

The role of textbooks in Finnish mother tongue and literature classrooms

Tainio, L. 2012 *Skriftpraktiker hos barn och unga*. Lehti-Eklund, H., Slotte-Lüttge, A., Silén, B. & Heilä-Ylikallio, R. (toim.). Vasa: Åbo Akademi, s. 11-33 23 Sivumäärä (Rapport från pedagogiska fakulteten vid Åbo Akademi; nro 35)

The Role of Textbooks in Finnish Mother Tongue and Literature Classrooms

Liisa Tainio

In Finland, the national curriculum is the basic document that guides school teachers in their work. The last national curriculum for basic education was published in 2004 (National Core Curriculum for Basic Education, henceforth referred to as the NC 2004). This document states that the main underlying values of the education include a respect for human rights, equality, and democracy (p. 12). It also takes seriously the role of language and culture for the development of individuals and the community: “Basic education must also support each pupil’s linguistic and cultural identity and the development of his or her mother tongue” (NC 2004, 12). This aim is supported by devoting more lessons to the subject of mother tongue and literature (henceforth MTL) than to any other subject in basic education. As a consequence, MTL is taught in every grade in basic education, and it is also prominent subject of studies in secondary education. For example, it is the only compulsory choice in the matriculation examination test in the end of upper secondary school. Furthermore, Finnish university students, regardless of the field of their major, are expected to study (scientific) literacy skills in the courses that are dedicated to their mother tongue education.

Finland has two national languages, Finnish and Swedish. While the national curricula for the subjects MTL (Finnish) and MTL (Swedish) are similar, they are not identical (NC 2004). In Finnish basic education, it is also possible, under some conditions, to study Sami, Romany, or Finnish sign language as the mother tongue, and to some extent to study also some other language as the mother tongue (NC 2004; Tainio & Grünthal 2012). However, in this article, the acronym MTL will refer to the subject of Finnish as the mother tongue taught in the Finnish-medium schools. Ninety percent of the population of Finland speaks Finnish as their mother tongue; this is why the great majority of schools use Finnish as the medium of studies.

In addition to the national curriculum, Finnish schools create and write their own curricula in order to specify their own ideas and goals of education. This procedure

is developed not only to help schools and teachers to identify their own strengths and common pedagogical ideas but also to explain these openly and in more detail to all concerned, especially to students and their parents. (Vitikka 2009.) However, these documents provide teachers the freedom to choose their own teaching materials, teaching methods, as well as their individual focus and emphasis on the content. This all has been cited as one of the reasons for the success of Finnish students in the international assessments such as PISA (Hautamäki et al. 2008).

Some researchers have, nevertheless, been sceptical about the teachers' independent academic and didactic contributions to the local curricula of their school. The local curricula have sometimes followed extremely closely the order and content of the textbook chosen for use in the school; and when a new textbook has been selected, the local curriculum has been changed to follow the new order and content of the selected volume (Heinonen 2005, 5). This has led researchers to ask whether the textbook in practice is treated as the curriculum of the subject (Heinonen 2005, 34–35; Pynnönen 2006). While these observations refer to teachers in Finland in general, in the MTL framework, it becomes interesting to ask and explore the role of the textbook in MTL classrooms. In other words, what is the importance of the textbook for the assigned curriculum in MTL? Furthermore, how does the textbook organize the pedagogic interaction between teachers and students? And finally, how do teachers use textbooks in the course of the interaction in the classroom, and how do students orient to that textbook during their lessons?

In this article I will investigate the use of school textbooks in Finnish MTL classrooms. After providing some background information about the subject, MTL textbooks and earlier studies on this phenomenon, I will turn to analyse MTL classroom interaction in order to identify the basic functions that textbooks have in organizing the pedagogic – or other types of – classroom interaction. My data consists of naturally occurring classroom interaction both in lower and upper grades of basic education¹. The data will be explored by applying ethnomethodological conversation analysis (e.g. Schegloff 2006; Tainio 2007).

Mother tongue and literature education and textbooks

¹ In this article, my data consist of video recorded lessons both in the lower and the upper grades in basic education. On lower grades, I have analysed 14 MTL lessons on 6th grade (students aged about 12). This material was collected in the Centre of Educational Assessment (Department of Teacher Education, University of Helsinki) in 2004 in the Helsinki area. I want to thank especially Sirkku Kupiainen for her generous help with this data. In addition, I have analyzed 10 MTL lessons in the upper grades in basic education, most of them collected in the 9th grade (students aged about 15) in the Helsinki area. These data has been video recorded in 2002–2011.

The central aim for MTL in the national curriculum education is that when students complete their basic education they have developed sufficient literacy skills for their further studies and everyday life in the society (NC 2004, 44–55; Linnakylä & Arffman 2007), that is, to study literacy in its deepest sense (Christenbury, Bomer & Smagorinsky 2009). This aim is approached by studying the various aspects of literacy, with the help of communication studies, literature, media, drama, theater, and folklore studies, as well as linguistics, including obtaining a knowledge of grammar, sociolinguistics, language policy, and language awareness. MTL is depicted as “an informational, artistic and skill subject” which helps the student to develop a healthy sense of self-esteem and to become “an active and ethically responsible communicator and reader who gets involved in culture and participates in and influences society” (NC 2004, 12, 44).

The production of textbooks is organized by commercial publishers, and usually, the schools and the teachers themselves are usually free to choose those books for their use that they see as being the most appropriate for their own pedagogical goals. In practice, there are, of course, restrictions, most of them economic but also administrative or social. For instance, some schools are obliged to follow the decisions made by the local educational municipality; other schools adhere to their strict tradition of using specific textbooks, or sometimes several teachers are expected to select a textbook by reaching a consensus regarding the most appropriate textbook for all of them to use. (Palmu 2003, 90.) Earlier, until 1992, the National Board of Education was in charge of inspecting of all the new learning materials for schools, but currently, the practice is that the teachers themselves are expected to select those materials that are of a high academic level, adhere to the national curriculum, and are pedagogically suitable for their teaching. They may choose from the parallel series available on the market. Teachers are therefore constantly facing the competing commercials of different materials from several publishers. For example, currently there are seven series available in the market for Finnish MTL education in the upper grades of comprehensive school, and some of the publishers have more than one series of textbooks available at the same time (the situation in April 2012).

As these textbooks are produced for the market, the writers, editors and publishers attempt to design and write as high quality books as possible, both academically and pedagogically. The textbooks need to be rich in their content, illustration and typography as well as in the other aspects of the design of the book. These books are typically created by a team; and one book is usually meant for one subject and for one grade. Moreover, each book is usually accompanied by a workbook or by other kinds of supplementary learning material, and always with a guidebook for teachers. On average, in my opinion, the textbooks published for Finnish MTL education are of high quality, covering many aspects of the subject, and they take into account the contents and purposes of teaching and learning in the framework of current national curricula. This is not to argue that textbooks could not be developed further in several aspects. For example, research reveals that the

textbooks do not always promote equality in respect to gender and sexuality (Palmu 2003; Tainio & Teräs 2010; Tainio forthcoming).

Mother tongue and literature teachers as textbook users

There are many earlier observations on Finnish teachers using textbooks extensively in their teaching (e.g. Kari 1988; Norris et al. 1996; Gordon, Holland & Lahelma 2000) but little research has been conducted particularly on how especially MTL teachers utilize textbooks in their teaching. For the background literature of my analysis on classroom data, I will refer to two recent surveys (Heinonen 2005; Luukka et al. 2008), one also including teachers' interviews (Heinonen 2005), as well as the latest national survey on MTL education (Lappalainen 2011), and an ethnographic study that includes both interviews and observations on MTL lessons (Palmu 2003). I will refer to these studies in order to better formulate questions regarding on, how many teachers use textbooks in their teaching, and what that influence is on their teaching. What is important to point out is that, with the exception of Palmu's observations (2003), all these studies rely on teacher self-reports and their beliefs regarding their own activities and not on the analyses of their activities in naturally occurring classroom situations using, for example, video recorded classroom interaction as data. As a consequence, these types of studies might have produced a very different type of results (cf. Schoultz, Säljö & Wyndhamn 2001).

All the above-mentioned surveys report that MTL teachers use textbooks very much in their teaching. For example, in their survey of 750 subject teachers² of MTL and second or foreign language (S/FL) teachers in the last (9th) grade of Finnish basic education, Luukka et al. (2008, 90–98) discovered that 76% of the MTL teachers report using textbooks often in their teaching; and 93% of them also considered the textbook to be the most important teaching material. According to the latest national survey, a slightly increased percentage, that is, 85% of the MTL teachers report using textbooks rather extensively or very extensively in their teaching (Lappalainen 2011, 25). However, it should be noted that there are always teachers who do not use textbooks in their teaching: in Finnish-medium schools 4% of the MTL teachers, and in Swedish-medium schools as much as 42% of the MTL teachers did use textbooks minimally or not at all in their teaching (Hellgren 2011, 65).

² In Finnish basic education, the teachers receive a different type of education in respect to the grades they are to teach. For teaching in the lower grades (1–6; pupils aged 7-12), primary teachers get more education in pedagogy and less education in subject teaching; in the upper grades of basic education (7–9; pupils aged 12-15) as well as in the secondary schools, the teachers are referred to as subject teachers, and they are specialized in the didactics of certain subjects, such as MTL or mathematics.

In addition, the percentages concerning MTL teachers could be compared to those of the S/FL teachers of whom 98% report using a textbook often in their teaching, 98% consider the textbook as the most important teaching material, and furthermore, 37% are of the opinion that all the information one needs in teaching can be found in a textbook (Luukka et al. 2008, 90–98). MTL teachers actually report using more fictional texts in their classrooms than school textbooks, and of the MTL teachers, only 14% think that all information needed in teaching can be found in the textbook (Luukka et al. 2008). This means that the S/FL teachers use textbooks and rely on them in their teaching more than the MTL teachers (see also Pitkänen-Huhta 2003).

According to Heinonen's (2005) smaller survey (157 teachers) and interview data (23 teachers), especially in the lower grades of basic education, the primary teachers' agenda adhere quite closely to the contents of the textbook in MTL and especially in mathematics. These teachers expect that both the textbook and the guidebook for teachers be designed to help their work and to offer various types of exercises for students to motivate them. Typically, teachers who closely follow the contents of the textbooks do not, on average, favor student-centered teaching methods (see also Kaikkonen 2011). However, according to Heinonen (2005, 158), both the teachers in the lower grades and the MTL teachers in the upper grades remain more motivated to use student-centered methods than, for example, subject teachers of mathematics. Heinonen (2005, 155) also determined that particularly MTL teachers thought it to be significant to develop their own pedagogical knowledge.

However, in Palmu's (2003) ethnographic study concerning the upper grades of basic education, MTL education is described in a slightly different light. According to the interviews of both teachers and students and researcher's observations, the textbooks in MTL classrooms are treated as a genre among others, and the MTL textbook is not seen as the most prominent genre for teaching and learning (Palmu 2003, 68–69). This is in line with the results by Luukka et al. (2008), since MTL teachers seem to use many types of texts and genres in classrooms (see also Niemi 2011). In the interviews conducted with MTL teachers, they also mention that they should themselves like the books they use, otherwise their teaching cannot be successful (Palmu 2003, 88); they also report that the more experience they have in teaching, the easier it is for them to focus on the most relevant materials in the textbooks and to select the sections that motivate students (Palmu 2003, 90).

All these results and observations present a somewhat puzzling picture of textbook use in MTL teaching. They suggest that MTL teachers in the upper grades make use of textbooks in their teaching rather often but not as often as the other subject teachers. However, teaching MTL in the lower grades constitutes following to a greater extent the contents of the textbooks and the instructions offered in guidebooks for teachers. Nevertheless, these studies do not report on how teachers actually use textbooks and how literacy practices are organized in MTL

classrooms (cf. Pitkänen-Huhta 2003). To investigate the functions of textbooks for the organization of classroom interaction, I will now turn to analyze the actual literacy practices in classrooms.

Textbook-based literacy events in mother tongue and literature classrooms

In this article, by the term literacy event, I refer to those sequences of action in the classroom where students and teachers act and interact around a text that is available for the participants (for the definition of the term literacy event, see also Pitkänen-Huhta 2003, 60-61; Bloome et al. 2005, 6). More specifically, I am interested in the role of textbooks, which means that I will focus on literacy events involving participants acting and interacting with texts that appear in a textbook. In her study on English as a foreign language classroom, Pitkänen-Huhta (2003) analyzes the role of the textbook in interaction in order to determine out how literacy events are organized, how the shape of the text also shapes the literacy event and pedagogic interaction, and in how texts are talked about in the classroom.

In my analysis I will focus on the functions of textbooks for the organization of interaction and on the scheme of the literacy events that can be identified in my data (see also Pitkänen-Huhta 2003). However, it should be emphasized that in this article, I only indicate some aspects of the various functions and ways, and levels of functions in which textbooks are used in the course of classroom interaction (see also Wikman 2004, Nygård Larsson 2011). I will thus provide examples and merely focus on three aspects of the use of a textbook. First, the use of a textbook as a material artefact, and second, the textbook used as the agenda, and third, the textbook used as the instruction.

1 Textbook as a material artefact

Textbooks are often used in classrooms to indicate concretely the moves from one phase of a lesson to another. To orient to the textbook as a physical artefact means that the participants handle the book in some ways, for example, that students take up their textbooks from their schoolbags and put them on their desks. These types of student embodied activities effectively serve the purpose of activating all participants to join in participating and it makes it clear to all students that a new phase of their pedagogic interaction is about to commence.

My first example is taken from a lesson in the 9th grade. Here, the object of teaching is the history and status of Finland and the Finnish language in the 19th century. Prior to this extract, the teacher has been talking about this subject at length. During his monologue, he sits in front of the classroom on his desk, holding the textbook in his hands. Even so, he looks at the students and not at the book. Students are sitting quietly at their desks but some of them display non-participation, for example, by leaning forward resting on their desks, or by

students to focus their attention on the book (lines 3–4). During his instruction on searching for certain pages (lines 3–4), the teacher himself stands up and starts to move around, looking at his own book in his hands. This activity gives students time to concentrate on the activity of picking up their books and searching for the right page. During the teacher’s quiet moving around, one of the students, Matti, says aloud a pair of dialogue particles (*no niin*, line 6) that usually in Finnish classroom interaction, and especially in the repertoire of this specific teacher, indicate moving from one phase to another (ISK 2004, Tainio 2012). The teacher repeats the students’ turn (line 7) and after a pause, informs the students of what will be done next and what is the meaning of the textbook in the next phase of the lesson (line 9).

This example illustrates a very common practice that can be found in all the classrooms in my data. The teachers use various verbal and nonverbal cues to indicate that it is time for the students to pick up their textbooks and to search for a certain page in them. This allows both the teacher and the students to concentrate on embodied activities for a while; usually these types of teacher’s instructions follow the teacher’s lengthy monologues or public pedagogic discussions on certain subjects. Using a textbook as an artefact allows teachers to manifest publicly and efficiently the agenda of the lesson and to indicate the changes in the modes of pedagogic activities (see also Example 5).

2 Textbook used as the agenda

Earlier studies suggest that textbooks exert a major influence on the local school curriculum (Heinonen 2005, Pynnönen 2006). In my data it became evident that the textbook significantly influences at least on the level of the agenda for the lessons. This is especially true when teachers want to check homework and to discuss on correct answers, they design their teaching along the lines of textbook sections or exercises (Kaikkonen 2011; Pitkänen-Huhta 2003). In my data, this pattern is especially common in lessons on 6th grade (age 12), when students are expected to learn Finnish grammar. The scheme of these literacy events is surprisingly similar to the one Pitkänen-Huhta (2003) has identified in her data.

According to Pitkänen-Huhta’s (2003) analysis, a typical pattern for a public literacy event in classroom interaction consists of four steps. She argues that in EFL lessons, the most typical literacy events are carried out during the review of homework or other exercises. The steps for these types of literacy events are illustrated in the following scheme (Pitkänen-Huhta 2003, 65-140):

- I The teacher introduces the exercise
- II The teacher reads the instruction aloud verbatim
- III The student’s answer, the teacher’s acceptance
- IV The teacher closes the sequence

During the first step, the teacher introduces on a general level, the content, and usually also the aim of the exercise; that is, the teacher points out the agenda for the next phase of the lesson (see Example 2). During the second step, the teacher reads aloud the instruction from the textbook or from the other source of the written text. Reading aloud seems to signify to the students the importance of the verbal design of the instruction (see Examples 3 and 5, cf. Nissi 2010, Tainio & Piirainen-Marsh 2011). This probably explains why the text is read aloud even when it is available for students to read in their own books on their desks. This reading aloud also serves as a signal for students to focus on the on-going activity and to orient to their important contribution in this literacy event, namely to answer. For example, in my data, the students often raise their hands to signal their readiness to answer even before the teacher finishes reading aloud (see Example 4; also Lehtimaja 2012). The third step in the scheme, the answers of the students and the teacher's acceptance, can be carried out following a repeated routine that follows the three-part turn sequence that is typical for classroom interaction, namely the initiation–response–evaluation sequence (IRE, see e.g. Mehan 1985; Nikula 2007; example 4). However, this step can also consist of several longer turns, and turn out to be developed as a lengthy sequence that includes the students' questions, comments and other initiatives, as well as the teacher's answers and comments, both in connection to the students' turns and as presented independently. This step forms the core of the literacy event. The fourth step is usually very short, merely the informing that the event is to be finished, which on the other hand, is also evident to the students as they share the same text or exercise as their teacher. However, this step displays the move to the next phase of the lesson (see Example 5).

The next examples (2–5) illustrate the steps in the scheme of the literacy events in a 6th grade MTL classroom while studying Finnish grammar. These examples are taken from the same lesson. The object is to study nominative and genitive cases by completing the exercises in the textbook. Students have been assigned these exercises as homework and now the correct answers are checked in a discussion led by the teacher.

The first extract (Example 2) occurs at the beginning of the lesson. The teacher has checked who is present and has planned a timetable for the forthcoming lessons. After that, the teacher explains the agenda of the current lesson. This occurs five minutes after the lesson has begun. In the beginning of this extract, the teacher stands in front of the class, looking at the students.

Example 2 (Nominative and Genitive, 6th grade)

01 Teacher: [TOTA ni tarkistetaan nominatiivitehtävät (.)
 [**OKAY we check the nominative exercises (.)**
 [*((gaze shifts from the students to the
 textbook on her desk))*
 02 katotaan vähä [genetiivitehtäviä ja

display the core structure of this step by showing how the basic turn taking is organized during this activity. In this extract, the students are asked to inflect nouns into the genitive plural. In Finnish, the genitive plural usually has two different forms; the task here is to mention both of them³. Prior to the extract, Frida has been sitting her hand raised up, ready to answer, even before the teacher presented the question. Just before line 1, the teacher made a playful comment regarding another student's previous answer and also addresses a playful comment to Frida. This means that the teacher was already looking at Frida in the beginning of the line 1, and the elicitation of the turn for her is possible only by using the verb form of a second person singular (see also Lehtimaja 2012).

Example 4 (Nominative and Genitive, 6th grade)

- 01 Teacher: [saat sanoo seuraavan.
[you may say the next one.
 [((looking at Frida, smiling))
- 02 Frida: [öää (.) [lyhyiden lyhyitten.
[umm (.) [short ones short ones
 [((smiling)) [((gaze at textbook))
- 03 Teacher: ly[hyiden lyhyitt[en. (.) k_{ol}[me
sh[ort ones short [ones. (.) thr[ee.
 [((teacher gazes at the tex[tbook in her
 hands)) [((several st[udents raise
 their hands)) [((teacher
 gazes at the students))
- 04 [(.) Timo.
[(.) Timo.
 [((teacher looks at the students and then at
 Timo))
- 05 Timo: (on)kse[päiden päitten.
is it hea[ds heads.
 [((gazes at book))
- 06 Teacher: päiden päit[ten.
heads he[ads.
 [((gazes at book))
 [((students raise their hands))
- 07 Timo: päiden [päitten
heads [heads.
- 08 Teacher: [nel[jä tervee(llinen).
[fo [ur healt(hy).
 [((gazes at the students))
 [((students raise their hands))
- 09 [(.) Aune.

³ To keep the translation simple, in the English version of the transcription, the genitive forms are presented in the nominative plural, e.g. *heads heads*, lines 5–7.

[(.) **Aune.**
 [((gazes at Aune))

The detailed transcript indicates how smoothly the process of turn taking is delivered during this task. The teacher and the students orient to each other and to the textbook in turns, marking them by their shifts in their gazes to indicate not only the importance of the textbook and the recipients of the talk, but also the importance of the repeated rhythm and tempo emerged in this activity. This repetition is manifested verbally by repeating the IRE sequence one after the other. However, the repetition is also manifested nonverbally. For example, the students look at the teacher when they request a turn, and after getting it, they orient back to the book. The teacher then looks at the students after she has been able to glance at the next instruction, and when a student begins to answer, the teacher's gaze shifts back to the book. During this repetitive verbal and nonverbal routine, the students are actively participating with several students raising their hands even prior to the actual instruction by the teacher (lines 3 and 6). Moreover, all the participants seem to display a shared focus of interaction. The textbook plays a central role in this process – the shared text is the focus of the talk, forming the structure of the discussion, and all participants are nonverbally dividing their attention between the participants and the text.

Pitkänen-Huhta (2003) reports that the literacy event was always closed by the teacher, and that this closing was always rather short. This also applies to my data. The moves from one phase to another during the classroom interaction were minimal and usually clearly marked as closings. In the following example, the teacher and the students have checked their homework and are ready for the students to read their own stories. In the beginning of this extract, the teacher is sitting in front of the class on a desk. They have just finished the previous exercise and have commented on it. The teacher then moves on.

Example 5 (Nominative and Genitive, 6th grade)

01 Teacher: [okei (1.2) "alleviivaa ne (.) Nirppa-sanat
 [**okay (1.2) "underline those (.) Nirppa⁴ words**
 [((gaze from student to the book in hand))
 02 joilla tarkoitetaan omistajaa." (1.0) olik
 that refer to the owner" (1.0) was
 03 [tää (.) ei [ollu.=ei sitte,
 [**this (.) it [wasn't.=well okay then,**
 [((gazes a[t the students))
 04 Students: [e:i.
 [no:.
 05 (.)
 06 Teacher: mennäkö aineisii.
 should we begin with your texts.

⁴ Nirppa is a fictional character in the textbook.

07 Timo: joo
yea

07 Student: joo-oo-oo
ye-e-e

08 Teacher: [selvä
[okay/sure
 [(closes the book, walks behind her desk)]

09 Students: ((talk in low voices, putting their books in
 their desks or in their bags))

The teacher marks the possible beginning of a new task by using the particle *okei* ('okay') which is frequently used in classroom interaction to display the boundaries from one phase to another (line 1). She then reads aloud verbatim the next instruction in the textbook. After reading it she orients to the students, asking them if this was part of their homework (lines 2–3). After receiving their negative response, she briefly closes the sequence both verbally (lines 3, 6 and 8) and nonverbally by closing the book and by heading for the students' stories on her desk (line 8). After that, the students also close their books and put them away, into their desks and bags. These actions indicate clearly that the textbook-based literacy activity is finished.

These Examples 2–5 illustrated the structure and the step-by-step development of the typical textbook-based literacy event in MTL classroom. It is evident that the textbook is used as the agenda for at least some phases of the MTL lessons. In addition, it can also shape the organization of interaction in a rather straightforward way. What is interesting is that students seem to orient actively in these literacy events, displaying active participation, answering questions and commenting on them. Although this type of an interaction is sometimes characterized in educational literature as being pedagogically doubtful and undermining students intellectually (e.g. Fisher 1995; Seedhouse 2004, 102–110), in my data, the students seem to enjoy these sessions. They seem to participate eagerly by orienting to the teacher and the pedagogic content and by commenting and asking questions about the subject. However, this applies solely to the data video recorded in the 6th grade, and only to the MTL lessons on Finnish grammar. One possible explanation for the students' enjoyment is that pupils of that grade are actually interested and motivated in learning grammar, which contradicts the conclusions presented in earlier studies (e.g. Korhonen & Alho 2006; Sarmavuori & Maunu 2011).

3 Textbook used as the instruction

The third function of the textbook for MTL classroom interaction that I will discuss is the use of the textbook as the tuition of the pedagogic interaction. By this I mean that the only instruction the students receive on a certain matter is by reading a section that is included in the textbook. This can occur either publicly (reading aloud) or independently (silent reading).

In my data, in the course of MTL lessons often involve phases of silent reading where students must read a section of a text and write, for example, a comment about it or use it in other ways for their individual or group work. This method is used both in the lower and the upper grades in basic education, although it seems to be more common in the upper grades. The next example is an extract from a lesson in the 9th grade. The teacher instructs the students to read a section in the textbook. Next, after his introduction and after their reading, they are to draw a figure based on the text that deals with a period in the history of the Finnish language. In the beginning of this extract, the teacher is standing in front of the classroom. The students have already opened their books on their desks.

Example 6. (Gospel Text, 9th grade)

01 Teacher: LUKEKAA sivu kaheksantoist viiva (3.0)
READ pages eighteen to (3.0)
02 kakskymmentä. (1.5) ni teille muodostuu (.)
twenty. (1.5) so you will get an idea (.)
03 kuva sen hetkisest tilanteesta,
about what was the situation at that time,
(the remainder of the teacher's instruction has been
omitted; then nine minutes of silent reading)
04 Teacher: ONKS JOLLAIN (.) LUKEMINEN KESKEN,
IS SOMEBODY (.) STILL READING,
05 Sami: ei
no

Many of the teachers in MTL education end up planning for literacy tasks that are completed during their lessons. This has many advantages, especially for those students who are not motivated to read and who therefore tend to skip the homework on these issues. These unmotivated students are instead expected to practice their skills during the school day. Furthermore, the teachers often offer students the types of genres and texts, fictional and other types of texts that they would not read in other circumstances on their own. However, reading a textbook during the lessons seems not to serve the purpose of expanding the range of genres in the students' stock of knowledge. Moreover, it seems to be an easy solution for the teacher to review the facts that are included in the curriculum. What is evident is that this method does not support the critical literacy practices that could be developed in the joint discussions between the students and the teacher (e.g. Bloome et al. 2005; Gee 2007; Belgarde et al. 2009).

In addition, the earlier examples contained some examples that included short sections of a reading aloud task, namely reading aloud verbatim the instruction in a textbook (Examples 3, 4 and 5). However, these texts were very short, usually the length of one sentence. Another common method that is adopted during the MTL lessons, especially in the lower grades in the basic education, is the reading aloud of longer fictional texts, ranging from poems to novels. Usually the texts that are read aloud are not those that are found in textbooks, but some of them

might be included in the guidebooks for teachers. For the pupils, reading aloud fictional texts seems to increase their motivation to read on their own, and it gives pleasure to the listeners – even to those students who are themselves able to read without difficulties (e.g. Suojala 2006, Lerkkanen 2007). In addition, in her analysis on the EFL classroom, Pitkänen-Huhta (2003) shows that teachers often instruct their students to read aloud sections in their English textbooks during their lessons. This is understandable because learning a foreign language also means learning to pronounce the words of the language accurately and to become acquainted with the rhythm and intonation patterns of the language. However, to my surprise, during the MTL lessons the teachers also use the method of reading aloud from a textbook, and they use this as a part of their teaching.

The last example illustrates from this type of a situation in the 9th grade. Here, the teacher has talked previously about the origins of old Finnish loan words. The students have read these words from a list in the textbook and have discussed about them. A few students then become restless. The teacher tries to get them to be quiet and at the same time, moves on to the next part of the lesson. During this extract, the teacher is sitting behind her table, facing the students who are sitting at back of the classroom, as far from the teacher as possible.

Example 7 (Language Relatives, 9th grade)

01 Samuli: ((*whis[les, imitating the sound of a bomb dropping*))

02 Teacher: [tarkotus ois mennä vähän eteenpäin,
[**the aim is to proceed a bit,**

03 (1.0)

04 Minna: [lopetta, hihihh
[**stop it, hihihh**
[((*looking at Samuli*))

05 Samuli: **kkrrshhhh[hhh** ((*imitating the sound of a bomb crashing on the ground*))

06 Teacher: [no nii, >lopettakaa nyt toi<.
[**okay, >stop that now<**

07 (0.7)

08 Teacher: mennääs vähä eteenpäin, suomi ja sen
let's proceed a bit, Finnish and its related

09 sukukielet [te pääsette oikeestaan
languages you may actually work

10 Samuli: [räkspoks tuks khrrr [

11 Teacher: jo[vähä omiin töihin hetken päästä.
in[dividually in a moment .

12 Ville: [pum

13 Samuli: **bum**

14 Ville: **pum**

15 Teacher: ja: (.) Samuli ku oot siellä äänessä
an:d (.) Samuli while you are talking aloud

16 muutenki ni alotappa meille sivulta

- 17 **anyway so start to read for us on page**
 sata yheksänyks.
 hundred ninety one.
- 18 Samuli: satayheksänyks. (.) alusta vai.
 hundred ninety one. (.) at the beginning or.
- 19 Teacher: kyllä ihan alusta.
 yes right at the beginning.
- 20 Samuli: "suomi ja sen sukukielet. (0.5) eräs
 "Finnish and its related languages (0.5) a
- 21 unkarilainen jesuiittamunkki huomasi - - "
 Hungarian Jesuit monk noticed - - "

Two boys, Samuli and Ville are engaged in imitating martial arts sounds (lines 1, 5, 10, 12–14). This activity seems not to be connected to anything that has transpired during the lesson. Furthermore, other students (line 4) and the teacher (line 6) are disturbed by these rather loud sounds that the boys are making. Because the teacher is unsuccessful in addressing her approach to (line 6) she tells one of them, Samuli, to engage in another activity (lines 15–17). When teacher's reproach is not otherwise successful, it seems to be a common procedure for teachers to direct a student to another kind of (embodied) activity (Tainio 2011). What is interesting from the point of view of the literacy event is that the task of reading aloud in the textbook is used here as a punishment. This hardly increases the students' interest in the issue or the textbook as a source of interesting information. After Samuli has read aloud for a while, the teacher gives the turn to another student; for some time, the students read aloud from the textbook one after another. The pedagogic benefit of this kind of an activity is difficult to grasp, but from the point of view of controlling the classroom order, this task seems to be successful. As a consequence, the students remain reasonably quiet and they agree to read aloud when it is their turn. All in all, both the silent reading of the textbook and the reading aloud the textbook during the lessons seem to serve other purposes than developing the students' literacy skills.

Concluding remarks

This article has presented a discussion of the role of textbooks in MTL education by referring to earlier studies and by analyzing the textbook-based literacy events in naturally occurring classroom interaction. According to surveys, MTL teachers use textbooks rather extensively in their teaching, however, subject teachers of MTL do not rely as heavily on textbooks as primary school teachers or some other subject teachers of, for example, S/FL or mathematics (Heinonen 2005; Lappalainen 2011; Luukka et al 2008). My analysis on classroom data in MTL education does not provide answers to questions concerning how much teachers use or how they estimate their use of textbooks in their teaching or in the delivered curricula. However, my examples illustrate the ways in which the material artifact of a textbook is handled during classroom interaction and also, to some extent, the

ways in which a textbook is used as a cognitive artifact (Hutchins 1999; Tainio & Piirainen-Marsh 2011).

My analysis has identified several functions for the use of textbooks in classroom interaction. As a material artifact, the uses include taking out a textbook from a school bag or from a desk, searching for the right page, teacher's ways of taking up the book, showing it to the students, and closing the book and putting it down. All these practices indicate to the students that a new phase of the lesson is about to begin or that the ongoing phase is to close. This allows students to concentrate momentarily on the embodied activities that offer a very concrete signal that the lesson is proceeding. As a cognitive artifact, the textbook seems to form the agenda of the lesson. This is especially true when teaching grammar. Another factor that affects the lesson is the organization of the pedagogic interaction, including the turn-taking organization. Sometimes the textbook is even used as the instruction, forming the basis of teaching and thus acting as a cognitive artifact at a very concrete level. During classroom interaction, a textbook can also be used as a means for classroom control, to ensure the students' being quiet and involved. These functions of the use of textbooks in classroom interaction would probably not have been mentioned by the teachers in interviews or surveys. Nevertheless, in my opinion, the uses of textbook that have been identified in the classroom data exert a major influence on the organization of the interaction in the MTL classroom.

In my discussions with teachers, and sometimes also with the researchers in education, the belief of 'good teachers do not use textbooks in their teaching,' is often mentioned. Some teachers even seem to be somewhat ashamed of their relying extensively on textbooks in their teaching. However, this question of using textbooks is not as simple as it might look like at first sight. From the national assessments, no evidence suggests that the learning results of students who have not used textbooks are better than the results of other students (cf. Hellgren 2011). Even the common belief that students become bored when their instruction is predominantly based on seems not to be valid in all situations. This became evident when I analyzed the data recorded from the 6th grade where textbook-based literacy events in the studying of grammar were carried out in quite a traditional way. Yet the students in these situations – including boy students – were active and focused on the activity of teaching and on their learning of the grammatical issues in question. Textbooks are written and designed by experts, and although teachers and students should also read textbooks critically, they offer material for different kinds of activities – with or without textbooks. Furthermore, teachers should not be reluctant to use textbooks when it is appropriate from the point of view of didactics. Nevertheless, the use of various kinds of methods and texts in teaching literacy skills serves best all types of learners.

References

- Belgarde, M.J., Loré, R.K. & Meyer, R. (2009). American Indian adolescent literacy. In L. Christenbury, R. Bomer, and P. Smagorinsky. (Eds.) *Handbook of adolescent literacy research* (pp. 415–430). New York, London: The Guilford Press.
- Bloome, D., Carter, S.P., Christian, B. M., Otto, S. & Shuart-Faris, N. (2005). *Discourse Analysis and the Study of Classroom Language and Literacy Events. A Microethnographic Perspective*. New Jersey, London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Christenbury, L., Bomer, R., and Smagorinsky, P. (Eds.) (2009). *Handbook of adolescent literacy research*. New York, London: The Guilford Press.
- Fisher, R. (1995). Socratic education. *The Journal of Philosophy for Children*, 12(3), 23–29.
- Gee, J.P. (2007). *Social linguistics and literacies. Ideology in discourses*. 3rd ed. Exeter: Taylor & Francis.
- Gordon, T., Holland, J. & Lahelma, E. (2000). *Making Spaces: Citizenship and Difference in Schools*. London: Macmillan & New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Hautamäki, J. et al. (2008). PISA06. *Analyses, reflections, and explanations*. Ministry of Education Publications 2008: 44.
- Heinonen, J.-P. (2005). *Opetussuunnitelmat vai oppimateriaalit? Peruskoulun opettajien käsityksiä opetussuunnitelmien ja oppimateriaalien merkityksestä opetuksessa*. [Curricula or educational materials?] Helsingin yliopisto: Sokla.
- Hellgren, J. (2011). *Modersmål och litteratur in årskurs 9*. [Assessment of learning results in mother tongue and literature (Swedish) in grade 9 spring 2010]. Helsinki: National Board of Education.
- Hutchins, E. (1999). Cognitive artefacts. In R. Wilson and F. Keil (eds.) *The MIT Encyclopedia of the Cognitive Sciences*(pp. 126–127). MIT Press.
- ISK = Hakulinen, A., Vilkkuna, M., Korhonen, R., Koivisto, V., Heinonen, T.R. & Alho, I. (2004). *Iso suomen kielioppi* [The big grammar of Finnish]. Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.
- Kaikkonen, L. (2011). *Kuinka kielioppia opetetaan peruskoulussa? Tapaustutkimus kieliopin opetuksesta ja opetuksen sisällöistä 6. luokalla*. [How Finnish grammar is taught in the 6th grade.] MA thesis. University of Helsinki: Department of Teacher Education.
- Kari, J. (1988). *Luokanopettajan oppikirjasidonnaisuus. Tutkimus ympäristöopin ja maantiedon opetuksesta peruskoulun ala-asteella*. [Primary teacher as textbook user.]

Jyväskylän yliopisto: Kasvatustieteiden tutkimuslaitoksen julkaisusarja A, tutkimuskia 14.

Korhonen, R. & Alho, I. (2006). Kielioppia kieliopin vuoksi [Grammar for grammar]. In: M. Harmanen & M. Siirainen (Eds.) *Kielioppi koulussa* [Grammar in school] (pp. 71–92). Äidinkielen opettajain liiton vuosikirja XLX. Helsinki: Äidinkielen opettajain liitto.

Lappalainen, H.-P. (2011). *Sen edestään löytyä*. [Assessment of learning results in MTL (Finnish) in grade 9 spring 2010]. National Board of Education.

Lehtimaja, I. (2012). *Puheen suuntia luokkahuoneessa. Oppilaat osallistujina yläkoulun suomi toisena kielenä -oppitunnilla*. [Talk and interaction. Students as participants in Finnish as a second language classroom.] PhD Thesis. University of Helsinki: Department of Fenno-Ugrian and Scandinavian Studies.

Lerikkanen, M.-K. (2009). The beginning phases of reading literacy instruction in Finland. In: P. Linnakylä & I. Arffman (Eds.) *Finnish reading literacy. When quality and equity meet* (pp. 155–174). University of Jyväskylä: Institute of Educational Research.

Linnakylä, P. & Arffman, I. (Eds.), (2007). *Finnish reading literacy. When quality and equity meet*. University of Jyväskylä: Institute of Educational Research.

Luukka, M.-R., Pöyhönen, S., Huhta, A., Taalas, P., Tarnanen, M. & Keränen, A. (2008). *Maailma muuttuu – mitä tekee koulu?* [Literacy practices in mother tongue and foreign language education.] Jyväskylän yliopisto: Solki.

Mehan, H. (1985). The structure of classroom discourse. In T. A. van Dijk (Ed.) *Handbook of Discourse Analysis, vol. 3: Discourse and Dialogue* (pp.119–131). Orlando: Academic Press.

NC 2004=*National Core Curriculum for Basic Education* (2004). Helsinki: The National Board of Education.

Niemi, K. (2011). Vuorovaikutus tekstien äärellä [Interaction around texts]. In: A. Kauppinen, H. Lehti-Eklund, H. Makkonen-Craig & R. Juvonen (Eds.) *Lukiolaisten äidinkieli*. [Mother tongue of upper secondary school.] (pp.408–427). Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.

Nikula, T. (2005). English as an object and a tool of study in classrooms: interactional effects and pragmatic implications. *Linguistics and Education* 16 (1), 27–58.

Nissi, R. (2010). *Totuuden jäljillä. Tekstin tulkinta nuorten aikuisten raamattupiirikeskusteluissa*. [In search of the truth. Text interpretation in young adults' Bible study conversations.] Jyväskylän yliopisto: Jyväskylä Studies in Humanities 145.

Norris, N., Aspland, R., MacDonald, B., Schostak, J. and Zamorski, B. (1996). *An independent evaluation of comprehensive curriculum in Finland*. Helsinki: National Board of Education.

- Nygård Larsson, P. (2011). *Biologiämnen texter. Text, språk och lärande i en språkligt heterogen gymnasieklass. Malmö Studies in Educational Sciences 62*. Accessed 28 October 2011, from <http://lup.lub.lu.se/luur/download?func=downloadFile&recordOid=1940571&fileOid=1962632>
- Palmu, T. (2003). *Sukupuolen rakentuminen koulun kulttuurisissa teksteissä. Etnografia yläasteen äidinkielen oppitunneilla*. [Ethnography of the construction of gender in MTL education in secondary school] Helsinki: University Press.
- Pitkänen-Huhta, A. (2003). *Texts and interaction: Literacy practices in the EFL classroom*. Jyväskylä Studies in Languages. University of Jyväskylä.
- Pynnönen, M.-L. (2006). Alakoululaiset oppivat (meta)kieltä. [Pupils learning (meta)language]. In M. Harmanen & M. Siirainen (Eds.) *Kielioppi koulussa* [Grammar in school] (pp. 155–168). Äidinkielen opettajain liiton vuosikirja XLX. Helsinki: Äidinkielen opettajain liitto.
- Sarmavuori, K. & Maunu, N. (2011). Toiminnallinen kielioppi lauseopin käsitteiden harjoittelussa – lisäksi kolmen vuoden kokeilun mittaustulokset. [Mother tongue grammar education with activating methods – and some measurements after three years.] *Aikakauskirja äidinkielen opetustiede* 40, 29–50.
- Schegloff, E.A. (2006). *Sequence organization in interaction. A primer in conversation analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schultz, J., Säljö, R. & Wyndham, J. (2001). Heavenly talk: discourse, artifacts, and children's understanding of elementary astronomy. *Human Development* 44, 103–118.
- Seedhouse, P. (2004). *The interactional architecture of language classroom: a conversation analytic perspective*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Skidmore, D. & Murakami, K. (2010). How prosody marks shift in footing in classroom discourse. *International Journal of Educational Research* 49 (2-3), 69–77.
- Suojala, M. (2006). Kirjojen lukijaksi koulussa [To become a reader of books in school]. In S. Grünthal & J. Pentikäinen (Eds.) *Kulmakivi. Luokanopettajan äidinkieli ja kirjallisuus*. [Mother tongue and literature education for primary teachers.] (pp. 170–189). Helsinki: Otava.
- Tainio, L. (Ed.) (2007) Vuorovaikutusta luokahuoneessa. Näkökulmana keskusteluanalyysi. [Classroom interaction. Conversation analytic perspectives.] Helsinki: Gaudeamus.
- Tainio, L. (2011). Gendered address terms in reproach sequences in classroom interaction. *Linguistics and Education* 22, 330–347.

Tainio, L. (2012). Prosodic imitation in classroom interaction: A gendered practice of empowerment? *Gender and Language* 6 (1), 197–232.

Tainio, L. (forthcoming). Gender in Finnish school textbooks for basic education. In T. Tolonen, T. Palmu, S. Lappalainen & T. Kurki (eds.) *Cultural practices in education*. Tufnell Press.

Tainio, L. & Grünthal, S. (2012). Language and literature education: Principles and reflections on Mother tongue and literature. In H. Niemi, A. Toom & A. Kallioniemi (Eds.) *The Miracle of Education*. (149–160). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Tainio, L. & Piirainen-Marsh, A. (2011). Vuorovaikutuksen tilat ja keinot videopelin pelaamistilanteessa. [Means of interaction in the activity of playing video game]. In P. Haddington & L. Kääntä (Eds.) *Kieli, keho ja vuorovaikutus* [Language and embodied interaction.]. Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.

Tainio, L. & Teräs, T. (2010). *Sukupuolijäsennys perusopetuksen oppikirjoissa*. [Organization of gender in textbooks for basic education] Raportit ja selvitykset 2010: 8. Helsinki: Opetushallitus.

Wikman, T. (2004). *På spaning efter den goda läroboken. Om pedagogiska texters lärande potential*. Åbo Akademi University Press.

Vitikka, E. (2009). *Opetussuunnitelman mallin jäsennys. Sisältö ja pedagogiikka kokonaisuuden rakentajina*. [Structuring curriculum design: content and pedagogy constructing the whole.] Finnish Educational Research Association: Research in Educational Sciences 44.

Appendix 1.

Transcription conventions follow the tradition of conversation analysis. The adopted transcription conventions are the following:

. / , / ?	Falling / level / rising intonation
-	Cut-off
↑ / ↓	Change in pitch height: higher / lower than preceding speech
> < / <>	Faster / slower tempo
:	Sound stretch
CAP	Loud voice
(.)	Pause, less than 0.3 s.
(0.5)	Length of pause
hh .hh	Out-breath / in-breath
[]	Overlap
=	Latching of turns
“ “	Reading aloud