

FINNISH STUDENT LANGUAGE TEACHERS REFLECTING ON LINGUISTIC CONCEPTS RELATED TO SENTENCE STRUCTURES: STUDENTS RECOGNISING LINGUISTIC CONCEPTS IN L1 AND L2 TEXTBOOKS

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Abstract

In this article, we report on a two-part qualitative case study on Finnish student language teachers' views of linguistic concepts related to teaching sentence structures and their ability to recognise linguistic concepts in mother tongue and foreign language textbooks. In addition, our aim is to gain experience of collaboration between mother tongue and foreign language students. The current Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (2014, translated 2016) emphasises language awareness, including linguistic and cross-linguistic awareness. Language education requires L1 and L2 teachers to co-operate, and it is important for teachers to gain experience of such co-operation already during their pedagogical studies. The focus of our study is on student language teachers' ability to recognise linguistic concepts in mother tongue and foreign language textbooks. The informants are mother tongue (Finnish) and foreign language students (studying English, Swedish, German, and Russian). The study found that the students were able to find syntactic and morphological concepts in particular. Overall, they understood language and defined "linguistic concepts" from a grammatical point of view; and a functional approach to learning a language stood out. In the textbooks, the students found both similarities and differences in using linguistic concepts related to sentence structures. Overall, co-operation between L1 and L2 teachers was considered important.

Keywords: language awareness, language didactics, language pedagogy, language education, sentence structures

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1. INTRODUCTION

Language awareness is an important part of language education in the current Finnish National Core Curriculum (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016; implemented in schools from August 2016). The Core Curriculum emphasises the similarity of language education in the mother tongue and foreign languages. The Curriculum considers the pupils' plurilingual competence, and it highlights the importance of communicative competence as well as language awareness. Competence in using linguistic concepts is mentioned specifically. Inter alia, the Finnish National Core Curriculum describes the role of language education as follows:

It [plurilingual competence] comprises competences of different levels in mother tongues, other tongues, and their dialects. The basic principle of language instruction at school is using the language in different situations. It strengthens the pupils' language awareness and parallel use of different languages as well as the development of multi-literacy. The pupils learn to make observations on texts and interaction practices in different languages, to use the concepts of language knowledge in interpreting texts, and to utilise diverse ways of language learning. (Finnish National Board of Education 2016, p. 109.)

According to the current Finnish Core Curriculum for Basic Education, language awareness plays a central role in mother tongue and foreign language education. Consequently, good language awareness skills are naturally required of teachers. Furthermore, the core curriculum encourages L1 and L2 teachers to collaborate (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, p. 110).

In our two-part qualitative case study, our aim is to learn about the student language teachers' linguistic awareness, especially, their views on linguistic concepts related to teaching sentence structures and their ability to recognise these concepts in language text books. In addition, we want to gain experience of collaboration between mother tongue (L1) and foreign language (L2) students. In our project, our aim is to help us, i.e. university language pedagogy lecturers, to better understand the particulars of student language teachers' linguistic awareness, especially, their views on linguistic concepts central in teaching sentence structures.

In the first part of our case study, we study student language teachers' considerations of the metalinguistic concepts they consider central to teaching sentence structures (Nupponen, Jeskanen, & Rättyä, 2017). The data consists of questionnaire answers by L1 and L2 student language teachers. In this article, we report on the second part of our study, in which the aim is to learn about the ability of student language teachers to recognise linguistic concepts related to sentence structures in language textbooks. In the second set of data, prospective mother tongue teachers and foreign language teachers analysed L1 and L2 text books and exercise books (grades 3–8) in mixed groups. The task of the student teachers was to reflect on linguistic concepts related to sentence structures and to compare the textbooks. The analysed textbooks are for teaching L1 Finnish and L2 English, Swedish, German, and Russian. According to the Finnish National Core Curriculum, a mother tongue could be Finnish, Swedish, Sámi, Romani, sign language, or a pupil's native language if it is

not one of the aforementioned languages. In this study, our focus is on the Finnish language as a mother tongue. Although Swedish is the second official language of Finland, we refer to it as a foreign language (L2) in this study.

The idea of collaboration in teaching L1 and L2 is not new. For example, Koppinen and Pasanen (1981) discussed integrating L1 and L2 teaching in Finnish education at the beginning of the 1980s. Harris and Grenfell (2004, pp. 119–120) reviewed research on cross-language collaboration in the 1990s and found that researchers concentrated mostly on language transfer, language awareness (knowledge about language), grammar teaching, and learning strategies. However, the connection between mother tongue and foreign language learning goes much deeper than simply reflecting on their integration in teaching. Butzkamm (2003, pp. 30–31) notes that while learning our mother tongue, we have also learned to think and communicate, and thus have acquired an intuitive understanding of how languages are linguistically structured. The current Core Curriculum (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016) highlights the importance of collaboration in a new way, even though different languages are still their own subjects and are scheduled in their own classes. The focus is now on the students' plurilingual competence, and all the mother tongue and foreign language teachers are together responsible for the development of this competence. Moreover, the curriculum notes (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, p. 29): "In a language-aware school, each adult is a linguistic model and also a teacher of the language typical of the subject he or she teaches". The new textbook on the Christian Orthodox religion for grades 1–2 is a good example of promoting this aim (see Aikonen & Havu-Nuutinen, 2017).

Some earlier Finnish studies have presented university students' observations on sentence structures. For example, Laine (2017) reflected on how Finnish-language university students analysed sentence structures, and Tainio and Routarinne (2012) discussed how Finnish class teacher students understand the term "clause". Some studies have also presented Finnish secondary school students' observations on sentence analysis (e.g. Paukkunen, 2011). Co-operation between student teachers is one of the topics in our study, and it has also been highlighted in some earlier studies. For example, Aalto and Tarnanen (2015) discussed language-sensitive teaching and language awareness. Among others, they have outlined co-operation between student teachers of different subjects.

2. BECOMING A LANGUAGE TEACHER

The informants of this study were student language teachers studying in a teacher-training programme for subject teachers. As the authors of this article are teacher educators, our focus is on developing teacher training. In this section, we discuss the theoretical concepts which compose the conceptual framework of this case study.

2.1 *Language didactics, language pedagogy, or language education?*

The Finnish Core Curriculum for Basic Education refers to the learning-studying-teaching process in the mother tongue and foreign languages as language education. Three concepts relating to language learning and teaching have been used: language didactics, language pedagogy, and language education. These three notions have scientifically, geographically, and historically different backgrounds. In the Finnish context, didactics is part of the compulsory content of language teacher training programmes (Government Decree on University Degrees, 794/2004). At the same time, at many Finnish universities, the teachers of language didactics are referred to as lecturers in language pedagogy, while the curricula for language teaching at schools use the term “language education”. What is the interrelation between these notions? Traditionally, didactics, especially in Anglo-American pedagogical literature, has been related to teaching and instruction methodology, while in Northern Europe didactics is understood more widely as the “science of the teaching-studying-learning process, and thus it can also be seen as a theoretical framework for studying this process” (Harjanne & Tella, 2007, p. 8; see also Lindgren & Enever, 2015). This widened definition comes very close to the definition of pedagogy, which Bygate, Skehan, and Swain (2013, p. 1) define as the “intervention into thought and behaviour which is concerned to promote learning processes for intended outcomes”. According to Murphy (1996, p. 17), “pedagogy is about interactions between teachers, students and the learning environment and learning tasks”. Murphy (1996) also notes the importance of the educational system and the goals of education expressed in curricula. According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Peel, 2017), pedagogy is the “study of teaching methods, including the aims of education and the ways in which such goals may be achieved”. Currently, didactics and pedagogy often have a similar content, and the use of these terms has depended on the tradition of the area in question (Hamilton, 1999).

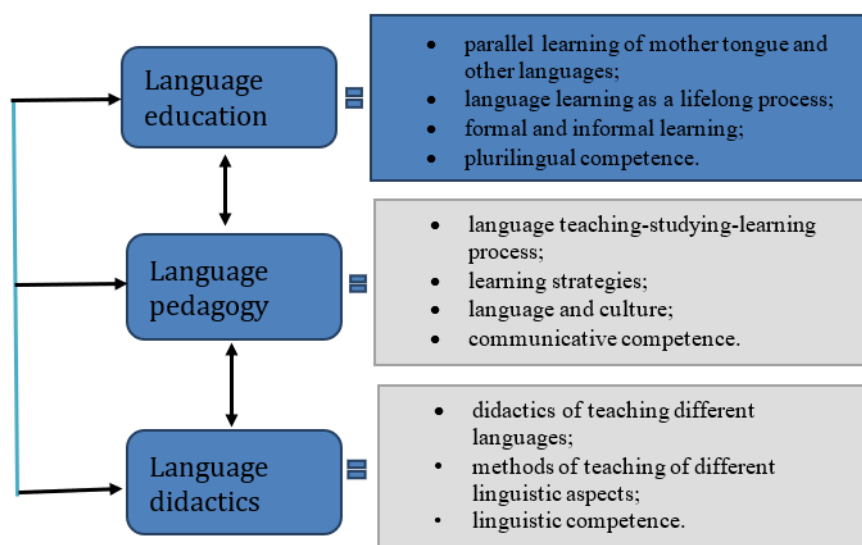
In the Finnish educational context, the terms “didactics” and “pedagogy” have traditionally had different definitions. Yrjänäinen (2011, pp. 49–50) discusses the use of these terms (see also Kansanen & Meri, 1999). The difference in the terms is explained by their different relations to the teacher, the learner, and the content of learning. Didactics concerns the relationship between the learner and the content of learning. The duty of teachers is to regulate this relationship and improve learning according to the curriculum. In pedagogy, the focus is on the relationship between the teacher and the learner, and the teachers’ duty is to encourage and supervise the students’ learning.

“Language education” is a wide umbrella term with roots in applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, and educational science among others. In discussing language education, Michael Byram (2012, p. 1) states that he is referring to “the teaching and learning of all languages in a curriculum, whether this be the synchronic experienced curriculum of a learner at a given point in time or the diachronic curriculum of their

lifelong learning.” In the current Finnish curriculum for basic education (Finnish National Board of Education 2016, pp. 105–106), language education includes both the mother tongue and all the languages that learners have learned or are learning in informal or formal environments. Language learning is seen to be a lifelong process, and the aim of this process is the development of plurilingual competence. At school, learners should have the opportunity to not only learn languages, but also to use them as a tool for other learning.

In Figure 1, we outline the interrelation of the terms “language didactics”, “language pedagogy”, and “language education” as we understand them now. It must be emphasised that the figure is preliminary, and it does not include all the aspects of the terms in question. These three terms are not separate nor are they hierarchical notions, but they overlap and complement each other, and they should be equally included in teacher education.

Figure 1. The interrelation of language didactics, language pedagogy, and language education



2.2 Teachers' language awareness

Awareness in language learning and teaching is a vast and complex concept. In the literature, the concepts of language awareness, linguistic awareness, and metalinguistic awareness are sometimes used interchangeably, while sometimes they have

different meanings. Language awareness is the broadest concept; it covers the affective, social, power, cognitive, and performance domains (Garrett & James, 2000). Schleppegrell (2013, pp. 156–157) discusses the meaning of linguistic awareness and metalinguistic awareness for learning languages. Linguistic awareness or metalinguistic awareness can be seen as the ability to perceive language, think abstractly about language, and talk about language. Metalanguage is needed for this. Making grammatical forms explicit and discussing their use in communication makes language instruction more effective. In recent years, “*linguaging*” has become a much studied and discussed notion (Rättyä, 2017, pp. 94–96). Swain (2006, p. 98) defines *linguaging* as “the process of making meaning and shaping knowledge and experience through language. [...] *Linguaging* about language is one of the ways we learn language.”

Teachers’ language awareness is closely related both to their general and linguistic pedagogical knowledge and to subject matter knowledge. In his review of research on language awareness in language teaching, Trappes-Lomax (2002, pp. 7–8) presents five components of teachers’ language awareness. The first component, language awareness in general, includes overall sensitivity to language, understanding of the nature of language, and awareness of the variability of language. The second component, awareness of separate languages, includes the understanding of the forms and functions of language systems (e.g. grammar, phonology, vocabulary). The third component is the awareness of learner language and an understanding of the process of its development. The fourth component is the awareness of teacher language—for example, the awareness of the teacher’s own language use in the classroom, and the teacher’s awareness of himself/herself as a language learner and user in general. The fifth component that Trappes-Lomax (2002) presents, is the awareness of teaching materials, which includes an understanding of the differences between authentic language and textbook language, and the ability to process the authentic language into pedagogically appropriate language for learning. Our article mostly focuses on this fifth component: the awareness of teaching materials, especially L1 and L2 textbooks and student teachers’ reflections on them.

Linguistics provides us with several perspectives on the concept of metalinguistics. Camps and Milian (2000, pp. 14–15) and Camps (2015, pp. 27–28) outline some of the main approaches to metalinguistics: metalinguistic functions, metalanguage, metalinguistic capacity, metalinguistic activity, and the awareness of metalinguistic knowledge. Metalinguistic functions refer to the function of human language in referring to the language system itself and language ability. Metalanguage is the language used to talk about language and systematic relations between linguistic elements. Metalinguistic activity can appear on several levels as unconscious activity, conscious activity (e.g. control of language usage), conscious activity using everyday language, and metalinguistic activity using linguistic terms. Furthermore, metalinguistic capacity refers to the ability of individuals to look at language from the outside. The question of whether metalinguistic knowledge is implicit, unconscious, or

explicit conscious knowledge has divided linguists. The representational re-description model presented by Karmiloff-Smith (as cited in Camps & Milian, 2000, pp. 7–8) distinguishes between different kinds of metalinguistic knowledge: implicit knowledge has its origin in early childhood; explicit primary knowledge originates from implicit knowledge and is not yet conscious and cannot be verbalised; explicit secondary knowledge is a conscious knowledge of language, but cannot be verbalised; and explicit tertiary knowledge is based on explicit secondary knowledge. This kind of metalinguistic knowledge can be expressed verbally in an abstract way. (See also Camps 2015, p. 28.)

Myhill, Jones, and Watson (2013) have discussed teachers' metalinguistic knowledge (see Table 1) from the perspective of grammar (grammar is naturally only one of the elements of teachers' metalinguistic knowledge). Teachers' metalinguistic knowledge consists of metalinguistic content knowledge and metalinguistic pedagogical content knowledge. Myhill, Jones, and Watson note that teachers' grammatical content knowledge relates to their ability to teach grammar in a pedagogically effective way. For this, teachers need general knowledge of language, explicit knowledge of grammar, and general pedagogical knowledge of how to teach grammar.

Table 1. Components of teachers' metalinguistic knowledge (modified from Myhill, Jones, & Watson, 2013, p. 80).

Term	Definition
Teachers' metalinguistic content knowledge	Teachers' knowledge about language
Teachers' grammatical content knowledge	Teachers' explicit knowledge of grammar
Teachers' metalinguistic pedagogical content knowledge	Teachers' knowledge about how to teach language
Teachers' grammatical pedagogical content knowledge	Teachers' knowledge about how and when to teach grammar

According to Masny (1997, pp. 105–107), the difference between language awareness and linguistic awareness arises from different scientific backgrounds. Language awareness is mainly related to applied linguistics and pedagogy, while linguistic awareness has emerged from psycholinguistic and cognitive theories. Language awareness is a tool for language teaching that draws the attention of teachers and learners to the similarities and differences between the mother tongue and other languages, and thus raises the learners' consciousness of language. Language awareness is related to language instruction and is part of pedagogy, while linguistic awareness refers to the ability of individuals to reflect on and use language. As Masny

(1997) notes, linguistic knowledge is initially tacit, but it can be made explicit in the learning process so that individuals are able to reflect on and self-correct the language they produce.

Diversity in classrooms is now increasing, and students have different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Students can have more than one first language, and, in Finland, all students are encouraged to learn languages other than English and the compulsory Swedish. In this situation, language teachers of both the mother tongue and foreign languages also need to know about languages other than the one(s) they teach at school. Cross-linguistic awareness—for example, knowledge and understanding of the similarities and differences between different language systems—is one of the important skills of today's language teacher. Awareness of cross-linguistic similarities is a factor that can help students to learn foreign languages (see Ammar, Lightbown, & Spada, 2010). The Finnish language and the foreign languages that are studied most often in our schools belong to different language groups and language families. Finnish-speaking students studying English or German do not have the same advantage in terms of the linguistic similarity of their mother tongue as Swedish-speaking students do (for more about Finnish and Swedish learners of English, see Ringbom 2007, pp. 41–53). It is the task of the both the mother tongue teacher and the foreign language teachers to help students become aware of the similarities and differences between languages and make the language learning process more explicit and effective.

2.3 Teaching linguistic structures

The teaching of grammar has had various aims, functions, and methods at different times. In the 1980s, some of the most prominent theorists of foreign language learning and teaching were ready to abandon grammar teaching completely. Today, grammar is again considered a necessary part of the language learning/teaching process. Long (1991; see also Myhill & Watson, 2014; Ellis, Basturkmen & Loewen, 2002) introduces two approaches to teaching grammar: “focus-on-forms” and “focus-on-form”. In current language education, the distinction between these approaches is widely discussed. “Focus-on-forms” in language teaching refers to instruction where linguistic forms are taught in isolation or out of context and are practised, for example, by writing or translating isolated sentences. “Focus-on-form”, on the other hand, means that linguistic forms are taught related to their meaning and practised in meaning-oriented communicative tasks.

Pedagogical grammar according to the definition offered by Dirven (1990), consists of learning grammar related to the textbook or the learner's personal grammar, teaching grammar, and reference grammar, which includes school grammar. de Knop and de Rycker (2008, pp. 1–4) define pedagogical grammar as a combination of the inventory of a language's form-meaning units and the didactic approach used to teach them. Pedagogical grammar provides a repertory of essential linguistic units, contrasts the native language and a target language or languages, and, finally,

conceptualises language learning and teaching. In the Finnish context, pedagogical grammar is often understood more widely. According to Harjunen and Korhonen (2008, p. 125), “a pedagogical grammar should be based on the whole human being as a feeling, thinking, willing and communicating individual”. The broad view of grammar—linguistic forms, their functions, and use in communication—motivates students to observe language as a whole.

In Finland, both the teachers of Finnish as a mother tongue and foreign language teachers often rely on textbooks in their work, and textbooks often take the place of the curriculum. According to the research by Luukka, Pöyhönen, Huhta, Taalas, Tarnanen, and Keränen (2008, pp. 90–94), 76% of Finnish language teachers and 98% of foreign language teachers often used textbooks in their classes. According to a report on the learning outcomes in Finnish as a mother tongue from 2010 (Lappalainen, 2011, p. 25), 85% of mother tongue teachers often or very often use textbooks in their teaching in the seventh to ninth grades. According to the research by Pylvänäinen and Kalaja (2014, pp. 10–11) on two textbook series published for teaching English and Swedish, the textbooks concentrated on forms rather than meaning or functions. The textbooks provided the rules, so the students did not have the opportunity to work them out for themselves. Grammar rules were mostly demonstrated by isolated sentences and practised in written form. In their research on teaching the mother tongue to support the development of plurilingualism, Aalto and Kauppinen (2011, p. 12) note that textbooks for Finnish as a mother tongue for eighth graders emphasise knowledge of grammar, while language usage and variation are secondary. According to Saaristo (2015, pp. 305–306), Finnish university students consider grammar an important element of teaching and learning languages. This can at least to some extent be explained by the traditionally prominent role of grammar in language studies both in mother tongue and foreign languages.

3. CONCEPTS RELATED TO SENTENCE STRUCTURE

In our study, the student teachers’ task was to reflect on linguistic concepts related to sentence structures. The students were allowed to define linguistic concept in any way they wanted; we did not give a ready definition. In Finnish discussion, the terms “linguistics” (*kielitiede*, literally “science of language”) and “linguistic concept” (*kielitieteellinen käsite*, literally “language scientific concept”) are wide. The term “linguistic concept” could be defined to refer to concepts included in any field of language research, e.g. the study of language contacts or language history (including concepts such as proto-language and calque). Presumably, the student teachers will exclude many fields of research which they do not relate to sentence structures.

Sentence structures can be approached in several ways, and there are various ways of extracting linguistic concepts that somehow relate to sentence structures. For example, sentence structures can be examined from the perspective of different levels of language. Fred Karlsson (2003, pp. 15–16) introduces “sub-systems” of lan-

guage in his work on general linguistics. The formal sub-systems are phonology, lexicon, morphology, and syntax. The fifth sub-system is semantics. Similarly, these five sub-systems are widely presented in English books of general linguistics (see e.g. Aronoff & Rees-Miller, 2004). One of these sub-systems naturally lies at the core of reflecting on sentence structures: syntactic concepts (word order, basic sentence structures, types of sentences, sentence constituents) are central when describing sentence structures. However, also other categories have connections to them. For example, parts of speech relate to sentence constituents (the predicate is always a verb, etc.) and the sentence constituent affects the case of the nouns in the Finnish language, certain words have a particular place in the word order (e.g. interrogatives and conjunctions), and sentence constituents may also have semantic roles (e.g. the agentive).

The sixth sub-system often mentioned besides phonology, lexicon, morphology, syntax, and semantics is pragmatics (see e.g. Aronoff & Rees-Miller, 2004). Briefly, this area studies how language is used (e.g. Kempson 2004, p. 396). Pragmatics is also related to sentence structure—syntax and semantics being “not the only regulators of sentence structure”, as Finegan and Besnier (1989, p. 213) note. When reflecting on the use of language, variation in language and its relations to sentence structures can also be highlighted (e.g., situational and stylistic variation and variation in colloquial and literary language). For instance, written sentence structures in a newspaper are likely to differ from a written informal WhatsApp conversation. One of the earlier mentioned sub-systems of language is phonology. This comes up when describing variation in colloquial versus literary language. In relation to colloquial (spoken) language, prosodic phenomena (phonology) may be connected to the way the sentence is structured. For example, emphasising a word in the sentence may affect the word order in Finnish. Additionally, when analysing sentence structures from the point of view of literary language, the orthography also contains a central set of concepts that must be taught when learning sentence structures (e.g. punctuation marks).

In Finland, language textbooks usually introduce phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactical, and semantical phenomena, along with variation in language. For example, the Finnish textbook *Kärki 8* introduces such concepts as sentence constituents, parts of speech, and conjunctions (Karvonen, Lottonen, & Ruuska, 2015, pp. 219, 226, 230–231). The English textbook *Spotlight 8* contains such concepts as sentence constituents, substantives, verbs, adjectives, and interrogative words (Haapala, Kangaspunta, Lehtonen, Peuraniemi, Semi, & Westlake, 2010, pp. 195, 196, 198, 206, 210). The Swedish textbook *På gång 8* introduces such concepts as sentence constituents, parts of speech, and interrogative words (Ahokas, Ainoa, Kunttu, Nordgren, & Westerholm, 2012, pp. 93, 115). Naturally, the number of concepts depends on the grade at which the books are targeted. For example, dialects are often introduced in ninth-grade Finnish-language books (see e.g. Karvonen, Lottonen, & Ruuska, 2017).

Finnish is a Finno-Ugric language belonging to the Uralic language family. The four foreign languages (English, Swedish, German, and Russian) that the student teachers represent in this study belong to the Indo-European language family. The sentence structures of the Finnish language are different in many aspects from the sentence structures of most Indo-European languages. For example, there are 15 noun cases in the Finnish language, very few prepositions, and no articles. Furthermore, word order does not have the same functions in Finnish as it does in German, for example. Despite this, the linguistic concepts are mainly the same. For example, the concepts of subject, predicative, substantive, and interrogative word are all used in the textbooks *Kärki 8* (Finnish), *Spotlight 8* (English), and *På gång 8* (Swedish) (Aho-kas et al., 2012, pp. 93, 115; Haapala et al., 2010, pp. 195, 196, 206; Karvonen et al., 2015, pp. 219, 226, 230, 231).

4. METHODOLOGY AND DATA

Our aim is to learn about the L1 and L2 student language teachers' linguistic awareness, especially, their views of linguistic concepts related to teaching sentence structures and their ability to recognise these concepts in language text books. In addition, we want to gain experience of collaboration between L1 and L2 students.

At the University of Eastern Finland, like many other universities in Finland, language studies and pedagogical studies are conducted separately. On pedagogical courses for subject teacher students, mother tongue teacher students have their own groups, while students of all foreign languages (in our case, English, Swedish, German, and Russian, occasionally also French) study in the same groups. After completing a master's degree (300 ECTS), which includes 60 ECTS of pedagogical studies and no less than 120 ECTS of language studies (most students have more than the minimum language studies in two or three languages), students have the right to teach language(s) at any level of the Finnish educational system, from the primary level to university level.

This two-part case study (case study research, see Yin 2009) examines two research questions: 1) which linguistic concepts do student language teachers consider central to teaching sentence structures and 2) what kind of observations do they make about linguistic concepts related to sentence structures in L1 and L2 textbooks?

The two sets of data were collected at the University of Eastern Finland in two questionnaires. Questionnaire A concerned students' individual considerations of the metalinguistic concepts central to teaching sentence structures, while questionnaire B concerned language students' joint understanding of concepts related to sentence structures and used in textbooks. Questionnaire A was administered to altogether 39 L1 and L2 student teachers during two courses in their pedagogical studies in the autumn of 2016 and spring of 2017. Sixteen of the students were prospective L1 teachers, and 23 were L2 student teachers (English 11, Swedish 9, German 2, and Russian 1). The students were asked three questions: Which linguistic concepts used

in teaching L1 are central in teaching L2? Which linguistic concepts are the most relevant when teaching sentence structures? How would you define *teaching of sentence structures*?

In the study based on questionnaire B, we focus on student language teachers' ability to recognise linguistic concepts related to sentence structures in L1 and L2 textbooks and exercise books. The textbooks represent the Finnish language and the foreign languages commonly taught in basic education in Finland. We have two research questions:

- 1) Which linguistic concepts related to sentence structures do the student teachers recognise in the L1 and L2 textbooks?
- 2) What are the similarities and differences according to the student teachers in using linguistic concepts related to sentence structures in the L1 and L2 textbooks?

The data obtained via questionnaire B was collected in the autumn of 2016 during a pedagogical studies course. The separate groups of L1 and L2 students were brought together for our study. The number of the respondents includes all the students participating in the particular course (naturally excluding absentees and those who refused research permission) in the autumn of 2016. Nine of the students (19 in total) were prospective mother tongue teachers in the Finnish language. The remaining ten students were prospective foreign language teachers of English, Swedish, Russian, or German.

The students were divided into eight small, mixed groups, in which the L1 and L2 student teachers together analysed 3–4 books: one L1 textbook and the exercise book from the same series and grade, and one L2 textbook and the equivalent exercise book if there was one available. The data consisted of the questionnaire answers written by the eight groups tasked with discussing textbooks and exercise books from third, fifth, seventh or eighth grades. Each group had L1 and one foreign language teaching materials to discuss: Finnish and English (three groups), Finnish and German (two groups), Finnish and Swedish (two groups) and Finnish and Russian (one group). Each of the eight groups had different books (a detailed list of the books is included at the end of the bibliography). In Finland, the Swedish and English languages are common subjects at school, so these languages are familiar to Finnish-language students too. The books were published between 2003 and 2015, and they were targeted at primary school (grades 3 to 5) and secondary school (grades 7 and 8) pupils.

The students answered an online questionnaire in groups of two or three. Questions 1 and 2 prepared the students to observe linguistic concepts generally. Questions 3–5 focussed on sentence structures. In the remaining questions, the students reflected on their experiences. The questions included in the questionnaire were as follows:

- 1) Which linguistic concepts are used in the mother tongue textbook and exercise book? In your opinion, which of these are essential for studying foreign languages?

- 2) What do you notice about linguistic concepts? Compare the books.
- 3) Which linguistic concepts are used in teaching sentence structures in the foreign-language books?
- 4) Which linguistic concepts are used in teaching sentence structures in the mother tongue books?
- 5) Discuss the teaching of sentence structures and the use of linguistic concepts. What do you notice about using linguistic concepts? Compare the books.
- 6) What did you learn from performing this task?

Our data consist of the answers written by the eight groups. In addition, we noted whether the respondents ignored some of the concepts dealt with in the books. However, we will not give a complete list of the concepts mentioned in the books that the students itemised or ignored, as we did not expect the students to give complete lists. In addition, it was possible to frame the answers in different ways—that is, the students could concentrate on superordinate concepts or write more in detail. There was approximately an hour to perform the task. Overall, the textbooks analysed in the data are not voluminous and do not contain a great number of pages representing sentence structures. In addition, in most textbooks it would have been easy to find many concepts in the separate grammar chapters or by utilising the table of contents. The main aim of the task was to encourage the students to discuss teaching sentence structures, as well as to compare teaching of different languages, and to reflect on the co-operation between L1 and L2 teachers.

The analysis of the data was carried out by two university lecturers (one who was a lecturer in mother tongue pedagogy and the other a lecturer in foreign language pedagogy) independently. The separate analyses were then compared and discussed, and a common interpretation of the results was achieved. The data was analysed using a qualitative content analysis. The students listed several kinds of detailed concepts in their answers, and this data was reduced and coded. The descriptive codes were then clustered into sub-categories. The sub-categories were grouped under generic categories. Table 2 presents the analytical process.

Table 2. Analysis of data

Concepts the students found in the textbooks	Sub-category	Generic category
word order	word order	
sentence, clause, types of sentences, main clause, subordinate clause, types of subordinate clauses, simple sentence, complex sentence, declarative sentence, assertive sentence, interrogative clause, exclamation clause, sentence analysis	basic sentence structures and types of sentences	
sentence constituents, predicative, subject, object, adverbial	sentence constituents	syntax
phrase, head of the phrase, complement	phrase	
parts of speech, verb, substantive, modal auxiliary verbs, irregular verbs, auxiliaries, chain of verbs	parts of speech	
noun cases, nominative, genitive, partitive, plural forms of different genders	declension	morphology
tenses, present tense, persons	tense and person	
agentive	semantic roles	semantics

5. RESULTS

In this section, we discuss the main results of our study. First, we introduce the linguistic concepts related to sentence structures the student teachers recognised in the L1 and L2 textbooks. After that, we introduce the students' reflections on the similarities and differences in using concepts related to sentence structures.

5.1 Recognising the linguistic concepts related to sentence structures in the L1 and L2 textbooks

The student groups were asked to find linguistic concepts that were used in teaching sentence structures in the L1 and L2 textbooks. The contents (and the language) of the book naturally affect the concepts to be listed. For example, sentence constituents are not yet studied at the third grade, and the concepts cannot be observed in the task (Groups 1, 4, and 6). In contrast, the books used in the eighth grade contain relatively many concepts (Groups 5 and 8). When the answers of all the groups are analysed simultaneously, there is a wide variety of concepts that could be mentioned.

Table 3 shows the concepts the student groups recognised as being related to sentence structures. The students recognised syntactic and morphological concepts in particular. In addition, one of the concepts mentioned has a semantic role: "the agent". No other concepts belonging to variation in language, for example, were mentioned.

Table 3. The linguistic concepts related to sentence structures the students found in the L1 or L2 textbooks

Generic category	Mentioned concepts	Groups referring to the concepts ("X")							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Syntax	word order		X	X		X		X	
	basic sentence structures and types of sentences	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	sentence constituents phrase		X			X			X
Morphology	parts of speech	X	X	X				X	X
	declension			X		X		X	
	tense and person			X				X	
Semantics	semantic roles		X						

The students usually answered by listing linguistic concepts. Some groups gave answers that were more descriptive. For example, Groups 1 and 5 described the linguistic concepts used in teaching sentence structures in the L1 books in the following way:

Sentence structure is presented through word classes. Verb as the core of a clause, followed by noun, but nothing more specific. Teaching is not explicit; it only prepares [students for learning sentence structures]. (Gr. 1)

Sentence constituents, the concept of phrase (head of the phrase, complement, etc.), those kinds of sentence constituents that are described with different linguistic terms (e.g. noun cases of objective are nominative, genitive, and partitive), types of subordinate clauses. Part of the concepts of sentence structures are dealt with in the chapters on language knowledge (e.g. sentence constituents), and another part in the chapter on writing (main and subordinate clause). (Gr. 5)

The analysed textbooks contained more concepts related to sentence structures than the students listed (see Table 3). For example, Group 4 do not list any concepts related to sentence structures in their L2 textbook, although their exercise book, *Yip-pee! 3 Writer* (Kuja-Kyyny-Pajula, Pelto, Turpeinen, & Westlake, 2015), includes tasks on writing sentences in English (p. 24), forming interrogative sentences (p. 37), writing the correct interrogatives at the beginning of the sentences (p. 170), and forming imperatives (p. 171). The grammar chapter at the end of the exercise book presents, for example, the concepts of positive sentence and negative sentence (p. 202); interrogative sentences (p. 203); ordering, denying, and proposing (p. 203); and the auxiliary verb (p. 203). As can be noted, the book contains grammatical concepts as well as functional concepts.

As another example, Group 8 listed only the subordinate clause in their L2 textbook. Their book, *På gång 8* (Ahokas et al., 2012), which is targeted at the eighth

grade, contains such concepts as word order (pp. 114–115), the subordinate clause (p. 115), sentence constituents (p. 93), parts of speech (p. 93), auxiliary verbs (p. 104), tenses (p. 105), and the imperative mood (p. 109).

5.2 Reflecting on the similarities and differences in using linguistic concepts related to sentence structures in the L1 and L2 textbooks

The student teachers were required to discuss teaching sentence structures and the use of linguistic concepts. They compared the books and reflected on their observations concerning the use of linguistic concepts. The students had different views regarding the similarities and differences between the analysed books. Groups 2, 5, 7, and 8 found that the L1 textbooks used more concepts, and the use of the concepts was more theoretical and detailed than in the L2 textbooks.

The mother tongue textbook explains concepts rather deeply and theoretically. Apparently, the aim is to develop metalinguistic knowledge. The English textbook has a more practical approach to linguistics. Concepts are often used as titles. Presumably, the English textbook relies on using concepts learned in the mother tongue, because the English textbook hardly explains any concepts. (Gr. 5)

The mother tongue textbook tackles smaller and more detailed concepts; the Swedish textbook concentrates on larger linguistic units (subordinate clauses). (Gr. 8)

Group 3 noticed that the L1 and L2 textbooks used the same concepts, and the use of these concepts supports the learning of both languages.

The textbooks [German and Finnish] contain the same linguistic concepts, which support each other naturally. A good command of those concepts in the mother tongue helps in learning a foreign language. (Gr. 3)

Three groups (1, 4, and 6) analysed textbooks targeted at the third grade. They noted hardly any similarities or differences in using linguistic concepts related to sentence structures. At the same time, they noted hardly any linguistic concepts at all, which explains the result.

There are only a few concepts. It is hardly necessary to learn the sentence structures theoretically [in the third grade]. The mother tongue textbook contains a few more concepts related to sentence structures compared to the English textbook. (Gr. 4)

The task also made the students consider co-operation between L1 and L2 teachers. Groups 2 and 5 considered co-operation important. Group 3 considered it useful to engage in this kind of co-operation between prospective L1 and L2 teachers already during the teachers' education.

The concepts used in the mother tongue could have been used in teaching and learning a foreign language. ... The foreign language textbook [German] also contains linguistic concepts that are not used in Finnish language textbooks. The teachers should be aware of what pupils have learned or are learning when they are studying different languages. The concepts should be standardised... (Gr. 2)

The mother tongue as a subject not only teaches the Finnish language but also linguistic concepts and general language awareness. That's why the mother tongue and foreign language teachers should co-operate, so the subjects could support each other. (Gr. 5) We learned [in this task] that the examples of another language could be used in teaching one's own subject. (Gr. 3)

6. CONCLUSIONS

In this section, we reflect on the main results and draw conclusions from our two-part qualitative case study. Firstly, we present the student language teachers' views of linguistic concepts which they consider to be central for teaching sentence structures. Secondly, we discuss the student language teachers' observations about the linguistic concepts related to sentence structures in L1 and L2 textbooks.

In the first part of our study (see Nupponen, Jeskanen, & Rättyä, 2017), we presented L1 and L2 student teachers' considerations of the metalinguistic concepts they consider central to teaching sentence structures. Six perspectives on teaching sentence structures could be seen in the data. The students mentioned concepts related to 1) sentence constituents (e.g. subject, predicative), 2) word order, 3) basic sentence structures and types of sentences (e.g. main clause, subordinate clause, interrogative clause), 4) structural components (sentence, clause, and phrase), 5) parts of speech and declension and conjugation (e.g. verb, partitive case, present tense, and mood), and 6) situational variation (such as differences between colloquial and literary language). The students emphasised syntactic and morphological concepts. Variation in language, which was not commonly referred to, seemed to be more important for prospective L1 teachers than to L2 student teachers. On the other hand, word order seemed to be more important for L2 student teachers than for the L1 student teachers. Thus, the study seems to indicate that the L1 and L2 student teachers had different considerations of which linguistic concepts are central to teaching sentence structures. This could be explained by the different traditions of teaching L1 and L2. Naturally, the characteristics of different languages also influence the views of the students. For instance, word order does not have the same functions in different languages.

In this article, we have reflected on the linguistic concepts related to sentence structures the student teachers recognised in L1 and L2 textbooks. The students recognised mainly syntactic and morphological concepts, such as word order and parts of speech. In addition, only one semantic concept was mentioned. Syntactic and morphological concepts were also emphasised in the first part of our study (Nupponen, Jeskanen, & Rättyä, 2017). Overall, the student teachers have a grammatical perspective of sentence structure—and on the definition of a “linguistic concept”. Our student teachers obviously have grammatical content knowledge (see Myhill, Jones & Watson, 2013, p. 80), and they are, on average, able to recognise many grammatical concepts. Furthermore, the student teachers are aware of particular languages, and they are able to reflect on teaching materials particularly from the perspective of grammar (see Trappes-Lomax, 2002).

In the second part of our study, the students mentioned syntactic and morphological concepts and gave detailed examples, such as “predicative”, “declarative sentence”, and “auxiliary verbs”. However, a review of the books reveals that they contained many more concepts that are related to sentence structures but are functional rather than grammatical in a scholarly sense (see e.g. Kuja-Kyyny-Pajula et al., 2015). The students did not refer to functional concepts in their answers. This may tell us something about the language learning history of the students and the way languages have been taught at school and university: the students are used to thinking about language through grammatical concepts. On the other hand, the result may also tell us how the student teachers define a “linguistic concept” overall. The students certainly understand that such functional concepts as “question” or “negation” lie at the core of language; however, these kinds of functional concepts are not outlined as belonging to linguistic concepts.

Some of the levels of language were ignored in the answers in the data for questionnaire B. Naturally, concepts that are rarely dealt with in the textbooks (such as prosodic phenomena related to sentence structures), are not referred to in the answers. The variation in language related to sentence structures was also ignored. When listing the concepts found in the L1 textbook that they also considered relevant for learning foreign languages, Group 2 mentioned variation. However, the group’s members did not relate variation to sentence structures. In the first part of our study, some students referred to concepts related to situational variation (see Nupponen, Jeskanen, & Rättyä, 2017).

One aspect revealed in the study was that orthographical concepts were ignored in the task. This is notable, as orthography is particularly essential in mother tongue books. For example, the Finnish language textbook *Kärki 8* contains the concepts of “question mark”, “comma”, and “colon”, which are closely related to sentence structures and the forming of correct written sentences (Karvonen, Lottonen, & Ruuska, 2015, pp. 98, 218, 220). Obviously, orthography is described by using linguistic concepts. However, the students did not relate this aspect to sentence structures. The phrasing of the questions in the task related to questionnaire B (“which linguistic concepts are used in teaching sentence structures?”) would have enabled them to list all kinds of linguistic concepts, including orthographic concepts.

Overall, the students saw sentence structures as a grammatical phenomenon when the task was to recognise any linguistic concepts related to them in L1 and L2 textbooks. In addition, the task of listing linguistic concepts presumably narrows the way the students reflected on language on account of their definition of the term. The students are clearly able to observe language from a broader perspective than this study indicates. It is worth considering how the concepts we use in teaching influence the learning of language. If we focus on separate and abstract concepts, do we miss something relevant in the broad view of language (see Harjunen & Korhonen 2008)? A broader view of language would also make it possible to view languages collectively rather than individually. Explicit grammatical forms make the discussion

of language effective (see Schleppegrell, 2013), but teachers must be careful that this does not lead to a narrow view of language.

The second research question in the second part of our study concerned the similarities and differences the student teachers found in linguistic concepts related to sentence structures in the L1 and L2 textbooks. Half of the groups found that the L1 books use more concepts and more detailed concepts compared to the L2 books. One group reported that the L1 and L2 books used the same concepts. Three groups noted hardly any similarities or differences—however, the lack of the concepts found explains this result.

The students were asked to reflect on performing the collaborative task in the questionnaire B. They thought the collaboration was useful, because they felt that teachers should know what pupils have learned or are learning in other languages. Pupils learn linguistic concepts and general linguistic knowledge in the L1 classroom. L2 teachers should be aware of this, and, vice versa, L1 teachers should be aware of what pupils learn in foreign language classrooms. Teachers should also use examples of other languages when teaching sentence structures. Our study indicates that the collaboration between the students of different subjects is important, and it should be included in both pedagogical studies and subject studies. Thus, further research on student language teachers' linguistic awareness and its characteristics is needed.

The pedagogical studies of the participants include three courses in subject pedagogy. The data gathered from questionnaire A of this two-part case study was collected during two pedagogical courses for subject teacher students in one academic year, and the data gathered via questionnaire B was collected during one pedagogical course. All the students on the courses participated in the research (with the exception of those who did not give permission for the research, absentees, and in for questionnaire A, those on the second course who had already participated previously). Approximately, 30–40 L1 and L2 students typically participate in one pedagogical course (the number is smaller than the yearly intake in pedagogical studies, depending on, e.g., those who delay the start of pedagogical studies or do not start them at all). Our aim was to learn about the level and characteristics of linguistic awareness of one group of students, and to experiment with collaboration between mother tongue students and foreign language students, and examine collaboration between university teachers of mother tongue pedagogy and foreign language pedagogy. The aim of our study was not to reveal the complete picture of the student teachers' linguistic awareness and their ability to analyse language text books. We can speculate from the data, that the students do not yet follow a routine of reading textbooks and locating certain contents quickly. It might have been good to provide more time for those students who studied the textbook materials for older age groups/advanced learners. Refining some of the questions or focusing the questions only on sentence structures could have enriched the data. The results of this case study cannot be generalised, but they give information for the development of teacher training courses in language pedagogy. The analysis of the data was conducted in the co-operation of lectures in language pedagogy. Besides investigator

triangulation also data triangulation (see Yin 2009, pp. 114–117) contributes to the validity of this study. Two different data sets deepen the understanding of the student teachers' linguistic and metalinguistic awareness.

7. DISCUSSION: DEVELOPING LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINING

In teacher training programmes and in schools, the mother tongue and foreign languages have been generally taught as separate subjects, and contacts between languages and the teachers of these languages have only been occasional. Language education in the 21st century calls for teachers in schools and teacher trainers at universities to adopt new approaches to collaboration. We should focus more on developing plurilingual awareness based on cross-linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge and plurilingual pedagogy in the classroom that also includes the parallel use of languages. As Jessner, Allgaüer-Hackl, and Hofer (2016, p. 176) note, multilingual or plurilingual pedagogy is not possible without the collaboration of all the teachers involved in language teaching.

The teaching and learning of sentence structures are strongly related to teaching and learning to write, and writing is a core skill of multiliteracies, which the Finnish Core Curriculum for Basic Education emphasises. Multiliteracy is defined as a cross-curricular competence that includes interpreting, producing, and evaluating different kinds of texts in a broad sense. The texts can take various forms: verbal, visual, audio, numeric, or kinaesthetic, plus their combinations. At school, the development of students' multiliteracy competencies require joint efforts of all teachers in all school subjects (Halinen, Harmanen, & Mattila, 2015, pp. 142–143).

In Finland, mother tongue language teaching has traditionally concentrated more on writing than speaking. In foreign language teaching, oral production has become more important since the rise of communicative language teaching, and language teachers do not consider writing as important as speaking. According to studies from 2008 (Luukka et al., 2008, p. 106, 109; Kauppinen et al., 2008), mother tongue and foreign language teachers and textbooks ask students to write mostly literary, narrative texts. The main difference is that in foreign language classes, students write shorter texts and perform such writing exercises less frequently than in their mother tongue language classes. Students write factual texts, and for instance media texts, more seldom.

Overall, it seems that the written texts produced by students in both the mother tongue and foreign languages have traditionally been unimodal and linear. One issue is that the textual worlds of the students and the school textbooks do not meet. In their free time, students live in a world of multimodal texts that combine verbal, visual, and audio elements. The current Core Curriculum (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016) obliges teachers to use texts (for both reading and writing) that are relevant to their students.

In Finland, the previous curriculum for basic education was published in 2004 (Finnish National Board of Education, 2004). The studies cited earlier are related to

the situation after the publishing of the 2004 curriculum and are already ten years old. The curricula from 2004 and 2014 differ significantly in many aspects, especially in language teaching. The new Core Curriculum (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, pp. 23–24, 109), which emphasises language education and multiliteracy, is hopefully changing both the language textbooks and the teaching of languages in schools and universities (see also Halinen, Harmanen, & Mattila, 2015).

Those of us who work in teacher training programmes at different universities must ask ourselves how we can teach and supervise our students so that on the one hand they develop as intercultural and plurilingual individuals, and on the other hand they gain such skills and knowledge in language teaching that they will be able to develop the ideas of language education in their prospective classes. One of the issues we must address is the role of subject didactics in the era of language education. Do we need to teach the didactics of every language separately or could we join forces and collaborate? This question is currently much discussed in Finland. We must also ask what role the teaching of grammar plays. How and when should we teach grammar to our students—and who indeed should teach it? At Finnish universities, student language teachers often learn their subject (e.g. Finnish language or English language) separately from pedagogical studies: departments of languages are responsible for subject teaching, while departments of educational science are responsible for pedagogical studies. It is obviously not enough for lecturers of language pedagogy to collaborate; the different departments should also find a common language in teacher training. Our students need to learn both the academic grammar of their language(s), but also adopt a more wholesome attitude to grammar in terms of the functions of language, grammar for communication, and language perception.

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