

**Learning Disabilities and the Textbook:  
How Differentiated English Textbooks  
Support Students with Developmental Language Disorders**

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Tämän tutkielman tarkoituksena on tarkastella kielen kehityksen häiriön eli dysfasian sekä lukemisen erityisvaikeuden eli dysleksian huomioimista kahdeksannen luokan eriyttävissä englannin oppikirjoissa. Tavoitteena oli saada selville, millaisia eriyttäviä tukikeinoja harjoituskirjoissa käytetään ja kuinka hyvin ne tukevat kyseisistä kielihäiriöistä kärsiviä oppilaita.

Tutkimus kohdistui kahden suomalaisen oppikirjasarjan kahdeksannen luokan tavallisiin harjoituskirjoihin sekä niiden perusteella myöhemmin laadittuihin eriyttäviin harjoituskirjoihin. Tutkimuksessa mukana olivat This Way Up -kirjasarjan tavallinen harjoituskirja ja sen eriyttävä versio, sekä Key English -kirjasarjan tavallinen harjoituskirja ja sen eriyttävä versio.

Tutkimusmenetelmänä käytettiin oppikirja-analyysia, jossa verrattiin eriyttävien harjoituskirjojen tehtävävalikoimaa ja tehtävien sisältöä tavallisten harjoituskirjojen vastaaviin ominaisuuksiin. Oppikirja-analyysin lisäksi tutkimukseen sisältyi myös pienimuotoinen kysely, jonka avulla tiedusteltiin oppikirjojen tekijöiden tarkoituksperiä ja toimintatapoja eriyttävien kirjojen laatimisessa.

Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat, että molempien kirjasarjojen eriyttävissä harjoituskirjoissa käytetään pääasiassa kuutta (6) erilaista eriyttämisen strategiaa. Näitä ovat 1) kirjan ulkoasua ja informaation esittämistapaa koskevat muutokset, 2) tehtävissä käsiteltävien oppikirjan tekstien rajaaminen vain osaan tekstikirjan teksteistä, 3) tehtävien määrän vähentäminen, 4) alkuperäisten tehtävien muokkaaminen 4a) laajentamisen ja 4b) supistamisen kautta, 5) uusien tehtävien lisääminen eriytettyyn harjoituskirjaan sekä 6) runsaampi suomen kielen käyttö tehtävien apusanoissa ja -ilmaisuissa. Tutkimuksessa tutkittiin myös suullisen ilmaisun ja eri aistikanavien käyttöä tehtävissä, ja tulokset osoittavat, ettei kumpaakaan niistä käytetty tehtävissä eriyttävänä strategiaa. Tulokset osoittavat, että eriyttävien harjoituskirjojen käyttäjiä pyritään tukemaan englannin kielen oppimisessa pääasiassa vähentämällä opittavaa kielellistä materiaalia, selkiyttämällä kirjojen ulkoasua ja informaation esitystapaa sekä käyttämällä tehtävissä enemmän suomen kieltä. Kielen kehityksen häiriön ja lukemisen erityisvaikeuden kannalta nämä eriyttämisen strategiat ovat perusteltavissa, mutta niiden tarjoama tuki on hyvin kapea-alaista. Kielihäiriöistä kärsivien oppilaiden kannalta eriyttävien englannin harjoituskirjojen suurena puutteena voidaan pitää sitä, että niiden eriyttäviin strategioihin ei ole sisällytetty kielihäiriöiden ydinongelmiin kohdistuvia kuntouttavia keinoja, kuten strukturoituja ja eksplisiittisiä kielellisiä ja oppimisstrategisia harjoituksia.

Asiasanat: dysfasia, dysleksia, eriyttäminen, kielen kehityksen häiriö, lukemisen erityisvaikeus, lukihäiriö, oppikirja, oppimisvaikeudet

## Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	1
<b>2. Earlier studies on developmental language disorders</b> .....	4
<b>3. Learning disabilities</b> .....	8
3.1 Classification of learning disabilities.....	8
3.1.1 Specific learning disabilities.....	9
3.1.2 Global learning disabilities.....	10
3.2 Communication disorders .....	11
3.3 Specific language impairment and dyslexia – two developmental language disorders.....	12
3.3.1 Specific language impairment .....	12
3.3.2 Developmental dyslexia .....	15
3.3.3 Relationship between dyslexia and specific language impairment.....	18
3.3.4 How dyslexia and SLI are manifested in EFL learning .....	19
3.3.4.1 Native language skills vs. foreign language skills .....	20
3.3.4.2 Mechanic reading and writing.....	21
3.3.4.3 Reading comprehension and productive writing .....	24
3.3.4.4 Listening comprehension and oral skills .....	26
3.3.4.5 Other related problem areas .....	28
<b>4. Pedagogical implications in EFL teaching</b> .....	32
4.1 Differentiation .....	32
4.2 Differentiating for students with SLI or dyslexia.....	36
4.2.1 Phonemic training with multisensory exercises .....	39
4.2.2 Language learning strategies and strategy instruction .....	46

4.2.3 Resources for reading and listening comprehension.....	50
4.2.4 Resources for oral and written expression.....	54
4.2.5 How to support grammar learning .....	56
4.3 Inclusion in practice.....	57
4.4 Demands for language instruction and differentiated textbooks.....	58
<b>5. Materials and methods .....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>6. Textbook analysis .....</b>	<b>66</b>
6.1 Data.....	67
6.2 General adjustments in the books.....	69
6.3 Differentiation in the choice of texts .....	70
6.4 Differentiation in the selection of exercises.....	72
6.5 Ways of differentiating in the exercises.....	75
6.5.1 The volume of exercises: reduction and expansion .....	75
6.5.2 The quality of exercises: a look on oral expression and sensory channels .....	77
6.5.3 Use of Finnish.....	81
6.6. Comments from the textbook authors.....	82
<b>7. Results and discussion .....</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>8. Summary .....</b>	<b>95</b>

## **Bibliography**

### **Appendix 1: Textbook exercises**

### **Appendix 2: Questionnaire for the authors of *This Way Up Special Exercises 2***

### **Appendix 3: Questionnaire for the authors of *My Own Key Courses 3-5***

## 1. Introduction

“Inclusive education demands that schools create and provide whatever is necessary to ensure that all students have access to meaningful learning.”

(Falvey & Givner 2005, 3)

In many Finnish schools, the concept of differentiation is becoming more and more relevant as many students with special needs are integrated into regular classrooms with the support of individualized study plans and differentiated teaching. Integration is an alternative for placing students with special needs in separate, segregated special teaching – which is the traditional and highly criticized way in the realm of education (Moberg 2001, 137). Also the term *inclusion* is used in connection with the term *integration*, usually when referring to including the students in the regular classrooms from the very beginning in their educational paths – in contrast with integration, which refers to taking the segregated students back to regular classrooms from which they have been initially excluded (Moberg 2001, 141; Norwich 1999, 5). Segregated special education has received criticism from scholars who have studied the school performance among segregated students and compared it with the performance among the integrated students: it has been shown that the student performance is better in an integrated classroom than in any segregated special group or class in regard to both the intellectual and the social domain (Saloviita 2001, 175-176). In addition, segregated special education can be seen as an ethical issue because it excludes a group of students from the regular education, and, according to some pedagogues and researchers, stigmatizes them negatively and creates educational and social exclusion in the society (Moberg 2001, 137).

For teachers, integration and inclusion ideologies set new challenges as differentiation, that is, individualizing teaching for students with special needs, is becoming more and more central also in regular classrooms. In 2006, 9,2 % of lower secondary school students (grades 7-8) received

special education in some form (Statistics Finland 2007). The statistics show that 19,0 % of the students who have been transferred to special education are fully integrated to the regular classroom, where as 34,3 % of this group study partially in regular classroom and partially in a special group. This means that 53,4 % of the students with special education transfer study at least some of the time together with other students. In 2006, 14,0 % of the transfers to special education were made because of learning difficulties due to specific language impairment, that is, a disorder in native language development (Statistics Finland 2007). According to statistics, problems in learning foreign languages were the primary reason to transfer to part-time special education for 30,4 % of the students in the lower secondary school during the school year 2005-2006 (Statistics Finland 2007). Problems in reading and writing, on the other hand, were the main reason to part-time special education for 12,7 % of the students (Statistics Finland 2007).

One of the key aspects in differentiation on a practical level is the use of tasks and exercises which take into account the students' special characteristics (Tomlinson 1999, 2). Hence, differentiation and the choice of teaching material go hand in hand. It also seems that the different pedagogical needs among students have already had an impact not only on conceptions of school and teaching in general but also on textbook writers and publishers: of the Finnish textbook publishers, Otava and WSOY have published their differentiated English exercise books that are aimed at students with special needs. These modified books can be used both in separate special education settings and in integrated classrooms side by side with the regular exercise books in the same series. In practice, this means that all students use the same version of the textbook while some of them use the differentiated exercise book and others the regular one. In my pro gradu thesis, I will study the topic of learning disabilities and carry out a textbook analysis in order to find out how these differentiated exercise books support their users in relation to the regular exercise books. Because the concept of learning disabilities is broad, I will limit my

study to developmental dyslexia, and, in addition, to specific language impairment. Of these, the latter is often classified as a communication disorder rather than a learning disability, but it is included because it shares characteristics with dyslexia and seems to affect both native and foreign language learning (Marttinen et al. 2004, 23; Pitkänen et al. 2004, 82). My research questions are the following: 1) *What kind of differentiating strategies have been employed in the differentiated exercise books?* and 2) *To what extent do these differentiating strategies support students with SLI or dyslexia?*

## **2. Earlier studies on developmental language disorders**

Studies on learning disabilities in general are numerous, and dyslexia and specific language impairment also seem to have received a lot of attention among scholars in different areas of expertise. General descriptions of learning disabilities, specific learning disabilities and the categorization of learning disabilities into different subgroups can be found in Siegel (2005), Fletcher et al. (2006), Lyon et al. (2006), Wodrich (2006) and Wilmshurst (2005). These writings offer a good starting point for understanding the basic characteristics of these phenomena. Specific language impairment, one of the developmental language disorders discussed in my thesis, has been described for example by Bishop and Snowling (2004), Bishop (2006), Van Weerdenburg et al. (2006), Wodrich (2006), Bavin et al. (2005), Carr (1999), Kelso et al. (2007), Hansson et al. (2004), Leonard et al. (2004), Snowling et al. (2001), Snowling et al. (2006), Miller et al. (2006), Lane et al. (2001) and, in the Finnish context, Korkman (2002), Ahonen and Rautakoski (2007), Marttinen et al. (2004) and Haapasalo (2007).

Elementary descriptions of developmental dyslexia can be found for example in Hultquist (2006), Vauras et al. (2007), Aro et al. (2007) and Korhonen (2002). Dyslexia or reading and writing difficulties have embarked a lot of research, and recent studies include for example the following: Helland (2007), Helland & Asbjørnsen (2004), Kotula (2003), Elbro and Jensen (2005), Simos et al. (2006), Papanicolaou et al. (2006), de Jong & van der Leij et al. (2003), Katzir et al. (2006), Lyytinen et al. (2004) and Catts et al. (2002). The relationship between language disorders and reading disabilities has also received attention (Leonard et al. 2004, Schuele 2004, Bishop and Snowling 2004).

Difficulties in FL learning have also been studied (Ganschow et al. 1998, Sparks et al. 1997, Sparks & Ganschow 1997, Ganschow et al. 1995, Sparks & Ganschow 1996), and so has the

effect of native language skills on FL acquisition (Sparks et al. 1998, Sparks & Ganschow 1995b, Sparks et. al. 2006; Kahn-Horwitz et. al. 2006). The effects of learning disabilities on FL learning have been studied by Sparks, Philips and Javorsky (2003, 2002), Dufva et al. (2007), van der Leij & Morfidi (2006), Lundberg (2002), Grigorenko (2002), Downey, Snyder and Hill (2000), Crombie (2000), Arries (1999), Crombie (1997), and Ganschow, Sparks, Javorsky and Pohlman (1991). The studies on developmental language disorders in relation to FL learning seem to be concentrated on dyslexia, that is, problems of reading and writing, where as studies on the effects of the broader disorder, specific language impairment, seem to be few. However, some research on the issue has been conducted for example by Dufva, Vaarala and Pitkänen (2007), and their work will be looked at in more detail later in my thesis. Instruction and teaching techniques in FL learning have also been studied (e.g. Dufva et al. 2007, Sparks & Miller 2000, Schneider & Ganschow 2000, Lenters 2004).

In regard to interventions for dyslexics, enhancing phonemic awareness through explicit training has received a lot of attention, and the studies presenting and evaluating different methods are many (Lane et al. 2007; Denton et al. 2006; Sparks & Miller 2000; Ganschow et al. 1998; Sparks & Ganschow 1995a; Ganschow et al. 1995; Ganschow & Sparks 1995; Malatesha et al. 2002; Dev et al. 2002; Massengill & Sundberg 2006; Moats 2004; Van Hell et al. 2003; Mercer et al. 2000; Wanzek et al. 2006, 540; Lenters 2004; Post 2003, 143-144; Mäki et al. 2002; Nijakowska 2007a, 2007b, 2001). Of these, I will look at Joanna Nijakowska's (2001) work on phonics training in more detail in my thesis. Another branch of interventions which is touched upon in my thesis is the one related to learning strategies. Literature on learning strategies includes Rebecca L. Oxford's (1990, 2003) well-known strategy categorization, and strategy instruction has been described for example by Vauras et al. (2007). Compared to methods for dyslexics, there seem to be much less empirical research on the intervention methods for SLI

students. However, some research can be found: Wodrich and Schmitt (2006, 67-81), Dufva et al. (2007), Leonard et al. (2008), Ebbels et al. (2007), Proctor-Williams & Fey (2007), Ebbels (2007), Ebbels & Van Der Lely (2001), Justice et al. (2005), Segers & Verhoeven (2004), Merrison & Merrison (2005) and Parsons et al. (2005).

In regard to supporting students with special needs in reading and writing, instructional practices have been studied by several scholars and experts (Nijakowska 2001, Taylor et al. 2006, Wanzek et al. 2006, Massengill & Sundberg 2006, Panel on Learning and Instruction Strategic Education Research Partnership 2003, Aro et al. 2007 and Vauras et al. 2007).

Outside the realm of academic research, supportive measures for learning disabilities have received attention and embarked ideas among foreign language teachers as well. In the Finnish context, Moilanen's (2002) book *Yli esteiden. Oppimisvaikeudet ja vieraat kielet* offers a multifaceted, though unfortunately disorganized and non-academic, collection of insights and ideas aimed at foreign language teachers who work with students with language disorders such as dyslexia. The book can be considered as an intriguing idea bank which presents many potential classroom activities and instructional practices related to different areas of language learning, which makes it highly fascinating from a language teacher's point of view. This is why some of the practical ideas that seem compatible with academic research are included in my thesis as well. All in all, however, the book should be approached with caution, because the author does not seem to motivate the choices of activities and practices with scientific research in a systematic way but relies mainly on his personal hands-on experience.

The concept of differentiation has been studied by Tomlinson (1999; 2001) and Tomlinson and Strickland (2005), and I will use their categorization of different elements of differentiation as one of my guidelines when analyzing the differentiation in the textbooks in my own study.

There does not seem to be research on differentiated FL textbooks, which makes the topic an interesting research objective. Because of the complex and partially unclear nature of learning disabilities, my aim is not to give an all-inclusive description of the origin and manifestation of dyslexia and specific language impairment. Instead, I will try to give a general overview of the disorders and their potential effects on FL learning. Interventions for supporting students with dyslexia or specific language impairment are of special interest: the pedagogical and psycholinguistic approaches presented in the intervention literature will be reflected upon in my textbook analysis in order to find out to what extent the support given in the differentiated textbooks is in line with academic research.

### **3. Learning disabilities**

In this chapter, I will give a brief outline of the concept of learning disabilities and describe developmental language disorders in more detail. First, in section 3.1, I will give an overview of two broad groups of learning disabilities, specific learning disabilities and global learning disabilities. After that in 3.2, I will discuss language disorders and communication disorders, and in 3.3 I will describe specific language impairment and dyslexia. Although the former is often classified as a language disorder or a communication disorder, where as the latter is a specific learning disability, they will both be discussed because they are language-based difficulties and therefore relevant in the context of EFL learning. In section 3.4, I will describe problems students with dyslexia or SLI may face in EFL learning.

#### **3.1 Classification of learning disabilities**

Siegel (2005, 44) defines learning disability as “a problem [in] taking in, processing, understanding, or expressing thoughts and information, as reflected in difficulties with reading, calculating, spelling, writing, understanding or expressing language, coordination, self-control, and/or social skills development”. However, as Siegel (2005, 44) points out, the term is used in many ways and it means different things to different people (see also Sparks et al. 2003, 357; Sparks et al. 2002, 495; Wilmshurst 2005, 209). For example, the contents of the term seem to depend on the area of expertise, that is, professionals in different fields define the concept differently (Siegel 2005, 44). According to Fletcher et al. (2006, 27), the concept is difficult to define because it is 1) an unobservable construct and 2) dimensional. A look at the literature on learning disabilities shows that the concept can be used to refer to academic and social

difficulties due to a wide range of disabilities from specific disorders or to different stages of mental disabilities (retardation). Below, I will present two broad categories of learning disabilities, specific and global, in order to illustrate the multifaceted nature of the concept.

### 3.1.1 Specific learning disabilities

Like the definitions for learning disabilities in general, definitions for specific learning disabilities are also very discrepant. The Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR) classification by American Psychiatric Association lists Specific Learning Disabilities under the title Learning Disorders, which in turn belong to the group of disorders titled as Disorders Usually First Diagnosed in Infancy, Childhood, or Adolescence. The specific learning disabilities that are listed include the following disabilities: Reading Disorder, Mathematics Disorder, Disorder of Written Expression and Learning Disorders NOS (not otherwise specified, for atypical variations) (cited in Wilmshurst 2005, 209-210).

The International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10) by World Health Organization uses slightly different terms for what specific learning disabilities. This group of disorders is titled as Specific Developmental Disorders of Scholastic Skills, and the disorders listed are Specific Reading Disorder, Specific Spelling Disorder and Specific Disorder of Arithmetical Skills. This group of disorders belongs to a larger group of disorders titled as Disorders of Psychological Development (cited in Carr 1999, 231).

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), defines the concept of specific learning disabilities in the following way:

Specific learning disability (SLD) means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in

understanding or using language, spoken or written, in which the disorder may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The term SLD is inclusive in subsuming other previously used terms, such as perceptual handicap, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia. However the term SLD is exclusive in that it excludes children who have learning problems that are primarily a result of visual, hearing, motor handicaps, MR, emotional disturbance, or environmental or cultural disadvantage.

(Federal Register, March 12, 1999, 12422 in Wilmshurst 2005, 211)

On the basis of these definitions, it seems that specific learning disabilities occur in *specific* areas in academic performance. Another way to distinguish specific learning disabilities from global learning disabilities is to look for a discrepancy between the student's poor performance and the intelligence level of the student (e.g. McNamara 1998, 9; Wilmshurst 2005, 210). However, this traditionally used IQ discrepancy criterion has been questioned because it does not seem to be sufficient for determining the nature of the students' difficulties and has not received much support from research (Wilmshurst 2005, 211-212; Fletcher et al. 2006, 27-28; Vellutino et al. 2006, 29; Lyon et al. 2006, 515-518).

### 3.1.2 Global learning disabilities

The broader definitions of learning disabilities cover also global learning disabilities which are due to "intellectual level that is significantly lower than the average level of people in society" (Thomas 2003, 11), that is, intellectual disabilities (retardation). The term *general learning disabilities* is also used in the literature to describe these disabilities (Carr 1999, 284). In the educational context, these students are sometimes referred to as "low ability pupils" (Bentham 2002, 58). In these cases, the IQ level is used to assess the level of the disability (Bentham 2002,

64). A traditional way of classifying the level of intellectual disability is to use the categories mild, moderate, severe and profound (Carr 1999, 230). This is used both in the DSM-IV classification and in International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10), where as American Association for Mental Retardation (AAMR) prefers classification on the basis of the areas in which the person needs extensive support (Carr, 1999, 230). What often is considered as the crucial difference between specific learning disabilities and global disabilities is, then, the fact that in the former the disability occurs in a specific area of learning where as the latter is manifested as a lower level of cognitive functioning in a more pervasive way.

### 3.2 Communication disorders

In addition to the problems in reading and writing mentioned above in 3.1.1, there are also language-based disorders that affect the development of language and communication in a more extensive way. In its classification of “[d]isorders where development of learning and communication skills is impaired”, American Psychiatric Association includes Communication Disorders as a separate group of disorders (cited in Carr 1999, 231). Communication Disorders include disorders called Expressive Language Disorder, Mixed Receptive-Expressive Language Disorder, Phonological Disorder and Stuttering (cited in Carr 1999, 231). International Classification of Diseases, on the other hand, titles the roughly corresponding category as Specific Disorders of Speech and Language, and it includes disorders called Specific Speech Articulation Disorder, Expressive Language Disorder, Receptive Language Disorder and Acquired Aphasia with Epilepsy (cited in Carr 1999, 232).

The *expressive* and *expressive-receptive* language disorders are often considered as two different types of what is called *specific language impairment* (Miller & Fletcher 2005, 6).

However, as can be seen in the definition in the International Classification of Diseases, also a two-fold division to *expressive* and *receptive* types seems to exist (Ahonen & Rautakoski 2007, 19). Specific language impairment, along with dyslexia, will be examined in more detail in the next section.

### 3.3 Specific language impairment and dyslexia – two developmental language disorders

Above, I have described specific learning disabilities, global learning disabilities, and, in addition, communication disorders, which give an idea of the multifaceted nature of learning disabilities and their classifications. In this section, I will describe specific language impairment and dyslexia, which are disorders that exemplify two of the three categories discussed above, that is, specific learning disabilities and communication disorders. Because the focus in my textbook analysis lies on EFL learning, I believe these disorders, being language-based in nature, are especially relevant. In addition, specific language impairment and dyslexia can both be classified as developmental language disorders (Leonard et al. 2004, 155) and they are closely connected on a behavioral level (Bishop & Snowling 2004; 858-859, 869, Marttinen et al. 2004, 23), which suggests that it is worthwhile studying them in conjunction with one another.

#### 3.3.1 Specific language impairment

Specific language impairment can be described as a developmental language disorder, which is manifested as a delay and deficits in native language development (Leonard et al. 2004, 155). Bishop's (2006, 218) list of characteristics common to SLI includes the following aspects:

- Delay in starting to talk; first words may not appear until 2 years of age or later
- Immature or deviant production of speech sounds, especially in preschool children
- Use of simplified grammatical structures, such as omission of past tense endings or the auxiliary “is,” well beyond the age when this is usually mastered
- Restricted vocabulary, in both production and comprehension
- Weak verbal short-term memory, as evidenced in tasks requiring repetition of words or sentences
- Difficulties in understanding complex language, especially when the speaker talks rapidly

SLI is a neurobiological disorder, and heredity seems to be the most significant risk factor related to it (Bishop 2006, 217; Marttinen et al. 2004, 19-21). Other risk factors include problems during pregnancy, delivery or early infancy, cerebral palsy and other neurological disorders (Marttinen et al. 2004, 21). In addition to these, multilingualism, lack of stimuli, severe problems in mental health and considerable deficiencies in infant attachment security can also slow down language development (Marttinen et al 2004, 21). Expressive and (expressive-) receptive language disorder are often considered as different forms of specific language impairment (Carr 1999, 231-232; Miller and Fletcher 2005, 6).

Carr (1999, 243-245) makes a number of observations on the typical manifestations of SLI. In addition to the division to receptive and expressive difficulties, the difficulties can also be described in relation to different areas in language: phonology, semantics, syntax, pragmatics and fluency. For those who have difficulties in phonology, the problems occur as inaccurate articulation of some sounds. Sounds may also be omitted, substituted or reduced. The problems may be due to difficulties in motor skills, in which case “the prognosis for both language development and reading skills is good” (p. 244). However, if the problems are due to weak phonemic awareness, that is, difficulties in using for example rhyme and alliteration, the

prognosis for these skills is poor. Problems in semantics are reflected as a limited vocabulary, which causes problems in understanding others and in communicating verbally with them. Difficulties in syntax are manifested as short utterances and a restricted number of utterance types. Among young children, this shows as an inability to use multiword utterances, where as in older individuals the difficulties occur in the use of multiclausal sentences. In Carr's (p. 245) words, problems in pragmatics, on the other hand, are manifested as an inability to "use language and gestures within particular relationships or contexts to get their needs met or achieve certain communicational goals". Problems in fluency include problems called stuttering, which involves breakdowns in fluency due to rapid speech rate, and cluttering, which involves disruptions in the flow of speech because of repetitions, prolongations and pauses.

When examining the deficits in SLI, it should be noted that the language profiles vary significantly between SLI individuals (Bishop 2006, 218; Leonard et al. 2004, 155).

According to Ahonen & Rautakoski (2007, 19), the prevalence of specific language impairment in children is approximately 3-7 per cent. It seems that the research into the disorder is focused on early childhood, and there is little systematic and reliable research into specific language impairment and changes in its manifestations in relation to youth and adulthood (Ahonen & Rautakoski 2007, 19). When examining the manifestations of specific language impairment from childhood to youth and adulthood, it seems that the disorder is often long-lasting (Snowling et al. 2001, 181-182) and may, if moderate or severe, affect the individual throughout his life in different forms (Ahonen & Rautakoski 2007, 19). In school age, the problems in everyday oral expression are often restored, but problems may still occur in comprehension of the language, linguistic reasoning and understanding concepts, which may cause problems in learning (Ahonen & Rautakoski 2007, 19-21).

Learning to read and write is often a toilsome task for an SLI student (Marttinen et al 2003, 23). Although there are SLI students who have problems mainly in using language correctly and in understanding meanings (Marttinen et al. 2004, 23), it seems that SLI students have a significantly greater risk of having problems in learning to read and write and in mastering these skills in later life (Schuele 2005, 181; Ahonen & Rautakoski 2007, 27). In youth, the problems in these skills are often manifested as slowness and inaccuracy in reading and writing and difficulties in reading comprehension, which causes difficulties in many different subjects where reading is required (Haapasalo 2007, 61). The difficulties in reading and writing are examined in more detail below in the discussion on dyslexia. In addition to the problems in reading and writing, a young person with specific language impairment may also have difficulties in spoken expression, understanding spoken instructions, mathematics, motor coordination, perception, memory and attention (Haapasalo 2007, 50-64). In addition, specific language impairment seems to influence also foreign language learning where the same linguistic deficits, with which the student struggles in his native language, are reflected (Dufva et al. 2007, 156). The specific problems related to specific language impairment in relation to FL learning will be discussed in more detail in section 3.3.4.

### 3.3.2 Developmental dyslexia

Developmental dyslexia is the best-known learning disability, and, like specific language impairment, it can be considered as a developmental language disorder (Leonard et al. 2004, 155). In general, dyslexia is manifested as problems in reading and spelling (Hultquist 2006, 13). Two broad categories of dyslexia can be distinguished: developmental dyslexia, which is the most common, refers to dyslexia that occurs as problems in reading and spelling from the outset,

where as acquired dyslexia means a loss of at least some of reading and spelling skills because of a brain injury (Hultquist 2006, 17). In my discussion, the terms dyslexia and developmental dyslexia are both used, and they both refer to the former, developmental type of the disorder. The following description by Hultquist (2006, 14) sheds light on the diversity of problems that are related to dyslexia:

Having dyslexia can mean a person has other problems besides difficulty with reading and spelling words correctly. The underlying brain differences that cause dyslexia can also cause problems with reading comprehension, listening, speaking, writing, math, storing information in memory, getting information out of memory, and doing things quickly. In addition, dyslexia can occur with other problems, such as depression, anxiety, dysgraphia (a handwriting problem), and various types of attention-deficit/ hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

The causes behind dyslexia seem to be related to unusual “wiring” in the brain, which makes the brain react differently to words, spoken or written (Hultquist 2006, 17). This seems to show that the way of processing information is different among dyslexics, which, in turn, makes reading and spelling more demanding than it is for people without dyslexia (Hultquist 2006, 18).

However, not all dyslexics face the same challenges, and different subtypes of dyslexia can be distinguished (Hultquist 2006, 18). *Phonological dyslexia* is manifested as problems in phonological processing and sounding out words, which can cause difficulties in speaking, reading, spelling and remembering (Hultquist 2006, 19). Problems occur especially when reading new words (Hultquist 2006, 19). This aspect of reading is also referred to as word recognition (Vauras et al. 2007, 139), and the mastery of this skill seems to rely on the ability to operate with phonological information, which is often referred to as phonological processing (Aro et al. 2007, 124). The prospects for development in this skill can be assessed already in the early childhood by examining the child’s phonological awareness, that is, “the ability to compare, segment, and discriminate spoken words on the basis of their phonological structure” (Bishop & Snowling

2004, 873; see also Carroll & Snowling 2004; Carroll et al. 2003; Snow et al. 1999; Badian 1998). Poor phonological processing is currently thought to be the key problem in dyslexia (Vellutino et al. 2004, 30; Snowling 1998, 5-6) along with retrieval problems and poor linguistic memory (Snowling 1998, 5-6; Aro et al. 2007, 124). Phonological dyslexia can also be manifested as mispronunciation of words when talking (Hultquist 2006, 19). When spelling words, phonological dyslexia is often manifested as addition of extra sounds, omitting sounds, putting the sounds in the wrong order or writing the wrong sounds (Hultquist 2006, 20). Problems may also occur in interpreting what people say or in remembering what has been said in detail, which is due to weak verbal (linguistic) memory (Hultquist 2006, 20).

Hultquist (2006, 23-24) describes the manifestations of *orthographic dyslexia*, which is another subtype of dyslexia. Orthographic dyslexia (also called surface dyslexia or dyseidetic dyslexia), on the other hand, occurs as problems in remembering what the written forms of letters and words look like. For example, similar-looking words or letters with similar orthographic components, such as *b*, *d* and *p*, or are often confused. Thus, where as phonological dyslexia involves troubles with processing phonological information – sounds – this type of dyslexia has to do with visual aspects of reading and writing. Troubles in visual processing of words makes reading slow and sometimes the reader might skip lines. Orthographic dyslexia can also be manifested as problems in remembering the different spellings of homophones and problems with sounding out irregular words, that is, words that are not spelled in the same way as they are pronounced. Extra problems are caused by texts where there are a lot of words on a page and the words are close together. In writing, the attempt to avoid the confusion with similar-looking letters might show in using capital letters even in the middle of a word: for example, *trouble* might be spelled as *trouBle*.

In addition to these problems, a dyslexic student may also find it hard to orient oneself in the text and to find the right page and place on the page (Moilanen 2003, 91).

Hultquist (2006, 15, 27-28, 31-33) makes a number of further observations on the manifestations dyslexia. Problems in reading and spelling may also be manifested as *retrieval problems* which refer to difficulties in collecting information from the long-term memory. The skill that is relevant here is often referred to as rapid naming. The information that is difficult to retrieve can include symbols such as letters, numbers or printed words, but it may also cover larger units of information, for example names of people or objects, dates or the sounds of letters. In general, memory problems seem to be common among dyslexics because they spend so much time on decoding individual words. Thus, there is not enough memory capacity to understand the message of the text. *Deep dyslexia*, which is a very rare form of developmental dyslexia, involves substituting words with semantically related words when reading. Misreading of small function words and choosing wrong but semantically linked words when speaking is also characteristic of deep dyslexia. According to Hultquist, many people with dyslexia have multiple processing problems, which can be called *mixed dyslexia*. There is a lot of variation in to what extent the types discussed above are present in mixed dyslexia. It also seems that there is overlap in regard to the characteristics that are common in the different types. In regard to the literacy prospects in the long run, Hultquist states that the academic possibilities for a dyslexic are unlimited, but what is often required is hard work.

### 3.3.3 Relationship between dyslexia and specific language impairment

The close relationship between specific language impairment and dyslexia, which has already been recognized above, deserves some additional attention. According to Bishop and Snowling

(2004, 859, 877), dyslexia and specific language impairment should be conceptualized as two distinct disorders, which may, however, overlap (see also Marttinen et al. 2004, 23; Siiskonen et al. 2004, 62). Bishop and Snowling's division into two distinct disorders is based on the different skill deficits that may contribute to the disorders: in dyslexia and severe forms of SLI, it is the phonological skills and the consequent problems in mechanic reading are in focus, where as deficits in non-phonological skills, such as vocabulary, morphology and syntax, may be the key problems in SLI (Bishop and Snowling 2004, 877-878). Because of the difference, SLI students may experience difficulties primarily in reading comprehension rather than in mechanic reading (Bishop & Snowling 2004, 865-866). What seems to be essential is that although SLI students and dyslexics can experience seemingly similar difficulties in reading, the underlying causes may be different (Bishop & Snowling 2004, 859-860). This implies that also the supportive interventions for these disorders may have to be different, that is, they have to be selected on the basis of the true, underlying difficulties and not on the basis of the potentially similar behavioural manifestations (Bishop and Snowling 2004, 880).

#### 3.3.4 How dyslexia and SLI are manifested in EFL learning

As noted above, FL learning is a challenge to a student with specific language impairment or developmental dyslexia. Below, I will discuss the manifestation of these disorders in relation to different areas of EFL learning: reading, writing, listening comprehension and oral skills. First, however, I will discuss native language skills in relation to foreign language skills; an issue which connects the discussion on dyslexia and SLI in section 3.3 to the topic of FL learning. In regard to the problems in different areas of EFL learning, note that some of the issues to be discussed were already recognized in sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2, but here the discussion is aimed to

move on a more concrete level and to examine how SLI and dyslexia affect school work in an EFL classroom specifically. In the end, I will also briefly present some related non-linguistic problems, which illustrates the issue of comorbidity typical of language disorders.

#### 3.3.4.1 Native language skills vs. foreign language skills

Dufva, Vaarala and Pitkänen (2007) discuss language disorders (with the emphasis on SLI) in relation to foreign language learning from a skill perspective. They acknowledge that deficits in native language skills are reflected as corresponding difficulties in foreign language learning (Dufva et al. 2007, 156; see also Sparks et al. 2006, 152; Sparks et al. 1995, 646-652; Sparks et al. 1998, 206; Ganschow et al. 1998, 249-250; Ganschow et al. 1995, 77; Ganschow et al. 1991, 532-533; Ganschow & Sparks 1995, 108-109; Crombie 2000, 113-117 and Pitkänen et al. 2004, 82). However, Dufva, Vaarala and Pitkänen (2007, 157) object to the use of the term ‘foreign language learning disability’, because it is a too broad concept for addressing the issue. Instead, they recommend an approach similar to the one that is used when analyzing the manifestation of the disorder in the native language of the student, that is, the difficulties and strengths of the student should be examined carefully in relation to *different areas* of the target language (Dufva et al. 2007, 157; see also Carr 1999, 243-245). The division of FL learning into different areas is also illustrated in the National Curriculum (Opetushallitus 2004, 151-152), according to which the mastery of a foreign language consists of listening comprehension, speaking, reading comprehension and writing. In addition, the mastery of a foreign language requires the use of learning strategies and knowledge of the target culture (Opetushallitus 2004, 152).

Dufva et al. (2007, 158-160) discuss the significance of universal and language-specific skills and make a number of observations based on literature on linguistic transfer. The writers

distinguish between two different sets of skills that are needed in FL learning: firstly, there are skills that are universal and that can be applied to all languages once learnt in one language, and secondly, there are skills which are language-specific. Of these two categories, the former includes listening comprehension, reading comprehension, oral expression, written expression, learning strategies and linguistic short-term memory (working memory). The latter, on the other hand, includes pronunciation, vocabulary and structures. In addition to universal skills and language-specific skills, there are also the skills of mechanic reading and spelling, which can be considered to fall in between the two main groups of skills. The skills interact with another in complicated ways: for example, vocabulary is needed in comprehending text and speech, and also in written and oral expression, and knowledge of the phonological structures is required in order to extract a meaning out of a flow of speech. In practice, the skill perspective described above implies that the skills of the student with language-based difficulties should be evaluated by examining the strengths and weaknesses in different subskills in both the target language and the native language.

#### 3.3.4.2 Mechanic reading and writing

As noted earlier, the core difficulties in dyslexia are concentrated around reading and writing. It has also been recognized that SLI, too, strongly predicts difficulties in reading and writing. The problems of this kind are often accentuated in the course of school years, as the amount, length and complexity of texts increases (Vauras et al. 2007, 135). Poor performance in reading and writing can be due to deficits in basic skills needed in these activities, or, as often is the case in lower and upper secondary school, deficits in the more advanced skills that are needed to operate with longer, more demanding texts (Aro et al. 2007, 123; Vauras et al. 2007, 135). In this and the

following section, I will discuss the two-fold nature of reading in order to illustrate the processes with which dyslexics and SLI students often have problems.

The concept of reading can be understood as a combination of two separate, yet intertwined, skills: mechanic reading and reading comprehension (Aro et al. 2007, 128). In Siiskonen, Aro and Holopainen's (2004, 66) model, mechanic reading is conceptualized as a hierarchy of basic skills, the foundation of which is linguistic awareness – an umbrella term covering for example phonemic awareness discussed above in 3.3.2. The next level in the hierarchy is the understanding of grapheme-phoneme correspondence, which, in turn, prepares the way for combining phonemes into different kinds of syllables, and syllables into words (Siiskonen et al. 2004, 66). In addition to the term mechanic reading, this process can also be referred to as word recognition (Vauras et al. 2007, 139; Siiskonen et al. 2004, 60) or decoding (Siiskonen et al. 2004, 60). The mastery of this process prepares the ground for reading comprehension (Siiskonen et al. 2004, 66). Like reading, the process of writing is also built on linguistic awareness, but the rest of the process goes to the opposite direction: words are divided into syllables, syllables into sounds, and, finally, sounds are translated into corresponding graphemes (Siiskonen et al. 2004, 66). Although mechanic reading and writing are usually learnt well enough in primary school, it seems that many students with SLI or dyslexia continue having difficulties with these skills in secondary school as well (Aro et al. 2007, 123).

Moilanen's (2002, 111-113) grassroots-level examples illustrate the writing errors that FL teachers may encounter when reading texts written by students with language disorders. The physical format of the text is often unclear: the product may be messy, handwriting might be unclear and the letters remarkably large, and the student may have difficulties in presenting the text in a clear format in regard to sections, margins and lines. The insecurity with sounds is reflected in spelling, word choices and syntax. It might also be problematic to organize thoughts

and process the contents of the text at the same time when operating with vocabulary and linguistic forms. There might be too little or too many words, and content words as well as function words may be missing. The student may repeat words or use some constructions excessively. Problems may be manifested as troubles with word order or as illogical relationships between sentence constituents. The structure of a sentence may be totally distorted when a more unfamiliar construction is used. On the morphological level, the student may have problems with using for example irregular plural forms, which may be combined with the regular plural -s. In spelling, difficulties often occur in the use of correct graphic forms of letters; an issue which was noted earlier in 3.3.2. In addition to the potential use of letters in the wrong order, the letters may be lacking parts: lines in *t*'s and *i*'s or apostrophes might be missing. The spelling of words often follows the pronunciation, which naturally causes problems in English because of the weak correspondence between graphemes and phonemes. The student's writing can also be characterized by anticipation of letters: *doesn't* becomes *dosen't* and *labyrinth* is spelled as *laphyrinth*. The student may also show difficulties in expressing voice in the choice of letters: *gat* replaces *cat* and *thinging* is used instead of *thinking*. The orthographic form of the word may also be distorted, especially if the word is long, which can be manifested for example as reduplication of syllables. Mistakes in writing words together or apart (*toomuch* for *too much* and *al ways* for *always*) can also occur in writing. The student may make mistakes even in familiar words.

Besides the problems the student may have in reading and writing in general, English language poses additional challenges especially for students with dyslexia or SLI in both of these skills. Unlike in some other languages, for example Finnish, the phoneme-grapheme correspondence in English is highly inconsistent: the number of sounds is 40, where as the number of graphemes is 26 (Dufva et al. 2007, 159). Because of this, English is considered to be a more demanding language than Finnish when comparing the difficulty of learning to read in

different native languages (Dufva et al. 2007, 159). Because of this inconsistency in the English language, the reader needs to rely strongly on two different strategies when learning to read English: in addition to grapheme – phoneme decoding strategy, the reader also needs to be able to recognize larger visual units, that is, word forms (Siiskonen et al. 2004, 59). In contrast, grapheme – phoneme decoding strategy is emphasized and recommended in the early steps of learning to read Finnish (Siiskonen et al. 2004, 59).

#### 3.3.4.3 Reading comprehension and productive writing

Reading comprehension refers to a higher level of reading, which goes beyond mechanic reading and literal understanding of texts (Vauras et al. 2007, 135-136). Reading comprehension includes understanding the underlying meanings of texts and also the ability to operate critically with many kinds of textual information within different genres and various types of media (Vauras et al. 2007, 136). Difficulties with reading comprehension are typical among students with dyslexia or SLI especially in secondary school, where the amount and level of written material increases and mechanic reading alone is not enough (Vauras et al. 2007, 135). Having good skills in phonological processing does not seem to guarantee success in reading comprehension automatically, and language-impaired students may struggle with reading comprehension even if their understanding of phonology is intact (Nation et al. 2004, 208-209). Regardless of the students' future studies and career choices, they will, however, inevitably need to be able to comprehend what they read and also apply the information into practice (Vauras et al. 2007, 137). Reading comprehension is needed in both academic and vocational studies, and also in everyday functioning in the society (Vauras et al. 2007, 136-139). In Siiskonen, Aro and Holopainen's model (2004, 66), reading comprehension is considered as the top element in

reading process; in other words, it relies on the more rudimentary skills listed above in 3.3.4.2. Thus, deficits in mechanic reading cause difficulties in reading comprehension as well: poor mechanic reading makes reading time-consuming, and the decoding of individual words requires so much attention that the student has difficulties in understanding the contents of the text and in distinguishing the main points (Aro et al. 2007, 126; Moilanen 2002, 91; Wadlington 2000).

Moilanen (2002, 91, 217) also criticizes the way of teaching where the forms of language in the textbook texts are emphasized at the expense of the contents: this causes difficulties especially for a student who struggles with reading from the outset. The problems with processing of textbook chapters often relate to the fact that the texts are not given new meanings in the student's mind and they are not applied to everyday life. Deficits in the linguistic short term memory – a common problem among students who struggle with reading – also pose challenges for understanding the text as a whole. There might also be too little time for processing the text, and, in addition, the student may have not discovered his individual way of studying the text or is not supported to use this method.

In writing, on the other hand, the end product of the mechanic sequence described in 3.3.4.2 is productive writing (Siiskonen et al. 2003, 66); an intricate process of problem solving through which the student is able to create a coherent, meaningful text (Vauras et al. 2007, 149). Productive writing can be understood as a thinking process, which includes planning, text formation and evaluation (Vauras 2007, 149-150; Mäki et al. 2002, 189-190). As illustrated in previous sections, the second phase can be very demanding for students who struggle with writing, and this is often reflected as alarming deficits in spelling, handwriting, sentence structures, the logic of the narrative and factual information (Vauras et al. 2007, 151-153). In addition, the texts the student produces are significantly short (Vauras et al. 2007, 153), and the student often experiences writing as unpleasant (Moilanen 2003, 111). For a student who

struggles with writing, the mechanic, technical aspect of writing is often in focus, and the creative nature of writing is neglected (Moilanen 2003, 111).

#### 3.3.4.4 Listening comprehension and oral skills

Although speaking and listening comprehension in the native language become easier with age among SLI students, many have problems with this kind of communication even in adulthood (Ahonen & Rautakoski 2007, 19). These problems are reflected in FL learning (Dufva et al. 2007, 156). Because of their deficits in listening comprehension, it may be difficult for SLI students to understand and follow instructions correctly, and they might often ask the teacher to repeat the things that have just been told (Haapasalo 2007, 51). In addition, the SLI students may not be able to keep track of conversations and might therefore start to talk about something that is unrelated to the topic (Haapasalo, 2007, 51). The problems are highlighted when the students try to understand rapid speech: especially very similar sounds and words may be muddled up and the meanings may change (Haapasalo 2007, 51; Moilanen 2003, 68), which can be due to problems in phonological processing (Carr 1999, 244-245). The ability to perceive the phonological makeup of words can be evaluated by asking the student to repeat words in English: the more accurate the word, the better representation has been constructed in the short-time linguistic memory (Dufva et al 2007, 164). In order to understand what is said and how to react to it, the student needs not only to master the phonology of the language but also the ability to know the meaning of different prosodic characteristics in the speech (Dufva et al. 2007, 164). These skills are crucial when trying to comprehend a foreign language (Moilanen 2003, 45-46).

Moilanen (2002, 45-46) lists a number of problems that may occur in connection to listening exercises in FL class. For students with language disorders, the regularities on the phonological

level may be difficult to perceive. It may also be problematic to distinguish prosodic features, such as stresses, rhythm and the beginning and end of words, unless these things are taught explicitly. Moilanen's observations in classroom settings indicate that it might also take time to 'tune up' the auditory channel so that the student is ready to take in auditory information for example in listening exercises. The students may also react slowly to what is heard and miss some of the questions related to the listening exercise. Weak short term memory makes it difficult to remember a great number of details and to answer many questions simultaneously. The student may also find it difficult to filter irrelevant sounds and the listening is disturbed by noises around him. The use of different "channels" may involve restrictions: for example, it can be difficult to listen and write at the same time, or the visual channel might disturb the listening. All in all, listening may become toilsome and energy-demanding, and the students easily become irritable, cannot concentrate and direct their attention somewhere else.

In addition to the fact that listening comprehension is an important skill in its own right, it is also needed in reading: after word recognition (mechanic reading, decoding) discussed above, listening comprehension is the most crucial component in reading comprehension, and it strongly predicts the development of listening comprehension skills (Vauras et al. 2007, 139-140). However, the skill profiles among SLI students vary, and it might be significantly easier for some students to understand spoken texts than written material because the burden of reading is not present (Dufva et al. 2007, 165-166). Like reading comprehension, listening comprehension is also linked to vocabulary in a bidirectional way (Dufva et al. 2007, 164).

SLI students are very often more skillful in oral expression than in written expression (Dufva et al 2007, 167). This characteristic is often considered to be dyslexics' strength as well, although individual skill profiles may vary significantly (Morris & Turnbull 2005, 239). However, it also seems that if oral expression is difficult in the native language, it is even more toilsome in a

foreign language (Dufva et al 2007, 167). It is important to be aware of the source of the difficulties: is the problem in distinguishing auditory information and sounds, or in difficulties in motor coordination of speech? (Dufva et al. 2007, 167). In regard to articulation, the student may have difficulties in producing foreign sounds, and it can be hard to try to fit together the articulation system of the native language and the one in the foreign language (Moilanen 2003, 68). Students with difficulties in speaking may use only very rudimentary expressions; a problem which can be due to deficits in retrieval and rapid naming discussed above (Dufva et al. 2007, 167).

#### 3.3.4.5 Other related problem areas

Although reading, writing, listening and speaking are essential skill areas in FL learning, there are also other skills that are closely related and even intertwined with them. Below, I will discuss the significance of vocabulary and morphological and syntactic knowledge. Moving on to more general skills in learning, I will also describe metacognitive and cognitive skills and also some typical non-linguistic problems that often occur together with language disorders.

*Vocabulary.* The relationships between different areas of language learning seem to be complex. The problems in reading, writing and listening discussed above are not separate entities but interact strongly with other language skills, especially with vocabulary and morpho-syntactic knowledge of the language (Dufva et al. 2007, 164). The richness of the students' productive and receptive vocabulary affects reading and listening comprehension, which, in turn, affects the growth of the vocabulary (Dufva et al. 2007, 164).

*Morphological and syntactic knowledge.* Dufva et al. (2007, 164-165) discuss the significance of morphological and syntactic knowledge in language learning. The morphological knowledge

of the language refers to language-specific knowledge of the inflection system, and the knowledge of how grammatical entities are “translated” into written language: for example, *s* in the word *dogs* refers to plural, and *s* in a general plural marker in English. Morphological knowledge is a part of word-knowledge, and it seems to support both the initial phase in learning to read English and reading comprehension in second language learning. The syntactic knowledge, on the other hand, refers to the language-specific knowledge of the sentence construction, for example, the knowledge of what kind of word order is used in different types of sentences in English. Students with language disorders often face difficulties in acquiring syntactic knowledge, and the problems are emphasized in texts with a complex syntactic structure. The problems do not necessarily arise from the difficulty of understanding the meanings of the structures but rather from the fact that the length and complexity of the linguistic elements burdens the linguistic short-time memory (working memory).

*Learning strategies, metacognition and cognition.* Learning strategies have a great impact on reading and listening comprehension (Dufva et al. 2007, 165). Learning strategies can be described as mental tools, which are used to analyze and process texts and flow of speech so that the essential things can be understood and learnt (Dufva et al. 2007, 165). Students with language disorders often have difficulties in extracting the essential from what they hear or read, and they may also find it difficult to perceive wholes (Moilanen 2003, 46, 91, 218). Strategies are related to metacognitive skills, which involve planning, monitoring and evaluating one’s learning and understanding (Dufva et al 2003, 165). The difficulties might be due to the fact that students with language disorders have problems in coordinating their executive functioning via language (Haapasalo 2007, 51). Difficulties in learning may be due to more general deficits in cognitive processes such as thinking and problem solving (Nevalainen et al. 2004, 123). For example, the students may have problems with analogous thinking, that is, using a rule to solve different kinds

of problems (Nevalainen et al. 2004, 123); a skill that is needed especially when learning grammar where the understanding of regularities is important (Moilanen 2003, 149). In addition to the problems in understanding rules, the interpretation of tables and diagrams can also be difficult (Moilanen 2003, 149). Difficulties may also occur in sequential thinking; a skill needed for example in listening and writing, where separate sounds (and graphemes) should be combined together in a sequence (Nevalainen et al. 2004, 125). A third type of thinking that may cause problems is hypothetical thinking, that is, the ability to make suppositions for example when reading: “if that is a *k*, what does the word sound like?” (Nevalainen et al. 2004, 126). Problems in this area are also manifested as problems in understanding causal relationships (Nevalainen et al. 2004, 126).

*Comorbidity.* The concept of *comorbidity* refers to a situation where many different kinds of problems occur simultaneously in an individual; a phenomenon that is typical of learning disabilities (Fletcher et al. 2006, 56). As noted above in 3.3.2 in the discussion on dyslexia, it seems that the spectrum of possible difficulties going beyond linguistic deficits is broad in dyslexia (Wilmshurst 2005, 211; see also Crombie 2000, 114). SLI is also often comorbid with other difficulties, for example problems in attention (Javorsky 1996, 247) and sensomotor functioning (Haapasalo 2007, 49). Deficits in attention can be manifested as difficulties in starting working or in organizing work, or the student might be “stuck” (Aro et al. 2004, 161). It also seems that students with attention problems may not notice their own mistakes (Aro et al. 2004, 161). Deficits in sensomotor functioning can be seen as problems in bodily sensations, in perceiving the environment or in planning and performing activities (Ahonen et al. 2004, 175-178). Deficits in sensomotor functioning create challenges for example in writing: producing graphemes in writing requires not only linguistic knowledge but also sufficient visuo-motor coordination (Ahonen et al. 2004, 175). Emotional, social and behavioural disorders may also

occur together with a language disorder (Snowling et al. 2006, 763-764; McCabe 2005, 384), and it has been suggested that a language disorder could play a causative role in their emergence (Sinkkonen 2007, 44-46). Social functioning may be affected negatively because of the deficits in communication skills (Sinkkonen 2007, 42).

In regard to the problems discussed above, it should be noted that it is not always easy to distinguish whether the problems in different areas of life are due to a disorder or whether they are merely a part of normal development of a teenager (Sinkkonen 2007, 38). That is why a careful examination and discussions with students with difficulties is crucial when assessing the origin of their problems (Sinkkonen 2007, 38).

#### **4. Pedagogical implications in EFL teaching**

In this chapter, I will describe the concept of differentiation and present Tomlinson and Strickland's (2005) classification which illustrates the ways of differentiating. Relying on the work of various researchers and experts, I will also present pedagogical and psycholinguistic approaches for supporting students with language disorders. The approaches and viewpoints presented are reflected later on in the textbook analysis.

##### 4.1 Differentiation

Differentiated instruction can be defined as “a systematic approach to planning curriculum and instruction for academically diverse learners” (Tomlinson & Strickland 2005, 6). According to Tomlinson & Strickland (2005, 6), the key aspect in differentiation is to take into account the divergent needs of the students. The essence of classroom differentiation in regard to teacher's role and attitude is summarized by Tomlinson (1999, 9) in the following way: “In differentiated classrooms, teachers provide specific ways for each individual to learn as deeply as possible and as quickly as possible, without assuming one student's road map for learning is identical to anyone else's.”

According to Tomlinson (2001, 3), differentiation is not, as some people understand it, about trying to “tailor” or “fine-tune” instruction to every single learner in the classroom separately. Instead, it is about providing a multitude of ways to learning on basis of the teacher's knowledge of the divergent needs among the learners (Tomlinson 2001, 3-4; see also Sheppard 2001; Duvall 2006, 42-43). Unlike many teachers incorrectly assume, differentiation is not about giving less work to some students and more to others (Tomlinson 2001, 4; see also Duvall 2006, 43). Instead

of *quantity*, differentiation should be about *quality*, which, in practice, means changing the nature of the assignments so that they are suitable for a variety of students (Tomlinson 2001, 4). Tomlinson & Strickland (2005, 6-8) also present five elements which can be differentiated in teaching: *content*, *process*, *product*, *affect* and *learning environment*. In regard to teaching material and textbooks – the focus of my study – *content* and *process* seem to be the most relevant elements, and therefore they will be presented here in detail. *Content* refers to the information that is being learnt, that is, the goals, and also to the ways in which the students are given access to it: the way to the information can be for example teacher talk, textbook, supplementary materials, technology, field trips or audiotape recordings (Tomlinson & Strickland 2005, 7-8). The teacher is responsible for selecting the essentials from the content and for providing as many different ways to access it as possible (Tomlinson & Strickland 2005, 7-8). In regard to the selection of the content, Tomlinson (1999, 16) points out that because it is impossible to anyone to learn everything in detail, the teacher should be able to “articulate what’s essential for learners to recall, understand, and be able to do in a given domain”. *Process*, another element in differentiation, refers to the stage which occurs after the students have gained access to the contents and in which the students start “making sense” of the ideas and the information the contents provides for (Tomlinson & Strickland 2005, 8). This is usually done through activities, which should encourage the students to “use the specific information and skills to come to understand an important idea or principle” (Tomlinson & Strickland 2005, 8). The activities should also direct the student to the goals and skills that are in focus (contents) and to help in seeing how things work and why (Tomlinson & Strickland 2005, 8). In addition, the activities should be interesting enough so that the student persist even when the activity is challenging (Tomlinson & Strickland 2005, 8).

According to Tomlinson and Strickland (2005, 6-7), the elements above can be differentiated in relation to three student characteristics: *readiness*, *interest* and *learning profile*. *Readiness* refers to the current knowledge the student has in the matter that will be taught to her, and it should be differentiated by offering the student work that is in such slightly too difficult to her but can be done with the help of the guidance offered by the teacher (Tomlinson & Strickland 2005, 6). *Interest* refers to the student interests, which should be differentiated by linking what is taught to the life of the students (Tomlinson & Strickland 2005, 6; see also Rickford 2005, 115-116 and Moilanen 2002, 30). *Learning profile* involves things such as learning style, intelligence preference, gender and culture, which should also be taken into account so that natural ways of learning are possible for all students in the class (Tomlinson & Strickland 2005, 7; see also Oxford 2003, 2-8 and Duvall 2006, 42-43). In regard to *content* discussed above, learning profile can be differentiated for example by presenting information in visual, auditory and kinesthetic modes (Tomlinson & Strickland 2005, 9). This topic of multiple sensory modalities will be discussed in more detail both in this section and in 4.2.1. In regard to *process*, on the other hand, learning profile can be differentiated for example by offering a student struggling with writing the opportunity to express what he has learnt through oral tasks (Tomlinson & Strickland 2005, 11).

In her discussion on differentiation in a mixed-ability classroom, Tomlinson (2001, 13-14) presents principles for supporting “struggling students”, that is, students suffering for example from a learning disability. According to her, students’ deficits should not be emphasized on the expense of students’ strengths. Instead, the strengths should be noted, supported and developed. The relevance of learning in relation to everyday life should also be made clear in teaching. In order to guide the students to see the “big picture”, the teacher should also focus on the most essential things: “[i]f struggling learners can’t learn everything, make sure they learn the big

ideas, key concepts, and governing principles of the subject at hand” (p. 13). The struggling students should also be given tasks that are challenging enough and support the students’ self-efficacy. The students should also be offered opportunities to learn via multiple sensory modalities. Encouragement and emotional support are also important when supporting students who struggle with school.

Learning styles, which were noted in Tomlinson and Strickland’s (2005, 7) discussion on differentiation, have been described in more detail for example by Oxford (1990; 2003, 2-8). In her summary of learning styles, Oxford (2003, 2-7) presents a number of observations on the topic. According to her, learning styles are the “general approaches ... that students use in acquiring a new language or in learning any other subject” (p. 2). Learning styles involve different areas: the learner’s sensory preferences, personality type, the degree of introversion versus extroversion, the degree of intuitive-random versus sensing-sequential thinking, preferences to thinking versus feeling, the degree of closure-orientation versus openness, the desired level of generality, and, finally, biological differences. She also states that “sensory preferences refer to the physical, perceptual learning channels with which the student is the most comfortable” (p. 3). Sensory channels include visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactual channel. Sensory preferences can be seen in the differing ways students prefer to learn: reading and visual stimulation is favoured by visual students, where as auditory students prefer lectures, interaction, conversations, role-play and directions that are given orally. Kinesthetic and tactile students enjoy moving and operating with concrete objects, such as flashcards, and need to have breaks in order to do little walks in the room every now and then.

Sensory channels will be discussed later in this chapter in connection to phonemic awareness training, and they will also receive attention in my textbook analysis. A detailed description of

the contents of the other areas of learning style can be found for example in Oxford's paper (2003).

Like Tomlinson, Oxford (2003, 16), too, emphasizes the importance of taking differing learning styles into account when planning instruction. According to her, the teacher should not select a specific instructional methodology but she should rely on an instructional approach that is broader, communicative and takes into account both form and fluency. This kind of approach allows variety and offers a better setting for meeting the divergent needs in the group. In fact, Oxford thinks that "[i]t is foolhardy to think that a single L2 methodology could possibly fit an entire class filled with students who have a range of stylistic and strategic preferences" (p. 16); a view that is in line with those of Tomlinson's (2001) and Tomlinson and Strickland's (2005).

#### 4.2 Differentiating for students with SLI or dyslexia

In their article on the implications of SLI on foreign language learning, Dufva, Vaarala and Pitkänen (2007, 162) outline two pedagogical approaches to differentiation, which illustrate the differences among SLI students. According to them, some students with SLI may need an approach where the emphasis is on spoken language (Dufva et al. 2007, 162). This may be appropriate with students who still struggle significantly with reading and writing even in their native language and to whom the acquisition of these skills in foreign language, consequently, would be a somewhat impossible challenge (Dufva et al. 2007, 162). With these students, the writers recommend lowering the demands of reading and writing, and they encourage the teacher to move the focus more on speaking and listening comprehension (Dufva et al. 2007, 162). Reading and writing could be restricted to core words, phrases and sentences without requiring a perfect performance from the student, or requiring only identification of FL words so that the

student understands their meaning in his native language (Dufva et al. 2007, 162). In some cases, the demands of writing can be discarded completely (Dufva et al. 2007, 162).

Another approach suggested by Dufva, Vaarala and Pitkänen (2007, 162) is recommended for SLI students who have already learnt the word recognition and spelling fairly well in their native language. With these students, writing and reading can be required in foreign language learning as well, and the FL teaching should also involve familiarizing the student with central phonetic symbols to support especially reading (Dufva et al. 2007, 162-163). In regard to dyslexia in its narrow meaning, it seems, similarly, that neglecting reading and writing as a means to ‘help’ the students is undesirable (Crombie 2000, 116; Sparks et al. 1991).

As already noted, dyslexia can occur as a part of the broader phenomenon of SLI, but it can also be manifested independently as a narrower set of problems that are restricted to mechanic reading and writing. Offering additional time and compensatory technology can be used to help a dyslexic student in his studies (Crombie 1997, 44; Alexander & Slinger-Constant 2004, 756-757). Another compensatory strategy is to offer the student opportunities to express what he has learnt orally instead of writing (Tomlinson & Strickland 2005, 11). In regard to the structure of instruction, the information that is being learnt can be presented in small chunks in order to support learning (Crombie 1997, 44).

There seems to be a great body of research on difficulties in reading and writing and how these problems could be approached via interventions, where as corresponding literature on how to meet the broader scope of needs among SLI students specifically is more difficult to find. In regard to dyslexia, many structured instruction methods have been developed, and the focus in them lies on phonemic awareness training (Vellutino et al. 2004, 12). In their research review, however, Alexander and Slinger-Constant (2004, 749) make the following conclusion of the effectiveness of interventions: “A systematic phonics approach results in robust results in word

reading accuracy but is not effective in developing fluency in the older, more impaired reader”. On the basis of this, it seems that phonological training is not enough in *severe* deficits in reading. In addition to phonology, semantics, morphology and grammar instruction is seen as an important part of many structured multisensory interventions for dyslexics (Crombie 2000, 118; Ganschow et al. 1995, 81). An example of these approaches is presented below in 4.2.1.

Like the severe cases of dyslexia discussed above, SLI, too, requires interventions that go beyond phonemic training (Bishop and Snowling 2004, 877-878) – although training of these skills, too, is often beneficial for SLI students (Dufva et al. 2007, 167; Justice et al. 2005; Segers & Verhoeven 2004). Bishop and Snowling (2004, 858) highlight the fact that SLI students’ core problem may lie in deficits in semantics, syntax and discourse, and, hence, problems in *comprehending* rather than in phonological processing. This is why interventions should be planned so that also these nonphonological verbal skills that affect literacy would be trained (Bishop and Snowling 2004, 858-880). Training grammatical skills is supported by other researchers as well (Ebbels et al. 2007; Ebbels 2007; Ebbels & Van Der Lely 2001), and also morphological training (Leonard et al. 2008), pragmatics training (Merrison & Merrison 2005) and vocabulary training (Parsons et al. 2005) are recommended.

Considering the literary challenges in lower secondary school, learning strategy instruction can be seen as an important way of enhancing the language skills of students with SLI (Dufva et al. 2007, 171-172). Although reading and writing are emphasized on this level of education, also other language skills should be taken into consideration when examining the needs of support among SLI students (Dufva et al. 2007, 163-171; see also Bishop and Snowling 2004, 877-878). In the discussion below, I will examine the ways in which students with language disorders can be supported in regard to phonemic processing and learning strategy usage. In addition, I will give examples of how support can be offered in different areas of FL learning.

#### 4.2.1 Phonemic training with multisensory exercises

The key problem in reading and writing difficulties often lies in the student's poor phonemic processing (Marttinen et al. 2004, 23; Hultquist 2006, 19) and the consequent troubles in mechanic reading (Aro et al. 2007, 128; Siiskonen et al. 2004, 66); issues which have been discussed above in detail. The attention given to this aspect of reading is also reflected in the teaching methods presented in the literature on dyslexia. In regard to mechanic reading and writing skills, explicit teaching of phoneme – grapheme correspondence and phonics training is supported by many researchers (Sparks & Miller 2000, 130; Crombie 2000, 117; Ganschow et al. 1998, 253; Sparks et al. 1997, 95-96; Ganschow et al. 1995, 81-91; Ganschow & Sparks 1995, 116; Malatesha et al. 2002, 237-239; Dev et al. 2002, 331; Massengill & Sundberg 2006, 121-122; Moats 2004, 156; Van Hell et al. 2003, 249-252; Mercer et al. 2000, 186-188; Wanzek et al. 2006, 540; Rickford 2005, 121-125; Lenters 2004, 333; Post 2003, 143-144).

Joanna Nijakowska, a professor in the Department of Psycholinguistics and Didactics of English Language at the University of Lodz, has studied the use of *direct multisensory approach* among dyslexics and lists a great number of sample exercises that have been used successfully in enhancing phonemic processing and other literacy skills (2007a, 2007b, 2001). In her conference presentation (2001, HTML document without page numbering), Nijakowska states that one of the key principles behind the method is the idea that dyslexic English learners need “explicit, structured and deductive instruction” (see also Schneider & Ganschow 2000, 75; Mushinski & Stormont-Spurgin 1995, 509). This kind of instruction should be used instead of more inductive and spontaneous approaches because dyslexics' understanding of the intricacies and phonic units of their native language and foreign language alike is poor (Nijakowska 2001). In addition to the phoneme – grapheme level, Nijakowska (2001) emphasizes the need for training the dyslexics in

understanding the structure of the language on syntactic and semantic level, that is, they need to practise not only how sounds and symbols relate to one another but also how they constitute words and how words constitute sentences (see also Arnbak & Elbro 2000, 249). This view that goes beyond phonology seems to be congruent with Bishop and Snowling's (2004) discussion on language-impaired students' multifaceted needs and the importance of training nonphonological skills; an issue that was discussed in 4.2.

Nijakowska's (2001) method is heavily based on repetition and automatization of skills, and that is why it is important to make training versatile so that it remains interesting for the students. According to Nijakowska (2001), training should also be cumulative and multisensory, that is, it should include "constant and simultaneous use of the visual (eyes), auditory (ears), kinaesthetic (motor memory), and tactile (hands) channels in the teaching of reading, spelling and writing" (see also Sparks & Miller 2000, 130; Crombie 2000, 118; Cooke 1997, 241; Ganschow et al. 1995, 82; Pitkänen et al. 2004, 83). The idea behind this view is Visual Auditory Kinaesthetic Tactile (VAKT) approach (on the history of this approach, see a review by Sparks and Miller (2000)), according to which the correspondence between graphemes and phonemes is learnt effectively when multiple perceptual channels are used, and, thus, there are more possibilities for understanding the forms and meanings of the phonemic and graphemic elements (Nijakowska 2001). Multisensory approaches, which originate from the Orton-Gillingham method developed in the 1930s (on the history of the method, see Sparks and Miller 2000), are great in number, and many of the publications listed in the beginning of this section present training programs that, too, are multisensory in nature.

In her conference presentation on a case study, Nijakowska (2001) lists a number of activities that rely on the principles discussed above and aim to enhance the phonological processing and literacy skills of a dyslexic student in foreign language learning. Sensitivity to the individual

needs of the student is necessary when implementing the method and the exercises in it (Nijakowska 2001) – an issue which is, as already discussed above, central in the realm of learning disabilities in general as well. According to Nijakowska (2001), there is much useful educational equipment on the market but it is possible for the instructor and the student to produce the equipment themselves. Nijakowska (2001) herself used wooden, plastic, paper and sponge letters when training the student in her case study in letter recognition through the tactile channel. Kinaesthetic channel was employed so that the student traced letters in the air and on her desk with her finger and wrote them in a sand tray (Nijakowska 2001). The physical sensations and movements were combined with writing, listening and looking at the letters; in other words, all sensory channels were employed in the case study (Nijakowska 2001).

Below, I will give a brief summary of the materials and sample activities presented by Nijakowska (2001) in her conference presentation. For the sake of clarity, I have grouped them into sections and titled the sections as *Letter and word drills*, *Blending activities*, *Segmentation activities*, *Recognition and matching activities*, *Combined activities*, *Games* and *Other activities*. Nijakowska's (2001) conference presentation and pictures of the instruction material can be viewed on the web pages of British Dyslexia Association International Conference at [http://www.bdainternationalconference.org/2001/presentations/thu\\_p1\\_b\\_2.htm](http://www.bdainternationalconference.org/2001/presentations/thu_p1_b_2.htm).

*Letter and word drills.* Letters and words can be practised through a multisensory drill in which the student writes the given letters or words in the air, pronounces them and writes them.

*Blending activities.* Blending sounds can be practised by having the student listen to a string of separately pronounced phonemes, after which the student tries to say the whole word. This blending activity can also be done by using a deck of flash cards with words and pictures illustrating the words: after hearing a string of separate sounds, the student attempts to recognize the word by locating the right flash card. In another application, the student hears words where

either the initial phoneme, last phoneme or the vowel phoneme has been left out and then tries to locate the right flash card. After this phase, the student can also try to recognize which graphemes represent the phonemes in the word and then write the word.

*Segmentation activities.* In these activities, the students are trained in phonemic segmentation through locating the word that has a given phoneme in a given position (initial, middle, final) in a word. This can be done so that the students are given a set of pictures or objects, from which they try to choose the one that represents a word that follows the given pattern. The students can also play ‘Odd-one-out’, a game where a word *not* having a given phonemic positioning is located, or ‘I Spy’ game where one picture is located among many pictures according to a given phonemic positioning in the word representing the picture. Sounds can also be segmented auditorily so that the students listen to the words and identify the phoneme or phonemes in a given position. They can also choose the matching flash card with the word and the picture.

*Recognition and matching activities.* The students can be trained through activities that focus on visual and auditory recognition and matching. In a visual recognition activity, the students use a deck of flash cards with a letter or word on one side and a clue picture on the other so that they have a look at the letter/word side and say the matching phoneme using the picture side as a clue if necessary. Visual recognition can also be practised by adding plastic letters or cards with letters to a given medial vowel in order to practise initial and final consonant blends and digraphs and to understand them as a single phonemic unit. Like in the recognition activity above, picture and word cue cards with the matching consonant combination on the other side can be used as aids. Auditory or visual recognition can be practised so that the students sort words into groups according to the short vowel sound in them. In connection to this, they can write the words in a chart as well. Visual matching, on the other hand, can be done by grouping words according to their common elements (e.g. certain consonant digraph) which are either indicated by the teacher

or identified by the students themselves. Visual or auditory matching can be also practised by providing the missing element in words that lack the identical part (e.g. *ri\_ \_*, *si\_ \_*, *thi\_ \_*, *so\_ \_* and *lo\_ \_* all lack the digraph *-ng*). After matching, the students are to give more examples with the same pattern.

*Combined activities.* Phonics training can be combined with other areas of language learning, for example reading comprehension and vocabulary or grammar learning. Visual recognition of spelling patterns and reading comprehension, for example, can be practised side by side by identifying all instances of a given spelling pattern (e.g. ‘i \_ e’) in a text, and, in addition, answering to comprehension questions. Visual recognition, reading comprehension and rhyming can be brought together by reading a poem aloud and marking different rhyme patterns (e.g. ‘-ew’ and ‘-or’) with different colours in text. This can be continued by filling in the gaps in another poem by using the given rhymes, and, in the end, the student can write all the words with the given rhymes in the texts. Words and phonics training are combined for example in rhyming exercises where picture cards are paired according to the corresponding words that rhyme with each other. Another activity involves the ‘Odd-one-out’ game, which can be played with picture cards by recognizing the picture that represents a word *not* rhyming with the other words in the set. Written exercises with rhymes and words can be done by filling gaps in a text by using a suitable word that rhymes with a cue word provided in the right hand column. The students can also practise words and rhymes with a list of words where the words are placed in three adjacent columns and the student tries to pick a word from each column and form three-word rhyming sets. Rhyming can also be practised by solving a triangle puzzle by matching the sides of triangles with words written on them according to the rhyme, and, consequently, forming a bigger triangle of the small ones. Spelling patterns and words can be taught by having the students read a list of words and having them write down the ones with a given spelling pattern

with the help of the list, and, later, from memory, after which the words are read again. Difficult words can be practised along with easier ones in the following way: the student reads words from a list that contains easy words in their full form and difficult words in their full forms and some difficult words with gaps. The student is then asked to 1) read all words, 2) read all words apart from the given difficult words, 3) read the difficult words in their full forms and the gap versions of them by filling in the gaps in writing in colour, 4) read only one of the difficult words, and 5) write down the difficult words from memory and read the text. In connection to grammar learning, phonics can be practised for example in connection to verbs by choosing the right word from a pair of homophones or by using different kinds of sentence completion tasks.

*Games.* There are different kinds of games that can be connected to phonics teaching. A reading game involves a deck of word or sentence cards that are to be read out loud: with a successful reading one scores a point, and words or sentences the students struggle with can be written down. A spelling board game with a ‘Battleships’ grid or board (rows are marked with numbers and columns with alphabets) so that the students place words that have a given spelling pattern (e.g. words with certain kinds of consonant blends) in their grids and try to immerse each other’s word-ships by shooting at them with shots such as ‘3B’ or ‘9K’. The word that is hit is pronounced, written down and translated into the native language. Another spelling board game can be played with a ‘letter maze’ so that each student rolls a dice ten times and moves on a maze composed of one long string of letters and ‘collects’ letters. The letters are then used to form, write and read words that follow a given spelling pattern, and the winner is the one who comes up most words. Dominoes can be used to play a visual matching and reading game: the students combine dominos that consisting of picture – picture, word – word and picture – word combinations. A newspaper spelling game can be played by locating words with a given spelling pattern in a newspaper text and writing them down.

*Other activities.* Sounds can also be practised so that the learner uses a list of words with a given common element and writes down the words so that only the given phonemic element is written in letters – other letters are marked with lines or dots. In another activity, words that are perceived visually or aurally are classified according to their graphic models: for example, vertical lines are used to represent consonants and horizontal ones to represent vowels. The student reads or listens to a list of words and writes them down matching them with the correct graphic models (e.g. the word *fish* matches with line combination | – ||), after which he is to write the words from memory by using the graphic models only. There is also an exercise where the student matches a list of words with gaps in them with the right phonemic element by writing the elements to the appropriate places in colour.

In addition to Nijakowska's (2001) conference presentation, resources for phoneme – grapheme training can be obtained for example from Sparks and Miller (2000), Blevins (2000) and Siiskonen, Aro & Holopainen (2004). In their review article on multisensory structured language techniques for at-risk foreign language learners, Sparks and Miller (2000, 128-130) list activities collected from literature on multisensory techniques: oral drills, orthography/phonology drills, grammar instruction and drills, vocabulary and dialogue drills, and reading and communicative activities. Blevins (2000, 31-32) gives ideas on how to teach syllable spelling patterns, and Siiskonen, Aro & Holopainen (2004, 68-72) list exercises and games for both sound/grapheme level and syllable level training. In regard to multisensory focus beyond phonological and orthographical training, Moilanen's (2002) book can also be considered as a valuable resource when aiming at making foreign language learning more multisensory in general.

#### 4.2.2 Language learning strategies and strategy instruction

According to Oxford (1990, 8), learning strategies are “specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferrable to new situations”. The use of foreign language learning strategies is positively associated to foreign language proficiency (Lan & Oxford 2003, 374-375; Peacock & Ho 2003, 182) and they should be taught to students who struggle with FL learning (Dufva et al. 2007, 168; Vauras et al. 2007, 143-144). Strategies have been described and categorised in many ways – a comparison of different models can be found for example in Hsiao and Oxford’s (2002) article. In her book, Oxford (1990) presents her classification, according to which strategies can be divided into six categories: cognitive, metacognitive, memory, compensation, affective and social (1990, 14).

Oxford (1990, 43-47) makes a number of observations on cognitive strategies. She describes them as a varied group of strategies which all involve “manipulation or transformation of the target language by the learner” (p. 43). Four subgroups of cognitive strategies can be distinguished: practicing strategies, receiving and sending messages, analyzing and reasoning, and, finally, creating structure for input and output. Practicing involves for example repetition, formal practice with sounds and letters, using routine formula phrases, recombination of elements in new ways, and practice in naturalistic settings. Receiving and sending messages involves for example getting the idea quickly, which can be realized by locating the main ideas with the help of quick skimming and scanning of the material, and using print and non-print resources. Analyzing and reasoning strategies, on the other hand, include deductive reasoning, analysis of new expressions by breaking them into parts, contrastive analysis by using the knowledge of native language and target language, translating the expressions encountered in target language

into the native language, and finally, transferring the usage of vocabulary or structural elements from one language to another. Creating structure for input and output involves taking notes for example in the form of a list or a semantic map, summarizing and highlighting.

Cognitive strategies have proven to be connected to foreign language proficiency (Oxford 2003, 12).

Students with language disorders may struggle with cognitive processes and thinking, and that is why they should be supported in this area by guiding them to discover the rules in classroom procedures instead of giving them the answers straight away (Nevalainen et al. 2004, 124). Cognitive skills can be developed through discussions which guide the students to their goals and where teacher uses questions as a central way of guiding (Nevalainen et al. 2004, 134-136). Bridging, that is, discussing how the skill that is being practised could be used in everyday life, should also be used in these kind of situations (Nevalainen et al. 2004, 136). The students should also practise planning, self-control, comparison and thinking aloud (Nevalainen et al. 2004, 139-146).

Metacognitive strategies, on the other hand, refer to the management of the overall learning process for example through centering, arranging, planning and evaluating (Oxford 1990, 135). These sets of strategies involve procedures such as combining the new material with the one that has been learnt earlier, paying attention, organizing, setting goals, planning, self-monitoring and self-evaluating (Oxford 1990, 136-137). Supporting the organizational skills of students with language disorders and comorbid problems in visuomotorics or attention is considered important, and that is why clarity is essential not only in instruction but also in the teaching material (Ahonen et al. 2004, 189; Pitkänen et al. 2004, 90). Clarity can be enhanced for example by using appropriate size and model in font, notebook squares and lines (Ahonen et al. 2004, 189) and by using colour-coding in texts and notebooks (Wadlington 2000, HTML document without page

numbering). The procedures the students need to use in classroom activities can also be guided with the help of pictures (Ahonen et al. 2004, 193). Problems in attention and in starting working can be approached by giving tasks in small portions and using clear and repeated procedures (Aro et al. 2004, 161). An outline of the lesson structure can be provided in writing on the blackboard or on a piece of paper so that the students can follow the lesson better (Pitkänen et al. 2004, 89). Students who have difficulties in noticing their mistakes when completing exercises can be supported by incorporating a regular checking procedure in the process (Aro et al. 2004, 161).

Memory strategies, or mnemonics, are crucial in vocabulary learning and fluency, and they help the learner in ordering, associating and reviewing information (Oxford 1990, 39). According to Oxford (1990, 38), they involve four sets: creating mental linkages, applying images and sounds, reviewing well and employing actions. Creating mental linkages can occur through grouping, associating or elaborating, and placing new words into a context (Oxford 1990, 39; see also Dufva et al. 2007, 170). Applying images and sounds, on the other hand, involves using imagery, semantic mapping or keywords, or representing sounds in memory (Oxford 1990, 39). The second set, reviewing, can be done in a structured way, which helps the learner to learn the information in a procedural and automatic way instead of learning mere facts (Oxford 1990, 39-40). The need of revision cannot be overemphasized when teaching students with language disorders: both words and central grammatical structures need to be revised repeatedly, because many of these students seem to struggle with long-term memory (Pitkänen et al. 2004, 90). Strategies employing action, on the other hand, refer to using physical sensations or mechanical techniques in learning (Oxford 1990, 39-40); an idea which was already discussed in section 4.2.1.

Compensation strategies refer to strategies that help the students to make up for the knowledge they do not possess (Oxford 1990, 47). These strategies involve intelligent guessing

with the help of linguistic or other clues, and overcoming limitations in speaking and writing for example by using mother tongue, getting help, miming or gesturing, avoiding communication, selecting the topic, adjusting or approximating the message, coining words or expressing the message in different words or expressions (Oxford 1990, 48).

Affective strategies involve being aware of one's emotions, attitudes, motivations and values (Oxford 1990, 140). Strategies related to these areas involve lowering one's anxiety for example through relaxation techniques, music or laughter, encouraging oneself through positive statements, wise risk-taking and rewards, and taking one's "emotional temperature" for example by listening to one's body, keeping a diary, using a checklist or talking with other people about emotions (Oxford 1990, 141).

Because language is a social phenomenon, social strategies are also significant in language learning (Oxford 1990, 144). The three strategy sets in this area are asking questions for clarification, verification or correction, cooperating with others and empathizing with others through developing cultural understanding and becoming aware of other people's thoughts and emotions (Oxford 1990, 145).

Students often need guidance in becoming aware of different strategies and in using them (Oxford 2003, 9). The need of strategy instruction is emphasized when teaching students with language disorders (Vauras et al. 2007, 143-144). Strategy teaching should be conducted explicitly and in connection to specific areas of language learning, for example alongside vocabulary learning, language comprehension or language production (Dufva et al. 2007, 173). The strategies should also be exemplified by the teacher and they should be discussed, employed and practised abundantly together with the students in a way that takes into account the individual differences in the use and need of the strategies (Dufva et al. 2007, 173-174). Strategy

teaching should be a long-term project where strategies are taught cumulatively and systematically so that different strategies are taught one at a time (Dufva et al. 2007, 174).

The use of strategies especially in reading and writing can be considered as an important skill in language learning because the amount and length of written material increases in the course of school years (Irvin et al. 2007, 76; Vauras et al. 2007, 135), and the students should be able to use writing as a tool in processing language when learning and when planning and executing different stages in the writing process (Vauras et al. 2007, 149, 153-154).

In addition to the general language learning strategies presented above, the literature on reading and writing strategies specifically offers more specific advice and ideas for supporting students who struggle with these aspects of language. Below, I will present a collection of ideas that may be useful when accommodating foreign language teaching for this kind of students. In addition to the suggestions for reading and listening comprehension, some ideas for oral and written expression and grammar learning are also presented.

#### 4.2.3 Resources for reading and listening comprehension

It is important to support SLI students in reading comprehension (Wodrich & Schmitt 2006, 79). Because prior knowledge is central in reading comprehension, it is good to discuss the topic of the text and activate the students' knowledge of the theme through discussion before actually operating with reading comprehension activities (Dufva et al. 2007, 165). Clarifying the purposes for reading is also needed at this point (Wadlington 2000). It is also beneficial to introduce the new vocabulary, key words and new structures before reading comprehension (Dufva et al. 2007, 165; see also Irvin et al. 2007, 81). Irvin et al. (2006, 81) also recommend the use of prereading strategies, for example predicting and questioning activities and anticipation guides before the

actual reading process (Irvin et al. 2007, 81). Looking at the type of the text can also give clues about what text will be about (Grenfell & Harris 1999, 75). Students who have problems in orienting themselves in the text can be supported for example by marking the direction of reading with an arrow (Ahonen et al. 2004, 189).

When reading the text, it is helpful to first ignore the unfamiliar words and search for the main points in the text (Grenfell & Harris 1999, 75), which is why the students should be taught to quickly scan the text through in order to understand the whole (Moilanen 2002, 99). Only after this, the students are gradually guided to pay attention to more detailed information in the text (Moilanen 2002, 99). The students can be encouraged to use the title of the text and the pictures as clues (Grenfell & Harris 1999, 75). Identifying the different sections in the textual structure is also beneficial (Grenfell & Harris 1999, 76). These skills can be practised for example through activities in which the student needs to organize pieces of text into a logical order or find a missing element in a text (Moilanen 2002, 100). On the sentence level, students can practise the analysis of sentence structure and information structure for example by searching for the core element of the sentence, distinguishing the main clause and subordinate clause from one another and by using the section division in the text to find the main points in it (Moilanen 2002, 100). The students should also be encouraged to use their common sense and their prior knowledge (Grenfell & Harris 1999, 76). When encountering new words in the text, the student can try to think of cognate words resembling the new word, make guesses based on the structure of the sentence or identify the grammatical category of the word (Grenfell & Harris 1999, 76). Reading comprehension can also be aided by finding out the meaning of new words with the help of the roots and affixes in the word (Irvin et al. 2007, 81; Grenfell & Harris 1999, 76). In regard to words, exposure to them is essential when supporting SLI students (Wodrich & Schmitt 2006, 79). The exposure can be done for example visually with words placed on the walls of the

classroom, through readings, and in the form of word games (Wodrich & Schmitt 2006, 79). Visualization activities and dramatization of texts may also be beneficial when training reading comprehension (Irvin et al. 2007, 81). Teacher read-alouds, systematic phonics training and discussions are also recommended as tools for reading comprehension (Irvin et al. 2007, 81). Irvin et al. (2007, 82) also suggest the use of cooperative learning activities and group summarizing in processing texts, and encourage the use of think-aloud processing in reading. They (Irvin et al. 2007, 82) also recommend emphasizing the different stages in reading process: 1) prereading, 2) reading and comprehending, and, finally, 3) rereading and responding. The second stage can be supported by making the students aware of text interaction, through visualization and through prediction (Irvin et al. 2007, 82). The third stage can be completed for example with the help of graphic organizers, oral interpretation or dramatization and by writing about the text (Irvin et al. 2007, 82).

The forms in the end of Medina & Pilonieta's (2006) article offer resources for processing narrative texts. For example, there is a story map where characters, settings, problems and resolution can be written after reading a narrative text (Form 8.6). In addition, there is a story frame (Form 8.7.), which is a brief fill-in exercise: the student is to fill the gaps in a text that summarizes the main things in the text the student has read. In the end of their article, on the other hand, Cash & Schumm (2006) offer resources for comprehending expository texts. The forms they present include a strategy inventory listing different strategies (Form 9.3) and resources for example for note-taking (Form 9.6) and paraphrasing (Form 9.7).

Students should be taught to emphasize essential points in the text by using for example highlighters or post-it notes (Wadlington 2000). The important parts of the text can also be read into a tape recorder (Wadlington 2000). Some students may have difficulties in staying on the right line when reading, which can be aided by teaching them to track lines for example with a

finger or with a “window card”, that is, a card with a hole through which the students sees a word or a line at a time (Wadlington 2000). According to Pitkänen et al. (2004, 85), the texts in the textbooks should be shortened and simplified to fit the needs of the students with language disorders if the original texts seem too difficult. This can be done by using easy-to-read text, that is, a modified text where sentences are shorter, subordinate clauses are fewer, and, if needed, verbs and adjectives are modified (Pitkänen et al. 2004, 85). Key words essential for reading comprehension can also be highlighted in the text (Pitkänen et al. 2004, 85).

According to Dufva et al. (2007, 166), it is better to concentrate mainly on listening comprehension if the student with a language disorder has very severe problems in reading comprehension. Students who face problems in listening comprehension can be supported by for example offering visual aids, such as pictures or written text, to help them to keep track of the speech they are to listen (Dufva et al. 2007, 166). It may also be a good idea to let the students listen to the material in shorter sections and several times, and to teach the student to use text on the tape or CD side by side with the textbook texts (Dufva et al. 2007, 166). The material to be listened can also be read to the students at a slower pace using a less complicated textual structure so that the students can also see the reader (Dufva et al. 2007, 166). The students should also be encouraged to listen to the texts at home (Dufva et al. 2007, 166).

Oral instructions should be given one at a time, and, if needed, they should also be repeated (Pitkänen et al. 2004, 83). Students’ understanding can be monitored by asking a student to repeat the directions and by letting them follow the directions first under supervision (Wadlington 2000). Outlines of the class schedule can aid the student in listening the directions (Wadlington 2000).

#### 4.2.4 Resources for oral and written expression

Oral and written expression can be supported by gradually teaching sounds to struggling students and teaching them to recognize the corresponding graphemes visually (Dufva et al. 2007, 167); an approach which was described above in 4.2.1. Letter charts displaying the letters that are especially difficult to the students can be useful tools for struggling students (Wadlington 2000). A vocabulary list can also be used as an aid when writing if the student is capable of searching words effectively in an alphabetical order (Pitkänen et al. 2004, 86-87). When learning to pronounce words, the student can be supported by providing the correct pronunciation model orally and by accentuating the word rhythm or the sentence rhythm by clapping hands or by using poems or songs; an approach that helps some students to remember the word and its pronunciation pattern better (Pitkänen et al. 2004, 85). Writing can be supported by using a computer if the student does not struggle with fine motorics (Dufva et al. 2007, 167). It may also be beneficial to concentrate on teaching selected, practicable phrases to the students (Dufva et al. 2007, 168). The strategies used in language production should also be strengthened (Dufva et al. 2007, 168). Giving extra time for oral responses might be needed when practising oral skills with students with language disorders (Wadlington 2000).

Structured oral and writing activities can also be used: in these exercises, the students are given a visual outline of the structure of the activity, which supports them in their own expression (Dufva et al. 2007, 168). This can be done for example with verb cards: the students are given a card with the beginning of an interrogative sentence (E.g. *Did you*) and they are to add suitable verb cards (e.g. *eat*) to this card by picking them from a deck, after which they are to invent an end to the sentence themselves (e.g. *Did you eat + pizza*) (Dufva et al. 2007, 168). Phonemes of the given words can also be combined to the activity, and the activity can also be applied to the

learning of other basic linguistic material in different situations (Dufva et al. 2007, 168). Structured writing frames can also be used: the students rely on a model composition when writing their own text, but alter the topic, characters, and setting in their writing (Wadlington 2000). The compositions can also be read into a recorder for further purposes (Wadlington 2000).

Students who get “stuck” in their writing process can be supported with the help of written questions that support essay writing and move the plot onwards (Aro et al. 2004, 161). If the students have problems in orienting themselves when writing, they can be supported by accentuating the start and the end point on the page for example with a marker and a dash line (Ahonen et al. 2004, 189). Because writing exercises are toilsome for students with language disorders, they should be selected with care so that they are appropriate for the individual needs of the student (Pitkänen et al. 2004, 88). According to Wadlington (2000), quality instead of quantity should be prioritised in writing tasks, and the tasks should also be altered or shortened if the students’ needs and their time-consumption require it.

Function words such as *who*, *when*, *where*, *how* and *then*, and similar-looking words such as *on* and *no*, and *from* and *for*, can be difficult to learn, which can be aided for example by writing the words on cards in raised lettering so that students can learn the words in a multisensory way and use them in texts as well (Wadlington 2000). When writing, the students can for example circle the words that seem misspelled and correct them afterwards so that they do not have to interrupt writing (Wadlington 2000). The use of spell-checkers is also recommended (Wadlington 2000).

In regard to the use of oral language versus written language, Pitkänen et al. (2004, 82-83) note that foreign language learning is not only about reading and writing. They state that students with language disorders and consequent writing difficulties should be offered a possibility to

acquire knowledge and express what they have learnt through oral expression or physical activity as well (Pitkänen et al. 2004, 82-83).

#### 4.2.5 How to support grammar learning

According to Dufva et al. (2007, 170), the extent to which grammatical structures are taught to students with language disorders should be assessed individually: the main focus should always lie on the ability to use and understand the language. Dufva et al. (2007, 170) recommend leaving out some of the grammar material and teaching only basic grammar. When teaching grammar, it is important to make sure that the students with language disorders understand the meanings of the concepts that are being discussed (Dufva et al. 2007, 170; Pitkänen et al. 89). Instead of using grammatical terminology and abstract concepts, it may be more appropriate to explain the connections between the structures in the target language and the corresponding structures in the native language (Dufva et al. 2007, 170). In grammar teaching, it is important to use familiar vocabulary so that the students are not confused because of new words (Dufva et al. 2007, 170). To make grammar teaching more explicit, the use of visual aids such as shapes, colours and arrows is recommended (Ebbels 2007; Ebbels & Van Der Lely 2001). It is also important to connect the use of grammatical structures to the everyday life of the students (Dufva et al. 2007, 170). To illustrate this point, Dufva et al. (2007, 171) present a game through which students can drill for example on prepositions: the teacher produces a pack of cards with important prepositional constructions (e.g. *I'm scared of* or *I'm interested in*), after which students are to invent suitable endings to complete the sentences. The words invented are written on cards which

are then shuffled, and after this cards can be picked from the deck and combined with different prepositional constructions (Dufva et al. 2007, 171).

#### 4.3 Inclusion in practice

The inclusion of students with different kinds of learning disabilities and individual needs into the regular education class is, by no means, meant to be a solitary project of an individual teacher. Instead, successful inclusion demands for adaptation in many dimensions: curriculum, teacher and administrator beliefs about teaching and learning, leadership in school administration, and school organization (McLeskey & Waldron 2000, 139-140). What is also needed is a change towards flexible, collaborative teaching among teachers (Frey et al. 2005, 132).

In the current Finnish education system, an individual education plan is compiled for all students who are transferred to special education (Perusopetuslaki 1998/628, § 17). This document includes information about the student, her educational needs and goals, and the supportive measures to be used, and it is to be used and developed further when planning interventions and following the student's learning process (Opetushallitus 2004, 30). Student who is recognized as having the need for special education can study either according to the general curriculum or according to an individualized curriculum, the details of which are to be defined in the individual study plan (Opetushallitus 2004, 30). Although the primary agenda is to support the special education student so that she can reach the general educational goals, an individualized curriculum can be used in those school subjects where the student is unable to meet the general learning goals (Siiskonen et al. 2007, 227).

#### 4.4 Demands for language instruction and differentiated textbooks

The approaches listed above in section 4.2 give an idea of how SLI students and/or dyslexics could be supported in EFL learning. Many of the ideas presented seem to be applicable to Tomlinson's (1999; 2001) and Tomlinson and Strickland's (2005) view on differentiation which aims at changing the quality of instruction in order to accommodate the needs of diverse learners (Tomlinson 2001, 4). Considering the great variety in the manifestations and in the underlying causes in developmental language disorders (Bishop 2006, 218; Leonard et al. 2004, 155), it seems, however, that the interventions should be selected with care so that the underlying deficit instead of the phenotype, that is, the behaviour of the student, is in focus (Bishop and Snowling 2004, 877-880).

In an inclusive classroom where there are students with SLI and dyslexia, this means, then, that a teacher who aims at facilitating effective learning of all students should 1) know the student's linguistic and nonlinguistic needs in detail, 2) possess knowledge of empirical intervention studies related to SLI and dyslexia and 3) be able to apply the information obtained from these studies when planning and implementing instruction in EFL learning. Because the interventions examined in the empirical studies often seem to be separate training programs, the application of them in ordinary, inclusive EFL courses in secondary school is not necessarily straightforward and requires further research. However, I believe that having accurate knowledge of the relationships between different deficits – linguistic and nonlinguistic – and intervention programs suitable for treating them would be a good start for planning EFL classes that include students with SLI and dyslexia. By examining the intervention studies and by consulting experts, it might be possible for EFL teachers to select and apply the kind of intervention elements that are considered as the key ways of treating the linguistic deficits of SLI students and dyslexics.

Alongside, the effects of the applied interventions should also be studied systematically in order to find out what works and what does not work in a context where a large group of students with highly different learning profiles is being instructed and where a regular curriculum is implemented for some students and individualized study plans for others.

In regard to interventions discussed in 4.2, it seems to me that the literature on SLI and dyslexia offers four lines of recommendations which can be used as a guideline when planning instruction and teaching material for SLI students and dyslexics. These four viewpoints are presented below and used as a guideline when analyzing the textbooks in my study.

The first way – and, in my opinion, the primary way – of meeting the needs of these students is 1) *to train the skills that are weak and therefore cause problems in learning*. For some, the deficits that require additional training may be mainly in phonological processing while others need training both in phonological skills and nonphonological skills, that is, morphology, syntax and semantics (e.g. Bishop and Snowling 2004, 877-880). On the other hand, there may be students who have intact phonological processing while some or all of the nonphonological skills need training (e.g. Bishop and Snowling 2004, 877-880). For many SLI students, the focus in intervention should be on developing learning strategies for example in reading and writing (e.g. Dufva et al. 2007, 168; Vauras et al. 2007, 143-144). In sum, students with linguistic deficits should be offered something “extra” for developing their weak areas in language learning.

On the other hand, it seems that students who struggle severely with FL learning because of language disorders are not always expected to learn the same things as other students (Dufva et al. 2007, 162; see also Tomlinson 2001, 13). For example, the requirements for reading and writing may be too difficult for the student and have to be discarded partially or entirely and replaced with listening comprehension and oral expression (Dufva et al. 2007, 162). The things to be learnt may have to be restricted to only the most essential vocabulary, phrases and structures

(Dufva et al. 2007, 162-168). The line of recommendation rising from this view is that students with severe linguistic deficits should be supported 2) *by limiting learning goals to the most essential things and manageable skills only.*

The third recommendation seems to be related to the variation among students in general, that is, not only to the needs of SLI students and dyslexics. According to Oxford (2003, 3-8), different learning styles should be taken into account, which means for example being aware of variation in relation to sensory preferences (visual, auditory, kinesthaetic, tactile) in taking in information and preferences in information processing. According to Tomlinson (2001, 14), struggling students should be offered the possibility to use multiple modalities, that is, visual, auditory and kinesthetic modes, in learning. According to the literature on SLI and dyslexia, spoken language is often a strength among students with language disorders (Dufva et al 2007, 167; Morris & Turnbull 2005, 239). Spoken language – along with other strengths of the students – can be offered as an alternative, compensatory way of expressing what the student has learnt in order to develop the students' strengths further and to lighten the burden of the more difficult areas, such as writing (Tomlinson 2001, 13; Tomlinson & Strickland 2005, 11; Pitkänen et al. 2004, 82-83). Hence, the third line of recommendations is 3) *to offer students multiple (e.g. multisensory) and compensatory (e.g. writing compensated by speaking) ways to learning.*

The fourth line of recommendations can be summarized as attempts to modify the organization of instruction, information and teaching material so that it is more accessible for students with language disorders. In phonemic training interventions for dyslexics, learning is often facilitated by using explicit, structured and cumulative approaches, which rely on the use of repetition and aim at automatization of skills (e.g. Nijakowska 2001, 2-4). Principles of briefness and repetition are also noted in the literature on SLI: presenting information in short sections (Dufva et al. 2007, 166; Aro et al. 2004, 161) and revising vocabulary and grammar very often is

also recommended when teaching SLI students (Pitkänen et al. 2004, 90). Clarity is important both in teacher-given instruction and in teaching materials (Ahonen et al. 2004, 189; Pitkänen et al. 2004, 90), and it can be enhanced by using suitable font size and model and with the help of pictures (Ahonen et al. 2004, 189-193) and colour-coding (Wadlington 2000; Nijakowska 2007a, 2007b). In sum, students with language disorders should be supported 4) *by using clear instruction and material which is divided into small portions, is revised often, and is easy to access both visually and linguistically.*

## 5. Materials and methods

As my material for the textbook analysis I will use a regular 8<sup>th</sup> grade exercise book and its differentiated version from two English textbook series: *Key English Courses 3-5 Workbook* (Kangaspunta et. al., 2003) and its parallel book *My Own Key Courses 3-5* (Lehtonen & Peuraniemi 2005), and *This Way Up Exercises 2* (Folland et. al., 1999) and its parallel book *This Way Up Special Exercises 2* (Lumiala & Vehkaluoma 2005). I chose these textbook series because they are, at the time of writing, the only two series on the market that offer a differentiated exercise book that can be used side by side with the regular book in an integrated learning context. In both series, both the original exercise book and the differentiated exercise book are based on one, common textbook. On the web pages for *My Own Key*, the differentiated exercise book is said to offer effective aid for students who need special support (WSOY oppimateriaalit, 2008). *This Way Up Special*, on the other hand, is said to aid students with learning disabilities (Otava oppimateriaalit, 2008). These promises seem grand but somewhat vague and therefore insufficient: the description of *My Own Key* does not specify what kind of needs for special support are in focus, and although the pages for *This Way Up Special* take up learning disabilities, they do not offer any further clarifications which could be considered important because the term ‘learning disabilities’ is, as already stated earlier, a broad concept that can be used to cover a wide range of students with diverse difficulties.

Both *Key English* and *This Way Up* series have differentiated exercise books for all three grades in lower secondary school, that is, for grades 7, 8 and 9. For my analysis, I have chosen the 8<sup>th</sup> grade exercise books: *My Own Key 3-5* and *This Way Up Special 2*, and their parallel regular books *Key English Workbook 3-5* and *This Way Up Workbook 2*. Of these, the books in *Key English* series, *Key English Workbook 3-5* and *My Own Key*, are based on a textbook with 11

‘units’ (Units 9-18), each of which focuses on specific texts, themes and linguistic items. The two parallel exercise books in *This Way Up* series are constructed around ‘chapters’ in the one, common textbook. Chapters, like units in *Key English*, concentrate on specific texts and themes. In the regular version of the exercise book, all 34 chapters presented in the textbook are addressed, where as only 25 of them are processed in the differentiated exercise book. Apart from these basic chapters, the regular version of *This Way Up* includes three additional ‘EXTRA’ chapters.

The exercises in both book series can be roughly divided into grammar exercises and, on the other hand, exercises revising and expanding on the contents of the textbook texts. In *This Way Up*, grammatical constructions and grammar exercises are all presented as a separate section in the back of the exercise book, where as in *Key English* they occur within the text-related units as separate sections so that one unit contains one grammatical item. Naturally, there is overlap in these two types of exercises in both books, but it seems that at least essential grammar exercises presenting new information have been placed so that they form a closely related entity.

In *This Way Up*, the wordlists of the texts are placed in the exercise book in the beginning of each chapter where as in *Key English* the wordlists are in the textbook. In addition, *Key English* contains self-evaluation forms in Finnish, which are aimed at monitoring the attitude, study skills and goals of the students. Self-evaluation is included also in *This Way Up* in the form of “Test Yourself”-forms.

The themes in the books are partially similar: the texts in both *This Way Up 2* and *Key English 3-5* focus on topics such as traveling and different cultures in the English-speaking world. In addition, *This Way Up 2* covers such topics as friendship, hobbies and fashion.

In later chapters in my analysis, I will refer to the books above by using the following abbreviations: *TWU* for *This Way Up Exercises 2*, *TWU Special* for *This Way Up Special*

*Exercises 2* and *Key for Key English Courses 3-5 Workbook. My Own Key Courses 3-5* is referred to as *My Own Key*. When referring to the whole book series, I will make it explicit by using the word *series* in connection with the names of the books.

In regard to the method, my aim is to conduct a textbook analysis in order to answer to the following research questions:

1. What kind of differentiating strategies have been employed in the differentiated exercise books?
2. To what extent do these differentiating strategies support students with SLI or dyslexia?

I will analyze exercises in two differentiated exercise books by comparing them with the parallel exercises in the regular exercise books. This is because the differentiated exercise books have been made later than the regular ones and thus the differences between the books seem to be based on the idea of changing and adjusting the regular book so that it would meet the needs of the target group. In practice, I will conduct the analysis by first carefully going over the exercises and examining how many of the regular exercises have been adjusted and how many are the same, how many exercises exist in the differentiated book only, and how many of the regular exercises do not exist in any kind of form in the differentiated book. In addition to this general, quantitative overview, I will continue the analysis by looking at the dissimilarities more closely to see what exactly has been made differently when constructing the differentiated books. The focus of this qualitative approach lies on the dissimilarities in different aspects in the exercises. In addition, I will also examine general adjustments that have been made in the format of the differentiated book.

In addition to the textbook analysis, I will also use a brief questionnaire in order to examine what kind of pedagogical needs the textbook authors have had in mind when writing the

differentiated textbooks and in what kind of ways of support are used in the books to meet the needs in question. The questionnaire and answers obtained from it are presented in the end of the textbook analysis in 6.6.

## 6. Textbook analysis

In this chapter, I will conduct a textbook analysis on the differentiated EFL exercise books *My Own Key Courses 3-5* and *This Way Up Special Exercises 2* by comparing them with the original, regular exercise books *Key English Courses 3-5 Workbook* and *This Way Up Exercises 2* respectively. I will focus on the dissimilarities between the differentiated and the regular version of the exercise book, because it is the changes that have been made in the differentiated book that reveal what the textbook authors consider as extra support for students with special needs of support (WSOY oppimateriaalit) or students suffering from learning disabilities (Otava oppimateriaalit). Naturally, there are many other aspects in the books that influence *all* learners using the book, and these things may have different outcomes among students with different learning disabilities. However, I will limit my study to the dissimilarities between the regular and the differentiated version of the book because it is a way to examine the ways that the textbook authors have deliberately used in order to accommodate the books for the needs of the target group. The level and the nature of the changes reveals how the authors understand the concept of differentiation and the ways of supporting students with differing pedagogical needs. This is relevant because language teaching in the field seems to rely strongly on the resources in the textbooks and the exercise books. A lot of time is dedicated to exercises in the books at school and they are often used as homework assignments, and that is why it seems reasonable to assume that they also have a fairly significant role when it comes to teaching students with special needs in EFL learning in an integrated class. The pedagogical implications of the findings presented in this chapter will be discussed in chapter 7.

## 6.1 Data

My data consists of exercises in *My Own Key 3-5* and *This Way Up Special 2*. In addition, I use the corresponding exercises in the regular versions of these exercise books, that is, *Key English Workbook 3-5* and *This Way Up Exercises 2*. This way, I will be able to compare the original, non-differentiated exercises with the modified versions in the differentiated books. The exercises used in the analysis are listed in Appendix 1.

*Key* and the parallel *My Own Key* are divided into ‘units’, which are relatively large entities encompassing the exercise material for one, two or three texts in the textbook. In contrast, *TWU* and the parallel *TWU Special* are divided into ‘chapters’, which are significantly smaller components than the units in *Key* series. Because the difference is evident in the number of the exercises related to these dissimilar entities, I have balanced the discrepancy by including in my study the exercises from two randomly chosen units in *My Own Key* and the exercises in as many as six randomly chosen chapters in *TWU Special*. Because the books are constructed differently in relation the presentation of grammar exercises, this selection alone would make the chosen material unbalanced: the units from *Key* and *My Own Key* have grammar exercises integrated among the other exercises as an entity, while grammar exercises in *TWU* and *TWU Special* do not occur in connection with the other exercises but in a separate grammar section titled as “Find out Yourself”. In order to have sufficiently representative material that includes versatile exercises from both books, I have also included the exercises from two randomly chosen grammar entities from the grammar section in *TWU Special*.

When counting the exercises, I have counted all the numbered exercises and not the potential sub-exercises marked with a, b, c, et cetera. This is because the book series differ in their presentation of exercises: both numbers and alphabets are used in the exercise books in *TWU*

series to order and structure exercises while only numbers are used in *Key* series. However, exercises in *Key* books also have sub-exercises but they are embedded in the exercise without the use of additional ordering with alphabets. The only exception in my method of counting the exercises are so called introductory exercises in the beginning of units in *Key* books: in these opening exercises (e.g. “Ready! A”, “Steady! B”), A/B- division is clearly a question of separating completely different tasks, and therefore they are counted as individual exercises. Altogether, my material consists of 54 exercises from *My Own Key* (55 in the original version, *Key*) and 63 exercises from *TWU Special* (68 in the original version, *TWU*). Of the exercises from *My Own Key*, 43 are related to the textbook chapter, where as 11 are grammar exercises. In *TWU Special*, the corresponding figures are 45 for chapter-related exercises and 18 for grammar exercises. The chosen textbook chapters and grammar sections together with the figures presented above are listed in Table 1 below:

**Table 1. Chosen material.**

	<i>This Way Up Special 2</i>	<i>My Own Key 3-5</i>
	Chapter 1: <i>New Kid on the Block</i>	Unit 11: <i>Travellers</i> <u>Grammar</u> : Singular and plural
	Chapter 2: <i>What? When? Where?</i>	Unit 12: <i>Globetrotters</i> <u>Grammar</u> : Genitive
	Chapter 17: <i>What's the Plan?</i>	
	Chapter 20: <i>You've Got Mail</i>	
	Chapter 22: <i>Just Looking</i>	
	Chapter 23: <i>Do Looks Matter?</i>	
	<u>Grammar</u> : <i>Some, every, no and their derivatives</i>	
	<u>Grammar</u> : <i>Future</i>	
Number of chapter-related exercises	45	43
Number of grammar exercises	18	11
Total number of Exercises	63	54

## 6.2 General adjustments in the books

Compared with its original version, *TWU Special* is different in its layout. The pages are larger than in the original, and the placing of exercises is looser: in many places, more pages are used for the same number of exercises. However, this seems to be compensated with the use of smaller

pictures in some places. The font size is also larger in the differentiated book. While the original exercise book is black-and-white, blue is used as an additional colour in the differentiated one. Blue seems to be used in many places which are gray or black in the original version, such as text backgrounds, frames, underlining and other details that highlight or structure information. In addition, blue is used in some pictures and as font colour in many titles and other pieces of text highlighting the text in question in relation to other textual components. Blue is also used in connection with the exercise numbering to mark the level of adjustment in the exercises in relation to the original exercises: dark blue refers to a modified exercise, light blue to an exercise that exists in the same form also in the regular book, and white to an exercise that exists only in the differentiated book.

Like in *TWU Special*, the font size is larger and the placing of exercises on pages is looser in *My Own Key* compared with its original version. Both the original and the differentiated book are black-and-white in this book series. In the differentiated version, the exercise numbers appear on grey square backgrounds and are smaller than in the original version, where the numbers are considerably larger and have no such background. Compared to *TWU* books, there seem to be more alterations in the layout of the differentiated exercise book in regard to the use and placement of different textual and illustrative elements.

### 6.3 Differentiation in the choice of texts

When examining the books as a whole, it seems that differentiation occurs in the selection of textbook chapters, which reflects Tomlinson and Strickland's (2005, 7-8) idea of differentiating *content*. As already noted earlier, both the regular exercise book and the differentiated exercise book are to be used together with the same textbook, which means that the same textbook texts

form the source from which linguistic material is chosen to the exercises in the exercise books. However, it seems that while the regular exercise books have exercises for all texts in the textbooks, the differentiated exercise books do not offer exercises for all texts. In other words, the users of the differentiated exercise book are expected to concentrate on fewer texts than the users of the regular version.

In regard to *TWU* books, it appears that the exercises in *TWU Special* cover 25 of the 34 chapters in the original exercise book *TWU*. Also the three 'EXTRA' chapters in the original book have been left out when selecting linguistic material to the differentiated exercise book. Thus, while the original exercise book has exercises for 37 texts chapters, the differentiated one provides them for 25, which is 67,6 % of the original chapters. In the preface of *TWU Special* (Lumiala & Vehkalo 2005, 4), it is stated that the chapters that have been left out are aimed to be used as extra material, and the student who needs this material should collect it from the teacher as photocopies.

The units in *Key* series, on the other hand, are usually constructed around one, two or three texts in the textbook. According to the web pages for *Key* books (WSOY oppimateriaalit), the textbook texts within units are classified as A-, B- and C-texts according to the task competence classification: A-texts provide the basic material for everyone, B-texts bring flexibility and new viewpoints to the theme and there are fewer exercises related to them, and C-texts are more demanding and develop mainly reading comprehension. It is stated on the web pages (WSOY oppimateriaalit) that this division contributes to differentiating the material. In regard to *My Own Key*, it is stated that the focus of the exercises lies in A-texts and basic grammar (WSOY oppimateriaalit). In other words, one of the ways to differentiate in *My Own Key* seems to be the reduction in the number of texts that are processed in the exercises.

In sum, it seems that one of the differentiating strategies used in the differentiated books is a reduction in the text material that is processed in the exercises. Because of the limited scope of this study, I will not examine the characteristics of texts that have been included or left out in more detail. Instead, I will focus on how differentiation is applied to that kind of exercise material that exists both in the original exercise book and in the differentiated exercise book. In other words, differentiation is examined by comparing the exercises that are based on the same texts in the common textbook. I am interested in to what extent and how the exercises in the regular exercise book have been changed when they have been taken into the differentiated version.

#### 6.4 Differentiation in the selection of exercises

In addition to the general adjustments and the differences in the choice of texts, the differentiated books also differ in their selection of exercises. This can be understood in terms of differentiating *process* (Tomlinson and Strickland 2005, 7-8) because it involves differences in the ways in which the selected material is processed. It seems that the differentiated books vary in to what extent the original exercises in the non-differentiated book have been adjusted. In *TWU Special*, the degree of differentiation is marked in each exercise by using colour codes, which were discussed in 6.2. In *My Own Key*, there is no such coding system. However, similar degrees of differentiation can be traced in this book as well through a careful examination of the exercises.

In both book series, the differentiated exercise book contains 1) exercises that have been retained the same as they are in the regular exercise book, 2) exercises that have been modified for the differentiated book and 3) new exercises that do not exist at all in the original version of the exercise book. In addition, some of the exercises in the original version have been left out

from the differentiated version. In other words, some of the new exercises in the differentiated books seem to have replaced the exercises that have been left out when choosing material from the original version.

The frequencies and percentages describing the degrees of differentiation are presented in Table 2. In *TWU Special*, the proportion of non-modified exercises is 28,57 per cent. In *My Own Key*, the corresponding proportion is 16,7 per cent. Modified exercises, on the other hand, make up 66,67 per cent of the exercises in *TWU Special*, while the corresponding percentage is 46,3 in *My Own Key*. While the proportion of both non-modified and modified exercises is smaller in *My Own Key*, the percentage of completely new exercises, that is, those that do not exist in the non-differentiated version of the exercise book, is much higher in it: in *TWU Special* new exercises make up only 4,76 per cent of the exercises while the corresponding proportion in *My Own Key* is as large as 37,0 per cent.

**Table 2. The degree of differentiation in the exercises.**

	<i>TWU Special</i>			<i>My Own Key</i>		
	Ex.	%		Ex.	%	
Non-modified	18	28,57	%	9	16,7	%
Modified	42	66,67	%	25	46,3	%
New	3	4,76	%	20	37,0	%
TOTAL	63	100	%	54	100	%

In both book series, there are also exercises in the original version that have not been included in the differentiated version. On the other hand, the differentiated books also include new exercises which can be considered as replacements for the original ones that have been omitted.

In *TWU Special*, there are three new exercises, and 11 of the original ones have been left out. In *My Own Key*, the difference between the number of the new exercises and the missing ones is smaller: there are 20 new exercises while 23 of the original exercises have been left out. The relationship between the new exercises and the ones that have been left out is presented in Table 3. The figures show that reductions of exercises have taken place in both differentiated books. However, more exercises have been omitted when compiling *TWU Special* compared with the reduction that has occurred in *My Own Key*.

**Table 3. New exercises in relation to the ones left out.**

	<i>TWU Special 2</i>	<i>My Own Key</i>
New	3	20
Left-outs	11	23
Balance	-8	-3

In this sample, quantitative changes are greater in *TWU Special* than in *My Own Key*. Because of the relatively small sample size and relatively small negative balance, extensive generalizations of the books as a whole cannot be made on the basis of this result. It also seems that the division of exercise book material into exercises varies in some places in the books so that one exercise in the original version has been broken into two exercises in the differentiated version; an issue that causes slight discrepancies between the differentiated and regular books. In regard to the main point of this study, which is to explore the repertoire of differentiating strategies, the results are nevertheless significant: the balance between the new exercises and left-outs clearly reveals that *reduction in the number of exercises* is one of the differentiating strategies used by the textbook authors in both book series.

The balance between the new and the missing exercises reveals only a part of the quantitative changes made in the differentiated books. It is also important to examine to what extent the modified exercises in the differentiated books are different in relation to the corresponding original exercises in terms of the quantity of linguistic material. This question will be examined below in 6.5.

## 6.5 Ways of differentiating in the exercises

I will now examine the ways in which differentiation is realized in the modified exercises in the data, that is, in the exercises that exist both in the differentiated book and in the regular book but have been altered for the differentiated version. I will first examine the quantitative differences and then the qualitative differences. In addition, the use of Finnish in the differentiated books is also discussed.

### 6.5.1 The volume of exercises: reduction and expansion

It seems that there are quantitative differences between the differentiated book and the regular book in regard to the linguistic material included in the modified exercises. The differences are sometimes manifested in the length of the exercise: a different number of responses from the student is required in the parallel exercises. In some exercises, on the other hand, the quantitative differences can be seen in the length of student response, which may consist of individual words, phrases, sentences or short texts. In addition, quantitative changes seem to occur in the number of subtasks included in the exercise. The quantitative changes in the modified exercises in the data are summarized in Table 4 below. Because of the relatively small sample size and the small

number of modified exercises, different types of quantitative changes (number of student response, length of student response and number of subtasks) are not recorded separately but they are analyzed as an entity. Of the 42 modified exercises in *TWU Special*, the majority (47,6 %) seem to be reduced, while modified exercises with no quantitative changes make up the second largest group (40,5 %). Although there are also modified exercises that have been expanded in the differentiated book, the representation of them is small, only 11,9 per cent. Of the 25 modified exercises in *My Own Key*, on the other hand, modified exercises with no quantitative changes make up the largest group (56,0 %). Reduced exercises make up the second largest group (32,0 %), and, like in *TWU Special*, expanded exercises make up the smallest group (12,0 %). The findings imply that reduction of original exercises occurs more frequently than expansion of them in both differentiated exercise books. In regard to generalization, however, the results are to be interpreted with caution because of the small sample size. Although the results may not be conclusive in regard to the relative use of reduction versus expansion of the exercise material in the books, this study clearly reveals that *exercise modification through reduction* and *exercise modification through expansion* belong to the differentiation repertoire of the authors.

**Table 4. Quantitative changes in the modified exercises.**

	<i>TWU Special</i>		<i>My Own Key</i>	
	Exercises	%	Exercises	%
Reduction of the original	20	47,6 %	8	32,0 %
Expansion of the original	5	11,9 %	3	12,0 %
No difference	17	40,5 %	14	56,0 %
TOTAL	42	100 %	25	100 %

#### 6.5.2 The quality of exercises: a look on oral expression and sensory channels

In addition to quantitative changes in the exercises, qualitative changes in the nature of activities can be considered as another relevant aspect when examining the ways of differentiation. Because of the recommendations given in the literature on SLI and dyslexia, I will examine the distribution of oral presentation and multisensory modalities in the exercises.

The number of modified exercises that include oral presentation are presented in Table 5 below. I have counted in all modified exercises that include instruction for oral presentation in any form. It seems that the differences between the differentiated and the regular book are nonexistent in *TWU* series and insignificantly small in *Key* series: there is no difference between the number of oral presentation exercises in *TWU Special* and the original *TWU*, and in *My Own Key* there is one oral presentation exercise less than in the original *Key*.

**Table 5. Oral presentation in the modified exercises.**

	<i>TWU Special</i>	<i>TWU</i>	<i>My Own Key</i>	<i>Key</i>
Oral exercises	18	18	4	5

In order to have a comprehensive idea of the frequency of oral presentation exercises, the new exercises, that is, the ones that exist in the differentiated books only, need also be examined. This is contrasted with the number of oral exercises that exist only in the regular books. Table 6 shows that the representation of oral presentation exercises is greater among the exercises that appear exclusively in the regular book than it is among the exercises that appear only in the differentiated version. None of the new exercises in *TWU Special* includes oral presentation, while oral presentation is required in 36,4 per cent of the exercises appearing in the regular book only. In *Key* series, the difference between the books is smaller: among the new exercises in *My Own Key*, oral presentation is needed in 10,0 per cent of the exercises while the corresponding figure for the regular exercise book is 17,4 per cent. Although the difference is smaller than in *TWU* series, it seems, however, that the balance is similar: oral presentation exercises are more frequent among the exercises that have been left out in the differentiated book than among the new exercises that have replaced the left-outs.

Because the sample size is small, only tentative evidence can be drawn from the data. On the basis of this data, it seems that differentiated books do not differ from the regular books significantly in regard to oral presentation exercises in either of the book series. In other words, oral expression has not been used as a differentiating strategy in either of the differentiated books.

**Table 6. Oral presentation in the new exercises vs. in the exercises appearing only in the original version.**

	<i>TWU Special</i> only		<i>TWU</i> only		<i>My Own Key</i> only		<i>Key</i> only	
	Ex.	%	Ex.	%	Ex.	%	Ex.	%
Oral presentation	0	0	4	36,4 %	2	10,0 %	4	17,4 %
No oral presentation	3	100 %	7	63,6 %	18	90,0 %	19	82,6 %
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Table 7 shows the number of modified exercises where auditory, visual, kinesthetic and tactile sensory channels are referred to in the exercise instructions. The use of auditory channel refers to listening and the use of kinesthetic channel to exercises that require bodily movement. In regard to the use of visual channel, the exercises that have been included are those that involve the use of pictures, mind-maps or other graphic non-text components as a part of the exercise – in other words, pictures that seem to have merely a decorative function are not included here. The figures in Table 7 suggest that the differences between the differentiated and the regular versions of the books in regard to the use of different sensory channels are nonexistent among the modified exercises in *TWU* series and insignificantly small in those in *Key* series. Between the original and differentiated *TWU*, there is no difference in the use of auditory and visual elements, and kinesthetic or tactile elements do not occur at all in the exercises. In *Key* series, there is no difference in the use of auditory elements, while visual elements are used in four exercises in the regular book and in only three in the differentiated version. Like in *TWU* books, there are no modified exercises with kinesthetic or tactile elements.

Likewise, the findings on the use of sensory channels in new exercises versus left-outs show no great differences between the differentiated and the regular versions. Table 8 shows that none of the four channels is addressed in the new exercises in *TWU Special*, while the exercises that have been left out include one (9,1 % of all left-outs) with an auditory element and one (9,1 % of all left-outs) with a visual element. In *My Own Key*, the sensory channels are used slightly more than in the regular version of the book: an auditory component is present in one exercise (5,0 % of all new exercises) and a visual component in two (10,0 %). In the regular *Key*, the only channel used is the visual channel and it occurs in one left-out exercise.

**Table 7. Sensory channels in the modified exercises.**

	<i>TWU Special</i>	<i>TWU</i>	<i>My Own Key</i>	<i>Key</i>
Auditory	2	2	4	4
Visual	3	3	3	4
Kinesthetic	0	0	0	0
Tactile	0	0	0	0

The frequencies are small and so is the sample size, and that is why the results give only a tentative idea of the use of different sensory channels as a differentiating strategy. On the basis of the results obtained from this sample, it seems that sensory channels have not been used as a differentiating element in the exercises.

**Table 8. Sensory channels in the new exercises vs. in the exercises appearing only in the original version.**

	<i>TWU Special</i> only		<i>TWU</i> only			<i>My Own Key</i> only			<i>Key</i> only	
	Ex.	%	Ex.	%	%	Ex.	%	%	Ex.	%
Auditory	0	0	1	9,1	%	1	5,0	%	0	0
Visual (non-text)	0	0	1	9,1	%	2	10,0	%	1	4,3 %
Kinesthetic	0	0	0	0		0	0		0	0
Tactile	0	0	0	0		0	0		0	0

### 6.5.3 Use of Finnish

The textbook analysis also revealed that the regular and differentiated exercise books differ in the relative use of English and Finnish. Unlike most of the aspects discussed above, these differences have not been studied through a systematic quantitative analysis but I will only present general observations that I came across when I examined other characteristics in the exercises.

There seems to be an increased use of Finnish in among both modified exercises and new exercises in the differentiated exercise books. Finnish translations of English material are offered more often in the differentiated books than in the regular ones. The greater use of Finnish is manifested also as additional wordlists in connection to some exercises. Sometimes the wordlist exists both in the differentiated and the regular version of the book, but the one in the differentiated one includes more words.

In addition to exercises, Finnish is used in exercise instructions in both differentiated books. In *Key* series, this does not appear to be a strategy related to differentiation because exercise

instruction is given in Finnish also in the regular book. However, in *TWU Special*, the use of Finnish in all of the instruction in the differentiated book is clearly related to differentiation because a considerable amount of the instruction in the regular book appears to be in English.

Hence, it can be stated that *replacing or accompanying English language with Finnish language in the exercise material* is used as a differentiating strategy in both book series, while *replacing English exercise instructions with Finnish instructions* can be considered as an explicit differentiating strategy only in *TWU Special*.

#### 6.6. Comments from the textbook authors

On April 3 2007, I sent a short questionnaire via e-mail to the authors of *My Own Key* series and *This Way Up Special* series in order to find out what kind of students the books are aimed at and how the modifications made to the original material support students with learning disabilities or special needs. In the questionnaire to the authors of *My Own Key*, I asked the following questions:

1. Where did you get the idea of making *My Own Key* book?
2. On the web pages of WSOY, the following is said about *My Own Key* books: “*My Own Key* books are effective aids for students who need special support”.
  - a) What kind of needs of special support / learning disabilities are included in the target group of *My Own Key 3-5*? Cross all the alternatives that describe the target group of the book.

\_\_\_ *Specific learning disabilities*

\_\_\_ specific difficulties in reading and writing  
(dyslexia)

\_\_\_ difficulties in linguistic functioning (specific  
language impairment)

\_\_\_ difficulties in speech production

\_\_\_ difficulties in speech comprehension

\_\_\_ difficulties in spatial perception

\_\_\_ attention deficits

\_\_\_ deficits in motor functioning

\_\_\_ *Global learning disabilities*

(=learning disabilities related to developmental disabilities, such as the level of development in talent and intelligence)

\_\_\_ *Other difficulties / problems / special needs; which?*

b) How are the needs of support in the target group taken into consideration in the exercises in *My Own Key 3-5* (see alternatives crossed in *a*), in other words, what supportive measures are used in the book to meet these needs?

c) On what grounds have these supportive measures have been chosen? Cross all the factors that have influenced the choice of the supportive measures.

\_\_\_ own experience in educational practice

\_\_\_ own knowledge of learning disabilities

\_\_\_ experts in different fields (psycholinguistics, special pedagogy, etc.); which fields and which experts?

\_\_\_ research and literature related to the topic; which sources?

\_\_\_ other; which?

3. What are pedagogically the most significant differences between the regular *Key English 3-5* and *My Own Key 3-5*?

4. Other things you would like to tell about *My Own Key* book, its target group or the supportive measures used in it:

The questions presented to the authors of *This Way Up Special* were the same, and only the name of the book was changed in the formulation of the questions. However, the formulation of question 2 was slightly different because of the different phrasing used on the web pages of the books: *My Own Key* is advertised as a book aimed at students who need special support (WSOY oppimateriaalit 2008) where as *This Way Up Special* books are said to support students suffering from learning disabilities (Otava oppimateriaalit 2008). The differences in the phrasing of question 2 in *This Way Up Special* questionnaire is illustrated below:

2. On the web pages of Otava, the following is said about *This Way Up Special* books: “New *This Way Up Special* exercise books support students suffering from learning disabilities”.

a) What kind of learning disabilities are included in the target group of *This Way Up Special 2*? Cross all the alternatives that describe the target group of the book.

b) How are the learning disabilities in the target group taken into consideration in the exercises in *This Way Up Special 2* (see alternatives crossed in a), in other words, what supportive measures are used in the book to meet these special needs?

I received an answer to the questionnaire from the authors of *This Way Up Special* on May 23, 2007, and from the authors of *My Own Key* on November 30, 2007. The reply from *This Way Up Special* was written by Jaana Lumiala and Päivi Vehkaluoma, and the reply from *My Own Key* by Jyrki Peuraniemi. The questions in both questionnaires were presented in Finnish. The questions sheets and full replies to the questions are recorded in Appendix 2.

The first question examined the motives for making the differentiated book. Jaana Lumiala and Päivi Vehkaluoma, the authors of *This Way Up Special*, state that the book was made because of a request from the publisher. Jyrki Peuraniemi, one of the authors of *My Own Key*, explains the background of the book in more detail: in book promotion events, teachers had brought up the need for differentiating material that can be used side by side with regular material

and includes the contents of the curriculum in an easier form. In addition, Peuraniemi mentions the growing need of special education and the integration of students with special needs into the regular education.

Question 2a revealed significant differences in the approaches of the textbook authors. Of the different disorders and difficulties listed in the questionnaire, Lumiala and Vehkaluoma from *This Way Up Special* selected the following: specific difficulties in reading and writing (dyslexia), difficulties in linguistic functioning (specific language impairment), difficulties in spatial perception, attention deficits, deficits in motor functioning and global learning disabilities. Thus, the authors seem to include a variety of disorders and difficulties in the target group of the book. As can be seen, also developmental language disorders studied in my thesis are included in the list. Peuraniemi from *My Own Key*, on the other hand, did not select any of the listed disorders or difficulties. Instead, he states that the authors of *My Own Key* have not wanted to define the concept of 'student who needs special support' in detail but have aimed at creating a flexible, easier material that a teacher can use in many different ways according to the differing needs among students. It is assumed that the teacher using the material makes case-specific decisions when assessing how to use the material among students in need of special support. It is also assumed that the teacher makes these decisions based on her own professional knowledge and the support offered by the school for example via special education teachers, who can give information about the student's skills and abilities. According to Peuraniemi, the users of *My Own Key* can be many: students who have an individual education plan because of a learning disability or some other reason, students who study some of the time in special education, or, for example, immigrant students.

In question 2b, I inquired the supportive measures used in the differentiated books. The authors of *This Way Up Special* replied that the book is characterized for example by larger font,

more space, a different kind of layout and placing of elements, and the more frequent use of capital letters. In regard to exercises, the book is said to include facilitations and modifications, more cue words and much more repetition. In addition, the exercises concentrate on basic vocabulary and basic grammatical structures. The answers from the authors of *My Own Key* were similar to those from *This Way Up*, but the former gave a more detailed description of the supportive measures. The author of *My Own Key* replied that *My Own Key* provides an abridged basic vocabulary for each thematic entity, and this basic vocabulary is practiced clearly in the exercises. Grammatical structures and examples are also often simplified. Exercises are shorter and have simpler sentences or Finnish translations to help the student. In reading comprehension exercises, more guidance is provided and the text is clarified in more detail and in shorter sections. Writing and oral exercises also provide more guidance. The books are also said to be characterized by familiar and repeated exercise types. In regard to the layout, the font is larger and the layout is looser.

Question 2c addressed the sources used in making of the differentiated book. The authors of *This Way Up* replied that they had used their own experience in educational practice, their own knowledge of learning disabilities, experts in different fields and research and literature related to the topic. Of the experts used, the authors mentioned special education teachers and Mia Dufva, who is a psychologist and an expert on learning disabilities and foreign language learning in the University of Turku. Her work was cited in the theoretical part of this thesis. Of the research and literature used, the authors mention articles written by Aino Paatela, who, according to her home pages (2008), is a Bachelor of the Arts and a teacher of English and Swedish. The writings on her homepage address a disorder called positional vertigo and its connections to learning disabilities, for example dyslexia and SLI. In addition, the authors mention the book *Sanat sekaisin. Kielelliset oppimisvaikeudet ja opetus kouluikässä*, the articles of which have also been referred to

in my thesis. The authors of *My Own Key* report to have used their own experience in educational practice, their own knowledge of learning disabilities and experts in different fields. Of the experts, they mention English teachers who have given feedback and special education teachers. In addition, the authors replied that they have participated in different kinds of training and had discussions with teachers.

Question 3 addressed the most significant pedagogical differences between the differentiated book and the regular book. According to the authors of *This Way Up Special*, the material to be learnt is more specifically delimited and there is a lot of repetition in the book. In their answer to this question, the authors of *My Own Key* referred to question 2b.

Question 4 gave the authors the opportunity to tell more about the books. The authors of *This Way Up Special* stated that their book is useful also in regular education among weaker students. The authors of *My Own Key* stated that their book is an answer to the hopes of many English teachers and special education teachers, and positive feedback about the book is being given constantly. According to the authors, the book is an age-specific and sensible material with interesting thematic entities, and it supports the student, maintains the students' interest despite their difficulties and offers experiences of success.

On the basis of the answers, it seems that the essence of the differentiated books is similar in the two series. Firstly, the target group of the books is not very specific but the books seem to be aimed at a large audience that covers a great variety of students. The authors of *My Own Key* do not even want to specify the target audience of the book but they suggest that many kinds of students with different disorders can benefit from the material. The answers from the authors of *This Way Up Special* reflect a great level of variety in the target group as well, and they have specified it by choosing as many as six different problem categories listed in the questionnaire. In regard to the supportive measures used in the books, the books seem to rely on similar

approaches. Both books are told to be characterized by simplification of exercises, the reduction of linguistic material, repetition and modifications in the visual layout of the books. Thus, the answers of the questionnaire seem to carry a message very similar to the findings obtained from the textbook analysis. Of the main aspects listed by the authors, only repetition was not included in my textbook analysis.

## 7. Results and discussion

The results obtained from the textbook analysis show that the differentiating strategies that have been used to modify the regular exercise books in order to create a differentiated version of it are the following in both book series:

- 1) *changes in layout and the organization of information*
- 2) *reduction in the number of texts processed in the exercises*
- 3) *reduction in the number of exercises*
- 4) *modification of the original exercises through*
  - a) *reduction*
  - b) *expansion*
- 5) *inclusion of new exercises*
- 6) *more frequent use of Finnish cue words and phrases in the exercises.*

In *This Way Up* books, there is also a systematic difference between the uses of Finnish in the exercise *instructions* in regard to the regular versus differentiated book: the instruction was given in English frequently in the regular book and only in Finnish in the differentiated version. The use of multiple sensory channels and oral expression as a differentiating strategy was also examined, and the analysis shows that these aspects were not used in differentiation. The majority of the differentiating strategies used in the differentiated books seem to be quantitative (strategies 2, 3, 4 and 5), where as only two can be considered qualitative (1 and 6). The textbook analysis indicates that the quantitative strategies used in the differentiated exercise books focused on reducing the material, and although expansion was also used in the modified exercises

(strategy 4b), it did not seem to be a very significant differentiation strategy when considering the overall strategy repertoire. Of the qualitative strategies, only strategy 6 can be considered linguistic; strategy 1, in contrast, was focused mainly on the layout and other non-linguistic aspects in the books.

In section 4.4, I discussed the demands that the needs of SLI students and dyslexics place on language instruction and teaching materials. In the light of intervention research and other literature on SLI and dyslexia, four recommendations were extracted:

- 1) *training the skills that are weak and therefore cause problems in learning*
- 2) *limiting learning goals to the most essential things and manageable skills only*
- 3) *offering students multiple (e.g. multisensory) and compensatory (e.g. writing compensated by speaking) ways to learning*
- 4) *using clear instruction and material which is divided into small portions, is revised often, and is easy to access both visually and linguistically.*

When evaluating the textbooks in regard to support given to students with developmental language disorders, these four points need to be taken into consideration.

In regard to strategy 1, neither of the differentiated textbooks seems to address the needs of students with developmental language disorders: no intensive training of linguistic deficits, which is the core idea in interventions planned for dyslexics and SLI students, seems to be included in the modified exercises or new exercises. Instead, exercises appear to be very similar to the original exercises in regard to the skills that are trained, and underlying deficits such as poor understanding of phoneme – grapheme correspondence, poor nonphonological skills or poor use of learning strategies in reading and writing are not addressed – at least not directly. In the

light of the intervention research, directness, explicitness and methodicalness are, however, crucial elements when aiming at training SLI students' and dyslexics' linguistic deficits. This is why it is not enough to present the topics of phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics embedded in the linguistic material but they need to be explicitly pointed out and manipulated in the exercises again and again in a systematic way. In their answers to my questionnaire, the textbook authors did not say a word about specific skill deficits that students with learning disabilities or special needs may have, and, similarly, the ways of support they listed did not include procedures that would aim at training students in specific skills.

At this point, it is important to note the difference in the approach of the authors: while the authors of *My Own Key* did not want to define the target group of their book, the authors of *This Way Up Special* were willing to select as many as six different problem categories including dyslexia and SLI. Because of this difference, one could have assumed that the authors of *This Way Up Special* would have also been able to describe the central deficits and corresponding supportive measures related to these problem categories in a more specific way. In regard to *My Own Key*, not defining the target group with the help of problem categories could have been considered as an understandable choice if the authors would have specified the deficits that the book is aimed to remediate. However, the authors did not do this, but stated that many different kind of students may benefit from the book. This may be true, but it does not explain what the mechanisms behind the modifications and benefits are. In the light of the textbook analysis, it seems that the main “benefit” in both differentiated books is that less linguistic material is processed in the exercises, which, together with the increased use of Finnish, makes the exercises easier. In the textbook authors' descriptions of the main modifications in the differentiated books, the ideas of reduction of material and simplification of exercises were also in focus. This idea of choosing the most essential from the teaching material (differentiating strategy 2) for those who

cannot be expected to learn as much as the others in the class is also recommended in the literature, and that is why the use of this procedure in the books can be justified. However, when students with language disorders struggle because of problems that could be eased with additional linguistic or strategic training, lowering the requirements seems not the primary way of meeting the students' needs. In sum, where as skill training and learning strategy instruction aim at developing skills and solving problems, lowering requirements seems to be a way to avoid the problems.

Multiple sensory channels or oral expression do not seem to be used as ways of differentiating in the exercises (differentiating strategy 3). It could be argued that the use of either of these would have been a fairly simple way to alter the original exercises: the linguistic content and the volume of the exercises could have been retained the same and only the ways of expression would have been changed when planning the required student response in the exercises. This kind of modifications could offer alternative ways of learning which would be especially suitable for students who struggle with written expression and should be given more opportunities to express themselves for example by speaking.

In regard to differentiating strategy 4, appropriate modifications can be found in both differentiated books in terms of layout and organization of information: the font is larger than in the original and the placement of different elements of pages is looser. Organization of information is also clearer because many of the exercises are shorter than in the regular exercise book. Repetition in the exercises was not examined in the study, but it seems that the authors of both differentiated exercise books have had this in mind: in the replies from the author, *My Own Key* is said to present reading comprehension exercises in small portions and to employ familiar, repetitive exercise types. Repetition is also brought up by the authors of *This Way Up Special*.

These characteristics support dyslexics' and SLI students' need for clarity in the organization of information.

In sum, the differentiating strategies used in the differentiated exercise books seem to be focused on lowering the level of the original exercises through quantitative reductions in the amount of linguistic material and through more frequent use of Finnish, and, on the other hand, on making the material more accessible in terms of layout and organisation of information. In regard to developmental language disorders and dyslexia, the books in question cannot be considered as an effective way of supporting students because crucial linguistic deficits and problems in the use of learning strategies are not addressed in an explicit way. Although the reductions in the selection of linguistic material and organizational adjustments are recommended in the intervention literature, it is clear that these differentiating strategies are not the kind of strategies that confront the core problems in developmental language disorders. The large body of research conducted on structured linguistic training interventions suggests that it is this kind of skill-specific approach that is needed when aiming at supporting students with language disorders in a way that actually enhances their linguistic functioning. Thus, it seems that these books alone do not offer adequate support for students with SLI or dyslexia. When planning an exercise book that offers remedial support for dyslexics or SLI students, a great amount of more suitable training material is needed to fill the pedagogical and linguistic gaps in these books.

This study suggests that in regard to appropriate intervention for dyslexia and SLI, the development of differentiated textbooks for EFL learning is still in its infancy. Considering the starting point for making these books, it seems that the textbook authors have tried to bite off more than they can chew: on the basis of their answers to the questionnaire, they have tried to create a material that would meet the needs of many kinds of students with a variety of needs. However, because the needs behind different disorders are so specific, intricate and in many

places still unclear, it seems very ambitious to try to create a material that would actually meet this goal. In order to produce material that would concentrate on training the skills that are weak rather than merely lowering the existing requirements, a careful definition of the target group's deficits is needed. In addition, the material should be made so that the intervention research in the field of learning disabilities is used to set the guidelines for supportive measures.

In regard to the textbook analysis, it should be noted that the sample size was relatively small, and therefore a larger study on the contents of the differentiated books is needed in order to have a more extensive picture of the relative use of different differentiating strategies. It is also important to keep in mind that the textbook is only a part of EFL teaching, and the teacher always has the chance to differentiate teaching in many ways and modify the exercises in the textbook. A more extensive study that would take into account actual classroom practices and teaching would be useful in mapping out the current situation in regard to supporting students with developmental language disorders or other learning disabilities in EFL classes. However, because the textbook and the exercises in it often form a significant part of EFL teaching, the results of my textbook analysis do shed some light on how learning disabilities are understood and faced in the field of EFL teaching.

## 8. Summary

In my pro gradu thesis, I have examined what kind of differentiating strategies are used in differentiated EFL textbooks and how well the strategies used support students with developmental language disorders. I conducted a textbook analysis where I compared the differentiated and the regular versions of two 8<sup>th</sup> grade EFL exercise books, *My Own Key Courses 3-5* vs. *Key English 8 Courses 3-5 Workbook*, and *This Way Up Special Exercises 2* vs. *This Way Up Exercises 2*. The differences between the regular and the differentiated version were treated as textbooks authors' differentiating strategies used to support students with special needs or learning disabilities.

The analysis showed that six differentiating strategies were used in the differentiated books in both book series. The differentiating strategies included the following: 1) *changes in layout and the organization of information*, 2) *reduction in the number of texts processed in the exercises*, 3) *reduction in the number of exercises*, 4) *modification of the original exercises through a) reduction and b) expansion*, 5) *inclusion of new exercises* and 6) *more frequent use of Finnish cue words and phrases in the exercises*. Of these, strategies 1 and 6 can be considered as qualitative strategies, where as strategies 2, 3, 4 and 5 are quantitative. The use of strategy 1 makes the differentiated exercise books better in terms of clarity compared to the regular versions of the books. Modification of the original exercises through expansion (strategy 4b) and inclusion of new exercises (strategy 6) were not used as much as reductions (strategies 2, 3 and 4a), and that is why the quantitative reductions together with the increased use of Finnish and the organisational changes formed the most significant differentiating strategies in the differentiated exercise books in both book series. In regard to the use of Finnish in exercise instructions, there was a systematic difference between the book series: both *Key English 8 Courses 3-5 Workbook*

and the differentiated *My Own Key Courses 3-5* had Finnish exercise instructions, where as Finnish instructions were given in *This Way Up Special Exercises 2*, and English instructions in the parallel *This Way Up Exercises 2*. Thus, Finnish was used as a differentiating strategy also in exercise instructions in *This Way Up Special Exercises 2*. Differentiation in the quality of exercises in regard to the use of different sensory channels and use of oral presentation was nonexistent or insignificantly small in both book series.

In the light of the multifaceted linguistic deficits in SLI and dyslexia, it seems that the differentiating strategies displayed in the differentiated EFL textbooks were limited. The central problems of developmental language disorders specifically were not addressed in the differentiated books: there was no special material that would have concentrated on additional explicit training of phonological skills, nonphonological skills, or learning strategies in different language skills. Support of this kind could have been expected at least from *This Way Up Special*, the authors of which stated that the book is aimed at students who have for example SLI or dyslexia. On the other hand, the books did address dyslexics' and SLI students' need for briefness and clarity in the presentation of information. Quantitative reductions may also be good for those language-impaired students who struggle severely with EFL and need to have lower requirements in their studies. In regard to the developmental language disorders, the support given the differentiated EFL textbooks examined in this study does not seem to be adequate because the differentiating strategies used in the books do not include the remedial training of specific linguistic problem areas that are in focus in the interventions studies.

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## APPENDIX 1: Textbook exercises

**Table 1. Exercises from *My Own Key Courses 3-5* and *Key English 8 Courses 3-5 Workbook*.**

<i>My Own Key Courses 3-5</i>		<i>Key English 8 Courses 3-5 Workbook</i>	
Exercise	Page	Exercise	Page
Ready! A	42	Travel Quiz	44
Ready! B	42	1	45
Steady! C Travel Quiz	43	2	45
Key Words	45	3	46
1	44	4	46
2	45	5	47
3	46	6	47
4	46	7	47
5	47	8	48
6	48	9	48
7	48	10	48
8	49	11	49
9	49	12	49
10	50	13	49
11	50	14 Key Verbs	50
12	51	15	50
13	51	16	51
14	52	17	50
Key Verbs	53	My Own Files	51
15	53	EXTRA	52
16	53	1	58
Act It Out C	54	2	58-59
1	60	3	59
2	61	4	59
G1	57	5	59
G2	57	Plural rule	53-54
G3	58	G1	55
G4	58	G2	55
G5	59	G3	55
Ready! A	62	G4	56
Steady! B	62	G5	56
1	63	G6	57
2	63	1	61
Key Words	64	2	61
3	64	3	61
4	65	4	62
5	65	5	62
6	66	6	63

7	66	7	64
Key Words	67	8	64
8	67	9	64
9	68	10	65
10	69	11 Key Verbs	65
11	70	12	65
12	70	13	66
Key Verbs	70	14	66
13	71	S-genitive rule	67
14	71	G1	68
G1	73	G2	68
G2	73	G3	69
G3	74	G4	69
G4	74	G5	70
G5	75	G6	70
G6	75	G7	70

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**Table 2. Exercises from *This Way Up Special Exercises 2* and *This Way Up Exercises 2*.**

<i>This Way Up Special Exercises 2</i>		<i>This Way Up Exercises 2</i>	
Exercise	Page	Exercise	Page
1	6	1	5
2	6	2	6
3	7	3	6
4	7-8	4	6
1	9	5	7
2	9	1	12
1	53	2	13
2	53	3	13
3	54	1	87
4	54	2	87
5	54	3	88
6	55	4	88
7	56	5	88
8	56	6	89
9	57	7	90
10	57	8	90
11	57	9	90
1	68	10	91
2	68	11	91
3	68	12	91-92
4	68-69	1	105
5	69	2	105
6	70	3	106
7	70	4	106
8	70	5	107
1	72	6	107
2	72	7	108
3	73	8	108
4	74	9	108
5	74	10	109
6	74-75	11	110
7	75	1	115
8	75	2	116
9	75	3	116
10	76	4	117
11	76	5	117
1	78	6	117-118
2	79	7	118
3	79	8	118
4	79	9	118
5	80	10	119

6	80	11	119
7	80	1	121
8	81	2	121
9	81	3	121
1	128-129	4	122
1	130	5	123
2	130	6	123
3	131	7	123
4	131	8	124
5	132	9	124
1	142	1	204-205
2	142	1	206
3	142	2	206
4	143	3	206-207
5	143	4	207
6	143	5	207
7	144	1	215
1	144-145	2	215
2	145	3	216
3	146	4	216
4	146	5	216
5	146	6	217
		7	217
		1	217
		2	218
		3	218-219
		4	219
		5	219
		6	219
		7	220
		8	220

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## APPENDIX 2: Questionnaire for the authors of *This Way Up Special Exercises 2*

**NOTE:** This sheet presents both the original questions sent to the textbook authors and the answers from the authors. The questions were sent on April 3, 2007 via e-mail and the answers were received on May 23, 2007 via e-mail. To distinguish the answers from the questions, the answers received from the textbook authors are presented here in underlined italics. Some minor changes in layout have also been made in this sheet for the sake of clarity.

### Kysely *This Way Up* -oppikirjasarjan tekijöille

3/4/07

Nimi: Jaana Lumiala, Päivi Vehkaluoma

1. Mistä saitte idean *This Way Up Special* -kirjan tekemiseen?

Otavasta otettiin yhteyttä ja ehdotettiin

2. Otavan www-sivuilla *This Way Up Special* -kirjoista sanotaan seuraavaa: ”Uudet *This Way Up Special* -työkirjat tukevat oppimisvaikeuksista kärsiviä oppilaita.”

a) Minkälaisista oppimisvaikeuksista kärsiville oppilaille *This Way Up Special 2* on suunnattu? Rasti kaikki vaihtoehdot, jotka kuvaavat kirjan kohderyhmää.

\_\_\_ *Erityiset oppimisvaikeudet*

x lukemisen ja kirjoittamisen erityisvaikeus (dysleksia)

x vaikeudet kielellisissä toiminnoissa (dysfasia)

\_\_\_ puheen tuottamisen vaikeudet

\_\_\_ puheen ymmärtämisen vaikeudet

x vaikeudet avaruudellisessa hahmottamisessa

x vaikeudet tarkkaavuudessa

x vaikeudet motoriikassa

x *Laaja-alaiset oppimisvaikeudet*

(=kehityksellisiin vaikeuksiin, kuten lahjakkuustasoon ja älylliseen kehitykseen liittyvät oppimisvaikeudet)

\_\_\_ *Muut vaikeudet / pulmat; mitkä?*

b) Miten *This Way Up Special* -kirjan tehtävissä otetaan huomioon kohderyhmän oppimisvaikeudet (ks. a-kohdassa rästetyt vaihtoehdot), ts. mitä tukikeinoja kirjassa käytetään näiden erityistarpeiden kohtaamisessa?

*Esim. isompi fontti, enemmän tilaa, lyhyemmät tehtävät, helpotuksia & muokkauksia, isojen aakkosten käyttö, enemmän apusanoja, asettelu ja taitto, keskittyminen perus sanastoon ja -rakenteisiin, paljon enemmän kertausta...*

c) Millä perusteella tukikeinot on valittu? Rasti kaikki tukikeinojen valintaan vaikuttaneet seikat.

x oma käytännön kokemuksenne opetustyössä

x oma tietämyksenne oppimisvaikeuksista

x eri alojen asiantuntijat (psykologivistiikka, erityispedagogiikka, ym.); mitkä alat ja ketkä asiantuntijat? *Mia Dufva, erityisopettajat*

x aiheeseen liittyvä tutkimus ja muu kirjallisuus; mitkä lähteet? *Esim. kirja Sanat Sekaisin, artikkeleita (esim. Aino Paatela)*

\_\_\_ muu, mikä?

3. Mitkä ovat pedagogisesti merkittävimmät erot tavallisen *This Way Up Exercises 2:n* ja *This Way Up Special 2:n* välillä?

*Opittavan aineksen tarkempi rajaaminen, runsas kertaaminen*

4. Muuta, mitä haluaisitte kertoa *This Way Up Special 2:sta*, sen kohderyhmästä tai siinä käytetyistä tukikeinoista:

*Kirja on käyttökelpoinen myös yleisopetuksessa heikommille oppilaille.*

Lämmin kiitos vastauksistanne! Voitte palauttaa kyselyn sähköpostin liitetiedostona tai postitse. Vastaan myös mielelläni mahdollisiin pro gradu- työtäni koskeviin kysymyksiin.

Yhteystiedot:

Sähköposti: Paula.Atila@uta.fi

Osoite: Paula Attila, Satamakatu 1 c 51, 33200 Tampere

### APPENDIX 3: Questionnaire for the authors of *My Own Key Courses 3-5*

**NOTE:** This sheet presents both the original questions sent to the textbook authors and the answers from the authors. The questions were sent on April 3, 2007 via e-mail and the answers were received on November 30, 2007 via e-mail. To distinguish the answers from the questions, the answers received from the textbook authors are presented here in underlined italics. Some minor changes in layout have also been made in this sheet for the sake of clarity.

#### Kysely Key English -oppikirjasarjan tekijöille

3/4/07

Nimi: Jyrki Peuraniemi

1. Mistä saitte idean *My Own Key* -kirjan tekemiseen?

Key English – oppikirjan esittely- ja palautetilaisuuksissa nousi esiin opettajien tarve sellaiselle eriyttävälle materiaalille, jota voitaisiin käyttää tavanomaisen oppikirjan rinnalla mutta joka kuitenkin sisältää helpotettuina opetussuunnitelmassa vaaditut asiat.

Erytisopetuksen tarpeen kasvu yleensä.

Eryistarpeita vaativien oppilaiden integrointi tavanomaisen opetukseen.

2. WSOY:n www-sivuilla *My Own Key* -kirjoista sanotaan seuraavaa: ”*My Own Key* -tehtäväkirjat ovat tehokkaita apuvälineitä erityistä tukea tarvitseville oppilaille.”

My Own Key on helpotettu materiaali ja jokainen opettaja tekee tilannekohtaisesti päätöksen, soveltuuko se hänen ryhmässään olevalle erityistä tukea tarvitsevalle oppilaalle. Tätä päätöstä tehdessään opettaja käyttää mitä todennäköisimmin hyväkseen omaa ammattitaitoaan ja koulun tarjoamaa apua, esim. erityisopettajan tietämystä oppilaan taidoista ja kyvyistä.

Eryistä tukea tarvitseva oppilas voi olla esim. oppilas, jolla on jostain syystä henkilökohtainen opetuksen järjestämistä koskeva suunnitelma esim. jostain oppimisvaikeudesta johtuen tai oppilas, joka on tavanomaisen opetuksen piirissä mutta opiskelee esim. osan tunneista erityisopettajalla. My Own Key – oppilas voi olla myös maahanmuuttajaoppilas.

Emme ole halunneet määritellä tarkasti sitä, millainen ”erityistä tukea tarvitseva oppilas” on. Tarkoitus on ollut tehdä koko Key English – sarjasta oppimateriaali, joka joustaa oppilaiden ja opettajien tarpeiden mukaan. My Own Key on yksi osa koko Key English – sarjaa, josta on tehty mahdollisimman joustava paketti, jota opettaja voi käyttää monin eri tavoin.

a) Minkälaisista erityisen tuen tarpeista / oppimisvaikeuksista kärsiville oppilaille *My Own Key 3-5* on suunnattu? Rastita kaikki vaihtoehdot, jotka kuvaavat kirjan kohderyhmää.

\_\_\_ *Erityiset oppimisvaikeudet*

\_\_\_ lukemisen ja kirjoittamisen erityisvaikeus (dysleksia)

\_\_\_ vaikeudet kielellisissä toiminnoissa (dysfasia)

\_\_\_ puheen tuottamisen vaikeudet

\_\_\_ puheen ymmärtämisen vaikeudet

\_\_\_ vaikeudet avaruudellisessa hahmottamisessa

\_\_\_ vaikeudet tarkkaavuudessa

\_\_\_ vaikeudet motoriikassa

\_\_\_ *Laaja-alaiset oppimisvaikeudet*

(=kehityksellisiin vaikeuksiin, kuten lahjakkuustasoon ja älylliseen kehitykseen liittyvät oppimisvaikeudet)

\_\_\_ *Muut vaikeudet / pulmat / erityistarpeet; mitkä?*

b) Miten *My Own Key 3-5* -kirjan tehtävissä otetaan huomioon kohderyhmän tuen tarpeet (ks. a-kohdassa rastitetut vaihtoehdot), ts. mitä tukikeinoja kirjassa käytetään näiden tarpeiden kohtaamisessa?

- *annetaan aihealueen suppea perusanasto*
- *harjoitellaan perusanastoa selkeästi*
- *rakenneasiat ja esimerkit usein yksinkertaistettu*
- *lyhyemmät tehtävät, yksinkertaisempia lauseita, suomennokset auttamassa*
- *ohjatimmat luetunymmärtämistehtävät, joissa teksti selvitetään tarkemmin ja pienemmissä osissa*
- *ohjatimmat kirjoitustehtävät ja puhetehtävät*
- *isompi fontti*
- *taitto väljempi*
- *tutut tehtävätyypit, jotka toistuvat*

c) Millä perusteella tukikeinot on valittu? Rasti kaikki tukikeinojen valintaan vaikuttaneet seikat.

oma käytännön kokemuksenne opetustyössä

oma tietämyksenne oppimisvaikeuksista

eri alojen asiantuntijat (psykologivistiikka, erityispedagogiikka, ym.); mitkä alat ja ketkä asiantuntijat?

palautetta antaneet englanninopettajat, erityisopettajat

\_\_\_ aiheeseen liittyvä tutkimus ja muu kirjallisuus; mitkä lähteet?

\_\_\_ muu, mikä?

erilaiset koulutukset, keskustelut opettajien kanssa

3. Mitkä ovat pedagogisesti merkittävimmät erot tavallisen *Key English 3-5:n* ja *My Own Key 3-5:n* välillä?

Katso 2b.

4. Muuta, mitä haluaisitte kertoa *My Own Key* -kirjasta, sen kohderyhmästä tai siinä käytetyistä tukikeinoista:

*My Own Key vastaa monen englanninopettajan ja erityisopettajan toiveeseen. Siitä on tullut jatkuvasti hyvää palautetta. Heikommalla oppilaalla on järkevä ikäkauteen sopiva materiaali, joka on aihealueiltaan kiinnostava ja joka tukee oppilasta, pitää mielenkiintoa yllä vaikeuksista huolimatta ja antaa onnistumisen elämyksiä.*

Lämmin kiitos vastauksistanne! Voitte palauttaa kyselyn sähköpostin liitetiedostona tai postitse. Vastaa myös mielelläni mahdollisiin pro gradu- työtäni koskeviin kysymyksiin.

Yhteystiedot:

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