of a material package would support the teaching of those elements?

As an answer to the first research question it can be summarised that research on pronunciation teaching has come to the conclusion that intelligibility and comprehensibility should be its main aims in today's world. For example, Tergujeff (2013b), and Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996) have highlighted the importance of teaching prosody, particularly intonation, word and sentence stress, and speech rhythm (in addition to individual sounds) in order to achieve those goals, preferably at the beginning of one's language learning journey. What is more, English textbooks, which are the main sources of teaching materials in Finland, lack activities that provide prosody instruction and practice (Mäkinen 2021). The lack of materials for teaching prosody may lead to prosodic elements not being taught at schools, at least not to the extent that they perhaps ought to be in order to aid the learning of intelligible and comprehensible pronunciation skills. Thus, after some prioritising, word stress, sentence stress, and speech rhythm were chosen as the topics of this material package and the target group of

this material package narrowed down to young, low language proficiency learners, since the teaching of prosodic elements is recommended to be started as early as possible. The aim of the material package is to provide a collection of activities for teaching and introducing the chosen aspects.

Regarding the second research question, this study found that it is important to consider the aims and objectives of the course and the needs of the learners. Special attention should be paid to the content, activities, organisation, and the presentation of the materials. Thus, the material package is divided into two units, the activities and overall organisation of the material package follow a structure recommended by background literature, and an attempt to make the material package user friendly with the help of visual aids and clear instructions for example, was made. Personally I have learnt about the importance of prosody and gotten many ideas for teaching prosody in practice by finding answers to these research questions and by creating the material package. A teacher's personality can affect their teaching and their decisions, and surely the activities and tasks chosen for this material package, even though based on other people's ideas, is a collection that reflects what kinds of activities I find interesting and motivating.

Unfortunately it was not possible to test this material package in practice due to the scope of this thesis; therefore, the results that one can get with the activities and how well the material package can reach its intended goals can only be hypothesised. The material package does offer many activities related to all of the topics and the activities were chosen based on background research. In addition, the activities make use of different teaching techniques and methods, meaning that hopefully at least some activities will suit the learners in question. This material package does not guarantee a successful command of prosodic elements, instead repetition is important and attaching learning prosody to other exercises as well by for example guiding the learners' awareness and noticing of the aspects is important – prosody is present whenever one speaks. One aim of this material package was also to promote and facilitate explicit teaching of prosody, for which the material package offers many possibilities.

The research on the topics summarised in this thesis, as well as the concrete activities in the material package can potentially benefit material designers and publishers, as well as teachers. Ideas for further future research on the topics of this thesis include for example testing and evaluating how well these activities work in practice. In addition, learning difficulties and the heterogeneity of pupils were not considered in great detail in this study, so future research and activities could be done and provided from a point of view that acknowledges such aspects better. Assessment is a central part of teaching as well, in the form of peer and teacher feedback, as well as self-evaluation. For example Wiggins and McTighe (2005) suggest that when designing a course, for instance, one should first think about the desired goals, which was also the starting point of this thesis. However, in their backwards design model they suggest that in the second stage of designing courses or units, one should contemplate what kind of evidence will prove whether or not those goals have been met, or in other words one should choose appropriate assessment materials at this stage. Only after these stages they suggest focusing on designing individual tasks, thus highlighting the importance of assessment and evaluation. As the scope of this thesis is limited and the material package is meant to be an introductory one that hopes to provide teachers with ideas for teaching and adding prosody to their classes, a decision to leave out assessment materials was made, even though some of the activities can be used for assessment purposes as well. Thus, more materials designed specifically for the assessment of pronunciation skills and for giving feedback would be greatly appreciated. Another factor discussed in the background literature section was the importance of teaching learning strategies when designing materials; however, learning strategies were not covered in great detail in this material package. This means that learning strategies regarding learning pronunciation and prosody is an area that could benefit from further research and for what more materials could be provided in the future.

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Introducing stress and rhythm:

A material package for teaching

English word stress, sentence stress,

and speech rhythm to Finnish

comprehensive school pupils

Hello fellow teacher!

Teaching pronunciation and prosody in particular is important with all pupils but especially with beginners, in order for them to achieve intelligibility and comprehensibility in a foreign language. However, textbooks seem to lack materials for teaching prosody. This material package aims to provide some introductory teaching materials for some prosodic elements, namely word stress, sentence stress and speech rhythm. This material package does not include homework and assessment activities per se, although some of the activities can be easily used as homework tasks or for assessment purposes.

It is recommended to start the teaching of prosody at the beginning of one's language learning journey and, thus, the target group of this material package is Finnish third grade pupils. However, many if not all the activities can be done with other age and language proficiency level groups as well, especially when modified. The material package is not strictly in the form of lesson plans, so you can utilise the activities whenever you see suitable. However, the order in which the material package progresses is recommended. The first aspect to be learnt is word stress, as it will serve as an introduction to sentence stress too. Sentence stress and speech rhythm are combined in the second unit, as they are very closely related. The learning objectives of the units are stated at the beginning of a unit along with some information for the teacher. The units are also built around a theme vocabulary. The theme vocabulary for word stress in this material package is foods and drinks, and the theme vocabulary for sentence stress and speech rhythm is animals. These themes can be assumed to be somewhat familiar to third grade pupils, however, you can modify the activities to use any vocabulary that is relevant to your learner group.

The activities start from more introductory and controlled activities in both units and move on to less controlled activities. You can also find the learning objectives of each activity at the beginning of an activity, in addition to a mention of the needed materials for the activity. Each activity is also combined with suggestions on how to prepare for the activity and how you could further practice the aspect, these suggestions can be found under the titles "Before the activity"

and "After the activity". The symbol refers to additional suggestions on how to modify the activity, but please feel free to modify the activities however you see fit! The sources used can be found at the end of this material package, and from the descriptions of the activities that they have inspired.

Hoping that this material package will be of help to you when it comes to adding the teaching of prosody to your lessons,

Hanna

Table of contents

Unit 1
WORD STRESS

Goals of the unit: recognising and producing stress in English, becoming familiar with the phenomenon of word stress, learning some differences between Finnish and English stress (for example the placement of word stress)

Theme vocabulary: Food

Information for teachers: Every word with a minimum of two syllables has a stress pattern (Cai 2008). In English, there are three levels of stress: strongly and lightly stressed syllables, and unstressed syllables (Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996), and words can have for example primary and secondary stresses. In English stress is created by saying the stressed syllable (or more accurately the vowel in the syllable) longer, louder and higher than unstressed syllables (Tergujeff 2019: 170). The vowels in stressed syllables are fuller than in unstressed ones, and the *schwa*-sound (/ə/) is never stressed (Checklin 2012). The vowels in unstressed syllables are also said quicker than in stressed syllables. In Finnish the change in speech rate is not that clear and vowel quality does not change (Suomi, Toivanen and Ylitalo 2008).

On word level, in Finnish the main stress is on the first syllable, whereas in English word stress may fall on any syllable, depending on, for example, the origin of the word or a particular prefix or suffix that the word contains. There are some simplified rules for the placement of stress; however, there are also exceptions to those rules, and different varieties of English may treat word stress placement differently. For example in the case of compound words the first element is strongly stressed, and the second one is slightly stressed in GA (General American), whereas some compound words in RP (Received Pronunciation) place the main stress on the second word, and slightly stress the first element (Berg 1999: 132-133).

ACTIVITY 1: Can you hear the word stress?

> **Aims:** Listening discrimination, familiarising pupils with word stress
>
> **Preparation and materials needed:** same/different - A/B cards for each pupil, example words
>
> **Estimated duration:** 20 minutes

Before the activity:

Inform the pupils about word stress:

- ❖ every word has one syllable that is stressed more than other syllables,
- ❖ in Finnish the main stress is on the first syllable but in English it can be on any syllable
- ❖ you can emphasise the importance of word stress by saying that if the pupils stress the wrong syllable or do not stress any syllable it might be difficult for the listener to understand what they are saying.

You can also demonstrate all of these examples and reassure the pupils that it is fine if they do not immediately hear the differences, because this may be a new phenomenon to them.

Here are some example words that you can use to demonstrate word stress in Finnish and English, you can overemphasise the stress: HOtelli - hoTEL , KAhvila - caFE, PEruna - poTAto, BAnaani - baNAna, TOdella - VEry, VAStata - rePLY, ALkaa - beGIN,

Can the pupils hear the word stress? It is fine if not, and they may still seem puzzled about this new phenomenon but the activity should help them grasp the idea of word stress better.

Activity:

This activity is from Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996: 146). You will need a set of A/B and SAME/DIFFERENT cards for this task. Printable sheets of 8 cards are provided at the end of this material package, but you can also create them yourself or ask the pupils to create their own cards using, for example, paper, sticky notes, or cardboard. The cards can also be of different

colours which can help the teacher see the pupils' answers clearer. The A/B cards can also be separate from the SAME/DIFFERENT cards. The idea behind the A/B cards is that the teacher can get some feedback on whether the pupils are able to hear the word stress patterns or not.

First, write two versions of, for example, the syllables *la la* side by side on the blackboard, whiteboard, smart screen et cetera, depending on what kind of a board or screen you have in your classroom. The first version could be, for example, A) *LA la* and the second one B) *la LA*. You then say either one of them, and ask the pupils to raise the piece of paper that says A or B to indicate which one they heard. You can repeat this a few times.

Next, you can wipe the board and say two versions of *la la* one after another (either with the same stress pattern or not). You do not need to show the pupils these words, instead only say them. Ask the pupils to raise the card that says SAME or DIFFERENT according to what you said and what they heard. You can say for example (Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin. 1996: 146):

1. la LA   la LA

2. LA la   la LA

3. la LA   LA la

4. LA la   LA la

5. la LA   la LA

You can also use three or more syllables:

1. LA la la   la LA la

2. la LA la   la LA la

3. LA la la   la la LA et cetera.

If this seems to be too easy, or as the next step, you can use actual words, such as:

1. beGIN   iDEA

2. VEry   hoTEL

3. MOney   CIty

6

4. baNAna   kangaROO

5. poTAto   Elephant

These words you can also show to the pupils, if you want to.

After the activity: Have a class discussion (which can be done in pairs first) during which you analyse how English stress is created. Ask the pupils, for example:

- ❖ how were the two versions different,
- ❖ how did they know the right answer, what did you (the teacher) do differently when you said the stressed and the unstressed syllables,
- ❖ how were the pupils able to tell which syllable was stressed,
- ❖ what could notice about how you produced the stressed and unstressed syllables.

You can also drill the syllables and words used in this activity. This discussion is also a good way to prepare the pupils for creating word stress themselves, and for the next activity presented in this material package.

💡 The pupils can also do this activity in pairs or small groups, for example after the teacher has demonstrated how it works. You can also use other models, and ask the pupils to self-evaluate how well they were able to hear the differences.

A/B and SAME/DIFFERENT cards:

A **SAME**	**A** **SAME**
A **SAME**	**A** **SAME**
A **SAME**	**A** **SAME**
A **SAME**	**A** **SAME**

B **DIFFERENT**	**B** **DIFFERENT**
B **DIFFERENT**	**B** **DIFFERENT**
B **DIFFERENT**	**B** **DIFFERENT**
B **DIFFERENT**	**B** **DIFFERENT**

ACTIVITY 2: Let's practise!

> **Aims:** learning to produce English (word) stress, learning information about word stress
>
> **Preparation and materials needed:** a mirror or a smartphone would be great for this activity but not mandatory.
>
> **Estimated duration:** 15 minutes

Before the activity: The previous activity and especially the discussion after it functions well as an introduction to this activity. In addition, you can introduce the visual aid of using different sized (and coloured if you wish) bubbles above the syllables: a big bubble above the stressed ones and a small bubble above unstressed ones. You can start with nonsense words, write for example *LA la* and *la LA*, on the board or screen with the bubbles and practise saying them and what the bubbles indicate. For example:

● •   • ●

 LA la   la LA

In addition, you can add clapping: clap silently when you say unstressed syllables and clap loudly when saying stressed syllables.

You can also point out that IPA transcriptions show word stress, meaning that the pupils can always check word stress from (online) dictionaries, for example. Remember to show and explain how word stress is indicated in the IPA transcriptions. For example:

/bəˈnɑː.nə/ (Cambridge Online Dictionary)

You can also mention that in English there are three levels of stress: strongly stressed, lightly stressed, and unstressed (different sizes of the bubbles), for example:

• ● •

/bəˈnɑː.nə/ (UK) or /bəˈnæn.ə/ (US)

● • ● •

/ˈwɑː.t̬ɚ ˌmel.ən/ (US) or /ˈwɔː.tə ˌmel.ən/ (UK) (Cambridge Online Dictionary)

Activity: the British Council website called Teaching English (word stress) mentions 5 different aspects of English word stress, using "computer" as an example word:

"A stressed syllable combines five features:

It is l-o-n-g-e-r – com p-u-ter

It is LOUDER – comPUTer

It has a change in pitch from the syllables coming before and afterwards. The pitch of a stressed syllable is usually higher.

It is said more clearly – The vowel sound is purer. Compare the first and last vowel sounds with the stressed sound.

It uses larger facial movements – Look in the mirror when you say the word. Look at your jaw and lips in particular"

Practise each of these features with the pupils: pick a word or a couple of words with different stress patterns that the pupils are familiar with, for example the word comPUter that has been used in the British Council example (and maybe toDAY, helLO, MORning, baNAna, WAter et cetera). You can write the word/s on the blackboard or smart board so that the division into syllables is clear and the stressed syllable is highlighted with capital letters and/or different symbols, such as bubbles of different sizes above the word/s. For example:

● ● ●   ● ●   ● ●

ba NA na   hel LO   WA ter

1. Elongate the stressed syllables in the word/s (say the word/s a few times and remember to explain why – this is how stress is created in English). You can also point out that the other syllables are, in contrast, said quicker and practise this too.

2. Say and ask the pupils to repeat the stressed syllables in the chosen word/s louder, and contrastively, the unstressed syllables quieter. You can first focus on the loudness of the stressed syllables and then point out the contrast to unstressed syllables.

3. Then focus on pitch: say the stressed syllables with a higher pitch (without forgetting the other features learnt so far).

4. As the fourth feature you can present the fact that stressed syllables are said clearer, which is particularly evident in the articulation of the vowels: place clear emphasis on the vowels in

the stressed syllables, and point out that vowels in unstressed syllables often contain the schwa-sound.

5. The last idea that the British Council website introduces is looking at what physically happens when you say stressed syllables. The pupils could observe the teacher, and themselves in a mirror or by looking at themselves with the help of the camera of a phone or tablet. The mouth movements (especially jaw and lips) are larger as one uses more muscles when saying unstressed syllables.

Drill the word/s a few times trying to combine all these elements. You can also overemphasise and clap to highlight the stressed syllables.

After the activity: You can use a (online) dictionary, or vocabulary from your textbook that includes IPA transcriptions. Practise word stress with different words (you can ask your pupils to say words that they know and want to practise), this task may also help them combine word stress with the real world – not just the words practised in this activity include word stress – instead every word (that has a minimum of two syllables) does. You can first do this together as a group and then let pupils practise alone or in pairs. You can also say the pupils' names similarly to how an English speaker would say and stress them. It can be fun and memorable, and make the contrast between Finnish and English clearer.

This material package uses clapping and bubbles as the aids for demonstrating word stress. Other methods that you may find useful are using rubber bands (elongating on the stressed syllables), thumping with feet, jumping, tapping or drumming the desk, using hand movements, underlining or circling the stressed syllable or using capital letters et cetera.

ACTIVITY 3: Drilling word stress

Aims: automatizing and producing word stress, listening discrimination, learning some basic word stress rules

Preparation and materials needed: A list of words representing different word stress patterns (create your own or use the one provided). Some Lego blocks or other visual aids to represent word stress patterns.

Estimated duration: 30 minutes

Before the activity: Introduce and drill different stress patterns and words that represent different stress patterns. You can first practise the patterns by clapping them and using nonsense syllables. Then drill all the words within one category. You can also present and introduce some rules related to stress patterns; however, it is up to you how much you want to emphasise the different rules, or whether you want to introduce them at all (as the rules are not without exceptions and some of them may be confusing to younger learners). The rules presented in this material package are also simplified and they can act differently in different dialects and varieties of English, and include exceptions. However, they serve as general rules that may help some pupils.

Two syllable nouns → 1st syllable stressed ● •	Two syllable adjectives → 1st syllable stressed ● •	Two syllable verbs → 2nd syllable stressed • ●
APple WAter YOGhourt CARrot	CREamy SAlty SPIcy YUMmy	enJOY prePARE disLIKE reLAX

Compound words: stress is often on the first element (second stress is on the second element)	Three syllable words →stress often on the first syllable (especially if the word ends in a consonant, -y, -ly, -er, or -or) ● ● •	Three syllable words with stress on the second syllable (for example suffix -ious and -ic → stress right before the suffix) ● ● •
PINeapple WATermelon GINgerbread (man) BREakfast	CUcumber TOtally HAMburger CEreal	baNAna poTAto toMAto fanTAStic

Examples of three syllable words with stress on the last syllable → suffixes -oon, -roo, -ee, -ade are stressed (also in words with more or less syllables) ● ● ●	Multiples of 10 → stress on 1st syllable ● •
lemonADE kangaROO underSTAND afterNOON	TWENty THIRty FOURty FIFty

Activity: This activity is inspired by Lin, Fan and Chen (1995). You can first practise together as a group and then the pupils can work in pairs or small groups. First you need a couple of lists that contain words that each represent a different stress pattern. These lists can be shown on a smart screen or handed out to the pupils. Each pair or group only needs one list.

Pick a word from the list and only clap the stress pattern of it – do not say the word. The pupils should try to attach the pattern that you clapped to the word that has the same pattern. After you have done this together the pupils can work in pairs or small groups: one pupil claps the stress

pattern of a word and the other/s try to guess which word has that stress pattern. Then the pupils switch roles.

List 1:	List 2:
● · ● · WAter**me**lon	● · WAter
· ● enJOY	● · · CUcumber
· ● · baNAna	· ● · toMAto
· · ● lemonADE	· ● reLAX
● · SPIcy	● · · ● GINgerbread **man**
● · · HAMburger	· · ● afterNOON

After the activity: As the next step you could reverse the roles of clapping and saying the word. This activity can again be done with the whole class first before the pupils work in groups or pairs. Both/all pupils in a group get a sheet of paper with different words on it that clearly indicate the word stress pattern (you can create your own or use the lists found in the activity). If you create your own list of words or use a vocabulary list from the textbook, it is okay even if multiple words have the same stress pattern. This idea is from Garside (2020): You can use Lego blocks or other blocks of different sizes, printed out bubbles, or anything that can represent the word stress patterns. Optionally, the pupils can also clap or draw the stress pattern.

First, choose a word from the word list, but do not show the stress pattern of it. Say the word with clear stress, for example: baNAna. The pupils should then arrange the blocks or other materials that you are using to represent and match the stress pattern of that word. In this example the pattern built with (Lego) blocks would be: ▪️🟥▪️ . The pupils can work individually or in pairs at this stage. If they seem to struggle (especially with the amount of syllables) you can give them a hint by telling them how many blocks they need for the word you said. You can also repeat the word multiple times. Then check the correct answer and drill the word.

Next, the pupils can work in pairs: they both get different vocabulary lists that show the stress patterns of the words (you can use the word lists from the activity above this one, for example) and the person saying the word should also check the other one's answer. Ask the pupils to exaggerate and repeat the word if the other person does not get it right the first time. They, too, can tell the other person the amount of syllables as a hint.

ACTIVITY 4: Categorising

> **Aims:** repetition, learning different word stress patterns
>
> **Preparation and materials needed:** Printable categorising
> activities, for example cardboard cups, and vocabulary lists.
> **Estimated duration:** 30 minutes

Before the activity: give instructions on how to complete the task, familiarise the pupils with the vocabulary needed in the activity

Activity: This suggestion works well as a homework activity too, as it is meant to be done individually, one can take all the time they need, and also practise using a dictionary, for example, but the activity can naturally also be done in class. The pupils get a sheet of paper and are asked to categorise words according to their stress patterns. This activity is adapted from, for example, Sketchley (n.d.).

The first step includes assigning "titles" to categories of words. The titles are word stress patterns and the categories include words that have those patterns (in the example provided in this material package also rules for word stress patterns have been taken into account). The pupils should draw or attach the right title, meaning stress pattern, above each category. The words can also be divided into syllables for more support. The use of online dictionaries can be encouraged, as many online dictionaries include IPA transcriptions and the possibility to hear the words said aloud.
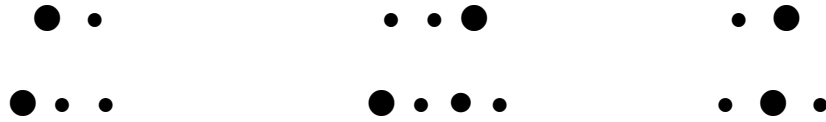
● •   • • ●   • ●
● • •   ● • • •   • ● •

table	begin	holiday	computer	lemonade	supermarket
purple	relax	customer	tomorrow	understand	gingerbread man
little	balloon	basketball	tomato	Japanese	motorcycle

Answers:

● •	• ●	● • •	• ● •	• • ●	● • • •
table	begin	holiday	computer	lemonade	supermarket
purple	relax	customer	tomorrow	understand	gingerbread man
little	balloon	basketball	tomato	Japanese	motorcycle

The second part (or an alternative) of this activity may be a bit more challenging, as it has the same idea but in this one the categories only include the "title" (for example ● ● •) and below it are individual words that the pupils should then assign to the right categories.

In this game pupils should work with vocabulary that they are already familiar with or they have access to (online) dictionaries or to a model of how the words are said aloud. The idea is to assign the words under the correct titles. Once the correct answers have been found, the words can also be drilled.

You can either use a sheet of paper in which the categories can be found (individual work), or play this as a game (with the whole group in teams), for example.

● ·	· ●	● · ·	· ● ·	· · ●	● · · ·

animal	macaroon	little
yesterday	afternoon	cauliflower
kangaroo	enjoy	today
fantastic	hamburger	banana
forget	apple	peanut butter
easy	watermelon	potato

Answers:

● •	• ●	● • •	• ● •	• • ●	● • • •
apple	today	animal	potato	kangaroo	watermelon
easy	enjoy	hamburger	banana	afternoon	peanut butter
little	forget	yesterday	fantastic	macaroon	cauliflower

If you want to play this as a game with the whole group, you can for example write the "titles" or the stress patterns (for example ● •.) on cardboard cups or other boxes, containers, desks, or on any surface that can function as different categories. The pupils work in groups and each team is given the same words. This method also makes the activity more challenging, as the fastest team is the winner. The words could, for example, be placed on one desk (upside down) and the "categories", however one wishes to implement them, for example in the form of cardboard cups, are placed on another desk. Each member of the team gets their turn in picking a word card, thinking about which category it belongs to (with the help of the rest of the team if needed) and then taking the word to the correct category or cup. Once a team believes that they have placed all the words into the right categories the teacher checks their answer (the game can, for example, be paused while the teacher does this), and if all the words are in the correct categories the team wins. Remember to also show the correct answers to the pupils to make sure that everyone can attach the words with the correct patterns.

After the activity: check the answers, explain and/or analyse some word stress rules if you want to, and drill each category. Here is one idea for checking the first part of the activity if it was done individually on a sheet of paper:

You can show the same categories of words (on a smart screen/blackboard) and ask the pupils to work in pairs or small groups to first compare their answers. You could then read a word or words from one category and ask the pupils to arrange the title somehow; for example, the pupils could work in teams of four. You read a category out loud and the pupils have printed out circles, for example, that represent the stress pattern symbols (light stresses and strong stresses). The pupils stand next to each other and they should arrange the symbols that they have to match the category or words you

said. The pupils can also arrange these symbols on their desk, for example (idea adapted from Pete 2016).

The words can be divided into syllables for more support. The pupils can also return their answers on the sheets on paper for the teacher for feedback or assessment. The categorisation activities can be done many different ways, they can for example also be turned into an online game. An additional task is to play a memory game in which the pupils should match the stress pattern (for example ● ● ●) and a word that has the same stress pattern. Note that you may only want to include one word representing each pattern or you will have more than one possible match for some cards. This game can be played either in pairs or small groups, or as an online game, for example.

ACTIVITY 5: Odd one out

Aims: listening discrimination, word stress rules

Preparation and materials needed: Odd one out-game

Estimated duration: 15 minutes

Before the activity: if you choose to do this on an online platform, make sure that the pupils know how the website or application works. You can also remind the pupils about the different word stress rules covered in this material package.

Activity: Using Odd one out as a game to practise word stress has been suggested, for example, by Checklin (2012). Say for example four different words out of which one has a different stress pattern (one example is provided as a slideshow). The pupils should find the word that has a deviant word stress pattern compared to the other three words. This activity provides an opportunity to go over some rules as well and that has been taken into consideration in the provided examples.

You can choose how this activity is done in practice: the pupils can work alone, in pairs or in small groups, and they can be provided with the words on a sheet of paper (and they circle the one that is deviant) or they may utilise small whiteboards and markers to write the option that is the odd one out. Alternatively this can also be turned into an online game in the form of a multiple choice test or a game that is played together at the same time, in which the pupils see the words on the main screen in the classroom and choose the right option on their phones or tablets (such as *Kahoot!*), for example. All of the words can also be drilled, once the correct answer has been found, and it is also recommended to, for example, clap the stress patterns of the words. You can count points if you want to but that is optional. You can also choose whether the fastest answer gets a point or if everyone has some time to answer and every correct answer gets a point.

Example of the game in the form of a slideshow: Odd one out

The words used in the game (the odd one out is written in red):

1. balloon – cartoon – loser – afternoon
2. delete – money – forget – relax
3. enjoy – purple – happy – easy
4. watermelon – peanut butter – avocado – cauliflower
5. lemonade – potato – tomato – banana
6. happy – evil – hungry – hotel
7. table – coffee – orange – macaroni
8. pineapple – fantastic – cucumber – hamburger

After the activity: the pupils can for example create sentences with the words used in the game.

For example: In the afternoon I eat watermelon. I enjoy peanut butter.

You can choose how to play the game, for example a *Kahoot!* will be more difficult as time and answering quickly are also factors. The words can be divided into syllables to provide more support.

ACTIVITY 6: Pupils' protests

> **Aims:** producing word stress
>
> **Preparation and materials needed:** You can use, for example, wooden sticks and cardboard or sheets of paper and markers, if you want.
>
> **Estimated duration:** depends on how you execute the activity, 15-30 minutes

Before the activity: Introduce the "What do we want"-chant to the pupils. You can also show an example of the chant in the form of a picture or video. The chant can be found for example from TSTA's (Texas State Teachers Association) (2019) website, link: TSTA chants. An example is also provided below.

Activity: This activity utilises the *What do we want?*-chant that is sometimes used in protests. You can practise the chant first by the teacher leading the chant, and then have the pupils do it in pairs or small groups, if it is not too difficult for them. The context can, for example, be that you are upset with the school meals and the pupils want more dessert/soft bread/different types of meals et cetera. You can chant many different food items (for example). If you want, especially if you want to attach this to practising new vocabulary, you can also create different signs for the protest, and maybe even walk to the school cafeteria or restaurant to voice the pupils' opinions! Remind the pupils to pay special attention to word stress, to really emphasise the words (and to get their message across). You can of course use differently themed vocabulary as well. *What do we want?*-chant examples:

What do we want?	What do we want?
LOLlipops!	(More) baNAnas!
When do we want them?	When do we want them?
NOW!	NOW!

After the activity: After the chant has been practised in class, you may ask the pupils to individually record their responses to the question in the chant and send them to you for feedback or assessment purposes.

The pupils can also perform their chants to the rest of the group, if they work in small groups. You can use other theme vocabularies as well.

ACTIVITY 7: Supermarket

Aims: producing word stress

Preparation and materials needed: Shopping lists (for example a notebook); for the *After the activity* task the pupils might need a phone or tablet.

Estimated duration: depends on how you execute the activity, 15-30 minutes

Before the activity: create shopping lists, practise relevant phrases.

Activity: This activity is adapted form Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996). The task focuses on supermarket themed vocabulary, but naturally other kinds of themes are possible with some modification too. This suggestion includes roleplaying with the whole group, but you can modify the activity so that the pupils work with a sheet of paper and they do not have to leave their desks if that does not suit your group.

Set up different sections of a supermarket, for example: dairy, fruit and vegetables, meat, drinks et cetera. Some pupils can be employees and others shoppers; remember to also switch roles at some point. Depending on how much time and effort you want to put into this activity, you can also include a cash register and a cashier.

The pupils could first create shopping lists, before the activity starts. If they want, they can mark word stress in their shopping lists, if they need more support. You can also give a minimum of items that each shopper must find, if you want. Then the supermarket employees can take their stations (maybe in pairs or small groups) and the shoppers should find all the items they are looking for, by stating what they have written on their shopping list.

The pupils can simply state what they need, or use intonation to turn words into questions:

Shopper: Two baNAnas (, please).

Employee: Two baNAnas? Here (you go/are).

Shopper: Thank you!

If you want, you can ask the pupils to make and use longer sentences:

How can I help (you)?

I need/want (two/big) toMAtoes/LOLLIpops.

Here you go/are.

Thank you!

After the activity: Sticking to the food theme, a post-task activity can be the pupils using the same vocabulary individually and in a different context. The pupils could, for example, videotape or record an audio of them showing and/or telling what kinds of foods they have at home. If you want, you can give them a list of food items and they should check whether or not they have them at home by creating: we have/we don't have... sentences, for example. Optionally, the pupils can just record or film a video of the food that they have at home and say what food it is in one word (filming a banana and saying "baNAna"), or they can make longer sentences (we have 3 bananas). This can also be done in the form of the teacher recording questions that the pupils then answer (with one word answers), for example: How many bananas do you have? What is your favourite fruit? What do you eat for breakfast? What is your favourite drink? What is your favourite food?

You can choose how controlled this activity is: for example you can create the pupils' lines and dialogues beforehand or ask them to create sentences on the spot. Depending on the vocabulary the pupils are familiar with or you want to teach, you can also set up many different kinds of stores and use many different kinds of vocabulary, not just food items (for example a hardware store and a toy store). In addition, you can suggest that the pupils ask for different kinds of items in more detail such as stating how many items they want, and describing them with adjectives (for example: I want two big apples). The activity can also be done in pairs. This activity and the after the activity task also provide great opportunities for (peer and teacher) feedback and (teacher and self) assessment purposes.

UNIT 2
SENTENCE STRESS AND SPEECH RHYTHM

Goals of the unit: learning about the rhythm and sentence stress of English and about the differences of Finnish and English sentence stress and rhythm; learning about stress-timed languages; learning about content words and prominence, contrastive stress, and new information stress.

Theme vocabulary: animals

Information for teachers: In sentences some words are stressed more than others: the stressed ones indicate the most important words of the utterance and create the rhythm of English. Similarly to primary stress in words, each thought group has one word that has one prominent word or syllable: this word is stressed the most. Prominence often occurs on the last word of a thought group. Some words are not stressed in sentences. The words that usually are stressed include content words (nouns, adjectives, numerals, notional verbs, adverbs, demonstrative, interrogative, indefinite pronouns and possessive pronouns functioning as nouns), whereas auxiliary and modal verbs, "to be", pronouns, articles, prepositions and conjunctions are unstressed (for example Tergujeff 2019: 170; Cai 2008: 63). In addition, new information is stressed. However, any word in a sentence can be stressed depending on the context; for instance, in the case of contrastive stress the elements being compared to one another are stressed more than usually (for example *It was UNDER the table, not ON the table*). Sentence stress is created similarly to word stress.

One function of sentence stress is also creating the rhythm of English – English is a stress-timed language. English rhythm also includes intonation and pauses, for example (Cai 2008). Finnish is not a stress-timed language but it is also not a fully syllable-timed language, instead it includes features from both (for example Suomi, Toivanen and Ylitalo 2008). Finnish rhythm is, however, quite different from English and Finnish pupils may emphasise every word thinking that it makes them sound more intelligible and comprehensible, even though that is not the case (Lin, Fan and Chen 1995: 5).

ACTIVITY 1: Not only words but sentences too

> **Aims:** getting to know sentence stress and rhythm, listening discrimination, comparing sentence stress to word stress and using what the pupils already know as a starting point, building on top of existing knowledge, raising awareness
>
> **Preparation and materials needed:** the examples provided or your own example words and sentences
>
> **Estimated duration:** 15 minutes

Before the activity: sentence stress is created similarly to word stress, so you can remind the pupils of the different aspects of creating English stress. You can also demonstrate the importance of sentence stress by saying sentences in English without the usual stress pattern (instead devote the same amount of time to each word, no word gets extra emphasis et cetera) and then say the sentences as you normally would. Ask the pupils which one sounds more natural. This suggestion is from Beare (2018). You can also try to speak English with Finnish rhythm and/or vice versa.

You can say, for example, these sentences without the normal stress pattern of English (every word is said with the same amount of time and you can also lose the intonation contour that accompanies stress and rhythm (stressed words are said with a higher pitch, for example)):

What do you mean?

I have a dog.

My dog can run very fast.

Activity: In this activity (adapted from Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996) you can drill for example the following sentences or phrases that have similar stress patterns as some words. You can drill all the sentences in one category one after the other and clap in time to the sentence stress and rhythm.

For example:

● •   • ●   ● • ●

● •	• ●	● • ●
APple	enJOY	afterNOON
THAnk you.	Let's EAT	I can SWIM.
DON'T run.	I'm SAD.	It is HOT.
HELP me.	He RUNS.	He is OLD.

• ● •	• • ● •
poTAto	avoCAdo
I SEE you.	I like APPles.
I'm HUNgry.	We have PARrots.
I'm RUNning.	Rats are TIny.

After the activity: This activity can be used to assess whether the pupils hear the stress pattern of sentences or not. You can use the same idea to teach word stress too, but in this case say sentences in English and ask the pupils to clap or hum, or use nonsense syllables (such as laLAla, daDAda, or saSAsa) to repeat the rhythm or the stress pattern of the sentence. This way the pupils become more familiar with the stress patterns without having to focus on words and meaning, and the teacher can get some feedback on how well the pupils are able to perceive the stress pattern. Some example sentences with a neutral stress pattern are presented here, but you can also use other sentences, for example from the textbook that you use in class. You can also use authentic audio or video clips – the pupils do not necessarily even have to understand what the speakers say, although if it is entirely impossible it may be frustrating. You can show how the sentences are written, and remember to provide the correct patterns as well. You can say the longer sentences in two or more parts, if needed. You can also say the sentences in Finnish to compare the rhythms of the two languages, and choose whether you use your own dialect or not when saying the sentences in Finnish. You can point out that the contrast between stressed and unstressed syllables is greater in English.

The CATS are in the KITCHen. (for example: da DAA da da da DAA da) vs. Kissat ovat keittiössä.

do you HAVE any CATS or DOGS? vs. Onko sinulla kissoja tai koiria?

I DON'T have CATS or DOGS but I have a HORSE vs. Minulla ei ole kissoja tai koiria, mutta minulla on hevonen.

I DON'T have any PETS. vs. Minulla ei ole lemmikkejä.

My LIZards are GREEN and very OLD. vs. Liskoni ovat vihreitä ja todella vanhoja.

💡 You can use sentences from the textbook or authentic materials, you can also have a discussion on how different the rhythms of the languages sound.

ACTIVITY 2: Content words

> **Aims:** information about content words, and unstressed versus stressed words, listening discrimination, raising awareness, practising receptive and productive skills regarding sentence stress
>
> **Preparation and materials needed:** example sentences
>
> **Estimated duration:** 20 minutes

Before the activity: inform the pupils about content and function words, meaning the words that are usually stressed and unstressed in sentences, and about prominence: one word in each thought group has one prominent word that is stressed the most. This prominent word often occurs at the end of thought groups, it is usually the last content word of the thought group (Muller Levis and Levis 2020).

Information on content words:

- ❖ the words that carry the most meaning, such as main verbs, nouns, adjectives, are content words, and they are stressed.
- ❖ Function or structure words are not stressed. These words include for example prepositions, articles, the verb "be" and personal pronouns.

You can give examples of the different types of words in both English and Finnish (for example: personal pronouns: my / minun; main verbs: run / juosta et cetera).

One way to demonstrate why content words are stressed is saying only the stressed words, and/or only the unstressed words of a sentence (Purland Training n.d.). In which case is it easier to guess the meaning of the sentence? After you reveal the whole sentence, the pupils could try to identify the prominent word, which in the examples has been bolded. You can say for example:

1. want buy purple parrot

    (I to a)

    I want to buy a purple **parrot**.

2. How old cat?

(is your)

How old is your **cat**?

3. Dog poodle

(My is a)

My dog is a **poodle**.

4.   Parrot can't talk

(Your)

Your parrot can't **talk**.

You can then drill the sentences with the pupils by exaggerating the stressed syllables and almost mumbling the unstressed ones. Explain that content words are usually stressed, because they include the most information.

Activity: As listening discrimination practise ask the pupils to first identify the stressed words in sentences that you say. After some examples the pupils can practise in pairs.

You can for example write these two sentences on the smart screen or blackboard:

My favourite **animal** is the **DOG**.

My **grand**parents have **two BIRDS**, the birds are **YELLOW**.

Say the sentences and ask the pupils to identify a) the prominent words and b) all of the stressed words (or syllables) in them. You can say more sentences if the pupils need more practice.

After this the pupils can practise producing and hearing sentence stress and prominence in pairs. The pupils are given two sets of sentences: in one of them the stress and prominence have been marked and in the other not. Each pupil should read aloud the ones that indicate sentence stress (the other pupil has the same sentences with no indications of sentence stress) and the other pupil should listen to which words the speaker stresses, and on which word/s prominence occurs, and for example underline and circle those words. They can ask the other person to repeat the sentence if it was not clear – point out that it is okay to overemphasise. This activity is also a great opportunity for peer feedback: how easy or difficult was it to hear the stressed words?

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Sentences for example (stressed words are **bolded** and prominence is indicated with CAPITAL letters. In this activity a differentiation between primary and secondary stresses is not made but you can do that or ask the pupils to identify them first if you want):

A)

I'm from **FINland**.	I am at the zoo.
I **don't like green APples**.	I can't see your black cat.
What colour is your **dog's TENnis ball**?	What is your hamster's name?
My **sister** has **three LIZ**ards.	You have a big fish tank.
Elephants are **BIG**, **rats** are **SMALL**.	I have two pets, a lizard and a snake.
How old is your **TORtoise**? He is **FIF**ty.	What is your kitten's name? Her name is Anna.

B)

I am at the **ZOO**.	I'm from Finland.
I **can't see** your **black CAT**.	I don't like green apples.
What is your **hamster's NAME**?	What colour is your dog's tennis ball?
You have a **big FISH tank**.	My sister has three lizards.
I have **two PETS**, a **LIZard** and a **SNAke**.	Elephants are big, rats are small.
What is your **kitten's NAME**? Her name is **ANNA**.	How old is your tortoise? He is fifty.

After the activity: This activity is adapted from Muller Levis and Levis (2020). Prominence often occurs on the last word of a sentence or thought group. Ask the pupils to create short, simple sentences with the help of pictures of animals, for example. Ask the pupils to pay attention to

stressing the final word, as in the sentences that they create prominence will most likely be on the last word. You can provide the pupils with some support, for example in the form of beginnings of sentences, such as:

The goat is…

(The) horses are…

The pig is…

Or the pupils can create their own sentences without additional support. You can either ask the pupils to create sentences one by one, or they can create them in pairs, for example.

ACTIVITY 3: Speech rhythm

> **Aims:** familiarising the pupils with stress timed English and its rhythm, comparing to Finnish
>
> **Preparation and materials needed:** for example pictures that represent the rhythms of English and Finnish, example sentences
>
> **Estimated duration:** 15 minutes

Before the activity: You can for example draw some stick figures of the same size walking and as a separate drawing create tall and short stick figures walking. You can also use items or pictures that represent the rhythms of English and Finnish languages. This idea of using pictures and/or concrete items instead of relying on abstract terms is inspired by Lin, Fan and Chen (1995). Explain what you want to communicate with the stick figure drawings or other visual material that you are using: they represent the rhythms of syllable-timed and stress-timed languages. Finnish is not completely suitable to either category, but the drawing representing the syllable-timed rhythm can still help them understand the differences of Finnish and English, as Finnish also has elements of syllable-timed languages. You can also say some example sentences to demonstrate how the rhythms and drawings are related to each other.

Example sentences:

Koirilla on neljä jalkaa / ja ne osaavat haukkua.

DOGS have **four LEGS** / and they can **BARK**.

Activity: This controlled drilling activity is made more engaging by adding movement to it. Drill for example the following sentences, but similarly to the drawings in *before the activity*: march when you say the Finnish sentences, and run or take tiny steps to represent unstressed words, and take big steps or leap or jump to represent stressed words when speaking English. If this is not possible or suitable for the particular group of learners, you can also use rubber bands, clapping, thumping or some other way to visually and/or kinaesthetically represent the rhythm. These movements will also aid the pupils to remember the different natures of Finnish and English rhythm.

You can read for example the following paragraphs sentence by sentence, and march or run and leap (the prominent word of each suggested thought group has been written in bold capital letters and other stressed words in bold letters). You and the pupils can first think about the rhythm as nonsense syllables (such as taTAAtataTAA or daDAAdadaDAA) if it helps them find the stress, beat, and rhythm of the sentences.

I **live** on a **FARM**. / **We** have **many ANImals**. / We have **two COWS /** and their **NAMES /** are **Lily** and **Rose**. / We have **CHICKens too**, / they can **RUN /** but they **can't FLY** . / We have **three POnies /** and a **big HORse**. / My **fav**ourite **ANImal /** is our **DOG**.

Minä asun maatilalla. Meillä on paljon eläimiä. Meillä on kaksi lehmää ja heidän nimensä ovat Lily ja Rose. Meillä on myös kanoja, ne osaavat juosta, mutta ne eivät osaa lentää. Meillä on kolme ponia ja iso hevonen. Minun lempieläimeni on meidän koiramme.

After the activity: This activity demonstrates the fact that even if (many) unstressed words are added in between the stressed ones, the rhythm and the beat stay the same.

Chant for example the following phrases and keep the beat and rhythm the same even when you add unstressed words in between the stressed ones. Start by introducing the first line quite slowly and then ask your pupils to say it with you. Then move on to the second version of it, by keeping the beat from the first line; you can introduce it first, before the pupils join you. Say the rest of the lines similarly. You can also drum the desks, clap, or jump in time to the rhythm of the utterances. This activity has been adapted from Yevmenov (2003).

We have…

1. **Cats dogs rats snakes**

2. **Cats** and **dogs** and **rats** and **snakes**

3. Some **cats** some **dogs** some **rats** some **snakes**

4. Some **cats** and some **dogs** and some **rats** and some **snakes**

5. Some **cats** and then some **dogs** and then some **rats** and then some **snakes**

At the farm I want to see….

1. **Cows goats pigs hens**

2. **Cows** and **goats** and **pigs** and **hens**

3. Some **cows** some **goats** some **pigs** some **hens**

4. Some **cows** and some **goats** and some **pigs** and some **hens**

5. Some **cows** and then some **goats** and then some **pigs** and then some **hens**

Instead of the drawings or pictures you can also use, for example, musical notes (half notes, quarter notes et cetera) to represent the different lengths of syllables and the beat and rhythm of (word and) sentence stress and rhythm.

ACTIVITY 4: Nursery rhymes and songs

> **Aims:** getting a better feeling of English rhythm of speech, listening discrimination, finding content words.
>
> **Preparation and materials needed:** a nursery rhyme, a poem, or a song, for example.
>
> **Estimated duration:** 20 minutes

Before the activity: familiarise the pupils with the vocabulary of the rhyme to make sure they understand it, and listen to it. If you want you can also attach a listening comprehension or discrimination activity as a warm up task. For example: ask the pupils to listen and add missing words to lyrics that you have printed out or ask them to underline what they think are the content words, meaning the stressed words, or ask them to divide the lyrics into thought groups before listening to it or during/after listening to it.

Activity: For example nursery rhymes and songs can be effective, authentic, and memorable sources for getting a feeling of English rhythm and sentence stress (for instance Millington 2011, who has also inspired this activity). You can listen to the same nursery rhyme or song multiple times. The first time the pupils listen to it they can focus on hearing and finding the beat; you can for example ask the pupils to underline the stressed words from the lyrics. Then you can clap, or walk and jump in time to the rhythm and beat of the rhyme or song. You can also try singing the rhyme or song. One example is provided below, and you can also find this nursery rhyme as a song from, for example, YouTube.

Five little monkeys

Five little monkeys jumping on the bed,

One fell off and bumped his head.

Mama called the Doctor and the Doctor said,

"No more monkeys jumping on the bed!'.

Four little monkeys jumping on the bed,

One fell off and bumped her head.

Papa called the Doctor and the Doctor said,

"No more monkeys jumping on the bed!'.

Three little monkeys jumping on the bed,

One fell off and bumped his head.

Mama called the Doctor and the Doctor said,

"No more monkeys jumping on the bed!'.

Two little monkeys jumping on the bed,

One fell off and bumped her head.

Papa called the Doctor and the Doctor said,

"No more monkeys jumping on the bed!'.

One little monkey jumping on the bed,

He fell off and bumped his head.

Mama called the Doctor and the Doctor said,

"Put those monkeys straight to bed!'.

The same lyrics but the stressed syllables have been written in bold letters:

Five little **mon**keys **jumpi**ng on the **bed**,

One fell **off** and **bumped** his **head**.

Mama called the **Doc**tor and the **Doc**tor **said**,

"**No** more **mon**keys **jump**ing on the **bed!**".

Four little **mon**keys **jump**ing on the **bed**,

One fell **off** and **bump**ed her **head**.

Papa called the **Doc**tor and the **Doc**tor **said**,

"**No** more **mon**keys **jump**ing on the **bed!**".

Three little **mon**keys **jump**ing on the **bed**,

One fell **off** and **bump**ed his **head**.

Mama called the **Doc**tor and the **Doc**tor **said**,

"**No** more **mon**keys **jump**ing on the **bed!**".

Two little **mon**keys **jump**ing on the **bed**,

One fell **off** and **bump**ed her **head**.

Papa called the **Doc**tor and the **Doc**tor **said**,

"**No** more **mon**keys **jump**ing on the **bed!**".

One little **mon**key **jump**ing on the **bed**,

He fell **off** and **bump**ed his **head**.

Mama called the **Doc**tor and the **Doc**tor **said**,

"**Put** those **mon**keys **straight** to **bed!**".

After the activity: as a follow-up you could try attaching the beat and rhythm of the poem, song, or nursery rhyme to everyday spoken English, which is suggested by Wei (2006). You can start by saying the lyrics instead of singing them, and then to take this task a step further you can show that rhythm is not only evident in rhymes but in everyday spoken language as well. You could practise for example the following sentences that follow the same rhythm and stress pattern as the rhyme. In addition, you can have a discussion on what kinds of words fall on the beat of the song.

Five little **mon**keys **jump**ing on the **bed**

I have a tortoise, lizards and a cat.

Bears are big and bugs are very small.

One fell **off** and **bump**ed his **head**

Bats are black and pigs are pink.

Rats can run but not very fast

Mama called the **Doc**tor and the **Doc**tor **said**

Elephants are giant and their trunks are long.

Rabbits have been jumping in our flower bed.

"**No** more **mon**keys **jump**ing on the **bed**!'.

Why do people buy so many pets?

Sam has kittens, puppies and a cat.

ACTIVITY 5: Can versus can't

> **Aims:** learning that auxiliary verbs are usually not stressed but their negative forms are
>
> **Preparation and materials needed:** for example a chant in which can and can't are present
>
> **Estimated duration:** 20 minutes

Before the activity: This activity demonstrates that modal and auxiliary verbs, in this case *can*, are not stressed but their negative forms usually are. In order for the pupils to be able to do this activity make sure that they understand the chant and can create sentences with the verb *can/can't*. They can also first find all of the occurrences of *can* and *can't* from the chant, and for example underline and circle them, and when listening to the chant they can try to think about what is different regarding the pronunciation and stressing of them.

Activity: learn the chant and pay attention to the stress. In this example from the British Council (link: I can-chant, but the rhyme can also be found below) many stressed words are emphasised already. The pupils can first listen to the chant and identify the words that are stressed. Then practise the rhyme together: you could highlight the fact that *can* is not stressed by emphasising the verbs: you can mumble the verb *can* and emphasise the main verb by, for example, pretending that you are doing what is mentioned in the chant (such as drawing or painting), or jump every time a word is stressed. In the sentences that contain *can't* emphasise the negative form instead: jump, cross your arms to create an X, and/or shake your head when *can't* is said, for example. You can use the chant as a text or also listen to it on the website, if possible.

Transcript:	Transcript with stressed words in bold letters:
I can paint and I can draw	I can **paint** and I can **draw**
I can dance and I can sing	I can **dance** and I can **sing**
I can speak a little English	I can **speak** a little **Eng**lish
But my cat can't do these things.	But my **cat can't** do these **things**.
He can sleep and he can eat	He can **sleep** and he can **eat**
He can go out every night	He can go **out** every **night**
But he can't do my homework	But he **can't** do my **home**work
Because he can't read or write.	Because he **can't read** or **write**.

After the activity: As a follow-up activity pupils can make their own chant or regular sentences about what they, or for example different animals, can and cannot do. Ask them to share their sentences with their classmates, paying extra attention to sentence stress (*can* is not stressed, *can't* is stressed). You can use pictures, or the following words as help, or use verbs that the pupils are already familiar with or currently practising, if you want to. For example:

Dogs	Elephants			swim
Cats	Camels			jump
Rats	Giraffes			sing
Horses	Sharks	can		fly
Parrots	Monkeys	**can't**		speak
Penguins	Rabbits			run
Lions	Birds			dive
				climb trees

In addition, you can practise the answer "Yes, I can / No, I can't" or "Yes, it can / No, it can't", as in these types of answers both can and can't are stressed. The pupils could ask each other questions and the other person should answer with Yes, I can. / Yes, it can, or No, I can't / No, it can't, stressing the verb *can* in both cases. You can use the same words as inspiration and have your pupils ask each other whether they, or different animals for example, can or cannot do something.

Can	dogs cats rats horses parrots penguins lions	elephants camels giraffes sharks monkeys rabbits birds	swim jump sing fly speak ? run dive climb trees

You can use an easier or more difficult song, nursery rhyme, or chant or one that has a different theme. The pupils can also modify the chant and/or create their own one, if you want the task to be more challenging. If you want more focus on the verbs, you can ask the pupils to fill them in first, with the help of picture clues for example. To make the pupils' own sentences more difficult you can only provide them with pictures or no clues as inspiration.

ACTIVITY 6: Contrastive stress

> **Aims:** learning about contrastive stress, practising receptive and productive skills
>
> **Preparation and materials needed:** example sentences, pictures of animals for example, statements with incorrect information
>
> **Estimated duration:** 20 minutes

Before the activity: contrastive stress is extra stress, and it is used when one wants to "call attention to explicit comparisons, to correct misinformation, or to imply connections to semantic categories that are not expressed" (Muller Levis and Levis 2020: 318).

Start by introducing contrastive stress to pupils (as suggested by Muller Levis and Levis 2020): point out that when, for example, two things are being contrasted and/or compared, the words referring to them are said with extra stress. You can demonstrate this with the help of the following sentences, for example:

I don't like **YOUR** dog, I like **MY** dog.

Which do you like better - **CATS** or **DOGS**?

I like my **DOG** but I don't like my **CAT**.

I like our dog but my **SISTER** doesn't like him.

Activity: This activity is recommended by Muller Levis and Levis (2020). Practise creating contrastive stress with the help of pictures of animals, for example. Ask the pupils (either one by one or in pairs, for example) to create sentences in which they compare two things. The pupils can for example compare the sizes and colours of different animals. You can give them added support by providing some examples and/or beginnings of sentences, or the pupils can create their own sentences. Remind them to emphasise and stress the words that they are comparing.

Examples of sentences that can support your pupils:

The **horse** is _____ (BROWN) and the **sheep** is _____ (WHITE).

The **cow** is _____ (BIG) and the **goat** is _____ (SMALL).

The **big** animal is _____ (a COW) and the **small** animal is _____ (a GOAT).

After the activity: Contrastive stress is also used to correct information, for instance. This you can practise by showing the pupils, for example, the following statements (on the next page) that contain false information. One pupil reads the sentence and their partner answers with the correct information by stressing it, for example: "The Finnish flag is blue and yellow." "No, the Finnish flag is blue and **WHITE**". The suggested answers are only some possibilities of the right answers and the pupils may answer differently.

You can read the sentences and the right answers together once the pupils have answered them first, and for example jump when you say the stressed word that corrects the information, in order to really emphasise the stress pattern.

The sentences can be easier or more difficult, you can combine information from other disciplines or school subjects as well. The pupils can also come up with their own sentences or you can personalise the sentences in the activities, for example create questions about the pupils in your class, about your school, about the city or town you live in, about the pupils' interests et cetera.

A puppy is a young cat.	No, a puppy is a young DOG.
Cows live in the jungle.	No, cows live on FARMS.
Pigs can fly.	No, Pigs CAN'T fly.
Elephants are small.	No, elephants are BIG.
Snakes have legs.	No, snakes DON'T/do NOT have legs.
Kangaroos live in Finland.	No, kangaroos live in AUSTRALIA.
Tigers are pink and black.	No, tigers are ORANGE and black.
Crocodiles have small mouths.	No, crocodiles have BIG mouths.
Sharks live in trees.	No, sharks live in WATER.
Zebras are black.	No, zebras are black AND white.

ACTIVITY 7: New information

> **<u>Aims:</u>** learning that new information is usually stressed, practising bot receptive and productive pronunciation skills; combining and practising different skills covered in this material package
>
> **<u>Preparation and materials needed:</u>** example sentences, a dialogue
>
> **<u>Estimated duration:</u>** depends on how you execute the activities, 20-45 minutes

Before the activity: new information is also usually stressed – for example when one asks you a question, (especially one that starts with *wh*-question words such as *when*, *why*, *where* et cetera) the information that answers the question will be stressed. Often this information and, thus, stress is located at the end of a sentence (Muller Levis and Levis 2020). To inform your pupils about this you can start by saying a sentence and then adding new information (new details to it) and pointing out that as they already know the old information, it does not have to be stressed, instead, what is interesting and important to highlight is the new information which will be stressed.

I have a **sister**. My sister is **twelve** years old.

Where do you **live**? I live in **Finland**.

Activity: practise stressing new information with the help of a dialogue, during which one person interviews the other. This activity also combines other information learnt during the activities in this material package.

The example dialogue and context provided is a discussion that the pupils could have if they were visiting a zoo with someone, for example with a distant English-speaking relative. You can also create your own dialogue, or the pupils can create their own dialogues or plays. If the pupils create their own dialogues you can ask them to think about what kinds of questions a distant relative would actually ask them. The pupils can simply read the dialogue but turning this activity into a drama activity is encouraged as drama can be an effective teaching method to teach prosody. In case you

treat this as a drama activity the pupils can videotape the scene or act and perform it to the rest of the class.

In the example dialogue a distant relative (played by a pupil) asks another pupil questions about their life. You can also add multiple roles if you create the situation yourself. Some suggestions if you want to create your own dialogue or if the pupils create their own ones:

- ❖ The relative could be very interested in the pupil's life and what they have been up to by asking questions about their life, in order to practise stressing new information (For example: How old are you? What's your favourite subject at school?)
- ❖ The relative could ask the pupil choice questions to practise sentence stress and contrastive stress, and the pupil should answer by stressing the option they want (to practice word stress and contrastive stress) (for example: Do you want to see the **monkeys** or the **penguins** first? I want to see the **penguins** first.)
- ❖ The relative may be hard of hearing, so the other pupil should stress the content words very clearly. In addition, the relative might mishear something and the pupil has to correct them.
- ❖ The relative could remember some things incorrectly (to practise word and sentence stress and contrastive stress by correcting information) (for example: Do you play football? No, I play **BAS**ketball).
- ❖ You could include the verbs *can* and *can't* in some sentences.
- ❖ You can also add comparing and contrasting two aspects to practise contrastive stress (for example: **That** penguin is **big** and the **other one** is **small**).

An example of a dialogue:

At the zoo

-Hey Peter! How old are you now?

-Hi! I'm nine (years old).

-Wow, I'm fifty! You are so young and I am so old! Do you have any hobbies?

-Yes, I play basketball and football.

-What's your favourite subject at school?

-My favourite subject is English.

-Swedish? Sorry, my hearing is not so good.

-No, English.

-Oh I see! What's your favourite animal?

-My favourite animal is the dog.

-Lovely! And you have a dog, right?

-No, we have a cat.

-Right. Well, what do you want to see first, monkeys or penguins?

-I want to see the penguins first! Can they fly?

-No, they can't. But they can swim! Let's go see them!

-Wow, that small penguin is cute! But that big penguin looks scary!

After the activity: You can add assessment, evaluation and feedback, from you and from peers, to this activity, and the pupils can also do some self-evaluation. Could they hear the stresses that the others produced clearly? Did they sound like they were speaking Finnish with English words or did their rhythm resemble English rhythm of speech? Whose play or scene was the best? Would the pupils have been able to perform the plays this well before practising word and sentence stress and speech rhythm? et cetera.

You can treat the example dialogue as a warm up task by asking the pupils to identify stressed words in it before they practise the dialogue. You can also use a dialogue or text from your English textbook, and as a warm up task you can ask the pupils to identify the stressed words in it before practising and performing it. The chosen dialogue can also be read to an application that can change the pupil's voice (called talking-head applications or websites), especially if the pupils are feeling self-conscious and shy. You could also utilise, for instance, a fairy tale, children's television show, or other authentic source as the story that the pupils act and perform.

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