

Emmi Nieminen

# **TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING MATERIALS IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO YOUNG LEARNERS**

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# ABSTRACT

Emmi Nieminen: Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching Materials in Teaching English to Young Learners

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This thesis examines the teachers' perception of teaching materials in teaching English to young learners (TEYL). Teaching English, and other languages, to young learners is a current topic both globally and in Finland. In Finland, TEYL comprehends the teaching of English in the first and second grades of basic education. There is a presupposition that learning a foreign language is easier for young learners. Multiple studies support this view, but multiple studies also object to it. However, it appears that TEYL has found its place in Finnish basic education, which is why more research on the topic is needed. TEYL was included in Finnish basic education officially from the beginning of 2020, and therefore, the research on it is somewhat limited. Especially studies on teachers' perceptions of the teaching materials in TEYL are lacking. Therefore, the motives behind this study are the topicality of the topic, the limited research data, and personal interest in TEYL as a future class and English teacher.

The data of the study was collected with an electronic questionnaire. Answering the questionnaire was voluntary and anonymous. In total, 53 TEYL teachers across Finland responded to the questionnaire. The questionnaire had both multiple-choice questions and open-ended questions, which together provided a versatile view of teachers' perceptions of the TEYL materials. The data were analyzed with content analysis by classifying and quantifying it. The questions aimed to examine teachers' perceptions of coursebooks and other materials in TEYL. In addition, the factors that influence the teachers' choice of teaching material were studied.

The respondents had widely varying perceptions of what teaching material is the most appropriate for TEYL's needs. Especially perceptions of coursebooks divided the respondents' opinions. Some respondents found coursebooks extremely beneficial, and others found them unsuitable for young learners' needs. However, almost all the respondents agreed that the pupils' needs must be regarded in the material selection. In addition, they agreed on what TEYL should be like; action-based and motivating. Action-based and motivating teaching are also the aims of TEYL defined in the National Core Curriculum. Thus, it is appropriate that these aims also emerged in the respondents' answers. Even though the respondents had varying perceptions of the teaching materials, one was evidently more common than others, as almost all respondents found songs an appropriate material for TEYL.

The divergence of the teachers' perceptions indicates that each teacher has their personal preferences to implement their teaching. In addition, as the teachers regard their pupils' needs when selecting the teaching materials, there is no straightforward answer to which is best for TEYL. Even though a straightforward answer cannot be given, it is essential to study teachers' perceptions of the teaching materials. The existing teaching materials can be improved, and new, even more, suitable teaching materials can be developed through research. Improving the TEYL teaching materials is crucial because, even though TEYL is a new subject in Finnish basic education, it creates the basis for all the future language learning of the pupils.

Keywords: teachers' perceptions, English language teaching materials, TEYL, teaching English to young learners, early English

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# TIIVISTELMÄ

Emmi Nieminen: Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching Material in Teaching English to Young Learners  
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Tämä tutkielma selvittää opettajien käsityksiä varhennetun englannin opetusmateriaaleja kohtaan. Kielten opetuksen varhentaminen on ajankohtainen aihe, sekä Suomessa että maailmalla. Suomessa varhennettu kielten opetus käsittää 1. ja 2.vuosiluokan oppilaiden kielten opetuksen. Yleinen käsitys tuntuu olevan, että nuoremmat oppijat oppivat vieraita kieliä helpommin. Tätä käsitystä tukevia, mutta myös vastustavia, tutkimuksia löytyy useita. Vaikuttaa kuitenkin siltä, että varhennettu kielten opetus on löytänyt paikkansa suomalaisesta perusopetuksesta, joten tutkimuksia on syytä tehdä aiheesta lisää. Suomalaiseen perusopetukseen varhennettu kieltenopetus sisällytettiin virallisesti vasta vuodesta 2020 lähtien, joten tutkimukset siitä ovat vielä suhteellisen puutteellisia. Erityisesti opettajien käsityksiä varhennetun englannin opetusmateriaaleista ei ole juurikaan tutkittu. Sen takia, tämän tutkielman motiiveja ovatkin aiheen ajankohtaisuus, tutkimustiedon puutteellisuus, sekä oma kiinnostus aihetta kohtaan tulevana englannin ja luokanopettajana.

Tutkielman aineisto kerättiin sähköisellä kyselylomakkeella vapaaehtoisilta varhennetun englannin opettajilta. Kyselyyn vastasi 53 opettajaa eri puolilta Suomea. Kyselylomake oli anonymi, ja sisälsi sekä monivalintakysymyksiä että avoimia kysymyksiä, jotka tarjosivat monipuolisen katsauksen opettajien käsityksiin varhennetun englannin opetusmateriaaleista. Aineistoa analysoitiin sisällön analyysin menetelmillä, luokittelemalla ja kvantifoimalla sitä. Kysymyksillä pyrittiin selvittämään opettajien käsityksiä niin oppikirjoista varhennetun englannin opetuksessa, kuin yleisesti opetusmateriaaleja kohtaan, sekä vaikuttimia heidän opetusmateriaalivalintojensa taustalla.

Kyselyyn vastanneilla opettajille oli hyvin eriäviä käsityksiä, siitä mikä opetusmateriaali on sopivin varhennetun englannin opetuksen tarpeisiin. Erityisesti oppikirjojen käyttö varhennetussa englannin opetuksessa jakoi vastaajien mielipiteet selvästi. Osa vastaajista koki oppikirjat erittäin hyödyllisinä, kun taas jotkut kokivat ne erittäin sopimattomina varhennetun kieltenopetuksen tarpeisiin. Lähes kaikki vastaajat olivat kuitenkin samaa mieltä, siitä että oppilaiden tarpeet täytyy huomioida materiaalin valinnassa, sekä siitä millaista varhennetun englannin kielen opetuksen tulisi olla; toiminnallista ja motivoivaa. Varhennetun kielten opetuksen toiminnallinen luonne ja motivoivuus ovat myös Opetussuunnitelman perusteissa oppiaineen päätavoitteita, joten on sopivaa, että ne nousivat myös vastaajien vastauksissa esille. Vaikka vastaajilla oli paljon erimielisyyksiä aiheesta, nousi yksi opetusmateriaali ylitse muiden, sillä lähes kaikki vastaajat kokivat laulut sopivaksi opetusmateriaaliksi varhennettuun kieltenopetukseen.

Opettajien käsitysten eriäväisyys osoittaa, että jokaisella opettajalla on henkilökohtaiset mieltymyksensä, jonka mukaan hän opetusta toteuttaa. Lisäksi opettajat huomioivat oppilaidensa tarpeet valitessaan sopivinta opetusmateriaalia, joten ei ole olemassa yksiselitteistä vastausta siihen mikä opetusmateriaali on paras varhennetun englannin opetukseen. Vaikka yksiselitteistä vastausta ei voida antaa, on silti tärkeää tutkia opettajien käsityksiä opetusmateriaaleja kohtaan. Tutkimusten avulla olemassa olevia opetusmateriaaleja voidaan parantaa ja uusia entistä sopivampia opetusmateriaaleja voidaan kehittää vastaamaan varhennetun englannin tarpeisiin entistä paremmin. Opetusmateriaalien kehittäminen on erityisen tärkeää, sillä vaikka varhennettu kieltenopetus on vielä uusi oppiaine suomalaisessa peruskoulussa, se luo pohjan oppilaiden tulevalle kielten opiskelulle.

Avainsanat: englannin kielen opettaminen, opettajien käsityksiä, englannin kielen opetusmateriaali, varhennettu englannin opetus

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The earlier one begins to learn languages, the better, seems to be a common belief.

However, it is not merely a belief but a result of multiple studies. It appears that children's natural curiosity and high motivation towards language learning might result in a deeper level of language proficiency. Encouraged by these results, there is a current trend of steadily lowering the onset age of language learning. Thus, English, among other languages, is introduced to ever-younger age groups, and teaching English to young learners (TEYL) has gained ground in the modern educational context.

Even though young learners have been studied in multiple studies, it is a lesser-studied topic in Finland. Therefore, this study concentrates on teaching English to young learners (TEYL) in Finland. More specifically, this thesis focuses on the teachers' perceptions of TEYL materials. TEYL is a highly current topic in Finland, as from the beginning of 2020, there has been a transition in the National Core Curriculum that prepones the onset of language learning. Thus, second language learning begins in the first grade of basic education, approximately at the age of 6 or 7.

Therefore, the motive behind this topic is its topicality; TEYL is a reasonably new theme, also globally, but especially in Finland. As TEYL has only begun in 2020, there have not been many studies about TEYL in the Finnish context until recently. One of the most significant studies of TEYL in Finland is Sjöberg and Skinnari's (2018) study. Sjöberg and Skinnari (2018) studied the influence of early language learning and how TEYL is organized in Finland. Most of the previous studies are, however, master's theses on various aspects of TEYL.

However, studies on teachers' perceptions of the TEYL materials are limited in Finland. Despite the recent increase in studies on TEYL and on its material (Garton & Copland 2019), Ghosn (2019: 385) states that there is an urgent need for studies on

teachers' perceptions of TEYL materials, as at the time of Ghosn's article's publishing there are only a few. Although conducted only in the Finnish context, this thesis aims to fill that gap to some extent. Moreover, personal interest as a future class and language teacher and experiences as a substitute teacher of TEYL contribute significantly to selecting this topic.

Hopefully, this thesis and its results will provide some aid for the TEYL teachers in Finland. Ideally, the results offer valuable information for the teachers, which can help them improve their teaching materials and, thus, their teaching. The results might also help the material developers to provide more suitable materials for TEYL and its teachers. An exciting possibility and much-needed application of this study would be to study the learners' perception of TEYL materials.

The data for the study is collected from TEYL teachers through an electronic questionnaire. The study is centered upon teachers' perception of the TEYL materials, and thereby the matter is approached with one main research question, which is as follows:

1. How do teachers of TEYL perceive the TEYL materials?

This main question can then be divided into several sub-questions

2. How do teachers perceive the usage of coursebooks in TEYL?
3. Which materials do teachers prefer to use in TEYL and why?
4. Which aspects influence the teachers' choice of TEYL materials?

The answers to these questions are derived from the answers of the 53 respondents that replied to the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of open-ended and multiple-choice questions that alongside offered both a qualitative and a quantitative overlook on the matter. The data was then analyzed through the means of content analysis by qualifying and classifying it.

This thesis will unfold in the following manner. Chapter 2 includes a literary review that lays the theoretical foundations for the study. The theoretical framework includes brief introductions of Second language learning and teaching, teaching English to young learners in a more general perspective and in the Finnish context. The materials of TEYL and their features are also presented. The data collection and the setting of the present study are introduced in Chapter 3. In chapter 4, the data and its quantitative and qualitative analysis are presented. Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the results and their possible implications and of the study's limitations and applications. Lastly, chapter 6 offers a conclusion for the study summarizing the main findings and discussing some of their societal significance.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, some central concepts concerning teaching English to young learners will be presented. Firstly, this chapter concentrates on second language teaching and learning. Secondly, the introduction of these concepts is followed by a discussion on the significance of the onset age based on earlier research and other literature. Thirdly, the concept of teaching English to young learners is presented, and the specificities of teaching English to young learners in Finland are observed. The chapter on teaching English to young learners in Finland focuses on the regulations issued by the Finnish National Agency for Education and earlier research. Lastly follows an introduction to teaching English to young learners' materials that mainly focuses on what the material can be and what advantages language teaching materials ideally have.

Even though language teaching is a universal topic as languages, especially English, are taught everywhere, it is highly dependent on the country and context where the language is taught. Therefore, this paper examines teaching English to young learners, mainly from Finland's perspective. Moreover, in the field of language learning and teaching, many terms may have different definitions that are still synonyms or near-synonyms. Therefore, some of the terms need to be discussed in this chapter from the context of this study.

### 2.1. Second language teaching and learning

More people than ever before learn multiple languages (Hawkins 2019). In fact, most people are multilingual; they can speak more than one language. According to Sharwood Smith (1994), the statistics show that monolinguals are "abnormal" (Sharwood Smith 1994: 3). If Sharwood Smith (1994) considered monolinguals abnormal thirty years ago, his claim holds even more true in the twenty-first century. Most non-native English speakers learn at least English as a second language (IS 1). Therefore, second language learning and



teaching are important fields of research, which is why this chapter will focus on both. However, before reaching the central aspect of this chapter, a brief discussion of terms “second language” and “foreign language” appears appropriate.

### 2.1.1. Second or foreign language?

Scholars' views differ in the usage of terms *second* and *foreign* concerning studying languages other than one's native language. Therefore, the usage of these terms is to be discussed first. Some scholars consider English a foreign language when it does not have the status of an official language in the country (Arnold & Rixon 2008: 38), as is the situation in Finland. Nonetheless, Arnold and Rixon (2008: 38) add that:

On the other hand, in Scandinavian countries, where English is technically a foreign language, the access to the language through the media and the standards achieved in the school system give English perhaps a greater currency than it has in some 'second language' countries.

Even though Finland is not a Scandinavian country but a Nordic country, as are the Scandinavian countries, this situation applies to Finland, too. English has a significant role in the media; English is a common language in social media, and most foreign TV shows and films are not dubbed into Finnish. Especially among the younger generation, English has become an essential part of their everyday life. According to a study conducted by the University of Jyväskylä in 2009 (IS 2), most Finns encounter plenty of English every day and even use it in their work or otherwise. In the same study, most Finns have positive perceptions of English, and for a small minority, it is even “the third national language” (IS 2). Thus, according to Arnold and Rixon's (2008: 38) view, English can be considered a second language in Finland. Besides, some other studies suggest that English has the role of a second language in Finland (see Pahta & Taavitsainen 2011).

Therefore, in this thesis, when addressing the English language teaching in Finland, the term used is *second language* instead of *foreign language*. Even though English is considered a foreign language in some aspects in Finland, the decision to prefer the term *second language* was ultimately made because English is the most common language learned in basic education. In 2018 over 90% of the pupils chose English to be their first foreign language, making it their second language (IS 3).

### 2.1.2. Second language learning and teaching

As second language learning and teaching create the basis for this study, they ought to be introduced here. Firstly, second language learning is examined. Secondly, second language teaching is discussed to some extent. The theory on second language learning, in general, is pervasive. The theory includes aspects such as how grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and a new writing system are learned and taught (Cook 2016). However, regarding this thesis, it is not sensible to cover all those aspects as the main focus of this theoretical framework is teaching English to young learners, which also discusses language teaching and learning. Therefore, this chapter only focuses on some of the more general features of second language learning, offering merely an overlook on the subject.

First of all, some scholars differentiate second language learning from second language acquisition. For example, Krashen (1981) and Yule (2010: 187) see that language acquisition refers to the unconscious and gradual process of acquiring a new language. In contrast, they consider language learning a process of obtaining the new language in a more conscious manner, and most often, in an institutional context (Krashen 1981; Yule 2010: 187). In this sense, this paper would merely handle language learning as the goal is to study the teaching materials used in a conscious language learning process. However, as some scholars disagree with the usage of these terms, and the difference between these terms regarding the topic of this paper is not overly crucial, the terms will not be further divided.

This paper concentrates on language teaching and its aspired goal of language learning, and there is no need to differentiate whether the learning occurs unconsciously or not.

Before discussing the learning of a second language any further, it is of interest to briefly consider the conventions of learning one's first language. Even though this paper will not differentiate the terms learning and acquisition concerning the second language, regarding the first language, the term acquisition is more appropriate. The acquisition of a first language usually occurs quite unconsciously after long-term exposure to the language (Järvinen 2014: 68). According to Järvinen (2014: 68), acquiring a first language is a long but effortless, even automatic, process. However, learning a second (or third/fourth) language requires much more effort and willful actions from the individual (Järvinen 2014: 68–69). Learning a second language differs significantly from learning one's first language, as "there is already one language present in [the learners'] minds" (Cook 2016: 17). Regardless of the effort the process demands, the outcome rarely measures the first language's profound and natural language proficiency. This raises the question; how do we learn a language? Furthermore, why do the conscious actions of learning a second language rarely result in the same outcome as the first language? According to scholars, there is no exact answer to these questions.

Some individuals may have more problems learning a second language than others. However, according to Hawkins (2019: 1), almost anyone can learn a second language regardless of one's first language, as language learning does not require any specific talent. In fact, Hawkins (2019: 3) considers learning a second language "a natural extension of human linguistic ability." Hawkins (2019: 2) states that given the motivation and sufficient time to learn a language and the opportunity to use it, most people can successfully obtain communicative ability in a second language. According to Hawkins (2019: 3), even though the influence of one's first language is usually detectable when learning a second language,

there are also many similarities between people who have different native languages and are even learning a different second language. This indicates that there is something universal in learning a second language (Hawkins 2019: 3).

According to Hawkins (2019: 222), the most critical aspects that influence an individual's second language learning are their first language, the innate knowledge, and the amount and quality of input. The first language can assist in learning the second language if they have some shared elements (Cook 2016: 17). Conversely, it can also impede learning if the elements differ significantly (Cook 2016: 17). Hawkins (2019: 293) suggests that "in the initial state of [second language] learning all properties of the [first language] are assigned to newly encountered forms in the [second language]." This indicates that the grammar of one's first language forms the initial state for the second language, whereby one's first language influences the learning of the second language. The second key aspect, according to Hawkins (2019: 222), is the concept of innate knowledge, or Universal Grammar, which is discussed more thoroughly in the following chapter. However, the role of input in second language learning is also significant, as stated above (Hawkins 2019: 222; Yule 2010: 192). Input can occur through multiple means in second language teaching as it includes all samples of the target language the learner encounters, such as the teacher's instructions and corrections and recordings played in the classroom (Hawkins 2019: 222). Nonetheless, the learners also need opportunities for output to effectively learn a second language (Mitchell et al. 2013: 161).

As discussed above, the learner's first language influences the learning of the second language significantly. Moreover, Cook (2016: 10) emphasizes that second language learners already have "fully formed personalities and minds," which also impacts the success of the learning and the ways the learners learn. Moreover, these "fully formed personalities" (Cook 2016: 10) define the learner's motivation to learn a new language; some

consider it a way to improve themselves, others might regard it as a threat. All students learn differently because their minds function differently (Cook 2016: 10). However, there are usually similarities between individual learners in the ways they learn.

As Cook (2016: 10) states, “[a]ll successful teaching depends upon learning”, the teaching can be good and motivating in many ways, but if the students do not learn, it cannot be successful. Second language teaching has its peculiarities. There are different approaches and methods to teaching a second language. The methods refer to the practices teachers use to reach the goals, both explicitly and implicitly defined aims of the language teaching (Kumaravadivelu 2006: 84). The objectives of language teaching can be diverse (Cook 2016: 12). Sometimes the goal is to provide brain training, which improves the student’s logical thinking, or to gain the ability to communicate with people globally, or simply to get the student acquainted with other cultures (Cook 2016: 12). Therefore, recognizing the goal aids in planning the most suitable teaching and selecting the appropriate methods (Cook 2016: 12). The goals are usually defined in the curriculum. For example, the goal for TEYL in Finland is to spark an interest in language learning and set the basis for future language learning (NCC 2019). This goal then should guide the methods the TEYL teachers choose to utilize in their classrooms.

To conclude, learning and teaching a second language differ greatly from learning and teaching one’s first language (Cook 2016: 17). There may be some similarities between acquiring one’s first language and learning a second language, but “the presence of the first language is the inescapable difference in [second language] learning” (Cook 2016: 17). The first language always influences the learning of the second language. Besides one’s first language, the amount and quality of input play a key role in learning a second language (Hawkins 2019: 222). There are differences between individuals learning a second language, and it can be more challenging for others. However, the comforting fact is that

almost anyone can learn one, as language learning does not require any specific skills (Hawkins 2019: 1).

## 2.2. The significance of the onset age

Even though this paper does not aim to prove when an individual should begin to study a second language, discussing the significance of the onset age is relevant to the topic. This chapter introduces some support on the possible benefits of early language learning but also discusses the advantages of later onset.

Many scholars believe that childhood is the best time to learn new languages (Nunan 2017: 70). This belief has caused the tendency to introduce foreign languages earlier in the curricula. However, scholars are not univocal about the issue. Instead of a critical period, some think childhood is the most “sensitive” period for language learning (IS 4). They think teens are the most effective language learners, at least in the classroom context (Hawkins 2019). Even though older learners might be quicker to learn the language, younger learners might be able to gain better and deeper language proficiency. Another advantage of earlier onset on language learning is increased language awareness, which appreciates the different linguistic and cultural varieties (IS 4).

As stated before, some researchers (e.g., Johnson and Newport 1989; DeKeyser 2000) consider childhood a sensitive period for learning a second language. They argue that this heightened tendency for learning other languages begins to diminish between the ages of seven and sixteen. Thus, one ought to begin to learn languages earlier to become more proficient. Both Johnson and Newport (1989) and DeKeyser (2000) base this claim on the assumption that younger learners “have access to innate linguistic knowledge” (Hawkins 2019: 276). This shared innate linguistic knowledge, or Universal Grammar (UG), is a theory on language learning usually credited to Noam Chomsky (White 2003: 1). The theory

proposes that an individual's ability to learn grammar is innate regardless of language because all languages have at least some of the same rules they follow (White 2003: 2); for example, all grammars have the means to negate a sentence. At some point, children's ability to utilize universal grammar fades (DeKeyser 2000). Thus, the older learners need other approaches when learning a second language, such as exploiting their first language or problem-solving skills (DeKeyser 2000). Nevertheless, according to DeKeyser (2000), this compromise is not as effective as universal grammar is with younger learners.

However, other researchers (e.g., Bialystok & Hakuta 1999) disagree with the theory on childhood being a sensitive period in language learning. Bialystok and Hakuta (1999) do, however, suggest that a person's general cognitive skills begin to decrease in later childhood, and they continue to do so for the rest of one's life (Hawkins 2019: 276). According to Hawkins (2019: 276), however, support for that claim is insufficient. Multiple studies (e.g., Birdsong & Molis 2001) demonstrate the older learners' capability to become proficient in their second language.

According to Sandberg's (2019: 11) empirical research on early language teaching, children were more receptive towards new languages at the age of 7 and 8 than at 10, which was the onset time of language learning in Finland before the change in the National Core Curriculum. Sandberg (2019: 11) sees that children at the age of 7 or 8 are highly eager and motivated to learn new things, including new languages. In addition, the brain's part that controls language learning is most active from birth to the age of seven, which supports the idea of early language learning (Sandberg 2019: 17). Sandberg (2019: 17) argues that the multisensory teaching method, often associated with early language learning, provides a playful learning experience. When the learning is playful, it brings joy and enhances motivation towards language learning both in the present and future (Sandberg 2019: 17). Therefore, even though children might not be as effective learners, the joy of learning a new

language that the young learner ideally acquires can carry out into the future. Cenoz (2003) agrees that the earlier onset of language learning might positively affect the attitudes towards language learning rather than the actual outcome of language proficiency.

At the early stages of language learning, younger learners tend to learn slower than their older counterparts (Hawkins 2019: 268). However, they eventually manage to bridge the gap with enough exposure to the language (Hawkins 2019: 270). The older learners benefit from their earlier experiences as language learners, whereas younger learners are usually still adjusting to the ways new things are learned (Hawkins 2019: 270). However, with enough time and exposure, the younger language learners tend to surpass the older language learners (Hawkins 2019: 270).

Considering these results and the multitude of studies not examined here, it is rather challenging to determine the best onset age for learning a second language. Attempting to compare young learners to more experienced learners is not straightforward and perhaps not even expedient, as multiple variables affect the outcome of language learning. However, some factors support the earlier onset age, as there are clear benefits, such as increased motivation and more positive attitudes towards language learning (Sandberg 2019: 17; Cenoz 2003). Presumably, the earlier onset also assists learning in later years, as the individual learns the conventions of language learning earlier, possibly making the learning more efficient in the future.

However, when determining the outcome of language learning, perhaps the teaching ought to be studied instead of the learner's age. Research suggests (Skinnari & Sjöberg 2018) that when assessing the successfulness of language teaching, age-appropriate approach and the quality of the teaching should be considered instead of the early onset age. The age-appropriate approach refers to teaching materials and methods that correlate to the learner's needs and level. According to Skinnari and Sjöberg (2018), the most critical



factors concerning teaching quality itself are the continuity of the teaching, pedagogically skilled teachers, and equal opportunities to participate. Therefore, when assessing the successfulness of language learning and teaching, there are many particulars to observe.

### 2.3. Teaching English to young learners

This chapter observes the fundamentals of teaching English to young learners. Some aspects have already been discussed in the earlier chapter concerning the significance of the onset age of language learning. Therefore, this chapter need not repeat those views but discuss the more practical angle of TEYL. Firstly, the term young learner ought to be discussed. It is not entirely straightforward which learners specify as *young learners*, generally in the field of language teaching and in the context of this thesis. Secondly, some of the unique features of teaching English to young learners are discussed.

As with the terms on second and foreign language earlier, the usage of the term *young learner* must be discussed in this chapter. Arnold and Rixon (2008: 38) consider pupils who attend elementary school or primary school young learners. However, they do not specify any certain age for these pupils, as it depends on the country in question and their policies. In Finland, primary school and elementary school would correspond best to the first six grades of basic education (NCC 2014). First grade in Finnish basic education begins during the year the child turns seven.

The European framework (Ghosn 2019: 374) makes the distinction between teaching English to young learners (TEYL) and teaching English to very young learners (TEVYL). TEVYL is taught to three- to six-year-olds and TEYL to seven- to twelve-year-olds (Ghosn 2019: 374). As this thesis is linked to the Finnish National Core Curriculum transition (NCC 2019), whereby language teaching begins during the first grade of basic education, the *young learners*, as addressed in this thesis, entail pupils in the first and second grades.

Those pupils are then mainly seven- to eight-year-olds and, thus, TEYL is the more appropriate concept. *Early English language teaching* would have been a suitable term too, but I considered *early* a slightly more ambiguous term than *young learner*. In addition, according to Inha and Huhta (2018), in Europe, early language learning often refers to language learning before school, sometimes even as young as under 5-year-olds, which is too early onset for this thesis. Therefore, *teaching English to young learners* was considered the most appropriate term for this context.

Teaching English to young learners has undergone a change in recent decades. According to Ghosn (2019: 374), before the 1990s, the onset of English language teaching was around the age of eleven or even above. However, during the 1990s in Europe, the onset age of language learning was lowered, and other countries followed the example (Ghosn 2019: 374). The trend seems to be continuing; the onset age has been steadily lowering, and English is introduced to ever-younger age groups. As the onset age lowers, more research on the topic is needed and conducted continuously. Garton and Copland (2019: 1) list three reasons for the apparent and recent increase in research on young learners. Firstly, as mentioned above, the number of young English learners is continuously increasing globally (Garton & Copland 2019: 1). Secondly, the researchers have recognized that the already existing data on older learners does not necessarily comply with the younger learners. Finally, as old myths on language learning are being debunked, the research focus “is shifting increasingly to how children learn languages.” Garton and Copland (2019: 2) describe that the combination of these three circumstances “ha[s] created a golden age” for the research on young learners.

Young learners vary significantly from their older counter partners, which is why teaching them should consider that. According to Garton and Copland (2019: 5), the teaching content of English traditionally consists of language systems, such as grammar,

vocabulary, pronunciation, and discourse, and systems closely related to these, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The coursebooks tend to be constituted around these systems (Garton & Copland 2019: 5). However, if the coursebooks do not fulfill the young learners' needs, teachers ought to utilize alternative approaches. For example, young learners might benefit from a more holistic approach to language learning (Garton & Copland 2019: 5). Moreover, due to young learners still developing cognitive skills, some national curricula often recommend TEYL teachers focus primarily on listening and speaking (Garton & Copland 2019: 5). This claim also holds true for the situation in Finland, but that aspect will be more thoroughly discussed in the next chapter.

Even though this thesis does not focus on various teaching methods or approaches, I considered it sensible to introduce one that perhaps should be exploited more in TEYL: storytelling. According to Bland (2019: 269), storytelling is a rather popular language teaching method with older learners but an underrated one among teachers of younger learners. However, Bland (2019: 269 after Hoey 2004) considers that literary texts "should be included in the input as early as possible". In fact, Bland (2019: 269) sees multiple benefits to including storytelling in young learners' language teaching: it improves their affective and cognitive development, increases intercultural learning, and offers experiences of authentic language use. Moreover, storytelling can endorse the learners' own creative abilities and their development of lexical representations (Maley 2013). Especially, picture books in education are "one of the richest and potentially most rewarding of literary forms" (Hunt 2001: 291). Even though picture books concentrate on the interactions between the pictures and words, it leaves room for interpretations and discoveries (Bland 2019: 271). According to Bland (2019: 271), picture books are an ideal material for TEYL, and teachers ought not to be afraid to choose even more challenging stories, as they create space for the learner's own thinking and discoveries.

Some of the pedagogical needs of young learners are addressed in the previous chapter regarding the significance of the onset age. In essence, teaching younger children varies significantly from teaching older learners, as children learn languages in a different manner (Cameron 2001). As Bourke (2006: 282) states, “[t]he language has to be packaged in a way that makes sense to children” and, ideally, the input would entail whole instances of language use instead of disconnected fragments of language (Parker & Valente 2019: 359). According to Puchta (2019: 203), language for younger learners is a means of communication, not “a system that needs to be learnt.” The younger learners want to comprehend the things a teacher, or their classmates, say in the second language (Puchta 2019: 203). Therefore, and because of their limited cognitive skills, TEYL tends to focus on oral language skills, including pronunciation and communicative skills (Garton & Copland 2019: 5). The limited cognitive skills decrease the meaning of exercises and activities based on reading and writing. In addition, TEYL most often focuses on expanding the learner’s vocabulary or beginning to create one (Hestetræet 2019: 222). Grammar is usually not taught, at least not explicitly taught, in TEYL (Puchta 2019: 203). The theory on TEYL, its practices, and teaching materials is constantly improving as more studies are conducted, and more data is gained.

## 2.4. Teaching English to young learners in Finland

As mentioned earlier, language teaching is highly dependent on its teaching context. Therefore, it is essential to explore some aspects of teaching English to young learners unique to Finland. This chapter introduces the regulations that direct education in Finland and some developmental programs that aim to improve early language teaching. In addition, some Finnish research on the field of teaching English to young learners will be presented.

The Finnish National Agency for Education regulates the direction of teaching with a national core curriculum to define the current teaching aims and a basis for basic education (NCC 2014). In addition to the national core curriculum, the control system for basic education contains the Basic Education Act and Commandment, government commandments, and the local curricula. The control system's main aim for basic education is to ensure the quality and equality of education.

The basic education in Finland entails grades 1-9, of which grades 1-6 are primary education. Children begin the first grade during the year they turn seven. During primary education, pupils must learn at least two languages, English and Swedish, besides Finnish (NCC 2014). English need not be the first foreign language children learn, but it is a mandatory subject for everyone. The municipalities select which languages they offer for the pupils to choose from as their second language. However, English must be one of the options. Due to the recent change in the national core curriculum (NCC 2019), obligatory Swedish begins a year earlier than before, in the sixth grade of basic education. Due to this change, the onset of the second language teaching was also shifted to two years earlier, from the third grade to the first grade (NCC 2019). The second language learned in basic education is called A1- language (NCC 2014). "A" refers to the language being a core subject with a long syllabus, and the number refers to the sequence of foreign languages (NCC 2014). Therefore, if one begins to learn English in the first grade, as is the context of this thesis, it is their A1- language.

According to the NCC (2019), the primary objective of teaching English to young learners is to spark an interest in learning new languages with a positive and motivational atmosphere. TEYL also aims at setting the basis for future language learning (NCC 2019). The main focus is on oral language skills as not all young learners have acquired reading and writing skills, and the teaching method ought to be based on games, songs, and playing

(NCC 2019). NCC (2019) mandates that the topics should regard the children's interests or even be chosen with the pupils. Learning and its assessment are based on supportive and constructive feedback to ensure the joy of language learning (NCC 2019). The evaluation is not based on overt testing (NCC 2019), which is appropriate with younger learners. According to Parker and Valente (2019: 359), children are emotionally more susceptible and often find overt testing straining. According to NCC (2019), TEYL (or other chosen second language) is taught one hour a week. The Ministry for Education and Culture (IS 5) states that their aim with the earlier beginning of second language learning is to decrease the regional and socioeconomic inequality in language learning and language supply. Besides, The Ministry for Education and Culture (IS 5) sees early and action-based language learning as a means to support children's long-term development of language learning skills. In addition to the NCC, municipalities compose their own curricula that follow the NCC but have some local variations.

Although teaching English to young learners is a new field, there is a relatively vast supply of recent studies on teaching English to young learners in the Finnish context. For instance, Huhta and Mård-Miettinen (IS 6) are currently conducting a follow-up study on early language learning's influence on the development of language proficiency and the motivation to study languages. However, most of the previous studies are master's theses. The previous master's theses focus, for example, on the methods and approaches in early English language teaching and evaluating some digital material's suitability for TEYL. In addition, few master's theses have studied the teachers' perceptions and readiness to teach English to young learners in general.

There are also some government-funded projects concerning the language teaching of young learners. Government Key Project for Languages (IS 7) is one of the Finnish National Agency for Education's projects. The project aimed to improve, increase, and

diversify early language teaching (IS 7). In addition, there are some projects issued by Finnish universities, such as Varpunen by the University of Helsinki (IS 8), that aim to develop early language teaching. These projects conduct essential research in the field and offer information to develop young learners' language learning. The projects often provide teaching materials for TEYL, and it is intriguing to examine whether teachers report using those materials in this study.

Being a new subject with under two years of active praxis, TEYL is still somewhat underdeveloped in Finland, but it is constantly improving. There is already a rather vast supply of studies and projects that offer information on TEYL and provide suitable material for it. NCC (2019) does not emphasize the outcome of TEYL, only that it should improve the learners' motivation and interest towards language learning. Besides sparking interest, creating a positive attitude and atmosphere for language learning is the primary goal of TEYL in Finland (NCC 2019). These aims also act as the reasoning behind the NCC's change for the earlier onset of language learning. Even though the exposure of TEYL in Finland, merely an hour a week, might not be enough to ultimately impact the outcome of language learning significantly, the earlier onset is justified if the goals are met. However, that can only be discovered once enough time has passed, and it is studied whether the earlier onset indeed improves the learners' motivation towards language learning or not.

## 2.5. Teaching materials in TEYL

As there are different types of TEYL programs, heterogenic teachers, and learners, there is also a broad range of teaching material available. This chapter explores some examples of what the material can entail and considers the essential features a teacher should regard when choosing a material for teaching English to young learners. Towards the end of the

chapter, two of the most popular coursebooks, according to this study's questionnaire, are briefly introduced to gain an outlook on the materials in the Finnish context.

According to Ghosn (2019: 374), teaching material includes coursebooks and other supplementary material used in the class. This supplementary material may include workbooks, videos, dictionaries, and most importantly, all materials the teacher has made themselves, such as flashcards, worksheets, and games (Ghosn 2019: 374). Tomlinson (2011: 2) broadens the notion even further, stating that "newspapers, food packages, photographs, live talks by invited native speakers, instructions given by a teacher, tasks written on cards or discussions between learners" can all be used as teaching materials. In fact, Tomlinson (2011: 2) points out that language-teaching material "can be anything which is deliberately used to increase the learners' knowledge and/or experience of the language". In recent years digital teaching resources, including digital coursebooks, interactive games, and songs, as well as different teaching applications, have become increasingly popular materials in language teaching.

Coursebooks are a rather traditional and dependable teaching material. However, they might not suit all teaching (Ghosn 2019: 377). Ideally, a coursebook is designed based on the curriculum, which eases the teacher's workload when planning the teaching. As a teaching material, coursebooks outline language learning goals by dividing their attention between the different subject matters (Richards & Rodgers 2001: 29). A well-designed coursebook has many advantages; it provides a suitable syllabus, a teacher's guide, and motivational material, and in addition, it saves the teacher some valuable time (Ghosn 2019: 377). Nevertheless, it is the teacher's responsibility to choose how they utilize the coursebook. They can, for example, ignore some aspects and focus more on others. TEYL coursebooks tend to focus on oral and listening exercises, such as songs and games (Ghosn 2019: 377).



According to Diyanti (2016: 64), there is a vast supply of materials available to purchase besides coursebooks. Diyanti (2016: 64) mentions, for example, picture cards, storybooks, and interactive language activity CDs. Naturally, teachers can utilize multiple materials in their teaching, but that does not automatically guarantee the best result. Diyanti (2016:64) distinguishes some of the essential issues teachers ought to consider when choosing the materials between the learners' attributes and the teacher's resources. The learners' attributes that must be regarded are their age level, interests, and their level of cognitive development (Diyanti 2016: 64). The teacher's resources entail both the financial and temporal aspects – whether the teachers have the time to produce their own materials or the money to purchase them (Diyanti 2016: 64).

There is also a vast supply of digital language teaching material available nowadays. Digital learning tools include, for example, apps and games oriented for language learning, such as Kahoot! or Moomin Language School, digital materials of coursebooks. The digital learning tools and materials are basically anything the teacher or learner needs a digital device to access.

Digital learning materials often have a high potential to be motivational to the learner, both younger and older, and they tend to increase the learner's autonomy towards their own learning (Garton & Copland 2019: 6). Even though digital learning tools increase the learner's autonomy, a teacher is still needed to identify the best practices and help mediate them. The increased autonomy of the learner is one of the main advantages of digital learning tools (Butler 2019: 305). Most importantly, they tend to emphasize the learner's role as an active participant in the learning process (Butler 2019: 305). According to Butler (2019: 305), games are especially advantageous as they include multiple features that are essential in learning, "such as setting clear goals, providing visible outcomes and instant feedback, having challenging tasks and fostering collaboration and interaction". Young learners are

increasingly familiar with digital devices and games, making it a natural extension to include them in language teaching (Butler 2019: 305).

As discussed in chapter 2.3., according to Bland (2019: 271), storytelling is an ideal approach to TEYL. Chapter 2.3. already introduced to benefits of picture books that Bland (2019: 271) considers perhaps the most suitable literary material for TEYL. Storytelling can, however, include multiple other literary texts as well. Graphic novels and comics offer a favorable material for TEYL, too (Bland 2019: 271). When age-appropriate, the language in graphic novels and comics tends to be challenging but straightforward enough for a young learner, with pictures that assist in the understanding (Bland 2019: 271). Graphic novels are optimal for TEYL because they “*enable* the struggling reader, *motivate* the reluctant one, and *challenge* the high-level learner” (Bland 2019: 271 after McTaggart 2008: 32, emphasis in the original). Therefore, the level of the learner’s cognitive skills has little to no significance, as the pictures assist in the understanding, although the learner ought to know how to read at least on a primitive level. Therefore, graphic novels are only suitable for TEYL if the learners know how to read (Bland 2019: 271). However, storytelling can also be oral. For example, short tales, legends, and fables are forms of oral storytelling that can be used as material in TEYL (Bland 2019: 273). Oral storytelling’s benefit is that it can be shaped to fit the needs of the learners, even though the traditional storytelling patterns and language ought to stay the same (Bland 2019: 273). Lastly, regarding storytelling, there are some performative formats that Bland considers suitable for TEYL, such as nursery rhymes and drama (Bland 2019: 272, 275).

As to what TEYL material should be like, Tomlinson (2011: 8) states that one of the essential aspects of language teaching materials is that it creates an impact on the learner. This impact can be achieved by sparking the learners’ curiosity, interest and holding their attention (Tomlinson 2011: 8), which combines with Diyanti’s (2016: 64) perception that the

learners' interests must be considered when selecting teaching material. Not only learners' interests but also the topic's relevancy and meaningfulness for the learner ought to play a significant part when choosing suitable material (Ghosn 2019: 377). According to Tomlinson (2011: 8), if the said impact can be achieved, there is a higher possibility for learning or "that some of the language in the materials will be taken in for processing". Thereby, the teaching material ideally increases the learners' motivation towards the subject. Ghosn (2019: 378) emphasizes that the motivational aspect is most important, as meaningful material is learned faster and assimilated better. As Tomlinson (2011: 8) explains, there are multiple ways of impacting the learner, but not all learners achieve the impact in the same ways. Thus, it is vital that the material developer knows their target audience: to maximize the possibility of impact (Tomlinson 2011: 8). Here teachers have an advantage – they know their pupils better than a teaching material developer and can offer them a more focused learning material. Tomlinson (2011: 9) highlights the influence of variation in the materials; "the more varied the choice of topics, texts and activities, the more likely is the achievement of impact".

In addition to the materials creating an impact on the learner, they should also make them feel comfortable (Tomlinson 2011: 9). As research suggests (Tomlinson 2011: 9), learners learn better when they "feel at ease," and this can be achieved with visually appealing and relatable content and with material that is "obviously trying to help them to learn [rather than] with materials which are always testing them." One aspect that assists the learner to feel more comfortable is contextual and natural language, which prefers to focus on meaning rather than form (Ghosn 2019: 377). Moreover, introducing and practicing new skills should rather be integrated into the content, for example, texts or stories, than occur as separate exercises (Ghosn 2019: 377). Repetition regarding input is also significant in TEYL materials (Ghosn 2019: 377), as the more times the learner hears something, the more natural it sounds to them, and they begin to remember it at some point.

In Finland, teachers tend to use materials developed in the local context as they usually follow the guidelines of the NCC. However, there are global coursebooks for TEYL, as well as for other levels of teaching English (Ghosn 2019: 377). It might seem somewhat irrelevant but using teaching material created in and for the local context is appropriate not just because of the curriculum but also because of the cultural aspect (Ghosn 2019: 377). Ghosn (2019: 377) argues that global teaching materials are often not appropriate for young learners, as they include unfamiliar cultural situations. Thus, the interaction is unauthentic, even confusing, and less meaningful to the learner (Ghosn 2019: 377).

As stated earlier, the learners' level of cognitive development must be regarded when choosing suitable teaching material (Diyanti 2016:64). What makes this more challenging is that, according to Sandberg (2019: 14), the teaching groups consisting of young learners are highly impulsive and heterogenic. For instance, not all young learners share the same cognitive skill sets. This raises some methodological challenges for the teachers; not all teaching materials and methods suit everyone in the group. Besides cognitive development, learners' psycho-social needs ought to be considered when selecting material for them (Ghosn 2019: 380). Children's attention span is relatively short, and maintaining their focus is a difficult task (Ghosn 2019: 380). Thus, the material should be striking (Ghosn 2019: 380) because abstract and unrelatable content is confusing for young learners, making it difficult for them to maintain focus.

Nonetheless, Sandberg (2019: 14) claims that the teacher's delivery is more important than the actual material. Sandberg (2019: 14) states that with an open-minded, inspirational, and student-centered attitude, the teacher can maximize the learning outcome despite the material utilized. In addition, Sandberg (2019: 68) emphasizes the importance of the learning environment. The environment influences the learning experience significantly: an aesthetic

learning environment can provide a positive experience, decreasing fear and anxiety and thus, enhancing the learning (Sandberg 2019: 68).

As noted above, the number of teaching materials available for teaching English to young learners is uncountable. Therefore, not all the materials that stood out in this study's questionnaire can be presented. However, to gain some knowledge about teaching materials utilized in teaching English to young learners in Finland, two of the most common coursebooks, according to the questionnaire of the present study, are briefly introduced here. Remarkably, both of the most common TEYL coursebooks are published by SanomaPro -publishing company. The most common coursebook is "Come with me!", a relatively new coursebook that combines a textbook and an exercise book (IS 9). SanomaPro (IS 9) describes Come with me! to inspire and motivate learners with action-based material and amusing characters. The basics of English are taught by playing, singing, moving, and playing games (IS 9). Music and videos are essential in Come with me!, which assist primarily in teaching pronunciation and speaking (IS 9). Overall, Come with me! (IS 9) states that it focuses on pronunciation. The coursebook approaches TEYL from the perspective of positive pedagogy and aims to increase the learners' language awareness (IS 9). In my own experience when teaching with Come with me! 1, most of the exercises in the coursebook do not require writing skill, thus being suitable for most first graders, but reading skill naturally helps to understand the assignments and the learners to be more independent.

The second most common coursebook is Go! by SanomaPro. SanomaPro (IS 10) describes Go! as an inspiring teaching material for TEYL that practices language with pictures, songs, games, and other action-based exercises. Phrases and vocabulary are taught with small conversational activities that also focus on practicing pronunciation (IS 10). The main focus in Go! is on the amount of output and on learning to recognize the

appearances of English words (IS 10). The teachers' perceptions on *Come with me!* and *Go!* are presented in chapter 4.2.

To sum up, teaching material can be practically anything the teacher chooses to utilize in the classroom. However, the material should always be age-appropriate and correspond to the learner's skill set (Parker & Valente 2019: 359). The age-appropriateness applies to the materials themes, language, approaches, and expectations (Ghosn 2019: 377). Ideally, the age-appropriate materials are motivational for the learner, thus increasing the desire to learn the new language (Ghosn 2019: 377). In TEYL, age-appropriate materials include, for example, simple exercises with an exciting story, characters, or colors with plenty of repetition and opportunities for the learner's own output. As teaching in Finland is, or at least should be, designed to fulfill the demands of the National Core Curricula, the publishers usually construct the coursebooks to meet those demands. Therefore, using a coursebook can help teachers target the educational needs assigned by the Ministry of Education and plan their teaching accordingly. Naturally, the requirements of the NCC can be fulfilled using other materials, too. When choosing what teaching material to use, a teacher should consider the learners' needs, the resources available, if the material fulfills the requirements of the NCC, how the material can be adapted to best assist the learning, and whether there are some clear benefits to creating their own teaching material or choosing a readily available coursebook (Diyanti 2016: 64). Even if a teacher chooses to utilize a coursebook, its contents can be supplemented with other materials if necessary (Diyanti 2016: 64; Ghosn 2019: 377).

### 3. PRESENT STUDY

In this chapter, the setting of the present study is described. The aims, including the research questions that guided the conducted study, are presented first. Second, the data collection process and an outline of the collected data and the respondents are presented. Last, the methods utilized in the study are introduced.

#### 3.1. Aims and Research Questions

Despite being a new teaching and research discipline, teachers' perceptions of TEYL itself have been quite widely studied in Finland, at least in the form of master's theses. Some TEYL materials, such as individual coursebooks or digital learning applications, have also been researched. However, the previous studies have lacked the teachers' and the students' perspectives on the TEYL materials. Therefore, this thesis aims to study how Finnish teachers regard the materials offered for teaching English to young learners and which materials they, in reality, use.

The main research question for the study is

1. How do teachers of TEYL perceive the TEYL materials?

This main question can be divided into several sub-questions

2. How do teachers perceive the usage of coursebooks in TEYL?
3. Which materials do teachers prefer to use in TEYL and why?
4. Which aspects influence the teachers' choice of TEYL materials?

The research questions are based mainly on the theory of what TEYL materials ought to be like to test if the theory and practice differ significantly. The questions aim to focus on all kinds of materials. However, one of them is focused especially on coursebooks, as one cautious hypothesis is that the usage of coursebooks in TEYL divides the respondents'

opinions. Moreover, in order to limit the study, only one main research question was selected. These research questions are approached with an online questionnaire distributed to TEYL teachers. A more detailed discussion on the data and its collection will follow in chapter 3.2.

## 3.2. Data and the respondents

Even though this is a qualitative study trying to understand better how TEYL materials are used, a questionnaire, which is usually considered a quantitative manner of data collection, was selected as the data source. Interviews might have offered a more profound, but also a more constricted, outlook on the matter. Therefore, a questionnaire was the chosen data source, as a questionnaire could reach a wider audience than interviews. As the aim is to understand teachers' perceptions of the materials, a broader audience was prioritized to gain a broader perspective of the matter. The questionnaire was conducted with Google Forms and distributed to English language teachers in Finland through three Facebook groups: Englannin opettajat, Alakoulun aarreaitta, and Varhennettu kieltenopetus ja kielirikasteinen opetus. In total, 53 respondents answered the questionnaire.

Answering the questionnaire was anonymous. The questions on the questionnaire were in Finnish, and they aimed to be reasonably concise in order to gain as many answers as possible. In chapter 4, when processing the data, the questions and answers are translated into English. The questionnaire consisted of three sections and 21 questions in total. The questions concentrated on the materials of TEYL, which materials the teachers use and prefer, and how they view the materials. The questions included multiple-choice questions, open-ended questions, and some Likert-scale questions. The open-ended questions were utilized to enable the teachers' own voices to be heard more closely. However, as these open-ended answers are somewhat troublesome to compare to one

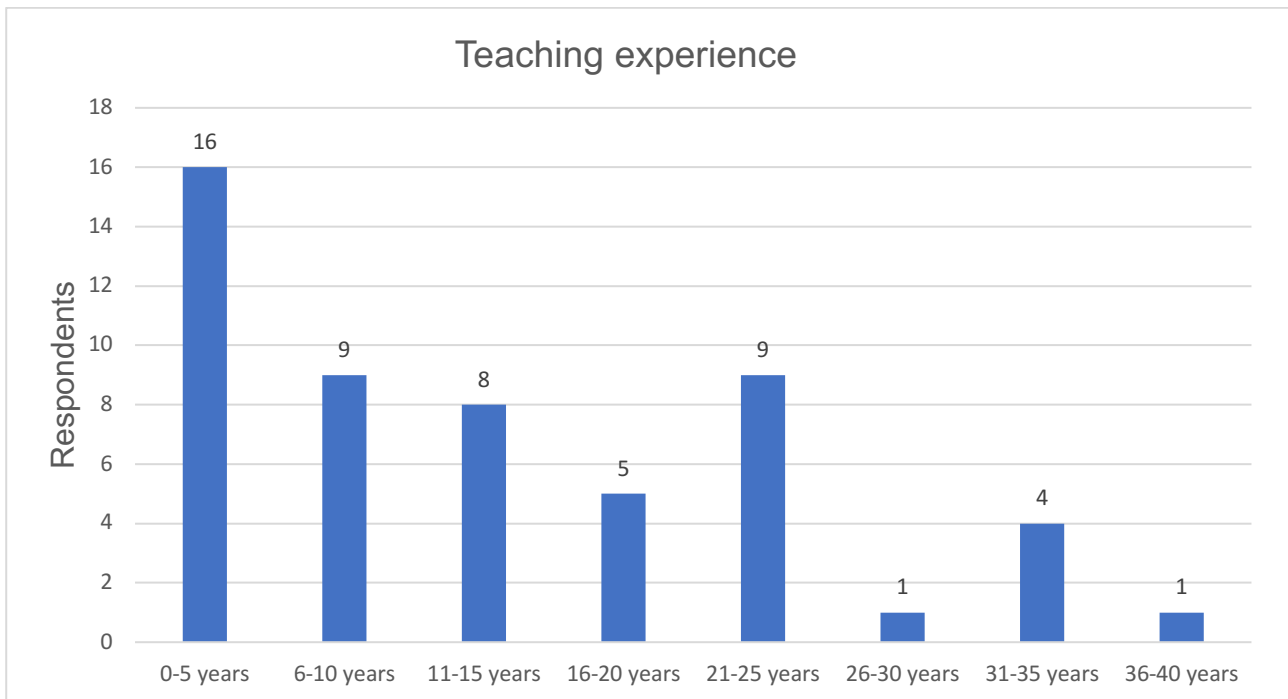


another, multiple-choice questions and Likert-scale questions were chosen to complement them. The Likert-scale questions allowed the respondents to evaluate chosen aspects of the materials and offered more easily comparable and comprehensible data. The questionnaire was tested with two language teachers before the distribution and adjusted based on their observations to its finalized form. The distributed questionnaire and its results can be found in the appendices.

The first section of the questionnaire consists of various questions of the respondent's background information, such as their education, years of work experience, and their current teaching municipality. The second section included questions concerning the TEYL materials in general. There were both multiple-choice questions and open-ended questions on which materials the teachers use in TEYL, including, which electronic materials or textbooks are used, if any. The third section concentrated on the actual perceptions of the teachers toward the materials. This section was the widest; some of the questions focused on textbooks, how they correspond to TEYL needs and how they could be improved. However, most of the questions were more general, such as what the teachers perceive as the most appropriate material, how happy they are with the materials, which aspects influence their choice of material, and what features they consider most important when choosing a material.

The respondents of the questionnaire are teachers in Finnish basic education who teach English to young learners. The participation relied solely on voluntariness. The 53 respondents provided an extensive overlook of the matter geographically as they represented 34 different municipalities in Finland. The majority of the respondents identified themselves as female and only three as male. Due to this imbalance, gender will not be considered as a factor in the analysis.

Interestingly, over half of the respondents are class teachers (28 out of 53), and a quarter of the respondents are language teachers (15 out of 53). Other respondents were both class and language teachers (7 out of 53), special education teachers (2 out of 53), and preschool teachers (1 out of 53). The respondents' age was not chosen as a factor in the questionnaire, but their teaching experience was. Most respondents had 0-5 years of teaching experience (16 out of 53), and only six respondents had over 26 years of teaching experience. Otherwise, the years of teaching experience were relatively evenly distributed among the respondents, as shown in Figure 1. It would be interesting to see whether the teaching experience influences the choice of teaching materials and whether some sort of pattern can be found among these groups. However, due to the need to limit the study, teaching experience could not be regarded as a factor for the material selection.



**Figure 1.** Teaching experience of the respondents.

### 3.3. Methods

As this study aims to discover the teachers' perceptions – including their attitudes and opinions, on teaching materials of TEYL, this is a qualitative study. By discovering the teachers' perceptions of the matter, this study aims to describe and understand the situation, which usually is the aim of a qualitative study (Saaranen- Kauppinen & Puusniekka 2009: 5). However, the primary manner of data collection, the questionnaire, is usually considered a quantitative method. Also, the sample size is relatively large (53 respondents), arguing in favor of the quantitative method. In addition, some quantitative elements, such as quantification, are utilized to handle the data and examine how the teaching materials' usage is distributed in practice. However, as Saaranen-Kauppinen and Puusniekka (2009: 5) note, qualitative and quantitative approaches are not mutually exclusive; a study must not always be strictly either qualitative or quantitative. Therefore, a qualitative study can, for example, exploit quantitative elements.

Moreover, as the questionnaire consisted of both open-ended and multiple-choice questions, the method can be regarded as somewhat two-fold. The open-ended questions offer a qualitative overview of the topic, while the multiple-choice questions provide a more quantitative perspective on the matter. Both of these perspectives are useful in order to gain a thorough understanding of the subject. The quantitative data provides support for the deductions of the qualitative answers and vice versa. Both qualitative and quantitative elements, such as quantification, are utilized to process the data, but the approach chosen for the analysis concentrates more on the qualitative aspect.

The study is not strictly data-driven, focusing on the collected data rather than previous theoretical knowledge and aiming to form a new theory on the subject, as the results are mirrored to the theoretical framework (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka 2009: 15). However, the study is neither a theory-driven one as it is not based on testing some existing

theoretical model, and conversely, the results of the collected data do form the core for the study (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka 2009: 15). Thus, the study is rather theory-bound, where the analysis is not based on an existing theoretical model, but the connections to theory are visible (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka 2009: 15). Moreover, some support for the findings can be found from the theoretical framework (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka 2009: 15). According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018), this theory-bound approach can also be called abductive reasoning.

The collected data will be analyzed using content analysis. Content analysis is one of the most central data analysis methods of qualitative research (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018). Content analysis aims to identify similarities and differences in the data by classifying it in different ways (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka 2009: 97). With content analysis, the researcher aims to constitute a compact description of the studied phenomenon that reflects the previous results on the subject and connects it to a broader context (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018). Before conducting the actual analysis, the results of the multiple-choice questions are categorized whenever possible according to the numbers of respondents that use certain teaching materials. Then, the answers to the open-ended questions are classified according to the central themes that stand out when they are examined. These themes are utilized to conduct the content analysis for the study.

## 4. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This chapter introduces the results of the questionnaire. Firstly, the data provided by the Likert-scale and multiple-choice questions is examined through quantitative methods. Secondly, the results of the open-ended questions will be examined through the means of content analysis by categorizing the answers according to different themes.

### 4.1. General overview of the results

This subchapter observes the more quantitative aspect of the study; what materials do the teachers use to teach young learners? This chapter introduces the quantitative data of the teachers' preferences regarding their chosen teaching materials and aims to answer the third research question. The teaching materials are categorized into their own subchapters. This chapter presents only the qualitative data concerning the teaching materials. The main focus of this study, the qualitative data of the teachers' perceptions of the teaching materials, is introduced in the following subchapter 4.2. Teachers' Perceptions. However, it was considered sensible to gain an understanding of which materials are most common, and only after that, to examine the teachers' perceptions towards them.

#### 4.1.1. Coursebooks

Nearly half of the respondents (26 out of 53) reported utilizing coursebooks in their TEYL classrooms. Most of them (20 out of 26) use a coursebook by publishing house SanomaPro, which offers two coursebook series designed for TEYL, Go! and Come with me!. The respondents' distribution between these book series is relatively even. Nine respondents use Go!, and 11 of them use Come with me!. Both of these coursebooks are briefly introduced in chapter 2.5. Teaching materials in TEYL. High five by Otava publishing is reasonably popular, too, as six respondents report to use it.

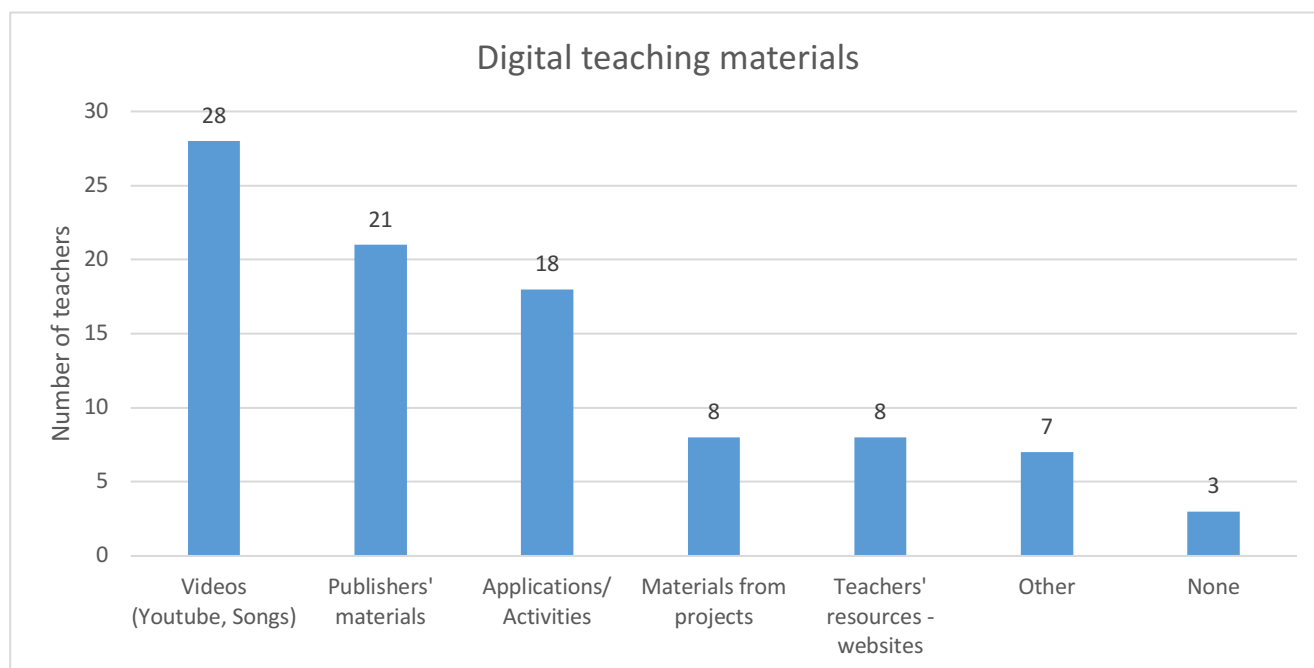
The manner in which the coursebooks are utilized differs. Mainly the coursebooks are used traditionally, meaning all learners have their own copy that they can write in. However, due to financial reasons, some teachers report they only have coursebooks as “class books”, which means the learners can use them in the classroom but are not allowed to write in them or take them home. Moreover, a few respondents who report they use coursebooks only have access to their digital materials. In this instance, the pupils do not have their own copies of the books. The aspect of whether these respondents actually use coursebooks is slightly questionable. However, since they consider this kind of usage as using a coursebook, and the concept “use a coursebook” was not defined in the questionnaire in any way, it cannot be opposed. To be precise, these respondents do use a coursebook, merely a version that is not the most traditional one.

#### 4.1.2. Digital teaching materials

Interestingly relatively many respondents chose not to answer the question: “Which digital teaching materials/applications do you use in TEYL?” Generally, the open-ended questions received fewer answers than the multiple-choice and Likert-scale questions, but this question received notably fewer answers than the others. However, as digital teaching materials were not specified in any way, the respondents might have had trouble understanding the concept. In this study, digital teaching materials comprise any teaching material requiring a computer or a tablet, and they are usually combined with a smartboard or a projector.

As 14 respondents selected not to answer the question entirely, their answers could most likely be interpreted as “I do not use any,” but one cannot know that for certain. However, the distinction regarding the answers that leave no room for interpretation is quite clear; only three teachers who answered the question reported they do not use any digital

materials. One specified that some financial difficulties prevent them from using digital materials. Most of the respondents (36 out of 53) use some sort of digital materials in their TEYL lessons. This is not surprising as *digital material* is a highly comprehensive concept. A wide variety of digital teaching materials emerged in the answers. Due to this wide dispersion, the answers were categorized, and the distribution can be seen in Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Categorized digital TEYL materials.

It is noteworthy that the respondents were asked to recount all digital materials they use. Therefore, the number of teachers in the categories combined is larger than the number of respondents in total.

According to the answer to this question, over half of the respondents, 28 out of 53, exploit some sort of videos in TEYL. The videos entail stories and games, but mostly songs. Most of the respondents specify that they utilize videos from YouTube. Besides YouTube, a website called Super Simple Songs was reported as an essential source of videos. The main advantages of both YouTube and Super Simple Songs that the respondents mention are easy accessibility and a wide variety of suitable material. One respondent emphasizes that

Super Simple Songs is a valuable resource for them because the videos are categorized according to their topics, and the videos can be used individually. Additionally, the website often offers other materials connected to the theme of the video, such as printable pictures. In addition to songs, the videos mainly entail stories and musical games. There are some controversies when using videos as teaching materials, as videos can only be used if the copyrights are in order.

Half of the teachers that responded to this particular question (21 out of 39) informed they use the digital materials provided by a publishing house, either SanomaPro or Otava. As with coursebooks, SanomaPro was significantly more popular, as 16 respondents reported they use some or multiple materials provided by them. The electronic materials SanomaPro provides that the respondents report they use include the digital materials of the coursebooks (Go!, Come with me! 1 & 2), Bingel (a learning game), Arttu -an application that provides extra material and videos for the coursebook, and Sanastot -application for vocabulary learning. Two of the respondents utilize Otava's materials, such as the digital material of their coursebook High five! and Otso -an application that offers recordings of the coursebooks texts and other extra materials. Other respondents did not specify which publishing company's material they utilize in their teaching.

The other categories under the digital materials are slightly more ambiguous. Not one particular application or any kind of activity distinctly stand out, which is why the rest of the categories are somewhat vague: application/ activities, materials from projects, teachers' resources- websites, and other. The application/activities category consists of 9 different digital learning tools that I considered some sort of applications or an activity, primarily games. The responses are relatively evenly distributed among the nine applications and activities, only Kahoot! -a website and application to create communal quizzes stands out with five respondents. Otherwise, these activities have responses ranging from one to three,



making them relatively insignificant material sources from a broader perspective. However, mainly to provide inspiration, but also to broaden the view on these applications, beginning from the most frequent one, the other applications and activities are Wordwall, Moomin Language School, Fun English, Quizlet, Moka Mera Lingua, Bamboozle, and Eskari by Pikku Kakkonen.

Regarding the digital teaching materials, the materials provided by the different projects did not gain much popularity, as only eight respondents stated to use them. However, in the questionnaire's previous question, "Which teaching materials do you use in TEYL?", the different projects' materials gained significantly more responses, as half of the respondents, 27 respondents to be precise, admit using them. The problem is perhaps in the phrasing of the question, as many respondents presumably do not consider these materials as digital. However, as in total, 27 respondents report using materials from different projects, they appear to be a rather significant source of teaching materials. Only a few of these projects are mentioned by name. The most popular one is ViLLE, a learning system created by the University of Turku that four respondents report using. The other projects are Land ahoy! by Niilo Mäki Institute, Oriveden Kielipolku, and KieKo (Kielitietoisesti Kouluissa).

The second to last category is labeled Teachers' resources- websites. These websites gained only a few responses but are still worth mentioning as an alternative source of teaching materials and even readily available lesson plans. The two most popular teachers' resources websites are Teachers Pay Teachers, a website where teachers can share materials they have made, some of which are free, and iSLCollective, which provides worksheets and PowerPoints on different topics. These websites appear in two respondents' answers. Other websites of this kind that are mentioned in the answers are Maple Leaf Learning, Starfall, Twinkl, and Live Worksheets. The last category is not strictly even a

category, as the answers in the Other -category are highly miscellaneous and ambiguous. They include answers such as “other exercises and playing activities” and “I have massive amounts of material collected from different places, that I consider best for my teaching”. They do not include any specific applications or activities. However, they are items the respondents wished to utter regarding the digital teaching materials, and thus, they were deemed worthy of a place in these categories.

#### 4.1.3. Self-made materials

Most of the respondents, 44 out of the 53, use materials they have made themselves in their TEYL classrooms. The self-made materials were not specified in the questionnaire in any way, but it was left on the respondents' own deliberation what materials they consider having done themselves. The number is significantly higher than the number of coursebook users presented above, which was 26 respondents. This would indicate that using self-made materials is much more popular than using coursebooks. However, perhaps surprisingly, out of the 26 coursebook users, 21 respondents report they also use self-made materials. Therefore, coursebooks and self-made materials are certainly not mutually exclusive. A noteworthy remark is that four respondents do not use either self-made materials or coursebooks, but they mainly teach with songs, games, and materials from projects.

#### 4.1.4. Songs

According to the questionnaire, songs are the most popular teaching material for TEYL. Almost all respondents, 49 out of 53 respondents, say they use songs as teaching material in TEYL. Songs are already discussed in section 4.1.2. regarding electronic materials and videos. However, only 28 respondents stated they use songs (including other videos) in the question about electronic materials. This implies that songs are a common teaching material even without electronic devices. However, in a separate question, “Where do you find your

teaching materials?” 49 respondents state they use Super Simple Songs -website, which implies that many of the respondents do not consider Super Simple Songs a digital teaching material, or they did not remember to answer so in the question about digital materials. The complication lies perhaps in the phrasing of the questions; “Which digital teaching materials/applications do you use?” occurs earlier in the questionnaire, and it is an open-ended question, which relatively many respondents left unanswered. Moreover, the concept of *digital teaching materials* leaves room for interpretation. However, the question “Where do you find your teaching materials?” is a multiple-choice question where a list of possible sources was provided. Super Simple Songs is one of the options whereby the respondents cannot have forgotten its existence.

#### 4.1.5. Other material

This chapter introduces a summary of the rest of the teaching materials that appeared in the questionnaire. These materials either include only a little information about the subject or did not gain much popularity among the respondents, thus considered best to introduce here under one heading. Nonetheless, they form an essential portion of the results.

Different sorts of plays and games appear to be a rather popular teaching material, as 35 of the 53 respondents use some sort of plays in their TEYL classrooms. Unfortunately, none of the questions focused on plays, so the types of plays and games used cannot be specified here. However, some of the respondents spontaneously mentioned musical games and action-based exercises.

Stories and fairy tales are used by a third of the respondents (19 out of 53). A few respondents mention stories in the same context as videos, which would imply they watch videotaped or otherwise recorded stories. One respondent lists simple storybooks they utilize that are appropriate for TEYL, such as *Brown Bear and Brown Bear, what do you*

see? and Very Hungry Caterpillar. Otherwise, how these narrative teaching materials are utilized is not specified. Perhaps the most traditional way is that the teacher reads it aloud themselves, but presumably, today, digital versions of the stories are relatively common, too.

Drama does not appear to be a prevalent teaching material in TEYL. Merely five respondents replied that they use drama with young learners. Lastly, two resources for teaching materials that emerged in a few respondents' answers are introduced briefly. Sanasala is a service that, for a fee, offers lesson plans and action-based teaching materials for English. Leo's English extensive material package for TEYL that, in return for a payment, includes lesson plans, picture cards, and worksheets, among other things, that one could use to replace coursebooks.

## 4.2. Teachers' perceptions

As is evident from the previous chapter, a wide variety of teaching materials is used in TEYL. Songs were the most popular choice of teaching material as almost all the respondents used them. Self-made teaching materials were very frequent, as most respondents make at least some of the teaching materials themselves. Digital teaching materials were also relatively popular. Half of the respondents utilized coursebooks but tended to complement them with other materials.

As the matter of which teaching materials teachers use is resolved, this chapter focuses on the respondents' perceptions of them. Therefore, this chapter focuses on the qualitative analysis of the data. The data consists mainly of the teachers' perceptions of the questionnaire's open-ended questions. Firstly, positive perceptions that appeared in the answers are presented. Secondly, other perceptions are introduced. They focus mainly on negative perceptions of coursebooks and the arduousness of preparing the teaching

material and lesson plans. However, they are not strictly negative, which is why the subchapter is called Assorted perceptions. Thirdly, the features that influence the respondents' choice of TEYL teaching materials are examined. Lastly, the essential aspects of teaching materials are introduced. In order to truly capture the teachers' perceptions of the matter, multiple quotations from the questionnaire are used to prove the main findings.

#### 4.2.1. Positive perceptions

Perhaps, unfortunately, but hardly surprisingly, most of the actual perceptions the respondents adduced regarded coursebooks. This situation is due mainly to the phrasing of the questions and the strong opinions the respondents have both for and against using coursebooks in TEYL. Therefore, this subchapter focuses on presenting the respondents' positive perceptions of coursebooks, but their positive remarks on other materials are presented, too.

When asked which teaching material the respondents find best for TEYL, 18 different options emerged, indicating the teachers' diverse opinions on the subject. However, of these 18 teaching materials, three were distinctly more popular than the others. The difference between these three options was relatively insignificant. Playful activities were the most popular options with 15 respondents, songs followed with 14 respondents, and the third was a coursebook with 12 respondents. Arguments for playful activities were, for example, "playful activities are memorable for the children, and I feel that this way the pupils learn English words, idioms, and phrases well." The fact that playful activities are easy to remember and include plenty of output was their essential argument. Moreover, "children are always excited about playing." Those in favor of songs had similar arguments: "songs [are the best] because children like them which means they are motivating, and they learn spontaneously with them" and "different songs, because through them the pupils get plenty of repetition naturally, and with the melody, the lyrics are perhaps remembered, too." The

arguments for coursebooks tended to point out that they include plenty of songs and games, and “the illustrations and musical games are exciting for the children. There is enough vocabulary”.

As noted above, some respondents find coursebooks highly beneficial. *Come with me!* especially gained plenty of praise, and according to one respondent, it alone covers all of the curriculum’s requirements. Another respondent agrees that “*Come with me* is a well-made package.” According to one respondent, “some of the coursebooks are too difficult but *Come with me* starts from simple enough words.”

Moreover, some respondents consider that having a coursebook makes the teaching less arduous, as “the lesson plans, many ideas for playful activities, and nice songs ease and decrease the workload of planning the teaching.” When the teaching material eases the teacher’s workload, they have more time and energy for the actual teaching. One of the respondents notes that “*Come with me* is a major improvement on the previous materials provided by publishing houses.” That *Come with me!* is already an improvement on the existing coursebooks indicates that as time passes, the teaching materials develop and become more appropriate for TEYL.

One teacher explained that they use a coursebook because they create structure and assist in planning the lessons. In addition, one respondent comments that “Using a publisher’s material makes the teaching more systematic and curricular.” As discussed in chapter 2.5, this ought to be the advantage of using materials made by publishing houses. Coursebooks tend to follow the NCC’s requirements for teaching and to be well-organized and planned. As one respondent noted, “[Coursebook] is not the key to happiness, but someone has already planned the topics to fit the NCC.” This answer indicates that not all coursebook users might be entirely satisfied with the books. However, for some, following the requirements of the NCC might matter more than the successfulness of the coursebook.

Another respondent considers not using a coursebook rather foolish, as “the author of the book has already thought out the content and exercises, why should I do the same work again? Moreover, a book aids to proceed systematically and build on top of previous knowledge”. By proceeding systematically, the teaching is more organized and helps great routines for language learning that the pupils might benefit from in the future.

Most importantly, there appears to be a somewhat consensus among the respondents that use coursebooks that the pupils enjoy having a coursebook. This perspective is uttered on several occasions. For example, “The pupils like the book, its characters, games, and songs” and “The pupils themselves often wish they get to do the exercises from the book” and “Both pupils and the teacher like the coursebook. The pupils want to get homework from the book because the exercises are so fun”. These answers can be summarized as follows “The children find the book motivating, and they enjoy using it.” However, some respondents have different perspectives on why the pupils enjoy having a coursebook. For example, one respondent states that “Some of the pupils want to already practice writing a little and having a book makes it easier,” while another respondent notes that “By writing some pupils learn better, and they have something concrete about the lessons.” Therefore, even though not all young learners are literate when TEYL begins, they might still benefit from a coursebook. The coursebook can motivate them to learn how to read and write (Ghosn 2019: 377). Not all the respondents who use a coursebook find it necessary. However, they utilize it because of the pupils: “Even though I find that the coursebook brings no added value to the teaching, they are important for the pupils and so are small homework exercises, too.”

Regarding the digital materials by publishing houses, one teacher comments that “the digital material of Come with me is wonderful”. Another respondent agrees that the coursebooks are unnecessary because the digital material of Come with me! is very comprehensive and functional even on its own. The digital material is functional because it

includes “Songs, playful activities, stories, listening exercises, lesson plans, and printable vocabulary cards of every topic.” Another respondent comments they use Bingel, a learning game by SanomaPro, because it is “a motivational learning environment”.

All in all, one of the prevalent features of the favorite teaching material appears to be accessibility and user-friendliness. For example, Super Simple Songs, and YouTube, both gained favorable attraction because they are both easy to use and have plenty of teaching material available. In addition, two applications emerged as easy to use; Kahoot! and Moomin Language School. One respondent especially perceived Moomin language school as a playful environment to learn a language. However, the materials created by different projects received positive feedback from some respondents, too; “Different projects have good, clear and coherent materials when other materials have not been available.” Moreover, self-made materials are considered appropriate and necessary because they “guarantee that one can focus on what is important with the little ones, pronunciation, the boldness of the expression, and creating a positive attitude to language learning.” Naturally, focusing on the essential aspects is easier with self-made materials as they can be centered around the wanted themes.

#### 4.2.2. Assorted perceptions

Those respondents who do not regard coursebooks as beneficial find them unnecessary or unsuitable. These respondents do not necessarily have negative perceptions of the coursebooks, but neither do they have a favorable perspective on using a coursebook in TEYL. However, some respondents are entirely against using coursebooks with young learners. The reasons behind these views vary. One respondent notes that “I don’t see a point having book-like material (at least for pupils). A teacher’s book might be beneficial, but it is not necessary as there is so much more material and ideas on the internet than one



could ever use". Therefore, some might consider books unnecessary because there is plenty of other material available. Even though relatively many respondents found that a coursebook motivates the learners, some disagree with that view. One of the respondents notes that using a coursebook makes the learning less meaningful, and without it, the teaching methods can be more versatile. However, the main argument against coursebooks is the young learners' limited cognitive skills: "there is no need to write that much," and "many coursebooks require reading and writing skills." In addition, some respondents note that the coursebooks are too difficult, as they assume the starting level to be higher than it is.

A common view among respondents who oppose coursebooks in TEYL seems to be that oral skills tend to be ignored by using a coursebook. As young learners' do not necessarily know how to read, oral language skills should be the main focus in TEYL; "I don't find [a coursebook] necessary as oral language skills and communication are more important." However, some respondents would perhaps want to use a coursebook, but "I haven't found a suitable one, the books focus too much on written language." Therefore, perhaps not all the respondents that appear to object to coursebooks indeed object to them. Perhaps they just have not found an appropriate one yet.

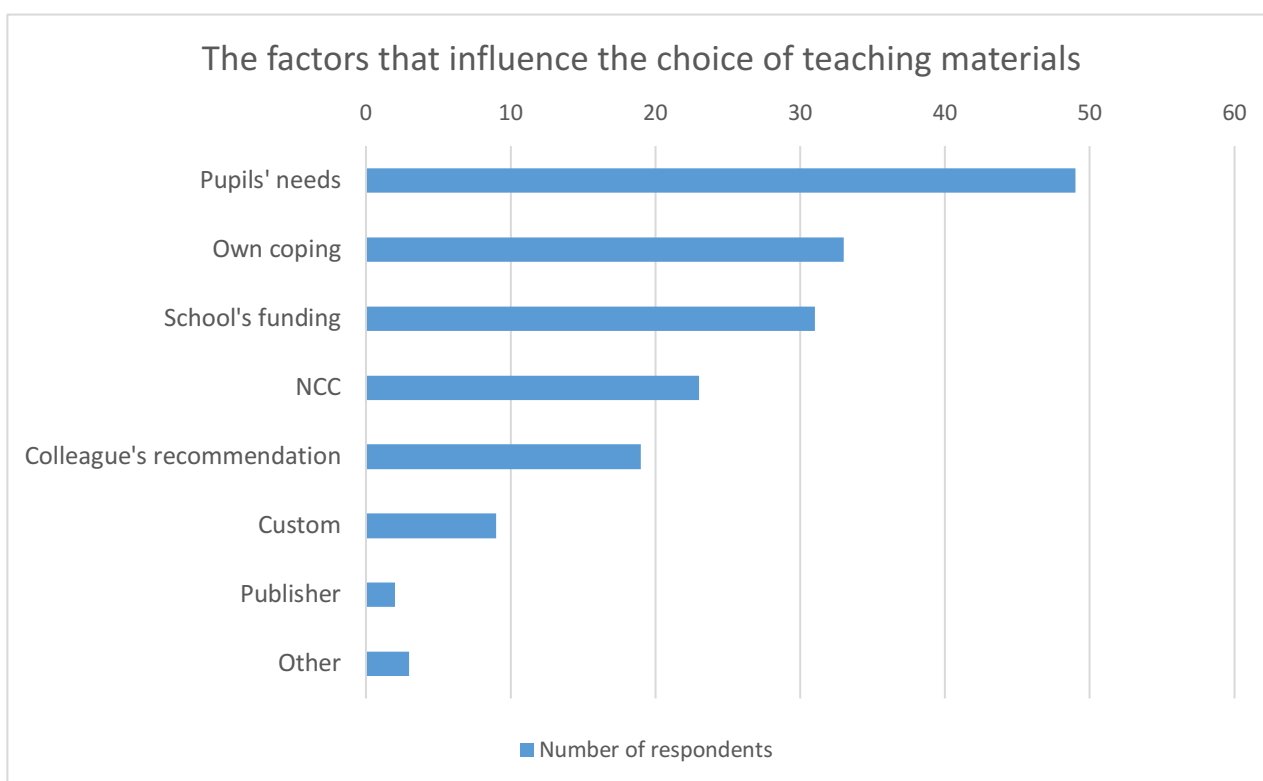
In addition, the young learners are a highly heterogenic group. Therefore, a few respondents expressed concern that the coursebooks should regard the learners' different skill levels by offering extra exercises. Then, grouping the pupils by their abilities would be easier. For example, for some pupils, "acquiring even the easiest oral matter is arduous and demands plenty of repetition. Others absorb written matters effortlessly." In addition to these extra exercises, one respondent suggests decreasing the number of themes in the coursebooks. Thus, each theme could be learned more thoroughly, creating a more robust basis for the later English learning.

In order to examine teachers' perceptions of TEYL materials, it was deemed appropriate to study how arduous they find creating TEYL materials and planning the lessons. It is notable that merely two respondents perceived producing the materials and planning the lessons "very arduous." The majority of the respondents (31 out of 53) appear to regard creating materials and planning the lessons relatively effortless, as they find it "not at all arduous" or only "slightly arduous." However, a third of the respondents find producing materials and planning the teaching "somewhat arduous." It would be intriguing to examine whether there is a connection between the respondents' competence to teach languages, their teaching experience, the teaching materials they use, and how arduous they find creating the materials. However, this could not be thoroughly examined as it was not the main focus of the study, and it would have required plenty of time and attention to realize. Suffice it to say that a cursory review of the data does not suggest any connections between those aspects. Some coursebook users found creating the teaching materials and planning the lessons "very arduous," some "not at all arduous," same with non-coursebook users. No clear pattern could be detected concerning arduousness and the respondents' educational background and teaching experience either.

The respondents were asked how happy they were with TEYL materials in general. Notably, only four respondents were "not at all happy" with the materials. Similarly, only four respondents were "extremely happy" with the materials. Approximately half of the respondents (25 out of 53) were "somewhat happy," and 14 respondents were "happy." As there is a wide variety of teaching materials, it is rather natural that the majority of the respondents are, at least to some extent, happy with them. However, the result does indicate that there is room for improvement in the material supply.

#### 4.2.3. Factors that influence the choice of teaching materials

This subchapter explores the aspects that influence the teachers' choice of teaching materials in TEYL that emerged in the questionnaire answers. A diagram was created to simplify comparing the answers based on the multiple-choice question "What influences your choice of teaching material in TEYL?". In the question, the respondents were instructed to recount all suitable options. The diagram is complemented with a deliberation on the teachers' perceptions that emerged in other questions. The diversion between different aspects that influence the choice of teaching materials is visible in Figure 3.



**Figure 3:** *The factors that influence the choice of teaching materials.*

Almost all the respondents, 49 out of 53, considered pupils' needs as an essential factor on their selection of teaching materials. It is remarkable but appropriate that the students' needs are essential in selecting teaching materials for almost all respondents. As stated in chapter 2.5., it is essential that pupils' needs influence the choice of appropriate material. In chapter 2.5., it was also concluded that the pupils' attributes and needs that should be regarded are

the level of their cognitive development, their age, and interests, in other words, what they find motivating and fun (Diyanti 2016: 64).

Moreover, it was noted in chapter 2.5. that teachers should consider the resources that are available for them in material selection (Diyanti 2016: 64). Diyanti (2016: 64) refers to the teacher's financial and temporal resources, whether they have the money or the time to produce their own materials. Naturally, the school's and municipality's funding form the basis for the material selection, whether the teachers can even consider purchasing material or if they need to save money by producing their own materials. The financial aspect of material selection will be more thoroughly below.

Even though it is significant that pupils' needs are regarded when choosing the teaching material, one cannot deny the importance of the teachers regarding their own coping, too. Therefore, I would broaden Diyanti's (2016: 64) notion on teacher's resources to include the aspect of the teachers coping or mental well-being. Thus, the teacher's resources should not only include the aspect of whether they have the time or the money for certain materials, but whether they have the energy to produce the materials themselves. If a teacher can save their energy and time by using readily available teaching materials and lesson plans, it is appropriate that they do so. There has been a public discussion on teachers' coping in Finland, how six in ten teachers have considered a career change due to the stress and increasing workload (IS 11). Therefore, it is essential that over half of the respondents regard their own coping too when selecting TEYL materials. Ideally, high-quality teaching materials reduce that stress even a little.

Surprisingly, the National Core Curriculum did not influence the choice of teaching material with the majority. Less than half of the respondents (23 out of 53) recount NCC as one of the factors that influence their choice of teaching materials. As NCC regulates the teaching in Finland and what the pupils are expected to learn, I somewhat expected it to

influence the material selection of all the respondents. However, NCC does not closely regulate TEYL, as it does not dictate what the teaching material should be like but gives general guidelines for the teaching. Even though, according to these results, over half of the respondents do not regard NCC when selecting TEYL materials, it does not mean their teaching would not fill the NCC's requirements.

As stated above, the school's funding naturally guides the selection of teaching materials. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that over half of the respondents list it as one of the essential factors in TEYL material selection. Even though education in Finland is well on track, the financial resources of the education providers can create great inequality between the learners. Coursebooks are relatively costly, which some respondents emphasize in their answers, but there are also other chargeable materials. Only 14 respondents of 53 disclosed they would not use a coursebook even if they did not need to consider the financial resources. The rest 39 respondents would like to use the coursebook or at least some materials provided by the publishing houses, such as the teacher's guides. As 26 respondents already use coursebooks in their teaching, this implies that 13 respondents cannot use a coursebook or its related material due to financial issues.

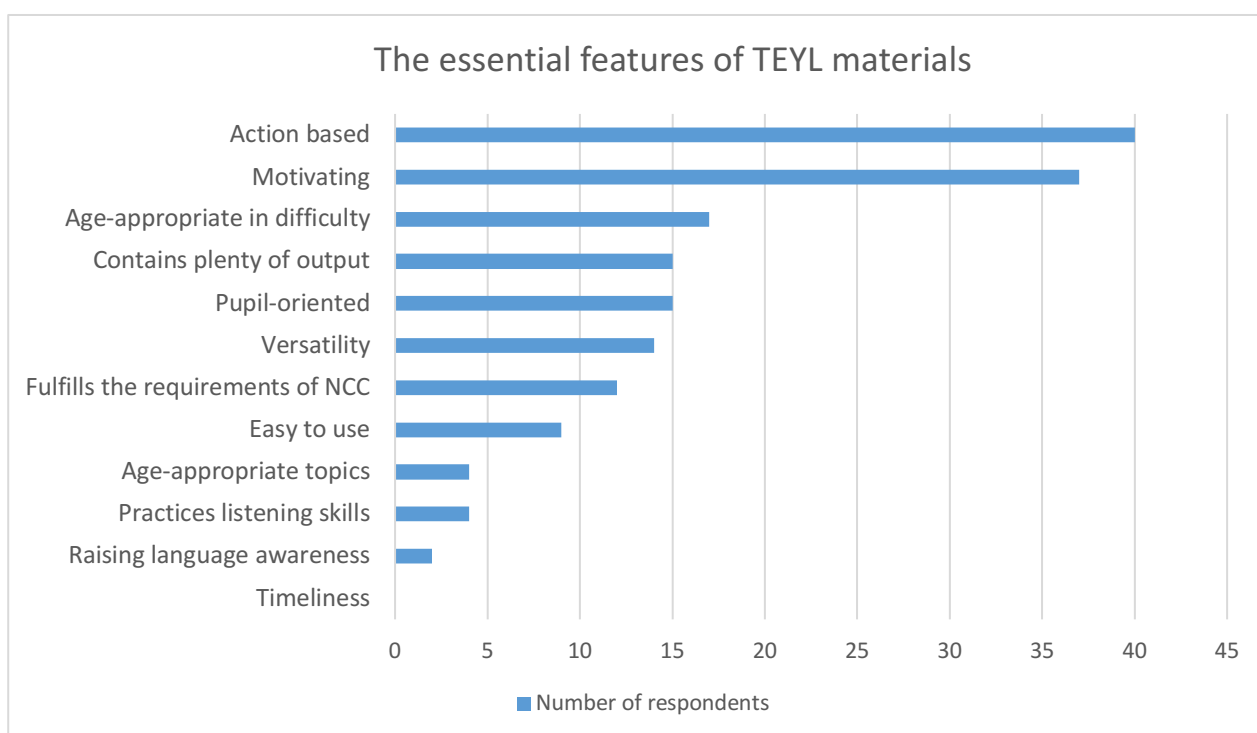
Not only financial issues but the school's or municipality's views can influence the choice of teaching materials. One respondent reported that "the school does not want to give money for the students' books," which implies that the school has money, but they do not find young learners' coursebooks a sensible expense. The same respondent does, however, note that according to them, "there is an anti-coursebook atmosphere in Tampere" concerning teaching languages to young learners. As this is only one person's opinion, it is difficult to say whether it is true. However, five respondents are from the Tampere area, of which two affirm to use coursebooks. This suggests that the perspective towards using

coursebooks in TEYL depends entirely on the school in question instead of the whole municipality.

The pupils' needs, the teacher's coping and other resources, and NCC are the most common factors in TEYL material selection. However, relatively many respondents answered that a colleague's recommendation also impacts their choice. Even though each teacher has their own personal preferences, sharing one's perceptions of materials that have proven their worth is sensible and can ease everyone's workload. Only a minority of the respondents report that they choose the teaching materials out of custom. Reusing materials that have proven to be successful is advisable, but it can have its disadvantages, too. For example, one of the respondents stated that they used a coursebook and "tried to teach early English the same way as older pupils, but it did not work out." Therefore, if one chooses, for example, a coursebook for TEYL just because they are accustomed to having one with older pupils, it can affect the teaching negatively. Nonetheless, the features that influence the teacher's choice of teaching materials in TEYL seem to be in consensus with the features mentioned in chapter 2.5, the learners' attributes, and the teachers' resources being the most prevalent ones.

#### 4.2.4. The essential features of TEYL materials

This chapter focuses on what the respondents perceive the TEYL materials as essential features of TEYL materials. As the essential features of TEYL materials were inquired in a multiple-choice question, the quantitative data will be complemented with remarks from the theoretical framework. The respondents were asked to choose three of the most important features of TEYL materials in order to detect if some option proves to be more crucial than others, rather than choose all the appropriate options. The dispersion of the respondents' answers can be seen in Figure 4.



**Figure 4:** *The essential features of TEYL materials.*

The two most important features are evident; that the material is action-based and motivating. Most of the respondents agree thereby. This perspective reflects the views presented in the theoretical framework and the NCC. Even though NCC did not significantly influence the selection of teaching materials, its influence can be detected here. Action-based and motivational teaching is what TEYL ought to be, according to NCC. However, those features can naturally stem from the young learners' needs, too. Moreover, only a minority of the respondents considered fulfilling the NCC's requirements an essential feature for the materials. However, the two most essential features, action-based and motivating material, do somewhat include the notion of fulfilling the NCC's requirements.

There is more variation with the other options. Age-appropriateness, both in difficulty and in topics, appears not to be as essential for the respondents as Parker and Valente (2019: 359) and Ghosn (2019: 377) implied it should be. However, there might be an overlap in the answers. For example, according to Ghosn (2019: 377), age-appropriate materials motivate the learner. Thus, the aspect that the materials are motivating could include the

notion that they are also age-appropriate. In addition, pupil-oriented teaching materials are somewhat included in the notion of age-appropriateness, as it entails the pupils' personal needs. Therefore, if a teaching material is pupil-oriented, it should regard the learners' age and the level of their developmental needs.

Some of the results are somewhat conflicted with features that emerged in the theoretical framework. For example, Hawkins (2019) stated that learning a second language demands plenty of input. However, the feature of practicing listening skills, or input, is not included in the three essential features of TEYL materials for most of the respondents. However, relatively many respondents (15 out of 53) consider containing plenty of output as an essential feature of TEYL materials. This result indicates that many teachers want to focus on developing the pupils' oral and communicational skills, as noted in chapter 4.2.2.

The versatility of the material and that they are easy to use are important features for a relatively small minority. Again, that the material is easy to use is perhaps included in age-appropriateness. If the teaching material is age-appropriate, it regards the learners' developmental needs and should therefore be easy to use. In addition, raising language awareness was essential to merely two respondents, and timeliness was not essential to any respondents. Alternatively, they can be essential features, but they were not included in the majority's three most important features of the teaching materials. Raising language awareness is one of NCC's aims for early language teaching (NCC 2019). It is not, however, reflected in these results.



## 5. DISCUSSION

This chapter will discuss the study's results and the study itself, their significance, and their limitations. Firstly, the results are summarized and compared to the theory or results of previous studies. However, there have not been many studies about teachers' perceptions of TEYL materials previously. Arnold and Rixon (2008: 45) have conducted one. Therefore, some results of Arnold and Rixon's (2008: 45) study will be presented here and paralleled to the results of this study to provide a broader perspective on the matter. Lastly, the study's limitations and suggestions for future studies are discussed.

### 5.1. Discussion of the results

There is very little research on TEYL materials (Ghosn 2019: 377). However, Arnold and Rixon (2008: 45) are one of those who have conducted a study on the matter. In Arnold and Rixon's (2008: 45) study, they surveyed 76 TEYL teachers in 28 countries for their perspectives of the materials. In their study, Arnold and Rixon (2008: 45) discovered that "EYL provision is so varied across sectors and cultures that it does not make sense to seek a 'typical' use of materials". The same finding applies well to the present study, too. The respondents have such divided perceptions of the TEYL materials that no clear consensus on the materials or their use can be reached. Nor is it necessary if the teachers are happy with the materials.

According to Arnold and Rixon (2008: 45), the majority of the teachers were happy with the materials they used, which is credited to the teachers having participated in choosing them. The same can be detected in the results of the present study, too; not many teachers are unhappy with the TEYL materials, and those who were, played little or no part in selecting them. In fact, most of the respondents were happy or at least somewhat happy with the supply of TEYL materials in Finland. This result indicates that there is room for

improvement in the TEYL materials. However, the situation is relatively good, considering TEYL officially began in Finland merely two years ago.

In this study, the most important features of the TEYL materials were that it is action-based and motivating. An action-based material refers to more informal learning that one learns rather spontaneously by doing. Motivating material is most likely age-appropriate in difficulty and themes. The somewhat same features emerged in Arnold and Rixon's (2008: 46) study, as the qualities of TEYL materials valued by the teachers the most were fun and enjoyable content that promotes oral language and interaction. Most of the respondents in the present study also emphasized the meaning of oral language skills, pronunciation, and communication.

The teachers' perceptions of TEYL materials are somewhat problematic; no clear consensus on the matter could be reached. However, to put it simply, most of the respondents make at least some of the materials themselves, and half of the respondents use coursebooks in TEYL. Most coursebook users prefer to utilize a combination of the two to complement a coursebook with other materials. In fact, only one respondent answered they solely use a coursebook. Even though many respondents praised the new coursebooks for being more than suitable for TEYL, some respondents are highly against using coursebooks when teaching young learners. Next follows a discussion on the necessity of coursebooks in TEYL based on the reasonings given by the respondents in the questionnaire.

Without studying the learners' perspective, their view on the matter can be merely speculated, which is why it is essential to study their side as well in the future. However, based on knowledge about young readers on earlier research and the teachers' reports to this study, it can be concluded that coursebooks are not necessary for the young reader in the early stage of learning languages. Even though most teachers agreed the coursebooks

might not be crucial for the young learner, some insist that coursebooks are as beneficial in teaching young learners as they are with older learners.

It is noteworthy that young learners might have limitations in their cognitive and linguistic abilities; for example, not all young learners know how to read when they begin learning a second language. Therefore, in this study, some teachers regard coursebooks as unnecessary or even consider them wasteful use of resources. Other teachers, however, emphasized that even with limited ability to read, the coursebooks can be helpful as they contain significantly more additional information than merely writing. The pictures are age-appropriate and create an enticing storyline even if one cannot read the descriptions connected to them. The teachers reported that the pictures and colors are interesting for the young learner to examine. Thus, the coursebooks can increase the learners' motivation to read and learn English, so they can better understand the stories.

Moreover, some of the teachers remarked that utilizing a coursebook reduced their own workload without negatively affecting the quality of the teaching. On the contrary, some respondents observed that planning the lessons became more effortless using coursebooks, thus leaving them more energy to perform on the actual lessons. In addition, some of the teachers mention that using a coursebook created a better structure both for the lessons and for the school year. Those teachers argued that this repeating structure helps them form routines for the lessons, which are often beneficial for the learners. Through routines, the learners gradually learn how to learn English and the routines diminish the chance of anxiety that some learners have on learning a second language. Ideally, an advantage of using a coursebook early on teaches the learner the conventions of language learning.

The limited selection of TEYL coursebooks can explain the diversion between the opinions on coursebooks. In Finland, there are only four TEYL coursebooks provided by the

publishers at the moment. Ghosn (2019: 377 after Enever 2011: 29) argues that publishers have been inactive with responding to TEYL needs. Ghosn (2019:377 after Enever 2011: 29) suspects that the reasons behind this are the “high costs, the uncertainty of the market and the well-established tradition of coursebooks for older learners”. This view focuses more on the global perspective but is presumably also valid in the Finnish context to some extent. However, one of the respondents notes that *Come with me!* is an improvement on earlier coursebooks. In addition, according to some of the respondents, some coursebooks, especially *Come with me!*, respond to the TEYL learners’ and teachers’ needs fairly or even exceptionally well. These views could imply that the newer coursebooks perhaps regard the young learner’s needs better than the previous ones. However, not all the respondents agree with those views.

The most surprising issue that emerged from the responses to the questionnaire is how varying perceptions teachers have of the teaching materials of TEYL. It is surprising because most respondents have similar views on what TEYL should be like, playful and action-based, instead of a more traditional teaching approach based on reading and writing. Nevertheless, using coursebooks in TEYL proved to be a proper divider of opinions. While others consider coursebooks very suitable, others find the same books unnecessary and too restrictive for TEYL. Those who are most against using a coursebook with young learners tend to think that coursebooks focus too much on written language instead of oral skills and communication. However, one respondent who uses a coursebook agrees that “Some coursebooks aren’t suitable for students who don’t know how to read”; however, they continue, “but I have been happy with *Come with me!*”. As discussed above, this could indicate that the newer coursebooks tend to consider the unique needs of young learners better. However, it could also indicate that the teachers have very different perceptions of young learners’ needs.

Every teacher has their own preferences regarding their teaching methods and approaches, including the teaching materials, which is reflected in this study's results. Even though there are some consistencies in the results, no two respondents utilize the same exact materials. That is due to the fact that teachers are individuals, and they are allowed to choose the materials that best suit their own teacher's identity and teaching methods. Moreover, the teachers are the experts regarding their students; they know their limitations and needs. Thus, they are the best party to choose the most suitable material to fit their needs. To regard the pupils' needs was deemed an essential factor by Parker and Valente (2019: 359) and Ghosn (2019: 377). Almost all the respondents agreed, as 49 of the 53 respondents reported that they regard the pupils' needs when choosing their TEYL materials.

Naturally, the school's resources guide the choice of teaching material and might prevent teachers from using their primary choice of teaching materials. Fortunately, that was rarely the situation with the respondents. In addition, the National Core Curriculum guides the teaching, but it does not dictate which teaching materials a teacher must use in TEYL. Thus, the teachers have plenty of options to execute the teaching as they prefer. The authenticity of the language was dismissed in the questions regarding the selection of teaching materials, as it was anticipated that it would not be as important with young learners as with older learners. However, one respondent explicitly stated that they prefer to use materials by BBC, British Council, and Cambridge University due to the authenticity of the language. Otherwise, authenticity appeared not to be a concern with most respondents as it was not reflected in the choices of teaching materials.

Most of the respondents report that they create at least some of the materials themselves. It is understandable because then they are able to influence the content of the material. However, the teacher's primary duty is teaching, not creating materials. There has

been a discussion on teachers' coping in the Finnish media, as the teachers' workload appears to increase continually (IS 11). Therefore, if the workload can be eased by exploiting readily available materials, it would be desirable. However, most teachers would presumably do so if suitable material for their teaching was available. Therefore, improving the existing materials and developing new materials better suited for TEYL should be the aim of material developers. Perhaps those developers would benefit from quiring the teachers' perceptions on the matter. However, relatively many respondents praised *Come with me!* as TEYL teaching material and that it has been a significant improvement on earlier TEYL materials. As Ghosn (2019: 385) states, more coursebook developers ought to consider the developmental needs of young learners better and abandon the traditional coursebook model. This view is also confirmed by the more negative perceptions of this study.

Even though the goal for the thesis was to study teachers' perceptions without any presumptions of the matter, there was one hypothesis concerning the financial aspect. The hypothesis was that there is regional variation between municipalities considering financial resources, that some municipalities would have more money than others for acquiring teaching materials. However, this hypothesis could not be thoroughly tested, as the 53 respondents are located in 33 separate municipalities. The greatest number of respondents from one municipality is six from Helsinki and five from Tampere, both of which are relatively low numbers. As discussed in chapter 4.2.3., there is no clear policy for TEYL materials in Tampere, some teachers use coursebooks, and some use other materials. The situation is entirely similar in Helsinki; four respondents disclose they use coursebooks, two use other material, but one of them would want to use a coursebook if they had enough funding. Even though this is a small sample of only two municipalities, it proves that at least not all municipalities have converging policies with TEYL materials, and again the school's perspective counts more than the municipality's view.

The goal of this study was not to discover which teaching material is the best for TEYL, nor could it do so. The results indicate that almost all teaching materials have their advocates and good qualities that make them appropriate for certain teachers and their pupils. Even though the diversion between the different choices of teaching materials is great, one respondent encapsulates the essence of TEYL materials. In the question “Which material do you find the best for TEYL, why?” they simply answered “Enthusiasm.” As long as the teacher is enthusiastic about TEYL, it counts for more than any teaching material. This view was presented by Sandberg (2019: 14), too. Moreover, if the teacher is enthusiastic about their teaching material, that material is best for them and their pupils.

## 5.2. Discussion of the study

As the study's goal was to study teachers' perceptions of TEYL material, it has been met. However, one must keep in mind that this study only represents the perceptions of those 53 teachers that chose to participate in the questionnaire. Therefore, if conducted again, the results would be most likely entirely different. Thus, one cannot conclude that half of all TEYL teachers in Finland utilize a coursebook based on this study. However, what we can conclude is that half of the respondents of this study use one.

Nonetheless, this study offers an overview of teachers' perceptions of TEYL materials in the Finnish context. Therefore, even if this thesis is only a small-scale study, it offers some valuable information on teachers' perceptions about the materials and how they are used in the classroom. Ghosn (2019) states that research of this kind is needed because teachers' perceptions of TEYL materials have not been well studied, and they are needed to offer more suitable materials for TEYL.

Moreover, as the sampling size is relatively small, it leaves some issues unresolved and might not portray the accurate perceptions of the majority of the teachers. Naturally, the

means of distributing the questionnaire also limit the sampling; only those teachers who use Facebook and follow these particular teachers' groups could answer the questionnaire. However, Facebook is a prevalent means of communication. Moreover, based on the number of Facebook groups related to teaching and their members, the questionnaire reached a vast number of teachers. For whatever reason, those numbers did not entirely reflect the numbers of the respondents of this study.

In addition, to the limitations of the means of distributing the questionnaire, the questionnaire itself has some limitations, too. Despite what seemed to be a thorough testing of the questionnaire, the answers lacked some tentatively expected elements. After some consideration, it was concluded that a few of the questions on the questionnaire were perhaps problematic and should have been even more carefully conducted primarily. For example, even though the questions provided positive perceptions on multiple materials, negative perceptions were only received from coursebooks because it was asked directly but not on other materials. In addition, one particular question that proved to be somewhat problematic was the question "Do you use a coursebook in TEYL? Why, why not?". The respondents often answered the first part of the question and left the second part unanswered, which is unfortunate, as the question was one of the most central ones for the study. In hindsight, perhaps if the questions had been separated, the respondents would have answered both. However, forming the questions was challenging because the materials used varied considerably. Therefore, not many questions could focus solely on coursebooks, and targeting all TEYL materials with the questions made some of the answers somewhat ambiguous. Therefore, it might have been more sensible to focus the study on coursebooks and their advantages and disadvantages in TEYL. However, that would have limited the group of possible respondents significantly, and it was not anticipated that



coursebooks would be popular with young learners. Moreover, I wanted the study to cover all materials used in TEYL.

In the questionnaire, answering the questions was optional; one could proceed to the next question without answering all the questions before. Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, relatively many respondents left some of the open-ended questions unanswered. However, apart from a few deviants, all the respondents answered all the Likert-scale and multiple-choice questions. Even though the number of respondents is reasonably good, 53 is not that high a number of respondents. Moreover, when even some of them leave the open-ended questions unanswered, it diminishes the validity of the results. This suggests that the more manageable the questionnaire is to answer, the better. However, the targeted goals had not been reached with only Likert-scale and multiple-choice questions.

This thesis does not address the learners' perceptions of TEYL materials. However, it is as important as teachers' perceptions, and even more so, considering they are the ones who are supposed to learn. Therefore, this thesis could serve as a starting point for another study focusing on the students' perspectives on TEYL materials. Studying young learners is, however, somewhat problematic. One must consider the ethical limitations of studying a young child, but also the cognitive limitations of the young learner that affect how the study could be executed. Even though the learner's perspective is essential, as stated earlier, it is rather difficult to study because a young learner's reflective skills have not developed that far yet.

Initially, the data set was supposed to be collected in a two-fold manner. The intention was to complement the questionnaire's results with Facebook posts made by teachers on TEYL materials on various teachers' Facebook groups. In addition, the data sets could not have been directly compared to each other, as different people would have made the posts

and answered the questionnaire. However, even though the data would have been collected anonymously, it was considered somewhat unethical to study the teachers' Facebook posts, and permission must have been asked of all the teachers, which would have been somewhat problematic. Moreover, even though the data is collected only by the questionnaire, it includes plenty of data about the subject.

Unfortunately, due to the need to limit the study, not all intriguing aspects found in the respondents' answers could be examined. For example, as the study focuses on the teachers' perceptions of the materials, not all motives behind their material selection process could be studied. In addition, examining the connection between the respondent's teaching experience and the materials they use would have provided an intriguing perspective on the matter. In addition, studying the influence of the respondent's educational and professional background on the selection of teaching materials had been exciting. For example, to study whether class teachers use a certain type of material as they might lack the pedagogical skills to create material for language teaching. To find interesting aspects through the data is often a typical problem for qualitative research; aspects that could not have been anticipated often emerge from the data (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2018). However, studying these aspects mentioned above could be possible applications of this study. In general, more studies are needed on TEYL materials as TEYL as a subject continues to evolve, and the teachers gain more experience with the materials.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The results emphasize that the teaching materials are not only an essential tool for the teacher but also for the pupil to promote their learning. Therefore, both those perspectives must be regarded when selecting the most appropriate teaching material for TEYL. However, what that teaching material is, cannot and should not be dictated by anyone other than the teacher. Nonetheless, as Cook (2016: 13) states, teachers can rarely choose “their own paths in the classrooms,” as they have to follow the guidelines provided by their principals, government, and coursebook authors. Sometimes, external circumstances, such as financial reasons or preferences mandated by the school or local authorities, influence the selection of the teaching materials.

However, not many respondents report that their principals or other authorities force them to use materials they disapprove of themselves. In a few instances, however, the teachers want to use a coursebook, but they cannot due to financial issues. Other than that, the teachers appear to be at liberty to use whatever materials they regard the best for TEYL. This most likely stems from the fact that teaching is a relatively highly valued profession in Finland, and teachers tend to have plenty of autonomy regarding their teaching.

The respondents have varying perceptions of what is the most suitable teaching material for TEYL. That is hardly surprising, as most of the teachers report that their pupils’ needs and their own coping are the aspects that influence their selection of teaching materials. However, naturally, these things have different meanings for each respondent as they are individuals, as are their pupils, too. Despite their personal differences, the respondents agree on what TEYL should be like; playful and joyful.

Without setting too restrictive guidelines, the results of this study indicate that songs are the preferred teaching material for TEYL. The respondents reported that songs’ advantages are the combination of a catchy melody, simple enough lyrics, and repetitive

structure that makes songs motivational for the pupils. In addition, the results indicate that action-based and playful activities also promote the children's learning of English. Moreover, they aid in reaching the aim of TEYL; to create an inspiring environment for learning and to spark an interest in language learning.

However, we must recall that TEYL has been taught in Finland for only about two years. This short timespan explains why the ready-made materials might be lacking in some aspects. However, as more years pass, the materials will surely develop along with the subject itself. This study proves that there is a need for TEYL teaching materials that do not require reading skills but focus on oral language skills and communication. However, the material should also create routines without being too restrictive and formal. Ghosn (2019: 385) agrees that TEYL materials should focus on oral language, but she suggests that they "should gradually incorporate basic reading comprehension strategies, word study and spelling instruction, and modelling of the writing process." Some respondents agreed with Ghosn's (2019: 385) suggestion, as they mentioned that some pupils want to begin learning how to write.

In hindsight, studying teachers' perceptions of TEYL teaching materials was perhaps somewhat problematic. The research is needed but studying teachers' personal views on young learners' materials is rather complicated; the teachers are individuals who experience matters in their own way. Their students are likewise individuals whose needs the teachers must consider when selecting the most suitable teaching materials. Therefore, there are almost as many approaches to the materials as there are teachers. However, perhaps this study will assist teachers in selecting the most suitable materials for their students or at least introduce different teaching materials to them.

The results of the study reflect some societal issues as well. Firstly, the diversion between the financial issues creates inequality between pupils in different schools. It might

not be significant if the teacher, despite the financial troubles, finds a teaching material that pleases them. However, some respondents reported they would want to use a coursebook if the financial situation allowed it. Secondly, as already discussed, the teachers' coping could be eased by providing either more suitable materials or a more varied selection of materials. Even though not all respondents were entirely happy with the materials provided for TEYL, the situation with English is most likely much better than the situation with other languages. It creates a somewhat vicious cycle, as English is taught and offered more in schools, strengthening its status in society and vice versa. Therefore, when English is taught more than other languages, it is somewhat natural that its materials are developed more. If this is the situation, and the teaching of other languages suffers because of the dominance of English, it creates inequality between the languages.

Moreover, another societal issue that arose from the questionnaire is teachers' competence to teach English to young learners. Even though the point of this study was to study teachers' perceptions of the materials, not TEYL or the teachers, it is ponderable that a few teachers wished to express their opinion on TEYL teachers. One of those respondents is an experienced class teacher who teaches TEYL. However, they do not find it appropriate because they do not possess the competence to teach languages, nor do they have the ability to create their own materials for language teaching. Thus, they are forced to rely solely on the coursebooks as material, as they do not possess the skill or even the desire to do any extra materials. It is regrettable that teachers who do not want to teach other languages are forced to do so due to financial issues. The teacher themselves must feel insufficient to perform their duties and negatively towards their administrators who have made the decision. Moreover, this most likely reflects negatively on the students' learning, as they learn better from a teacher that is motivated and excited about their subject (Sandberg 2019: 14).

Therefore, the most critical question regarding TEYL is not how teachers perceive TEYL materials. There is wide variation in teachers' perceptions of the TEYL teaching materials, but that is relatively irrelevant. The teachers must choose the materials that suit their own teaching and pupils the best. Therefore, as there are not, nor should there be, any policies that define appropriate material for TEYL. However, perhaps the question we should ask is, is it sensible to waste resources in teaching English to young learners if it is not done properly? An unmotivated teacher might do more harm in teaching young learners. The primary aim of TEYL is to motivate the learners towards language learning in the future, in which an unmotivated teacher is unlikely to succeed. A motivated teacher and their enthusiasm are the best approaches to TEYL, regardless of their teaching material preference.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1: Questionnaire

### Selvitys opettajien mielipiteistä varhennetun englannin oppimateriaaleja kohtaan

Pro gradu- työn tutkimusaineistoksi tuleva kysely koskien varhennetun englannin (1. ja 2. vuosiluokan) opetuksessa käytettyjä oppimateriaaleja sekä erityisesti opettajien mielipiteitä, asenteita ja ajatuksia niitä kohtaan. Kyselyyn vastaaminen tapahtuu anonymisti, eikä sen tuloksia voida yhdistää kehenkään tiettyyn henkilöön.

Mikäli sinulla herää kysymyksiä kyselyyn liittyen, voit ottaa yhteyttä [emmi.nieminen@tuni.fi](mailto:emmi.nieminen@tuni.fi).

1. Osio: Yleistä taustatietoa vastaajasta. Taustatietoja kysytään, jotta tuloksia analysoidessa voidaan selvittää, onko näillä seikoilla vaikutusta tutkimuksen tuloksiin. Ainoastaan ensimmäinen kysymykseen on pakko vastata.

2. Osio: Mitä oppimateriaaleja käytät varhennetun englannin opetuksessa?

3. Osio: Ajatuksia käyttämisestäsi varhennetun englannin oppimateriaaleista.

#### \*Pakollinen

1. Opetatko varhennettua englantia 1. tai 2. vuosiluokkalaisille? \*

- kyllä
- en

2. Olen

- kielten aineenopettaja
- luokanopettaja
- sekä kielten aineen- että luokanopettaja
- Muu: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Kauanko olet toiminut opettajana?

- 0-5 vuotta
- 6-10 vuotta
- 11-15 vuotta
- 16-20 vuotta
- 21-25 vuotta
- 26-30 vuotta
- 31-35 vuotta
- 36-40 vuotta
- +40 vuotta

4. Sukupuoli

- nainen

- mies
- Muu: \_\_\_\_\_
- En halua kertoa.

5. Missä kunnassa/kunnissa opetat varhennettua englantia tällä hetkellä?

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### Varhennetun englannin oppimateriaalit

6. Mitä oppimateriaaleja käytät varhennetun englannin opetuksessa? Voit valita useita.

- Oppikirjaa (sis. tekstit, tehtävät, pelit, laulut..)
- Itse tekemiäni materiaaleja
- Erilaisia sähköisiä materiaaleja/opetussovelluksia (esim. videoita, Kahoot, Quizlet, Arttu-sovellus - voit tarkentaa vastausta seuraavassa kysymyksessä)
- Lauluja
- Leikkejä
- Näytelmiä
- Tarinoita/ satuja
- Eurooppalaista kielisalkkua
- Eri hankkeiden materiaaleja (esim. Porin kaupungin Vinkkivihko, Oriveden kaupungin Opettajan opas varhennettuun englantiin, Kieliä kehiin! Aarrearkku)
- Muu: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Mitä sähköisiä materiaaleja/ sovelluksia käytät varhennetun englannin opetuksessa? Voit lyhyesti perustella, miksi juuri kyseisiä materiaaleja.

---

8. Jos käytät jotakin oppikirjaa, mitä sarjaa käytät?

---

9. Mistä löydät varhennetun englannin opetuksessa käyttämäsi oppimateriaalit? Voit valita useita ja lisätä oman vaihtoehdot.

- Oppikirjasta
- Kustantajien nettisivuilta/ sähköisistä oppimateriaaleista
- Kehittelen itse
- OPH:n kautta
- Opettajien Facebook- ryhmistä
- Sukolin kautta
- Kollegoilta
- Youtubesta
- Super Simple Songs- sivustolta
- Eri hankkeiden sivuilta
- Muu: \_\_\_\_\_

### Asenteesi oppimateriaaleja kohtaan

10. Kuinka työlääksi koet oppimateriaalin valmistamisen ja tuntien suunnittelun varhennetun englannin opetuksessa?

- Erittäin työlääksi
- Melko työlääksi
- Hieman työlääksi
- En lainkaan työlääksi
- En osaa/halua sanoa
- Muu: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Valitse 3 omasta mielestäsi mieluisinta oppimateriaalia varhennettuun kielten opetukseen.

- Oppikirja
- Laulut
- Leikit
- Pelit
- Itse tekemäni materiaalit
- Erilaiset sähköiset materiaalit (esim. videot, Kahoot, Quizlet, Arttu- sovellus)
- PowerPoint- esitykset
- Tongue Twisters
- Näytelmät
- Tarinat/ sadut
- Muu: \_\_\_\_\_

12. Minkä koet parhaimmaksi oppimateriaaliksi varhennetussa englannin opetuksessa ja miksi?

---

13. Miksi käytät/ et käytä oppikirjaa varhennetun englannin opetuksessa?

---

14. Jos koulun/kunnan rahoitus ei olisi este, haluaisitko käyttää oppikirjaa englannin varhennuksessa?

---

15. Kuinka hyvin oppikirjat mielestäsi vastaavat varhennetun englannin tarpeisiin?

- Erittäin hyvin
- Hyvin
- Kohtalaisesti
- Huonosti
- Erittäin huonosti
- En osaa/ halua sanoa
- En käytä oppikirjaa

16. Jos käytät oppikirjaa, mikä niissä on hyvää tai kehitettävää?

---

17. Kuinka tyytyväinen olet varhennetun englannin oppimateriaaleihin ylipäänsä?

- Erittäin tyytyväinen

- Tyytyväinen
- Jokseenkin tyytyväinen
- En lainkaan tyytyväinen
- En osaa/ halua sanoa
- Muu: \_\_\_\_\_

18. Kuinka sähköiset opetusmateriaalit/ erilaiset opetussovellukset vastaavat opetustarpeisiisi varhennetussa englannissa?

- Erittäin hyvin
- Hyvin
- Kohtalaisesti
- Huonosti
- Erittäin huonosti
- En osaa/ halua sanoa
- En käytä sähköisiä opetusmateriaaleja
- Muu: \_\_\_\_\_

19. Mikä vaikuttaa opetusmateriaalin valintaasi varhennetun englannin opetuksessa? Voit valita useita.

- Oppilaiden tarpeet
- Oma jaksaminen
- Kollegan suositus
- Koulun rahoitus
- Tottumus
- Kustantaja
- OPS
- Muu: \_\_\_\_\_

20. Mitkä ovat mielestäsi tärkeimpiä piirteitä varhennetun englannin opetusmateriaalissa? Valitse 3 vaihtoehtoa.

- Innostavuus
- Toiminnallisuus
- Helppous
- Ajankohtaisuus
- Oppilaslähtöisyys
- Ikätasoa vastaava vaikeusaste
- Ikätasoa vastaavat teemat
- OPSin vaatimusten täyttäminen
- Monipuolisuus
- Tuottaa runsaasti puhetta
- Harjoittaa kuuntelutaitoa
- Kielitietoisuuden lisääminen
- Muu: \_\_\_\_\_

21. Vapaa sana varhennetun englannin oppimateriaaleista. Onko jotain mitä en huomannut kysyä, mitä haluat tuoda vielä ilmi? Suuri kiitos teille kaikille kyselyyn vastanneille!

## Appendix 2: Questionnaire's results

Kysymys 1:

<b>Opetatko varhennettua englantia 1. tai 2. vuosiluokkalaisille?</b>	
Vastausvaihtoehto	Vastauksia (kpl)
kyllä	52
en	1

Kysymys 2:

<b>Olen</b>	
Vastausvaihtoehto	Vastauksia (kpl)
luokanopettaja	28
Erietyisluokanopettaja	2
kielten aineenopettaja	15
sekä kielten aineen- että luokanopettaja	6
erikoistunut luokanopettaja (englanti)	1
Esikoulun opettaja	1

Kysymys 3:

<b>Kauanko olet toiminut opettajana?</b>	
Vastausvaihtoehto	Vastauksia (kpl)
0-5 vuotta	16
6-10 vuotta	9
11-15 vuotta	8
16-20 vuotta	5
21-25 vuotta	9
26-30 vuotta	1
31-35 vuotta	4
36-40 vuotta	1

Kysymys 4:

<b>Sukupuoli</b>	
Vastausvaihtoehto	Vastauksia (kpl)
nainen	50
mies	3

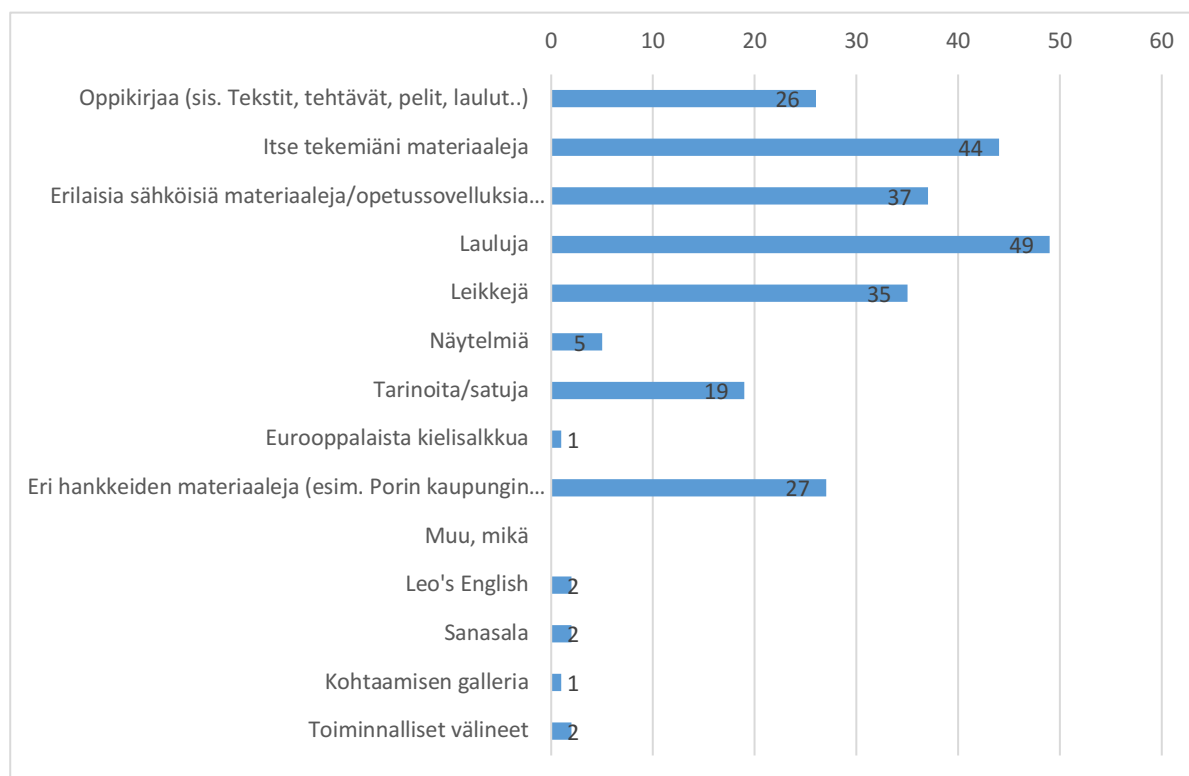
Kysymys 5:

<b>Missä kunnassa/kunnissa opetat varhennettua englantia tällä hetkellä?</b>	
Vastausvaihtoehto	Vastauksia (kpl)
Tampere	5
Vantaa	1

Nurmijärvi	2
Järvenpää	2
Huittinen	1
Helsinki	6
Hattula	1
Oulussa	1
Vantaa	1
Nivala	2
Hämeenlinna	2
Turku	1
Ylivieska	1
Kaarina	1
Raisio	1
Sastamala	1
Pudasjärvi	1
Vantaalla	1
Ilomantsi	1
Tervola	1
Lahti	2
Karjajoki	1
Muurame	1
Mikkeli	1
Rautalampi	1
Opetan kerhotoiminnassa.	1
Kemi	1
Rovaniemi	1
Kontiolahti	1
Oulainen	1
Savukoski	1
Oulu	1
Seinäjoki	1
Loimaa	1
Kuopio	1
Keski-Suomi	1
Rauma	1



Kysymys 6: Mitä oppimateriaaleja käytät varhennetun englannin opetuksessa? Voit valita useita.



Kysymys 7:

Mitä sähköisiä materiaaleja/ sovelluksia käytät varhennetun englannin opetuksessa? Voit lyhyesti perustella, miksi juuri kyseisiä materiaaleja.
Videoita, kustantajan oppimateriaalien pelejä, Arttu-appi, Sanomapron sanastot-appi
Moka mera, on tarpeeksi yksinkertainen varhennuksen tarpeisiin
Niilo Mäki Instituutin Land Ahoy!
Videoita (satuja, lauluja, laululeikkejä)
Super Simple songs, maple leaf learning, singing walrus, sock puppets...minulla on valtava määrä itse eri paikoista haalittua materiaalia, jonka koen omaan opetukseen parhaiten sopivaksi.
Videot, Baamboozle, Kahoot
Supersimple songs youtubesta aiheeseen liittyen, netistä löytyviä harjoituksia/leikkejä aihealueen liittyen
Suoer simple songs
Kustantajien materiaali tuo ryhdikkyyttä ja suunnitelmallisuutta, muita materiaaleja käytän toiminnallisuuteen
Oppikirjan sähköinen materiaali, videot ja laulut Youtubesta
Youtube
Ville, YouTuben mm. supersimple laulut, kielitietoisesti kouluissa, wordwall, incredibox, starfall, sanomapro, qhirp, ja monia muita
Come With Me! 1 ja 2 digimateriaalia. Se on ihana!
youtube + eri appeja

Go for it -sähköinen, youtube, super simple songs GFI on meille hankittu, joten siksi se, eikä esim. Come with me. SSS on hyvä, kun sieltä löytää aihepiireittäin helposti, eikä tarvitse edetä minkään tietyn järjestyksen mukaan. Siellä on myös lauluihin liittyviä tulostettavia kuvia, jotka ovat erittäin hyvät.
Go, ViLLE, elias-robotti( kokeilu) youtube, twinkl, yms.
Pikku Kakkosen Eskari tabletilla, Go-digimateriaali satunnaisesti, Kahoot
Go! -sarjan sähköisistä materiaaleista olen hyödyntänyt muutamaa laulua, youtuben enkkulaulut, ViLLE
SanomaPro
Come with me
You tube - laululeikkivideot, opetettavan aiheen perusteella löydettyjä nettivinkkejä paljon erilaisia, ei mitään vakituista sovellusta/materiaalia, eniten ehkä Oriveden kielipolun vinkit
Kirjan sähköiset materiaalit, YouTube videot, muiden tekemät nettisivut asiaan liittyen...
Moomin Language School, sanomapron go for it materiaali, go materiaali, kahoot yms satunnaisesti
Bingel, kun sen saimme sen ilmaiseksi viime vuoden huonon toimivuuden takia, erilaisia laulu ideoita (mm super simple songs jne.)
Eri hankkeiden materiaaleissa selkeitä kokonaisuuksia, kun ei muuta materiaalia ole ollut saatavilla.
Ville, Otso, Arttu, Youtube, liveworksheets
Digitaaliset opettajan materiaalit, SanomaPron Go!:sta ja Come With Me 2. Kyllästyin jo Jump in!-materiaaliin. Netistä Super Simple Songs. Lapsilla tabletilla Fun Englishin ilmaiset osiot, Bingel-tehtävät. Haluan käyttää jotain runkona, mutta rakennan muusta materiaalista haluamani kokonaisuuden.
Come with me 1 digiopetus, Quizlet, Bingel, Fun english
BBC, British Council, Cambridge University ; näiden tarjoamat aineistot; paras autenttinen kieli ja muutoin kaikkiaan laatu
En mitään
Super Simple Songs
Super simple-sivusto: näppärä käyttää ja löytyy helposti lauluja eri teemoihin sekä monisteita yms. Myös High Five 1-2 digiopetusmateriaalia ja sen opettajan lisämateriaalia. Joskus teemme padeilla nettitehtäviä sanastoihin, silloin käytössä esim. Wordwall.
YouTube, Quizlet
SmartTech, Wordwall
Kahoot, videot, oppikirja digilisätehtävät
ei ole, koska rahapula
Go
Oppikirjan sähköiset materiaalit (SanomaPro), erilaisia laululeikkejä lähinnä Youtubesta (helppo saatavuus), Moomin Language School -pelisovellus (helppokäyttöinen sovellus kielen oppimiseen pelillisesti), Kahoot (helppokäyttöisyys), Bingel (motivoiva pelillinen ympäristö)

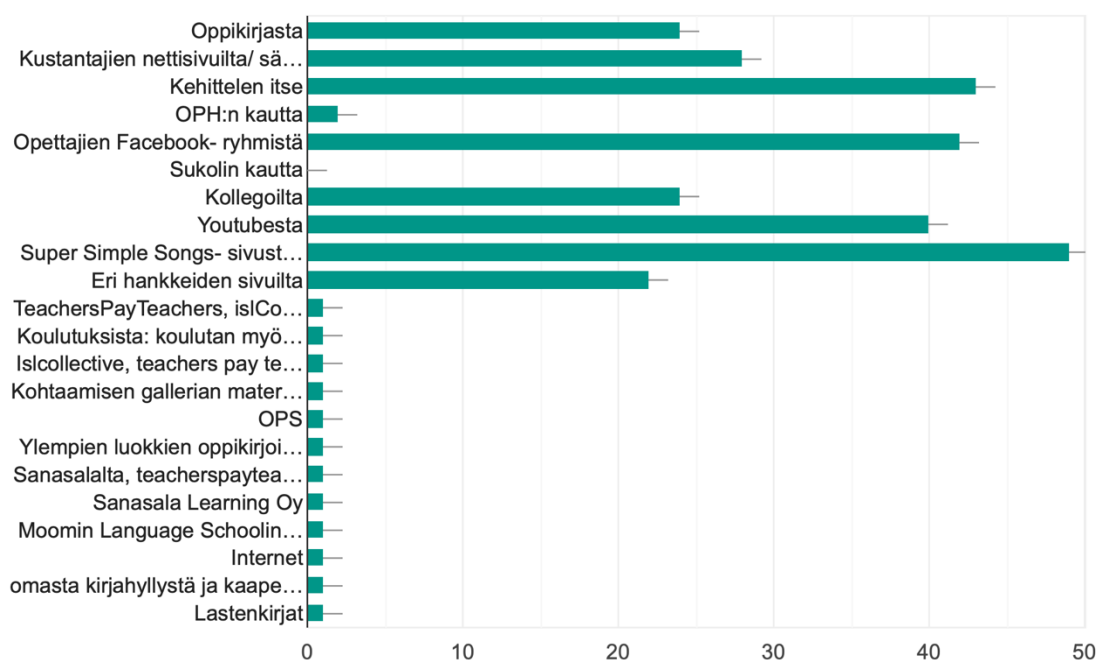
Kysymys 8:

<b>Jos käytät jotakin oppikirjaa, mitä sarjaa käytät?</b>	
Vastausvaihtoehto	Vastauksia (kpl)
Come with me!	11
Go!	9
Jump in!	2
High Five	6
En käytä oppikirjaa	4

### Kysymys 9:

Mistä löydät varhennetun englannin opetuksessa käyttämäsi oppimateriaalit? Voit valita useita ja lisätä oman vaihtoehdotasi.

53 vastausta



### Kysymys 10:

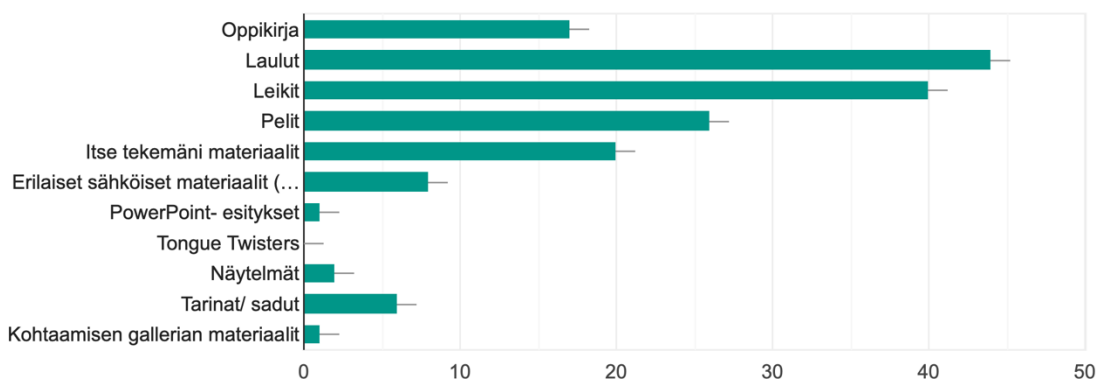
<b>Kuinka työlääksi koet oppimateriaalin valmistamisen ja tuntien suunnittelun varhennetun englannin opetuksessa?</b>	
Vastausvaihtoehto	Vastauksia (kpl)
En lainkaan työlääksi	9
Hieman työlääksi	22
Melko työlääksi	17
Erittäin työlääksi	2
<i>Tyhjä vastaus</i>	1

En ehdi nähdä kovasti vaivaa, valmiit matskut (go, moomin Language School) helpottavat	1
Viimeiset kaksi-kuusi vuotta ovat menneet silivili. Aloitimme varhennetun silloin ja nyt ykkösen tultua mukaan tarvittiin paljon lisää , joten aikaa on mennyt todella paljon; vapaa-aikana on tullut puuhattua melkein toiden koulutyön verran. Mutta hauskaa on ollut!	1

### Kysymys 11:

Valitse 3 omasta mielestäsi mieluisinta oppimateriaalia varhennettuun kielten opetukseen.

53 vastausta



### Kysymys 12:

<b>Minkä koet parhaimmaksi oppimateriaaliksi varhennetussa englannin opetuksessa ja miksi?</b>
Come with me - digimateriaali Joka aiheeseen laulut, leikit, tarinat, kuuntelutehtävät, tuntisuunnitelmat, tulostettavat sanakortit. Helpottaa valtavasti suunnittelutyötä.
Kuvat, koska niitä voi käyttää hyvin monipuolisesti eikä S2 oppilaillakaan suomen osaamattomuus haittaa
Laulut, koska sanat jäävät lasten mieleen.
Laululeikit, joissa kielen oppiminen tapahtuu laulun/musiikin ja liikkeen yhdistelmän kautta.
Ehdottomasti erilaiset leikit, joissa oppilas pääsee tutustumaan, harjoittelemaan ja oppimaan uusia sanoja, ääntämistä, perusfraaseja jne. Leikkien kautta voi oppia kaiken varhennetussa tarvittavan.
Oppikirjan materiaali, johon etsin lisäjuttuja netistä/kehitän itse
Laulut ja leikit, motivoivat oppilaita nähdäkseni ja toimivat myös "välipaloina"
Laulut
Kustantajien sähköinen materiaali
Itsetehdyt sana-kuva taulut, jotka ovat esillä tietyn ajan. Aina aihepiiriin kuuluvat sanat, joita on 6-8 kpl.
Kirja

Leikit, yleensä kaikki osallistuvat
Come With Me! Kattaa koko varhennetun OPSin.
Netistä löytyvä vapaasti käytettävissä oleva ilmainen opetusmateriaali, joka ei ole kustantajien tekemää, vaan opettajien toisilleen jakamaa.
Kohtaamisen gallerian materiaalit. Ovat opsin mukaiset, monipuoliset ja ajankohtaiset.
Leikit! Niistä voi varioida lukemattomasti eri versioita /vaikeustasoja, samaa leikkiä voi leikkiä eri sanojen opettelussa (esim. Kim's game). Lisäksi lapset aina innostuvat leikeistä.
Toiminnalliset leikit, laulut
Leikit jäävät lapsille mieleen ja tuntuu, että oppilaat oppivat tätä kautta hyvin englannin kielisiä sanoja, sanontoja ja virkkeitä.
Laminoidut kuvakortit. Niillä voi leikkiä monenlaista ja samalla oppii englantia
Laulut, jäävät hyvin oppilaiden mieleen, leikit ja pelit, toiminnallisuus ja kielen käyttäminen rohkeasti mielestäni tärkeää. Paljon suullisia harjoituksia pelien ja leikkien muodossa.
Innostus
Laulut
Come with me open digimateriaalin
sanasalan kortit ja pelit, youtuben laulut
Sanasalan materiaalit, koska ne ovat toiminnallisia ja helposti eriytettäviä.
Laululeikit uppoavat nykyiseen ryhmääni ja niitä pyydetään joka kerta
Mahdollisimman toiminnallista, kuvalliskirjallista, lauluja, leikkejä, pelejä ja tehtäväkirjan tehtäviä tukena. Kirjoittamalla ylös ja tekemällä monisteita.
Omassa käytössä Go-kirja osottautui todella rajoittuneeksi. Olen tykännyt Moomin LSn leikkiohjeista ja kuva korteista, joilla saan helposti tuntiin leikkiä ja peliä mukaan.
Leikit
Kustantajien materiaaleista come with me on huikea parannus aiempiin. Oppilaat tykkää eniten leikeistä ja englanniksi luetuista yksinkertaisista teemaan sopivista satukirjoista (esim. Brown bear, Brown bear what do you see? Tai very hungry caterpillar)
Haluaisin itselleni selkeän rakenteen (esim. oppikirjan), jonka pohjalta voisin suunnitella opetustani ja rikastuttaa sitä omilla materiaaleillani.
Ville
Come With Me 2. Paljon jo valmiiksi lauluja ja leikkejä, sekä pelejä, joita voi käyttää, vaikka oppilailla ei ole kirjaa käytössä. Lapsia innostava kuvitus ja laululeikit. Sopivasti sanastoa.
Sähköinen sanaston kertaus (pelit, harjoitukset). Laulut ja leikit yhtä tärkeitä
Jokin väline, jonka ympärille saa rakennettua yksinkertaisen keskustelun, jota sitten toistaa ja toistaa ja myöhemmin soveltaa edelleen
Leo's english. Se jättää tilaa omalle suunnittelulle mutta antaa runsaasti vinkkejä.
Kuvat keskeisistä opiskeltavista sanoista, laulut ja leikit, koska niiden avulla oppimisesta saadaan toiminnallista.
Oppikirja antaa runkoa oppimiselle

Laulut: lapset pitävät niistä eli ne ovat motivoivia, he oppivat asioita ikäänkuin huomaamatta, musiikki edesauttaa oppimista.
Oppikirjan valmiit tehtävät (lapset pitävät hauskoista kynätehtävistä) Itse kehitellyt lorut ja laulut, joihin saa ryhmälle sopivaa sanastoa Itse kehitellyt leikit ja toiminnalliset tehtävät, jotka sopivat juuri omalle ryhmälle
Kuvakorttien avulla voidaan leikkiä monenlaisia leikkejä. Kuvakorttien avulla sanoja toistetaan useasti.
Super simple-sivusto on ollut hyvä!
Kollegalta saadun vuosikellon.
Pelit ja leikit
Erilaiset laulut, niiden kautta tulee luonnollisesti paljon toistoa ja melodian avulla sanatkin ehkä jäävä paremmin mieleen. Lauluihin on myös helppo keksiä toiminnallisuutta mukaan, esim. erilaiset liikkeet yhdistettynä sanaan.
Oppikirja ja en tee muuta materiaalia.
1.lk parhaimpia laulut ja leikit, 2.luokalla oppikirja. Laulut ja leikit ovat loistava tapa aloittaa kieleen tutustuminen. 2.luokalla oppilaat kaipaavat jo lisää haastetta ja sisältöä kielenopetukseen ja oma oppikirja omien kokemuksieni mukaan motivoi tehtävien tekemiseen.

### Kysymys 13:

<b>Miksi käytät/ et käytä oppikirjaa varhennetun englannin opetuksessa?</b>
Koska koululla oli kirjat hankittuna. Ja koska oppikirjassa valmiit tuntisuunnitelmat, paljon leikki-ideoita, kivoja lauluja, joten helpottaa ja vähentää suunnittelutyötä valtavasti. Oppilaat myös tykkäävät kirjasta, kirjan hahmoista, kirjan peleistä ja lauluista.
Koulumme määrärahoissa ei ole varattu kirjoja varhennettuun
Oppilailla ei ole omia kirjoja, koska ei ole rahaa.
Ei tarvetta kirjan kaltaiselle materiaalille (ainakaan oppilaan kirjoille). Oppikirjasta voisi olla hyötyä, mutta sitäkään emme kollegoideni kanssa ole kokeneet tarpeelliseksi, sillä materiaaleja ja ideoita löytyy netin syövereistä enemmän kuin ehtii hyödyntämään.
Koen, että oppimateriaali on pienten kanssa turha. Itsetehdyt materiaalit takaavat sen, että pystyy keskittymään pienten kanssa olennaiseen eli ääntämiseen, ilmaisun rohkeuteen ja positiivisen kielenoppimisen asenteen luomiseen.
Oppikirjan käyttö antaa valmiin rungon asioiden käsittelylle. Kirjan käyttö vähentää monisteiden tarvetta, kun kirjassa on bingot ja tehtävät valmiina. Oppilaat itse toivovat usein, että pääsevät tekemään tehtäviä kirjaan.
Emme saa hankkia kirjoja varhennetun englannin opetukseen kustannussyistä.
Koululla lisenssi vain opemateriaaliin, joka aika suppea
Käytän osittain, se helpottaa suunnittelua, jolloin kaikkea oppimateriaalia ei tarvitse keksiä ja valmistaa itse.
En käytä: Oppimisen mielekkyys, vaihtelevat työtavat, ei tarvetta kirjoittaa vielä paljoa
Oppikirja on lähinnä 2. luokan oppilaita varten. Ykkösten kanssa edetään enemmän leikinomaisesti. Nivalassa on varhennettua englantia opetettu jo kokeilujakson aikana, eli 2. luokkalaiseni jatkavat jo viime vuoden englannin opintoja. Minulla on 1-2. lk pienryhmä.
Edes jonkinlainen käsitys sisällöistä,

Liian vähän toiminnallista, keskittyvät liiaksi kirjalliseen oppimiseen
Koulu ei halua antaa rahaa oppilaiden omiin kirjoihin. Tampereella on myös kirjavastainen ilmapiiri.
Laulujen, leikkien ja muun toiminnallisuuden lisäksi oppitunnit kaipaavat rauhallista ja itsenäistä tekemistä. Oppikirja säästää opettajalta vaivan näiden tehtävien tekemiseltä. Osa oppikirjoista eivät sovi oppilaille, jotka eivät osaa vielä lukea, mutta come with me -kirjaan olen ollut tyytyväinen. Jos oppikirja on huono tai ei sovi ikätasolle, opetan mielummin ilman.
En käytä, koska se ohjaisi liikaa opettamistani ja loisi oppilaille liian formaalin mielikuvan kielennoppimisesta. Oppikirjat hankaloittaisi opetustani.
Varhennetussa ei tarvita kirjoja.
Mikään kirja ei vastaa tarkoitusta.
Se tuo pienen rauhoittumisen hetken kielen tuntiin. Ikäänkuin ankkuroidutaan hetkeksi pulpetin ääreen. Lisäksi kirja on lapsista motivoiva, ja pitävät sen tekemisestä. Itse miellän kirjan kuitenkin itse oppimisen kannalta toisarvoiseksi.
Kirja rajaa aihepiirejä, on kuitenkin tukena opetuksessa.
Osa haluaa jo opetella esimerkiksi hieman kirjoittamista. Oppikirja helpottaa esimerkiksi tätä paljon.
Koulu ei ole tilannut, ja en käyttäisi muutenkaan 1.-luokalla. 2.-luokalla voisin ottaa käyttöön kirjoituksen opetteluun osittain. Oppikirjaa käytettäessä äkkiä alkaa menemään rutiininomaisesti vain kirjaa eteenpäin, omat materiaalit ja leikit jäävät silloin vähemmälle, mikä saattaa vaikuttaa opetuksen laatuun heikentävästi.
Ekaluokkalaisille olen aina kokenut haasteelliseksi sen, että useat oppikirjat ja kirjasarjojen materiaalit vaativat luku- ja kirjoitustaidon. Lisäksi materiaalit ovat liian haastavia sanastoltaan koulussamme, jossa esimerkiksi tällä hetkellä omassa ekaluokassani selkeä vähemmistö on suomea äidinkielenä puhuvia. Materiaalit on selvästi suunnattu lapsille, joiden suomen kieli on jo sujuvaa. Alkuopetuksessa suosin muutenkin toiminnallisuutta ja leikkejä sekä pelejä ja koska englannin kielen viikkotuntimäärä on pieni käytän sen päivittäisiin toiminnallisiin englannin opetuksen tuokioihin milloin laulun ja leikin kautta ja milloin taas integroiden aamupiiriin tai muihin oppiaineisiin.
Kirja turha, vihkolla ja monisteilla pärjää
Sanastoa on helpompi opettaa.
Come with me on erittäin hyvä, olen siihen todella tyytyväinen.
ei annettu tilata
Pienet eivät välttämättä osaa vielä lukea ja kirjat ovat kalliita.
kirjarahat eivät riitä tähän.
Kirjoittamalla osa oppii parhaiten, jää jotain konkretiaa.
Tällä hetkellä kirja on takia-alalla, kun se tuntuu aika rajottuneelta. Yritin opettaa varhennettu samoin kuin isompia, mutta ei toiminut. Kirja on nyt välipalana muun touhun lomassa.
Mielestäni on parempi keskittyä alussa suulliseen kielitaitoon
Otimme eka kerran kirjan testiin tänä vuonna ja vaikka itse oppilaan kirja ei tuo hirveästi lisäarvoa vaan opettajan sähköiset materiaalit on se paras anti niin kirjat on oppilaille tärkeitä ja pienet kotiläksyt myös. Mutta hyvin pärjää myös ilman kirjaa ja ehkä sitten kun on taas jaksamista tehdä

enemmän enkun materiaalia itse niin voisi olla ilman kirjaakin.. Tällä hetkellä materiaaliin käytetty aika menee äikkään ja matikkaan.
Meillä ei ole oppikirjaa käytössä. En ole voinut vaikuttaa tähän asiaan (aloitin uudessa koulussa syksyllä). Rahoitus on ollut esteenä.
Ei ole rahaa, myös useissa oppimateriaaleissa on kirjoittamista
En käytä, koska sitten oppikirjan täyttäminen helposti rajoittaisi tunnilla tekemistä. Tärkeämpää on saada lapset lauluilla ja leikeillä rohkeasti käyttämään kieltä. Lisäksi varhennetun oppilailla on monesti vielä vaikeuksia lukea/kirjoittaa edes suomeksi, niin englannin kirjoittaminen ei minusta ole järkevää.
Toiminnallisen opetuksen tärkeys
Opetan vuorovaikutusta vieraalla kielellä; ääntäminen ja kommunikaatiotaidon luominen on kaiken keskiössä.
En koe sitä tarpeelliseksi. Suullinen kielitaito ja vuorovaikutus on tärkeämpää.
Emme käytä. Painotamme 1.luokalla suullista kieltä ja ääntämistä, joten käytämme mahdollisimman vähän kirjoitettua kieltä. Oppikirjat painottuvat liikaa kirjoitettuun kieleen.
Painotan suullista kielitaitoa, jota on paras harjoitella ilman kirjaa.
Antaa runkoa tuntien suunnittelulle. Ei ole avain onneen, mutta joku on jo suunnitellut aihepiirit OPSin mukaisesti valmiiksi.
Haluan keskittyä suulliseen harjoitteluun varhennetussa opetuksessa.
Kirjan tekijä on kertaalleen miettinyt sisällön ja tehtävät, miksi tekisin saman työn uudelleen? Kirja myös auttaa etenemään järjestelmällisesti ja rakentamaan vanhan tiedon päälle.
En ole löytänyt sopivaa kirjaa. Kirjat perustuvat liikaa kirjoitettuun kieleen.
Koululla ei riitä budjetti varhennetun kelen kirjoihin. Harmittava tilanne.
Meillä ei ole hankittu sitä 1lk oppilaille.
Kirjasta saa tukea. Valmista. Rungon jota täydentää.
Oppikirja on käytössä vain 2. luokilla. 1. luokilla kirjaa ei ole käytössä. 1. luokalla en ota kirjoitettua kieltä vielä juurikaan mukaan joten en koe oppikirjaa tarpeelliseksi. 2. luokilla kirja helpottaa opetettavien sanastojen valintaa ja rajaamista ja keventää materiaalin etsimiseen ja valmisteluun liittyvää työtaakkaa.
En ole englannin opettaja. En hallitse kielipedagogiikkaa. En osaa tehdä materiaalia. Pakosti joudun englantia opettamaan.
Käytän, koska se tarjoaa lisää sisältöä ja haastetta kielenopetukseen. Oppikirjan avulla on myös helppo eriyttää opetusta eri tasoisilla tehtävillä. Oppilaat tykkäävät tehdä kirjan tehtäviä ekaluokan leikkipainotteisen kielenopetuksen jälkeen. Harjoituttaa myös kielen kirjoittamista.

#### Kysymys 14:

<b>Jos koulun/kunnan rahoitus ei olisi este, haluaisitko käyttää oppikirjaa englannin varhennuksessa?</b>
En, mutta haluaisin opettajan materiaalin
Kyllä
En, ei tarvetta. Enemmän käyttäisin rahat esimerkiksi peleihin tai sovelluksiin.
En.
Kyllä



Kyllä.
Osittain kyllä!
Käytän jo.
En
Kyllä. Se antaa raamit vuosisunnitelmalle. Oppilaat ovat innoissaan kirjasta. Opetukseni on pääasiassa leikinomaista.
Kyllä tehtäväkirjaa
Voisin käyttää, jos materiaali olisi sopivaa.
Haluaisin.
Kyllä haluan.
En.
En.
En, ellei se ole OPSin mukainen
Kyllä
Kyllä ja en.
Kyllä
Ks. edellinen vastaus
En
En
Käytän oppikirjaa
Meillä onneksi kirjat ovat.
en
En
En haluaisi
Kyllä
Käytän jo.
Haluaisin jotain kirkaa
Mieluummin vasta 8-vuotiaille
Voimme käyttää halutessamme.
Haluaisin ehdottomasti.
Tottakai käyttäisin muun opetuksen ohella.
En. Ei ole varsinaisesti nytkään rahasta kiinni, mutta minä olen saanut meidän koulujen varhennetuista päättää, että kirjaa ei käytetä, koska sitä ei tarvita.
Opettaja-aineistoa kyllä, Bingelin kaltaiset tehtävät tärkeitä
Ainoastaan, mikäli löytyisi kirja, joka keskittyy lähinnä kuunteluaineiston tarjoamiseen, tarinoihin ja äänneiden, sanojen sekä kielenkäyttötilanteiden tunnistamiseen hyvien harjoitusten avulla. Ei kirjoitettua tekstiä ekaluokalle, eikä kakkosen syksyynkään!

En
Haluaisin, jos oppikirja soveltuisi paremmin meidän linjaan.
En
Kyllä
En haluaisi.
Haluaisin käyttää, ja käytän aina kun raha riittää.
Kyllä
Kyllä
En, mutta opettajan materiaalia kyllä.
Kyllä, 2. luokalla.
Kakkosluokkalaisilla kyllä, ekaluokkalaisilla en

## Kysymys 15:

<b>Kuinka hyvin oppikirjat mielestäsi vastaavat varhennetun englannin tarpeisiin?</b>	
Vastausvaihtoehto	Vastauksia (kpl)
Erittäin hyvin	5
En käytä sähköisiä opetusmateriaaleja	6
Kohtalaisesti	21
Hyvin	19
Huonosti	1
Käytän vain etäopetuksessa	1

## Kysymys 16:

<b>Jos käytät oppikirjaa, mikä niissä on hyvää tai kehitettävää?</b>
Valmiit laulut ja leikit teemoittain kivoja, mutta toisaalta ilman kirjaa (pelkällä vihkolla) pärjäisi, kun pelkät digimatskutkin niin hyvät. Olisi kiva, jos varhennetun kirjoissa kerrotaisiin juhlista ja niiden perinteistä eri maissa esim.joulu ja ystävänpäivä, nyt olen itse niistä tehnyt matskut ja kehitellyt ohjelmaa. Enemmän extra-tehtäviä kirjaan.
Voisi olla monipuolisemmin vinkkejä peleihin ja leikkeihin.
Kehitettävää olisi toiminnallisuudessa ja tulostettavissa liitteissä.
High give on ok.
Olettavat lähtötason liian korkeaksi
Come With Me! on valmis paketti.
Hyvää on kuuntelutehtävät, yhdistelytehtävät, väritystehtävät, laulut ja pelit. Huonoa on tehtävät, jotka painottuvat liikaa lukemiseen tai kirjoittamiseen.
Huonoa: Tehtävät ovat joskus värityskirjan omaisia, heppoisia... hyvää: lapset innostuvat niistä ja pitävät kirjan tekemistä tärkeänä.
Hyvää: kuuntelut Kehitettävää: toiminnallisuus ja juhlien materiaalit.
Osa oppikirjoista on aivan liian vaikeita. Come with me -kirjassa lähdetään tarpeeksi yksinkertaisista sanoista jne. liikkeelle.

Selkeät kuvasanastot ja kivat tehtävät
Ihana musiikki, kivat hahmot, opsia hyvin toteuttavat tehtävät, upea kuvitus.
Liikaa kirjoitettua kieltä
Liian paljon kaikkea ympätty yhteen. 1-2.lk:set eivät edes osaa vielä suomea kirjoittaa ja lukea kunnolla.
Leikinomainen ote ja paljon helppoa puuhaa toivoisin.
Come with me tuntuu tällä hetkellä melko hyvältä sillä kaikki aiemmat oli tosi kökköjä mm etenemisjärjestyksen suhteen. Kehitettävää olisi ehkä aihepiirien vähentäminen ja se ettei 3.luokallavaan nopeasti kerrattaisi 1-2.luokkien asioita ja hypittäisi vaan nopeasti eteenpäin.. Käy taas kohta sama kuin matikassa että opetettavaa ainesta aikaistetaan liiaksi ja oppilaat eivät saa aikaa luoda kunnan pohjaa kun koko ajan pitää edetä ainakin kirjasarjojen mukaan (ops tätä harvoin vaatii)
Nissä voisi olla enemmän pieniä tarinoita ja satuja kuunneltavaksi
Selkeämpiä tehtäviä.
Eriyttämistä tarvitaan paljon. Osalle helponkin suullisen aineksen omaksuminen on työlästä ja vaatii paljon toistoa. Osa omaksuu kirjoitetunkin aineksen vaivattomasti. Tarvittaisiin kirjoitettua ainesta, jota etevät voivat tehdä omatoimisesti sillä aikaa kun heikkojen kanssa tankataan yhä uudelleen samoja suullisia asioita.
Vähemmän tekstiä, enemmän kuvaa, audiomateriaalia
Hyvää on värikkyys ja selkeys. Ikätasolle sopivat tehtävätyypit plussaa. Kehitettävää voisi olla itsearviointiin mukaan ottamisessa selkeämmin.
Lisää tehtäviä, kun itsellä ei ole taitoa tai edes halua niitä tehdä.
Mielenkiintoiset hahmot, monipuoliset tehtävät, itsearviointi-osuudet, selkeät jaksotavoitteet, onnistuneet laulut ja pelit. Kehitettävää olisi ylöspäin eriyttämisessä.

## Kysymys 17:

<b>Kuinka tyytyväinen olet varhennetun englannin oppimateriaaleihin ylipäänsä?</b>	
Vastausvaihtoehto	Vastauksia (kpl)
En lainkaan tyytyväinen	4
Jokseenkin tyytyväinen	26
Tyytyväinen	15
Erittäin tyytyväinen	4
En osaa/halua sanoa	4

## Kysymys 18:

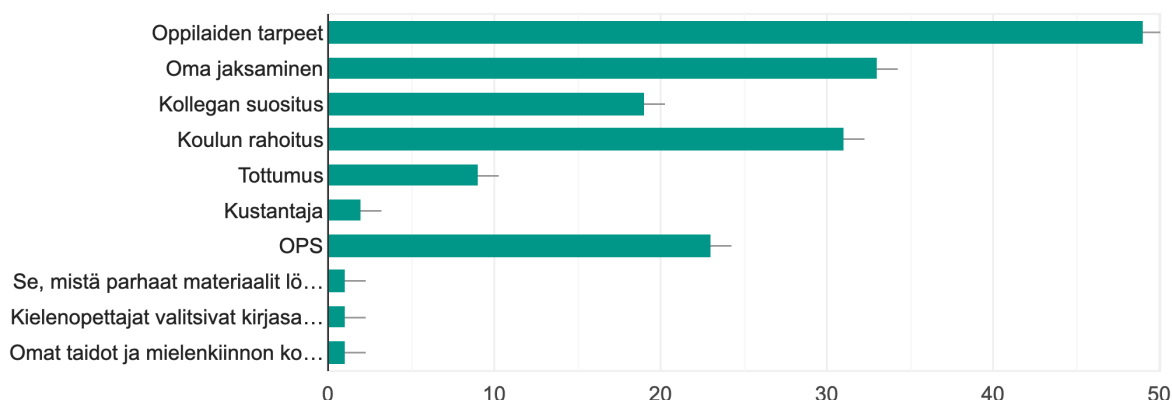
<b>Kuinka sähköiset opetusmateriaalit/ erilaiset opetussovellukset vastaavat opetustarpeisiin varhennetussa englannissa?</b>	
Vastausvaihtoehto	Vastauksia (kpl)
Erittäin hyvin	5
Hyvin	19
Kohtalaisesti	21
Huonosti	1

Käytän vain etäopetuksessa	1
En käytä sähköisiä opetusmateriaaleja	6

### Kysymys 19:

Mikä vaikuttaa opetusmateriaalin valintaasi varhennetun englannin opetuksessa? Voit valita useita.

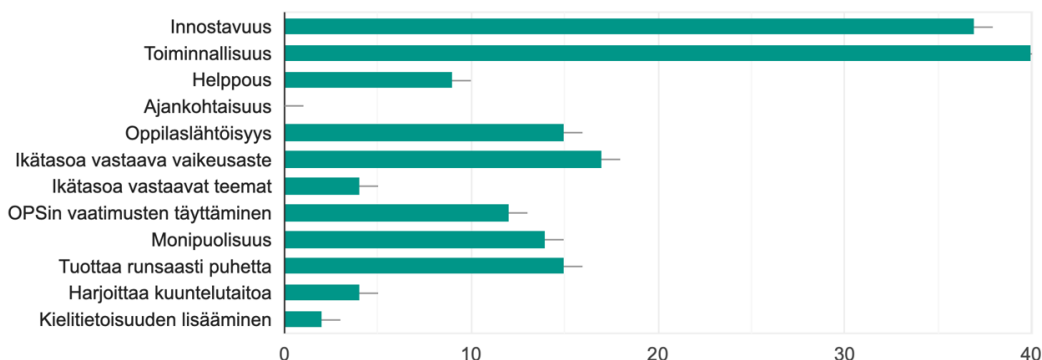
53 vastausta



### Kysymys 20:

Mitkä ovat mielestäsi tärkeimpiä piirteitä varhennetun englannin opetusmateriaalissa? Valitse 3 vaihtoehtoa.

53 vastausta



### Kysymys 21:

**Vapaa sana varhennetun englannin oppimateriaaleista. Onko jotain mitä en huomannut kysyä, mitä haluat tuoda vielä ilmi? Suuri kiitos teille kaikille kyselyyn vastanneille!**

Sekä oppilaat että ope tykkää oppikirjasta varhennuksessa. Oppilaat haluavat saada kirjasta läksyä, kun siellä on niin kivoja tehtäviä.

Oppimateriaaleissa pitäisi ottaa huomioon se, että tuskin yksikään koulu hankkii kirjoja joihin tehtävät tehdään (kertakäyttökirjoja) vaan enemmän jonkinlaista "lukukirjan" omaista riittävän yksinkertaisella aiheiden käsittelyllä. Itse otan usein esim British counsillin sivuilta monisteita,

joihin oppilaat harjoittelevat kirjoittamista mallista mutta varhennettu pitää painottua puhumiseen
Moni valmis kirja vaatii kirjoitustaitoa jo heti alussa.
Oppikirja toisi mielestäni opetukseen "ryhtiä" mutta en kaipaa niinkään oppilaille täytettäviä tehtäviä. Puhuminen ja ymmärtäminen mielestäni keskiössä.
Valmiit materiaalit ovat liian kalliita. Siksi joutuu itse askartelemaan kuvakortit ja niihin liittyvät sanat ja muut materiaalit.
On raskasta luetella kaikkia käyttämäni materiaalia. Olisi hyvä eritellä niitä.
Kolmannen luokan vanhojen kirjojen open oppaista saa matskua, ykkösille esim. kuvia sanoista suullisesti, kakkosille samat myös kirjoitettuna.
Come with me on hyvä!
Kokeneena 3-6 luokan enkun opena huomasin, että pelillinen ja leikillinen opetus on minulla hakusessa. Moomin Language School on ehkä kakkosille jo hieman lapsellinen, mutta kyllä sen pelit ja leikit ovat pelastaneet mun varhennetut enkun tunnit. Go-kirjaan olen pettynyt, vaikka kirjassa on hyvääkin. Kyllä kirjan pitäisi tarjota opelle valmiimpi paketti. Melkein helpompaa saattaisi olla etsiä matsku itse. Muista kirjoista ei ole vielä kokemusta.
Monistettavia tehtäviä voisi olla opettajan digimateriaalin liitteenä, niin ei tarvitsisi kaikkea askarrella itse, kun emme käytä kirjaa.
Toivottavasti teistä kyselijöistä joku voi hyödyntää kokemuksiamme :)
Aineenopettajien tulisi opettaa varhennettua englantia.