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## List of Abbreviations

AHS	Allgemeinbildende Höhere Schulen (Higher School of General Education)
BK	Activating background knowledge about the topic of the text
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference
CLT	Communicative language teaching
CW	Command words
EFL	English as a foreign language
EiC	English in Context
EIL	English as an international language
EV	Evaluating the text
FL	Foreign language
GF	Gap filling
I	Insights
L	Becoming familiar with some of the language in the text
LC	Language consolidation
LF	Language focus
L1	First language
L2	Second language
MC	Multiple choice
MM	Multiple Matching

O	Other
OT	On Track
P	Producing some longer output
PR	Eliciting a personal response (agree/ disagree, like/ dislike, etc.)
P&H	Predicting and hypothesising about the content of the text
PR& O	Eliciting a personal response or opinion on the text
PT	Prime Time
QE	Questions with Open answers in English (L2)
QFIN	Questions with Open answers in Finnish (L1)
S	Sequencing
SA	Short answers
SF	Strategy focus
TFJ	True or false with justification
TFNG	True or false or not given
TFC	True or false with correction
Trans	Translating
U	Checking understanding of the text

# 1. Introduction

English plays a vital role in today's world and is often considered the lingua franca, the language used for "communication between those who do not share a mother tongue" (Seargeant 2016: 18) and thus used for international communication. In most western civilisations, English as a second language is taught from an early age and is often the, or one of the first, foreign languages learnt. The teaching methods and materials used in the English classroom form an important part of the language acquisition process and significantly shape the learning of the pupils, helping them to acquire skills and the language system to be able to understand and use English in every day life.

This thesis investigates the similarities and differences between English textbooks used in the last two years before the matriculation examination in upper secondary schools in Austria and in Finland. Textbooks are part of almost every foreign language class nowadays as they greatly facilitate the planning of the lessons for the teacher. Moreover, textbooks frequently constitute the main source of material and the backbone of lesson plans. For this reason, it seems crucial to explore different textbooks in depth in order to identify strengths and possible weaknesses. In this study, reading comprehension tasks, including the pre-, while- and post-reading exercises, are analysed in detail. Reading is considered a vital skill in today's society, particularly for those pupils wishing to pursue higher education. As English is considered an international language, good reading skills in English will likely be needed by the target group in their future life.

First, the theoretical part outlines important concepts related to reading in language teaching, such as communicative competence and literacy. Then, the theoretical background of reading is highlighted, which is followed by a short outline of the role of textbooks and textbook analysis. In the second part, the methodology used in this study is explained in detail. This includes the presentation of the research questions, which are defined as follows:

- *To what extent do the textbooks under analysis offer a proportionate number of activities related to the four skills and the language system? Which role is attributed to texts and reading exercises in the textbooks?*
- *In how far do the textbooks employ the three stages of reading comprehension (pre-/ while/ post-reading)? Which skills are needed to do these accompanying exercises? What is the aim of these exercises?*
- *To what extent is there a variety of different question types? To which degree do the post-reading questions make the students use higher-order thinking skills?*

The study is based on McGrath's approach on materials evaluation (2016) and consists of four stages: a context-and-needs analysis, the impressionistic method, the checklist method and the in-depth method. The findings section presents the obtained data in a systematic fashion and answers the research questions mentioned above. The discussion includes the most important and interesting similarities and differences between the textbooks as well as a section on limitations, implications for teaching and further research.

## **2. The communicative classroom: the four skills**

The communicative approach is nowadays seen as the dominant language teaching approach in the Western world, which means that the focus of teaching a foreign language (FL) should be on developing the students' ability to communicate effectively in the foreign language. According to Canale (1983: 14-17), it is important that students not only possess knowledge of a language system, but also the skills in using this knowledge. Therefore, knowledge-oriented as well as skill-oriented activities are crucial and the right amount of such activities varies depending on different learner needs. The communicative approach includes all modes of language use, including oral and written modes as well as production and comprehension skills (Canale & Swain 1980: 29).

There are four components of communicative competence, namely grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic and discourse competence (Canale 1983: 6). Grammatical competence refers to the knowledge of phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and orthography of the FL (Canale & Swain 1980: 29; Canale 1983: 6). Sociolinguistic competence "addresses the extent to which utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts" (Canale 1983: 6). Strategic competence is necessary when the communication is about to break down. Thus, this competence includes knowing strategies such as paraphrasing, or making use of other ways of appealing for help (Canale & Swain 1980: 30). Discourse competence "concerns mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different genres" (Canale 1983: 6). In Canale and Swain's (1980: 5) view, all these competences are equally important to successful communication and an integrated approach of all types of knowledge needs to be taken. Thus, grammatical competence is not seen more or less important than any of the other competence areas (Canale 1983: 18). Moreover, authentic and realistic communicative situations are to be favoured in a language teaching context to bring about "communicative confidence" (Canale & Swain 1980: 28).



Communicative language teaching (CLT) focuses on the four skills, which need to be taught and practised in a foreign language classroom according to the current consensus on foreign language teaching. These are reading, listening, writing and speaking. Reading together with listening are considered passive or receptive skills whilst writing and speaking are productive in nature as the students need to actively produce some output in the foreign language, either in written or oral form. However, it must be mentioned at this point that the receptive skills mentioned above do require active meaning making processes. Reading is considered an interactive process as “both reader and writer depend on one another” (Nuttall 2005: 11). These four skills are needed for complete communication in any language – in one’s first language (L1) as well as in foreign languages (FL). Hence, the challenge of most language teaching is the relatively balanced teaching of these four skills in the foreign language. However, depending on the social, cultural, economic and political contexts, a highly focused approach on only some skills may be adopted as students have different learning goals (Hinkel 2006: 111). ESL students (English as second language) may prioritise speaking as they will encounter and need it much more than perhaps writing. However, in this study, the premise is taken that the students need to be able to use all four skills in a fairly balanced manner as all of them are important language skills required for any type of communication.

### **3. Literacy and writing systems**

The term *literacy* is closely tied to reading and writing. In order to be able to read – which will be defined at a later stage – orthography, the system of spelling in a language, needs to be acquired even in one’s native language. Everything else, such as for instance phonology, morphology and syntax, seems to come naturally to native speakers (Bardakci & Akpinar 2014: 136). Therefore, the symbols for representing language, which are culturally dependent and may thus vary around the globe, must be acquired through specific instruction (Birch 2007:22).

The alphabetic writing system, to which English, Finnish and German belong, formulates that one abstract symbol stands for one sound of a language. These symbols can be put together to create words (Birch 2007: 22). There are also sub-categories in this branch, splitting the alphabetic writing system into languages with a shallow (or transparent) orthography and those with a deep (or opaque) orthography (Grabe 2009: 114; Perfetti & Harris 2017: 353). The former, which includes languages such as Italian, Hungarian, Finnish and partly German, signifies that the connection between the writing system, the grapheme, and the sound system, the phoneme, is transparent. This means, in layman’s terms, that the languages are read as they

are written with only some minor exceptions. In the opaque writing systems, the relation between writing and sound system is not one-to-one. This is, for instance, the case with Russian, French and English (Birch 2007: 24). However, languages are commonly placed on a continuum of orthographic depth and are usually not considered as being completely transparent or completely opaque (Grabe 2009: 114). According to Birch (2007: 24), “English is usually considered the opaque writing system par excellence”. In fact, English is not always in line with the alphabetic principle even though it is considered to be part of the alphabetic writing system as some letters represent more than one sound (e.g. the letter *c* can be pronounced /k/ as in the word “*cold*” and /s/ as in the word “*city*”). These inconsistencies make English spelling difficult, which certainly has some impact when being confronted with reading in English. However, even though there are orthographic challenges, “its grapheme-phoneme inconsistencies are less severe than often implied”, according to Perfetti and Harris (2017: 363). There are predictable patterns, which can be learnt. In addition, “[w]hen one also takes into account that some grapheme-morpheme mappings are more common than others, additional predictability emerges” (Perfetti & Harris 2017: 365).

Second language literacy is the term used to refer to the ability to decode and read in a second language (Gunderson & D’Silva 2017: 275). As elaborated above, English orthography seems to be a bigger obstacle at the beginning, but as the beginning English-speaking readers or ESL/EFL pupils get accustomed to this writing system, these spelling problems slowly cease to drastically hinder the reading process (Birch 2007: 26). Those students whose first language varies greatly from the opaque English writing system need to work harder and develop additional strategies to cope with this challenging new writing system (Birch 2007: 42). It is often the case that the pupils manage to figure out the relationship between grapheme and phoneme in the target language, but have no comprehension of the L2 text. Thus, they can “decode” a text, but still lack the ability to read and understand the text (Gunderson & D’Silva 2017: 275).

Literacy is nowadays considered an important contributor to overall economic well-being in literate societies and often plays an important role in achieving success at the workplace (Al-Noursi 2014: 211). In literate societies, reading is part of our every-day-life and is often taken for granted. Any citizen is expected to be able to read, as for instance the process of voting and reading the names of the candidates requires us to read (Wallace 1992: 5). These cultures typically have huge respect for the printed word (Alderson 2005: 25). However, even in literate societies there are sub-groups of people and families who attribute great importance to books

and reading, whereas others do not own many books at home. Thus, some children grow up with a totally different view on reading and their “early experiences of literacy may be in conflict with those of the school and classroom community” (Wallace 1992: 21). In addition, Wallace (1992: 21) argues that the term literacies (i.e. the plural of literacy) should be used as people’s literacy likewise varies according to the text to be read. Thus, those pupils who struggle with the reading conducted at school may simply not be proficient in that particular literacy, which does not mean that they are not literate at all or literate enough as they may very well satisfy the demands of non-academic contexts.

As we enter the modern era, digital literacy or online literacy has come to play a crucial role in the Western world due to the introduction and rapid spread of new technologies and the ever increasing use of the internet (García-Martin et al. 2016: 45; Gunderson & D’Silva 2017: 281). The term online literacy focuses on the “skills needed to read, write, publish, and interact online” (Gunderson & D’Silva 2017: 281). The term digital literacy is much broader. Martin and Grudziecki (2006: 255) offer the following definition of this term:

Digital Literacy is the awareness, attitude and ability of individuals to appropriately use digital tools and facilitates to identify, access, manage, integrate, evaluate, analyse and synthesize digital resources, construct new knowledge, create media expressions and constructive social action; and to reflect upon this process.

Thus, Martin and Grudziecki (2006: 255) see digital literacy as encompassing numerous aspects, such as the appropriate use of digital tools in manifold ways as well as the construction of knowledge.

The European Commission published the DigComp 2.1, the Digital Competence Framework for Citizens, which is considered a tool to improve citizen’s digital competence. There are five competence areas, which are information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content creation, safety and problem solving (Carretero, Vuorikari, Punie 2017: 21). The promotion of digital competence in the classroom is relevant across all subjects. According to the European Commission (2018: 1), “[d]igital technology enriches learning in a variety of ways and offers learning opportunities, which must be accessible to all. It opens up access to wealth of information and resources”. Blended learning and e-learning can also enhance learning and make it more interesting (McGuinness & Fulton 2019: 5). In terms of reading digital texts as opposed to print texts, some pupils may find it difficult to read electronic or hypertexts. One consequence of the incorporation of digital text is intertextuality and text-reader interactivity (Newton 2016: 432).

## **4. Theory on reading**

After having talked about the importance of the acquisition of a writing system and the complex concept of literacy, the question arises what exactly it means to be able to read. This is especially important regarding the fostering of the reading skill in the foreign language classroom as it helps to be clear – to the teacher as well as to the pupils – what the ultimate aim of the reading lessons and tasks in the classroom is. Alderson (2005: 27) argues that there is “no one correct view of what reading is: many different views are possible, and perhaps indeed inevitable”. Hence, this section will offer various definitions of the concept of reading, discuss its complex nature and arrive at a common reference point. Moreover, two ways of looking at reading and what it is are presented and analysed.

### **4.1. Defining reading**

The literature on second language reading appears to agree that reading is about uncovering or constructing meaning in order to become a fluent reader in a second language. It is usually not considered enough to only recognise or decode written words very rapidly as reading is much more than that, even though decoding is an important aspect and first step of reading (Nuttall 2005: 2). Likewise, Koda (2016: 70) underlines the idea that reading equals to constructing “text meaning based on the linguistic information encoded in print”. Grabe & Stoller (2002: 9) offer a short one sentence-length definition of reading, which also stresses the need for interpretation and carving out the meaning of a text: “Reading is the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret this information appropriately”. They immediately, however, stress that this short definition does by no means fully explain or encompass the true and complex nature of reading. This is because this short definition does not, for instance, mention any of the various reading skills believed to be involved in reading. Nor does it “explain how reading is carried out as a cognitive process that operates under intense time constraints” (Grabe & Stoller 2002:10). Nuttall (2005:2-3) agrees with these definitions insofar that reading is essentially concerned with meaning, with the “transfer of meaning from mind to mind: the transfer of a message from writer to reader” (Nuttall 2005: 3).

In order to understand what a text means, it is necessary to construct meaning, as the idea of meaning residing in the text waiting to be uncovered is only partly true according to current research. It is believed that the act of reading is an active process and requires the reader to be fully involved (Kucer 2014: 290). The fact that a reader is not a tabula rasa but brings his/her own beliefs, expectations, hopes and so on to the text may have an impact on the reading and

how it is interpreted. For this reason, what readers understand from text varies, sometimes greatly and at other times not significantly. There is this idea of the writer's communicative intent or purpose which the reader tries to uncover and understand (Wallace 1992: 4). If the writer and the reader do not share any assumptions, then it may be difficult for the reader to arrive at the writer's intended meaning. In terms of reading in a foreign language, this means that the L2 reader may struggle to comprehend a text because the reader may be from a culturally different background and does not share any assumptions with the writer. Like an oral conversation, reading is considered an interactive process, involving both the reader and the writer or author as well as the text. The reader's purpose may be to try to unravel the author's original intentions, but it can also be to arrive at a personal interpretation of a text (Alderson 2005:6).

Reading is done in order to get something from the text – either knowledge, enjoyment, ideas, feelings or the like – which will also be the main understanding of reading that this thesis is built upon. Moreover, the reader's purpose for reading a text determines how he/she reads a text. Thus, the activity of reading is highly connected to the reader's purpose of reading a particular text (Grabe 2016: 304). Each person may have a different reason for reading the same text, which results in different reading strategies being used in order to achieve one's intent.

## **4.2. Process vs. Product**

It is very common to distinguish between the *process* of reading and the *product* of reading. The *process* approach emphasises the act of reading itself. It is about what happens when the reader reads the text; thus, the interaction between reader and text is in the foreground. It is, however, very difficult to tell what exactly is happening in the reader's brain as they read a text. Moreover, many factors may have an impact on this process and alter it significantly, e.g. different purpose for reading the text, different reader, same text but read at a different time. A common ground is that the process of reading is usually silent, internal and private (Alderson 2005: 4). Research has tried to gain an insight into this process by observing the reader's eye movements or via introspection and think-aloud protocols. Another way of examining this process is to look at the *product* of reading. This is done, in Alderson's words (2005: 4), in the belief that "although different readers may engage in very different reading processes, the understandings they end up with will be similar. [...] [W]hat matters is not *how* you reach that understanding, but *the fact that* you reach it, or to put it another way, what understanding you

do reach”. Looking at the product of reading means to measure text understanding, which may be done via test questions, summaries or interviews (Alderson 2005: 5). However, this is problematic as readers may interpret a text differently due to, for example, diverse previous knowledge as explained in the previous section. In addition, the method used to measure the product may be problematic as the assessment of reading is a highly complex topic on its own, requiring much research and refinement. To name one difficulty, simply the fact that some methods of testing may be unfamiliar to the students taking the test may alter the results and make them unreliable. This is referred to as the test-method effect and for this reason training in the test format and method of testing is often practised regularly especially before high stake tests (Alderson 2005: 7). Assessment is further explored in chapter 5.5.

It is very important for the teacher to get a good grasp of the nature of the reading process as their perceptions of it directly influence their teaching and the way the students learn to read in a FL. Good readers are defined as follows by Al-Noursi (2014: 217):

Good readers usually read slowly, and reread often to grasp the writer’s message. They work hard to make the text comprehensible and consider their first reading as an approximation or, as it were, a rough draft. While they are reading, they interact with the text by asking questions, agreeing and disagreeing with its messages, and linking what they read to their life experiences.

Therefore, it is not helpful for the students to think they must read fast and receive this wrong image of a good reader being someone who can simply pronounce words correctly. Thus, to stop the decline of general reading abilities in most communities, it is essential that the teacher, but also the student and the text writer, gain a good and common understanding of the complex process of reading (Al-Noursi 2014: 229).

### **4.3. Reading sub-skills: skimming, scanning, inferencing**

Even though reading seen as a process is difficult to analyse, it has been theorised that reading consists of numerous reading skills and sub-skills - though this has been controversial. It is unclear whether separable skills exist, what they might consist of and how they might be classified. However, Alderson (2005:10) points out that “the notion of skills and subskills in reading is enormously pervasive and influential, despite the lack of clear empirical justification”. Therefore, many different lists of skills, and taxonomies have been created.

Grabe (2016: 299) mentions the following key component abilities, or skills: “Fluent reading comprehension involves abilities to recognize words rapidly and efficiently,

develop and use a very large recognition vocabulary, process sentences in order to build comprehension, engage a range of strategic processes and underlying cognitive skills (e.g. setting goals, changing goals flexibly, monitoring comprehension), [...], interpret and evaluate texts in line with reader goals and purposes [...]”. Alderson (2005:10) also identifies recognising the script of a language, understanding information when not explicitly stated, identifying the main point, skimming and scanning to locate specifically required information. In this section, the skills skimming and scanning as well as inferring meaning from the context will be discussed in greater detail.

*Skim reading*, or *skimming*, is used to get a global understanding of a text. The reader glances rapidly through the text by looking at headlines and first lines of paragraphs in order to determine the gist of the text at hand. This type of reading is performed, for instance, in order to quickly find out whether a text is worth reading, e.g. finding a relevant research paper or having a glance at different newspaper articles to determine which ones are worth a read (Nuttall 2005: 48-49).

*Scanning* is in some way similar to skimming, as it is also a rapid way of dealing with a text. The goal is to locate specific information in a text fast. This searching for information may involve looking for specific names or dates. Nuttall (2005: 49). stresses that scanning needs to be done quickly as it otherwise would not classify as such. When assigning a scanning task to students, it is important to highlight this by, for instance, giving time limits or setting up races (Nuttall 2005: 49).

Both of these skills are important techniques and especially skimming can be a first step to dealing with a more difficult text as it gives an overview and a rough idea of what the text may all be about (Nuttall 2005: 49). The choice between these two and other reading skills should be made based on the reading purpose. This flexibility is needed and characterizes a good reader. However, this needs to be practised as some students may find it odd to skip and ignore parts of a text if they do not contribute to fulfilling the reading purpose (Nuttall 2005: 48).

Being able to *infer meaning from the context* is often regarded as another reading sub-skill. Alderson (2005: 7) distinguishes between levels of understanding which range from literal understanding to understanding the main implications of a text. Inferencing from the context is often needed to deal with unknown vocabulary instead of consulting a dictionary (Nuttall 2005: 72).

#### **4.4. L1 vs. L2 reading**

L2 reading is in some areas quite different to L1 reading and poses new challenges to the students, which is why there has recently been more and more research appearing on L2 reading. When children learn to read in their native language, they usually already possess a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical features as they have been learning this language orally for several years already. It is believed that a six-year old starting to learn how to read in L1 knows about 6,000 words (Grabe & Stoller 2002: 43). However, when students start reading in the foreign language classroom, which is usually done right away, they do not have a good command of the language yet. L1 readers also possess some knowledge on discourse and text types in their mother tongue, which aids them in the act of reading, but which L2 readers may not have gained yet.

According to Grabe & Stoller (2002: 42), these linguistic and processing differences between L1 and L2 readers mentioned above are one area in which L2 reading comprehension processes and instruction differ from L1 reading. The other two important areas are labelled *individual and experiential* differences, and *socio-cultural and institutional* differences (Grabe & Stoller 2002: 42). The second area involves resources and experiences that influence L2 reading comprehension such as students' proficiency level in L1 literacy skills and their motivations towards L1 and L2 reading. Moreover, the use of bilingual dictionaries, glosses, translation and cultural background resources is also included in this point. Lastly, the larger cultural and social issues play a huge role as well and can influence reading development (Grabe & Stoller 2002: 42).

#### **4.5. Transfer issues**

The L2 students have had in most cases experiences in learning to read in the L1, which they can use to aid them with their L2 reading. It is believed that reading in a foreign language involves in fact two languages, which means that "L2 reading is crosslinguistic and, thus, inherently more complex than L1 reading" (Koda 2007: 1). The interplay of the two languages is crucial and may have a serious impact on L2 comprehension (Grabe & Stoller 2002: 54). This impact may be positive or negative, which Birch (2007: 27) states clearly: "L1 literacy can facilitate or interfere with L2 literacy". The term for this phenomenon in linguistics is called *transfer* or *cross-linguistic influence*, which means that some knowledge of one language (i.e. linguistic as for instance phonological, topical, problem-solving skills) may have a positive or negative effect on the acquisition of another language (Odlin & Yu 2016: 1).



Facilitation of reading comprehension is believed to take place when the second-language reader has reached a certain threshold, which is called the *Language Threshold Hypothesis* according to Alderson (1984: 20-21; Alderson 2005: 23). This hypothesis states that L2 readers must surpass this threshold by having enough knowledge of the L2 (i.e. vocabulary, grammar and discourse) before their L1 reading abilities can transfer to the L2 and aid in L2 reading situations (Grabe & Stoller 2007: 43). Thus, a good first-language reader is not immediately a good second-language reader as according to the *Language Threshold Hypothesis*, knowledge of the second language plays a more important role than L1 reading abilities up to a certain point (Grabe & Stoller 2007: 50). There is, however, not a clearly defined threshold as this threshold varies according to the text, topic and reader: “Because L2 readers are all different in their L2 knowledge, topic knowledge and L2 reading experiences, there is no one level of general language proficiency that counts as the threshold for all readers or for all texts” (Grabe & Stoller 2007: 51). When the students have crossed the threshold, they are said to have more cognitive resources available, which were previously used for figuring out unknown vocabulary and other new structures (Grabe & Stoller 2007: 51). It follows that the students need much exposure to reading in order to improve their vocabulary and passive knowledge of grammatical and discourse structures in order for the L1 reading skills to be able to transfer. A reading deficit should not be assumed immediately and the idea that poor L2 reading is mainly due to inadequate L1 reading is not supported by current research in this field (Alderson 2005: 24).

Grabe and Stoller (2002: 51) list some examples of positive transfer as they may be manifold, such as: “effective strategies for reading academic texts, appropriate purposes for reading, experiences with successful task completion, flexibility in monitoring comprehension and skills for analysing and learning new words”. Moreover, Grabe and Stoller (2002: 51) found that positive transfer speeds up reading development in the L2 if the students are guided by a teacher.

In this thesis, the L1 languages under analysis in the study are German and Finnish. As they, as well as English, belong to the alphabetic writing system, positive transfer may arise. Yet, there are big differences in terms of their orthographic transparency, as mentioned in *chapter 3* of this thesis. If the languages are both largely alphabetic, which is only the case with Finnish out of the three languages, then positive transfer is highly to be expected (Fraser et. al. 2016: 242). However, in this case, a positive transfer may be hampered by the fact that English, in comparison to Finnish or German, is challenging in terms of its spelling and pronunciation.

When students start reading in a foreign language, they usually tend to use some L1 processing. Yet, these influences decline when the L2 skills are more advanced (Grabe & Stoller 2007: 49). A greater focus on bottom-up reading skills may be highly beneficial in the beginning. Hinkel (2006: 120) states that “[t]he bottom-up processing of reading involves a broad array of distinct cognitive skills, such as word recognition, spelling and phonological processing, morphosyntactic parsing, and lexical recognition and access”. The use of both bottom-up and top-down skills, which will be explained in detail in the next chapter, is recommended (Hinkel 2006: 121).

German and English, which both belong to the Indo-European language family tree, share many cognates and vocabulary with each other; therefore, facilitating the learning of the L2 (Grabe & Stoller 2007: 50; Fraser et. al. 2016: 242). Cognates and shared vocabulary are very useful as they help with word recognition, fluency and overall success of reading comprehension (Grabe & Stoller 2007: 49). Finnish is part of the Uralic language family, same as for instance Estonian and Hungarian. Therefore, there are a smaller number of cognates and similarities in vocabulary as well as grammatical structures. Many Finns learn Swedish either as their first or second foreign language (usually right after English). This means that those who first learn Swedish, an Indo-European language which shares some similarities to English, may find it easier to acquire another Indo-European language at a later stage, namely English. Thus, if two languages are typologically similar, positive transfer may likely take place (Fraser et. al. 2016: 246).

#### **4.6. Bottom-up and top-down approach**

These two approaches are two ways of processing a text. The *bottom-up* as well as the *top-down* approach are both used when reading takes place. However, sometimes one approach dominates and at other times the other. When the students are faced with a difficult text, they can consciously choose to employ either approach to work out the meaning of a text. Thus, these normally unconscious processes may become conscious and a helpful tool for students reading a text (Nuttall 2005: 16).

As already briefly explained in the previous chapter, a reader using the bottom-up approach may look closely at individual letters and words first, and then look at the sentence structure (Nuttall 2005: 17). Thus, such a reader may understand one little area (e.g. a sentence in a text) well after having employed bottom-up processing skills. The top-down approach, on the other hand, is applied when the reader makes use of prior knowledge, common sense and their own

experiences in order to understand a text (Li & D'Angelo 2016: 160). The aim is to understand the overall purpose of a text.

It is important to understand that both approaches are invaluable and must be used in order to gain full and correct understanding of a text. It has been criticised when a teacher relies heavily on one approach only in his classroom as good readers are known to be skilful decoders and good text interpreters; thus, mastering both approaches (Al-Noursi 2014: 213). Interactive reading, or the interactive approach, is often used to refer to this complementary use of both types of processing skills. The interplay of these two approaches is more likely to accurately represent the reading process (Li & D'Angelo. 2016: 160). However, the interaction between the two approaches is still not fully understood by researchers. It seems that this varies depending on text, reader and purpose (Alderson 2005: 20). Birch acknowledges that “the bottom of the reading processor serves the top because the more efficiently and “quietly” the bottom functions, the more attention there will be for higher level processing of meaning, implications, outside references, and so on” (2007: 170).

#### **4.7. Variables that affect the nature of reading**

There are said to be two main groups of variables that affect the nature of reading: the first one contains factors within the reader, such as of linguistic nature, background, cultural and other types of knowledge as well as reader purpose, motivation, and interest. The second group is composed of factors tied to the text, such as text topic and content, literary or non-literary text and text readability (Alderson 2005: 33-84). In the following section, a few of these topics will be dealt with in greater detail.

##### **4.7.1. Formal and content schemata**

It is believed that the different types of knowledge that the readers possess have a large impact on how much the reader remembers from reading a text and also, much more importantly, how he/she interprets the text. Carrell (1983: 81-92) refers to all different types of knowledge that involve language as formal schemata, whereas the latter, involving world knowledge and subject matter of a text, are called content schemata. However, also background and cultural knowledge play an important role and form another sub-group of content schemata. This view of the different types of knowledge is also represented in the bottom-up and top-down approach, where the former focuses on linguistic cues and the latter more on world knowledge. According to Carrell and Eisterhold (1983: 560), “failure to activate an appropriate schema (formal or content) during reading results in various degrees of noncomprehension”.

Chihara et al. (1989) investigated the effects of culture and content on reading comprehension and found that by making small changes to two English texts to make them conform more to the expectations of Japanese readers (e.g. hugging instead of kissing), the students' performance was significantly increased. Thus, "minor differences in text in terms of their cultural location or content might have an important effect on reading comprehension during tests" (Alderson 2005: 105).

Alderson (2005: 43) states that it is not enough to possess knowledge as it is important that the reader activates the needed knowledge in order to make use of it. Studies have shown that the activation of pre-existing schemata has a profound effect on the comprehension of a text and the performance on a reading task. For this reason, previewing a text is a common strategy employed before reading a text. Chen and Graves (1995: 682) found that "previewing provides support for L2 students when dealing with unfamiliar selections, particularly selections reflecting unfamiliar cultural information. As students become better readers and increasingly familiar with the culture reflected in the non-native texts they encounter, previews generally become less necessary". A range of pre-reading activities in order to facilitate reading will be explored in the section on Pre-/While- and Post-reading strategies.

#### **4.7.2. Knowledge of the language: the importance of vocabulary**

As already discussed in the chapter dealing with language transfer from the first to the second language, the important role of vocabulary in L2 reading is undeniable. Especially in lower grades, the influence of vocabulary on L2 reading was found to be stronger whereas metacognitive knowledge tends to play a greater role at the higher grade level as well (Schoonen, Hulstijn & Bossers 1998: 89). In order to be a successful reader, the L2 reader needs to know about 98% of the words in the text (Hu & Nation 2000: 442). Otherwise comprehension and an inference of unknown words from the context is drastically hampered.

According to Nation (2013: 216) "meaning-focused input is essential for language learning", which is also stressed by Sonbul and Schmitt (2010: 258) who say that "direct teaching of word meanings in a reading passage is more effective than an uninstructed vocabulary learning approach". Thus, it seems to be not enough to hope for incidental learning to take place when reading, for instance, longer texts (see chapter "extensive reading"). Moreover, the students need to meet words numerous times so that they are learned from context alone. For this reason, many researchers believe that it is necessary to focus deliberately on the study of decontextualized words (Hinkel 2006: 122).

### **4.7.3. Topic knowledge and interest**

Knowledge of the topic of the text is known to facilitate the comprehension of the text. Thus, subject matter familiarity plays an important role when selecting texts for high-stake exams. Especially so, since it is also known that students might not always perform according to their abilities at exams due to pressure and anxiety issues. There have been studies which have shown that superior linguistic skills can compensate for lack of subject matter familiarity, as well as the other way around. Knowledge of the topic does not, however, mean that the students are also genuinely interested in the topic. Thus, topic knowledge and interest do not always correlate. Students in school are expected to read texts on a variety of topics and acquire a considerable amount of knowledge on them even if their interest in those topics is not strong (Carrell & Wise 1998: 297). Results of a study conducted on topic interest and knowledge confirm that high topic interest and topic knowledge lead to slightly better reading comprehension; however, this effect of high topic interest has been found to be greater on male readers. Thus, the factor of gender seems to play another role, which, however, will not be further investigated at this point. All in all, it can be confirmed that “comprehension may suffer most when students have both low prior knowledge and low interest in a given topic” (Carrell & Wise 1998: 302).

This chapter has thus explored the theory on reading in the first and second language. In the next chapter, a closer look at reading in the foreign language classroom will explore how reading exercises are commonly designed and why accompanying exercises to a text are invaluable. Moreover, assessment as well as standardised tests in reading will be discussed.

## **5. Reading in the foreign language classroom**

### **5.1. Why read in the L2 classroom**

Some students view reading in the L2 as something that is done for classroom purposes only, which is why it may seem that reading is often underrated or disliked by pupils (Nuttall 2005: 3). However, as a teacher it is fundamental to keep in mind that reading and the use of a variety of texts is an important means of improving one's language skills. According to Nuttall (2005:30), “[l]anguage improvement is a natural by-product of reading, and a highly desirable one”. However, she also stresses that students need to learn how to read for meaning, and texts should not only be seen as an opportunity to improve one's command of the language (Nuttall 2005: 30). In addition, the need for proper reading lessons is stressed, as texts should not only

be chosen for their linguistic value and the linguistic possibilities for which it may be exploited. Texts should also be chosen for reasons of information and entertainment, and not merely to teach language (Nuttall 2005: 30). Thus, in her view, it is vital to consider the meaning of the text of paramount importance, and any other language learning should be a bonus. If students do not understand the details of a text, then complete understanding is not given, which should always be the target unless otherwise stated (Nuttall 2005: 32). A focus on the meaning of a text and not only on the language used may motivate pupils much more as texts can be chosen based on topics of interest. Moreover, this kind of reading is much more comparable to reading outside the classroom and what the pupils would more likely do in their free time (Nuttall 2005: 32).

Nuttall (2005:31) defined the aim of a reading programme, which highlights the element of enjoyment and the level pupils should arrive at unaidedly. The aim is:

to enable students to enjoy (or at least feel comfortable with) reading in the foreign language, and to read without help unfamiliar authentic texts, at appropriate speed, silently and with adequate understanding.

The goal is thus to equip pupils with techniques for approaching other texts on their own with the strategies and skills they have learnt and found useful with other texts. (Nuttall 2005: 38). It is not humanly possible to go through every text with the students, yet it is possible to give them the tools so that they can understand texts of various kinds.

## **5.2. Intensive Reading**

In the FL classroom, *intensive reading* signifies a reading focused on “increasing learners’ knowledge of language features and their control of reading strategies” (Nation 2009: 25). A text chosen for an intensive reading task may focus on one of the following aspects: comprehension of a text, vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, information structure, genre features, strategies (e.g. guessing from context), regular and irregular sound-spelling relations (Nation 2009: 27). Through these intensive reading exercises, different reading strategies can be targeted and trained.

The idea behind intensive reading is to address features that are not only important to this one particular text under analysis, but to a range of different texts. Nation (2009: 26) advises the teacher to ask themselves the following question when devising an intensive reading exercise: “How does today’s teaching make tomorrow’s text easier?”. This is important as the goal is for the students to be able to read and comprehend texts independently. These intensive reading

exercises may take the form of a teacher-led sessions as well as exercises and questions accompanying the text (Nation 2009: 28).

### **5.3. Extensive Reading**

*Extensive reading* means “reading a lot of material continuously over an extended period of time” (Grabe 2016: 308). The following slogan (Nuttall 2005: 128) illustrates perfectly why *extensive reading* is beneficial to FL students: “The best way to improve your knowledge of a foreign language is to go and live among its speakers. The next best way is to read extensively in it.” Nuttall sees extensive reading as a way of significantly improving one’s language skills, especially when a prolonged stay in the target country is not feasible. Moreover, in order to become a good L2 reader, reading extensively is crucial: “[T]here is no way around the fact that students only become good readers by reading a lot (Grabe 2016: 308).

Extensive reading, as opposed to intensive reading, does not focus on exploring a particular linguistic feature in detail, but is focused on making sure that the students get as much exposure to the written language through longer readings in order to improve their command of the FL. The main goal for these extensive reading exercises is not only to use them as an educational tool, but to show students that reading can also be a source of enjoyment (Nuttall 2005: 127). Moreover, if the books contain very few new lexical and grammatical items, fluency improves significantly (Nation 2009: 49). This increased fluency may also contribute to an enhanced enjoyment of reading as it gets easier and faster. As it can be seen in this succinct elaboration of the benefits of extensive reading, there seems to be a cycle where one benefit leads to another and yet another. Nuttall (2005: 227) refers to this cycle as the *cycle of growth* or the cycle of the good reader. On the other hand, she also depicts the vicious cycle of the weak reader, which she also calls the *cycle of frustration*. If the students do not enjoy reading, then they do not usually read much, which leads to poor skills of reading comprehension and understanding, and which then leads to a reduction of reading speed. As reading gets somewhat tedious when it takes too long, it is often difficult to enjoy the reading. In order to avoid all of this, a reverse of this cycle is needed. Nuttall (2005: 130) stresses the importance of enjoyment as this is the cornerstone of successful extensive reading programs.

Extensive reading is praised for promoting implicit learning, which signifies that learning takes place on a subconscious level and through continual and multiple exposures to the input (Suk 2016: 74). In terms of vocabulary acquisition, this means that the students are exposed to a large variety of words and re-encounter previously learned words, which through exposure in

different contexts reinforces learning. Students also come across new words whose meaning they can guess from the context. Therefore, extensive reading is said to contribute to the consolidation and expansion of the lexicon (Suk 2016: 77). However, it has also been reported that words need to be repeated a considerable number of times until they are stored in the lexicon and that the frequency at which some rare words appear in texts may sometimes be insufficient to have a major impact on vocabulary acquisition and consolidation (Cheetham 2015: 3). The vocabulary gains can be lost again if the words are not repeatedly encountered (Nation 2009: 51). Moreover, as already elaborated in the section on the importance of vocabulary (4.7.2), some believe that direct teaching of vocabulary is necessary and that incidental vocabulary learning is more a feature of first language acquisition (Sonbul & Schmitt 2010: 258). Another drawback of extensive reading in the context of school is that some students may dislike tasks accompanying the reading as they may interrupt the reading flow and hence lose the joy of reading extensively (Alderson 2005: 28).

#### **5.4. Pre-/while-/post-reading exercises**

Even though reading outside of the language classroom is not accompanied by any questions or other forms of exercises, it is a common feature of classroom reading tasks to include pre-, while- and post-reading exercises. Pre-reading exercises precede the text, whilst while-reading exercises accompany it and post-reading exercises follow reading the text. These three main types of reading activity have the aim of supporting the students in their reading process. Some exercises may also activate schemata and, therefore, facilitate understanding of the text. On the other hand, some types of exercises lend themselves to be used as reading assessment tools, which will be discussed in the subsequent chapter. Most reading exercises created today contain these three different types of reading exercises (Wallace 1992: 86). In the following section, these different activities will be described in detail and ideas and examples will be shown.

##### **5.4.1. Pre-reading exercises**

As already stated, many pre-reading tasks aim to activate existing schemata prior to the reading process. This is done in the FL classroom because the non-native speaker may encounter unfamiliar words or cultural concepts (Madaoui 2013: 9-10). The intent of pre-reading exercises may be for the students to “become orientated to the context of the text, for example for what purpose was it originally produced?; tune in to the content of the text; establish a reason for reading; express an attitude about the topic, review their own experiences in relation



to the topic; activate existing cultural knowledge; and become familiar with some of the language in the text” (Hedge 2000: 210). Urquhart & Weir (1998: 183) name two important pre-reading strategies, namely previewing and prediction, which cover some of the aforementioned strategies. Previewing is largely used in order to gauge whether a text is worth reading. Prediction is about making assumptions about the content of the text and what the text might be about. Moreover, Wallace (1992: 92) states the pre-reading tasks also aim to help students select a reading strategy that is appropriate to the reading and the purpose of reading.

There are a number of different activities which the teacher can use in order to achieve one or more of the aims stated above, for example: to label a diagram with the given words, to predict from the title, to answer a set of questions or a quiz, to talk about pictures accompanying the text, to brainstorm by being given a key word, key concept or newspaper headline; to discuss a topic. Brainstorming is an activity especially cherished by teachers as it takes no time to prepare but allows all students to participate. The advantage of brainstorming is also that students do not need to feel threatened by their contribution as any contribution is considered valuable. Some examples for previewing are, for instance, reading the abstract, preface, blurb or foreword carefully (Urquhart & Weir 1998: 184).

It is important that the selected pre-reading exercise supports the purpose of the reading as well as the type of reading as stated by Wallace (1992: 90): “If we are to offer our learners a range of genres with varying topics and discourses, it follows that the pre-reading activities aimed to encourage particular reading strategies should vary too”. The content and genre of a text determine the pre-reading questions or type of pre-reading exercise. Thus, a factual text lends itself for a pre-reading quiz whereas a discursive text may benefit from a ranking exercise. Wallace (1992: 91) states that pre-reading exercises often fall into two categories, which are “fact” and “opinion”. Factual knowledge may fill important gaps that a non-native speaker may have when dealing with topics focused on the target culture. Asking for the students’ opinions may activate schemata and raise interest in the topic.

#### **5.4.2. While-Reading exercises**

While-reading exercises aim to “encourage learners to be flexible, active and reflective readers” (Wallace 1992: 93). Flexibility is needed as each text is to be read in line with the purpose of reading. Urquhart and Weir (1998: 186) list two while-reading strategies, which are self-questioning and self-monitoring. Self-questioning includes processes such as inferencing and attending to structure. Self-monitoring is used to check understanding of the text and if the

text has not been understood yet, it means knowing which repair strategies to adopt in order to obtain comprehension (Uruqhart & Weir 1998: 186).

As with the pre-reading activities, it is important to consider the genre and purpose of reading when selecting a while-reading exercise. The reading of narrative fiction, for instance, can be interrupted by asking students a set of questions, e.g. to predict the continuing events of the story. This invitation to pause and predict is said to be a process which occurs spontaneously and subconsciously in mature readers. As such while-reading questions render these subconscious mental processes conscious, they have been criticised as it is unnatural to overtly predict the content. However, a counterargument stands on the belief that classroom tasks “make explicit what is, in non-educational settings, implicit” and this is simply done to support learning (Wallace 1992: 95).

### **5.4.3. Post-reading exercises**

In some settings, such as test situations, post-reading exercises are used to check global understanding as well as the comprehension of details if that is the goal of the reading test. However, outside a test situation, the purpose of the post-reading exercises is not to just quickly check understanding, but to increase engagement with the text. Thus, many post-reading activities invite the pupil to evaluate the text or to respond to it on a personal level (Uruqhart & Weir 1998: 187). Personal response is considered an important post-reading strategy as research has shown that “in learning to make the text their own the readers will better comprehend it” (Uruqhart & Weir 1998: 187). Relating the text to the outside world is considered vital. (Nuttall 2005: 167).

According to Wallace (1992: 100), post-reading exercises often take the form of a set of questions, which need to be answered after reading a text. Alderson (2005: 51) states that “inserting post-questions has a greater effect than pre-questions”. Possible types and forms of post-reading questions will be discussed in the next paragraph. However, not all reading lessons need to follow the same structure and it is advisable to supplement questioning with new activities (Nuttall 2005). Other activities in this phase of reading include the use of other skills, such as, for instance, writing or speaking. Some activities, such as using figures or a transfer of information, do even require little or no language. It is highly common to follow-up a reading activity with an interactive role-play, debate or discussion or a generic writing task. Again, this must be decided based on the genre of the text, the context of learning and the learner purpose (Wallace 1992: 101). Nuttall (2005: 167) emphasises the importance of speaking and

discussions in the post-reading stage in order to effectively exchange views in class, but she equally acknowledges that written work can be included at the end as well.

Some post-reading exercises may require pupils to not only use lower-order thinking skills such as e.g. summarising, but also make use of higher-order thinking skills. Bloom's taxonomy (1956) outlines six different thinking processes in the form of a pyramid. The three levels at the bottom, which are knowledge, comprehension, and application, represent lower-order processing skills whereas the three levels at the top of the pyramid stand for the higher-order processing skills and are made up of analysis, evaluation and creation of something new. Both sets of skills are "integral to effective learning" (Coyle, Hood & Marsh 2010: 30). However, asking questions that require the use of higher-order thinking skills is often challenging to teachers, which is why some often only resort to simpler tasks such as recalling information (Lundquist & Hill 2009: 39). According to Alderson (2005: 51), "post-questions of a higher order result in incidental as well as intentional learning, and, unlike lower-level pre-questions, result in retention of both factual and higher-order information over time".

#### **5.4.4. Questioning: Post-reading questions**

As already mentioned, questions are a frequently used tool to assess reading comprehension. Day and Park (2005: 61) stress that "well-designed comprehension questions help students interact with the text to create or construct meaning" and state that they have observed how these kinds of questions help students begin to think critically. Thus, the use of post-reading questions should not be for reasons of testing and assessment only, but these questions should support the students' interaction with a text. Nuttall (2005: 125) agrees with this statement as she says that questions need to be developed in a way that they support teaching and are intended for teaching and not for testing only. Nuttall (2005: 125-126) states the following on the usefulness of questions:

The questions that help you to understand are the ones that make you work at the text. They force you to contribute actively to the process of making sense of it, rather than expecting understanding just to happen. They make you realize which bits of the text you have not understood, so that you can concentrate on those bits.

Therefore, it is essential that the teacher does not use the questions as a quick way of checking comprehension, but that he/she takes the time to discuss challenging questions as this will increase comprehension and understanding. Nuttall (2005: 127) reported that "discussion is key", by which she means that even well-constructed questions are only valuable if they are used effectively, meaning for instance that alternative answers are discussed, defended or

criticised. Day and Park (2005: 68) agree with Nuttall regarding the importance of a teacher-fronted or group discussion of the answers. The effective use of post-reading questions requires a classroom atmosphere where giving incorrect answers is not discouraged as they are seen as an opportunity for learning. Therefore, questions should be seen “not as attempts to expose their (*here: students*’) ignorance, but as aids to the successful exploration of the text” (Nuttall 2005: 126).

Nuttall (2005: 127) likewise states that when devising questions – which may sometimes be necessary as some texts in textbooks are not accompanied with well-constructed questions – it is important to remember that questions in the reading class are not primarily there for testing, but “to make the student aware of the way language is used to convey meaning, and of the strategies he can use to recover the meaning from the text”. For this reason, questions of grammatical nature are only justified if they are relevant in terms of text comprehension. Content questions are a good starting point. However, teachers need to be aware that they do not ask general knowledge but questions on the actual text (Nuttall. 2005: 127). Thus, the questions should be chosen or created with the goal of being able to understand the text as a whole (Nuttall 2005: 128).

#### **5.4.5. Manner of presentation, form and type of question**

There are three aspects of questions which are worth considering when discussing questioning: the *form of the question*, the *manner of the presentation*, and the *type of the question* (Nuttall 2005: 128). In the next paragraphs, these different aspects will be discussed in detail.

#### **Forms of questions**

Some well-established forms of questions are yes/no questions, alternative questions (e.g. Is a dandelion a flower or a tree), true or false, wh-questions (who, what, which, when, where) and how/why questions, and multiple choice questions (MC Questions) (Nuttall 2005, Day & Park 2005). True/False, Yes/No, Alternative as well as MC Questions can be grouped together as they do not require the student to write an answer. He or she can simply choose one of the options, which means that there is an element of guessing involved (Day & Park 2005: 65). However, these types of questions may be easier for beginners as they do not face the additional challenge of having to compose a written answer. Day and Park (2005: 65) recommend asking follow-up questions after MC, Yes/No, True/ False Alternative questions because only then can real learning take place, as it is investigated whether the students have really understood the text. MC questions are often used in examinations due to their high reliability and easy

marking (practicality), which is why teachers train the students in the use of this form of question. Devising MC questions is a difficult task as the distractors (i.e. incorrect options) must be plausible. Only when well-constructed can these MC questions lead to an effective training of the students' interpretative skills (Nuttall 2005: 126). Another problematic aspect of MC questions in high-stake exams is the fact that distractors which are not selected by any students are discarded and replaced by more difficult ones. However, as Alderson (2005: 102) states: "it is possible that all the readers have simply understood that aspect of the passage".

Open-ended questions or short answer questions (i.e. wh-questions and how/why questions) require the reader to form their own responses, which can pose a challenge to beginners. For this reason, it is often claimed that the answer must be understandable even if there are, for instance, some spelling mistakes. Another option is to let the students reply in their L1 in order to avoid the problem of language mistakes in short answer questions. The use of the L1 is also more easily accepted if the goal of the language learning is for receptive use only (Nuttall 2005: 129-131). This may be an acceptable solution as it is possible to understand texts in a foreign language, but to not be able to compose adequate sentences and communicate in that foreign language. An advantage of these types of question is certainly that they are easy to create and offer at the same time the greatest scope.

### **Manner of representation**

Another aspect of questioning is the *manner of representation*. The fact that questions can either be asked orally or may be written down matters and may make a difference. Some forms of questions (e.g. MC questions) can only be presented in written form, whereas others (e.g. open-ended questions) are easily asked orally by a teacher. Nuttall (2005: 129) emphasises at this point that the questions presented in a textbook after a reading are never enough. Moreover, the questions need to be adjusted to the class and the way they are responding to the text. In some cases, additional questions are necessary, in other cases maybe fewer additional questions will do. The following quote by Nuttall (2005: 129) further illustrates the importance of additional questions: "Written questions may supply the skeleton of the reading lesson, but normally you will have to take care of what may be the most important part of the work by means of numerous oral questions. You certainly should not assume that your work is done when you have got through the questions in the textbook".

Other topics which Nuttall (2005: 131) mentions when talking about the manner of representation of questions is the language of responses as well as the language of questions.

The former has already been addressed in the previous section. The latter, the language of questions, is a relevant topic and often poses a problem. The issue is that the language used in the asked questions is often too complex, which is why teachers are advised to phrase them in a simple way, easier than the passage (Nuttall 2005: 131; Alderson 2005: 86). Another option is to phrase them in the students' L1, albeit this is a controversial topic. However, Nuttall (2005: 131) is of the opinion that a well devised question in the L1 can be more valuable than an ill-formulated or too complex one in the target language.

### **Types of questions**

Regarding the *types of questions*, this classification of questions is done according to their content. Different researchers have come up with various reading question types, which shall be discussed in this section.

Urquhart and Weir (1998: 187) mentions questions of evaluation and personal response as adequate post-reading activities. These kinds of questions are especially valuable as they connect the readers' outside world to the text. Schacter (2006) differentiates between "thick" and "thin" questions. Thin questions are factual questions which can be answered directly from the text, whereas thick questions are inferential questions and are not stated directly in the text. The answers have to be obtained through "making inferences and by combining information from various parts of the text" (Anderson 2012: 220).

Nuttall (2005: 132) identified five types of questions. She likewise lists questions of personal response, evaluation, and questions of literal comprehension as well as of inference, and adds questions involving reorganization or reinterpretation to her taxonomy of question types. Nuttall (2005: 133) found that many questions in textbooks are questions of literal comprehension. Questions involving reorganization or reinterpretation, as well as questions of personal response, are the second most used questions. She states that for critical reading, and in order to become a good and competent reader, questions involving reorganization, inference and evaluation are essential. These type of questions "force the readers to think about not just what the writer has written, but how he has written it" (Nuttall 2005: 133). She considers all of the aforementioned types (except for questions of evaluation) appropriate for beginners.

Similarly, Day and Park (2005) created their own taxonomy based on Nuttall's (2005) and Pearson and Johnson's work (1972). However, Day and Park (2005) list six types of questions which they have found to be useful in helping students to interact with a text. These are identical to Nuttall's aforementioned types; however, they added prediction as another type of

comprehension with the additional note that it is often used as a while-reading question (e.g. to predict what might happen next in a story). In post-reading questions prediction can be used to e.g. predict how a story might end. It is not possible, however, to use such an activity with other genres, e.g. scholarly articles (Day & Park 2005: 63). Prediction is also often used as a pre-reading activity in which case it is purely done to activate schemata and not to measure comprehension. Personal response questions ask the reader to respond to the text by expressing their own feelings on the topic and the text. The answer to this type of question is subjective and cannot be deemed incorrect. However, they also have to be well-grounded and reasonable and must relate to the content of the text. In order for the reader to do so, he/she must have understood the text (Day & Park 2005: 64). Evaluation is another type of question somewhat similar to personal response. The reader is asked to evaluate a text and to “give a global or comprehensive judgment about some aspect of the text” (Day & Park 2005: 64). The reader must have a literal understanding of the text and relate that to their knowledge of the topic of the text. Inferences go beyond the literal understanding of a text. The information that the reader is looking for is in the text, but not explicitly stated. Moreover, an inference “involves students combining their literal understanding of the text with their own knowledge and intuitions.”, which can make this type of question more difficult (Day & Park 2005: 63). Reorganization is another type of comprehension and requires the student to use information from various parts of the text. Then, the student has to combine the received information in order to obtain the answer to the question. For this type of question, the reader has to look at the text in its entire form (Day & Park 2005: 62). The last type of question in Day and Park’s taxonomy (2005: 62) is literal comprehension, which refers to a straightforward understanding of the text. The information is located directly and explicitly in the text. This type of question is often considered easier than the other types. As a teacher, it is recommended to use various comprehension types. Moreover, Day and Park (2005: 64) state that research has found that higher-level questions were raised more by effective teachers. These higher-level questions go beyond mere literal understanding of the text.

The above mentioned taxonomies of questions types are all somewhat similar, but some researchers such as Day and Park (2005) built upon the pre-existing taxonomies and fine-tuned them in order to better reflect the variety of question types as found in diverse textbooks and other kinds of materials. Most categorisations of question types named above include the inclusion of learner’s affect. According to Masuhara (2003: 351), affect questions are “vital for deep processing and creates reasons and motivation to read on”. In the next section, another

taxonomy of question types will be presented. This taxonomy by Freeman (2014) seems to be the most comprehensive taxonomy on this subject matter and was trialled by Freeman who analysed a large number of textbooks according to her taxonomy. Her taxonomy will therefore form the basis of the study conducted in the scope of this thesis.

#### 5.4.6. Diana Freeman's (2014) taxonomy of comprehension question types

Diana Freeman developed her own taxonomy of text-related comprehension question types as she found that no previously established taxonomy covered all the questions types that she had found in her textbook analysis (Freeman 2014: 79). She established three categories which can be divided into smaller sub-categories. These categories are listed and briefly described below. (taken from Freeman 2014). For a full and detailed description of her taxonomy, see the Appendix).

- **Content:** information in the text, hierarchical from lower to higher order thinking
  - **Textually Explicit** (word matching, the answer is in one place in the text)
  - **Textually Implicit** (answer may be worded slightly differently from the question, may be spread over several parts of the text)
  - **Inferential Comprehension** (information presented in the text + own knowledge and experiences)
- **Language questions:** not hierarchical
  - **Reorganization** (e.g. transfer of data into parallel forms, translation from L1 to L2 or vice versa)
  - **Lexical** (requires reader to guess the meaning of unknown words from the context of the text, using a dictionary, or matching definition with word or phrase)
  - **Form** (grammar-related questions, e.g. explain the use of one tense rather than another)
- **Affect questions:** learner responds to the text, hierarchical
  - **Personal Response** (on a personal level, no correct answers, e.g. like/ dislike, what did they find funny or surprising)
  - **Evaluation** (on a deeper, evaluative level including giving a justification for their view)

As can be seen, her taxonomy resembles Nuttall's (2005) and Day & Parker's (2005) amongst others as she also employs categories such as personal response and evaluation and inferential comprehension. Freeman (2014) underscored the importance of distinguishing between wording in the text and in the question for which added a category named "Textually Implicit. Therefore, Freeman's taxonomy seems to be an amalgam of different categories of various taxonomies to fit the textbooks that she analysed in her study.

In her study, Freeman (2014) analysed every reading in four different textbook series according to her framework. She investigated the distribution of question types in terms of their



occurrence, frequency and range. Occurrence means that she investigated whether a certain question type was present or absent in the readings. Frequency means that she looked at whether each different question type appeared in each reading. Lastly, “the range of q-types (question types) represents the number of different q-types accompanying a single reading in a series or edition” (Freeman 2014: 85). The results show that the content question types appeared most often in terms of occurrence and frequency compared to the other two categories, language and affect questions. Moreover, she found that lexical question types and personal response question types were significantly more common in the language and affect category. There were differences between the individual textbook series, which will not be in the focus here. In summary, some textbook series under analysis significantly preferred content questions whereas others had significantly more questions types of the language category. A closer look at each of the three big categories reveals that in terms of the content category, the higher-order inferential comprehension question types were more common in most of the analysed textbook series. Concerning the language category, the lexical question type is most favoured in terms of its occurrence and frequency. Concerning the affect category, the personal response question type is more common than the evaluation question type in each series. In terms of range, which has not been considered yet, on average between four and five different question types accompanied the texts. There was only one instance in one textbook series where all the eight question types appeared in a reading exercise. Freeman (2014: 107) also interviewed the textbook writers after her study. She found that “question and task-writing was an intuitive process” even though some had clear preferences (e.g. “we’re not great believers in the traditional what, who, where”) which led to a conscious decision of fewer content question types in one textbook series (Freeman 2014: 103).

Freeman states that all of these question types have their own merits (2014: 105) and that it is simply useful to check if there is an over-reliance on one particular question type. In this case, the questions may need to be rephrased or the choice of text reconsidered (Freeman 2014: 106).

As the study included in this thesis will also make use of Freeman’s (2014) taxonomy, her findings will be compared to my findings. However, before explaining the methodology of my study, reading assessment and textbook analysis are two topics which will be discussed in the next sections. Reading assessment does not only refer to test situations, but has various goals and plays a vital role in any teaching context, expanded on further below.

## 5.5. Reading assessment

*Reading assessment* is done for several reasons. First of all, tests, exams and even school-leaving examinations are part of many students' lives. However, reading assessment is so much more and does not only contain the testing of reading in exam situations. Nation (2009: 75) lists four different goals of assessment, which are to *motivate*, to *measure achievement*, to *diagnose problems* and to *measure proficiency*. There are many different ways of assessing in order to reach the desired goals. In the following section, these four different goals of assessment as outlined by Nation (2009) will be described in detail and how they may be assessed.

*Motivation* is an important factor in reading comprehension as already discussed. In the best case, this form of assessment should encourage learning and motivate the students to continue learning and improving their skills. This can be achieved through standard comprehension tests, but some more creative ways of assessment, such as for instance reading logs or book reports, might have a bigger effect on the students' motivation, which is after all the desired outcome. Measuring achievement is closely related to the course of which the students are part and aims to find out whether the students have learnt what they should have learnt in the course. For the teacher, it is important to monitor the progress in order to prepare meaningful lessons and guide the teaching in the desired direction. Moreover, providing feedback to the learning, as well as awarding a grade, are part of this form of assessment. One way of assessing achievement is certainly the comprehension test in the form of a text and a set of questions (Nation 2009: 76-78). Diagnosing problems may also be one goal of assessment of reading as it is crucial for the teacher as well as for the learner to know where his or her weaknesses lie in order to provide focused help. Nation (2009: 76) suggests the following ways of assessing: reading aloud, vocabulary tests, receptive grammar tests, translation and speed-reading tests. Lastly, proficiency tests aim to determine the learner's skill in relation to a wider standard, which goes well beyond a language course. IELTS and TOEFL are famous tests which test reading proficiency and award a grade at the end. Proficiency tests often use the format of multiple-choice questions in a comprehension test or cloze tests (gapped text which needs to be completed by filling in the missing words).

### 5.5.1. Reliability, Validity, Practicality

Good tests and therefore good comprehension questions are *reliable*, *valid* and *practical*. What these terms mean will be explored briefly in this section.

In order to create a test that is *reliable*, the students have to be familiar with the test format. Otherwise challenges might arise not due to difficulty of comprehension of the text but because the format is unfamiliar to the students (Nation 2009: 88). In addition, the questions should not be composed using more difficult language and grammatical structures than the text itself (Nation 2009: 88-89).

*Validity* means that it must be impossible to answer the question without having read the text. They should not be able to answer the questions by solely relying on their background knowledge. Moreover, the options in the multiple-choice tests should not make it easy and obvious as to which answer is the correct one. Another important aspect is that the questions should not focus on small details in the text that even a native speaker would not remember or disregard (Nation 2009: 89).

According to Nation (2009: 90), *practicality* means that the test should not cause any problems with the marking. In other words, it should be possible to easily mark a test.

These three principles are also relevant to a textbook analysis as the textbooks under investigation in the practical part of this thesis also prepare the pupils for their final matriculation examination. Thus, some of the exercises were designed as test preparation and should therefore adhere to these standards as far as possible in order to be good test preparation exercises.

### **5.5.2. Standardised tests**

*Standardised tests* are highly common in today's world. These tests are "administered, scored, and interpreted in a standard, consistent manner, regardless of where the test is administered" (Mertler 2007: 17). Moreover, Mertler (2007: 5) defines the general purpose of standardised tests as tests which "determine how well students are performing (e.g. achieving, mastering, learning) a common set of broadly based goals [and] allow comparisons of a student's individual performance [...] to the performance (i.e., scores) of similar students who have taken the same test under the same condition".

A set of directions is usually handed to the teacher or test administrator to ensure that the test is administered in the designated manner. Another characteristic of standardised tests is that they are timed. This is also done to ensure comparability between students from different schools. The scoring, as already mentioned, must be consistent as well. For this reason and to reduce teacher subjectivity, the standardised tests usually consist of selected-response items,

such as multiple choice or true/false (Mertler 2007: 4). A computer can read and score the answer sheets, which increases the speed of correction as well as objectivity. Mertler (2007: 5) states that constructed-response test items in which the students need to create their own responses are also more and more included in standardised tests. To ensure objectivity and comparability, the particular scoring criteria are determined before the test is administered.

Standardised tests are sometimes criticised and disliked. While there are certainly many negative aspects to it, there are also numerous benefits to be taken from standardised tests as elaborated by Mertler (2007). First of all, the tests are independent of teacher opinions which is favourable as teachers are often – consciously or unconsciously – favouring or downgrading students for reasons other than performance. Moreover, parents are provided with a tool to compare their child to children of a similar age group beyond the classroom. Furthermore, Mertler (2007: 22) mentions that the results can pinpoint weaknesses or specific problems of learning and provides data about the effectiveness of instruction. The teacher may adapt his/her teaching according to the data and may thus improve the overall quality of teaching. However, Mertler (2007: 24) also lists misuses of and downsides to standardised testing in education. Teachers often dislike standardised testing because they take away time that they could have used on classroom instruction in other areas which are not likely to be tested in the exam. While it is essential to adequately prepare the students for an upcoming standardised test, there are certainly limits to it. “Teaching to the test”, which is a phrase commonly related to standardised tests, is considered unethical if it consists of teaching only the content objectives that are tested as well as including only highly similar test item content. However, this ill-worded and negatively connoted phrase may also be ethical if “instruction is designed to parallel the broader content standards, which are also assessed by the standardised test” (Mertler 2007: 45). What teachers can and should do is to prepare the students by helping them develop skills known as *testwiseness* skills (Mertler 2007: 34). These skills can be practised by taking practice tests and include making students aware of the importance of listening to or reading test directions and test items carefully. Another strategy is to skip difficult items and to re-try them at a later stage. Moreover, the students should be trained to make informed guesses instead of just ignoring items that they deem to be too difficult. Lastly, another strategy is to check the answers before the time is up carefully. Other essential preparation practises included practising and familiarising the students with a variety of assessment forms, such as multiple choice or short answer items (Mertler 2007: 36).

After having discussed some issues regarding the theory of reading in the L1 and FL, the following section dives into the role of textbooks used in English as a foreign language lessons. Moreover, the theory on material analysis and evaluation will be presented, which will form the theoretical underpinnings of my study.

## **6. Textbooks– the role of textbooks**

Textbooks, also referred to as coursebooks and both terms will be used from now synonymously, are often the foundation of any language teaching course or at school. For this reason, Richards (1998: 125) stated that “the most commonly found elements in second and foreign language classrooms around the world are teachers, learners and textbooks”. There are, of course, other kinds of materials that the teacher can use in class, but the textbook is usually the most ubiquitous one of them. Other types of materials consist of realia or teacher-prepared materials such as authentic materials and digital materials. These latter types of materials will not be discussed further. According to Luukka et al. (2008: 94), foreign language teachers rely more heavily than first language teachers on the use of textbooks than on other materials. Moreover, 98% said to also make use of the accompanying materials, such as the workbook, or audio and video recordings (Luukka et al. 2008: 94). Thus, the results of Luukka’s study (2008), which focused on the text and media practices of Finnish 9<sup>th</sup> graders and their teachers, depict a heavy use of textbooks (98% claim to use textbooks often in class) and workbooks (95%) whereas literature (2%), newspapers (1%) and study materials on the internet (6%) seem to have a less prominent place in the language classroom. However, as Luukka’s study is more than ten years old, the use of technology including materials on the internet has most likely been on the increase in the last few years as this is the current trend not only in Finland but around the world. Moreover, Finland introduced the digital matriculation examination in 2016 and in the spring of 2019, the final tests to become digital took place (Ylioppilastuntokintolautakunta. *Digital Matriculation Examination*).

There are several ways of categorising materials. One way of classifying materials is according to their purpose for which the target group is learning the language. Thus, if learners need general English, they likely benefit from a different textbook than those who study English for specific work-related purposes (ESP), such as nursing or tourism (McGrath 2016: 10). The distinction between *global* and *local textbooks* is likewise often made. The global textbooks are produced by international publishers intended for a broad audience across the world. According to Tomlinson (2012: 272), “[m]ost best-selling materials are global materials – that

is, materials designed for use with any learner at a particular level anywhere”. However, in Tomlinson’s opinion (2012: 272), these global textbooks fail to engage learners sufficiently and he advocates for the use of local materials. Local materials are used primarily in a single country and are usually published by a ministry of education (McGrath 2016: 10). These local materials can be specifically designed for a target group and can meet their needs much better than a global textbook can probably do (Tomlinson 2012: 272). As learners can learn more than the language from the material, the content also plays a crucial role. Local content, for instance, can “offer some security in the sea of unfamiliar language” and are also “a way of reinforcing a sense of national or cultural identity” (McGrath 2016: 217). Moreover, since English is considered an international language (EIL), learners do not need to solely learn about the target cultural norms of native speakers of that language. Instead, learning English is often “denationalised” (Lee Mc Kay 2012: 16). This means that aim of learning English is to be able to communicate the students’ ideas and their culture in the target language (Lee Mc Kay 2012: 16).

At this point, it must be mentioned that textbooks are full of ideological beliefs and the pictures, illustrations and photographs are social constructs which deliver - consciously or unconsciously - a particular message to the addressee (McGrath 2016: 220). For this reason alone, it is fundamental to analyse textbooks in detail to avoid dangerous messages or stereotypes to spread amongst the young generation.

Even though the use of coursebook in class is certainly not uncontroversial and endorsed by all teachers, there are some considerable benefits for the teacher, the students as well as the parents. Coursebooks are an aid for the teacher who is often under time constraints. They thus reduce the time needed for lesson preparation as the teacher can simply follow the coursebook or adapt it slightly to their students’ needs. Moreover, they provide support for inexperienced teachers as they usually include methodological support – especially in the form of a teacher’s handbook, which is often handed out to the teachers in addition to the coursebook. Coursebooks also give parents a good idea of what their children have to do and know. This makes it easier for the parents to determine where they can potentially offer help to their children (McGrath 2013: 5). The students profit from coursebooks as well as they can preview and review what is done in class. Beyond the individual level and in light of recent standardisation processes when it comes to examinations, the coursebooks also ensure that the same things are learned in schools around the country. The coursebooks are thus also a “convenient administrative tool” (McGrath 2013: 6).

Some negative aspects and potential pitfalls of coursebooks are certainly the aforementioned possible negative ideological implications. Moreover, some teachers and even learners might see the coursebook as a “holy book” and follow it religiously. They do not assume any ownership or authority and assume that the coursebook is superior. Questioning the coursebook and its content and ideas is not recommended by those people. The term “coursebook-led teaching” falls under this way of thinking about the status of the coursebook. According to McGrath (2016: 12), “[i]n *coursebook-led teaching*, the content of teaching is completely prescribed and standardised by the coursebook, and the role of the teacher to the coursebook is rather like that of a worker to assembly line”. The opposite is “*coursebook-based teaching*”, which “allows the teacher to adapt or modify the content of teaching” (McGrath 2016: 12). It is crucial that the teacher understands the role of the textbook as a tool that facilitates rather than dictates teaching. However, McGrath (2013: 17) also stresses that “what is important is not what kinds of materials are used but whether they help to accomplish the desired learning outcomes; and this will depend in part at least on how they are viewed and used”. Since no coursebook fits precisely to a particular classroom, it seems of great significance that the teacher adapts and supplements exercises. Thus, first, an evaluation of the coursebook appears necessary so that the teachers then knows what to adapt and supplement. In the following section, textbook selection and materials evaluation will be dealt with in detail.

## **6.1. Materials analysis and evaluation**

The object of material analysis are the materials “as they are” and not materials “in action” (Littlejohn 1998: 191). This does not include the teacher’s judgment and interpretation as well as other factors in the classroom which may have a significant effect on the overall usefulness of the materials.

It is important to distinguish between material analysis and material evaluation. According to Cunningsworth (1995: 9), “analysis is more or less neutral”, seeking information in a range of categories”. This is considered objective, and a verifiable description (McGrath 2016: 28). Cunningsworth defines material analysis as being the first stage, which is followed by the second stage focussing on the interpretation of the data obtained (1995: 9). The third stage is the evaluation of the materials, which he defines as involving “value judgements on the part of those involved”. Thus, an evaluation is less neutral than an analysis and includes a degree of subjectivity. Materials evaluation “attempts to measure the value of materials” (Tomlinson 1998: 3).

There are different stages commonly employed in materials analysis and materials evaluation. Cunningsworth (1995: 1-4) talks about approaches to evaluation whereas other researchers, such as Littlejohn (1998: 194-195) speaks of levels of analysis and McGrath (2016: 31) examines methods of analysis. However, even though they use different terms, they all include similar stages, which will be elaborated in the following.

First, the analysis of “what is there” is important and includes looking at statements and descriptions and physical aspects of the materials (Littlejohn 1998: 195). This means looking, amongst other things, for the publication date, intended users, use of colour, organisation of the student’s book. McGrath (2016: 32) call this stage the **impressionistic method** and Cunningsworth (1995: 1) refers to it as an impressionistic overview. Thus, a general introduction and first impressions obtained through a quick browse through the textbooks are at the heart of this stage. McGrath (2016: 32) also indicates that this stage does not have to merely consist of a rather superficial first analysis, but that it can also include looking at the material more carefully. Some specific features can be looked at in more detail.

The second stage is labelled the **checklist method** in McGrath (2016: 32-33). This method contains a list of several items. The advantages of this method are its systematicity, its cost-effectiveness, as well as its objectivity (McGrath 2016: 32-33). Cunningsworth (1995: 2) equally proposes the use of a checklist for evaluating coursebooks. He suggests a few criteria, or items, but acknowledges that the checklist should be individualised according to one’s own concerns and priorities. Some of the proposed criteria include looking at the aims and approaches, the design and organisation, the language content and the different skills. Concerning the skills, he suggests investigating whether these skills are adequately covered and if there is material for integrated skills work (Cunningsworth 1995: 3). Moreover, he proposes to look at each individual skill in more detail. In terms of reading, it is advisable to check whether the activities are suitable for the student’s levels and are interesting enough. In addition, Cunningsworth (1995:3) recommends inquiring whether there is sufficient reading material in the textbooks under analysis. However, he does not specify what “sufficient” may mean as this is related to the purpose of the course, which may vary significantly.

As a final step, McGrath (2016: 33) puts forward the **in-depth method**. Likewise, Cunningsworth (1995: 2) speaks of the in-depth evaluation and Littlejohn (1998: 195) equally suggests analysing the materials on a deeper level, which is implied by his description of level 2 and 3 of the levels of analysis of language teaching materials. The in-depth method usually



focuses on specific features which are to be analysed according to students' learning needs, syllabus requirements, how different aspects of language are dealt with, etc. (Cunningsworth 1995:2). This stage is characterised by its active nature as information is actively sought out. The impressionistic method, on the other hand, notes anything interesting (Cunningsworth 1995: 2). A combination of these stages or levels is recommended and "will form a sound basis for evaluation" (Cunningsworth 1995: 2).

Moreover, McGrath (2016) emphasises that a context analysis and a survey of learner needs should be done before all of these methods are applied. This includes looking at the age range, proficiency level in the target language, first language, sociocultural background, reasons for studying the target language, interests, and the like. An analysis of the syllabus or a public examination gives insights into what the learners need to learn. In addition, it may be important to also look at the institution and the specific programme for which the materials are intended. Thus, an investigation of the role of the target language and level within the education system as well as of the aims of the programme may be part of this analysis (McGrath 2016: 25-28).

To conclude the theoretical part of my thesis, it was shown how essential and integral to our everyday lives yet also how complex reading really is. There are different approaches to reading, i.e. the product and the process approach as well as numerous skills are said to be involved in order for successful comprehension of the text to take place. Reading in a FL poses additional challenges to the reader as, for instance, the lexicon is fairly small when the reader usually begins to read in a FL. In the setting of a reading lesson, the literature on reading comprehension recommends following a certain threepart structure, consisting of pre-, while and post-reading exercises, in order to facilitate the reading, e.g. by working on difficult words before reading a text, or to teach the reader to make use of different reading strategies when appropriate, e.g. inferencing, skimming or scanning. As EFL textbooks are widely employed in English lessons, it seems vital to analyse the reading tasks and see whether they make use of the principles of reading comprehension as theorised in the literature. It is highly advisable to follow a clear and outlined structure of analysis as proposed by McGrath (2016) amongst others. The analysis of textbooks will be the topic of the next chapters.

## **7. The study**

The ubiquity of textbooks in the education sector is undeniable. Some teachers see textbooks as a useful tool and aid (Lähdesmäki 2015: 529). Reinventing the wheel and creating similar exercises to those already existing in textbooks would not support teachers who are often under time-pressure and already overloaded with work. However, being aware of the benefits and possible limitations of certain tasks and activities in the textbook is crucial as there is certainly no textbook which fits perfectly to each and every classroom and learner group. Therefore, textbook comparison and analysis is a useful tool for selecting different tasks that may work well as well as those which may better be ignored with a particular group of pupils in mind.

Comparing an Austrian English textbook to a Finnish English textbook offers insights into different ways of teaching English in a foreign country. Finland has so far received an outstanding score in the PISA study and is in general a country whose education system enjoys an excellent reputation across the world. The analysis of textbooks with their curriculum in mind will not provide enough information to make substantial claims about the education system as a whole in the respective countries; however, such an analysis can provide a first and general idea of how teaching English in those two countries resembles as well as differs from one another. This comparison may also offer new ideas about teaching a foreign language and materials creation, which may make teaching more varied and give invaluable input not only to any pre-service teacher, but arguably even to experienced in-service teachers.

### **7.1. Settings**

This section provides relevant background information on Finland and Austria, the two countries represented in the research project through the analysis of their English textbooks. First, the English language, its position and role in the two countries under analysis is briefly examined. Then, a look at both education systems will provide further insight into the role of the English language in both countries.

#### **7.1.2. Finland**

Finland is a northern European country with roughly 5.52 million inhabitants (Statistics Finland 2017: Immigrants in the population). The majority of the population lives in the southern part along the coast and in the capital city region (Helsinki). Due to Finland's history and close ties to Sweden for more than 600 years, since 1922 the two national languages of Finland have been Finnish and Swedish, making Finland officially a bilingual country (Leppänen et al.

2011). Most of the population considers Finnish their first language (4.9 million people), whereas only a minority, around 0.5 million people, speak Swedish as their first language (Institute for the Languages of Finland). In addition to the two national languages, there are minority languages which enjoy exclusive rights as stated under Finnish law. These languages include three Saami languages, Finnish Romani, Karelian, Finnish and Finland-Swedish sign language. The influx of immigrants in the past few years has had an impact on Finnish society, albeit arguably to a much smaller extent than it has had on, e.g. Austrian society. However, this still means that the number of different foreign languages that are spoken as first languages in Finland has increased. The Ministry of Justice reports that 4.5% of the total population do not have Finnish or Swedish as their mother tongue (Ministry of Justice). According to the Institute for the Languages of Finland, “more than 150 different first languages are spoken in Finland” (Statistics Finland: Foreign-language Speakers). Russian is the most widely spoken foreign language in Finland, which is followed by Estonian, Arabic and Somali. English is in fifth place (Statistics Finland: Foreign-language Speakers).

Nevertheless, English enjoys a high status in Finland today, which has been a product of numerous factors coming together, such as the modernisation, urbanisation, technologisation and internationalisation within Finnish society. The English language is present in many aspects of society, including academia, as well as in the Helsinki slang. Likewise, some Finnish multinational companies use English as their working language (Moore & Varantola 2005: 149). Probably most importantly, however, has been the broadcasting industry, where companies have decided to give subtitles to the films shown on TV rather than to dub them. This has undoubtedly increased the exposure of English among Finns. (Moore & Varantola 2005: 140-141).

Moving on to education in Finland, the Finnish education system consists of four stages: pre-primary education, basic education, general as well as vocational education, and higher education. One year of pre-primary education for 6-year-olds as well as nine years of basic education for children aged 7-16 are compulsory (Finnish National Agency for Education). Basic education is concluded by obtaining the basic education school leaving certificate. Those who wish to continue their education can take the national matriculation examination, or obtain a vocational upper secondary qualification by passing through vocational education.

The textbooks under analysis in this study are used in the general education branch, also known as “lukio”, meaning in upper secondary school. The primary aim of general upper secondary

school is to enable further studies at a higher education institution (e.g. university) by providing students with general knowledge on numerous subjects. This is usually achieved in three years. The students have to select at least 75 courses (duration on average 38 hours per course) from a set of compulsory, in-depth and applied courses (Ministry of Education and Culture). The matriculation examination at the end of general education is an entirely standardised school-leaving examination and consists of at least four written tests. The mother tongue exam is the only compulsory test, meaning that the other three tests can be selected from the following options by the students themselves: a second national language, a foreign language, mathematics or an exam in one subject in the humanities and natural sciences. The Finnish matriculation examination underwent a process of digitalisation which ended in spring 2019 and is now completely digital (Ylioppilastuntokuntakunta: *Digital Matriculation Examination*). The matriculation examination only consists of written exams. There is currently no oral exam in place. However, the vocabulary and phrases are tested in the English exam, which are, of course, necessary both in writing and in speech (Juurakko-Paavola & Takala 2013). Through testing the knowledge of certain words and phrases, the results in the exam also indirectly say something about the pupils' capability to speak in the foreign language. The tests are all assessed by teachers in upper secondary schools and are then sent to the Matriculation Examination Board comprised of specialists who ultimately score the tests (Ylioppilastuntokuntakunta: *Assessment of examination*).

Considering foreign language learning within the education system, the Finnish education system is built to fulfil the EU guideline suggesting that in addition to one's mother tongue, two additional languages should be learnt and acquired. The EU and Finland thus promote the teaching and learning of foreign languages as plurilingualism is regarded as an essential skill which highly increases job opportunities in the future. As Finland's national languages are both rather small languages, the importance of acquiring other languages in order to facilitate communication in international contexts is important. Today, the first foreign/second language taught at most comprehensive schools is learned in grade 3 at the age of 9, even though some children start learning a foreign/second language in grade 1 (Nuolijärvi 2011: 112). The children can choose to take up, for instance, English, French, German, Russian as a foreign language, or Swedish/Finnish as a second language. The first foreign/second language learnt at school is commonly called the A1 language in Finland. According to Statistics Finland (2017), English was the most studied foreign language in grades 1 to 6 in 2017. Most Finnish-speaking pupils take up English first and learn the second national language only later.

Swedish-speaking Finns are, however, more likely to take Finnish before English than the Finnish-speaking peers to take Swedish before English. This leads to most Finns speaking English better than Swedish (Ringbom 2007: 34). The pupils may also take up another foreign language in grades 1-6, which is, however, not compulsory. In grade 7, pupils have to choose their second compulsory language, which has to be the other national language if it had not been chosen before. A B1 and B2 language, both optional, may be chosen at a later stage. In upper secondary school, students continue with their two compulsory languages; Swedish/Finnish has to be one of them (Leppänen et al. 2011).

### **7.1.3. Austria**

As the reader is more likely to be familiar with information on Austria and its education system, the following section is kept rather concise as compared to the previous one about Finland.

In terms of population, Austria is similar to Finland as it is a rather small country in the European Union with around 8.84 million inhabitants (Statistics Austria – Bevölkerung 2018). There are six autochthonous minorities in Austria, which are the Croatians of Burgenland, the Slovenians in Carinthia and Styria, the Hungarians in Burgenland and in Vienna, the Czechs and the Slovaks in Vienna, as well as the Roma in Burgenland (Bundeskanzleramt – Volksgruppen). They are given exclusive rights in the respective regions of Austria and their languages are protected. For certain parts of Austria, there is an Education Act in place which regulates the mother-tongue instruction of these minority languages at school.

Bosnian, Serbian, Turkish, English, Albanian and Polish are other languages widely spoken in Austria, besides its official language, German, and the languages of the autochthonous peoples. According to Dalton-Puffer, Faistauer and Vetter (2011: 183), “[i]n urban areas, most classrooms, therefore, feature a sizable number of students who do not have German as their family language”.

In terms of exposure to the English language, given the high profile of the German language in Austria, a large number of films are dubbed into German. Therefore, English is arguably less present in Austrian society than in Finnish society. However, thanks to easy access to the internet in today’s globalised world, English is accessible on one’s own initiative in Austria.

Compulsory education comprises nine years of schooling in Austria. According to the Ministry for Education, Science and Research, most pupils start learning their first foreign language in primary school, which is thus between the age of 6 and 10 (Bundesministerium für Bildung,

Wissenschaft, Forschung – Fremdsprachenlernen). English is the language that is most widely taught as a first foreign language at schools (Migration – Leben und Arbeiten in Österreich). Other foreign languages often taught at school are the romance languages (French, Italian, Spanish). Russian and Chinese are taught in a few schools. Minority languages are rarely taught within the school framework (Dalton-Puffer, Faistauer & Vetter 2011: 183). Multiple foreign language learning is highly dependent on the school type that one attends in Austria. In upper secondary schools, one third of the pupils learn a second language, whereas only 4% learn a third or more foreign languages (Österreichisches Sprachenzentrum 2007).

The Austrian matriculation examination is partly standardised and consists of three parts: a pre-academic paper and its presentation and discussion, two or three oral exams, and three or four written tests. The writing of a pre-academic paper allows the pupils to choose a topic based on their interests. The written tests are possible in the following subjects; mathematics, applied mathematics, mother tongue, foreign languages, Greek and Latin.

## **7.2. Aim, research questions and hypotheses**

This chapter describes the aim of the research project and lists the research questions. Moreover, some hypotheses were formulated for each research question.

This research project aims to identify similarities and differences of reading comprehension activities within the English textbooks used in Austria and Finland. The focus of the study is on the analysis of the accompanying activities surrounding each text, namely the pre-, while- and post-reading activities. Moreover, the exercises and tasks of the post-reading phase are analysed in detail.

In order to achieve this objective, the following three research questions were raised:

1. To what extent do the textbooks under analysis offer a proportionate number of activities related to the four different skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking) and the two language systems (vocabulary, grammar)? Which role is attributed to texts and reading exercises in the textbooks?
2. In how far do the textbooks employ the three stages of reading comprehension tasks (pre-/ while-/post-reading)? Which skills and language systems are required to do the accompanying exercises? What is the primary aim of these individual exercises?

3. To what extent is there a variety of different comprehension questions types in the post-reading stage? To which degree do the post-reading questions make the students use higher-order thinking skills?

The first research question looks broadly at the whole textbook and all the exercises the textbooks under analysis offer. The textbooks likely contain a fairly balanced number of different activities which require the use of the four skills as all of these skills are considered essential in communicative language teaching (CLT). However, there are likely to be fewer activities which focus mainly on grammar and vocabulary. Especially grammar is often dealt with in the first few years of learning a language and is only fine-tuned in the last two years of high school. Thus, a high number of grammar-related tasks is not to be expected.

The second research question focuses solely on reading comprehension tasks. According to the literature, there are likely to be more post-reading exercises than pre- and while-reading exercises to be found in the textbooks. Those texts which were created as practise material for the imminent matriculation examination – which thus use one of the activity formats used in the reading part of matriculation examination – do not probably contain any pre- and while-reading exercises as these are also not part of the matriculation examination. All four skills are needed in these pre-, while- and post-reading activities in general. However, as the texts are used in a classroom setting, speaking will most likely be predominant. Writing is also expected to be a necessary skill in those activities as it allows the teacher to outsource certain activities to at home as homework. The overall aim of these activities is to either prepare the students to work with a text, or to encourage more in-depth work with it in order to get as much out of it as possible. This is, to a great extent, achieved through relating the content of the text to the students' personal lives and their opinions and attitudes.

The third research question examines the post-reading activities one step further. The post-reading exercises are analysed according to Freeman's taxonomy of question types (2014), which means that these questions or question-like activities are labelled and put into the categories labelled as content, language or affect. These three categories are further subdivided in order to obtain more detailed insight into the depth of text analysis that these questions require. The textbooks under investigation are used during the last two years of secondary education, which means that the students are arguably expected to engage with the texts on a deeper level in order to understand fine nuances and interpret them correctly.

These research questions show the focus of this research project. However, and as to be expected, other factors such as the structure of the books, topics, level of difficulty (CEFR scales) and text types will be investigated to obtain a detailed and coherent indentation. Moreover, this will also help fulfil the aim of the study, which is to establish the differences and similarities between Austrian and Finnish English textbooks.

### 7.3. Method

This research project analyses the following textbooks:

- *Prime Time 7, Prime Time 8 (Austria)*
- *English in Context 7/8 (Austria)*
- *Insights 3, Insights 4, Insights 5, Insights 6 (Finland)*
- *On track 3, On track 4, On track 5, On track 6 (Finland)*

The first two series, namely *Prime Time* (PT) and *English in Context* (EiC), are used in Austria, whereas the latter, *Insights* (I) and *On track* (OT) are used in Finland. The four textbook series all meet certain criteria which make them eligible for comparison. First, these books were designed for learning English as a foreign language with a teacher at a regular Austrian/ Finnish school. Secondly, they are currently still being used in schools in the two respective countries. Thirdly, they are all used in upper secondary schools in the last two years before the matriculation examination. As both countries aim for their pupils to reach level B2 (under the CEFR standard) at the end of their schooling, the level of difficulty is supposed to be comparable. The only potential problem in terms of comparability is the use of different editions of the textbooks. This means that some of the analysed textbooks from one series are the first edition, whereas others are from the second edition. Some changes in the second edition will have been made, which are not tracked and analysed in this thesis. Thus, this dimension of positive and negatives changes between different editions of the textbook series is not taken into account in this study.

The research methodology used in this project consists of four different parts which are based on McGrath (2016): a **context-and-needs analysis**, the **impressionistic method**, the **checklist method** and the **in-depth method**. The combined insights gained from all four parts will help to get a clear idea of the differences and similarities of the Finnish and Austrian textbooks. In the following section, these four parts are explained in detail.



The first step, the **context-and-needs analysis**, looks at the Austrian and the Finnish curriculum as well as the Common European Framework of Reference for Language: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR). The goals of foreign language learning at school are examined by looking at the curricula for upper secondary education. Moreover, the CEFR, which is a framework of reference composed by the Council of Europe, is explored as it is a key document in Europe with regards to language teaching.

The second step, called the **impressionistic method**, records necessary information on the four textbook series, lists general impressions as well as looks at the place of reading in the textbooks under analysis. Therefore, while information on the publishing house, publishing year, edition, authors, and structure of the units, as well as the layout, will be presented, the focus of this part of the analysis is put on the reading comprehension activities. For answering the first research question, this method analyses the role of reading compared with the other skills, speaking, writing and listening, and the two language systems, vocabulary and grammar. This is quantified by calculating the ratio of activities to the total. A fact file is in the appendix, which records all the basic data from the impressionistic method on each textbook series. Thus, while this method gives a general, superficial impression of the textbook series, depth is added to this part of the analysis by looking more carefully at features interesting to the research project, namely at reading tasks compared to other tasks.

The third step is the analysis of the textbooks according to a **checklist**, which was created to obtain the necessary data to formulate clear answers to the second and third research questions as elaborated in the previous chapter. Thus, this checklist focuses solely on the reading comprehension activities and examines the topic, text type, length of the texts, CEFR levels, the pre-, while-, post-reading exercises and their aims. Moreover, two items look specifically at the post-reading tasks and their formats and question types. The checklist offers space to record not only whether a particular feature is present in the textbooks, but also to add comments deemed valuable to the in-depth analysis. There are ten items in total on this checklist which will be explained in detail in the following.

The first item on the checklist deals with the topics of the reading activities. The list was created based on the topics and themes mentioned in the curriculum of Austria (BMBWF 2004: 119-129) and the curriculum of Finland for higher secondary school (Opetushallitus 2015:110-111) as well as the CEFR framework (CEFR 2011: 52). In order to shorten the list of topics, similar

themes were grouped together. As there was a considerable overlap of topics mentioned in the Austrian, the Finnish curriculum, and the CEFR, a distinction between the countries is not upheld in the checklist.

The following 30 topics were defined in *Table 1: Checklist Item 1 - Topics*.

Topic	Tick	Comments
Relationships and social networks (family, friends, ...)		
House and home		
Fashion and trends		
Nutrition		
Health		
Sports		
Education (school, further education)		
Working environment		
Free time and hobbies		
Consumerism		
Traditions and customs		
Transport and tourism		
Applied geography (Landeskunde)		
Art, culture, creativity, literature, music		
Media		
Communication		
Nature, environment and global problems		
Modern technology and digitalisation		
Personal plans and goals, future		
Youth, adolescence, becoming an adult		
Politics and public institutions		
The globalised world		
Minorities and other marginal groups		
Rules and laws (youth delinquency, crime, punishment, personal freedom)		
Science		
Language, Plurilingualism		
Human rights		
Career plans		
Migration and multiculturalism		
Economy, money		
Other:		

*Table 1: Checklist Item 1 - Topics*

It must be mentioned that the curricula are often vague and do not clearly list all the topics which should be dealt with in the last two years of upper secondary school. Instead, there were some general remarks about themes and topics on English as a foreign language in upper secondary schools, which consist of three to four years of school. Therefore, some of the topics may have been dealt with in the previous year/s and are only discussed shortly or not at all in the textbooks of the last two years before the matriculation examination. This will likely be the

case, given the textbooks selected for this study, which are the last two or four books in the series (7 and 8 in the Austrian series, or 3 to 6 in the Finnish series). It could also be the case that the topics may have been dealt with in exercises practising other skills other than reading, such as in a listening exercise. Moreover, a text can sometimes be attributed to two categories as these topics are not necessarily mutually exclusive. For instance, the topic of traditions and multicultural society are two topics which can easily both appear in one text. Moreover, food and nutrition are often related to the topic of health. In this case, both topics are ticked. In other instances, the texts may deal with topics which are lost in those rather broad descriptions of topics as listed in the table above. The option “other” can then be ticked to show finer sub-topics which seem interesting to note.

The second item on the checklist investigates text types, distinguishing between literary text and non-literary texts. Furthermore, comments can be added in order to take note of the different kinds of literary or non-literary texts, i.e. poem, drama, song lyrics, novel for the literary text type category and articles, newspaper articles, instruction manuals, how-to-books and the like for the non-literary text type category.

The reading corresponds to the text types...	Tick	Comment
Literary text (novel, poem, drama)		
Non-literary text (articles, instruction manuals, how-to-books, etc.)		

Table 2: Checklist Item 2 – Text types

The third item presents the length of the texts. The number of words of each text is counted. Then, the text is categorised according to one of the following five groups:

The reading exercise contains a text of different lengths	Tick	Comment
less than 250 words		
between 250 and 500 words		
between 500 and 750 words		
between 750 and 1000 words		
more than 1000 words		

Table 3: Checklist Item 3 – Length of the texts

The fourth item looks at the texts in terms of their level of difficulty. The CEFR scales for reading are employed to facilitate the categorisation. Most of the texts are probably at the level B2 as this is the target level of the matriculation examination. However, it is possible that the textbooks contain easier texts, i.e. at the level B1, as well as more difficult ones, i.e. at the level

C1. The can-do statements/descriptions are applied to the texts in this study and not to the pupils themselves.

CEFR	Description	Tick	Comment
<b>B1</b>	Can read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to his/her field and interest with a satisfactory level of comprehension.		
<b>B2</b>	Can read with a large degree of independence, adapting style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes, and using appropriate reference sources selectively. Has a broad active reading vocabulary, but may experience some difficulty with low frequency idioms.		
<b>C1</b>	Can understand in detail lengthy, complex texts, whether or not they relate to his/her own area of speciality, provided he/she can reread difficult sections		

Table 4: Checklist Item 4 – CEFR scales

The fifth item on the checklist aims to gather information on the pre-, while- and post-reading exercises. First, it will be shown whether these three stages are employed in the various reading comprehension activities and which skills the pupils need in order to complete the exercises. Thus, the use of integrated skills is being investigated. If it is not entirely clear from the instructions in the textbooks which skills the exercises involve, more than one of the skills may be selected. The answering of post-reading questions, for instance, may involve speaking or writing if not clearly stated. In this case, both are ticked.

The sixth, seventh and eighth item focus on the aim of the pre-, while- and post-reading exercises.

The three different stages of reading comprehension activities were already explained in chapter 4. In this study, the exercises of the pre-, while- and post-reading stage had to fulfil certain criteria, which are explained in detail in the following paragraphs, in order to be classified as such.

The pre-reading exercises have to be before the text and must be clearly referring to the main topic of the text following it. Sometimes it may be the case that there are several exercises before the text which are, however, only very loosely connected to the topic of the text, or are part of a much bigger, overarching theme. These exercises were disregarded in this study. The four possible strategies and aims analysed in this study are clearly listed in table 6. One aim may be to activate background knowledge on the topic of the text. This can be done with a quiz

or a quick brainstorming session on what the learners already know about the topic. Another aim may be to predict and hypothesise about the content of the text. This may include looking at the title and images to predict what the text could be all about. Moreover, the pre-reading exercise may involve an exercise on vocabulary in order to pre-teach and familiarise the pupils with keywords from the text. The pre-reading exercise may also aim at eliciting a personal response on the topic from the text, by e.g. asking the pupils what they think.

The while-reading exercises must be either stated before the text or appear next to or in between the text. These exercises bring the pupils' attention to certain aspects of the text, e.g. the main aspects of the text must be underlined, or some key numbers or names and the like must be found by doing a quick scan of the text. The attention may also be drawn to specific words and what they mean in the given context. The possible aims of the while-reading stage in this study are thus either a focus on language or a focus on structure as listed in table 7.

The post-reading exercises are to be found after the text. As with the pre-reading exercise, there must be a clear connection to the text. If the exercise can be easily done without having read the text, the exercise does not qualify as a post-reading exercise in this study. The aims of the post-reading exercise are stated in table 8. One aim may be to simply check understanding of the text, which can be done in the form of questions containing question words. True or false statements can also be included amongst many other activities. Another goal of the post-reading exercise may be to elicit a personal response from the pupils by asking them questions whether they agree or disagree/like or dislike something. Moreover, the pupils may be asked to evaluate the text. The post-reading exercise may focus on vocabulary to consolidate important words. In addition, the pupils may be asked to produce an output, which exceeds simple one-sentence length answers to questions. Thus, they may be asked to write an email or letter, or to prepare a presentation or a role play.

The reading exercise contains a pre-, while- and/ or post-reading exercise						
Pre-reading	Tick	While-reading	Tick	Post-reading	Tick	Comments
Listening		Listening		Listening		
Speaking		Speaking		Speaking		
Writing		Writing		Writing		
Grammar		Grammar		Grammar		
Lexicon		lexicon		Lexicon		

Table 5: Checklist Item 5 – Pre-/ While-/ Post-reading exercises and integrated skills

Code	The pre-reading exercise aims at	Tick	Comment
<b>BK</b>	Activating background knowledge about the topic of the text		
<b>P&amp;H</b>	Predicting and hypothesising about the content of the text		

<b>L</b>	Becoming familiar with some of the language in the text		
<b>PR/O</b>	Eliciting a personal response or opinion on the topic		

Table 6: Checklist Item 6 – Aim of the pre-reading exercises

<b>Code</b>	<b>The while-reading exercise aims at</b>	<b>Tick</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>LF</b>	Language focus		
<b>SF</b>	Strategy focus		

Table 7: Checklist Item 7 – Aim of the while-reading exercises

<b>Code</b>	<b>The post-reading exercise aims at</b>	<b>Tick</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>PR</b>	Eliciting a personal response (agree/disagree, like/dislike etc.)		
<b>EV</b>	Evaluating the text		
<b>U</b>	Checking understanding of the text		
<b>LC</b>	Consolidating language		
<b>P</b>	Producing output		

Table 8: Checklist Item 8 – Aim of the post-reading exercises

The last two items on the checklist focus on the post-reading exercises. The second to last item examines the different activity formats. These formats, as presented in *Table 9*, were created mainly based on the requirements of the Austrian and Finnish matriculation examination. Multiple choice, short answers, true/false with justification and multiple matching are part of the reading test of the Austrian matriculation examination. Multiple choice, cloze tests, open questions, summaries and translations or description assignments are possible formats in the Finnish matriculation examination (Ylioppilastuntintolautakunta – Description of tests). Moreover, a first analysis of the textbooks lead to the inclusion of activity formats such as true/false/ with correction, command words, sequencing, questions in English or in the L1 (Finnish). The activity format labelled command words includes those exercises with instructions such as “analyse”, “examine” or “compare”. These words are also sometimes called instructional words. An example for such a post-reading exercise is found, for instance, in *Prime Time 7* where it says “Describe Banksy’s Leita and the different reactions the image has aroused.” (Hellmayr et al. 2018: 110-111).

An example for a translation activity is, for instance, found in *On track 6* on page 146. The instruction reads “Phrase hunt. Find the following expressions in the text” and contains eight phrases in Finnish that have to be translated and found in the reading (Daffue-Karsten et al. 2019: 141-143).

Questions with open answers in German (L1) were not included in this checklist as they do not appear in any of the analysed texts. Short answers are part of the questions with answers in E/FIN. An explanation of the other activity formats can be found in Nuttall (2005).

Code	The post-reading exercise corresponds to a certain activity format	Tick	Comment
MC	Multiple choice		
TFJ	True or false with justification		
TFNG	True or false or not given		
TFC	True or false with correction		
QE	Questions with Open answers in L2		
QFIN	Questions with Open answers in L1		
MM	Multiple matching		
S	Sequencing		
CW	Command words		
Trans	Translation		
GF	Gap filling		
SUM	Summaries		
O	<i>Other:</i>		

Table 9: Checklist Item 9 – Activity format

The tenth and last item on the checklist works with Freeman’s taxonomy on comprehension question types (2014). The structure and results of her study were already explained in detail in section 5.4.6. In short, she categorised the comprehension questions into different types. The categories are labelled “content questions”, “language questions” and “affect questions”. Then, eight sub-categories, as seen in the table below, were created in order to receive in-depth data on the question types. The comprehension question types are taken from her study and applied without any change to 20% of the reading comprehension texts in the Austrian and Finnish textbook series under investigation. The selection of the texts in this study was based on the following criteria: First, the selection of literary and non-literary texts was made based on how often these two types appeared in each textbook series. Hence, a weighted number of literary and non-literary was chosen in order to be representative for each textbook series. Moreover, the effort was made to choose texts containing different activity formats as well as texts from different parts of the textbook.

The post-reading questions are of the following type (as defined by Diana Freeman)		Tick	Comment
Content questions	Textually explicit		
	Textually implicit		
	Inferential comprehension		
Language questions	Reorganization		
	Lexical		

	Form		
Affect questions	Personal response		
	Evaluation		

Table 10: Checklist Item 10 – Comprehension question types

After the context-and-needs analysis, the impressionistic method and the checklist, the **in-depth analysis** concludes the research project. The in-depth analysis is, in fact, the analysis of the checklist. Thus, the last part of the analysis is not separate from the previous one and will, therefore, be dealt with as one step in the findings section.

## 7.4. Findings

### 7.4.1. The context-and-needs analysis

In this section, the findings of the context-and-needs analysis are presented. First, the Finnish curriculum is briefly examined, which is followed by the Austrian curriculum. The last part deals with the CEFR, which applies to both countries.

#### 7.4.1.1. The Finnish curriculum

The newest Finnish curriculum for upper secondary school was published in the year 2015 and has been in use since 2016. There is a more recent one, but as this updated curriculum will not be in use until 2021, the one from the year 2015 will be taken for this analysis.

English as the first foreign language (A1 language) means that the target level is B2 regarding all skills (Opetushallitus 2015:108). Some of the aims of learning English are to “understand the significance and role of English as the language of international communication”, “develop as a user of English and an actor in the culturally diverse world in local, European, and global communities”, “gather experiences of reading, interpreting, and discussing more extensive texts in English” (Opetushallitus 2015: 109). Moreover, “in teaching, bridges between different languages should be built” according to the curriculum (Opetushallitus 2015: 197). It is also stated that it is entirely natural for pupils to advance at different speeds, which means that some may need additional support and differentiated materials (Opetushallitus 2015: 107).

There are six obligatory courses in upper secondary school in English. Each course has its own topic and focus. Since the textbooks from course 3-6 are analysed in this study, only these are illuminated below.

Course 3 focuses on cultural phenomena. This course addresses multiliteracies in a more profound way. The topics include, besides cultural phenomena, the English media and



creativity. Course 4 focuses on society and the surrounding world. In this course, different types of text and different types of register are in focus. Individual and societal responsibility are investigated as well as human rights and possible ways of having an impact in today's society (Opetushallitus 2015: 110). The theme of course 5 is science and the future. Likewise, different texts and registers are analysed. The topics include the future seen from a technological point of view as well as in terms of digitalisation. Moreover, English as the international language of science and technology is discussed. Course 6 concentrates on studies, work and livelihood. The pupils get acquainted with text types which they might also encounter in their further studies or at work. The topics include further studies or career plans and the world of work including in international settings (Opetushallitus 2015: 110).

#### **7.4.1.2. The Austrian curriculum**

This section provides information on the Austrian curriculum for upper secondary schools in terms of foreign language learning. The aim of foreign language learning, according to the Austrian curriculum, is to equip pupils with the necessary skills (listening, reading, speaking, writing) to meet society's demands in private, professional and public settings. Moreover, foreign language learning contributes to the development of skills such as social and interpersonal skills in multicultural environments. Cross-cultural competence is essential and should be developed. Open-mindedness towards the languages of the neighbouring countries of Austria and the languages of the autochthone languages of Austria, as well as those of minority groups and migrants, are to be promoted (BMBWF 2004: 126).

The four skills, listening, writing, speaking and reading, should be practised regularly and to a similar degree, with integrated approaches being preferred. Additionally, the curriculum states that as much target language as possible should be used in the classroom. The use of German is to be kept to a minimum. However, the reflective use of various languages, e.g. one's mother tongue or other foreign languages, ought to be promoted in the classroom (BMBWF 2004: 127-128). The materials must be up-to-date, and the use of authentic text materials is highly encouraged (BMBWF 2004: 128).

The goal of learning English as the first foreign language is to reach the level B2 in all skills. The curriculum states what the pupils need to be able to do in the foreign language in each grade. In terms of reading in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, the pupils ought to be able to independently read and understand longer texts, reports and articles which thematise current questions as well as literary texts. Moreover, they should be able to scan texts to find important individual pieces of information. The pupils must be able to understand the main message of linguistically

complex texts, as well as texts on topics which are literary, concrete and abstract. In addition, they should be able to understand texts in which the writer takes a specific position (BMBWF 2004: 132-133). Reading in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade means that the pupils can ideally read and understand a broad range of different texts – literary and on less familiar topics. They can understand the main message as well as specific information (BMBWF 2004: 133).

#### **7.4.1.3. The CEFR**

In addition to the national curriculum, foreign language teaching in Austria and Finland follows the guidelines of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The CEFR “provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe” (Council of Europe 2011: 1). The CEFR describes which skills language learners need to develop to communicate effectively in a foreign language. There are in total six levels of proficiency (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2) which identify traits that a learner in that level can already achieve in that language. These can-do statements make it easier for students, pupils, teachers and textbook writers alike to estimate the proficiency level of the learner. In general, the A1 and A2 stage is the beginner’s stage and describes the basic use of the language. B1 and B2 are defined by the pupils’ capability to use the language independently. Pupils and students at the C1 and C2 level are considered proficient users (Council of Europe 2011: 32).

For this study, the reading descriptors are of importance. While the checklist in this study only focuses on the broad categorisation of overall reading comprehension, the CEFR also contains numerous sub-categories, such as reading for correspondence, reading for orientation, reading for information and argument and reading instructions. Therefore, with the help of the CEFR, it is possible to accurately pinpoint the pupils’ proficiency in different areas of language learning.

Moreover, the CEFR lists topics and themes which the proficient reader should be familiar with, such as environment, daily life, free time, relationships, health, education, shopping, food and drink, services, places, language and weather (Council of Europe 2011: 52). The CEFR also lists text types, such as books (fiction and non-fiction), literary journals, magazines, newspapers, brochures, leaflets, packaging and labelling on goods, letters, essays, reports and papers (Council of Europe 2011: 95).

### 7.4.2. The impressionistic method

In this part of the thesis, general information on the textbook series is given. Additional details and information can be found in the fact file in the appendix. Likewise, one example of a reading comprehension activity of each textbook series is added to the appendix. Besides general information, the reading comprehension activities receive a special focus and are analysed in terms of quantity and its role compared to the other skills as well as vocabulary and grammar in the textbooks. Thus, the first research question will be answered in this section.

First, the general impressions of the textbook series are presented individually, starting with the Finnish textbooks *On Track* and *Insights* which are followed by the Austrian textbooks *English in Context* and *Prime Time*. The final section is devoted to the first research question.

#### 7.4.2.1. On Track

The textbook series *On Track* (OT) was published by Sanoma Pro Oy in Helsinki, Finland and was written by Louisa Daffue-Karsten, Mike Davies, Tuija Kae, Riitta Myller, Pirjo Rantanen and Petri Vuorinen. Sanoma Pro is the most prominent educational publisher on the Finnish market and offers printed as well as digital educational materials for all subjects. The publishing year of these books ranges from 2015 to 2019. Course 6 was published in 2019 and is thus considered a recent publication. The intended audience of this textbook series consists of pupils in high school who study English as their A1 language. Besides the student's book, which is also available as an e-book, the audio for the listening comprehension activities can be accessed online.

In total, there are eight books in this textbook series. As the Finnish high school system is based on courses, one textbook is meant for one course. The last two courses are optional and are only taken by pupils who choose to study English in-depth. Thus, for this research project, *On track* 3 – 6 were selected, as the last two courses (7 and 8) are not mandatory.

The page count of the textbooks is as followed: *OT* 3 contains 213 pages, *OT* 4 240 pages, *OT* 5 239 pages and *OT* 6 232 pages in total. The majority of the book covers the units and the topics. The last 45 to 50 pages are devoted to grammar explanations in English and Finnish as well as to grammatical exercises. The themes of the different textbooks are, roughly speaking, arts and culture (*OT* 3), interculturality and the media (*OT* 4), science and technology (*OT* 5), and education, work and economy (*OT* 6). Some exercises include a focus on Finland. There is, for instance, a listening exercise on a Finnish comedian (Daffue-Karsten 2015: 72) as well

as text comparing the legal ages in Finland versus Britain (Daffue-Karsten 2017: 20). A post-reading exercise of a text on unique buildings around the world encourages the pupils to reflect on Finnish towns and the architecture in Finland (Daffue-Karsten 2015: 146).

Regarding the structure of the textbook, each book has a short foreword of about half a page which addresses the pupils directly with phrases such as “you will learn why...”, “this course looks at...” and “learning happens when you make it happen”. The table of contents illustrates the overall structure of the book by assigning page numbers to the different topics (in total 16) and units (in total 4) as well as to the grammar section at the end of the book. Each textbook contains a *Precourse* before the first unit, which introduces key ideas relevant to all the units. Then, unit 1 starts with the first topic. Each unit contains four topics. Each of the first two topics in the unit contains a text. A list of vocabulary and exercises are found after each text. The third topic of each unit contains theme vocabulary or exercises on pronunciation. The last topic of the unit presents a “read on” text as well as keywords and exercises.

In terms of visuals and layout, almost every double page contains a colourful and often big image, a table or chart. Shading in different colours is used behind texts.

In summary, it can be stated that the *On track* series clearly labels the key readings already in the table of contents. The texts are situated at the beginning of the topics after a short introductory activity. Most topics seem to be built around these texts and the topics introduced by the texts. The role attributed to vocabulary seems to be great as well since the vocabulary sections are clearly indicated in the table of contents and take up considerable space.

#### **7.4.2.2. Insights**

The second Finnish textbook series, *Insights (I)*, was published by Otava and was written by Elina Karpalo, Paula Keltto, Mark Kilmer, Päivi Kuusivaara, Teijo Päckilä and Annukka Suonio. Otava is a Finnish publishing house which does not only focus on educational materials but publishes all kinds of different books, such as novels. The branch Otava Learning is responsible for the educational materials, which are published both as printed and digital versions.

The publishing years for the books under analysis range from 2016 to 2017. Some books are the first edition, whereas others are in their second edition. The textbooks are intended for high school students who have English as their A1 language. The student’s book is also available as an e-book. Furthermore, the audio recordings for the listening exercises are available for free

online and can be easily accessed via an app. There is also a digital teacher's guide, which provides further material, the key to the exercises, and lesson planning tips. In addition, there is the possibility to obtain digital tests. These tests aim to prepare the pupils for the matriculation exam.

Like *On Track*, *Insights* is a textbook series consisting of eight textbooks in total. Each textbook is devised for one course. As the first six courses are mandatory, the books for the courses 3-6 have been selected for the analysis. These books are used in the last two years before the matriculation examination in the mandatory English courses.

*Insights Course 3* contains 173 pages; course 4 consists of 196 pages, course 5 has 179 pages and course 6 contains the most with 199 pages. Around half of the book is devoted to the units of the textbook. The other half contains additional vocabulary exercises, a grammar section with grammatical exercises as well as a section on "learning to learn" including additional prompts for writing tasks. The big themes of the textbooks are culture (course 3), societies (course 4), science (course 5), your individual future including further studies, the world of work and the economy (course 6). Some exercises feature topics on Finland. There is, for instance, a text on the Nordic countries and their way of life (Karpalo 2017: 69). Moreover, an exercise asks the pupils to write down ten things that make them happy in their hometown or in Finland. Another exercise includes an internet search "googling strange facts about Finland" (Karpalo 2017: 77). Other examples for exercises with a focus on Finland include reflecting on the big milestones in a young person's life in Finland (Karpalo 2016: 69) or a festival that exhibits something very Finnish (Karpalo 2016: 85).

In terms of the structure of the textbook, there are nine to ten units in total in each textbook. Most units contain a key text. However, some units consist of workshops instead, which deal with vocabulary or projects. The table of contents also lists the CEFR level of the texts, the type of text as well as the special focus of the whole unit, which may be for instance to discuss pros and cons or to seek information and to a presentation. After the table of contents, there is a short introductory activity (around two pages) which introduces the topics of the textbook. Then, the first unit commences with an "engage" activity. Every unit in this textbook contains this "engage" activity before the text. After the text, a list of vocabulary with translations into Finnish is provided, which is followed by various exercises on the text and also beyond that.

The books use different colours and numerous big images. The colours are used to make some textboxes stand out.

Similar to *On track*, *Insights* seems to put emphasis on vocabulary and glossaries. The main texts are usually at the beginning of the unit after a short “engage” activity.

#### **7.4.2.3. English in Context**

*English in Context 7/8 (EiC)* was published by the Austrian publishing house Veritas and was written by James Abram and Megan Hadgraft. Veritas is Austria’s biggest publishing house for educational materials. *EiC* was published in 2018 and is the 1<sup>st</sup> edition. The textbook series is based on the textbook *Context 21*, written by Barbara Derkow Disselbeck and Allen J. Woppert, which was published by Cornelsen. *EiC* combines two books in one as the title suggests. Thus, the books are aimed at English pupils who are in the last two years before their matriculation examination. As this textbook follows the curriculum for the school type Allgemeinbildende höhere Schulen (AHS), this book is targeted towards pupils attending this type of school.

English in Context is a textbook series consisting of 3 books in total. The student’s book is available as a printed book as well as digitally. In addition, there are other materials which provide additional exercises for the students. These are called “English in Context 5-8 Companion”, “English in Context 7/8 Tasks for Testing/Matura”, “English in Context 7/8 Training”. Moreover, there is a teacher’s guide available.

The book contains 298 pages in total. The last thirty pages of the book consist of additional exercises labelled “check your progress”. These exercises are either reading, listening, writing, language in use or speaking exercises. Additional information on, e.g. the British and the American System of Government in the form of a chart, language for tasks and discussions are part of this section as well. The topics covered in the textbook are Youth/Adolescence, Media, UK, the World of Work, USA, Home and Houses, Science, Technology, Environment, Globalisation, Diversity, and Shakespeare. Few exercises focus specifically on Austria. For instance, there is a speech given by an Austrian politician (Abram & Hadgraft 2018: 204) or a text on Kunsthau Graz and innovative buildings in Austria or abroad (Abram & Hadgraft 2018: 139).

Concerning the structure of the textbook, it is divided into semesters and then further subdivided into the topics and units. Each topic (in total 10 topics) contains three units (in total 30 units). Each unit has three or four sections labelled A, B, C and D. The sections often contain a reading comprehension, language in use task, or a listening comprehension. Each unit is introduced with a “lead in” activity consisting of a double page containing numerous pictures

and some questions to introduce the topic. Then, a double page is filled with a “words in context” activity. This activity consists of a text with highlighted words, which are then recycled in the following exercises.

Visuals and images feature on most pages. There is little use of additional colours, giving it a more formal look. Language help and fact file textboxes are coloured in yellow to stand out from the rest of the text.

Many texts are clearly marked as reading comprehension activities. These are labelled “reading comprehension: sequencing” or “reading comprehension: multiple choice”, indicating the format of the post-reading activity. In addition, the three stages of reading are also often clearly labelled with “before you read”, “while reading” and “after reading”. Thus, the instruction reads, for instance, “After reading: Complete the table below” (Abram & Hadgraft 2018: 45).

#### **7.4.2.4. Prime Time**

*Prime Time (PT)* was published by Österreichischer Bundesverlag, ÖBV, and was written by Georg Hellmayr, Stephan Waba and Heike Mlakar. ÖBV is a publishing house focusing solely on educational materials. The year of publication is 2018 (*PT 7*) and 2019 (*PT 8*). The intended audience for this textbook series consists of pupils who are in the last two years before their matriculation examination. The textbook is based on the curriculum for the school type AHS, which means that it is targeted towards pupils attending this type of school.

The series consists of four textbooks for upper secondary school. A CD and DVD are included in each textbook. E-book versions are also available. There are additional materials for pupils, such as “Prime Time Writing” and “Prime Time Language in Use”. Teachers can also benefit from the availability of a teacher’s handbook and a teacher’s test resource pack.

*Prime Time 7* and *8* contain both 208 pages each. The last fifty pages of the textbook are used for semester self-check exercises, exam preparation and a list of vocabulary. The self-check exercises, as well as the ones targeted at exam preparation, practise the four skills. There are self-assessment sections, where the pupils can tick if they have achieved one of the mentioned can-do descriptors. Some of the topics covered include the UK, Health, Diversity, India, Celebrities, Art, Shakespeare, Ireland, Environment, Migration, Shopping, Science and Technology, and Education. There is one exercise explicitly focusing on Austria on page 39 in *PT 7*. The pupils are encouraged to share their experiences with Austria’s national identity and how it differs from other nations.

In terms of the structure of the textbooks, each unit is kicked off with a double page presenting pictures, words, phrases, and questions related to the topic of the unit, which is introduced to the pupils. Moreover, the goals of the unit are mentioned in the top right-hand corner. On the next pages, texts and other exercises follow. Each unit ends with a section called “spot on language” which practises vocabulary and grammar. In addition, there are two “check-out” pages which practise some of the skills.

There are images on most pages. However, these are usually rather small and in a corner. Colours are used somewhat sparingly, such as in textboxes. The “check-out” pages have a completely green background. Only a blue textbox containing statements of what the pupils can do is in a different colour. The “Spot on” language pages are coloured in blue.

Many texts are clearly marked as reading comprehension exercises. The title of the text is often preceded by the word “reading”, such as for instance “Reading: A glimpse at Hazel’s life” (Hellmayr et al. 2019: 74). The other skills are also clearly labelled.

#### **7.4.2.5. Research question 1**

In this section, the occurrence and frequency of the four skills, in addition to vocabulary and grammar, will be analysed. The first research question will be answered, which was stated as follows: *To what extent do the textbooks under analysis offer a proportionate number of activities related to the four different skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking) and the two language systems (vocabulary, grammar)? Which role is attributed to texts and reading exercises in the textbooks?*

The two *PT* textbooks contain altogether 108 texts which were developed into reading comprehension exercises; in other words, containing some sort of pre-, while- or post-reading activity and having the practice of the reading skill as the main aim of the activity. 57 texts could be identified in *EiC 7/8*. *OT* contains 60 texts and *Insights* 36 in total. It would have been natural for the textbook series containing the smallest number of pages to have the fewest texts. However, this is not the case as can be seen in *Table 11*. *Insights* has the fewest texts which were prepared as a reading comprehension activity but nevertheless has 747 pages in total. *OT* has a similarly low ratio of texts to pages. The Austrian textbooks contain significantly more reading comprehension activities with regard to the number of pages. *PT* consists of the most texts, also regarding the ratio of texts to pages.



	<b>Insights</b>	<b>On Track</b>	<b>Prime Time</b>	<b>EiC</b>
<b>Texts (total)</b>	36	60	108	57
<b>Pages (total)</b>	747	924	416	298
<b>Ratio (texts: pages)</b>	4.8 %	6.5 %	25.9 %	19.1 %

Table 11: Ratio of texts to pages of the textbook series

The number of identified reading comprehension activities does not, however, reflect the instances of reading that take place. Naturally, reading occurs much more often as it is necessary in textbooks almost all the time. For example, just being able to read and adequately understand the instructions for a speaking activity already involves reading. However, this kind of understanding of reading is not how this research paper defines the skill reading. Those activities where the aim is to read, be that stated explicitly/implicitly or inferred, was counted as a reading skill in this study. The categorisation of the various activities, which is an essential step to obtaining an answer to the first research question, is not a straightforward task. Some activities in the textbook do not have an explicit instruction telling the reader how this exercise must be carried out. Post-reading questions are one example, which can be arguably answered in spoken or in written form. In this case, it is up to the teacher to decide, but for the purpose of this study, both or multiple options were ticked. Moreover, many exercises integrate skills. For instance, a listening exercise is often followed up by questions which need to be answered (in written or in spoken form) or a multiple-choice exercise, which requires reading the questions and possible answers.

For this part of the research project, the activities of the textbooks were categorised into one of the following groups: reading, listening, writing, speaking, vocabulary, grammar. Then, the frequency data, which was collected by counting the instances of the skills or language system in a textbook series, were calculated into percentages to give more insight.

The results show that *Insights* focuses significantly on vocabulary (27%), grammar (22%) and speaking (19%) activities as seen in the pie chart below. Similarly, the second Finnish textbook series, *OT*, shows a clear focus on vocabulary (26%), speaking (19%) and grammar (18%). Reading is in both textbooks on the third place considering all the skills and the language system (*Insights* 12%, *OT* 13%). Listening is the least used skill in the Finnish textbooks with only 5% in *Insights* and 10% in *OT*. These numbers represent all activities in the books, including additional exercises in the appendix. The grammar activities were focused in the appendix section of the Finnish textbooks, while they were rare in the units themselves (*OT* 8% without appendix, *Insights* 6% without appendix). All in all, almost half of the activities

involve a focus on vocabulary and grammar; the language system. Then, the productive skills come in second while the receptive skills (primarily due to low numbers of listening activities, especially in *Insights*) come in last.

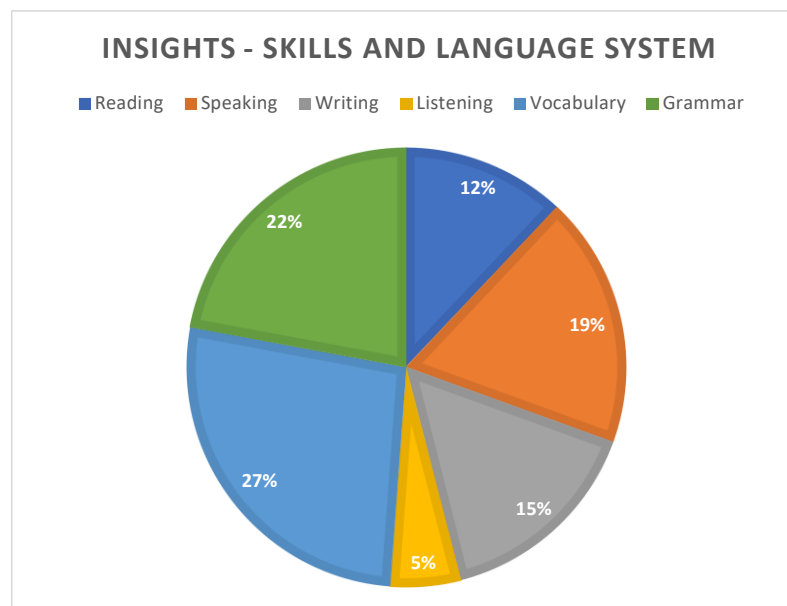


Figure 1: Insights skills and language system

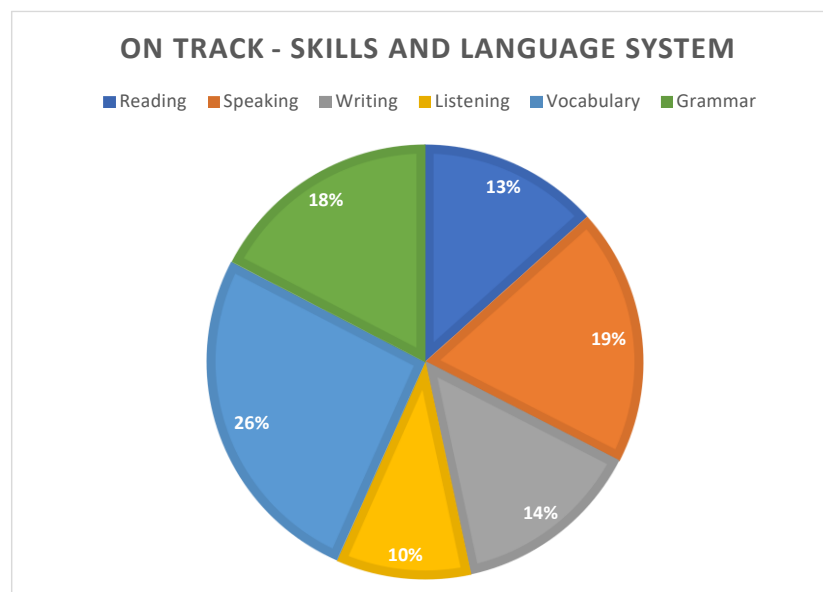


Figure 2: On Track skills and language system

Concerning the Austrian textbooks, *PT* and *EiC* show that writing (*PT* 27%, *EiC* 19%), speaking (*PT* 26%, *EiC* 36%) and reading (*PT* 23%, *EiC* 23%) are the most used skills. In contrast with the Finnish textbooks, vocabulary and grammar seem to play a relatively smaller role as only 16% (*PT*) and 18% (*EiC*) are exercises on the language system as compared to the almost 50% of the Finnish textbooks. Instead, the Austrian textbooks focus on the skills.

However, one of the skills, namely listening, is considerably less represented (8% in PT, 6% in *EiC*). The appendices are only comprised of exercises featuring the four skills, which is thus in stark contrast to the Finnish textbook series, whose appendices focused mainly on grammar.

In terms of productive and receptive skills, the productive skills outweigh the receptive skills. 53% (*PT*) and 45% (*EiC*) involve the productive skills, whereas 31% (*PT*) and 27% (*EiC*) focus on the receptive skills.

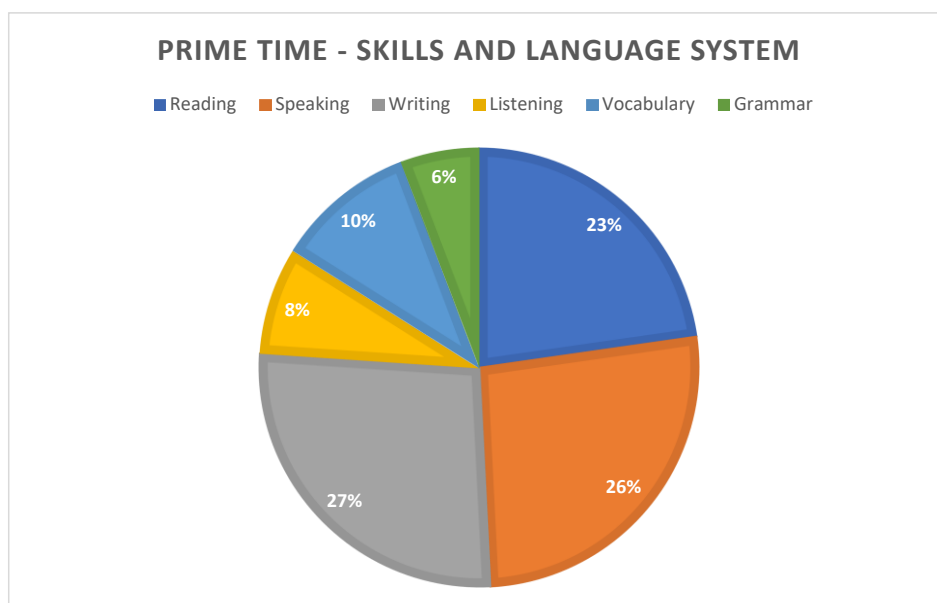


Figure 3: Prime Time skills and language system

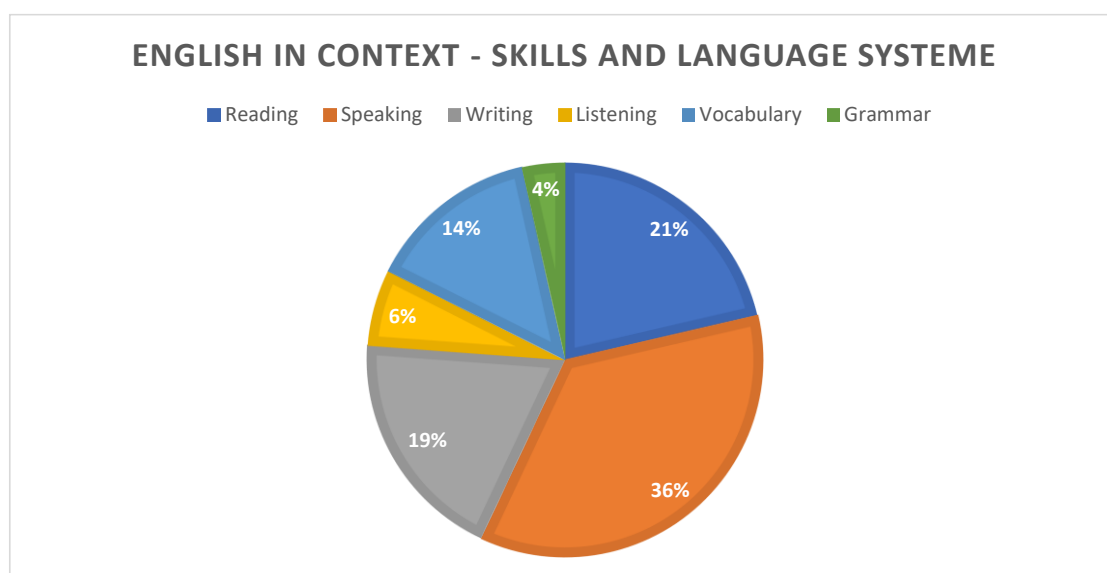


Figure 4: English in Context skills and language system

Comparing the textbooks from the two countries with each other, the stark difference between the amount of vocabulary and grammar exercises as compared to the exercises practising the

skills stands out in the data. The Finnish textbooks focus much more on vocabulary and grammar exercises than the Austrian ones do. Much more than 50% is shared by speaking, writing and reading in the Austrian textbooks. Therefore, these three skills are used the most when compared to the other skills/ language system. In terms of skills in the Finnish textbooks, speaking, writing and reading are also used the most, but only if grammar and vocabulary are disregarded. Thus, listening exercises are the minority in all the textbooks under analysis. Due to this lack of listening exercises, the receptive skills (reading and listening) are employed less often than the productive skills (speaking, writing). However, looking at reading on its own reveals that reading is a prominent skill in the Austrian textbooks and slightly less so in the Finnish ones. This has already been hinted at when looking at the texts versus pages ratio in table 11.

The hypotheses of the first research question needs to be entirely or at least partially rejected. The skills are not used in a balanced way as the textbooks include too few listening exercises. Moreover, at least the Finnish textbooks rely heavily on vocabulary and grammar exercises as more than 50% is devoted to exercises where the language system is practised. Thus, there are not fewer grammar and vocabulary exercises than expected. The Austrian textbooks contain, as expected, fewer grammar and vocabulary exercises compared with the exercises training the skills (listening being an exception). Only the vocabulary exercises in *English in Context* seem to be high in number (14%). *OT* seems to be the textbook which is the closest to containing a balanced approach of all the skills and the language system. All skills and grammar are between 10% and 20%. Only vocabulary is considerably above the 20 % mark, namely at 26%.

Reading takes up a considerable position in the Austrian textbooks and comes in second (*EiC*) and in third place (*PT*). More than 20% is devoted to practising reading. However, in the Finnish textbooks, reading is in fifth place (*I*, *OT*), meaning the second last place.

### **7.4.3. The checklist and in-depth approach**

This section contains the findings obtained through the checklist method which are analysed using the in-depth approach. Moreover, through the data obtained from the checklist, the second and third research questions will be answered. The checklist is discussed item per item.

#### **7.4.3.1. Checklist item 1: Topics**

The first item on the checklist explores the topics in the textbooks under analysis. *Figure 5: Topics* shows the frequency of the topics mentioned in each textbook series as a portion of the

total sum of topics mentions. Some texts were allowed to be categorised under two categories to reflect the variety of topics mentioned in the texts.

The topic cluster containing art, culture, creativity, literature and music ranks highly among all textbook series. The Finnish textbook series showed a strong presence of topics under science, and modern technology and digitisation. The Austrian textbook series featured more topics regarding youth / becoming an adult, as well as showing a presence of migration and multicultural society. Of course, one should mention that in the textbook series under one origin (Austrian or Finnish) some topics were strongly featured in one of the series whilst not featuring so often in the another, e.g. in the Austrian series modern technology and digitisation was frequently mentioned in *EiC* but not so much in *Prime Time*. *Prime Time* seemed to have an exclusive focus on “Applied geography” which was defined as texts with a focus on a specific country, such as the UK, the US, or a combination of countries. The *EiC* series focuses on the topics society, politics, and human rights when comparing with the other textbook series. The *Insights* series has the strongest presence of work, education, and rules / laws.

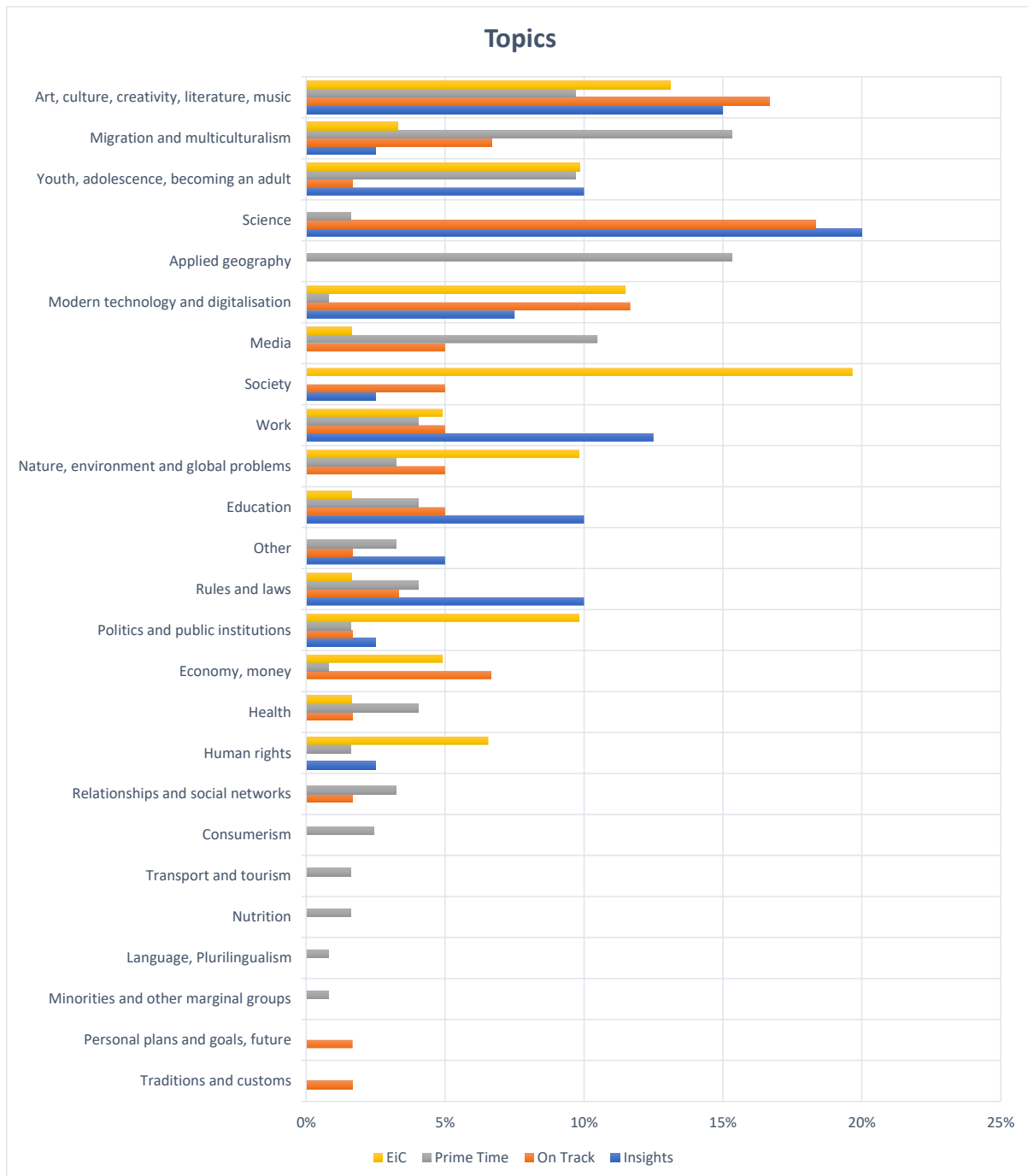


Figure 5: Topics

#### 7.4.3.2. Checklist item 2: Text type

The second item on the checklist investigates the text types. A broad distinction between literary and non-literary texts was made.

A trend which can be observed across all four textbook series is the predominance of the non-literary texts. *Table 12* illustrates these findings by supporting it with the collected data.

	On Track		Insights		Prime Time		EiC	
<b>Literary texts</b>	19	32%	9	25%	15	14%	18	32%
<b>Non-literary texts</b>	41	68%	27	75%	93	86%	39	68%

Table 12: Checklist Item 2 Results – Text Types

Around two-thirds of the texts in *OT*, *I*, and *EiC* are non-literary. Only the *PT* series seems to rely even more on the non-literary text types as almost 90% of the texts are non-literary. Interestingly, *OT* and *EiC* show precisely the same percentage of literary (32%) and non-literary texts (68%).

Moreover, the comments section offered space to take note of the sub-categories of literary and non-literary texts without quantifying it. The non-literary text type contains numerous articles from newspapers and magazines. Articles feature thus heavily in all four series. Blog posts are also featured, albeit to a much lesser extent.

Some more unusual and unique text types in the Austrian textbook series are, for instance, a selection of oaths and pledges which are required of immigrants if they want to become citizens of Australia, Canada, the UK or the USA (*EiC*, p. 244). Moreover, one text features The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and lists a short description of article 1-10 (*EiC*, p. 219). Another interesting example is an extract from a legal text which was found on a bulletin board in a US Court of Law (*PT* 7, p. 29). This text appears in the context of smoking and health. There is also a short extract from an academic journal (Psychological Bulletin) featured in *PT* 8 (p. 38-39) and an extract from a book, which may be classified as a self-help book, which addresses the difference between the way men and women think and communicate (*PT* 8, p. 38).

Likewise, the Finnish textbooks offer some interesting text types within the non-literary text type category. *OT* 4 features a speech (p. 25-26) given by a young 19-year-old who explains why many young people do not vote in Britain. Moreover, it includes an extract from a dissertation entitled “The relevance of culture today” by Maia Sertovics of the University of North Carolina (p. 135-137). *Insights Course* 5 includes a short extract from a lab report (p. 83) and *course* 6 offers the description of an American college course on Contract Law (p. 19). Moreover, *course* 4 contains Queen Elizabeth I’s Speech to the Troops at Tilbury, 1588 (p. 67).

Concerning the literary text types, extracts from novels seem to play a dominant role. All textbooks except for *English in Context* also contain at least one piece of drama and a poem.

*OT*, *PT* and *Insights* contain a play by Shakespeare, namely *Macbeth*, *Richard III*, and the prologue of *Romeo and Juliet*, respectively. *Insights* and *PT* also contain a modern play. Interestingly, *Insights* also included a Finnish translation of the prologue of *Romeo and Juliet*. Examples of poetry are poems by Emily Dickinson, Carl Sandburg (*I*), W.B. Yeats, Wendy Cope (*OT*), Jackie Kay (*PT*), James McAuley and Maya Angelous (*EiC*). Short stories and song lyrics are also part of the literary text type category. However, they rarely feature in the textbooks under analysis.

In addition to the categorisation of the texts, the sources of the texts were mostly added at the end of the text, or, in the case of *OT*, mostly as part of the text. Some texts did not indicate any source, which suggests that these texts were written by the textbook authors themselves. However, these texts are a minority. Moreover, *PT* clearly labels if these texts were altered. Most of the articles are in an abridged and adapted version in *PT*. However, it can be assumed that the articles and other text types of all textbook series are equally altered slightly to fit the needs of the learners.

To conclude this section, it appears that all four series contain considerably fewer literary texts than non-literary texts. Even though the majority of the non-literary texts are articles, some more unique text types were also found. The literary text type category is dominated by extracts from novels. However, poems and scripts from dramas as well as song lyrics and short stories also feature.

#### **7.4.3.3. Checklist Item 3: Length of the texts**

In this checklist item, the texts were categorised according to their length and put into one of the five categories as defined in the section on methodology.

*Figure 6* presents the findings.



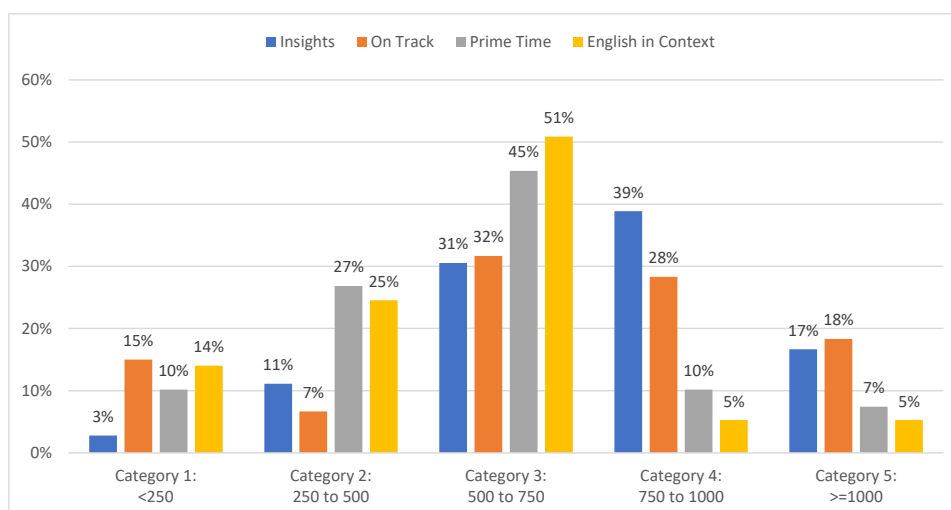


Figure 6: Checklist Item 3 Results – Length of the texts

As can be seen from *Figure 6*, the Finnish textbook series contain more longer texts than the Austrian textbook series. The two highest percentages are from category 3 (501-700 words) and 4 (701-1000 words) in the Finnish textbook series, whereas category 2 (250-500 words) and 3 (501-700 words) are most prevalent in the Austrian textbook series, meaning that the latter series contain many short to medium-length type of texts whereas the Finnish series contain medium-length and longer types of texts.

Looking at the two categories which contain the longest type of texts, namely category 4 and 5, the Austrian textbook series contain rather few texts from category 4 (701-1000 words) and 5 (>1000 words). The corresponding percentages are both equal to or under 10%. The percentages of the Finnish textbook series in category 4 and 5 are all far above the 10% mark, ranging between 17% and 39% (*I*). *OT 6* contains the longest text with around 2000 words.

Category 1, which with under 250 words is the category containing the shortest texts, is marginally represented by *Insights* (3%). However, the other textbooks, *OT* (15%), *PT* (10%) and *EiC* (14%) contain a considerable number of short texts.

In conclusion, it can be stated that the Finnish textbook series contain more medium-length to longer texts, whereas the Austrian textbook series contain a considerable number of medium-length type of texts and many shorter texts.

#### 7.4.3.4. Checklist item 4: CEFR scales

The fourth item on the checklist investigates the CEFR levels of the texts. Some textbook series already presented the CEFR levels on the text or unit level (*Insights* and *EiC*), whilst the remaining series (*PT* and *OT*) had their CEFR levels determined manually according to the

checklist. *Insights* series included the CEFR levels for every key text. Likewise, *EiC* contains the descriptors and CEFR levels for all the skills at the end of each unit, which made the categorisation of the texts according to the CEFR scales easier as well. Thus, only the texts in *PT* and *OT* were analysed according to the CEFR scales in checklist item four.

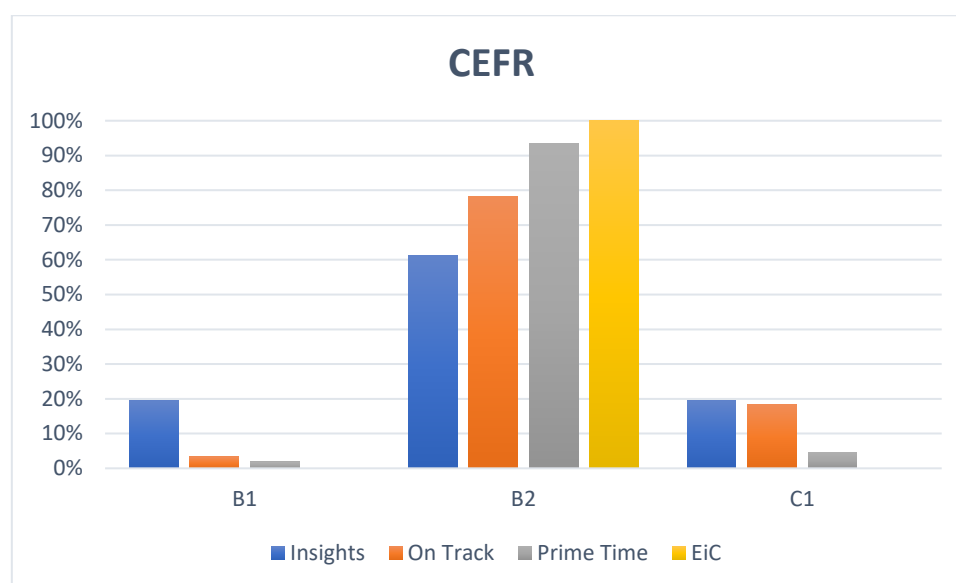


Figure 7: CEFR scales

Figure 7: CEFR scales shows that the majority of the texts in all the books are at the B2 level. *EiC* contains only texts on this level, while the other series also include a few texts which may be considered B1 and C1 texts; thus, texts being slightly below and above the target level B2. It is not surprising that most texts were B2 texts given this is the target level stated in both curricula. Interestingly, the Finnish textbook series contain more texts that deviate from this target level. *Insights* contains almost 20% of B1 and C1 texts. *OT*, on the other hand, does not feature many B1 texts (3%), but includes a considerable number of C1 texts in their textbooks (18%). *PT*, the only Austrian textbook which contains texts at other levels than B2, contains only very few texts at the B1 (2%) and C1 level (5%). Thus, the Finnish textbooks show a greater variety of texts at different levels than the Austrian textbooks do.

#### 7.4.3.5. Checklist item 5: Pre-, while and post-reading exercises and integration of skills

This item on the checklist investigates the inclusion of pre-, while and post-reading exercises. Moreover, the different activity formats of the various stages are listed. Afterwards, these exercises are categorised as reading, writing, speaking, listening, vocabulary and/or grammar in order to analyse the integration of skills in these three stages.

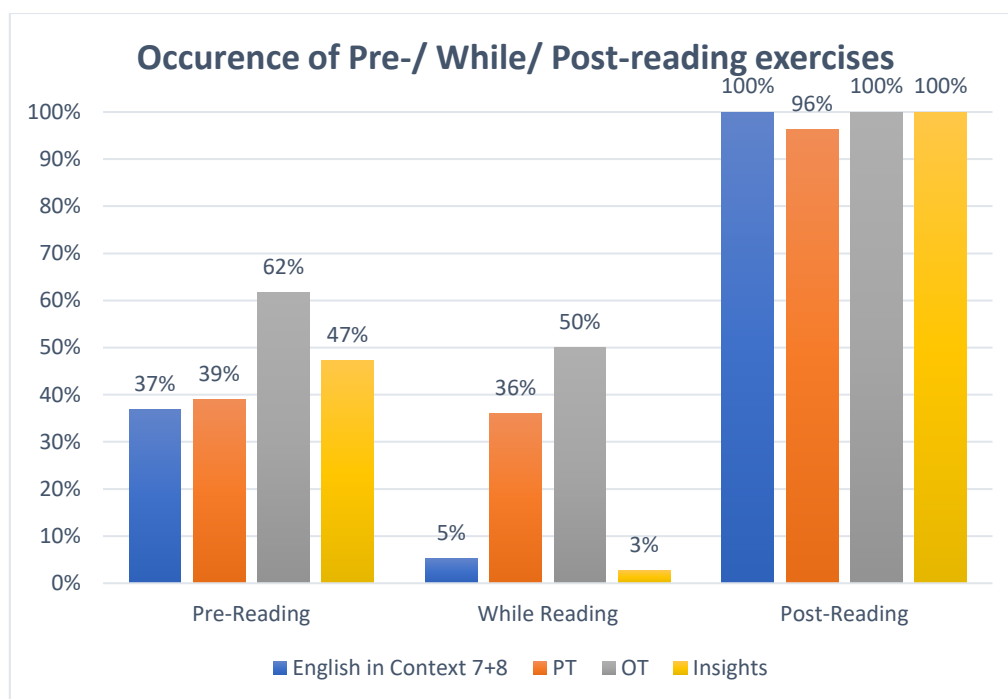


Figure 8: Occurrence of pre-, while- and post-reading exercises

Figure 8 illustrates the distribution of exercise occurrence in each textbook series. Overall, around half of all texts contain a pre-reading stage. Regarding the Austrian textbooks, around 40% of the texts include this kind of activity, whereas the percentages for the Finnish textbooks are slightly higher; around 55% of the texts on average contain a pre-reading stage. *OT* raises the average for the Finnish textbooks, as 62% of the texts include a pre-reading exercise.

Some common activities of the pre-reading stage include making a list, discussing with your partner, coming up with a definition of a term, analysing a picture, making a mind map, sharing one's opinions on statements, brainstorming, explaining key words and checking their meaning in dictionaries.

Regarding the while reading stage, Figure 8 shows that these are employed less frequently than the pre-reading exercises and the post-reading exercises. Interestingly, two textbook series, namely *EiC* (5%) and *Insights* (3%) contain significantly fewer while-reading exercises than the other two textbooks (*PT* 36%, *OT* 50%). Thus, a clear difference between Austrian and Finnish textbooks cannot be established concerning the while reading stage as both countries contain each one textbook with almost no while-reading exercises, while the other textbook in both countries contains a fair amount of them.

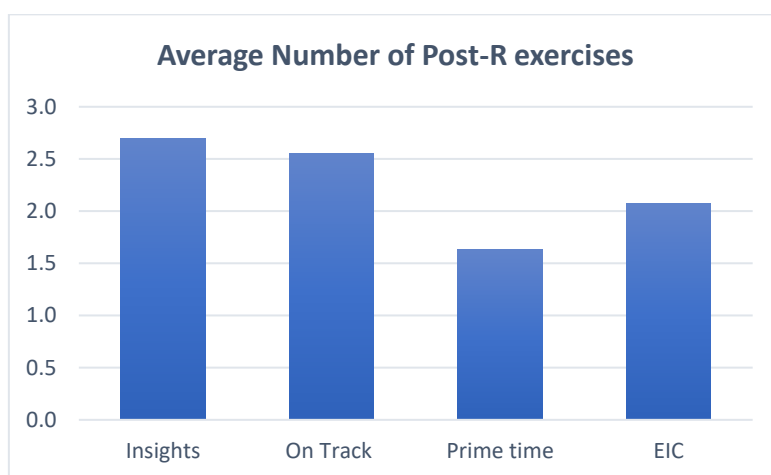
Some examples of while reading exercises employed in the textbooks under analysis are, for instance, underlining key ideas or key words and finding out what they mean through the

context. Other examples include doing a quick scan reading or quickly skimming the text to get a rough idea of the content of the text and its main message.

As can be observed in *Figure 8*, every text in *Insights*, *OT* and *EiC* contains one or more post-reading exercises. Only *PT* has four texts without any clear post-reading stage. A look at these four texts showed that the texts often contain an activity after the text, which could have been classified as a post-reading activity. However, these activities are too loosely connected to the text and could have been easily done without having read the text. Therefore, these activities do not qualify as post-reading activities according to the definition of post-reading activities used in this study. One of the texts is, for example, a text on the future of Irish in Gaeltacht areas (*PT 7*, p. 154), focussing only on the Irish language. The learners are then asked to investigate the diversity of languages in Austria, culminating in a written report. These two tasks are related in some way, but the post-reading activity can be done without having read the prior text, which disqualifies it from being a post-reading activity in this study.

Common post-reading activities are part of the ninth checklist item and are therefore not explained at this stage.

However, not only the occurrence of post-reading activities is of interest to this study, but also the frequency of them. As this thesis focuses on the post-reading stage, the frequency was calculated for this stage only. *Figure 9* and *Figure 10* present the data concerning this point.



*Figure 9: Average number of post-reading exercises*

*Figure 9* shows that the average number of post-reading exercises in the textbooks is at 2.7 (*I*), 2.6 (*OT*), 2.1 (*EiC*) and 1.5 (*PT*). Thus, the Finnish textbooks contain on average around three post-reading exercises after every text, whereas the Austrian textbooks employ on average

around two of these exercises after every text. Thus, there is a difference of one exercise per text between the textbooks of the two countries under analysis.

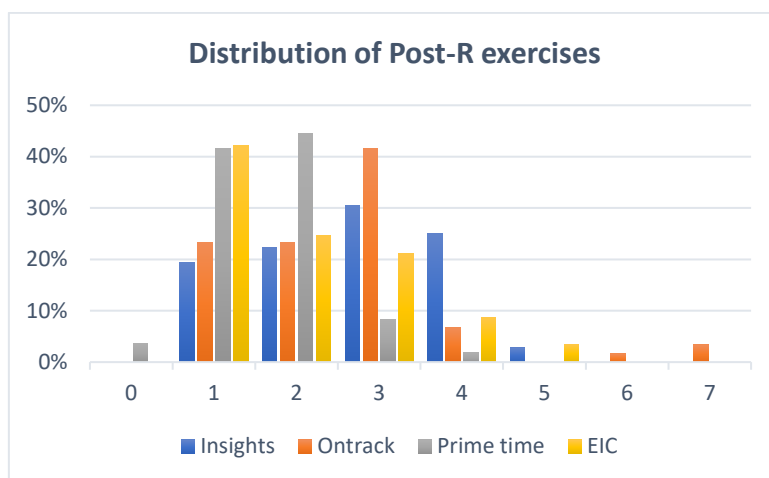


Figure 10: Frequency share of post-reading exercises

The column chart in *Figure 10* provides further insight into the number of post-reading exercises. It shows that only *PT* contains texts with zero post-reading exercises. Moreover, it shows that, overall, most texts contain one, two or three post-reading exercises, which the calculation of the average in *Figure 9* supports as well. However, it is interesting to see that *OT* is the only series offering six or seven post-reading exercises after a text. In this exercise under question, the learners had to previously read one text, do the post-reading exercises on this text and then had to do some more exercises as they were asked to exchange the obtained information with the other groups, to fill in a table and to explain vocabulary, amongst some other tasks. Thus, many different stages and group work were employed, which then generated these higher numbers for the Finnish textbook series.

Moreover, it is interesting to see that *EiC* has most often only one post-reading exercise (42%). Two and three post-reading exercises are at the 20% mark. *PT*, on the other hand, contains almost an equal number of texts involving one (42%) and two (44%) post-reading exercises. *Insights* contains a fairly equal distribution of texts containing one (19%), two (22%), three (31%) and four (25%) post-reading exercises. *OT* has a large portion of texts with three post-reading exercises (42%), while there are is also a significant number of one (23%) and two (23%) post-reading exercises.

The next step includes the **analysis of the integration of the skills and the language system**. Starting with the pre-reading stage, the following results could be gained: In all four textbooks under analysis, speaking was found to be the skill most deployable in the pre-reading exercises.

More than 50% of these exercises require speaking in most textbooks, except for *PT* (36%). Moreover, no exercises explicitly practising grammar in the pre-reading stage were found in any of the analysed textbooks.

In the Finnish textbook series, reading, writing and listening skills can be utilised fairly equally (between 11% and 19%), except for writing in *OT* which was only identified in 8% of the texts. Vocabulary is used rather sparingly in *Insights* (4%) and *OT* (8%).

The Austrian textbook series seem to use the integration of skills and the language system slightly differently. Listening, for instance, could not be identified in any pre-reading activity in *EiC* and played a minor role in *PT* (3%). However, vocabulary is employed more often than in the Finnish textbooks as 15% (*PT*) and 21% (*EiC*) of the exercises contain a focus on vocabulary as compared to the mere 8% (*OT*) and 4% (*I*) in the Finnish textbook series. Writing also features more often in the Austrian textbooks. Writing is, in fact, the second most utilised skill in *PT* right after speaking.

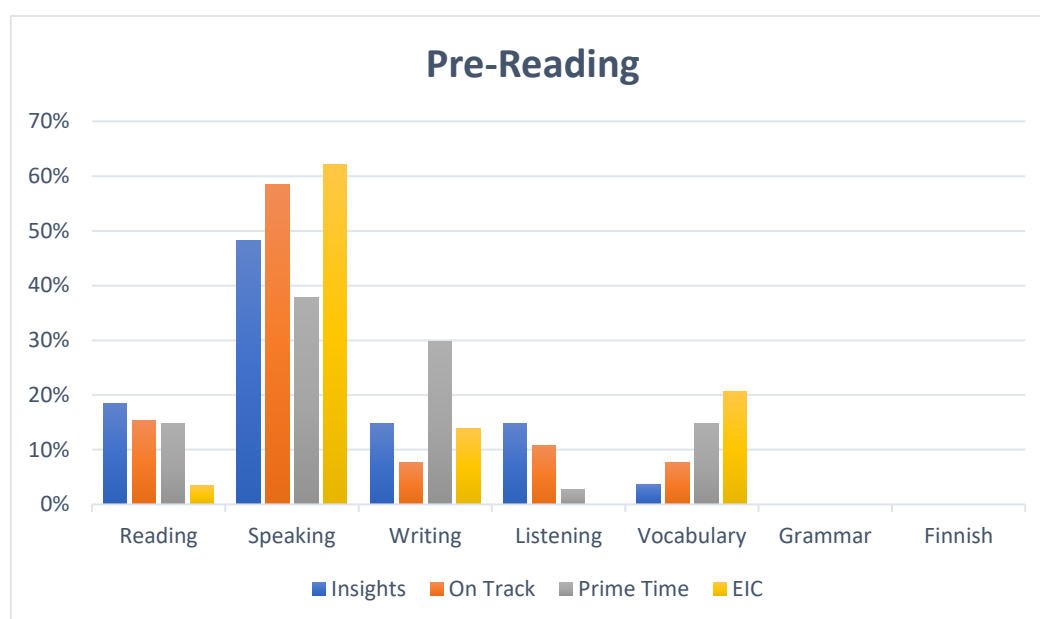


Figure 11: Integration of skills and language systems in the pre-reading stage

The while reading stage is, in general, employed less often than the pre-reading stage (79 times in while-reading vs 195 in pre-reading), and the skills required are generally quite concentrated to mostly one or two skills, which means that the statistics look quite different. What seems especially striking in *Figure 11* is the bar referring to vocabulary which was present in all of the while-reading exercises in *OT*. There are no other skills or grammar in focus in these exercises in this one textbook series. *Insights* seems to focus on speaking and writing pre-reading exercises only. There are no vocabulary exercises featured in *Insights*, which is in stark

contrast to the *OT* series. Thus, the two Finnish textbooks seem to be quite different when looking at their approaches to utilising the while-reading stage.

*PT* is the only textbook incorporating numerous different skills in these exercises, namely reading, speaking, writing and vocabulary. However, speaking is used minimally (5%).

*EiC* requires vocabulary and reading in half of the texts. At this point, the use of reading has to be explained in greater detail. In some cases, the while-reading exercise demanded the learner to skim or scan the texts to locate information, which does not really involve any other skill if not otherwise stated. Likewise, instructions such as “underline the pro and contra argument”, “highlight interesting features”, “highlight the main points” do not arguably make use of any other skill. Thus, these were also put into the category reading. Then, there was one instance, which clearly did not fit any of the given categories. The instructions said to “make a mental note” and to “visualise” (*EiC*). Thus, everything happens in the brain only. It can be expected that the teacher would probably ask the learners to then talk to a partner about what they visualised, but this is not in any way stated or indicated in the instructions. For this reason, this was the only while-reading exercise where no other skill was identified.

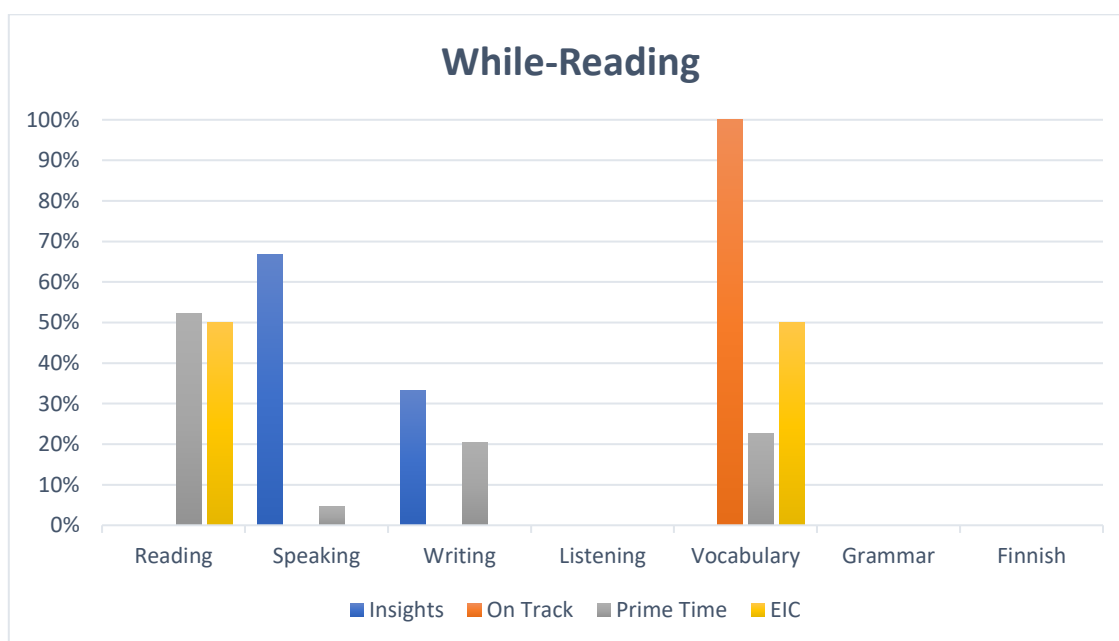


Figure 12: Integration of skills and language systems in the while-reading stage

Figure 13 presents the data obtained for the post-reading stage, which contained the highest number of exercises (in total 687). Listening seems to be the least used skill in post-reading exercises, which is followed by grammar.

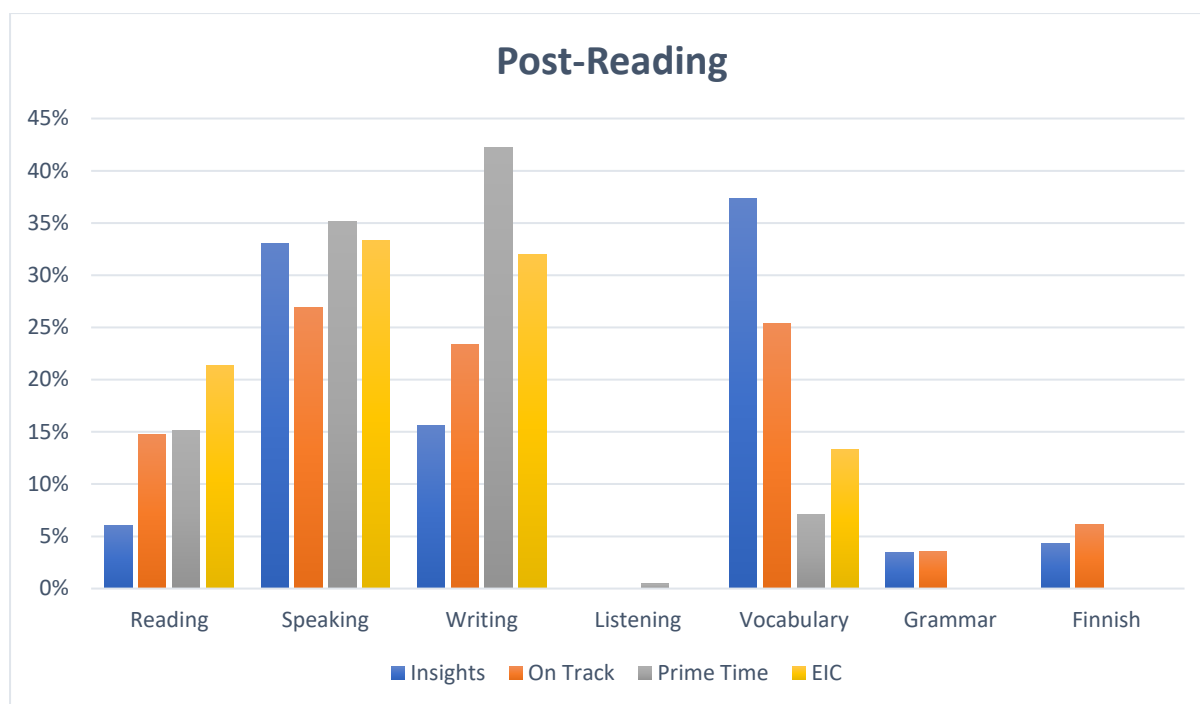


Figure 13: Integration of skills and language systems in the post-reading stage

The Austrian textbooks contain a large share of speaking and writing exercises, on average making up 36% and 35% respectively. Reading and vocabulary seem to be relevant as well, although to a lesser extent (17% and 11% respectively). The Finnish textbooks focus the most on vocabulary (31%) and speaking (30%). Writing (20%) has a fair presence, whereas reading is used to a smaller extent. Grammar, which is completely non-existent in the Austrian textbooks, features in the Finnish textbooks, even if the percentages are minuscule (3% and 4%). At this point, the meaning of the last column in *Figure 13* shall be explained further. Even though only the four skills, as well as vocabulary and grammar as part of the language system, were originally investigated, it was necessary to create another category for those exercises which were completely in Finnish. Therefore, this category, labelled “Finnish” in the figure below, contains all the instances the learners had to respond to Finnish questions on the text in Finnish. This means that the target language was not used in the post-reading exercise at all. Such kind of exercises are present in both Finnish textbooks and the percentages even exceed the ones for grammar, meaning that their relevance is not insignificant. Moreover, the fact that the Austrian textbooks do not contain any similar exercises in the respective first language, namely German, seems interesting and will be discussed further in the discussion of the results.



#### 7.4.3.6. Checklist Item 6, 7 and 8: Pre-, While, Post-reading aim

This section presents the results concerning the aim of the pre-, while and post-reading exercises.

Figure 14 shows that the pre-reading aim abbreviated with PR & O, eliciting a personal response or opinion, obtained the highest percentages in all four series. Around 60% of the pre-reading exercises in *Insights*, *OT*, and *PT* incite the pupils to state their personal opinion or give some other kind of personal response on the topic of the text prior to reading it. *EiC* contains a slightly smaller share of activities with this pre-reading aim (48%). The second most frequently used aim is the activation of background knowledge (BK). Similarly to PR & O, all the textbooks have a high number of exercises with this aim (between 30 and 40%). The other two aims investigated in this study, were spotted considerably less often. Becoming familiar with the language in the text (L) is only used in *Insights* (5%), *OT* (8%) and in *PT* (5%) to a small extent. Even less used is the aim P&H, predicting and hypothesising, which was only found in one textbook, *EiC* (14%).

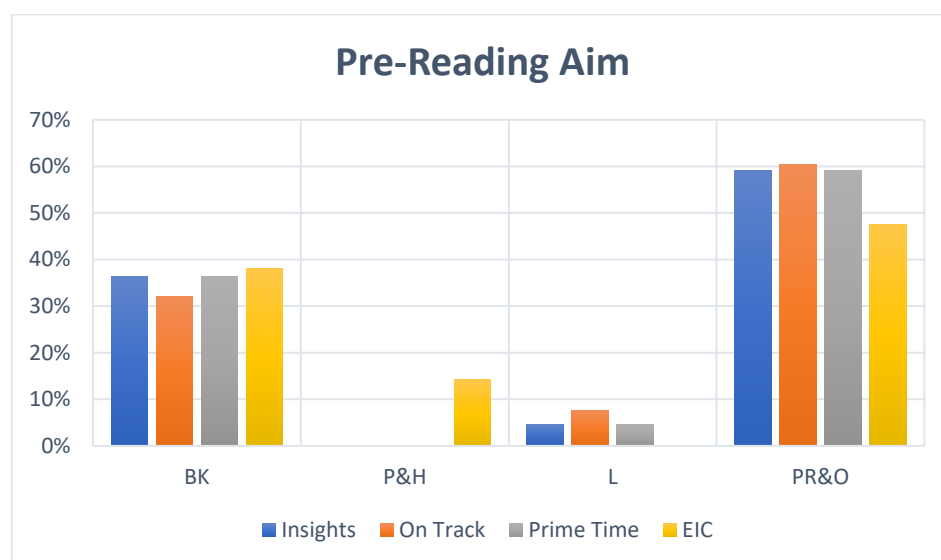


Figure 14: Aim of pre-reading exercises

The results of the analysis of the aims of the while-reading exercises in the four textbook series are presented in Figure 15. Interestingly, each textbook series seems to focus either entirely on language or 100% on strategy in the while-reading exercises. *OT* and *PT*'s while-reading exercises all have a focus on language, whereas *Insights* and *EiC* contain a focus on strategy only. One example of an exercise with a focus on language include tasks where the pupil has to work out the meaning of a word in its context. An example for a task with a focus on strategy is the scanning of a text in order to locate some information.



Figure 15: Aim of while-reading exercises – focus on language (LF) or focus on strategy

The analysis of the aims in the post-reading stage showed that a high number of post-reading exercises (nearly 50% in all textbooks) aim at checking basic understanding (U) of the text. Language consolidation (LC) was another frequently found aim in *Insights* (39%), *OT* (31%) and *PT* (30%). The other three aims are not represented as much in comparison to U and LC in those three textbooks. The exercises in *EiC* all show a more balanced use of different aims. Eliciting a personal response (PR, 14%), evaluating the text (EV, 13%), language consolidation (12%) and producing a longer output (P, 12%) are all almost equally represented. Moreover, *EiC* is the only textbook which has a significant number of exercises requiring the production of some kind of longer output (P). This output may take the form of a role-play, a debate or a written production (e.g. a mail, a report).

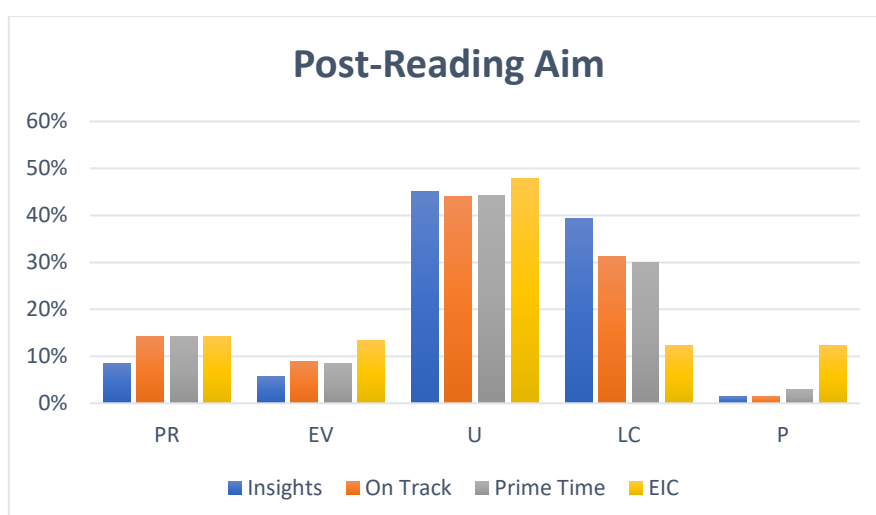


Figure 16: Aim of post-reading exercises

#### 7.4.3.7. Research question 2

In this section, the second research question is answered in detail by putting together the findings elaborated in the two previous sections on checklist list item 5, 6, 7 and 8. The second research question, which is, in fact, a combination of three questions all related to the three stages of reading comprehension, was phrased as follows:

*In how far do the textbooks employ the three stages of reading comprehension (pre-/ while/ post-reading)? Which skills are needed to do these accompanying exercises? What is the aim of these exercises?*

As the findings elaborated in the previous sections revealed, almost all the texts in the four series contain a post-reading stage. The pre-reading and while reading stages are less frequently employed than the post-reading stage in all textbooks. However, the Finnish textbooks contain slightly more pre-reading exercises than the Austrian ones. There is no clear difference between Austrian and Finnish textbooks when looking at the while-reading stage, as this really depends on the textbook series of choice. On the one hand, one Austrian and one Finnish textbook contain a fair amount of while-reading exercises, while on the other hand, the second Austrian and Finnish textbooks under analysis contain hardly any such activities. *OT* seems to have the textbooks with the highest percentage of pre-, while and post-reading exercises in total.

Concerning the integration of skills, speaking seems to be one of the most frequently used skills in most stages and in most textbooks. Speaking is especially much needed in most pre- and post-reading exercises. The other skills and vocabulary do play a role in pre-reading exercises as well, but they are used significantly less than speaking. The exercises included in the while-reading stage are more varied by each textbook, with *OT* focusing only on vocabulary and *Insights* on speaking and writing only. *EiC*, on the other hand, only employs reading and vocabulary. *PT* is the only book making use of more than two different skills, which are vocabulary, writing, speaking and reading. Therefore, in terms of integration of skills in the while reading phase, it seems that the textbooks employ a smaller variety of different skills and the language system as most seem to focus on only one or two skills/ vocabulary. There was no specific focus on grammar found in any of the while reading exercises. Looking at the post-reading stage, most skills (except for listening) are employed frequently. However, grammar is only present in the Finnish textbooks. Moreover, another category was created to show the sole use of one's L1 in some exercises in the Finnish textbooks only. Overall, speaking seems to be employed by most textbooks to a fairly similar degree, while the use of the other skills in

the post-reading stage varies according to textbook. Besides speaking, the Finnish textbooks, for instance, focus largely on vocabulary, whereas the Austrian textbooks use more writing.

Thus, as expected and hypothesised in section 7.2, there were more post-reading exercises than pre- and while reading ones in all textbooks. Moreover, those texts which have exercises in the matriculation format only rarely employ the pre- and while reading stage in the Austrian textbooks. The Finnish textbooks do not conform to this. However, the question on different activity formats is a checklist item on its own and shall be thus elaborated in detail at a later stage. As expected, speaking is a predominant skill in all the analysed textbooks. The other three skills are needed in the pre-, while and post-reading exercises as well. However, listening was only featured a few times.

The last part of the research question included the analysis of the aims of the pre-, while and post-reading exercises. The data shows that activating background knowledge and eliciting a personal response or opinion are two common aims of the pre-reading exercises in all four series. The aim of the while-reading exercises was found to be either a focus on language as observed in two textbooks, or on strategy, as observed in the remaining two textbooks. The post-reading exercises' aim is largely to check understanding of the text and to consolidate language. Personal response, evaluation and producing some larger output are aims that could not often be found in post-reading exercises. Thus, the hypothesis made in section 7.2 concerning the aims of the various exercises in the three stages is partly supported by the data. On the one hand, the exercises do prepare the students for the text by activating background knowledge or by eliciting a personal response. However, deeper work on the text is only partly encouraged as evaluation and the production of output are not employed to a great extent. Moreover, the learners could receive more support by offering them a greater variety of different pre-reading tasks, which, for instance, have the goal to explain difficult words to them or make students predict the content. The content of the text is related to the pupils' lives, but this is done mostly in the pre-reading stage and less often in the post-reading stage.

#### **7.4.3.8. Checklist Item 9: Activity format**

Item 9 on the checklist focuses on the activity formats used in the post-reading exercises. *Figure 17* shows that the most used activity formats in all the textbooks are the questions in English (*PT* 21%, *EiC* 19%; *I* 16%, *OT* 22%) and “other” (*PT* 34%, *EiC* 26%; *I* 16%, *OT* 17%). The Austrian textbooks employ most often an activity from the “other” category, questions in English and command words. True/false/justification, multiple matching, summarising and

multiple choice also feature. Gap filling and sequencing only play a minor role. The Finnish textbooks, on the other hand, employ most frequently the activity format called translation and secondly questions in English. Moreover, “other” features often as well. Command words, summaries, questions in Finnish and multiple choice are likewise used, albeit less often. Minor activity formats are true/false/not given, true/false/correction, sequencing and gap filling.

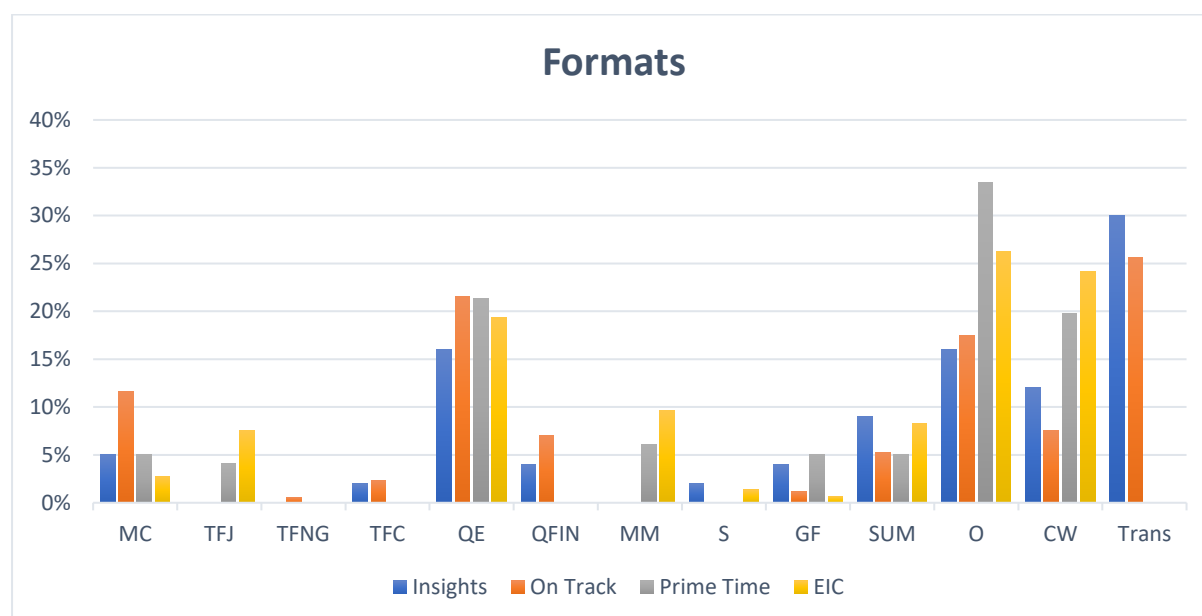


Figure 17: Activity formats

The Austrian and the Finnish textbooks both have in common the relatively high use of the activity format labelled “other”. In this type of category, exercises such as writing an email, letter or article, creating a table, preparing a talk, making notes, writing an ending and group discussions are grouped together. Therefore, while the post-reading exercises adhere to the formats of the reading test in the matriculation examination, it is clear that the post-reading exercises were not only created for this purpose. Instead, a variety of different formats and exercises is employed.

The biggest differences can be found in the activity formats “translation” and “questions Finnish”. Both appear only in the Finnish textbooks. The Austrian textbooks did not include an equivalent “questions in German” format, nor did they include any activities which require the learners to use any other language than the target language. The Finnish textbooks frequently contain exercises which specifically ask the learners to use Finnish to answer questions or to translate sentences and phrases. Other differences are the use of the format true/false/justification in the Austrian textbooks while the Finnish ones use a different variety of the

same format, namely mostly true/false/correction. Multiple matching was only found in the Austrian textbooks.

#### 7.4.3.9. Checklist item 10: Comprehension question types

The last item on the checklist looks at the different comprehension question types according to Freeman's taxonomy (2014). *Figure 18* shows the frequency share of the content, language and affect questions types in the four analysed textbook series. All three question types were found. The content and language category of question types are the greatest in terms of frequency; the affect category is employed less frequently. There are some differences between the Austrian and the Finnish textbooks. The Austrian textbooks contain more content question types (*PT* 64%, *EiC* 53%) while the Finnish textbooks are dominated by the language question types (*I* 62%, *OT* 45%). Around 40% of the analysed tasks in the Finnish textbook series focus on the content question types. The language question types are employed to a varying degree in the two Austrian textbooks. While *EiC* does include a considerable number of questions from the language question type (38%), *PT* makes use of this question type more rarely (19%). *Figure 18* shows that almost none of the analysed question types in *Insights* fall into the affect category (1%). However, the percentages for the other three textbooks are higher (*OT* 15%, *PT* 17%, *EiC* 9%).

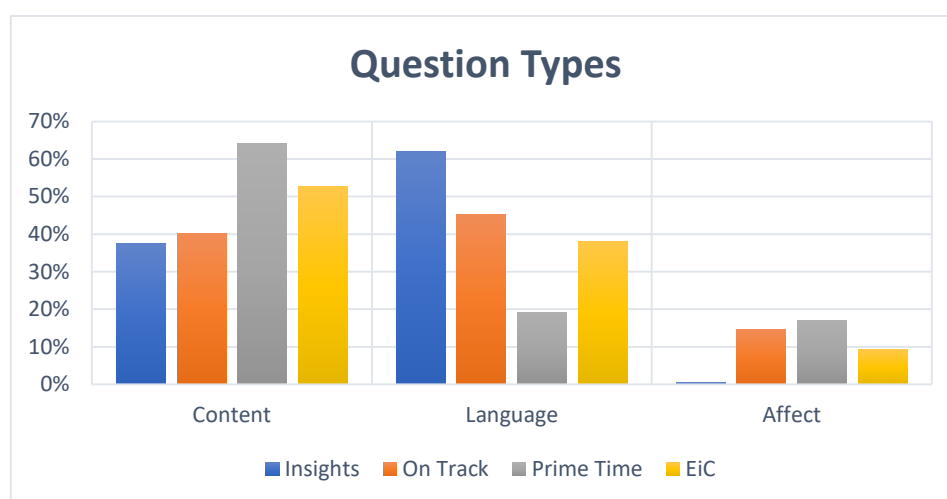


Figure 18: Frequency of Content, Language, and Affect question types

The three categories were further divided into sub-categories. The content category is comprised of explicit, implicit and inferential question types. The frequency *Figure 19* shows that the implicit question type is the most used question type in the content category in the Austrian and Finnish textbooks. Almost 50% in *PT* and around 40% of the analysed questions in *EiC* are considered an implicit question type. Thus, almost half of the questions in the

Austrian textbooks are from this sub-category. The Finnish textbooks' numbers are lower as only 28% in *Insights* and 22% of the questions in *OT* are implicit. The implicit question type, however, is still the most favoured content questions type in the Finnish textbooks even though the percentages are low. One reason for these low numbers in the Finnish textbooks in the implicit question type category is the overall focus on the language category, which is comprised of the reorganisation question type, the lexical question type and the form question type. Especially reorganisation received high percentages (*I* 42%, *OT* 34%), but also the lexical question types are used in the Finnish textbooks (*I* 20%, *OT* 11%). The Austrian textbooks contain more lexical (*PT* 17%, *EiC* 30%) than reorganisation question types; the latter is, in fact, only used sparingly (*PT* 2%, *EiC* 8%). The question type form is not present in any of the analysed questions. The affect category is comprised of the personal response question type and the evaluation question type. Personal response question types are the most frequently asked ones out of these two. Interestingly, the evaluation question type was not found in any of the analysed tasks in *Insights*. Moreover, only 1% of the analysed questions in *Insights* fall into the personal response question type category. The other Finnish textbook, *OT*, contains considerably more personal response question types (14%). The numbers for the evaluation question type are, however, also almost non-existent in this textbook (*OT* 1%). The Austrian textbooks contain slightly more evaluation question types (*PT* 8%, *EiC* 3%). The personal response question type is likewise used to a small degree in the Austrian textbooks (*PT* 12%, *EiC* 6%).

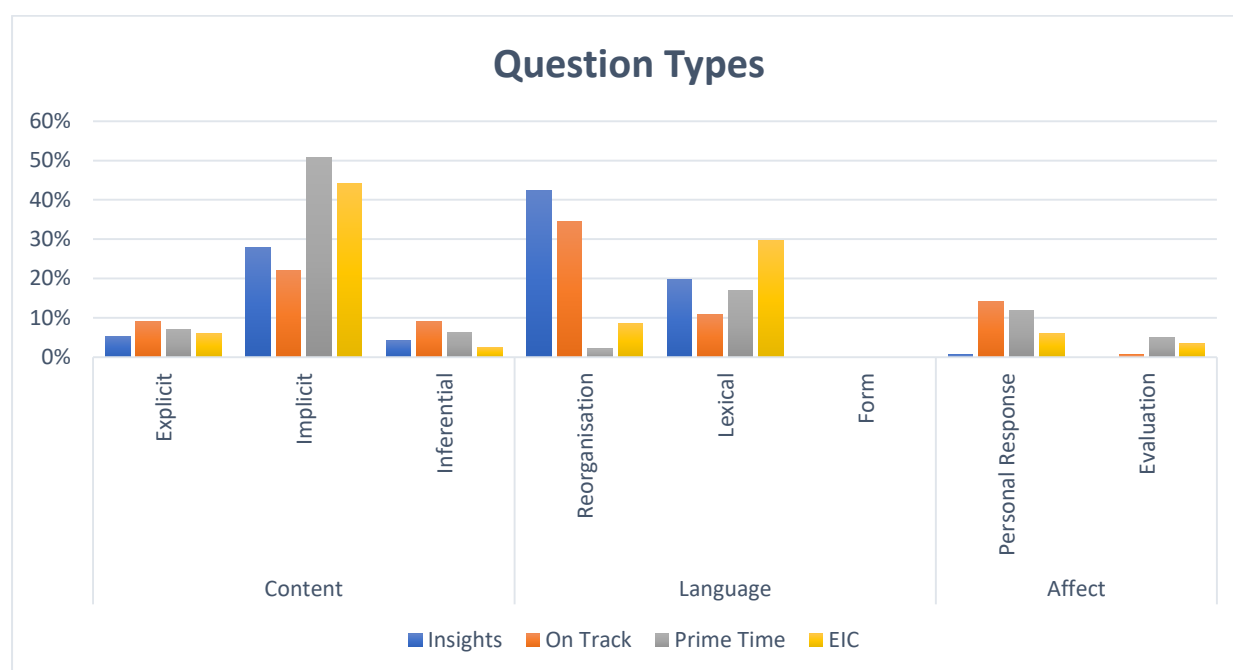


Figure 19: Frequency of Comprehension question types

#### 7.4.3.10. Research question 3

Based on the findings on the comprehension question types listed in the previous section, the third research question is discussed in this chapter. The third research question was previously stated as follows:

*To what extent is there a variety of different question types? To which degree do the post-reading questions make the students use higher-order thinking skills?*

Figure 19 shows that even though most of the question types are used to a varying degree in all the textbooks (except for the form question type which could not be detected in any of the analysed exercises), there are clear areas which stand out. The implicit question type from the content category, as well as the reorganisation question type from the language category are employed most often. Moreover, the lexical question type in the content category was found multiple times. However, the other question types are mostly below the 10% mark, which means that they are rare. Thus, the different question types were not used to a similar extent as two out of the eight question types are dominating.

Freeman (2014) also found in her study that the question types were used to a varying degree. However, in her analysis, the content category was the greatest in all textbooks while the results of this study show that the Finnish textbooks favoured the language category. Freeman (2014) also noted that there is always one question type in each of the three categories which dominates. These were the lexical question type in the language category and the personal response question type in the affect category. Similarly, the findings in this study also show that the personal response question type was the most favoured one in the affect category. However, the lexical question type was mainly dominant in the Austrian textbooks whilst the Finnish textbooks employed the reorganisation question type most often. Therefore, it seems that the Finnish textbooks differ more to the ones used in Freeman's study than the Austrian ones.

The second part of the third research question investigates the use of higher-order thinking skills in those post-reading questions. Thus, the question types such as inferential comprehension and evaluation are analysed in order to obtain an answer to this question. As was shown in the previous section, both of these question types were not found to a great extent in any of the analysed textbooks. Less than 10% of the exercises in all the textbooks include the evaluation or inferential question type. *PT* seems to be the only textbook which contains 6% of inferential question types and 5% of evaluation question types. These 11% in *PT*



represent the highest percentage found when comparing the textbooks to each other. In all other textbooks, less than 10% of the exercises incite the learners to use higher-order thinking skills in the form of evaluation and inferential comprehension. Therefore, the hypothesis made at the beginning of the study cannot be supported so well. It was expected to find a considerable number of exercises which encourage the learner to engage with the texts on a deeper level, using higher-order thinking skills. The findings, however, show that by far only the minority of the analysed exercises require the pupils to use higher-order thinking skills.

At this point, it must be underlined that only 20% of the reading comprehension activities were analysed in this last checklist item. Thus, the data offers only a glimpse into the textbooks and their comprehension question types. Only a thorough analysis of all the reading texts may offer more accurate and precise findings.

## **7.5. Discussion of the study**

This section of the research paper analyses the results and findings as revealed in the previous sections. It will highlight and discuss the main similarities and differences between the Austrian and Finnish textbook series, discuss some of the challenges in comparing the two as well as the implications for teachers.

### **7.5.1 The similarities**

Concerning the distribution of the four skills and the language system, even though the curricula, the CEFR and the literature on L2 acquisition promote the teaching of the skills to a fairly equal degree, the textbooks under analysis all contain a somewhat unbalanced approach, favouring certain skills, e.g. speaking, over others, e.g. listening.

Speaking is featured strongly in all textbooks, likely because they were designed to be used in the classroom; an ideal environment for pupils to practise this skill amongst each other. Other textbooks outside the scope of this study could be primarily aimed at self-study in e.g. adult education which may well contain more listening exercises as the social component of the classroom setting is missing. Thus, the use of the analysed textbooks in a classroom with adolescents may necessitate more interactive exercises amongst the learners and the teacher in contrast to textbooks used in other contexts.

The least favoured skill in all the analysed textbooks was found to be listening, while the other skills were used much more often. One possible reason for the low reported numbers could be in the methodology used in this study, which required textbooks to explicitly state when to utilise

the skill to conduct an exercise. On the other hand, limited use of listening exercises may simply be down to the fact that listening does not offer the same level of interactivity and is not as easily integrable as reading, speaking or writing, as listening requires technology, such as a CD player or some other kind of sound system. It has to be mentioned that listening is, of course, also taking place when listening to the teacher or other pupils speaking English in a classroom discussion, for example. However, these instances of listening were not quantified in this study. The Finnish textbooks contain an audio recording of all the texts on the CD or online, which is not, however, explicitly mentioned in the textbooks. This means that even though these texts were not originally devised as listening comprehension activities, the recordings still offer the possibility to also listen to the texts. The teacher could choose to listen to instead of read the text, or to read the text only after having listened to the audio, which would make it a good listening practise. Thus, more opportunities for practising listening can be found in the Finnish textbooks in addition to the numbers mentioned in this study.

Regarding the three stages of reading comprehension exercises, the post-reading stage was almost always included in all the textbooks, which was to be expected as this is a natural placement to create interaction/discussion around the text. Likewise, exams and in particular the matriculation examination employ post-reading exercises to measure reading comprehension. Therefore, the reading comprehension exercises in the textbooks often prepare for the respective examinations by using similar formats. Similarly, the pre-reading stage was utilised by all textbooks to some extent, with a slightly higher proportion found in the Finnish textbooks. In the literature on reading, the pre-reading stage is seen as playing an important role in practising the reading skill as it helps prepare the reader for the text and thus facilitates reading. Moreover, the pre-reading stage amongst all textbooks was filled with exercises featuring speaking, while the post-reading phase is also dominated by speaking (amongst other skills and vocabulary in the Finnish textbooks). The pre-reading aim also had a large consensus. Activating background knowledge and eliciting a personal response or opinion were employed to a high extent in all four textbook series.

Questions in English were a highly used activity format and this goes hand-in-hand with high utilisation of the speaking, as well as writing, skills required to answer the questions. These question formats can also be quickly formulated by teachers or textbook writers and are thus more time-saving activity formats than e.g. multiple choice. Moreover, the category “other” was also found to a considerable extent in all the textbooks. As this category includes activity formats which do not conform to the ones in the matriculation examination, it can be assumed

that the reading activities in the textbooks were not only created to practise and prepare for this exam, but to engage the reader with a variety of different activity types, such as writing an email or preparing a speech.

Another similarity found between the Austrian and the Finnish textbooks is the lack of higher-order thinking skills required to solve post-reading questions. By employing Freeman's taxonomy (2014) to the post-reading questions, it was found that the inferential and the evaluation question types, both requiring higher-order thinking skills as postulated by Bloom (1956), were amongst the least used question types. On the one hand, this may seem understandable as not every text needs to work on developing these more difficult and complex skills whereas basic understanding of the text, which may be arrived at through explicit or implicit questions, forms the basis for any further discussion. On the other hand, the pupils using the analysed textbooks are all in their last two years of secondary education, which means that it is more essential than ever that they are able to tackle the more difficult question types as well in order to gain deeper understanding of the text and make connections that go beyond the text. This is especially important for those wishing to pursue tertiary education at universities (Lundquist & Hill 2009: 39). Even though questions of higher-order processing may be more difficult to create and to answer by pupils, it still seems necessary to include a considerable number of these in the exercises as both types, lower and higher-order thinking skills, are important for effective learning to take place (Coyle, Hood & Marhs 2010: 30).

### **7.5.2 The differences**

Naturally, there are also numerous differences between the textbooks. The Finnish textbooks, for instance, contain slightly longer texts than the Austrian textbooks. However, as already pointed out, the Austrian textbooks contain more texts. Moreover, the Finnish textbooks include more post-reading exercises than the Austrian textbooks. *English in Context* was the only textbook showing a considerable number of post-reading exercises which require the pupil to produce a longer output, e.g. in the form of writing a proper text or a discussion or role-play. Therefore, the number of post-reading exercises by itself does not necessarily reflect the depth the text is being analysed by the pupils.

An interesting difference related to the first checklist item is the integration of topics related to the pupils' immediate life in the country they live in. While the Austrian textbooks, especially *Prime Time*, feature more texts and exercises about the UK and the USA, the Finnish textbooks focus significantly more on their home country, Finland. It was observed that the Finnish

textbook series do not only focus on the target country and culture, i.e. the UK or the United States, but choose to include elements familiar to the pupils. This is also one way of making the learning process more personal and perhaps even more meaningful and can only be achieved by local textbooks which cater to a smaller audience than the global textbooks do. The Austrian textbooks feature proportionally fewer exercises that specifically focused on Austria when compared to Finland in the Finnish textbooks. The inclusion of a considerable number of exercises with a focus on the country the pupils live in might also reflect the way EFL teaching is seen in the country. While a language is certainly connected to the country or countries it is being spoken in, the English language does have a unique and privileged position in many parts of the world. English is often considered the lingua franca of today's world, which is why a strong connection to the UK, or the USA, is perhaps less favoured today as English is seen as a supranational and international language. This progressive view of the English language may be supported by the textbook writers in Finland more than by those in Austria, judging by the inclusion of exercises incorporating other topics than the UK and the USA. The Finnish curriculum even specifies one of the goals of teaching English to be to "understand the importance of the English language and its role as the language used in international communication" (Opetushallitus 2015: 109). Moreover, the pupils are educated to develop their language skills to be competent users of English in local and national organisations (i.e. in Finland) and in those on a European level or on a global scale (Opetushallitus 2015: 109). Therefore, it seems that the Finnish textbook authors might not attribute as much importance to learning e.g. about the culture of the UK or the USA as the Austrians do because it is more likely that the pupils will use English with non-native speakers in Finland or internationally. As elaborated in the theoretical part of this thesis, learning English is often "denationalised" (Lee Mc Kay 2012: 16). However, further research would be needed to make a meaningful conclusion. Moreover, it was noticeable that some topics featured more often in Austrian textbooks and others in the Finnish textbooks. Science, modern technology and digitalisation were prevalent in the Finnish textbooks, while migration and multicultural society were two topics highly present in *Prime Time*, one of the Austrian textbooks. Thus, the choice of topics used in the textbooks may also be a reflection of the cultural topics highly discussed within the countries and their society. Especially multiculturalism and migration seem to have become more and more critical to Austrian society, which is why the textbook writers may have picked them up in the creation of the textbooks.

One of the biggest differences between the Austrian and the Finnish textbooks was the utilisation of vocabulary and grammar activities. While these are highly present in the Finnish textbooks, they serve a less prominent role in the Austrian textbooks. The findings revealed that the Finnish textbooks employ numerous vocabulary exercises after texts as post-reading activities. This was also visible in the analysis of the comprehension question types which included many questions of the “language” category, which feature vocabulary related exercises, in the Finnish textbooks. Moreover, even though grammar is not as present as vocabulary in the post-reading activities, its role in the textbooks is still prevalent. This can be seen in the grammar section at the end of the textbooks which contains numerous additional grammar exercises. In *Insights*, even half of the textbook is devoted to this grammar section. Moreover, there are many translation activities in the Finnish textbooks, which require the accurate use of lexical and grammatical structures. The differences between the two languages, Finnish and English, may specifically be highlighted through these translation exercises. The high number of vocabulary and grammar exercises may, in fact, relate to the fact that Finnish and English are two completely different and unrelated languages, the first being a Finno-Ugric language and the latter an Indo-European language, unlike English and German which both belong to the Indo-European languages. Thus, Finnish and English function completely differently in terms of grammar and except for some loanwords, the lexicon is different too. For instance, the use of prepositions is omnipresent in English while there are only a handful of prepositions in Finnish and these are not often used. The Finnish language prefers postpositions. Moreover, when “Swedish and English use independent words (prepositions, pronouns, auxiliaries, adverbs), Finnish tends to use case endings, verb endings, possessive suffixes or enclitic particles” (Ringbom 2007: 38). In other words, most structures which require a preposition in English are expressed through case endings in the Finnish language. This correspondence between cases and prepositions, amongst other grammatical phenomena, has to be specifically learnt, which probably explains the high number of grammar exercises in the Finnish textbooks. There are numerous exercises where the pupils have to select the right prepositions and the reasons elaborated above may well explain the frequent use of such exercises.

Another interesting difference between the two textbooks is the considerable use of Finnish in the Finnish textbooks. The Austrian texts do not contain as much German. The appendix in *Prime Time* only contains a vocabulary list with words in English and their translations into German. German is not needed to complete any of the exercises in the book. The Finnish

textbooks sometimes use Finnish in their post-reading comprehension questions after a text. Moreover, translations of Finnish sentences into English and vice-versa require the L1. As the Finnish matriculation examination also contains post-reading questions in Finnish, which have to be likewise answered in Finnish, it is not surprising to find a high number of such exercises in the Finnish textbooks. In general, as discussed in the theory on reading in the first part of this thesis, the use of the pupils' L1 in post-reading comprehension questions is debatable. It seems to be acceptable at a beginner's and intermediate level; however, it is questionable whether the use of the L1 is appropriate at an advanced level. One plausible reason for the use of L1 in the post-reading comprehension questions in the Finnish textbooks and in the Finnish matriculation examination may be to fully disintegrate all other skills which may be involved in testing reading comprehension. A reading comprehension activity usually integrates the other skills as the post-reading questions have to be first of all understood and appropriate answers have to be formulated, which requires a writing competence. The Austrian curriculum specifically states that the target language should be used as much as possible and that translation should be used selectively to provide some learning aid if necessary in Upper secondary English lessons (BMBWF 2004: 57). Therefore, it seems that the Austrian textbook writers entirely adhered to this guideline in the curriculum. While such a guideline cannot be explicitly found in the Finnish curriculum, it may very well be that priority should be given to the target language in Finland as well since comprehensible input is one well-known principle of second language acquisition (Krashen 1991: 409). The reasoning behind their methodological choice of the inclusion of L1 in some exercises by the Finnish textbook authors cannot be explained with certainty and it would be interesting to discuss these issues with the textbooks authors in an interview. Thus, one can only assume that the reason for the use of Finnish may possibly be to fully disintegrate reading from other skills.

With regards to the approach to the reading exercises, the Finnish textbooks seem to put a stronger emphasis on "key texts" and the exercises surrounding those texts in the design of their units, which are on average longer than the texts in the Austrian textbooks, even though there are relatively fewer texts (as seen in the comparison of ratio of text to pages). The Austrian textbooks' emphasis is on quantity of texts, appearing to increase exposure to their readers. This is likely why the Austrian textbook series appear to have a larger proportion of reading exercises compared with the Finnish series. Because of this, these statistics in particular should be taken with a grain of salt, as the share of reading exercises need to be balanced with the

length of the texts, as well as the structure of the units which are not captured in the numbers in this study but are assessed qualitatively.

### **7.5.3 The challenges in comparing and the limitations of the study**

There was sometimes no clear consensus between the two Austrian textbooks and/or between the two Finnish textbooks, which is why some conclusions in terms of similarities or differences between the Finnish and Austrian textbooks cannot be drawn so clearly. One example is the while-reading stage, which was found in many texts in *PT*, but not in the other Austrian textbook, in *EiC*. Likewise, all the while-reading exercises had a focus on language in *OT*, while all those in the other Finnish textbook, in *Insights*, had a strategy focus. The various textbook writers in Austria and in Finland appear to sometimes have a different idea, be it subconsciously or consciously, of how to teach reading.

Certainly, the study contains limitations, especially in the use of checklists. A checklist is often regarded as an objective tool ideal for comparing different textbooks. However, the categorisation of the texts, e.g. according to their topics, was found to not always be fitting exactly to the available categories. Moreover, simply defining what constitutes a “reading comprehension activity” or a pre- or post-reading exercise was cumbersome. Other researchers may employ a less strict definition of pre- and post-reading exercises and will thus obtain different results. Therefore, the analysis certainly includes a degree of subjectivity, and a second rater would have helped to increase the objectivity of the obtained data in some cases. Moreover, only the student’s books were analysed and a look at the teacher’s book or other accompanying materials would have certainly added to the analysis. Contacting the textbook writers would have also added depth to the textbook analysis as the textbook writers, their opinions and attitudes naturally play a decisive role in the creation of the materials and thus what is ultimately used in the classroom. Further research may choose to include these aspects.

### **7.5.4. Implications for teaching**

Given the finding of an unbalanced distribution of skills used in all the textbook series analysed in this study, one of the biggest implications for teaching is the necessity to supplement with additional materials, depending on the learner’s needs. Thus, if the teacher observes that more exercises practising a certain skill, vocabulary or grammar are needed than what is offered in the textbook, the teacher should not hesitate to utilise further material. Coursebook-based teaching, i.e. seeing the coursebook or textbook as a springboard and not a “holy book” (McGrath 2016: 13), is vital in order to adequately teach English to a specific group of learners

in a specific country. Moreover, it is up to the teacher to possibly create additional post-reading questions which perhaps focus more on affect or that necessitate higher-order thinking skills, such as for instance the inferential question type. An interview with the textbook writers in Freeman's study also revealed that the textbook writer may also expect teachers to ask additional questions without being prompted, such as questions of the personal response category (Freeman 2014: 101).

Many of the key differences between the Finnish and Austrian textbooks presumably resort to the fact that they were produced for two very different groups of language learners who have different needs. The Finnish pupils may need additional exercises on grammar and vocabulary because Finnish is very different to English, whereas German is a related language to English and shares similarities in lexicon and grammatical structures. However, it is nowadays not enough to assume that the learners in a country form a homogenous group. Many pupils have a different first language than German or Finnish. These pupils may need additional support or exercises, which the teacher may even find difficult to provide. This question of multiculturalism and materials design has to be investigated in further research.

## **8. Conclusion**

The aim of this thesis was to establish similarities and differences between English textbooks used in Austria and in Finland in the upper secondary school level. The focus was put on the reading comprehension exercises in the Finnish textbooks *On Track 3-6*, and *Insights 3-6* as well as in the Austrian textbooks *Prime Time 7-8* and *English in Context 7/8*. In the first part of the thesis, the theory on reading and materials analysis was discussed. The research conducted in the second part was based on McGrath's approach of materials analysis and consists of a context and needs analysis, the impressionistic method, the checklist method and the in-depth method.

The findings show that there are a number of similarities between the Austrian and the Finnish textbooks, e.g. the unbalanced proportion of activities practising the four skills and the language system. In terms of reading exercises, almost all of them in the four textbooks contained a post-reading stage and the pre-stage was also utilised considerably by most textbooks. Speaking is one of the most used skills in the pre- and post-reading exercises. The aims of the exercises were also quite aligned, that is use of background knowledge and personal response/opinion in pre-reading exercises as well as mainly checking understanding in post-reading exercises. In terms of question types, the textbooks deploy a variety of question types,



although there are clear preferences such as the implicit question type. Question types requiring the use of higher-order thinking skills are not so prevalent.

The main differences between the two countries' textbooks include the focus on vocabulary and grammar in the Finnish textbooks as opposed to the Austrian textbooks focus on the skills (mainly speaking, reading, and writing). Moreover, the amount of L1 usage varies significantly. While the Austrian textbooks did not make any use of German in the units, the Finnish textbooks seemed to rely on Finnish to a considerable extent. Regarding the reading exercises, Austrian textbooks contained more reading exercises and texts compared with the Finnish variants which used fewer texts but put a larger emphasis on their centrality in each unit.

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## 10. Appendix

### 10.1. Fact file

#### On Track (OT)

<b>Name:</b>	On Track 3/ On Track 4/ On Track 5/ On Track 6
<b>Authors:</b>	Louisa-Daffue- Karsten, Mike Davies, Tuija Kae, Riitta Myller, Pirjo Rantanen, Petri Vuorinen
<b>Publisher:</b>	Sanoma Pro Oy, Helsinki (Finland)
<b>Year of publication:</b>	2015 (course 3), 2017 (course 4 and 5), 2019 (course 6)
<b>Intended audience:</b>	students in high school who have English as their A1 language (= first foreign language)
<b>Type of material:</b>	student's book (e-book also available), audio (online)
<b>Structure of the series:</b>	8 books in this textbook series, one book is used in one course, lasting over a period of a couple of months. The pupils must take six obligatory courses in English. The last two courses are optional.
<b>Number of pages:</b>	OT 3: 213 pages, OT 4: 240 pages, OT 5: 239 pages, OT 6: 232 pages
<b>Blurb:</b>	short description of the overall topic of the textbook (title: "express yourself", "we are the world", "you, science and technology", "you and your future"); ISBN number, link to the publishing house, link to further courses in the form of tutoring offered by tutorhouse.fi
<b>Table of contents:</b>	name of topics, units, key texts, vocabulary lists, page numbers
<b>Structure of one textbook:</b>	a short <i>foreword</i> directly addressing the pupils ("you will learn why..."; "learning happens when you make it happen"); table of contents, " <i>precourse</i> " before the first unit; topics/ units; after the last unit, there is a " <i>Grammar on track</i> " section (explanation of grammar using Finnish and English, around 50 pages long); on the inside of the back cover: images, quotes and/or words/ phrases directly related to the theme of the whole book.
<b>Design of the units and topics:</b>	Each unit contains 4 topics. Each of the first two topics in the unit contain one key text. A list of vocabulary follows right after each text. Sometimes there are some gaps (English words are not translated) in this vocabulary list which have to be translated by the pupils themselves. The words are found in the text. Then, exercises on the text and beyond the text can be found. The second to last topic does not contain a key text. This topic's focus is on theme vocabulary and pronunciation. There are sometimes short texts and other exercises included. The last topic of each unit is called "Read on" and contains a text/multiple texts with exercises.
<b>Interesting features:</b>	Each topic is introduced by a quote which illustrates the content of the topic. Each key text is accompanied by a vocabulary exercise (while-reading), which the pupils have to focus on when reading

the text. The instruction is to find the words, to underline them in the text and to figure out its meaning by considering the context.

## Insights (I)

<b>Name:</b>	Insights Course 3 (I3), Insights Course 4 (I4), Insights Course 5 (I5), Insights Course 6 (I6)
<b>Authors:</b>	Elina Karapalo, Paula Keltto, Mark Kilmer, Päivi Kuusivaara, Teijo Pääkkilä, Annukka Suonio
<b>Publisher:</b>	Otava
<b>Year of publication:</b>	2016 (I3, 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition), 2017 (I4 and I6, 1 <sup>st</sup> edition; I5, 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition)
<b>Intended audience:</b>	High school students who have English as their A1 language (= first foreign language)
<b>Type of material:</b>	student's book (e-book also available), audio (available for free online)
<b>Structure of the series:</b>	8 books in this textbook series, one book is used in one course. The pupils must take six obligatory courses in English. The last two courses are optional.
<b>Number of pages:</b>	I3: 173 pages; I4: 196 pages; I5: 179 pages; I6: 199 pages
<b>Blurb:</b>	short text describes the book and overall theme (I3: culture; I4: societies; I5: science; I6: your future/ jobs/ university); information on additional materials printed below the short text: student's book (printed and e-book), MP3 recordings + link, vocabulary app (in the app store), digital exam practice, assessment materials
<b>Table of contents:</b>	table presenting information on units including page number, theme, title, CEFR level (B1.2 up until C1), type of text, special focus, vocabulary revision, learning to learn section, grammar, keys
<b>Structure of one textbook:</b>	<i>foreword</i> addressing the reader/ pupils. Technicalities are explained (e.g. symbols used throughout the book, where to find vocabulary etc.); short <i>introductory activity</i> (2 pages.); units; sometimes there are <i>glossaries</i> (vocabulary plus exercises) in between the units; vocabulary revision section, "learning to learn" section; <i>grammar</i> section (in English and in Finnish), <i>key</i> .
<b>Design of the units:</b>	Most units commence with an "engage" activity introducing the topic. Then, a text is given, plus a vocabulary list containing the words from the text in English and in its Finnish translation. Exercises follow the vocabulary section.
<b>Interesting features:</b>	Most units contain one longer reading, unless labelled as "workshop" (1-2 units per book do not have a long reading). All in all, the appendix contains around 100 pages, meaning that half of the textbook is devoted to the units and the other half to additional materials and information.

## English in Context (EiC)

<b>Name:</b>	English in Context, Student's book. Language and Skills Proficiency 7. + 8. Klasse
<b>Authors:</b>	James Abram, Megan Hadgraft
<b>Publishers:</b>	Veritas
<b>Year of publication:</b>	2018 (1 <sup>st</sup> edition)
<b>Intended audience:</b>	English students in the last two years before matriculation examination (Matura). Book is targeted towards pupils attending school with curriculum for AHS.
<b>Type of material:</b>	student's book, incl. CD and e-book
<b>Blurb:</b>	Suitable and "THE perfect" book for the Neue Oberstufe. Book is accredited and follows the curriculum of 2017 and contains stimuli on the 10 global topics in text form and includes test formats. Offers good practice situations for written and spoken Matura (SRP-Training). Shows images of accompanying study books (English in Context Training, English in Context Companion). ISBN Number and website to publishing house stated at bottom.
<b>Table of contents:</b>	Sections split into 4 semesters. 10 topics, 30 units in total; 3 units per topic; can-do statements at the end of each unit; one picture for each topic which illustrates the theme of the topic.
<b>Structure and design of the topics/ units:</b>	<p>298 pages in total</p> <p><i>Foreword</i> entitled "Working with English in Context" explains aim of course book and its structure. After the <i>table of contents</i>, first topic introduced with a "<i>lead in</i>" activity with double page containing pictures and questions. Then, a double page is filled with "<i>words in context</i>" activity. This activity consists of a text with highlighted words which are then recycled in the following activities (LiU, Speaking, finding synonyms, making sentences with the words, creating a mind map, etc.). Then, the <i>unit</i> starts. On average, one unit is around 7 pages long. A unit consist of several sub-sections labelled A – B – C – D. These sections often contain a reading comprehension activity, LiU or listening task.</p> <p>Towards the end, 18 pages of "<i>check your progress</i>" contains additional exercises, incl. reading exercises. After that the language for tasks ("<i>Operatoren</i>") are explained.</p>
<b>Interesting features:</b>	Many readings are clearly marked as such in the book. Reading strategies/skills and task format (e.g. multiple choice, page 49, multiple matching, page 58, true/false/ justify at page 61) are often clearly defined (reading for gist, reading comprehension). Marked as "Before you read", "while reading", "after reading".

## Prime Time (PT)

<b>Name:</b>	Prime Time 7, Prime Time 8
<b>Authors:</b>	Georg Hellmayr, Stephan Waba, Heike Mlakar
<b>Publisher:</b>	ÖBV
<b>Year of publication:</b>	2018
<b>Intended audience:</b>	English students who are in the last two years before their matriculation examination (Matura). As this textbook follows the curriculum for AHS, this book is especially targeted towards pupils attending this type of school.
<b>Type of material:</b>	Coursebook (Schülerbuch) plus Audio-CD/ DVD, e-book available
<b>Blurb:</b>	ISBN number, link to website, information on the content of the book (10 units, appendix containing self-checks, writing guide, vocabulary, etc.), additional materials available online ( <i>Prime Time-Online</i> )
<b>Table of contents:</b>	Listing the topics, texts, skills practice of the 10 units
<b>Structure:</b>	<p>Prime Time 7: 208 pages Prime Time 8: 208 pages</p> <p>At the back side of the cover there is some <i>general information</i> on copying license, and the note by the board of education that this book is designed according to the curriculum of 2017 and is therefore suitable for AHS. Then, a double page <i>explains how to work with this book</i>. One unit is around 14/ 12 pages long. After the 10 units, a <i>semester self-checks</i> section offers additional exercises which are also related to the units. The exercises clearly state what skills are being practised (reading, listening, speaking, writing). Book 8 offers a section called “<i>exam preparation</i>” which contains exercises and tips on the four skills as well as on so-called special skills, such as collecting and structuring ideas improving your style. Book 7 does not contain this section. However, book 7 contains a “<i>writing guide</i>” offering tips on and prompts for writing tasks. Both books end with a <i>vocabulary</i> section, split into all the units. Then, the <i>solutions</i> to the check-out pages in the units are offered as well as a short table of the content of the CD and DVD. Book 8 also offers a list containing the <i>CEFR descriptors</i> and in which unit these are trained.</p>
<b>Design of the units:</b>	The unit starts with a double page of a lead-in to the topic, containing lots of pictures and other short texts. The goals of the unit are listed. A word bank and fact file support the students.

## 10.2. Checklist

### Item 1: Topics:

The reading exercise deals with a relevant topic as stipulated in the CEFR, the Austrian curriculum of AHS Oberstufe and the Finnish curriculum for English A1	Tick	Comments
Relationships and social networks (family, friends, ...)		
House and home		
Fashion and trends		
Nutrition		
Health		
Sports		
Education (school, further education)		
Working environment		
Free time and hobbies		
Consumerism		
Traditions and customs		
Transport and tourism		
Applied geography (Landeskunde)		
Art, culture, creativity, literature, music		
Media		
Communication		
Nature, environment and global problems		
Modern technology and digitalisation		
Personal plans and goals, future		
Youth, adolescence, becoming an adult		
Politics and public institutions		
The globalised world		
Minorities and other marginal groups		
Rules and laws (youth delinquency, crime, punishment, personal freedom)		
Science		
Language, Plurilingualism		
Human rights		
Career plans		
Migration and multiculturalism		
Economy, money		
<i>Other:</i>		

### Item 2: Text types:

The reading corresponds to the text types...	Tick	Comment
Literary text (novel, poem, drama)		
Non-literary text (articles, instruction manuals, how-to-books, etc.)		

**Item 3: Length of the texts:**

Category	The reading exercise contains a text of different lengths	Tick	Comment
1	Less than 250 words		
2	Between 250 and 500 words		
3	Between 500 and 750 words		
4	Between 750 and 1000 words		
5	More than 1000 words		

**Item 4: CEFR scales:**

	Description	Tick	Comment
B1	Can read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to his/her field and interest with a satisfactory level of comprehension.		
B2	Can read with a large degree of independence, adapting style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes, and using appropriate reference sources selectively. Has a broad active reading vocabulary, but may experience some difficulty with low frequency idioms.		
C1	Can understand in detail lengthy, complex texts, whether or not they relate to his/her own area of speciality, provided he/she can reread difficult sections		

**Item 5: Pre-/ While/ Post-reading stages and integration of skills:**

The reading exercise contains a pre-, while- and/ or post-reading exercise...						
Pre-reading	Tick	While-reading	Tick	Post-reading	Tick	Comments
Listening		Listening		Listening		
Speaking		Speaking		Speaking		
Writing		Writing		Writing		
Grammar		Grammar		Grammar		
Lexicon		lexicon		Lexicon		

**Item 6: Pre-reading aim:**

Code	The pre-reading exercise aims at	Tick	Comment
BK	Activating background knowledge about the topic of the text		
P&H	Predicting and hypothesising about the content of the text		

<b>L</b>	Becoming familiar with some of the language in the text		
<b>PR/O</b>	Eliciting a personal response or opinion on the topic		

**Item 7: While reading aim:**

<b>Code</b>	<b>The while-reading exercise aims at</b>	<b>Tick</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>LF</b>	Language focus		
<b>SF</b>	Strategy focus		

**Item 8: Post-reading aim:**

<b>Code</b>	<b>The post-reading exercise aims at</b>	<b>Tick</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>PR</b>	Eliciting a personal response (agree/disagree, like/dislike etc.)		
<b>EV</b>	Evaluating the text		
<b>U</b>	Checking understanding of the text		
<b>LC</b>	Language consolidation		
<b>P</b>	Producing ....		

**Item 9: Activity format**

<b>Code</b>	<b>The post-reading exercise corresponds to a certain activity format</b>	<b>Tick</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>MC</b>	Multiple choice		
<b>TFJ</b>	True or false with justification		
<b>TFNG</b>	True or false or not given		
<b>TFC</b>	True or false with correction		
<b>QE</b>	Questions with Open answers in English (L2)		
<b>QFIN</b>	Questions with Open answers in Finnish (L1)		
<b>MM</b>	Multiple matching (e.g. sentence halves)		
<b>S</b>	Sequencing		
<b>CW</b>	Command words		
<b>SA</b>	Short answers		
<b>Trans</b>	Translation		
<b>GF</b>	Gap filling		
<b>O</b>	<i>Other:</i>		

**Item 10: Comprehension question types**

<b>The post-reading questions are of the following type (as defined by Diana Freeman)</b>		<b>Tick</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Content questions	Textually explicit		
	textually implicit		
	Inferential comprehension		
Language questions	reorganization		
	Lexical		

	Form		
Affect questions	Personal response		
	evaluation		

### 10.3. Comprehension question types (Freeman 2014)

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Categories	Comprehension question types	Description
<b>Content questions</b>	Textually Explicit	In this question type the answer to the question can be found stated directly in the text. There is word-matching between the question and the text. The information required is in sequential sentences.
	Textually Implicit	In this question type the answer to the question is stated directly in the text but is not expressed in the same language as the question (no word-matching). The information is not all in the same order. It is separated by at least one sentence.
	Inferential Comprehension	In this question type the answer to the question is not stated explicitly in the text but rather alluded to. The reader has to combine their background knowledge with the information in the text and make the necessary connections.
<b>Language questions</b>	Reorganization	This question type requires the reader to reorder, rearrange or transfer information in the text. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– putting sequences in chronological order</li> <li>– transferring data into parallel forms (e.g. label pictures/maps, complete a table, translate)</li> </ul>
	Lexical	This question type requires the reader to focus specifically on <i>vocabulary</i> , not information. Included in this category are exercises where the reader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– guesses the meaning of a word or phrase from the context</li> <li>– matches definition A with word/phrase B</li> <li>– Uses a dictionary</li> </ul> Word attack and text attack strategies are included in this level.
	Form	This question type requires the reader to focus specifically on <i>grammar</i> or <i>form</i> , not information. Examples of form questions include exercises where the reader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– changes a sentence from the affirmative to the negative</li> <li>– forms the question that goes with a given answer</li> <li>– explains the use of one tense rather than another (e.g. present perfect not past simple)</li> </ul>

Figure 3.1 The taxonomy of comprehension questions



<b>Affect questions</b>	Personal Response	This question type requires the reader to offer their personal reaction to the text in terms of likes/dislikes, what they found funny, surprising etc. The reader can be asked to transfer the situation in the text to their own cultural context and comment. Highly subjective, there is no 'right' answer.
	Evaluation	<p>This question type requires the reader to make a judgement or assessment of the text/information according to some understood criteria. This criteria can be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– formally recognized independent sources</li> <li>– teacher provided</li> <li>– student-set standards</li> </ul> <p>The reader is also expected to provide a rationale or justification for their view.</p>

## 10.4. Examples of reading exercises from the textbooks

### 10.4.1. English in Context 7/8

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Unit 20 – Genetics

#### Fact File

**Cloning** refers to the creation of genetically identical copies of living matter. **Reproductive cloning** is used to produce 'identical twins' of animals through genetic manipulation. **Therapeutic cloning** holds the possibility of generating body-identical cells to repair damaged human tissue through the use of stem cells. Because these are obtained from human embryos, stem cell research is strictly regulated in most countries.

### B Born for a Purpose

In Jodi Picoult's novel *My Sister's Keeper*, the 13-year-old Anna, whose older sister Kate suffers from leukaemia, thinks about this question.

#### 1 Before reading

List all the different reasons why people might want to have children.

When I was little, the great mystery to me wasn't how babies were made, but why. The mechanics I understood – my older brother Jesse had filled me in – although at the time I was sure he'd heard half of it wrong. Other kids my age were busy looking up the words penis and vagina in the classroom dictionary when the teacher had her back turned, but

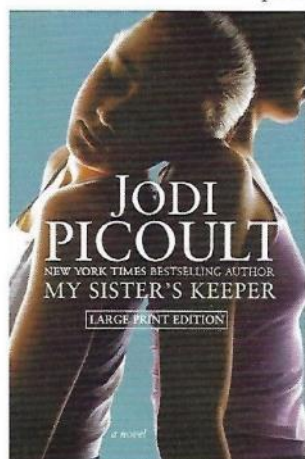
I paid attention to different details. Like why some mothers only had one child, while other families seemed to multiply before your eyes. Or how the new girl in school, Sedona, told anyone who'd listen that she was named for the place where her parents were vacationing when they made her. ('Good thing they weren't staying in Jersey City,' my father used to say).

Now that I am thirteen, these distinctions are only more complicated: the eighth-grader who dropped out of school because she got into trouble; a neighbour who got herself pregnant in the hopes it would keep her husband from filing for divorce. I'm telling you, if aliens landed on Earth today and took a good hard look at why babies get born, they'd conclude that most people have children by accident, or because they drink too much on a certain night, or because birth control isn't one hundred percent, or for a thousand other reasons that really aren't very flattering.

On the other hand, I was born for a very specific purpose. I wasn't the result of a cheap bottle of wine or a full moon or the heat of the moment. I was born because a scientist managed to hook up my mother's eggs and my father's sperm to create a specific combination of precious genetic material. In fact, when Jesse told me how babies get made and I, the great disbeliever, decided to ask my parents the truth, I got more than I bargained for. They sat me down and told me all the usual stuff, of course – but they also explained that they chose little embryonic me, specifically, because I could save my sister, Kate. 'We loved you even more,' my mother made sure to say, 'because we knew what exactly we were getting.'

It made me wonder, though, what would have happened if Kate had been healthy. Chances are, I'd still be floating up in Heaven or wherever, waiting to be attached to a body to spend some time on Earth. Certainly I would not be part of this family. See, unlike the rest of the free world, I didn't get here by accident. And if your parents have you for a reason, then that reason better exist. Because once it's gone, so are you.

*Jodi Picoult: My Sister's Keeper. New York: Atria Books 2004 © by Jodi Picoult*



**fill sb. in** (informal) give sb. the necessary details or information about sth.

**multiply** to increase in number rapidly

**vacation** (AE) (v) go on vacation

**distinction** clear difference

**file for divorce** to apply to end a marriage

**flattering** making sb. feel pleased and special

**precious** valuable or important and not to be wasted

**bargain for sth.** (informal) expect sth.

**better** had better

**2 Understanding the text**

- a Summarize Anna's ideas about why children are born; compare them with your own ideas from exercise 1.
- b Describe Anna's reaction to the news that she is a product of embryo screening.

**3 Creative writing: diary entry**

- a Together with a partner, imagine how the story could continue. Write a short outline of your ideas.
- b Each of you chooses one point in your scenario and writes a page from Anna's diary.
- c Read your partner's text and discuss how the two texts differ.

SP 44 Creative Writing (p. 58)

**4 Listening comprehension: multiple matching**

You are going to listen to the first part of an interview with Jodi Picoult, the author of *My Sister's Keeper*. While listening, match the beginnings of the sentences (1–8) with the sentence endings (A–K). There are two sentence endings that you should not use. Write your answers in the spaces provided. The first one (0) has been done for you.

SP 20 Listening for Details (p. 45)

TF B Multiple Matching (p. 72)

- 0 *My Sister's Keeper* is about a teenage girl \_\_\_\_.
- 1 The girl's parents conceive the girl's little sister to \_\_\_\_.
- 2 When she is a teenager, the younger sister decides that she isn't going to \_\_\_\_.
- 3 Jodi Picoult thought of the title of the book when \_\_\_\_.
- 4 The book is partly based on real-life events that Picoult came across when \_\_\_\_.
- 5 She decided to write her story because she wondered what would happen \_\_\_\_.
- 6 Her son Jake has an unusual illness that can \_\_\_\_.
- 7 She is aware of how difficult things can be \_\_\_\_.
- 8 She lets all the main characters in the book speak because she wants them all to \_\_\_\_.

- A help her sister against her will
- B she was researching another book
- C have the chance to explain the decisions they take
- D if the patient died
- E with leukemia and a kidney problem
- F be a medical donor for the sister
- G cause severe hearing problems
- H when an illness starts to affect the whole family
- I with a normal family background
- J if the patient needed lots of items for the donor
- K she was out walking with a friend



0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
E								



SP

20 Listening for Detail (p. 45)

TF

C Sentence Completion (p. 72)

**precociousness** the state of behaving in an adult or grown-up way when still a child



### 5 Listening comprehension: sentence completion

Listen to the second part of the interview. While listening, complete the sentences (1–6) using a maximum of 4 words. Write your answers in the spaces provided. The first one (0) has been done for you.

- 0 Jodi Picoult thinks that 13-year-old Anna sounds \_\_\_\_\_. *very realistic*
- 1 She says that Anna's voice has an edge and precociousness to it because she had to \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 Jodi Picoult didn't allow Anna to complain about her situation because she didn't want her readers \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 The author says the situation in the book is very much like real life because all the characters are \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 You can't blame the parents for using Anna for her body because it is a \_\_\_\_\_ situation for Kate.
- 5 Jodi Picoult found the book very hard to write because she knew from the beginning that there wasn't going to be \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6 After nine months of writing her characters, Jodi Picoult was emotionally happy to \_\_\_\_\_.

### 6 Group discussion

Work in groups of four. Each choose one of the following roles and discuss Anna's decision not to allow her kidney to be used to save her sister Kate.

Partner A	Partner B	Partner C	Partner D
<i>You are one of Anna and Kate's parents. You love both your children equally but you can't understand why Anna does not want to help her sister. You want to keep the decision in the family and don't want outsiders to interfere.</i>	<i>You are the lawyer that Anna has hired. Even though she is a minor, she has the right to decide what she wants or doesn't want to do with her body. You won't allow her parents to make her do anything against her will.</i>	<i>You are Kate's doctor. You know that she needs the kidney transplant urgently, otherwise she won't survive. The transplant is a routine operation today and donors can survive easily with one kidney.</i>	<i>You are a child psychologist familiar with the case. You are concerned about the effect the choice is having on Anna. She thinks that she was only conceived for the purpose of providing spare parts for Kate.</i>

SP

23 Taking Part in a Classroom Discussion (p. 47)

### 7 EXTRA Discussing ethical issues

In the video in Part A, exercise 2, Dr. Offit mentions the possibility that PGD could be used to eliminate embryos with other unwanted hereditary characteristics, such as obesity. Alternatively, it could be used to select embryos with desirable traits, e.g. 'saviour siblings' chosen to donate bone marrow to an older brother or sister, or 'designer babies' created to their parents' wishes.

Discuss the moral issues surrounding these measures in class.

## Genetic engineering: Medicine

### 1 What is your view of medical progress?

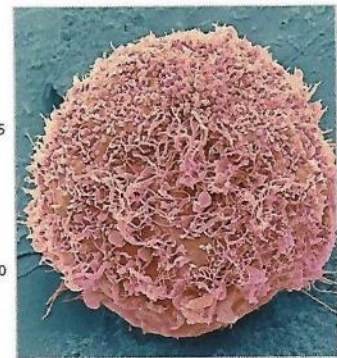
Discuss the question above with a partner. Make sure you deal with the following aspects:

- Is it right to test new methods of treatment on animals and/or humans?
- Should people interfere with nature?
- Who should take the decision to determine which medical treatment is ethically acceptable?

### 2 Reading: How stem cells can turn back the biological clock

Read the text about stem cell therapy. Some parts are missing. Choose the correct part (A–I) for each gap (1–6). There are two extra parts that you should not use. Write your answers in the boxes provided. The first one (0) has been done for you.

Breakthrough discovery by Edinburgh researchers. Finding offers hope of replacing damaged organs.



British scientists have discovered a secret ingredient which gives stem cells the power to grow into any tissue in the human body. Stem cells are believed ... **0**, but the

stem cell boosted by Nanog, it was converted into a stem cell.

The researchers believe that Nanog, alongside other genes, kicks into action a cascade of complex biological machinery that forces cells back into their simplest state, before becoming one of the 200 cell types found in the body.



biological machinery that allows them to form anything from nerves to liver and skin cells has until now eluded scientists. The finding paves the way for potentially radical changes in medicine.

Ultimately, it could let researchers take skin or other cells from a patient and convert them into stem cells. With further work, these could be grown into tissues and organs ... **1**.

Researchers at Edinburgh University made the discovery during experiments in which stem cells taken from human embryos were fused with brain cells. Occasionally, when the two cells fused, the brain cell was converted into a stem cell. Effectively, the stem cell had turned back the clock on the brain cell, rewinding it to the earliest stage in its development. "We knew that stem cells could rewind other cells, but we had no idea how they did it," said Professor Austin Smith, who led the study.

To investigate, the researchers repeated the experiments after boosting levels of a gene inside the stem cells. The lab named the gene "Nanog", after Tir nan Og, the Celtic mythical "land of the ever-young". The tests, reported in the journal *Nature* recently, showed that every time a brain cell was fused with a

Previous studies have found that Nanog is first expressed on the third day of life, when a fertilised human egg is no more than a ball of cells. At the same time stem cells form, which go on ... **2**.

"The dream here is that if you have a patient with Parkinson's disease or type I diabetes, where particular types of cells have died, then maybe we could take skin cells from the patient, expose them briefly to Nanog and convert them to embryonic stem cells. You then grow those up, convert them into replacement cells and ... **3**. Because they are identical to the patient's own cells, there is no danger of them being rejected by the immune system," said Professor Smith.

Such radical new therapies are likely to be many years away, but unlocking the secret that gives stem cells their versatility brings hopes much closer.

Some researchers believe that by understanding how stem cells work, they will eventually be able ... **4** stimulate healthy cells in damaged organs to regenerate themselves.

"This is probably the \$64 billion question when it comes to stem cells, but it's not a simple question and



75 there will be no simple answer," said Professor John Burn, head of the Institute of Human Genetics at Newcastle University. "What is useful about this is that it will allow us ... 5 have been rewound with genuine embryonic stem cells, so we can assess which 80 are best."

Although embryonic stem cells are considered by many scientists to have the most potential for future

- A be ethically more acceptable
- B to compare cells that
- C to replace those damaged by disease or injury
- D be replaced by skin cells
- E to generate the entire human body
- F to devise therapies that
- ☒ G to be unique in their versatility
- H to exclude stem cells that
- I transplant them

therapies, critics protest because human embryos are destroyed in the process. Any therapy that used only adult cells they argue would ... 6. The debate 85 continues whether this research poses a promise, a threat or a mixed ethical picture for society.

(Ian Sample, *The Guardian*)

### 3 Questions on the text

Go through the text again and find answers to the following questions:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of different methods of generating stem cells?
- What is the aim of these scientists?
- Why are these methods not acceptable for many people?

### 4 Controversial issues

Read the statements below and tick (✓) them if you agree or write a ✗ if you disagree with them. Decide spontaneously and try to explain why.

1. Couples should be allowed to use genetic engineering to make sure that they have a healthy baby. ☐
2. Insurance companies should be allowed to use genetic testing before giving someone health or life insurance. ☐
3. Sports officials should be allowed to use genetic testing of young athletes before supporting and sponsoring careers. ☐

### 5 Speaking: Therapeutic cloning?

- a) Prepare a talk about therapeutic cloning and its consequences and present it to the class. In your presentation, you should:
  - discuss the reasons for developing this method
  - analyse the ethical problems related to it
  - suggest how to solve the dilemma
- b) Compare your new insights with the views you put forward in the previous sections. Have you (not) changed your mind?



#### Useful phrases

##### Debating

First of all, ... • Next, ... • Finally, ... •  
 As far as I'm concerned, ... • I'm sure you'd agree that ... • It's obvious that ... • But don't forget ... • I admit that ... , but ... •  
 I'm sorry but I don't agree that ... • In fact, I'd go so far as to say ... • Yes, but obviously you can't deny ... • It cannot be denied, however, that ...

### 10.4.3. Insights

#### engage

Go through these words with your partner. Explain all the words you know and check the meaning of any words that are new to you. 172

immortal  
tumor  
in vitro fertilization  
cell  
gene mapping  
mitosis  
cervix  
embryo  
diagram



# 3 The ubiquitous woman



**How can a person become truly immortal?**  
**Read on to find out.**

5 **T**here's a photo on my wall of a woman I've never met, its left corner torn and patched together with tape. She looks straight into the camera and smiles, hands on hips, dress suit neatly pressed, lips painted deep red. It's the late 1940s and she hasn't yet reached the age of thirty. Her light brown skin is smooth, her  
10 eyes still young and playful, oblivious to the tumor growing inside her—a tumor that would leave her five children motherless and change the future of

medicine. Beneath the photo, a caption says her name is "Henrietta Lacks, Helen Lane or Helen Larson."

15 No one knows who took that picture, but it's appeared hundreds of times in magazines and science textbooks, on blogs and laboratory walls. She's usually identified as Helen Lane, but often she has no name at all. She's simply called HeLa, the code name given to the world's  
20 first immortal human cells—her cells, cut from her cervix just months before she died.

Her real name is Henrietta Lacks.

I've spent years staring at that photo, wondering what kind of life she led, what happened to her children, and  
25 what she'd think about cells from her cervix living on



### 3. The ubiquitous woman

forever—bought, sold, packaged, and shipped by the trillions to laboratories around the world. I've tried to imagine how she'd feel knowing that her cells went up in the first space missions to see what would happen to human cells in zero gravity, or that they helped with some of the most important advances in medicine: the polio vaccine, chemotherapy, cloning, gene mapping, in vitro fertilization. I'm pretty sure that she—like most of us—would be shocked to hear that there are trillions more of her cells growing in laboratories now than there ever were in her body.

There's no way of knowing exactly how many of Henrietta's cells are alive today. One scientist estimates that if you could pile all HeLa cells ever grown onto a scale, they'd weigh more than 50 million metric tons—an inconceivable number, given that an individual cell weighs almost nothing. Another scientist calculated that if you could lay all HeLa cells ever grown end-to-end, they'd wrap around the Earth at least three times, spanning more than 350 million feet. In her prime, Henrietta herself stood only a bit over five feet tall.

I first learned about HeLa cells and the woman behind them in 1988, thirty-seven years after her death, when I was sixteen and sitting in a community college biology class. My instructor, Donald Defler, a gnomish balding man, paced at the front of the lecture hall and flipped on an overhead projector. He pointed to two diagrams that

appeared on the wall behind him. They were schematics of the cell reproduction cycle, but to me they just looked like a neon-colored mess of arrows, squares, and circles with words I didn't understand, like "MPF Triggering a Chain Reaction of Protein Activations."

Defler paced the front of the classroom telling us how mitosis—the process of cell division—makes it possible for embryos to grow into babies, and for our bodies to create new cells for healing wounds or replenishing blood we've lost. It was beautiful, he said, like a perfectly choreographed dance.

All it takes is one small mistake anywhere in the division process for cells to start growing out of control, he told us. Just one enzyme misfiring, just one wrong protein activation, and you could have cancer. Mitosis goes haywire, which is how it spreads.

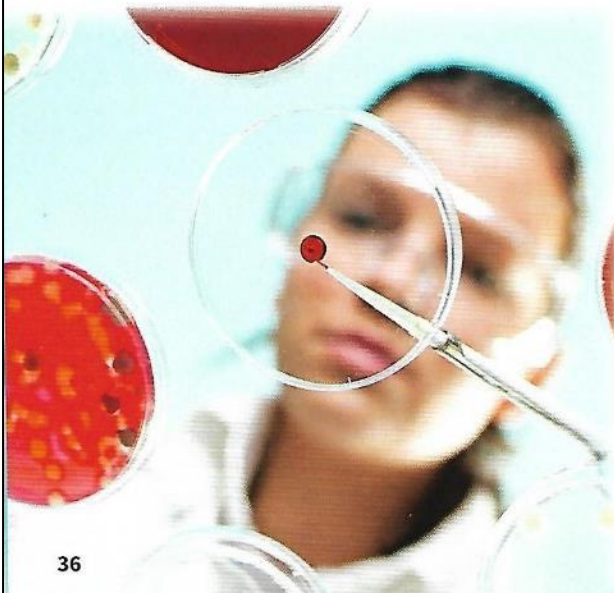
"We learned that by studying cancer cells in culture," Defler said. He grinned and spun to face the board, where he wrote two words in enormous print: HENRIETTA LACKS.

Henrietta died in 1951 from a vicious case of cervical cancer, he told us. But before she died, a surgeon took samples of her tumor and put them in a petri dish. Scientists had been trying to keep human cells alive in culture for decades, but they all eventually died. Henrietta's were different: they reproduced an entire generation every twenty-four hours, and they never stopped. They became the first immortal human cells ever grown in a laboratory.

"Henrietta's cells have now been living outside her body far longer than they ever lived inside it," Defler said. If we went to almost any cell culture lab in the world and opened its freezers, he told us, we'd probably find millions—if not billions—of Henrietta's cells in small vials on ice.

Her cells were part of research into the genes that cause cancer and those that suppress it; they helped develop drugs for treating herpes, leukemia, influenza, hemophilia, and Parkinson's disease; and they've been used to study lactose digestion, sexually transmitted diseases, appendicitis, human longevity, mosquito mating, and the negative cellular effects of working in sewers. Their chromosomes and proteins have been studied with such detail and precision that scientists know their every quirk. Like guinea pigs and mice, Henrietta's cells have become the standard laboratory workhorse.

*Arbeitspferd*





"HeLa cells were one of the most important things that happened to medicine in the last hundred years,"  
 100 Defler said.

Then, matter-of-factly, almost as an afterthought, he said, "She was a black woman." He erased her name in one fast swipe and blew the chalk from his hands. Class was over.

105 As the other students filed out of the room, I sat thinking, That's it? That's all we get? There has to be more to the story.

I followed Defler to his office.

"Where was she from?" I asked. "Did she know how  
 110 important her cells were? Did she have any children?"

"I wish I could tell you," he said, "but no one knows anything about her."

Excerpt from *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot, copyright © 2010 by Rebecca Skloot. Reproduced with permission of Pan Macmillan via PLSclear.

author



### Rebecca L. Skloot

is a freelance writer who specializes in science and medicine. Her stories and essays have been published in *the New York Times* among other publications. Her first book, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* (2010), was one of the best-selling new books of that year and also won several literary prizes. Oprah Winfrey bought the rights to the book and she herself stars in the movie version of the book. Skloot is now working on her second book.

ubiquitous [ju:'bikwɪtəs]

immortal [ɪ'mɔ:təl]

patched [pætʃt]

dress suit

pressed

oblivious [ə'blɪvɪəs]

tumor [tju:mə]

medicine [medɪsɪn]

beneath [bi'ni:θ]

caption [kæpʃn]

identify [aɪ'dentɪfaɪ]

cell

cervix [sə:'vɪks]

package [pækɪdʒ]

ship

trillion

space mission [speɪs mɪʃən]

zero gravity [ziə'ru grævɪti]

advance [əd'vɑ:ns]

vaccine [væksɪ:n]

chemotherapy [ki:məuθerəpi]

gene mapping [dʒi:n]

in vitro fertilization [fa:tilai'zeɪʃn]

estimate [estimeɪt]

pile [paɪl]

scale [skeɪl]

metric ton

kaikkialla läsnäoleva

kuolematon

paikattu

jakkupuku

prässätty

tietämätön

kasvain

lääketiede

alla

kuvateksti

nimetä, tunnistaa

solu

kohdunkaula

pakata, paketoita

toimittaa

biljoona, miljoona

miljoonaa

avaruuslento

painottomuus

edistysaskel

rokote

kemoterapia

geenikartoitus

keinohedelmöitys

arvioida

kasata

vaaka

tonni

inconceivable [ɪn'kən'si:vəbl]

individual [ɪndɪ'vɪdʒuəl]

calculate [kælkjuleɪt]

end-to-end

wrap [ræp]

span

foot, feet

prime [praɪm]

instructor [ɪn'strʌktə]

gnomish [nəʊmɪʃ]

balding [bɔ:ldɪŋ]

pace [peɪs]

lecture hall [lektʃə]

flip on

overhead projector [prə'dʒektə]

diagram [daɪəgræm]

schematic [ski'mætik]

reproduction [ri:prə'dʌkʃn]

cycle [saɪkl]

arrow [æraʊ]

square [skweə]

circle [sə:kl]

MPF: maturation promoting factor

trigger [trɪgə]

chain reaction [tʃeɪn ri'ækʃn]

käsittämätön

yksittäinen

laskea

päästä päähän

kiertää

ulottua, käsittää

jalka (30,48 cm)

kukoistus

opettaja

kääpiömäinen,

peikkomainen

kaljuuntuva

astella edestakaisin

luentosali

laittaa päälle

piirtoheitin

diagrammi, kaaviokuva

kaavio

lisääntyminen

kierto

nuoli

neliö

ympyrä

tekijä, joka säätelee

solusyklin M-vaiheeseen

siirtymistä

laukaista

ketjureaktio

### 3. The ubiquitous woman

protein activation [prəʊti:n  
æk'ti'veɪʃn]  
mitosis [maɪ'təʊsɪs]

**division** [dɪ'vɪʒn]  
**embryo** [embriəʊ]  
**heal** [hi:l]  
**wound** [wu:nd]  
**replenish** [ri'pleniʃ]  
**enzyme** [enzaim]  
**misfire**

**go haywire** [heɪwaɪə]  
**culture** [kʌltʃə]  
**grin**  
**spin, spun, spun**  
**vicious** [vɪʃəs]  
**cervical cancer** [sə:vɪkl]  
**surgeon** [sɜ:dʒən]  
**sample** [sɑ:mpəl]  
**petri dish** [pi:tri dɪʃ]  
**eventually** [ɪ'ventʃuəli]  
**reproduce** [ri:prə'dju:s]  
**vial** [vaɪəl]  
**suppress** [sə'pres]  
**drugs** [drʌɡz]  
**hemophilia** [hi:mə'filiə]

proteiinin aktivaatio  
mitoosi,  
solunjakautuminen

**jakautuminen**  
alkio, sikiö  
**parantaa, parantua**  
**haava**  
**täydentää**  
entsyymi  
epäonnistua, jäädä  
laukeamatta  
mennä sekaisin  
**viljely**  
**virnistää**  
**pyörähtää**  
**raju, säälimätön**  
kohdunkaulan syöpä  
**kirurgi**  
**näyte**  
petrimalja  
**lopulta**  
**lisääntyä**  
näytepullo  
**pidättää, ehkäistä**  
**lääkkeet**  
verenvuototauti

lactose digestion  
[læktəʊs daɪ'dʒestʃn]  
sexually transmitted disease  
appendicitis [əpendɪ'saɪtɪs]

**longevity** [lɒn'dʒevɪti]  
**mating** [meɪtɪŋ]  
**sewer** [su:ə]  
**precision** [pri'siʒn]  
**quirk** [kvə:k]  
**guinea pig** [ɡɪni]  
**matter-of-factly**  
**afterthought**  
**swipe** [swaɪp]  
**chalk** [tʃɔ:k]  
**file out**

laktoosin  
pilkkoutuminen  
sukupuolitauti  
umpilisäkkeen  
tulehdus  
**elinikä, pitkäikäisyys**  
pariutuminen  
**viemäri**  
**tarkkuus**  
oikku  
marsu, koe-eläin  
asiallisesti  
lisäys  
pyyhkäisy  
liitu  
poistua



#### 3a Come up with questions for these answers based on the text.

1. Q: \_\_\_\_\_?

A: Young, neatly dressed, smiling, happy and unaware of her illness.

2. Q: \_\_\_\_\_?

A: A code name for Henrietta's cells.

3. Q: \_\_\_\_\_?

A: They were sold to laboratories all over the world and they have been used in numerous scientific studies.

4. Q: \_\_\_\_\_?

A: We don't know exactly, but there are a lot of them.



5. Q: \_\_\_\_\_?

A: From her biology instructor at a community college.

6. Q: \_\_\_\_\_?

A: Cells divide and new cells are created (for healing wounds or replenishing lost blood, for example).

7. Q: \_\_\_\_\_?

A: When something goes wrong in the process of cells dividing.

8. Q: \_\_\_\_\_?

A: Because her surgeon took a sample of her tumor before she died in 1951.

9. Q: \_\_\_\_\_?

A: They were the first human cells that stayed alive and reproduced in culture, outside a human body.

10. Q: \_\_\_\_\_?

A: Her cells have been studied in detail and we know a lot about them, whereas we have very little knowledge of Henrietta Lacks.

### 3b Discuss.

1. Henrietta's cells were used for research without her consent or knowledge. Now her cells can be found all around the world. Do you think the scientists should have asked for permission to use her cells? Why or why not?
2. Do you think that it is more important to make advances in science and medicine than to respect an individual's right to privacy? Would you allow your cells or your medical information to be used for research?
3. How do you feel about animal testing? For example, is it okay to use animals to test the side effects of new medicines? How about using animals for testing cosmetic products?
4. Would you consider donating your organs for medical research after your death? Why or why not?
5. Who should be responsible for developing new medicines and treatments: businesses, non-profit organizations, governments or somebody else? Who should pay for this?



### 3. The ubiquitous woman

#### 3c Spot the phrase. How were these phrases expressed in the text?

1. 1940-luvun loppupuoli
2. saavutti kolmenkymmenen vuoden iän
3. satoja kertoja
4. millaista elämää hän vietti
5. edistysaskeleet lääketieteessä
6. ulottuen yli 350 miljoonan jalan pituudelle
7. hieman yli 150 senttiä pitkä
8. kuulin ensimmäistä kertaa
9. vuorokauden välein
10. miljoonittain... Henriettan soluja
11. pienissä näytepulloissa jäissä
12. yksi tärkeimmistä asioista
13. viimeisen sadan vuoden aikana
14. yhdellä nopealla pyyhkäisyllä
15. opiskelijat marssivat ulos huoneesta
16. Tarinaan täytyy liittyä jotakin enemmän.



#### 3d Use the phrases from the previous exercise to complete the sentences. You might have to change them a little.

Lou Gehrig's disease, or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), is 1. \_\_\_\_\_ diseases named after a celebrity. He played for the New York Yankees major league baseball team from 1923 to 1939, his career 2. \_\_\_\_\_ consecutive games. He set several records and was adored by fans, but by 3. \_\_\_\_\_ it was obvious something was wrong. He had hit that ball 4. \_\_\_\_\_, but in 1938 his batting average fell significantly. He grew weak and sluggish and he played his last game on April 29, 1939. That's when 5. \_\_\_\_\_. He died before he 6. \_\_\_\_\_. Although 7. \_\_\_\_\_, especially 8. \_\_\_\_\_, there is still no cure for this disease.

1. yksi kuuluisimmista
2. ulottuen/käsittäen yli 2100
3. 1930-luvun loppupuoleen (mennessä)
4. satoja kertoja
5. monet amerikkalaiset kuolivat ensimmäistä kertaa ALS-taudista
6. oli saavuttanut 40 vuoden iän
7. lääketieteessä on ollut merkittäviä edistysaskelia
8. viimeisen 20 vuoden aikana

## DIY

Go online and find out who the following people were.  
What are the things that have been named after them?

Louis Braille

Hieronymus Carl Friedrich von Münchhausen

Wilhelm Röntgen

Julius R. Petri



3e Fill in with a word from the list in its right form.

calculate  
estimate  
heal  
identify  
immortal

inconceivable  
oblivious  
suppress  
trigger  
vicious



- The police haven't \_\_\_\_\_ the victim yet.
- That somebody can be so cruel to animals is just \_\_\_\_\_.
- I \_\_\_\_\_ that it will take us about three hours to finish this.
- Do you know how to \_\_\_\_\_ the area of a square?
- Haven't you noticed what's going on – are you completely \_\_\_\_\_?
- Many cultures believe that people have \_\_\_\_\_ souls.
- That looks like a very \_\_\_\_\_ infection; you'll have to get antibiotics.
- If you try to \_\_\_\_\_ your anger for too long, you'll eventually lose your temper.
- That's a nasty looking cut; it'll take a while to \_\_\_\_\_.
- Animal hair and even cat saliva can \_\_\_\_\_ an asthma attack.



### 3. The ubiquitous woman



**3f** Choose nouns from the word list and draw or explain them. Your partner guesses which word you are trying to depict. Take turns and draw or explain as many things as you can.

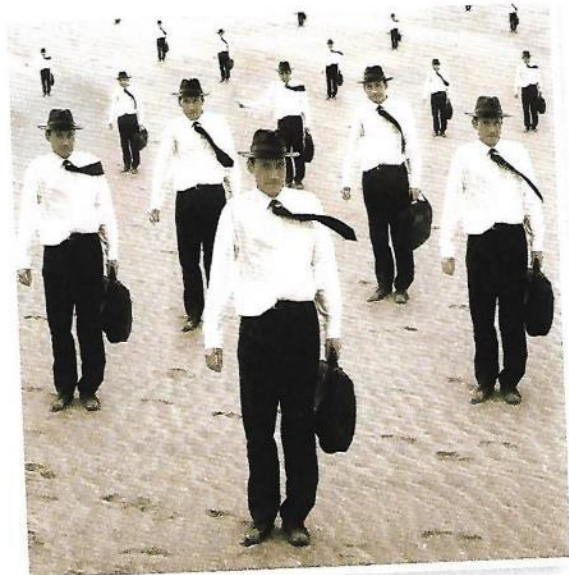
**3g** Discuss the following questions in small groups.

1. The text tells about Henrietta's immortal cells. Would you like to become "immortal" and be remembered by future generations? How could you achieve this?
2. Some historical people are recognized all over the world, for example famous leaders, artists, composers and scientists. Who will be remembered in fifty years? What about in a hundred years?
3. Why do you think that people want to leave a legacy? Why is it important for us to be remembered after we are no longer here?
4. Would you like to live forever if science made it possible? Why? How could it be made possible?



**3h** Watch the video and choose the best alternative according to what you hear.

1. **The Center for Life...**
  - a. clones people
  - b. has cloned animals
  - c. may clone human cells.
2. **How will the center get eggs?**
  - a. From local farmers
  - b. From volunteers
  - c. From patients
3. **What happens to the stem cells after a week?**
  - a. They are extracted from the embryo.
  - b. They start to reproduce.
  - c. They start turning into other cells.
4. **What is special about embryonic stem cells?**
  - a. They cure all kinds of diseases.
  - b. They are different from other cells.
  - c. They might even help paralyzed people.
5. **What would be a suitable title for the video?**
  - a. Stem cells are the future of medicine
  - b. Stem cells pose many moral problems
  - c. Stem cells to be used to clone people

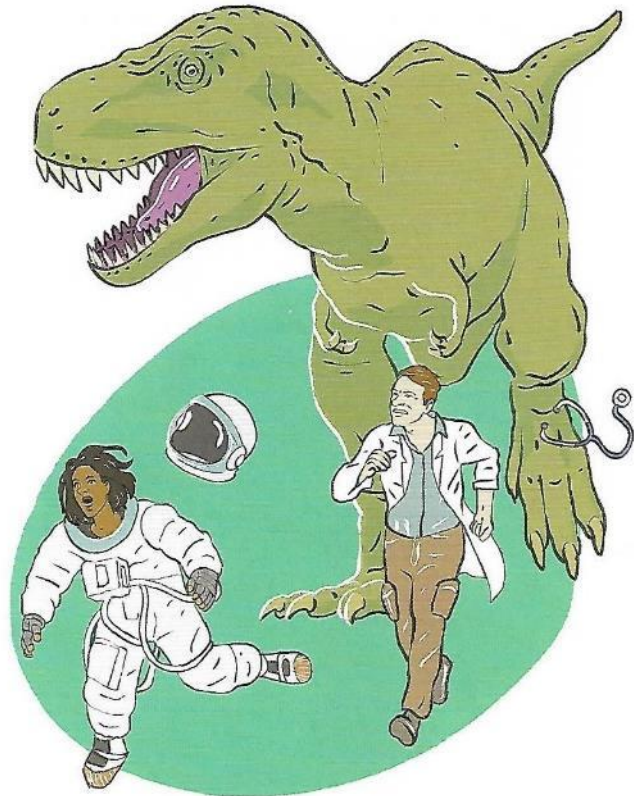


#### DIY

Craig from England is 6 ft. 1 tall, weighs 15 stone and lives 7 miles from the center of the city.  
Cathy from the US is 5 ft. 8 tall, weighs 159 lb. and lives just 200 yards from her best friend's house.  
Use conversion charts to express the same information in centimeters, kilos, kilometres and metres.

**3i Crack the nut.** Do you know who the following medical professionals were?  
172

- |                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Virginia Apgar (1909–1974)      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Hans Asperger (1906–1980)       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Elizabeth Blackwell (1821–1910) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930)  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Michael Crichton (1942–2008)    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Hippocrates (460 BCE–370 BCE)   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Mae Jemison (1956–)             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Jack Kevorkian (1928–2011)      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Maria Montessori (1870–1952)    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Louis Pasteur (1822–1895)      | <input type="checkbox"/> |



- |   |  |
|---|--|
| a. A British-born woman, who was the first woman to graduate from medical school in the United States.  | f. A Scottish doctor and writer who created the character Sherlock Holmes.   |
| b. “The Father of Modern Medicine”, he founded a school of medicine which revolutionized medicine in ancient Greece and established medicine as a profession. | g. An American author, producer, screenwriter and doctor, who created the TV show <i>ER</i> and wrote eg the book <i>Jurassic Park</i> .   |
| c. A physician and NASA astronaut. She was the first African-American woman to travel in space.   | h. An Italian physician and educator. She is famous for her writing on pedagogy, and a philosophy of education has been named after her.   |
| d. A French chemist and microbiologist famous for his discoveries of the principles of vaccination, microbial fermentation and pasteurization.                | i. An American anesthesiologist who is known as the inventor of a system that helps to assess the health of newborn children right after birth.                                      |
| e. An American pathologist, who became known as Dr. Death after publicly defending a terminal patient's right to die via doctor-assisted suicide.             | j. An Austrian pediatrician and medical professor, who is best known for his studies on mental disorders, especially in children. His work became better known only after his death. |

#### 10.4.4. On Track

#### Topic 6 Key text

### Topic 6

## Stand-up

A day without laughter is a day wasted.

(Charlie Chaplin, British comic actor)

- 6A** Jokes form an important part of our culture. In English many jokes depend on puns. In pairs, look at the following examples first and then fill in the missing words.

*I live in an airport, but when the security guard comes at night Heathrows me out.*

*I used to have a fear of hurdles, but I got over it.*

I wondered why the baseball was getting bigger. Then it \_\_\_\_\_ me.

I couldn't quite remember how to throw a boomerang, but eventually it came \_\_\_\_\_ to me.

I don't trust these stairs because they're always \_\_\_\_\_ to something.

The dead batteries were given out free of \_\_\_\_\_.

- 6B** A punchline is the final part of a joke which makes the listener laugh. Listen to the following longer joke. What do you think is the punchline?



### Personal dictionary

- 6C** Read text 6. Find the words below in the text and underline them.

- First, guess the meaning, then look them up in the dictionary if necessary.
- Choose 3–5 extra words and mark them, too.
- Try making sentences with some of the words.

- |                  |               |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1 appoint        | 6 obviously   |
| 2 unconventional | 7 skit        |
| 3 shrink         | 8 desperately |
| 4 gag            | 9 hearsay     |
| 5 split up       | 10 articulate |



## Topic 6 Key text

# Laughter: a serious business

A stand-up comedian? One of the hardest jobs in the entertainment business. Speaking directly to a live audience, armed with little more than a few anecdotes, jokes and one-liners, the stand-up is expected to have his listeners in stitches, night after night. It's a tough call.

*to laugh a lot  
to cause one to laugh hysterically*

5 You may not know much about him, but the South African stand-up comedian Trevor Noah landed one of the biggest jobs on US TV. The boy from Soweto has been appointed as the host of *The Daily Show*. But who is he and why does it matter? Simon Brown from *Baltimore Today* interviewed Trevor's friend, the journalist Karen Landman, to find out more about the man behind the comedian.

**Simon:** I heard that he had a rather unusual childhood?

**Karen:** It was certainly unusual at the time. His mother was a Xhosa woman, his father a white Swiss-German man, and in apartheid South Africa, this sort of relationship was illegal. Trevor has worked his unconventional parents into one of his routines, saying, "It was very awkward, growing up in a mixed family, with me being the mixed one. My mum was like 'Ohh, I don't care, I don't care, I love my white man!' And my dad? Well, you know how the Swiss love chocolate, so..." But jokes aside, it can't have been an easy life.

*date of birth*

### Trevor Noah

d.o.b.: 20 February 1984

Place: Soweto, South Africa

Career: Host of *The Daily Show*;

TV presenter; stand-up comedian

Languages: Xhosa, Zulu, English,

Afrikaans, German

Education: No performing arts education

Obsession: Roller-coaster rides



## Topic 6 Key text

- 20 **Karen:** They had to be on their guard all the time, in case the police found out about their relationship and arrested them.
- Simon:** Stand-ups often use personal material in their routines, don't they? I remember Woody Allen saying once that using his own life as material for his stand-up routines is a form of psychotherapy, "cheaper than going to see a shrink."
- 25 **Karen:** That's right. A fellow stand-up comedian, Eddie Izzard, actually advised Trevor to use more gags about his unusual family in his act. For example, after Trevor's parents split up, the relationship with his mum's new partner took a terrible turn one night when he shot her. Fortunately, she survived, but it was obviously a very traumatic experience, which Trevor then used as material on stage. It helped him to come to terms with it. But the skit I like best is where he tries to explain what he does for a living to his Swiss-German father, an educated, hard-working, serious man.
- 30 **Simon:** It was actually Izzard who got Trevor his international break when he booked him a slot at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, right?
- Karen:** Yes, the biggest arts festival in the world, and Trevor brought the house down. = *Stürmischen Beifall ernten*
- Simon:** How did he get started?
- 35 **Karen:** He started out on TV, and has remained in the spotlight ever since. At 18, shortly after he matriculated, he landed a cameo role in a South African soap. After that, he hosted an educational show and from there he went on to reality TV. He hosted everything, from game shows and dating programmes to celebrity gossip and sports programmes. Apartheid was over, and the South African Broadcasting Cooperation was desperately looking for talented African presenters. Trevor was talented, of course, well-spoken and fluent in several languages, but he was also in the right place at the right time.
- 40 **Simon:** What about his break into the stand-up circuit? I heard that it happened quite by accident.
- Karen:** Apparently – and this is hearsay, but it makes such a good story that I think people are starting to take it as gospel – he was at a gig one night and not laughing at any of the jokes. The host, getting a bit irritated, said to him, "Do you think you can do any better?" And he got up on stage, totally unprepared, and just spoke about his day. The audience loved him. He got a standing ovation, and he's never looked back. He took to stand-up like a fish to water.
- 45 *brief appearance*
- 50 *to believe sth. without doubting it at all*
- 55 *to discover when you start to do sth. for the first time that you have a natural ability to do it*

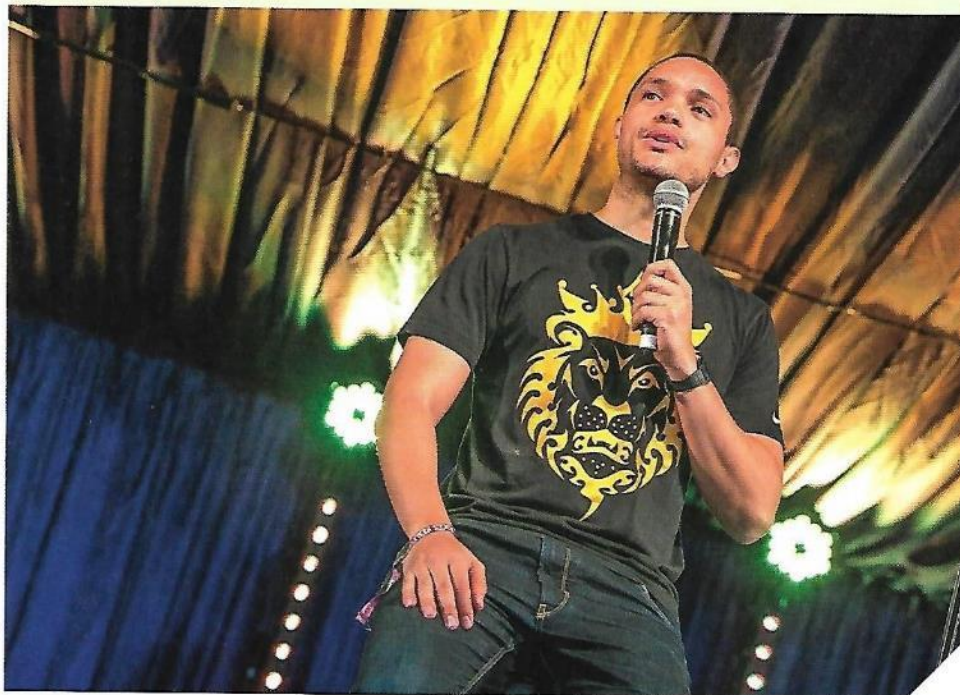




60 **Simon:** He'll certainly bring a more global point of view to *The Daily Show*.  
Plus, he's got millions of fans on social media, so he's connecting  
with the so-called second-screener. He is in that sweet spot for this  
particular show: a young adult, multi-racial, international, articulate  
and very funny. Plus, coming from the background that he does,  
65 he can poke fun at holy cows in a way that a white American host  
probably couldn't.

**Karen:** Well yes, stand-up comedy is very often politically incorrect, and  
Trevor Noah has certainly raised some hackles with some of  
70 the things he has said. But you raised an interesting point there:  
many stand-up comics now use the internet to reach a wider  
audience, don't they? Post some skit online, then remove it after  
a while... also, downloads, social media, that sort of thing.

**Simon:** Right. But somehow I feel that laughing by yourself, in front of  
a screen, is not quite the same as laughing with others, in a theatre  
or a club – you know, with a stand-up comic standing in  
75 the spotlight on stage. When it comes to stand-up comedy,  
I think old-fashioned live performance is always better,  
don't you?



## Topic 6 Key text

**entertainment** /entə'teɪnmənt/ viihde,  
ajanviete

**audience** /ɔːdɪəns/ yleisö

**armed with** /ɑːmd wɪð/ varustettuna jollakin

**anecdote** /ænikdəʊt/ juttu, tarina

**one-liner** /wʌnlɑːnə/ lyhyt vitsi, sutkaus

**appoint** /ə'pɔɪnt/

**host** /həʊst/ isäntä/emäntä, juontaja

**Xhosa** /hɔːsə, hɔʊzə, kɔːsə, kɔʊzə/  
afrikkalainen heimo, kieli

**apartheid** /ə'pɑːt,heɪt/ rotuerottelu

**illegal** /ɪ'liːɡl/ laitton, lainvastainen

**unconventional** /ʌnkən'venʃənəl/

**awkward** /ɔːkwəd/ vaikea, hankala, kiusallinen

**the Swiss** /ðə swɪs/ sveitsiläinen, sveitsiläiset

**aside** /ə'saɪd/ sivuun, syrjään, sikseen

**psychotherapy** /saɪkə'θerəpi/ psykoterapia

**shrink** /ʃrɪŋk/

**gag** /gæɡ/

**\*split up** /splɪt ʌp/

**fortunately** /fɔːtʃənɪtli/ onneksi

**obviously** /ɒbvɪəsli/

**skit** /skɪt/

**hard-working** /hɑːd'wɜːkɪŋ/ ahkera

**book** /buk/ varata

**slot** /slɒt/ paikka, aika

**spotlight** /spɒtlaɪt/ valokeila, huomion keskipiste

**matriculate** /mə'trɪkjuleɪt/ \*päästä ylioppilaaksi  
(Etelä-Afrikassa)

**cameo role** /kæmɪəʊ rəʊl/ cameorooli,  
näyttäytymisosa: henkilö esiintyy omana  
itsenään elokuvassa

**desperately** /despə'reɪtli/

**presenter** /prɪ'zentər/ juontaja, esittäjä

**well-spoken** /wel'spəʊkən/ hyvä puhuja

**fluent** /fluːənt/ sujuva

**circuit** /sɜːkɪt/ piiri

**by accident** /baɪ æksɪdnt/ vahingossa, sattumalta

**apparently** /ə'pærəntli/ ilmeisesti

**hearsay** /hɪəseɪ/

**gospel** /gɒspəl/ totuus, ilosanoma, evankeliumi

**gig** /ɡɪɡ/ keikka

**irritated** /ɪrɪteɪtɪd/ ärtynyt, äkäinen

**unprepared** /ʌnpri'peəd/ valmistautumaton

**standing ovation** /stændɪŋ əv'eɪʃn/  
suosionosoitukset seisten

**second-screener** /sekənd skriːnə/

"kahden ruudun" samanaikainen käyttäjä

**sweet spot** /swiːt spɒt/ ihannepiste

**multi-racial** /mʌlti'reɪʃl/ monirotuinen,  
kansainvälinen

**articulate** /ɑː'tɪkjʊleɪt/

**background** /bækgraʊnd/ tausta

**poke fun at** /pəʊk fʌn æt/ tehdä pilaa jostakin

**holy cow** /həʊli kau/ pyhä asia

**raise (somebody's) hackles** /reɪz sʌmbədiːs hæklz/  
suututtaa, nostaa niskakarvat pystyyn

**6D** Answer the following questions in Finnish.

- 1 Miksi stand upin tekeminen on tekstin mukaan vaikeaa? Mainitse kaksi syytä.
- 2 Miksi Trevorin lapsuus oli epätavallinen?
- 3 Mitä Trevorin äidille tapahtui eron jälkeen? *breakthrough*
- 4 Miten ja missä Trevorin kansainvälinen läpimurto tapahtui?
- 5 Miten Trevorin stand up -ura sai alkunsa?
- 6 Mitkä ovat Trevorin menestyksen tekijät?

**6E** In pairs, translate the questions in exercise 6D into English.

**Phrase hunt**

**6F** Find the following expressions in the text.

- 1 saada kuulijat nauramaan katketakseen  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2 vaikea homma \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 sai yhden arvostetuimmista työpaikoista  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4 varpaillaan, varuillaan \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 sai kauhistuttavan kääntein eräänä yönä  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 6 tulla sinuiksi asian kanssa \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 varasi tälle esiintymisajan Edinburghin taidefestivaaleille  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 8 sai yleisön repeämään naurusta \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 puhuu sujuvasti useaa kieltä \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 yleisö osoitti suosiotaan seisoen  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 11 irvailla, pilkata \_\_\_\_\_
- 12 poliittisesti epäkorrekti \_\_\_\_\_

## 10.5. Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to identify similarities and differences in English textbooks used in high school in the last two years before the matriculation examination in both Austria as well as in Finland. The focus is on the accompanying activities, which are categorised as pre-, while-, and post-reading exercises. The Austrian textbooks *Prime Time 7* and *Prime Time 8* as well as *English in Context 7/8* were analysed. Regarding the Finnish textbooks, *On Track 3-6* and *Insights 3-6* were selected and analysed.

First, the literature review discusses the theory of reading, as well as the foreign language teaching classroom. Then, textbook analysis and evaluation is elaborated, which also forms the basis for the study of this thesis. After an outline of the method and research questions, the findings are presented and analysed.

The findings show that the analysed textbooks in Finland and in Austria contain numerous similarities, i.e. regarding the predominant use of the post-reading and pre-reading stage, as well as the substantial use of speaking activities in those stages. There are also significant differences; one of them is related to the number of exercises practising the language system, i.e. vocabulary and grammar which is much more predominant in the Finnish textbook series compared to the Austrian textbooks. Moreover, the use of the Finnish language in exercises is in strong contrast to the non-existent use of the German language in the Austrian textbooks. These differences in approach of learning English as a foreign language are likely based on the typological differences between the two languages.

## 10.6. Zusammenfassung auf Deutsch

Diese Diplomarbeit befasst sich mit den Lesetexten in diversen Schulbüchern, die in Österreich und in Finnland in der Oberstufe in den letzten zwei Jahren vor der Reifeprüfung im Englisch Unterricht benutzt werden. Das Ziel dieser Arbeit ist es, herauszufinden, inwieweit sich diese Leseübungen in den österreichischen Schulbüchern im Vergleich zu den finnischen Schulbüchern ähneln beziehungsweise unterscheiden. Ein besonderer Fokus liegt auf den Übungen, die Lesetexte oft begleiten. Das können Übungen vor dem Lesen, während dem Lesen als auch Übungen nach dem Lesen sein. *Prime Time 7* und *Prime Time 8* sowie *English in Context 7/8* wurden von den österreichischen Schulbüchern analysiert. *On Track 3-6* und *Insights 3-6* wurden von den finnischen Schulbüchern zur Analyse herangezogen.

Der erste Teil der Arbeit, die Literaturlauswertung, beschäftigt sich zunächst mit wichtigen Konzepten, wie zum Beispiel der kommunikativen Kompetenz, der Lese- und Schreibkenntnisse, sowie einer Definition des Begriffs Lesen. Des Weiteren werden verschiedene Leseansätze, Lesefertigkeiten und der Unterschied zwischen Lesen in der Erstsprache im Vergleich zu Lesen in einer Fremdsprache thematisiert. Danach wird ein Blick auf den Leseunterricht im Fremdsprachenunterricht geworfen und wie dieser aussehen kann. Das Thema Schulbuchanalyse und Evaluation wird im Anschluss behandelt und erläutert wie eine Schulbuchanalyse systematisch durchgeführt werden kann. Laut McGrath (2016) kann diese aus folgenden Schritten bestehen: “context and needs analysis”, “impressionistic approach”, “in-depth method” und “in-depth method”. Aus diesen vier Schritten besteht die Analyse der Lesetexte in österreichischen und finnischen Englisch Lehrbüchern, die im zweiten Teil der Arbeit beleuchtet und analysiert werden.

Die Ergebnisse aus diesen vier Teilen zeigen, dass es selbstverständlich einige Ähnlichkeiten gibt, wobei die Differenzen am auffälligsten sind. Eine Gemeinsamkeit ist, dass alle Schulbücher nach fast jedem Lesetext eine post-reading Übung inkludieren. Übungen vor dem Text sind ebenfalls in allen Büchern beliebt, wohingegen die Übungen während des Lesens zu einem teilweise sehr unterschiedlichem Ausmaß in den einzelnen Schulbuchreihen vorkommen. Es werden unterschiedliche Fertigkeiten in diesen Übungen verwendet; allen voran jedoch das Sprechen. Eine weitere Gemeinsamkeit im Bezug auf die Übungen vor dem Lesen, betrifft den Zweck dieser Übungen. Die Schulbücher haben zum Großteil ähnliche Absichten wie z.B. die Verwendung von Hintergrundwissen oder Wissen, das die SchülerInnen schon besitzen sowie persönliche Reaktion. Des Weiteren werden verschiedene Typen der



Fragestellung (analysiert nach einer Studie von Freemann 2014) verwendet, wobei jedoch der implizite Fragetyp am meisten vorzufinden war.

Im Bezug auf die Differenzen war am auffälligsten das vermehrte Auftreten von Vokabel- und Grammatikübungen in den finnischen Schulbüchern. Im Gegensatz zu den österreichischen Schulbüchern war es auffallend, dass die finnischen Bücher die Erstsprache/ Finnisch zu einem beträchtlichen Grad in Form von Übersetzungsübungen oder Fragen, die gänzlich auf Finnisch beantwortet werden sollen, einbauen. Eine Verwendung des Deutschen konnte hingegen in den Übungen der österreichischen Schulbüchern nicht festgestellt werden. Da die finnische Reifeprüfung ebenfalls Fragen auf Finnisch zu den Lesetexten beinhaltet sind solche Übungen nicht allzu verwunderlich und deuten eventuell auf ein anderes Verständnis der Methodik des Unterrichtens einer Fremdsprache hin. Der unterschiedliche Einsatz von Grammatik und Vokabelübungen kann auch auf der Tatsache beruhen, dass Finnisch und Englisch zwei typologisch andere Sprachen sind, wohingegen Deutsch und Englisch verwandte Sprachen sind und somit viele ähnliche Strukturen und Kognate teilen und weniger Bedarf an solchen Übungen gegeben ist.