

Use of Authentic Texts in L2 Teaching in Finland

A Mixed-Methods Study

Emmi Kaitarinne

Master's Thesis

Degree Programme in Language Learning and Teaching, Department of English

School of Languages and Translation Studies

Faculty of Humanities

University of Turku

March 2025

The originality of this thesis has been checked in accordance with the University of Turku quality assurance system using the Turnitin Originality Check service.

Master's Thesis

**Degree Programme in Language Learning and Teaching, Department of English
Emmi Kaitarinne**

Use of Authentic Texts in L2 Teaching in Finland: A Mixed-Methods Study

Number of pages: 55 pages, 15 pages in appendices

This thesis inquires into the use of authentic target language texts in second and foreign language classrooms in Finland. The aim of this thesis is to examine what types of authentic texts teachers in Finnish primary and secondary schools use and how often they use them. The study also delves into how teachers perceive the use of authentic texts outside coursebooks and textbooks considering practical issues and how they view the texts' effects on their students' language learning.

The use of authentic texts is studied from the teachers' perspective through a concurrent combination of a questionnaire with 154 responses and eight semi-structured interviews. The data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The questionnaire data were mostly analyzed quantitatively utilizing descriptive statistics. Open-ended questions and interview data were analyzed employing data-driven qualitative content analysis. To measure the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha of each Likert scale question was calculated in IBM SPSS Statistics.

The vast majority of second and foreign language teachers in Finnish primary and secondary school reported using authentic texts outside coursebooks and textbooks in their teaching. The results show that teachers use several types of authentic texts, the most common ones being websites, songs and vlogs or videos, which teachers reported using often. The majority of teachers supported the use of authentic texts in second and foreign language classrooms and believed that they enrich classroom input. Authentic texts were seen to be beneficial to all of the students' four basic language skills, but receptive skills more than productive and written rather than oral.

The results of the study imply that teachers believe students should be exposed to authentic texts at all levels of proficiency and that they have positive perceptions on the use of authentic texts in second and foreign language classrooms, although not entirely without difficulty. To facilitate the use of authentic texts in second and foreign language classrooms, teachers could be provided with resources and training on how to effectively find, evaluate and incorporate authentic texts into their teaching. Furthermore, the results of the current study encourage materials developers to include authentic texts in teaching materials at all levels of proficiency. Future research could tap into the learner perspective and experiment the use of authentic texts with pedagogical interventions. Such research could provide useful information for teachers, teacher trainers and materials developers alike.

Key words: authenticity, authentic texts, foreign language learning, second language learning, communicative language teaching

Table of contents

1	Introduction	5
2	Communicative Language Teaching and Authentic Texts	7
2.1	Communicative Language Teaching	7
2.2	Language Teaching in Finland	9
2.3	Authenticity	12
2.3.1	Definitions for Authenticity	13
2.3.2	Modification of Authentic Texts	18
2.4	Earlier Studies	20
3	Methods	24
3.1	Questionnaire	24
3.1.1	Structure	24
3.1.2	Participants	27
3.2	Interviews	27
3.2.1	Structure	28
3.2.2	Participants	28
3.3	Methods for Analysis	29
3.3.1	Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis	29
3.3.2	Reliability	30
4	Results	32
4.1	Use of Authentic Texts	32
4.2	Teachers' Perceptions on the Use of Authentic Texts	36
4.2.1	Overall Perceptions and Impacts on Students' Language Learning	36
4.2.2	Onset of Exposure	40
4.2.3	Authentic Texts and Textbooks	41
5	Discussion	45
6	Conclusion	50
	References	52
	Appendices	56
	Appendix 1 Questionnaire	56
	Appendix 2 Interview Questions	63

Appendix 3 Use of Authentic Texts	64
Appendix 4 Finnish Summary	65

List of Tables

Table 1 Authentic Text Types in the Questionnaire	25
Table 2 Initial Cronbach's Alpha of Each Likert Scale Question	30
Table 3 Cronbach's Alpha of Each Likert Scale Question with Selected Items	31
Table 4 Use of Authentic Texts in Order of Frequency per Category	33
Table 5 Perceptions on the Use of Authentic Texts	36
Table 6 Onset of Exposure	40
Table 7 Authentic Texts and Textbooks	42

List of Abbreviations

CEFR = Common European Framework of Reference

CLIL = Content and Language Integrated Learning

CLT = Communicative Language Teaching

EFL = English as a Foreign Language

ELT = English Language Teaching

IB = International Baccalaureate

ICT = information and communications technology

L2 = second and/or foreign language

1 Introduction

This thesis investigates the use of authentic target language texts in second and foreign language (L2) classrooms in Finland. The focus of the study is on authentic texts outside coursebooks or textbooks, and the phenomenon is examined from the teachers' perspective through a concurrent combination of a questionnaire and eight interviews. As a concurrent combination, the two methods are used separately from one another, and the results are integrated in the discussion. This study method was chosen as it aims to "broaden the research perspective and thus provide a general picture or to test how the different findings complement or corroborate each other" (Dörnyei 2007, 172).

The current Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (Finnish National Agency for Education EDUFI 2014) lists seven transversal competencies that students should develop during their primary and lower secondary studies. One of these competencies is multiliteracy, which includes the ability to interpret, produce and evaluate different kinds of texts (EDUFI 2014, 22). The *multiliteracy* section of the core curriculum explicitly mentions that teaching should incorporate texts that are authentic and meaningful for the students (EDUFI 2014, 23). Later, in the sections for the second national language (Swedish) and foreign languages, it is also stated that students should be encouraged to communicate in authentic environments, and that information and communications technology (ICT) provides a possibility to teach languages based on authentic situations (EDUFI 2014; 125, 127). The National Core Curriculum for General Upper Secondary Education (EDUFI 2019a), on the other hand, is not as explicit with the desire to incorporate authentic texts in teaching. However, the sections for the second national language and foreign languages showcase several learning objectives where students could or should make use of authentic texts.

In Finland, the most commonly applied approach to language teaching is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) with some modifications and form-focused grammar teaching (Kantelinen and Hildén 2016, 163). The nature of these modifications is not specified, and it is likely that they vary depending on the teacher. Studies have also shown that textbooks are used to a great extent in foreign language classrooms (Maijala 2020, 158; Kantelinen and Hildén 2016, 166). For instance, Harjanne, Larenas and Tella (2017) discovered that language teachers in Finland use textbooks extensively in their teaching and that they seem to be quite satisfied with Finnish textbooks, as there are communicative tasks in them and the textbooks meet their requirements (Harjanne, Larenas and Tella 2017; 6, 16). However, the use of

authentic texts was not found to be as common, which seems contradictory to the principles of CLT, as Harjanne, Larenas and Tella (2017, 6) point out.

In light of the objectives of the National Core Curriculums and findings by Harjanne, Larenas and Tella (2017), it is worthwhile to study the use of authentic texts in Finnish primary and secondary schools in more detail. As teachers are the ones that design and carry out their own teaching, it is sensible to examine their perceptions on the issue of authentic texts in formal classroom learning environments. To my knowledge, there are no other studies on teachers' perceptions on the use of authentic texts in L2 teaching in Finland. Earlier MA theses on authentic texts in language learning have focused specifically on the use of literature (Sarimo-McKusick 2004; Kirsi-Lahti 2005) or on the authenticity of Finnish textbooks (Sinkkonen, 2011). However, teachers' perceptions on the use of authentic texts in foreign language teaching have been studied in other countries quite recently (e.g. Orooq and Hussein-Abdel Razeq 2022; Rehman and Perveen 2021).

This thesis examines what types of authentic target language texts teachers in Finnish primary and secondary schools use and how often they use them. This thesis also taps into what kind of practical issues impact the teacher's use of authentic texts and how the teachers view the texts' impacts on their students' language learning. The research questions of the thesis are as follows:

RQ I: (a) What types of authentic texts outside course- and textbooks do L2 teachers in Finland use in their teaching and (b) how often do they use them?

RQ II: How do L2 teachers in Finland perceive the use of authentic texts outside course- and textbooks considering (a) practical issues and (b) impacts on their students' language learning?

In the next section, I provide theoretical background to the study. I begin with an overview of CLT and the current situation of L2 teaching in Finnish mainstream education. I then move on to the varied definitions of *authenticity*, modification of authentic texts and how authentic texts differ from simplified texts. Subsequently, I present a literature review of earlier studies regarding authentic texts in language learning and in general. After that, in the Methods section, I first introduce the questionnaire part of the study and then move on to the interviews. The results of the study are covered one research question after another, followed by discussion and finally, the conclusion.

2 Communicative Language Teaching and Authentic Texts

In what follows, I provide background to the current situation of L2 teaching in Finland, beginning with an overview of the widely adopted approach known as CLT. I then move on to three key documents that guide Finnish mainstream education today: the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and the Finnish National Core Curriculums. After that, I provide theoretical background for the notion of *authenticity*, followed by a review of some earlier studies.

2.1 Communicative Language Teaching

The approach adopted by an educational materials designer or a teacher guides the decisions they make while planning a learning unit and choosing texts for it. Each approach includes its own goals and the appropriate means to reach those goals. CLT is widely understood as an approach to language teaching with two objectives: (1) to make *communicative competence* the goal to aim for and (2) to develop communicative teaching procedures for reading, writing, listening and speaking skills (Richards and Rodgers 2014, 85). The communicative approach has its roots in the 1970s when sociolinguistics was gaining ground and language was increasingly seen not just as a system of rules, but as a more complex social phenomenon. Along these lines, language is seen primarily as a means of social communication in CLT. This said, CLT does not disregard the importance of grammar as is commonly misconstrued – grammar is a part of language, and it is a part of communicative competence as well.

Canale and Swain (1980) have suggested a framework of communicative competence that encompasses three main competences: grammatical, sociolinguistic and strategic competence. Three years later, Canale (1983) revised this model and proposed a four-component framework with the inclusion of discourse competence. The first competence in this framework, grammatical competence, refers quite simply to the learner's knowledge and skills regarding the lexis and rule system of a language (Canale 1983, 7). Sociolinguistic competence, for its part, refers to the command of *sociocultural rules of use* (ibid.). Sociocultural rules of use have to do with the appropriateness of utterances in a specific sociocultural context with regard to both meaning and form. For instance, an utterance may be grammatically correct but convey an impolite meaning or an unconventional form, going against the sociocultural rules of use. Discourse competence, on the other hand, focuses on

“how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different genres” (Canale 1983, 9). According to Canale, a unified text is formally cohesive and coherent in meaning (ibid.). In other words, a unified text makes use of cohesive devices to connect words and utterances and presents ideas in a harmonious, coherent way. Finally, strategic competence entails communication strategies to overcome breakdowns in communication or to strengthen the efficacy of communication with slower speech, for example (Canale 1983, 10–11). Breakdowns in communication may be caused by momentary lapses or lacking language proficiency. Either way, compensational strategies offer a way out of the predicament and keep communication going. Canale (1983, 11) posits that learners should be encouraged to use communication strategies, and they should be given opportunities for their use. Furthermore, Canale and Swain (1980, 31) have stated that compensational strategies may be especially helpful for beginning learners and that these strategies are most likely acquired through meaningful real-life communication situations.

As Richards and Rodgers (2014, 105) highlight, CLT is not a method but an approach to language teaching that has certain principles to follow when applied in practice. One of these principles, perhaps the most central one, is that learning happens through communication itself (ibid.). Communication can occur between students, between teacher and student or between student and learning materials through communicative activities. Another element of CLT – also found in many other modern teaching approaches – is student-centered learning, in which the teacher gives the students some autonomy over their own learning to find a style that works best for them. According to Little, Devitt and Singleton (1988, 19), learner-centeredness in this approach derives directly from the learners’ communicative needs and the social functions of the language. In other words, the goals of a communicative teaching unit are based on who the learners are and what kinds of social needs they aim to fulfil by learning the language in question. Other important principles in CLT are the following:

- Authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities.
- Fluency is an important dimension of communication.
- Communication involves the integration of different language skills.
- Learning is a process of creative construction and involves trial and error.

(Richards and Rodgers 2014, 105)

In this context, authentic and meaningful communication refers to activities where students negotiate meaning, solve problems or produce something creative instead of mechanical repetition, for instance. In the best situation, communication and what they learn from it is meaningful for the students also outside the school, in their lives and future careers. In CLT, fluency is highlighted over accuracy, although both are important aspects of linguistic proficiency. However, the students are also taught grammar, oftentimes inductively so that the students themselves work out the rules from meaningful contexts. Explicit grammar teaching is not excluded from CLT either, as long as it is carried out in a communicative way (Thompson 1996, 10). As Thompson (1996, 11) put it, the focus in communicative grammar teaching has “moved away from the teacher *covering* grammar to the learners *discovering* grammar” (italics as in the original). Another common misconception regarding CLT is that it teaches primarily speaking and neglects the other three language skills (ibid.). Quite contrarily, the aim of CLT is to teach both productive and receptive, oral and written skills through meaningful communication. The students will need to be able to listen, write and read different kinds of texts from many genres and registers in addition to the speaking ability. Thus, it is important to include all of them in the teaching as well. Texts always aim to relay a message, which makes them communicative in nature. As the learner processes a text in a meaningful way, they are effectively communicating with the text and whoever produced it. The key is to guide the learner to find and construct meaning from the text.

The principles described above are reflected in some of the key documents that steer current Finnish mainstream education all the way from syllabus and materials design to classroom practice. These documents, which are presented in the next section below, affect the everyday decisions teachers make as they navigate between national and international standards, the students’ needs as well as practical issues.

2.2 Language Teaching in Finland

As stated in the introduction, CLT is the most common approach to language teaching in Finland, albeit with some modifications and form-focused grammar teaching (Kantelinen and Hildén 2016, 163). This is not surprising, since the communicative approach is in line with the objectives of the CEFR and the Finnish National Core Curriculums. These documents not only influence the choice of topics in modern textbooks and coursebooks, but teachers should also bear them in mind while choosing texts, topics and activities for classes. The CEFR is used as a point of reference and an assessment tool for both teachers and students, as the

students' skill level is referenced to the CEFR levels and descriptors. The CEFR levels are also referenced throughout the National Core Curriculums, highlighting the international standards that students should aim to meet.

The CEFR itself claims an *action-oriented approach*, which considers learners as social agents that have tasks or actions that they need to perform in a certain social context (Council of Europe 2001, 9). According to the Council of Europe (2020, 27) the action-oriented approach “builds on and goes beyond the communicative approach proposed in the mid-1970s”. In this approach, learners develop a range of *general competences* and *communicative language competences* on which they draw as they engage in language activities (Council of Europe 2001, 9). General competences consist of the learners' knowledge, skills, existential competence (individual characteristics, attitudes, personality traits) and ability to learn (Council of Europe 2001, 11). Communicative language competences, on the other hand, consist of linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences (Council of Europe 2001, 13). The communicative language competences specified in the CEFR are in line with Canale's (1983) grammatical, sociolinguistic and discourse competences despite differing terminology. Furthermore, although the CEFR does not include strategic competence on the list, it later acknowledges *production strategies* that involve “balancing between different competences – exploiting strengths and underplaying weaknesses – in order to match the available potential to the nature of the task” (Council of Europe 2001, 63). The CEFR also presents three other strategies that the learners should develop: *reception*, *interaction* and *mediation* strategies (Council of Europe 2001; 72, 84, 87). These strategies are included in the ultimate objectives of language learning as well. According to the CEFR, language learners should develop their general and communicative language competences, the ability to bring these competences into action and the ability to utilize the required strategies to do so (Council of Europe 2001, 131).

While the CEFR is an EU-wide document and specifies the international standards for L2 teaching, national standards are specified in the National Core Curriculums. Primary and lower secondary schools share a common core curriculum, and upper secondary school has its own core curriculum.¹ One major objective of modern mainstream education in Finland is building the students' *transversal competencies*. Transversal competencies go beyond

¹ Vocational schools have national core curriculums for each separate degree. These core curriculums are numerous and will not be further elaborated on in this thesis for practical issues.

independent disciplines and skill areas and entail the ability to use knowledge and skills accordingly in different situations (EDUFI 2014, 20). The National Core Curriculum for Basic Education lists seven transversal competencies that all primary and lower secondary school education should address one way or another: (1) thinking and learning to learn, (2) cultural competence, interaction and expression, (3) managing daily life, taking care of oneself and others, (4) multiliteracy, (5) ICT competence, (6) working life and entrepreneurial competence and (7) participation, influence and building a sustainable future (EDUFI 2014, 20-24). The objectives for transversal competence in upper secondary education differ from those in primary and lower secondary education. The National Core Curriculum for General Upper Secondary Education (EDUFI 2019a, 60) lists six instead of seven transversal competencies: well-being competence, interaction competence, multidisciplinary and creative competence, societal competence, ethical and environmental competence and global and cultural competence.

The National Core Curriculum for Basic Education describes the guidelines for language education in second national language and foreign languages for grades 1–2, 3–6 and 7–9 separately. Across all grade levels, the Core Curriculum states that language education in school should be based on using the language in different situations (EDUFI 2014; 124, 196, 324). Since spring 2020, Finnish primary schools have begun foreign language education in first grade, and in most cases that foreign language is English. Literacy is not yet required at the beginning of primary school, but language education in grades 1–2 should instead emphasize “joy in learning, changing practices, functional activities and oral interaction” (EDUFI 2019b, 25; my translation). Teaching and learning can include, for example, songs, games, drama, nursery rhymes and stories so that the students’ curiosity towards learning a new language is raised and fostered (EDUFI 2019b, 27). After the first compulsory foreign language (A1-language), students may choose a voluntary A2-language to study from the 4th or 5th grade onwards. The B1-language (most often Swedish) is also compulsory and begins in the 6th grade. In addition to these, the students may choose a voluntary B2-language starting in the 8th grade. Themes of functional activities and creativity mentioned in grades 1–2 continue in grades 3–6 and 7–9 as well. According to the Core Curriculum, the students should be encouraged to find materials in the target language appropriate for their age and language skills, language use should be as natural and meaningful as possible, learning together in pairs or groups should be emphasized and students should be encouraged to take action and responsibility over their own learning (EDUFI 2014; 225–229, 354–361). The

specific objectives of language learning vary depending on the grade level, but interaction, creativity and communication are highlighted across all levels.

The National Core Curriculum for General Upper Secondary Education (EDUFI 2019a), on the other hand, is highly oriented towards the students' future studies and careers. The purpose of teaching languages is not only to learn the language itself, but also to foster the students' abilities to operate in a global world. According to the Core Curriculum, language education should cooperate with other school subjects as well as build connections outside the school context (EDUFI 2019a, 174). The Core Curriculum also states that thinking and analyzing skills should be developed through diverse and student-centered methods and that it is important to work on problems and their solutions in interaction with others (EDUFI 2019a, 175). All in all, interaction is emphasized in several parts throughout the Foreign Languages section of the Core Curriculum. For instance, the Core Curriculum explicitly states that one of the general objectives of foreign language education is building interaction and increasing mutual understanding rather than acquiring native-like language skills (EDUFI 2019a, 176). In so-called short languages or B2- and B3-language syllabuses², language teaching should emphasize oral proficiency and demonstrate how one can get acquainted with different languages and cultures even with minor language skills (EDUFI 2019a; 190, 193). This suggests adopting a communicative approach to language learning all the way from beginning levels onwards.

In summary, mainstream L2 education in Finland is based on the National Core Curriculums and the CEFR, which adopt a communicative or action-oriented approach. According to these documents, the learners are expected to develop several competencies, linguistic and otherwise. This thesis aims to examine how the ideals and realities of L2 teaching in Finland relate to one another and how authentic texts fit into the equation.

2.3 Authenticity

This section first presents different definitions for authenticity and authentic texts. As is the case for many academic concepts, there is no one definition of authenticity to rule them all. Under closer inspection, we find that authenticity is a complex concept with diverse aspects that may support or contradict one another. After the definitions, we then move on to consider

² B2-language studies begin in the 8th grade and may continue in upper secondary school, whereas B3-language studies begin in upper secondary school. Both are voluntary studies and the languages available to study differ from school to school.

modifications of authentic texts and linguistic differences between authentic and simplified texts. Possible theoretical implications for teaching are also discussed throughout this section.

In this thesis, a *text* can be either a written, spoken or multimodal entity that aims to relay a message of some sort to its audience. In some parts of this thesis, the term authentic *materials* will also be mentioned. Authentic materials include not only texts but also cultural materials that are not necessarily considered texts, such as currency. However, the focus of this thesis remains on the texts and their authenticity.

2.3.1 Definitions for Authenticity

According to Little, Devitt and Singleton (1988, 21), authenticity has been a key concept of the communicative approach to language teaching since its beginning. In a broad sense, authentic texts are texts that have not been created for teaching purposes but for a social, communicative purpose in the target language community (e.g. Little, Devitt and Singleton 1988; Lee 1995; Guariento and Morley 2001; Crossley et al. 2007). According to Little, Devitt and Singleton (1988, 21), language teaching within the communicative approach should ensure a continuum between what happens in the class and the conventions in the target language communities. They note that “[o]ne of the most damaging criticisms that can be levelled against language pedagogies that focus on the target language system is that they all too easily leave the learner without secure bridges into the actual world of language use” (ibid.). They find that authentic texts should have a central role in second language learning because they have been written for a real communicative purpose – and are thus likely to be more motivating – and because they focus on meaning rather than on form (Little, Devitt and Singleton 1988, 22). For Little, Devitt and Singleton (1988, 21–23), then, authentic texts are bridges into the world of language use and a way for the teacher to create an environment where opportunities for more naturalistic language acquisition may arise.

However, there are varied interpretations as to what is truly meant by authenticity, and there are different opinions whether or not authentic texts should be used in language teaching. For instance, Widdowson ([1979] 1980) distinguishes between *genuine* and *authentic* discourse. In fact, Widdowson ([1979] 1980, 165) prefers to consider authenticity not as a quality of language but as something created by the receiver’s response. Widdowson ([1979], 1980, 166–167) remarks that considering authenticity as a quality of a text misrepresents the inherently interactive nature of discourse. He elaborates that “[m]eanings are not as it were there, present in the text awaiting collection: they are recovered by negotiation with the aid of

shared conventions” (ibid.). He also argues that managing genuine texts is the ultimate goal of learners, and the objective of pedagogy is to guide learners towards the goal through intervening stages. Therefore, according to Widdowson ([1979] 1980, 171), presenting students with “authentic” texts without intervening stages of pedagogically processed materials may lead to teachers forgetting their pedagogic responsibility of guiding the students.

Lee (1995), on the other hand, makes a distinction between *text authenticity* and *learner authenticity*. According to Lee (1995, 323), text authenticity refers to the origin of said text (Widdowson’s *genuine*), whereas learner authenticity entails the learners’ responses and reactions to any text they are presented with (Widdowson’s *authentic*). More specifically, to be learner authentic, the text should evoke appropriate reactions and *positive* perceptions in the learner. According to this viewpoint, it is not the textual authenticity that motivates the learner or engages them in communicative learning but rather the perception of authenticity that they get from the texts. These texts may well be authentic or non-authentic in terms of their origin. However, Lee (1995, 324) notes that because they are communicative by nature, textually authentic materials are inclined to have more potential to become learner authentic compared to textually inauthentic materials. The challenge of the teacher, then, is to provide learners with materials and tasks that they would likely perceive as authentic.

Furthermore, according to Breen (1985, 61), teachers deal with altogether four types of authenticity in the classroom: authenticity of the *texts*, authenticity of the *learners’ interpretations* of the texts, authenticity of *tasks* and authenticity of the *classroom situation*. He reasons that all of these four types contribute to what may be considered authentic in the foreign language classroom, and while they may sometimes contradict one another, a balance must be sought and maintained. Like Widdowson, Breen (1985, 61–63) ties together authenticity of text and authenticity of the learners’ interpretations. He proposes that authentic text could be any text that aids the learner develop an authentic interpretation. Tasks, on the other hand, could be authentic if they require learners to “communicate ideas and meanings *and* to meta-communicate about the language and about the problems and solutions in the learning of the language” (Breen 1985, 66). Lastly, an authentic classroom situation provides opportunities to share what the learners have learned, what kind of problems they faced and how they could overcome said problems – in other words communicating about the learning process (Breen 1985, 67–68). Thus, Breen’s task authenticity and classroom authenticity seem to be interrelated, as authentic tasks should require learners to communicate about the

learning and an authentic classroom should provide opportunities for this sort of communication.

Lee (1995, 325) rephrases Breen's (1985) four types as *text factor*, *learner factor*, *task factor* and *learner setting factor*. She also adds a fifth factor to the list, one that she calls *the teacher factor* (Lee 1995, 325). She elaborates that if the teacher does not allow students to interact with each other and assumes an authoritative teacher-centered approach, even well thought of materials may cease to be learner authentic. Selection of texts, for their part, should address questions of whether the material is textually authentic, compatible with the course objectives as well as suitable for the teaching approach and tasks. During task design, teachers should aim to integrate several language skills and provide natural, meaningful and relevant contexts for the learners to develop their skills. The tasks should also relate to the selected authentic materials and have high task validity, meaning that they actually develop what the teacher aims them to develop. All of these decisions are made with the learners' needs in consideration, with the ultimate objective of learner authenticity. One may conclude that is therefore not enough to provide the learners with textually authentic materials and assume learning to take place from there, but one must consider multiple aspects of authenticity and adjust to the learners' needs.

Guariento and Morley (2001) further discuss the notion of *task authenticity*. According to them, there are four aspects of task authenticity: authenticity through a *genuine purpose*, through *real world tasks*, through *classroom interaction* and through *engagement* (Guariento and Morley 2001, 349–350). Firstly, authentic tasks should contain natural interaction between the learners to achieve a genuine communicative goal. Secondly, they should have a clear connection to the learners' needs in the real world. In other words, the tasks should address scenarios that occur in the world outside the classroom, preferably the kind that the learners are likely to come across. Authenticity through classroom interactions, on the other hand, refers to Breen's (1985) view of classroom authenticity, where students communicate about the language and their learning process with one another. Lastly, Guariento and Morley (2001, 350–351) ascertain that authenticity through engagement is likely the most essential type of task authenticity, because if the students are not genuinely engaged in the task, the other types may not amount to much. Furthermore, task and classroom authenticity relate to the learners' perception of the authenticity of the texts that are being dealt with.

As the authenticity of texts and their interpretations have been much discussed, Taylor (1994, n.p.) argues that the authenticity of the classroom itself should not be overlooked. After considering many different types and interpretations of the term authenticity, he concludes the following:

Let us therefore acknowledge that there is no such thing as an abstract quality “authenticity” which can be defined once and for all and that authenticity is a function not only of the language but also of the participants, the use to which language is put, the setting, the nature of the interaction, and the interpretation the participants bring to both the setting and the activity. (Taylor 1994, quotation marks as in the original)

That said, Taylor (1994) points out that nearly all definitions for authenticity contain an assumption that what happens in the classroom is “artificial” or inauthentic. According to him, classrooms construct their own authenticity, and that classroom language is real language use as well. He maintains that authenticity is not an issue to be concerned with, but teachers should have faith in their learners’ capability to extrapolate from the classroom context. Instead, the classroom should be allowed its own legitimacy, in which learners and teachers create their own sense of reality and authenticity.

As further critique regarding the discussion on authenticity, MacDonald, Badger and Dasli (2006) bring attention to four risks of considering only one aspect of authenticity in isolation from others. It should be noted here that they discuss authenticity specifically from the perspective of English language teaching (ELT), and while these four issues are important to consider as a teacher, they are not insurmountable. Firstly, MacDonald, Badger and Dasli (2006, 254) argue that focus on textual authenticity alone may lead to a situation where some regional varieties of English are prioritized over others. However, although it is true that many definitions for authenticity are associated with the target language community, it is not always specified what that community entails. For MacDonald, Badger and Dasli (2006, 254), it seems to entail Kachru’s (1985) inner circle countries. If we consider the community to encompass the entire world of English as an International Language instead, more varieties will unfold. To clarify, English as an International Language does not refer to a particular variety of English but instead emphasizes the international and intercultural nature of English with its numerous varieties (Sharifian 2009, 2). The same paradigm can also be applied for other target languages, with their diverse varieties and contexts of use around the globe. On another note, one must accept that it is not possible to teach every variety of a language, and

that choices must be made. The second risk that MacDonald, Badger and Dasli (2006, 254–255) bring forward is native speaker performance as the objective of language teaching and learning. Again, we need to question which community authenticity is associated with and whose competence we aim for. In CLT, for example, the aim is not a native-speaker competence but an intercultural communicative competence that goes beyond specific target language communities.

The last two points of MacDonald, Badger and Dasli (2006) relate to learner authenticity and classroom authenticity. As their third point, MacDonald, Badger and Dasli (2006, 255) criticize the view that requires the learners to appropriately interpret the original meaning of a text for it to be considered authentic. They posit that learners have a right to interpret the texts from their own cultural frames of reference and “[t]o insist on a correspondence between the language learner’s interpretation and an autochthonous meaning actually inhibits the imaginative and creative potential of the learner” (ibid.). Once again, we turn to the definition of such correspondence to obtain a clearer image of the issue. For instance, Lee (1995, 323) does argue that authenticity is only achievable when the writer’s intention and the learners’ interpretation are in agreement. However, the nature of this agreement is not specified. It does not need to correspond one-to-one, but there needs to be an agreement of some sort for successful communication to take place. Lastly, MacDonald, Badger and Dasli (2006, 256) note that while authentic materials are managed in a classroom, they are redefined in the classroom context and the experience is thus contextually restricted. This is a point that seems to have come back around a full circle. The aim of authentic materials in classrooms, as pointed out by Little, Devitt and Singleton (1988) above, is to widen the context of the classroom to the world outside. However, as the context of the classroom itself cannot be disregarded, some have decided to embrace it in its own terms instead of fighting against the current.

For the sake of clarity, the term *authentic texts* in this thesis refers to the textual authenticity of the texts, as teachers cannot vouch for their students’ perceptions, neither individually nor as a whole. Furthermore, the focus of this thesis is on the texts, and not on the other aspects of authenticity in a foreign language classroom. However, as different types of authenticity are often connected to one another in some way, the other types have been presented here and will be considered to a relevant extent in the discussion of the results of this study.

2.3.2 Modification of Authentic Texts

As can be seen from the previous sections, there are proponents of using authentic texts in foreign language classrooms (e.g. Little, Devitt and Singleton 1988) as well as those who deem it a peripheral matter (e.g. Taylor 1994) or even go so far as to claim it avoidant to pedagogic responsibility (e.g. Widdowson [1979] 1980). There are also those that acknowledge the complex nature of foreign language teaching and learning and thus seek to find a balance between different types of authenticity (e.g. Breen 1985; Lee 1995; Guariento and Morley 2001). One way of importing authenticity into a classroom without disregarding one's pedagogical responsibility or the learners' holistic learning experience is the modification of authentic texts, which is discussed in this section.

As the discussion around authentic texts in language learning may sometimes seem quite black and white, Steven Brown (2011, 140) suggests considering authenticity on a continuum rather than as a binary concept. He presents five types of input authenticity on said continuum: *genuine* input authenticity, *altered* input authenticity, *adapted* input authenticity, *simulated* input authenticity and *inauthenticity* (Brown 2011, 140–142). Genuinely authentic input refers to input that has not been created for teaching purposes nor have any changes been made in it to facilitate understanding or learning. This is the most exclusive type of authenticity, and by some binary definitions the only one. Altered input, on the other hand, includes some changes to it without change in meaning to the original text, for example footnotes. These also entail any pedagogical modifications made to texts, for instance dividing a novel into segments and providing content questions in the middle about the previous segment. Adapted input, on the other hand, entails larger changes to the text to make it more comprehensible, for example grammatical or lexical simplification. However, the origin of the text is still in an authentic context with a real, communicative purpose. Simulated input, on the other hand, refers to texts that have been created for learning purposes while aiming to portray real-life text characteristics. By the definition expressed in the beginning of section 2.3.1 above, simulated texts no longer qualify as “authentic” as the texts have been created with a pedagogical purpose in mind. Lastly, Brown's (2011) inauthentic texts have been created for teaching and learning purposes without any attempt to portray authentic target language texts. Brown (2011, 141) posits that inauthentic materials are not pedagogically worth less than the abovementioned materials on the continuum: they, too, have their place in the language classroom, for example in instances where focus on linguistic form is needed. Hence, it seems that what matters is the purpose for which texts are used in

learning, and it is the teacher who must choose appropriate texts according to their specific purposes.

Crossley, Louwse, McCarthy and McNamara (2007) examine the linguistic differences in authentic and simplified reading texts in order to provide empirical data to rely on when judging the value of each type of text for language learning purposes. In their study, simplified texts refer to texts that have been written for learning purposes, for example to demonstrate a specific language feature or to modify the number of vocabulary items that are new to the learners (Crossley et al. 2007, 16). Their study found significant differences in authentic and simplified texts. Somewhat counterintuitively, Crossley et al. (2007, 26) found that simplified texts in fact display more overall syntactic complexity than authentic texts. One explanation for this is simplified texts' heavy reliance on noun phrases in cases where authentic texts would employ other means, which suggests unnatural language and sometimes even overgeneralized grammar in simplified texts (*ibid.*). Authentic texts also contained significantly more causal verbs and particles, suggesting that they express cause-and-effect relationships better than simplified texts (Crossley et al. 2007, 25). Additionally, simplified texts employed significantly fewer causal connectives (e.g. *because*), negative temporal connectives (e.g. *until*) and negative additive connectives (e.g. *however*) as well as *if*-clauses and conditional constructions (Crossley et al. 2007, 23). Overall, authentic texts also provided more lexical diversity and different parts of speech (Crossley et al. 2007, 26). Since simplified texts lack in the abovementioned elements, they also have limited ways of expressing complex thoughts. However, simplified texts showed significantly more overlapping nouns, arguments and stems than did authentic texts, signifying more coreferential cohesion (*ibid.*). There was also more semantic overlap, more familiar words and more higher frequency words in simplified texts (*ibid.*). In light of these findings, simplified texts seem faster for the reader to process and therefore easier to comprehend. Hence it seems that linguistically simplified texts are useful for beginning learners, granted that one does not engage in too complex thoughts with limited means, resulting in language that does not reflect reality. Authentic texts, on the other hand, seem to serve better for expressing causal relationships and illustrating more diverse language.

In this thesis, a distinction has not been made explicitly between unedited authentic texts and texts of authentic origin that have been modified for pedagogical purposes. Instead, the emphasis has been on the origin of the texts, regardless of possible modifications. The only definition provided for the participants of this study was the definition by Lee (1995) which

does not address modifications. She only states that “[a] text is usually regarded as textually authentic if it is not written for teaching purposes, but for a real-life communicative purpose, where the writer has a certain message to pass on to the reader” (Lee 1995, 323). Further interpretation of this definition was left to the participants themselves.

2.4 Earlier Studies

As mentioned in the introduction, there are to my knowledge no earlier studies on teachers’ perceptions on the use of authentic texts in L2 language teaching in Finland. However, there have been earlier MA theses specifically on the use of literature in language learning. For example, Sarimo-McKusick (2004) examines the use of sustained silent reading in upper secondary school English classes. In this study, students read a novel of their own choosing for 15 minutes during each of their English classes (Sarimo-McKusick 2004, 56–57). The researcher chose unadapted authentic texts for multiple reasons. For one, Sarimo-McKusick (2004, 45) notes that “the simplified version naturally lacks some of the richness of the original work” and that it may “rob the reader of some of the pleasure of reading”. Secondly, she expresses fear that modified discourse structure may lead to text that is difficult to understand (*ibid.*). She also argues that authentic texts may be more challenging and motivating for the students (Sarimo-McKusick 2004, 46). It was also more practical to use unadapted materials since they were more readily accessible for the students, and the researcher wanted to provide the students with a new experience since they had already been working with texts written for learners before (*ibid.*). The study found that while sustained silent reading did not significantly affect students’ grammar or vocabulary learning, reading speed or written production, significant improvement in reading comprehension occurred (Sarimo-McKusick 2004, 89). Moreover, the students reported that their cultural knowledge had increased and that they had enjoyed the activity and wanted to continue it (*ibid.*).

Another MA thesis by Kirsi-Lahti (2005) examines the use of literature in Finnish lower and upper secondary school English education from the teachers’ perspective. The study included 92 survey participants from the Turku region, four of whom formed the interview sample. The thesis found that less than half of the surveyed teachers had used literature in their teaching that year (Kirsi-Lahti 2005, 89). The most significant reason for not using literature was reported to be lack of time (Kirsi-Lahti 2005, 90). The researcher also found that literature seems to be primarily regarded as something supplementary or “extra” in Finnish secondary schools (*ibid.*). Another reason for not using literature was the students’ lacking language

skills (Kirsi-Lahti 2005, 91). However, the four interviewees that used literature in their teaching did not see this as an impediment but instead allowed their students to read simplified versions if needed (*ibid.*). Finally, the questionnaire results also suggested that well experienced teachers utilized literature more than less experienced teachers (*ibid.*). The results of the study by Kirsi-Lahti (2005) forms an interesting point of reference for the current study.

The MA thesis by Sinkkonen (2011) examines the textual authenticity of Finnish upper secondary school English coursebooks. The study found that the three coursebook series under inspection varied notably in terms of references to authentic sources. The percentage of main texts that contained at least one reference to an authentic source ranged from 35.5 percent to 83.3 percent (Sinkkonen 2011, 73). The most common references in all coursebook series were to works of literary fiction or periodicals, followed by non-fictional works and the internet whereas most infrequently referenced type was audiovisual authentic sources (Sinkkonen 2011, 77). In her analysis, Sinkkonen (2011, 102) divides the authentic source texts into narrated sources (literary fiction, movies and narrated non-fiction) and non-narrated sources (factual non-fiction, periodicals, online articles, a speech). According to the researcher, most extracts or samples from narrated literary sources appeared to exhibit very little adapted language, if at all (*ibid.*). However, some omissions were detected. According to the researcher, these omissions were made due to references that the students were not expected to understand or to avoid controversy (Sinkkonen 2011, 103). In factual non-narrated sources omissions occurred in relation to selected research, heavy details or references that the students were not expected to understand (Sinkkonen 2011, 104). Some non-narrated extracts had also been abridged or rephrased for the learners. In addition, some of these non-narrated sources exhibited only an informational, rather than directly textual, relationship to an authentic source. The researcher concludes that differences between adaptation practices of narrated and non-narrated texts may stem from the original social purposes of the texts (*ibid.*). She reasons that narrative works can be associated with “pleasure reading and culture-oriented entertainment” while factual texts usually aim to relay information to the readers (*ibid.*). The results of this thesis are by now outdated as new Core Curriculums are in place and coursebooks have been updated or new series have emerged. Nevertheless, the results are interesting and provide a point of reference for future research on the topic of textbook authenticity.

Despite the lack of similar studies in Finland, teachers' perceptions on the use of authentic texts in foreign language teaching have been studied in other countries. Orooq and Hussein-Abdel Razeq (2022) study reasons for and challenges in using authentic materials, what types of authentic materials are used and how frequently in grade ten EFL teaching in Palestine. The study found that 94.2% of the respondents ($n = 63$) supported the use of authentic materials in English language classroom (Orooq and Hussein-Abdel Razeq 2022, 167). The most agreed-upon reasons for the use of authentic materials were that they enrich classroom input and that they were seen to increase students' motivation and expose them to real language (Orooq and Hussein-Abdel Razeq 2022, 168). The biggest challenges were seen to be the requirement for extra effort and a different way of planning (Orooq and Hussein-Abdel Razeq 2022, 169). The most used authentic materials were photographs, picture books and websites (Orooq and Hussein-Abdel Razeq 2022, 170). However, the list of authentic materials that the researchers provided in the questionnaire did not include any material categorized as literature in this thesis (drama, children's literature, fictional prose, poetry or non-fiction) but instead listed a more miscellaneous repertoire of authentic materials from food labels to movies.

Rehman and Perveen (2021) study the perceptions of 40 Pakistani secondary school English teachers through a questionnaire. The study found that teachers thought that authentic materials are beneficial for the students' learning, but they were seen as supplementary material to textbooks (Rehman and Perveen 2021, 67). Teaching through authentic materials was seen to be more challenging but also to increase the students' vocabulary (Rehman and Perveen 2021, 68). In addition, Pakistani teachers felt that local textbooks fell short of natural use of English and often overlooked cultural features of language (*ibid.*). The respondents also mostly agreed that it is time-consuming to select authentic material suitable for the students' level of English (Rehman and Perveen 2021, 69). Finally, Rehman and Perveen (2021, 70) note that Pakistani teachers are under considerable pressure as they have full schedules and several lessons to plan every week, and they do not wish to overburden their students either. This study, although small-scale and set in a very different cultural context, taps into issues that are relevant to examine in the Finnish context as well.

Another study worth mentioning, although not directly about the use of authentic texts in foreign language learning, is one by Harjanne, Larenas and Tella (2017), which examines Chilean and Finnish teachers' perceptions of the reality of foreign language teaching in their classrooms through a survey. The study found that although both Chilean and Finnish

teachers claimed to encourage their students to use the language they are learning in class, Finnish teachers reported relatively little use of target language on behalf of both themselves and the students (Harjanne, Larenas and Tella 2017, 6). In addition, teacher-centeredness scored high in both Chilean and Finnish teachers' answers, which does not align with the principles of CLT. Teachers from both groups reported using textbooks relatively much, but Chilean teachers scored slightly higher on the use of authentic materials than on the use textbooks, whereas Finnish teachers scored notably lower on the use of authentic materials than on the use textbooks (ibid.). On the other hand, Finnish teachers also seemed quite content with local textbooks regarding communicative tasks (Harjanne, Larenas and Tella 2017, 16).

Harjanne, Larenas and Tella (2017, 17) note that teachers seem to overlook some core elements of CLT, for instance use of the target language, connections outside the classroom and student-centeredness. The participants also seemed to struggle between teacher-centeredness and student-centeredness, likely because lessons contain much more variables in practice than in theory, which steers teachers to adjust their stance according to the situation. The issue with textbooks, on the other hand, seems to be how teachers use them to foster communication that is meaningful for the students (Harjanne, Larenas and Tella 2017, 17–18). Nevertheless, the researchers point out that the study also yielded positive results with high scores in encouraging the students to use the target language, using communicative oral tasks and using peer scaffolding (Harjanne, Larenas and Tella 2017, 18). Overall, the results of the study suggest dissonance between the ideals and realities of second or foreign language teaching and learning, which calls for further investigation on the matter. The results of Harjanne, Larenas and Tella (2017) as well as the results of the other studies presented above will be compared to the results of the current thesis to see whether similar themes arise regarding the use of authentic texts.

3 Methods

The current study was conducted as a concurrent combination of a questionnaire and eight interviews in order to provide a general overview of the phenomenon and see how the findings complement one another (Dörnyei 2007, 172). In what follows, I present the methods of the current study beginning with the questionnaire and followed by the interviews. The questionnaire was administered during spring 2024, and the interviews were conducted during fall 2024.

3.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was piloted by four pre-service teachers before being sent out, and some changes were made to the initial questionnaire based on their feedback. The invitation to participate was sent to over 550 principals of primary and/or secondary schools, 30 principals or heads of vocational schools and 150 teachers participating in an in-service teacher training unit organized in April. Additionally, the invitation was posted on several Facebook groups for primary, secondary and vocational school L2 teachers. The principals of primary, secondary or vocational schools were sent an email and asked to forward the invitation to the L2 teachers at their school. Only Finnish-speaking or bilingual schools were contacted like this, which led to the exclusion of 20 Finnish municipalities that did not have such schools. Otherwise, 1–6 schools in each Finnish municipality were randomly chosen to be contacted, depending on the size of the municipality and how many primary and/or secondary schools there were there. The 30 vocational schools were also chosen randomly.

Participation in the questionnaire was voluntary, and participants were provided with a privacy notice to inform them on the use of their answers and personal information in the study according to Articles 13 and 14 of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (2016). The language of the questionnaire was English, but participants were allowed to answer open-ended questions in either Finnish or English, and the invitation to participate as well as the privacy notice were in Finnish only. The questionnaire was anonymous.

3.1.1 Structure

The questionnaire was administered online as a Webropol survey. The questionnaire is provided in Appendix 1. After confirming the participants' informed consent, the questionnaire was divided into three pages: background information, questions on the

teachers' use of authentic texts and questions on the teachers' perceptions regarding authentic texts. As background information, the participants were asked their age, experience as a teacher, gender, first language(s), the language(s) that they taught, the level(s) at which they taught at the moment and whether or not they taught International Baccalaureate (IB) or Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) classes. If the teacher taught at vocational school, they were asked to specify the field of study. If the teacher did not teach at the moment, they were asked the level(s) at which they had taught most recently.

The second section of the questionnaire began with a definition for *authentic texts* by Lee (1995, 323). The first question of this section asked whether the participants used authentic texts outside coursebooks and textbooks in their teaching or not. If the participant chose *no*, they were directed to an open-ended question *what types of texts do you use in teaching?* If the participant chose *yes*, they were directed to a five-point Likert scale question with 21 text types, including the option *other, please specify*. The participants were asked how often they used each type of authentic text on a scale of *never – rarely – sometimes – often – always*. The text types were chosen to represent different “cultural products” classified by Mishan (2005, 95), and they are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Authentic Text Types in the Questionnaire

Mishan's (2005, 95) classification	Text types in the questionnaire
Literature	Drama (e.g. plays, opera) Children's literature Fictional prose (e.g. novels, short stories) Poetry Non-fictional literature
The broadcast media	TV shows Cartoons Documentaries News broadcasts Radio Podcasts
Newspapers	Newspapers Magazines
Advertising	Advertisements
Music and song	Songs

Film	Movies
ICT	Websites Blogs Social media posts (e.g. X/Twitter, Instagram, Facebook) Vlogs or videos (e.g. YouTube, TikTok)

Firstly, the text types in *literature* category were chosen based on the classification of The Helsinki Term Bank for the Arts and Sciences (2014, n.p.), which divides literature roughly into drama, children’s literature, fictional prose, poetry and non-fiction. The text types in *the broadcast media* category, on the other hand, were chosen consulting Orooq and Hussein-Abdel Razeq’s (2022, 169–170) list of authentic materials. Podcasts were not included in Orooq and Hussein-Abdel Razeq’s list, but they were included in the questionnaire, nevertheless. Magazines were also added to the *newspapers* category, making a distinction between newspapers and magazines. Lastly, the text types in *ICT* were chosen consulting Barton and Lee’s (2013) examples of digital texts. These examples included “websites and discussion forums; mobile texting, blogging and micro-blogging such as Twitter; wikis, online dictionaries and encyclopedias such as Wikipedia, search engines such as Google; and multimedia sharing such as YouTube” (Barton and Lee 2013, 4). Later, Barton and Lee (2013, 155–158) mention also photo sites, virtual worlds and social networking sites. Out of these, only websites, blogs, social media posts and vlogs or videos were included in the current study. All in all, choices had to be made for practical reasons, and many text types had to be excluded. However, if the respondents so wished, they could name other text types they used in teaching under the option *other, please specify*.

The last section of the questionnaire had three Likert scale questions of 15, 4 and 5 items each. The items of these questions were mostly adapted from the items in Orooq and Hussein-Abdel Razeq’s (2022) and Rehman and Perveen’s (2021) studies. Some questions were left as they were whereas some questions underwent minor changes to make them better suit the purposes of the current study. In addition, three items were added by me (item 3 in question 14 and items 4–5 in question 15). A forced choice Likert scale was chosen to minimize indecisive answers. The participants were asked to answer the questions on a scale of *strongly disagree – disagree – agree – strongly agree*. The first 15 items dealt with general attitudes and perceptions regarding authentic texts and practical issues or impacts on students’

language learning. The next four items dealt with exposure to authentic texts, i.e. when students should be exposed to authentic texts, if at all. The last five items dealt with the role of textbooks and authentic texts in teaching and learning. After the Likert scale questions, the questionnaire provided an optional open-ended question for the participants to add or comment on anything.

3.1.2 Participants

Altogether 155 participants completed the questionnaire. Out of the 155 participants, 154 consented to the processing of their personal data and gave permission to use their answers in this study. One participant did not consent to the processing of their personal data and was hence excluded from the study.

Out of the 154 participants of this study, 27 were male and 127 were female. The first language of the participants was predominantly Finnish: 145 participants reported Finnish as their only first language and four participants reported having two first languages, one of which was Finnish. Of the remaining five participants, two reported Swedish as their first language and three reported other first languages. The participants were 24–65 years old and their teaching experience ranged from less than a year to 39 years. The participants were asked the language(s) they taught and the level(s) at which they taught, meaning that one participant could select several languages and levels. The four most frequent languages that the respondents taught were English ($n = 140$), Swedish ($n = 73$), French ($n = 27$) and German ($n = 27$). Other languages taught were Russian, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Estonian and Finnish. 78 of the respondents taught at upper secondary school, 62 at lower secondary school, 46 at primary school and 19 at vocational school. Four respondents out of the 154 reported not teaching at the moment and hence answered the most recent level or levels at which they taught. Additionally, three participants reported teaching IB or CLIL classes. Their answers are included in the numbers above.

3.2 Interviews

The questionnaire was supplemented with eight interviews to gain more insight into the phenomenon and hear more from the teachers themselves. The interviews were conducted in Finnish face to face, on Zoom or on Teams and recorded for analysis. The duration of the interviews varied from about 11 to 42 minutes depending on the length of the participants' answers. The mean duration of the interviews was about 24 minutes.

3.2.1 Structure

The interviews were semi-structured, which allows the interviewer to elaborate or build on anything that the interviewees bring up in their answers and thus make the interviews more personalized (Dörnyei 2007, 136). The interviews in the current study began with ethical reminders of the participants' rights and use of their answers in the study. The participants were first asked to talk about their background as a teacher (how long they had worked as a teacher, which language(s) they taught, at which levels and so on). After that they were asked about the use of authentic texts in their classes. Subsequently, they were asked about practical issues related to texts and L2 teaching. Lastly, they were asked if they had anything to add, to allow them to speak freely on the matter. As the interview was semi-structured, all interviewees were not asked the exact same questions in the exact same order. Some questions were occasionally left out whereas additional questions arose in some cases. The questions prepared in advance for the interviews are provided in Appendix 2.

3.2.2 Participants

Interview participants were chosen from 22 teachers that expressed interest in participating in the interviews and gave their contact information at the end of the questionnaire. Out of these 22 teachers, 13 were contacted over the course of two weeks in fall 2024. To avoid sampling bias, possible participants to contact were numbered and chosen with random number generator on Google. However, the selection was not completely randomized as the aim was to interview language teachers at all four levels of interest (primary school, lower secondary school, upper secondary school and vocational school). In practice this meant that if there seemed to be no response from a teacher of a certain level, another teacher of that same level was randomly chosen to be contacted. In the end, eight out of 13 agreed to the interviews and were interviewed.

The interviewees' language teaching experience ranged from around 10 years to 37 years, and they taught or had previously taught 1–3 languages at 1–2 different levels. The languages in question were English (6 participants), Swedish (6), German (3) and Estonian (1). Five of the interviewees taught or had taught at primary school level, four at lower secondary school level, three at upper secondary school level and two at vocational school level. The teachers had versatile backgrounds, and some did not teach in a Finnish mainstream setting. One of the teachers taught at a folk high school (upper secondary school level education at a boarding

school setting) and one taught at primary and lower secondary school level at a Steiner school. One teacher taught mainstream education at primary and lower secondary school level but also taught a school-specific lower secondary level program focused on natural sciences and English. One of the teachers was recently retired. Four of the teachers also had some experience in adult education, but that is out of the scope of the current study.

3.3 Methods for Analysis

In this section, I present the methods for analysis, beginning with the quantitative and moving on to the qualitative methods. After that, I present the reliability calculations of each Likert scale item of the questionnaire. The focus of this study leans toward the quantitative analysis of the questionnaire data, which is then supplemented with qualitative analysis of open-ended questions and interview data.

3.3.1 Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis

The questionnaire had mostly quantitative data and was thus analyzed utilizing quantitative methods. Quantitative analysis was carried out in IBM SPSS Statistics (version 28) and Microsoft Excel. The mean, mode and standard deviation of each Likert scale item were calculated, and they are presented in the results below. Each item was also analyzed by taking a closer look at the percentages of each option on the scale. The quantitative analysis of the data was quite straightforward and posed no significant problems.

Open-ended questions and interviews were analyzed employing data-driven qualitative content analysis as characterized by Schreier (2012). According to Schreier (2012, chap. 1), qualitative content analysis involves systematically classifying one's data into the categories of a coding frame. Building a coding frame entails selecting relevant data for analysis, deciding the structure of the coding frame, generating categories, defining those categories, revising the coding frame and expanding the coding frame for the entirety of the material at hand (Schreier 2012, chap. 5). Two separate coding frames were built – one for the questionnaire data and one for the interview data. The structure of the coding frames was kept simple, as there are no subcategories of any sort. The analysis began with the answers to the open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire (question 16). Each answer was analyzed for emerging themes, which were then defined as categories of the coding frame. For instance, answers that entailed references to authentic texts' effect on the students' motivation were coded into the *motivation* category. The coding frame was then expanded to the other open-

ended question for those who did not use authentic texts outside coursebooks or textbooks in their teaching (question 12). The interviews were analyzed last. The interviews were first summarized in a matrix where each participant had a row of their own. The participants were then compared to one another to find similar themes in their answers. Emerging similarities were then classified into categories and the coding frame was revised. There was also no need to expand the coding frame of the interviews any further, as there was only one data set.

Several answers, especially in the interview data, entailed multiple references to different thematic categories in the coding frame. Because of this, each category was color-coded, and each reference was underlined with the color of that category. Both coding frames underwent continuous revision throughout the analysis to ensure that they served the purposes of the current study accurately and appropriately.

3.3.2 Reliability

To measure the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha of each Likert scale question was calculated in IBM SPSS Statistics. The reliability of the scale varied between the four questions of the current study (see Table 2 below). Negatively keyed items were reverse coded for the reliability calculations. According to Tähtinen, Laakkonen and Broberg (2020, 86), Cronbach's alpha should be between 0.6 and 0.85 in non-standardized scales for an acceptable reliability score. In addition, scores above 0.9 may indicate too many or too redundant items in the same series of items and is not desirable (Tähtinen, Laakkonen and Broberg 2020, 86–87). Therefore, the first two questions of the current study had high scores ($\alpha = 0.858$ and $\alpha = 0.828$) whereas the third question had a sufficient one ($\alpha = 0.633$). The last question, on the other hand, had a low score and hence the items did not seem to measure the same thing ($\alpha = 0.419$).

Table 2 Initial Cronbach's Alpha of Each Likert Scale Question

Question	N of items	Cronbach's α
How often do you use the following types of authentic texts (outside coursebooks or textbooks) in teaching?	20	0.858
Perceptions on the use of authentic texts.	15	0.828
Exposure to authentic texts.	4	0.633
Role of textbooks and authentic texts.	5	0.419

To increase the internal consistency of the questions and obtain higher reliability scores, some items were deleted. Additionally, corrected item–total correlations were checked on the remaining items. According to Ferketich (1991, 167), item–total correlations above 0.3 may be considered good, and the higher the correlation, the better the item in general. All corrected item–total correlations in the selected items were therefore above 0.3. Cronbach’s alphas of the selected items are displayed in Table 3 below.

Table 3 Cronbach’s Alpha of Each Likert Scale Question with Selected Items

Question	N of items	Cronbach’s α
How often do you use the following types of authentic texts (outside coursebooks or textbooks) in teaching?	19	0.860
Perceptions on the use of authentic texts.	15	0.828
Exposure to authentic texts.	3	0.768
Role of textbooks and authentic texts.	2	0.559

The deleted item in the first question is about how often the teachers used authentic vlogs or videos (e.g. YouTube, TikTok) in teaching. The item was deleted because the item–total correlation was below 0.3 ($\alpha = 0.277$), indicating inconsistent results compared to the composite score of all the other items. Deleting the item also raised Cronbach’s alpha from 0.858 to 0.860. No items were deleted in the second question, but since items 2, 5, 6, 7, 14 and 15 were negatively keyed, meaning that high results would indicate negative perceptions, they were reverse coded for the reliability calculations. In the third question, the item “Students can learn languages well without exposure to authentic texts” was also reverse coded. However, it was then deleted altogether to raise Cronbach’s alpha from 0.633 to 0.768. Lastly, the first item of the fourth question “Authentic texts are more beneficial to the students’ learning compared to textbooks” was reverse coded as it was the only item to highlight authentic texts over textbooks. Nevertheless, despite deleting all but two items, the question did not achieve the desired reliability score as it remained below 0.6. Therefore, the question about the role of textbooks and authentic texts did not yield internally consistent results ($\alpha = 0.559$). The results of every item will be presented in the following sections, but it is important to note that the last question as well as the two other items presented above must be addressed with reservation regarding their reliability.

4 Results

In this section, I present the results of the current study. I begin by addressing the first research question in section 4.1 and then move on to the second in section 4.2.

4.1 Use of Authentic Texts

In this section, I address what types of authentic texts outside course- and textbooks L2 teachers in Finland use in their teaching and how often they use them. The issue will be addressed first and foremost through the questionnaire results with some input from the interviews.

Altogether 125 out of the 154 respondents of the questionnaire (81.2%) reported using authentic texts outside coursebooks and textbooks in their teaching. The 125 participants responded on 20 items on a scale of *never – rarely – sometimes – often – always*. At the end of these items, the respondents also had an option to name other text types they used in their teaching. The remaining 29 respondents were directed to an open-ended question where they were asked what types of texts they used in teaching. The results of the open-ended question will be addressed later in this section.

The most frequent types of authentic texts that the teachers used in their teaching were websites ($M = 3.58$), songs ($M = 3.21$) and vlogs or videos ($M = 3.13$). 57.6% of the respondents reported using websites often or always, whereas the corresponding percentages for songs and vlogs or videos were 43.2% and 41.6%, respectively. However, it is important to note that the results for vlogs or videos warrant some caution regarding their reliability, as stated in the previous section. Additionally, the results of vlogs or videos varied the most across all items, as indicated by standard deviation ($SD = 1.08$). The least frequent types of authentic texts, on the other hand, were radio ($M = 1.55$), drama ($M = 1.64$) and podcasts ($M = 1.86$). Radio was used never or rarely by 90.4% of the respondents, whereas the corresponding percentages for drama and podcasts were 86.4% and 77.6%, respectively. The means, modes and standard deviations of each text type are shown in Table 4 below. The results of the questionnaire regarding the types and frequencies of authentic texts in teaching are illustrated as a stacked bar chart in Appendix 3.

Table 4 Use of Authentic Texts in Order of Frequency per Category

Category	Text type	Mean (M)	Mode (Mo)	Std. Deviation (SD)
Literature	Non-fictional literature	2.46	3	1.02
	Fictional prose (e.g. novels, short stories)	2.39	3	0.88
	Children's literature	2.22	2	0.88
	Poetry	2.02	2	0.78
	Drama (e.g. plays, opera)	1.64	1	0.78
The broadcast media	News broadcasts	2.86	3	0.95
	Documentaries	2.75	3	0.84
	TV shows	2.62	3	0.82
	Cartoons	2.42	3	0.89
	Podcasts	1.86	1	0.90
	Radio	1.55	1	0.76
Newspapers	Newspapers	2.84	3	0.87
	Magazines	2.50	3	0.82
Advertising	Advertisements	2.25	2	0.80
Music and song	Songs	3.21	4	0.97
Film	Movies	2.46	3	0.83
ICT	Websites	3.58	4	0.91
	Vlogs or videos (e.g. YouTube, TikTok)	3.13	4	1.08
	Blogs	2.11	2	0.88
	Social media posts (e.g. X/Twitter, Instagram, Facebook)	2.05	2	0.95

In the case of literature, the most frequent text types were non-fictional literature ($M = 2.46$) and fictional prose ($M = 2.39$). However, the results of non-fictional literature also varied the most in this category ($SD = 1.02$), and almost half of the respondents (48.8%) reported using non-fictional literature never or rarely. Fictional prose was also quite divided, as 49.6% of the respondents reported using fictional prose never or rarely and 50.4% reported using fictional

prose sometimes, often or always. Children's literature ($M = 2.22$) and poetry ($M = 2.02$), for their part, were quite infrequent, as 60% and 76% of the respondents reported using them never or rarely.

In broadcast media, the most frequent types were news broadcasts ($M = 2.86$) and documentaries ($M = 2.75$). News broadcasts were used sometimes, often or always by 64.8% of the respondents, whereas documentaries were used sometimes or often by 67.2%. No respondent reported using documentaries always. Additionally, over half of the respondents (61.6%) reported using TV shows sometimes or often in their teaching ($M = 2.62$). Cartoons were less frequent, as more than half of the respondents (52%) reported using them never or rarely ($M = 2.42$).

In the following category, newspapers ($M = 2.84$) were used more than magazines ($M = 2.50$). Newspapers were used sometimes, often or always by 68.8% of the respondents, whereas magazines were used sometimes or often by 53.6%. Subsequently, use of advertising ($M = 2.25$) was quite rare, as 60.8% of the respondents reported using advertising never or rarely. Use of movies ($M = 2.46$), on the other hand, was divided in a similar way to fictional prose, but with the percentages reversed: 50.4% of the respondents reported using movies never or rarely, whereas 49.6% reported using them sometimes, often or always. In the ICT category, blogs ($M = 2.11$) and social media posts ($M = 2.05$) were quite infrequently used, as 64.8% and 69.6% of the respondents reported using them never or rarely.

The most frequent mode of the items was quite unsurprisingly the third option *sometimes*, which was the most frequently chosen option in the case of nine items. The next most frequently chosen option was *rarely*, which was the mode of five items. Three items had the mode of 1 or *never* (radio, drama and podcasts), and three items had the mode of 4 or *often* (websites, songs and vlogs or videos), which was reflected in the overall frequency of these items.

Other text types or resources mentioned by the respondents were online postcrossing, research publications or scientific articles, Onestopenglish articles, websites by the British Council and merely "news". In the open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire, one teacher also mentioned rap lyrics as something they particularly enjoy using "to teach pronunciation, rhyming schemes, metaphors, and literary and poetic techniques". Another teacher wrote that their students are "encouraged to use target language subtitles whenever possible to enhance

listening comprehension”. They also highly recommended audiobooks although they considered audiobooks more demanding than texts in writing. A third teacher mentioned online resources “that are used by teachers in the nations where these languages are spoken that have been specifically created for teaching some of these authentic texts in their own context”. The respondent does not specify which resources they mean, but resources such as websites by the British Council might fit the mold. Lastly, two respondents mentioned opportunities provided by electronic platforms such as Studeo or Moodle. According to them, it is easy to use (electronic) authentic texts in conjunction with these platforms, as the texts can be linked to the students on the platform.

18 of those 29 that did not report using authentic texts outside textbooks or coursebooks only mentioned using textbooks, coursebooks or other materials from the publishers. Additionally, three respondents reported using “mainly” or “usually” texts from the textbooks or course materials but did not clarify what other texts they used on occasion. Two respondents reported using old final exams or matriculation exams in addition to textbooks or other teaching materials. Six respondents reported using mainly coursebooks or textbooks but still mentioned using some additional authentic materials, such as news, internet, music, fairytales or short texts from children’s books. In addition, two respondents pointed out that the books also included text from authentic sources. Four respondents also gave reasoning as to why they only or mainly used textbooks or coursebooks. The reasons they gave were related to short experience as a teacher, students’ limited skills or young age and lack of time. One respondent said that they had only used textbooks for the time being but in the future they would like to use children’s literature or news articles, for example.

In the interviews, all eight participants mentioned using the internet one way or another, either internet in general or particular sources or text types found online. For instance, BBC resources were referred to by three participants. Five participants mentioned newspapers or magazines, and three participants mentioned books or extracts from books. News or easy language news were also mentioned by three participants. Additionally, several participants stated that they encourage their students to use the target language in their free time by reading books, finding media content or following the news in that language.

4.2 Teachers' Perceptions on the Use of Authentic Texts

In what follows, I address how L2 teachers in Finland perceive the use of authentic texts outside coursebooks and textbooks considering both practical issues and impacts on students' language learning. The participants answered three questions of 15, 4 and 5 items on a scale of *strongly disagree* – *disagree* – *agree* – *strongly agree*. This section is divided into subsections according to those three questions. However, each subsection will include not only the results of the Likert scale questions but also the results of open-ended questions and interviews relevant to each question.

4.2.1 Overall Perceptions and Impacts on Students' Language Learning

This section deals with the 15-item Likert scale question regarding teachers' overall perceptions and impacts on students' language learning. The most frequently chosen option on the scale was 3 or *agree*, which was the mode of ten items altogether. Option 4 or *strongly agree* was the mode of two items, whereas option 2 or *disagree* was the mode of three items. In no item was *strongly disagree* the most frequently chosen option. The items are shown in Table 5 below arranged from the most agreed to the least agreed statement.

Table 5 Perceptions on the Use of Authentic Texts

Item	Mean (M)	Mode (Mo)	Std. Deviation (SD)
Students should be encouraged to use authentic texts outside the classroom.	3.66	4	0.48
I think it is easy to access authentic texts nowadays due to the internet.	3.53	4	0.60
I support the use of authentic texts in a second or foreign language classroom.	3.43	3	0.52
Authentic texts enrich classroom input.	3.42	3	0.51
Authentic texts improve the students' reading skills.	3.27	3	0.50
Using authentic texts outside textbooks requires extra effort on the teacher's behalf.	3.22	3	0.62
Authentic texts improve the students' listening skills.	3.16	3	0.63
Authentic texts increase the students' motivation.	3.06	3	0.56
Authentic texts improve the students' writing skills.	3.04	3	0.57

Authentic texts improve the students' speaking skills.	2.93	3	0.53
Using authentic texts outside textbooks is time-consuming.	2.83	3	0.62
It is difficult to find authentic texts that are suitable for the students' proficiency level.	2.72	3	0.81
It is difficult to find authentic texts that are relevant to the students' lives and interests.	2.45	2	0.77
I think the use of authentic texts outside textbooks in classroom is challenging for the teacher.	2.38	2	0.72
Authentic texts are too difficult for the students to understand.	2.29	2	0.65

The most agreed-upon item in this question was that students should be encouraged to use authentic texts outside the classroom ($M = 3.66$). It is noteworthy that no respondent strongly disagreed or disagreed with this item. Instead, 34.4% of the respondents agreed and 65.6% strongly agreed. 96.1% of the respondents also agreed or strongly agreed that it is easy to access authentic texts nowadays due to the internet ($M = 3.53$). The least agreed-upon item was that authentic texts are too difficult for the students ($M = 2.29$). 61% of the respondents disagreed with this statement, whereas 7.2% strongly disagreed. 60.4% of the respondents also disagreed or strongly disagreed that the use of authentic texts outside textbooks is challenging for the teacher ($M = 2.38$). Another item that over half of the respondents (56.5%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with was that it is difficult to find authentic texts that are relevant to the students' lives and interests ($M = 2.45$).

The remaining ten items were agreed or strongly agreed with by most of the respondents, agree being the most frequently chosen option. 54.5% of the participants agreed and 44.2% strongly agreed that they support the use of authentic texts in a second or foreign language classroom, whereas only 1.3% disagreed with the statement. This item was the third most agreed-upon item in the questionnaire ($M = 3.43$), closely followed by the statement that authentic texts enrich classroom input ($M = 3.42$), which was agreed with by 57.1% of the respondents and strongly agreed with by 42.2%.

Authentic texts were seen to improve all of the students' four basic language skills by most of the respondents, but receptive skills more so than productive and written rather than oral.

97.4% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that authentic texts improve the students' reading skills ($M = 3.27$). The corresponding percentage for the item regarding listening skills was 90.9% ($M = 3.16$). Regarding receptive skills, 87% and 83.7% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that authentic texts improve the students' writing and speaking skills, respectively ($M = 3.04$ and $M = 2.93$). Additionally, authentic texts were seen to increase the students' motivation ($M = 3.06$), as 68.8% of the respondents agreed and 18.8% strongly agreed with the statement.

However, most of the respondents also agreed with some issues with the use of authentic texts. 92.2% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that using authentic texts outside textbooks requires extra effort on the teacher's behalf ($M = 3.22$) and 74.7% agreed or strongly agreed that using authentic texts outside textbooks is time-consuming ($M = 2.83$). Lastly, 61.1% agreed or strongly agreed that it is difficult to find authentic texts that are suitable for the students' proficiency level ($M = 2.72$).

Several themes emerged from the participants' answers to the open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire. To begin with, seven participants expressed critique towards the forced Likert scale as it did not include a neutral option. Additionally, nine participants pointed out that their answers depend on the target language and the skills of the students in question (Examples 1 and 2).

- (1) In questions 13–15, the answer depends strongly on the language and the skills of the pupils in question. E.g. compared to English, in German it's much harder to find texts suitable for beginners when the beginners aren't children. (Participant 50)
- (2) Nowadays the gap in pupils' language skills is a major problem. In the same group there can be a few near-native level pupils but also pupils who can barely count from 1 to 10. I mostly use authentic texts to give the more skilled pupils extra practice. (Participant 31)

Five participants also discussed use of authentic texts in relation to time constraints in teaching. One participant stated that there is "not much extra time for authentic texts" whereas two participants expressed that finding suitable texts and making exercises for them is time-consuming for the teacher. Two participants admitted that using authentic texts can be time-consuming for the teacher if they are not used to it or if they do not utilize appropriate resources when planning for lessons. In addition, two participants in the questionnaire expressed interest in using authentic texts but did not do so because of short experience as a teacher (Examples 3 and 4).

- (3) I usually use textbooks' texts but it would be a good idea to use some authentic texts as well. My teaching experience is still quite short so I have not tested using authentic texts as well, especially because I am a bit unsure if I would be able to choose the level of the texts well enough. (Participant 21)
- (4) Using authentic texts could be interesting and enriching, but as a young teacher I think I have to manage the "basics of teaching" first before I can start to include teaching methods that I'm not as familiar with. (Participant 27)

All of the interviewees used authentic texts in their teaching. The reasons for using authentic texts were somewhat varied and some teachers had multiple different reasons. Three participants referred to motivational aspects of authentic texts. Two participants mentioned the cultural aspects of authentic texts. One participant perceived authentic texts mainly as a means to differentiate teaching for the more advanced students for whom textbooks were too easy. Three participants mentioned that there were no textbooks available for the program that they taught, and one participant stated that they had learned to teach without textbooks from the beginning of their teaching career. The participants were also asked whether or not the students could choose texts for themselves. Five out of eight participants said that the students could choose texts for themselves, whereas two said that they could not. One participant acknowledged that they provided their students with too few opportunities to choose texts for themselves. In their experience, it was laborious to arrange such tasks, as their school did not provide the students with laptops or tablets to use in class, and giving the tasks as homework did not always yield results from the students.

The interviewees were asked how they dealt with authentic texts in the classroom. Most of the interviewees used authentic texts alongside textbooks, and authentic texts were used in diverse ways for varying learning objectives. These learning objectives included vocabulary, reading and listening comprehension, target culture and society, language related to the students' future vocation, translating from target language to first language and searching for information. The students' tasks included open-ended questions about the text, vocabulary exercises, pair exercises and different kinds of projects. One teacher also provided their students with an opportunity to keep voluntary listening or reading diary over the course of the learning unit for bonus points. Authentic texts were also dealt with traditionally as a dialogue between the teacher and the students. Songs or news broadcasts were used as an opening session for lessons with or without exercises related to them. In vocational school, the use of authentic texts was quite hands-on, as the students practiced customer service, looked up descriptions for cars or searched for flights and hotels in the target language. One

teacher had designed their upper secondary school courses so that the students themselves found an authentic text that they were interested in and made it into a textbook chapter for the class to be studied instead of a traditional textbook chapter. However, it is noteworthy that grammar learning was rarely, if ever, associated with the use of authentic texts. Instead, textbooks were used as a resource for grammar exercises.

The interviewees also mentioned some difficulties regarding the use of authentic texts. One participant stated that there are plenty of texts to choose from that pile up over time. Another participant pointed out that elementary school students nowadays have a hard time focusing on reading texts, and there is not enough time for it in the syllabus either. The concern over students' ability to concentrate was echoed by a vocational school teacher who said that the students could not focus on reading longer texts. Another teacher asserted that the biggest downside of authentic materials is that written text and sound are rarely combined, and even if one uses a text-to-speech function, the speech will not sound natural. Other difficulties mentioned were the teachers' own limited time and resources, copyright issues and trying to find texts that are not too difficult and are beneficial for the students' learning.

4.2.2 Onset of Exposure

In the following Likert scale question, the participants were asked when they thought students should be exposed to authentic texts or whether they could learn languages well without them. As pointed out previously, there are some reservations regarding the reliability of the last item of this question. It would seem that the answers of the last item are not consistent with the rest since it does not exactly measure the same thing. The other three items have to do with the level at which students should be exposed to authentic texts, whereas the last item inquires whether exposure to authentic texts is needed for the students to learn languages well. Therefore, the fourth question does not pertain to the timing of the exposure like the rest. The items are shown in Table 6 below arranged from the most agreed to the least agreed statement.

Table 6 Onset of Exposure

Item	Mean (M)	Mode (Mo)	Std. Deviation (SD)
I think students should be exposed to authentic texts at the advanced level.	3.71	4	0.47

I think students should be exposed to authentic texts at the intermediate level.	3.32	3	0.53
I think students should be exposed to authentic texts at the beginner level.	2.98	3	0.64
Students can learn languages well without exposure to authentic texts.	2.46	2 & 3	0.75

All but one respondent agreed or strongly agreed that students should be exposed to authentic texts at the advanced level ($M = 3.71$). Subsequently, only 3.2% disagreed that students should be exposed to authentic texts at the intermediate level ($M = 3.32$). Most of the respondents (79.8%) also agreed or strongly agreed that students should be exposed to authentic texts at the beginner level, whereas 20.1% disagreed or strongly disagreed ($M = 2.98$). The respondents' answers were not as concordant in the item about whether students can learn languages well without exposure to authentic texts ($M = 2.46$). In this item, options *disagree* and *agree* were the most frequently chosen options, as they were each chosen by 42.2% of the respondents. Altogether 51.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, whereas 48.7% agreed or strongly agreed. However, it is important to note that this item does not inquire whether students should be exposed to authentic texts or not but whether such texts are necessary for students to learn languages well.

While the onset of exposure was not a topic in the interviews, the question of students' proficiency level and authentic texts emerged from the participants' answers when asked about what kind of things they consider when choosing texts for teaching. Six out of eight participants mentioned that they considered whether the text was appropriate for the students' proficiency level. Other aspects of consideration were the topic and length of the text, the age of the students, the core curriculum(s), the particular learner group in question and the teachers' own resources.

4.2.3 Authentic Texts and Textbooks

Lastly, the participants of the questionnaire were asked questions relating to the role of authentic texts and textbooks in language teaching and learning. This section received a low Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha < 0.6$) and therefore warrants some reservations regarding the reliability of the results. The results of these items are nevertheless presented in this section. The items are shown in Table 7 below arranged from the most agreed to the least agreed statement.

Table 7 Authentic Texts and Textbooks

Item	Mean (M)	Mode (Mo)	Std. Deviation (SD)
Authentic texts act as a supplement to textbooks.	3.16	3	0.54
Using authentic texts is more challenging for the students than using textbooks.	2.97	3	0.50
Textbooks are more effective in teaching and learning than authentic texts.	2.75	3	0.54
Textbooks themselves generally incorporate a sufficient amount of authentic texts.	2.66	3	0.67
Authentic texts are more beneficial to the students' learning compared to textbooks.	2.26	2	0.50

The most agreed-upon item in this question was that authentic texts act as a supplement to textbooks ($M = 3.16$). This statement was strongly agreed with by 24% of the respondents, agreed with by 68.2% and disagreed with by 7.8%. The next most agreed-upon item was that using authentic texts is more challenging for the students than using textbooks ($M = 2.97$). It was strongly agreed with by 11% of the respondents, agreed with by 75.3% and disagreed with by 13.6%. Most of the respondents also found textbooks more effective in teaching and learning than authentic texts ($M = 2.75$). This statement was strongly agreed with by 5.2% of the respondents, agreed with by 64.9% and disagreed with by 29.9%. No respondent strongly disagreed with any of these three items. The following item was the one with most dispersed answers: 62.3% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that textbooks themselves generally incorporate a sufficient number of authentic texts, whereas 37.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed ($M = 2.66$). The least agreed-upon item, on the other hand, was that authentic texts are more beneficial to the students' learning compared to textbooks ($M = 2.26$). This statement was strongly disagreed with by 3.9% and disagreed with by 78.6% of the respondents.

In the open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire, 14 respondents pointed out that it is not a question of either–or when it comes to authentic texts and textbooks. According to eight respondents, textbooks already incorporate many authentic texts and genres or texts that are similar to authentic texts. Respondents also pointed out that both authentic texts and textbooks are needed in different situations for different learning purposes (Examples 5 and 6).

- (5) Textbooks should provide the basics of a certain subject area, but authentic texts provide the 'real world' experience and the actual use of the language. We need both. (Participant 7)
- (6) Sometimes authentic texts are better and more effective in learning than textbooks but sometimes it's vice versa. Good textbooks include well planned and written, and intriguing texts and exercises. (Participant 22)

There are differences in textbook series with regard to authenticity and the number of text types, as mentioned by two respondents. Furthermore, one participant claimed that upper secondary school textbooks “already incorporate almost exclusively authentic texts.” Another participant pointed out the change in textbooks over time (Example 7).

- (7) The quality of textbooks has improved a lot in this area during the last few years. In the 2000s, textbooks were still very focused on quite non-authentic dialogue. The texts were not even made to look like authentic texts. Nowadays the diversity of texts in textbooks has increased and they at least try to mimic more different text types. (Participant 20)

Furthermore, four participants discussed the motivational aspects of using authentic texts or textbooks. One participant stated that authentic text can increase the motivation if the students can choose what they read or listen to. Another participant wrote that authentic texts “spice up” lessons and motivate advanced learners, whereas the third participant said that textbooks are “boring and the topics are quite weird and irrelevant.” The fourth participant expressed an opposing view, saying that “[m]any students are more motivated to work on textbook texts because authentic texts don't have similar exercises and they are seen as something extra”.

Six respondents, all of whom worked at vocational school, reported that they do not use textbooks in their teaching. Therefore, the texts have been either derived from authentic sources or created by the teachers, their colleagues or even the students themselves.

According to one respondent, there are no textbooks of English available for the field in which they teach. Another respondent stated that students do not receive textbooks nor are they obligated to buy or borrow them. The remaining respondents did not explain why they did not use textbooks, but it is possible that they have similar reasons as the other two. They merely stated that they haven't used textbooks for years or that they do not use textbooks in their school.

In the interviews, the participants were asked about their general opinions about the quality and contents of textbooks in their target languages. Most participants were content with local textbooks. The textbooks were seen to be high-quality and to have good, communicative

exercises and to advance logically. Four participants noted that the amount of ready-made materials in textbooks was plenty and that it is not necessary to come up with anything additional. One participant even said that there is enough material to cause anxiety and that teachers could go through the materials for nights on end. There was also criticism concerning differences between textbooks, authenticity of the texts, electrification of textbooks, motivational aspects and realistic portrayal of the world. To be more precise, the differences between textbooks concerned either books of different target languages or different textbook series of the same target language. Especially English textbooks were seen to be high-quality and have much to choose from. Swedish textbooks were seen to vary: Swedish books for B-language syllabus were seen to be very good whereas books for A-language syllabus either had too little material (elementary school) or were too difficult for the students (upper secondary school). With regard to German textbooks, two participants said that there is not much to choose from, but that the quality of German textbooks has improved substantially over the years.

This section has presented the results of the study. The focus of the analysis has been on quantitative questionnaire data, which has been supplemented with qualitative data from the questionnaire and the interviews. The results of this thesis will be further discussed in the next section below.

5 Discussion

According to the principles of CLT, as laid out by Richards and Rodgers (2014, 105), classroom activities should aim for authentic and meaningful communication. Furthermore, communicative language teaching should encompass not only speaking, but other language skills as well, as communication occurs through both spoken and written media (Thompson 1996, 11). The notion of authenticity is multifaceted, and the authenticity of texts can be experienced differently by the learners regardless of their origin. However, as pointed out by Lee (1995, 324), textually authentic materials tend to have more potential to become learner authentic than textually inauthentic materials. In the same vein, teachers may perceive the authenticity of texts differently. Some teachers may regard texts as authentic only without any modifications and in their original context, whereas others allow some changes to the original text and context. Some are content with even simulated authenticity, in which texts are created for learning purposes with a goal of portraying authentic texts and their characteristics. This view was evident in some of the responses of the current study, as a few teachers noted that textbook texts are often similar to authentic real-life texts and should not be belittled for their worth.

The pedagogical decisions made by the teachers, including the selection of materials, are influenced by international and national standards and guidelines for language teaching. The CEFR and Finnish National Core Curriculums name several competences that the learners are expected to develop under the teacher's guidance, both in general and regarding language studies specifically. The *multiliteracy* section of the Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education even explicitly states that teaching should include texts that are authentic and meaningful for the students (EDUFI 2014, 23). In addition, the students should be encouraged to find materials in the target language appropriate for their age and language skills (EDUFI 2014; 227, 357). The results of the current study indicate that the majority of L2 teachers in Finland do incorporate authentic texts in their teaching, and that they believe students should be encouraged to find these materials outside the classroom as well.

In an earlier MA thesis on the use of literature in EFL teaching, Kirsi-Lahti (2005, 89) found that less than half of the survey participants in her study had used literature in their teaching that year. In the current study, the participants were asked how often they used different text types – including five literary genres – in their teaching in general. The vast majority of the respondents reported using authentic texts outside coursebooks and textbooks in their

teaching, the most used text types being websites, songs and vlogs or videos. However, literary genres were not used to the same extent. Kirsi-Lahti (2005, 90) also found that literature was seen as a supplementary element in Finnish secondary schools, a view that is echoed in the results of the current study regarding authentic texts. Lack of time was reported as the primary reason for not using literature, and the results also suggested that experienced teachers used literature more than less experienced ones (Kirsi-Lahti 2005, 90–91). Using authentic texts was also seen to be time-consuming by the majority of the respondents in the current study. In addition, two teachers brought up their short experience as a teacher as a factor that deterred them from using authentic texts.

After websites, songs and vlogs or videos, the most used text types were news broadcasts, documentaries and newspapers. The respondents were not asked to state reasons for the use of different text types, but it is possible that these text types were common due to their availability on the internet for free. The internet is full of websites that are useful for language learners, and it is no surprise to see it as the most used resource. Songs and vlogs or videos are also very useful for oral/aural language learning in the classroom, and they are easily accessible online as well. News broadcasts, documentaries and newspapers, for their part, are also informative in nature, and therefore the learners can be exposed to current or otherwise relevant topics at the same time as they are learning the target language. The least used resources, on the other hand, were radio, drama and podcasts. Live radio broadcasts may be difficult to incorporate in teaching with appropriate tasks, as the teacher cannot predict the content beforehand. Podcasts and recorded radio broadcasts may also be more difficult and/or less engaging for the students than vlogs or videos, which could explain their infrequent use. Drama, on the other hand, may be more difficult to access in the classroom. However, more research is needed to determine why certain text types are used more than others in the L2 classroom.

Similarly to Orooq and Hussein-Abdel Razeq's (2022, 167) findings regarding authentic materials in EFL classes, nearly all of the respondents in the current study supported the use of authentic texts in L2 classrooms. The most notable reasons why the respondents in Orooq and Hussein-Abdel Razeq's study supported the use of authentic materials in their classrooms were that they enrich classroom input and increase the students' motivation (*ibid.*). The first statement (authentic texts enrich classroom input) was agreed or strongly agreed with by 99.3% of the respondents in the current study, whereas the latter statement (authentic texts increase the students' motivation) was agreed or strongly agreed with by 87,6% respondents.

The majority of teachers in both Orooq and Hussein-Abdel Razeq (2022, 169) and the current study also found it easy to access authentic materials nowadays due to the internet. The statements that using authentic materials requires extra effort (on the teacher's behalf) and is time-consuming were also agreed to a similar extent in Orooq and Hussein-Abdel Razeq's study and the current one. However, as Orooq and Hussein-Abdel Razeq employed a five-point Likert scale with a neutral option and the current study did not, the latter two comparisons are quite rough and should be met with caution. In addition, Orooq and Hussein-Abdel Razeq (2022, 168) did not explicitly specify whose extra effort was required – the teacher's or the students' – but it is presumed that they meant teachers in the context of their study.

Pertaining to the students' improvement in language skills, Orooq and Hussein-Abdel Razeq (2022, 168) found that according to the respondents, authentic texts develop students' reading, listening, speaking and writing abilities (in order of most agreed to least agreed). In the current study, reading and listening were the most agreed-upon skills to be improved through authentic texts, but speaking was the least agreed-upon instead of writing. Nevertheless, it would seem that authentic texts are seen as beneficial first and foremost for the students' receptive language skills. When it comes to the onset of exposure to authentic texts, 75% of the respondents in Orooq and Hussein-Abdel Razeq (2022, 169) agreed or strongly agreed that students should be exposed to authentic materials at the beginning level and 76.9% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement at the intermediate level. In the current study, the percentages were higher, especially at the intermediate level (79.8% and 96.7% respectively). The difference might be explained at least to some extent by the lack of a neutral option in the current study. Orooq and Hussein-Abdel Razeq did not include a question regarding the advanced level, but in the current study, 99.3% agreed or strongly agreed that students should be exposed to authentic texts at the advanced level. Therefore, it would seem that teachers believe that students should be exposed to authentic texts at all levels of proficiency, but increasingly so as the proficiency of the students advances.

Rehman and Perveen (2021, 67) found that 42.5% of the teachers in their study stayed neutral when asked if students could learn English well without exposure to authentic materials. There was no neutral option in the current study, but the same item in the current study was also the one where agree and disagree were both the most frequent answers, reflecting a divided general opinion on the issue. Regarding the role of textbooks and authentic texts, 75% of the respondents in Rehman and Perveen's study agreed or strongly agreed that authentic

materials are more beneficial to students' learning than local textbooks. The results of the current study, however, indicate the opposite: 82.5% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. This might be due to differences in Finnish and Pakistani textbooks with regard to their quality and contents. Nevertheless, the majority of respondents in both studies agreed or strongly agreed that authentic materials act as a supplement to textbooks. Rehman and Perveen (2021, 71) conclude that curriculum developers should include authentic materials in the English language textbooks. In Finnish textbooks this seems to already be common according to the respondents of the current study and Sinkkonen (2011). Even so, the current study implies that Finnish teachers utilize additional authentic texts in their teaching to further enrich the classroom input.

In Harjanne, Larenas and Tella (2017, 6), Finnish teachers scored low on the use of authentic materials. According to the current study, however, Finnish teachers do use a variety of authentic texts in their teaching albeit relying on textbooks as the backbone of their teaching. Furthermore, 62.3% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that textbooks themselves generally incorporate a sufficient number of authentic texts. The results of the open-ended questions and interviews also show that teachers value local textbooks highly and see them as abundant resources for teaching. Therefore, both authentic texts and textbooks were seen as valuable materials in L2 classrooms for different purposes. In fact, one of the interviewees longed for ready-made high-quality learning materials in vocational school as the teacher cannot know the professional vocabulary of each field even in their native language. Another interviewee, a teacher in primary and lower secondary school, pointed out that the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education does not specify the kinds of content that should be dealt with each year and in which order. Therefore, teachers are compelled to rely on materials such as textbooks to guide their teaching.

Harjanne, Larenas and Tella (2017, 6) also found that Finnish teachers scored high on teacher-centeredness, which seems to contradict the intended nature of CLT. The interviewees in this study were asked how they dealt with authentic texts with the students and whether or not the students could choose texts for themselves. Based on the results, authentic texts were dealt with in both teacher- and student-led activities. One participant argued for their teacher-centered approach saying that they do extensive background research while preparing their material and then invite the students to a dialogue around the topic. Another participant argued for their student-centered approach – in which the students make their own textbook chapters – saying that they could not motivate their students with textbook texts and thought

that the students might be more interested in the things their peers are interested in. The teacher also liked the individuality of self-made chapters, pointing out that textbook chapters are “quite dull” when taught multiple times to different classes. On the whole, the majority of interviewees allowed students to choose some texts for themselves, either from a set of provided options or by searching for the texts themselves.

The majority of teachers in the current study did not deem authentic texts too difficult for their students. Instead, the more pressing issue was finding texts that are appropriate for the students’ level of proficiency. When asked about what kinds of things the interviewees considered when choosing texts for teaching, the majority indeed considered the difficulty of the authentic texts in comparison to the students’ language skills. Furthermore, even if the language itself was deemed too difficult for the students, one of the interviewees said that they strived to pick less demanding parts of the texts or provide the students with assistance through visual cues. Another participant differentiated their teaching so that the more advanced students could listen to several BBC English stories during class whereas the less advanced students could focus on understanding just one.

Lastly, it is noteworthy that despite the textual focus of the current study, authenticity in language learning is not merely a property of the text but includes other aspects as well (e.g. Breen 1985; Lee 1995; Guariento and Morley 2001). The experience of authenticity is also mediated by learners’ perceptions of the text, nature of tasks associated with the texts, the classroom situation and the teacher’s presence. These different aspects of authenticity relate to one another in multiple ways in the classroom. The interviewees of the current study had different approaches to engaging their students with the authentic texts. The texts were dealt with through, for example, open-ended questions, vocabulary exercises, pair exercises and different kinds of projects. None of these tasks is inherently authentic or inauthentic, but the way in which they are presented by the teacher and received by the students ultimately determines their nature. Furthermore, the way in which the students perceive the tasks also affects how they perceive the authenticity of the text. This was, however, out of the scope of the current study.

6 Conclusion

The aim of this thesis has been to examine what types of authentic texts teachers in Finnish primary and secondary schools use and how often they use them. The results show that teachers use several types of authentic texts outside coursebooks and textbooks, the most common ones being websites, songs and vlogs or videos, which teachers reported using often. The least common text types were radio, drama and podcasts, which teachers reported using never or rarely. Overall, the vast majority of L2 teachers in Finland reported using authentic texts outside coursebooks and textbooks in their teaching.

The second aim of this study has been to examine how teachers perceive the use of authentic texts outside coursebooks and textbooks considering practical issues and how they view the texts' effects on their students' language learning. The majority of teachers supported the use of authentic texts in L2 classrooms and believed that they enrich classroom input. Authentic texts were seen easy to access due to the internet but using them requires extra effort on the teacher's behalf. Authentic texts were also seen to increase the students' motivation and improve all of the students' four basic language skills. However, authentic texts were seen more beneficial to the improvement of the students' receptive skills than productive and written rather than oral. The respondents believed that students should be exposed to authentic texts at all levels of proficiency, but increasingly so as the proficiency of the students advances. Authentic texts were seen to act as a supplement to textbooks, and several respondents expressed that both textbooks and authentic texts are valuable resources for L2 classrooms.

The results of the current study warrant some caution regarding their generalizability. Firstly, it is possible that teachers who use authentic texts were more inclined to answer the questionnaire to begin with than teachers who do not. This may affect the results of the questionnaire. The internal consistency of the questionnaire answers was also at times questionable. Especially the question regarding the role of textbooks and authentic texts should be addressed with reservations, as it did not achieve the desired reliability score. In addition, vlogs or videos – although one of the most used text types – correlated poorly to the composite score of other items in the question, indicating inconsistency in the answers. The participants' responses to the item “Students can learn languages well without exposure to authentic texts” were also divided, and deleting the item raised the reliability score of the question. It is noteworthy that the Likert scale questions did not include a neutral option,

which forced the respondents to decide whether they agreed or disagreed with the statements, and did not leave room for neutral opinions. The interview data, on the other hand, is by no means intended to be generalized to apply to the whole profession but to shed light on individual teachers' experiences and perceptions on the issue.

This thesis has sought to provide insights into the current practices in L2 classrooms in Finnish primary and secondary schools regarding the use of authentic texts. The results of the study imply that teachers believe students should be exposed to authentic texts at all levels of proficiency and that they have positive perceptions on the use of authentic texts in L2 classrooms, although not entirely without difficulty. The majority of the respondents agreed that using authentic texts outside textbooks is time-consuming and that it is difficult to find authentic texts that are suitable for the students' proficiency level. To facilitate the use of authentic texts in L2 classrooms, teachers could be provided with resources and training on how to effectively find, evaluate and incorporate authentic texts into their teaching. Furthermore, the results of the current study encourage materials developers to include (or continue to include) authentic texts in teaching materials at all levels of proficiency.

Future research on authenticity in language learning could tap into the learner perspective, that is, how the learners themselves perceive the authenticity of texts both in and outside textbooks. In addition, the effect of authentic texts on learners' language improvement could be investigated through case studies of pedagogical interventions. Such research could provide useful information for teachers, teacher trainers and materials developers, as it could help to develop efficient and evidence-based teaching techniques that motivate students and provide them with bridges to the target language world outside the classroom as well.

References

- Barton, David and Carmen Lee. 2013. *Language Online: Investigating Digital Texts and Practices*. 1st ed. London and New York: Routledge. Ebook Central Academic Complete.
- Breen, Michael P. 1985. "Authenticity in the Language Classroom." In *Applied Linguistics*, edited by Alan Davies, Bernard Spolsky and Elaine Tarone, 60–70. Vol. 6. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brown, Steven. 2011. *Listening Myths: Applying Second Language Research to Classroom Teaching*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Canale, Michael. 1983. "From Communicative Competence to Communicative Language Pedagogy." In *Language and Communication*, edited by Jack C. Richards and Richard W. Schmidt, 2–27. London and New York: Longman Group Limited.
- Canale, Michael and Merrill Swain. 1980. "Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing." In *Applied Linguistics*, edited by J. P. B. Allen, Bernard Spolsky and H. G. Widdowson, 1–47. Vol. 1. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Council of Europe. 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. coe.int/lang-cefr
- . 2020. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) – Companion volume*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing. coe.int/lang-cefr
- Crossley, Scott A., Max M. Louwse, Philip M. McCarthy and Danielle S. McNamara. 2007. "A Linguistic Analysis of Simplified and Authentic Texts." *The Modern Language Journal* 91, no. 1: 15–30. JSTOR Arts and Sciences III.
- Dörnyei, Zoltán. 2007. *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). 2016. *Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the Protection of Natural Persons with Regard to the Processing of Personal Data and on the Free Movement of such Data, and Repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation) (Text with EEA Relevance)*. OJ 2016 L 119/1. data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/679/oj

- Ferketich, Sandra. 1991. "Focus on Psychometrics: Aspects of Item Analysis." *Research in Nursing & Health* 14, no. 2: 165–168. Wiley Online Library.
- Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI). 2014. *Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteet* [National Core Curriculum for Basic Education]. 4th ed. Helsinki: Opetushallitus. Oph.fi. Accessed 9.9.2024.
- . 2019a. *Lukion opetussuunnitelman perusteet* [National Core Curriculum for General Upper Secondary Education]. Helsinki: Opetushallitus. Oph.fi. Accessed 9.9.2024.
- . 2019b. *Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteiden 2014 muutokset ja täydennykset koskien A1-kielen opetusta vuosiluokilla 1–2* [Amendments and Additions to the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2014 Regarding the Instruction of the A1 Language in Grades 1–2]. Helsinki: Opetushallitus. Oph.fi. Accessed 9.9.2024.
- . 2023. *Teosten käyttö opetuksessa on helpottunut – Kopiosto ja Opetushallitus kokosivat ohjeet opettajien tueksi* [Using Works in Teaching Has Become Easier – Kopiosto and the Finnish National Board of Education Compiled Instructions to Aid Teachers]. Helsinki: Opetushallitus. Accessed 13.1.2025.
<https://www.oph.fi/fi/uutiset/2023/teosten-kaytto-opetuksessa-helpottunut-kopiosto-ja-opetushallitus-kokosivat-ohjeet>
- Guariento, William and John Morley. 2001. "Text and Task Authenticity in the EFL Classroom." *ELT journal* 55, no. 4: 347–353. EBSCOhost.
- Harjanne, Pirjo, Claudio Díaz Larenas and Seppo Tella. 2017. "Foreign-Language Teaching and Studying in Chilean and Finnish Classrooms as Seen by Teachers." *Journal of Language and Cultural Education* 5, no. 3: 1–21. DOAJ Directory of Open Access Journals.
- The Helsinki Term Bank for the Arts and Sciences*. 2014. "Luokka: Kirjallisuuden lajit" [Category: Literary Genres]. Accessed 8.8.2024.
tieteentermipankki.fi/wiki/Luokka:Kirjallisuuden_lajit
- Kachru, Braj, B. 1985. "Standards, Codification and Sociolinguistic Realism: The English Language in the Outer Circle." In *English in the World: Teaching and Learning the Language and Literatures*, edited by Randolph Quirk and H. G. Widdowson, 11–35. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. teachingenglish.org.uk
- Kantelinen, Ritva and Raili Hildén. 2016. "Language Education: Towards Transversal Intercultural Language Proficiency." In *Miracle of Education: The Principles and Practices of Teaching and Learning in Finnish Schools*, edited by Hannele Niemi, Auli

- Toom and Arto Kallioniemi, 157–178. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers. Ebook Central Academic Complete.
- Kirsi-Lahti, Minna. 2005. “I’d Do Anything to Get Them to Read: A Survey of the Use of English Language Literature in Finnish Secondary Schools.” MA Thesis, University of Turku.
- Lee, Winnie Yuk-Chun. 1995. “Authenticity Revisited: Text Authenticity and Learner Authenticity.” *ELT Journal* 49, no. 4: 323–328.
- Little, David, Seán Devitt and David Singleton. 1988. *Authentic Texts in Foreign Language Teaching: Theory and Practice*. Dublin: Authentik Language Learning Resources Ltd.
- MacDonald, Malcolm N., Richard Badger and Maria Dasli. 2006. “Authenticity, Culture and Language Learning.” *Language and Intercultural Communication* 6, no. 3–4: 250–261. Taylor & Francis Online.
- Maijala, Minna. 2020. “Pre-Service Language Teachers’ Reflections and Initial Experiences on the Use of Textbooks in Classroom Practice.” *Journal of Language Teaching and Research* 11, no. 2: 157–165. ProQuest Central.
- Mishan, Freda. 2005. *Designing Authenticity into Language Learning Materials*. 1st ed. Bristol: Intellect Books. Ebook Central Academic Complete.
- Orooq, Ghuson and Anwar Hussein-Abdel Razeq. 2022. “Use of Authentic Materials in English as a Foreign Language Classrooms: Challenges, Reasons, Types and Frequency.” *Journal of Educational Sciences* 20, no. 20: 161–175. DOAJ Directory of Open Access Journals.
- Rehman, Atiya and Ayesha Perveen. 2021. “Teachers’ Perceptions about the Use of Authentic Material in Pakistani EFL Classrooms.” *International Journal of Language Education* 5, no. 2: 63–73. ERIC Education Resources Information Center.
- Richards, Jack C. and Theodore S. Rodgers. 2014. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Cambridge Core.
- Sarimo-McKusick, Jannika. 2004. “The Use of Literature in a Foreign Language Classroom: A Case Study of Sustained Silent Reading in a Finnish High School.” MA Thesis, University of Turku.
- Schreier, Margrit. 2012. *Qualitative Content Analysis in Practice*. 1st edition. London: SAGE Publications. Sage Research Methods.
- Sharifian, Farzad. 2009. “English as an International Language: An Overview.” In *English as an International Language: Perspectives and Pedagogical Issues*, edited by Farzad Sharifian, 1–18. 1st ed. Bristol: Multilingual Matters. De Gruyter eBooks Complete.

- Sinkkonen, Larissa. 2011. "Importing Authenticity into Formal EFL Learning and Teaching Materials: A Study of the Use of Authentic Target-Language Texts in EFL Coursebooks Intended for Today's Finnish Upper Secondary School Students." MA Thesis, University of Turku.
- Taylor, David. 1994. "Inauthentic Authenticity or Authentic Inauthenticity? The Pseudo-Problem of Authenticity in the Language Classroom." *TESL-EJ* volume 1, no. 2: n.p. DOAJ Directory of Open Access Journals.
- Thompson, Geoff. 1996. "Some Misconceptions about Communicative Language Teaching." *ELT journal* 50, no. 1: 9–15. Oxford University Press Journals Current.
- Tähtinen, Juhani, Eero Laakkonen ja Mari Broberg. 2020. *Tilastollisen aineiston käsittelyn ja tulkinnan perusteita* [Basics of Statistical Data Processing and Interpretation]. 2nd edition. Turku: University of Turku, Department of Education. UTUPub.
- Widdowson, H.G. [1979] 1980. *Explorations in Applied Linguistics*. 2nd impression. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Questionnaire

Use of Authentic Texts in Second and Foreign Language Teaching in Finland

Pakolliset kysymykset merkitty tähdellä (*)

Hei,

opiskelen Turun yliopistossa englantia kielten oppimisen ja opettamisen tutkinto-ohjelmassa ja teen nyt pro gradu -tutkielmaa autenttisten kohdekielisten tekstien käyttämisestä kieltenopetuksessa. Tutkielmaa varten kerätään aineistoa tällä kyselyllä. Kysely on englanninkielinen, mutta avoimiin kysymyksiin voi vastata englanniksi tai suomeksi.

Kysely on suunnattu kieltenopettajille ja siihen vastaaminen vie noin 10–15 minuuttia. Voit osallistua tutkimukseen, mikäli opetat tai olet opettanut jotakin vierasta kieltä jossakin suomalaisessa ensimmäisen tai toisen asteen oppilaitoksessa. Kysely on anonymi, eikä vastauksia voi liittää yksittäiseen henkilöön. Osallistuminen on vapaaehtoista ja osallistumisen voi myös keskeyttää. Kerättyjä tietoja säilytetään enintään kaksi vuotta tutkielman valmistumisesta, minkä jälkeen aineistot hävitetään tietoturvasest.

Tietosuojaseloste: <https://seafiler.utu.fi/f/2904d3ae339489f9ca3/>

Kiitos jo etukäteen kyselyyn vastaamisesta. Jos kyselystä tai tutkimuksesta herää jotakin kysyttävää, minuun voi olla yhteydessä esimerkiksi sähköpostitse (xxxxxx@utu.fi).

Ystävällisin terveisin

Emmi Kaitarinne

xxxxxx@utu.fi

Ohjaaja:

Pekka Lintunen

xxxxxx@utu.fi

1. I have read the privacy notice and I accept the processing of my personal data. *

Yes

No

2. My answers can be used in this study. *

Yes

No

[page break – page 2]

3. Background information. *

Age _____

Experience as a teacher (in years) _____

4. What is your gender? *

Male

Female

Other

Prefer not to say

5. What is your first language? You may select multiple answer options. *

Finnish

Swedish

Other, specify: _____

6. What language(s) do you teach? You may select multiple answer options. *

English

Swedish

Spanish

French

German

Italian

Russian

Other, specify: _____

7. At which level(s) do you teach at the moment? You may select multiple answer options. *

- Primary school
- Lower secondary school
- Upper secondary school
- Vocational school, which field? _____
- I don't teach at the moment

8. At which level(s) have you taught most recently? You may select multiple answer options. * [visible only if I don't teach at the moment is selected]

- Primary school
- Lower secondary school
- Upper secondary school
- Vocational school, which field? _____

9. Do you teach IB or CLIL classes? *

- Yes
- No

[page break – page 3]

A definition for *authentic texts*:

"A text is usually regarded as textually authentic if it is not written for teaching purposes, but for a real-life communicative purpose, where the writer has a certain message to pass on to the reader." (Lee 1995, 323)

Lee Winnie Yuk-Chun. 1995. "Authenticity Revisited: Text Authenticity and Learner Authenticity." *ELT Journal* 49: 323-328.

10. Do you use authentic texts outside coursebooks or textbooks in teaching? *

Yes

No

11. How often do you use the following types of authentic texts (outside coursebooks or textbooks) in teaching? [visible only if Yes is selected]

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Drama (e.g. plays, opera) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Children's literature *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fictional prose (e.g. novels, shorts stories) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Poetry *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Non-fictional literature *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TV shows *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cartoons *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Documentaries *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
News broadcasts *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Radio *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Podcasts *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Newspapers *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Magazines *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advertisements *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Songs *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Movies *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Websites *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blogs *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social media posts (e.g. X/Twitter, Instagram, Facebook) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vlogs or videos (e.g. YouTube, TikTok)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other, please specify:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. What types of texts do you use in teaching? [visible only if *No* is selected]

[page break – page 4]

13. Perceptions on the use of authentic texts. Answer the questions below. *

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I support the use of authentic texts in a second or foreign language classroom.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think the use of authentic texts outside textbooks in classroom is challenging for the teacher.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students should be encouraged to use authentic texts outside the classroom.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think it is easy to access authentic texts nowadays due to the internet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using authentic texts outside textbooks requires extra effort on the teacher's behalf.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Authentic texts are too difficult for the students to understand.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using authentic texts outside textbooks is time-consuming.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Authentic texts enrich classroom input.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Authentic texts increase the students' motivation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Authentic texts improve the students' reading skills.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Authentic texts improve the students' writing skills.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Authentic texts improve the students' listening skills.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Authentic texts improve the students' speaking skills.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is difficult to find authentic texts that are suitable for the students' proficiency level.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is difficult to find authentic texts that are relevant to the students' lives and interests.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. Exposure to authentic texts. Answer the questions below. *

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I think students should be exposed to authentic texts at the beginner level.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think students should be exposed to authentic texts at the intermediate level.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think students should be exposed to authentic texts at the advanced level.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students can learn languages well without exposure to authentic texts.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. Role of textbooks and authentic texts. Answer the questions below. *

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Authentic texts are more beneficial to the students' learning compared to textbooks.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Authentic texts act as a supplement to textbooks.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using authentic texts is more challenging for the students than using textbooks.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Textbooks are more effective in teaching and learning than authentic texts.

Textbooks themselves generally incorporate a sufficient amount of authentic texts.

16. Is there anything you would like to add or comment? (Optional)

17. This questionnaire will be supplemented with interviews in Finnish in August-September 2024 (on Zoom or face-to-face in Turku region). Would you like to participate in the interviews? This answer is not binding. *

Yes, I would like to participate in the interviews.

No, I don't want to participate in the interviews.

18. Please give your contact information here. This information will only be used to contact you regarding the interview. * [visible only if Yes, I would like to participate in the interviews is selected]

First name _____

Last name _____

Phone number and/or email address _____

Appendix 2 Interview Questions

1. Kerro omasta taustastasi: Kauanko olet työskennellyt opettajana? Mitä (kieli)aineita opetat? Millä taso(i)lla? Opetatko IB-lukiossa tai CLIL-luokkia? Muuta?

Tell me about your background: How long have you worked as a teacher? Which (language) subjects do you teach? At which level(s)? Do you teach at an IB school or CLIL classes? Anything else?

2. Käytätkö opetuksessasi kurssikirjojen/oppikirjojen ulkopuolisia autenttisia tekstejä? Miksi/miksi et?

Do you use authentic texts outside coursebooks and textbooks in your teaching? Why/why not?

3. Jos käytät autenttisia tekstejä, niin millaisia? Miksi?

If you use authentic texts, what kind? Why?

4. Miten käsittelet autenttisia tekstejä? Tekevätkö oppijat tehtäviä, pari- tai ryhmätöitä, esseitä...?

How do you deal with authentic texts? Do the students have exercises, pair or group work, essays...?

5. Mitä asioita harkitset, kun valitset opetuksessa käytettäviä tekstejä?

What kind of things do you consider when choosing texts for teaching?

6. Saavatko oppilaasi valita itselleen mielenkiintoisia tekstejä käsiteltäväksi? Miksi/miksi eivät?

Can your students choose texts to work with that are interesting for them? Why/why not?

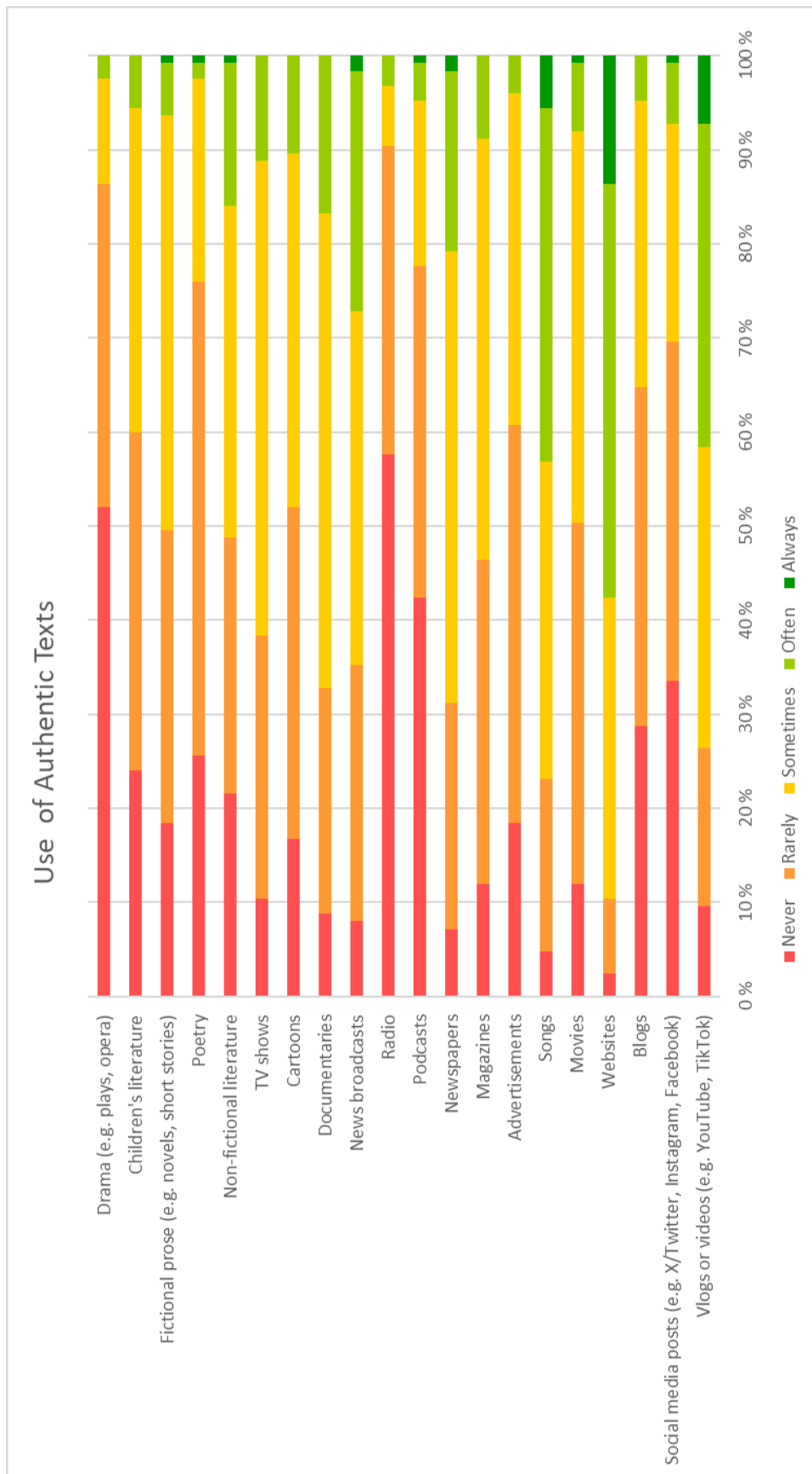
7. Mitä ajattelet yleisesti opettettavien kieltesi oppikirjojen laadusta ja sisällöstä Suomessa?

Generally speaking, what do you think about the quality and contents of Finnish textbooks of the languages you teach?

8. Muuta lisättävää?

Anything to add?

Appendix 3 Use of Authentic Texts



Appendix 4 Finnish Summary

Tämä pro gradu -tutkielma tarkastelee kurssikirjojen ja oppikirjojen ulkopuolisten autenttisten kohdekielisten tekstien käyttöä toisen kotimaisen kielen ja vieraiden kielten opetuksessa Suomessa. Tutkielman tarkoitus on tutkia, millaisia oppikirjan ulkopuolisia autenttisia tekstejä opettajat käyttävät suomalaisissa ensimmäisen ja toisen asteen oppilaitoksissa ja kuinka usein niitä käytetään. Lisäksi tutkielman tarkoitus on kartoittaa, miten opettajat mieltävät autenttisten tekstien käytön käytännön näkökulmasta sekä oppijoiden kielenoppimista ajatellen. Ilmiötä tarkastellaan opettajien näkökulmasta kyselyllä ja kahdeksalla haastattelulla.

Opettajien toimintaa ja pedagogisia päätöksiä ohjaa opettajan omaksuma lähestymistapa opetukseen. Suomessa yleisin lähestymistapa on kommunikatiivinen kieltenopetus, joskin muokattuna kunkin opettajan tavalla. Tutkimusten mukaan suomalaisessa kieltenopetuksessa käytetään myös paljon oppikirjaa, ja autenttisten tekstien käyttäminen on vähäisempää, mikä vaikuttaa ristiriitaiselta kommunikatiivisen kieltenopetuksen periaatteiden valossa.

Kommunikatiivisen kieltenopetuksen tarkoituksena on tehdä oppijoiden kommunikatiivisesta kompetenssista opetuksen tavoite sekä kehittää kommunikatiivisia opetustapoja kielen perustaitojen kehittämiseksi. Lähestymistavan keskeisin periaate on, että kielen oppiminen tapahtuu kommunikaation kautta. Lisäksi kommunikatiivisen kieltenopetuksen periaatteisiin kuuluvat muun muassa oppijälähtöisyys sekä autenttinen ja merkityksellinen kommunikaatio toiminnan tavoitteena.

Kommunikatiivinen kieltenopetus on linjassa Eurooppalaisen viitekehyksen sekä suomalaisten opetussuunnitelman perusteiden kanssa. Nämä asiakirjat ohjaavat oppikirjojen tekijöiden sekä opettajien valintoja. Eurooppalainen viitekehys noudattaa toimintakeskeistä lähestymistapaa, joka rakentuu kommunikatiiviselle lähestymistavalle. Sen mukaan oppijat kehittävät kielenopetuksessa yleisiä kompetensseja sekä kommunikatiivisia kielellisiä kompetensseja. Suomalaiset opetussuunnitelmat puolestaan tarkentavat opetuksen tavoitteita kansallisesti. Nykyinen Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelma listaakin seitsemän laaja-alaista osaamisaluetta, joita oppijoiden tulisi kehittää peruskoulun aikana. Yksi näistä laaja-alaisen osaamisen alueista on monilukutaito, joka käsittää kyvyt tulkita, tuottaa ja arvioida erilaisia tekstejä. Opetussuunnitelmassa mainitaan myös, että opetukseen tulisi sisällyttää autenttisia ja oppilaille merkityksellisiä tekstejä. Lukion opetussuunnitelman perusteet eivät mainitse autenttisia tekstejä, mutta toisen kotimaisen kielen ja vieraiden kielen opetussuunnitelman

perusteissa on useita tavoitteita, joiden saavuttamiseksi oppilaat voisivat tai heidän tulisi hyödyntää autenttisia kohdekielisiä tekstejä. Lukion opetussuunnitelman perusteet keskittyvät vahvasti oppijoiden valmisteluun tulevaisuuden jatko-opintoja ja työelämää ajatellen, ja kieltenopetuksen tarkoituksena on myös edistää oppijoiden kykyä toimia globaalissa maailmassa.

Tämän tutkielman keskiössä ovat autenttiset tekstit, joita ei ole tehty opetustarkoitukseen, vaan aitoon kommunikatiiviseen tarkoitukseen kohdekielisisessä kulttuurissa. Autenttisuuden ja autenttiset tekstit voidaan kuitenkin käsittää monin eri tavoin. Tekstin autenttisuus voi juontua sen alkuperästä tai oppijoiden tekemistä tulkinnoista. Autenttisuus voi viitata myös tehtävien tai luokkahuoneen autenttisuuteen, jolloin oppijat ovat aidossa vuorovaikutuksessa. Tehtävät voivat olla autenttisia aidon tarkoituksensa, koulun ulkopuolisen elämän kytkösten, luokan vuorovaikutuksen tai oppijoiden osallisuuden kautta. Tehtävien ja luokan autenttisuus vaikuttavat myös oppijoiden näkemyksiin käsiteltävien tekstien autenttisuudesta. Autenttisten tekstien käytön merkitystä kieltenopetuksessa on myös kyseenalaistettu ja kritisoitu. Kriitikoiden mukaan tekstin autenttiseen alkuperään keskittyminen voi johtaa tiettyjen alueellisten variaatioiden suosimiseen ja natiivinomaisen kompetenssin korostamiseen. Oppijoille tulisi myös antaa tilaa tulkita tekstejä omasta kulttuurisesta viitekehyksestään, eikä vaatia heitä tulkitsemaan niitä niiden alkuperäisen tarkoituksen mukaan. Lisäksi kriitikot järkeilevät, että autenttisten tekstien käsittely luokassa määrittelee tekstien autenttisuuden uudelleen ja oppijoiden kokemus on näin rajattu luokkahuoneen kontekstiin.

Autenttisia tekstejä voidaan myös muokata opetustarkoitukseen. Autenttisuuden voi tällöin nähdä aidon, muunnellun, mukautetun ja simuloitun autenttisuuden jatkumona. Aidolla autenttisuudella tarkoitetaan sitä, kun tekstiä ei ole alun perin tehty opetustarkoitukseen eikä niihin ole tehty muutoksia. Muunneltu autenttisuus viittaa muunnoksiin, jotka eivät vaikuta alkuperäisen tekstin merkitykseen, kuten alaviitteet tai sisältökysymykset tekstin lomassa. Mukautettu autenttisuus puolestaan käsittää suuremmat muutokset, kuten tekstin yksinkertaistamisen. Simuloidulla autenttisuudella tarkoitetaan opetustarkoituksiin tehtyjä tekstejä, jotka jäljittelevät aitojen kohdekielisten tekstien ominaisuuksia. Tällaisen jatkumon mukaan tekstit ovat siis epäautenttisia tekstit silloin, kun ne on tehty opetustarkoitukseen yrittämättä jäljitellä autenttisia kohdekielisiä tekstejä. Autenttisilla ja yksinkertaistetuilla teksteillä on kuitenkin huomattu kielellisiä eroja, joiden perusteella autenttiset tekstit sopivat kompleksisten ajatusten ja monipuolisen kielen ilmaisuun, kun taas yksinkertaistetut tekstit eivät tähän sovellu. Yksinkertaistetut tekstit ovat puolestaan hyödyllisiä aloittelijoille, sillä

niissä on enemmän semanttista limittäisyyttä sekä tuttuja ja yleisesti paljon esiintyviä sanoja, jotka nopeuttavat tekstin prosessoimista. Tässä tutkielmassa autenttisilla teksteillä tarkoitetaan tekstejä, joita ei ole tehty opetustarkoitukseen vain oikeaan kommunikatiiviseen tarkoitukseen kohdekielellä. Teksteihin tehtyihin muutoksiin ja niiden vaikutuksiin tekstin autenttisuuteen ei ole otettu kantaa, vaan käsitteen laajempi tulkinta on jätetty tutkimukseen osallistuneille.

Keväällä 2024 sähköiseen Webropol-tutkimuskyselyyn vastasi 155 opettajaa suomalaisista ensimmäisen ja toisen asteen oppilaitoksista. Yksi vastaajista ei kuitenkaan hyväksynyt henkilötietojensa käsittelyä, joten hänen vastauksiaan ei sisällytetty tutkimukseen. Osallistuminen kyselyyn oli vapaaehtoista. Kysely on tutkielman tekijän itse kokoama lähdekirjallisuuden ja aiempien tutkimusten nojalla. Kyselyn alussa osallistujilta kysyttiin lupa henkilötietojen käyttöön tietosuojailmoituksen kertomalla tavalla sekä vastausten käyttöön tutkimuksessa. Kyselyssä oli yhteensä neljä Likert-asteikollista kysymystä – joissa kussakin 20, 15, 4 ja 5 kohtaa – sekä kaksi avointa kysymystä. Vastaajista suurin osa oli naisia ja suurimman osan äidinkieli oli suomi. Vastaajat olivat 24–65-vuotiaita ja heidän opetuskokemuksensa vaihteli alle vuodesta 39 vuoteen. Neljä yleisintä opetettavaa kieltä olivat englanti, ruotsi, ranska ja saksa, ja muita opetettavia kieliä olivat venäjä, espanja, italia, japani, viro ja suomi. Vastaajista 78 opetti lukiossa, 62 yläkoulussa, 46 alakoulussa ja 19 ammattikoulussa. Kyselyn lopussa kartoitettiin haastatteluista kiinnostuneita opettajia, ja lopulta kahdeksan heistä valikoitui satunnaisesti haastatteluihin. Haastattelut pidettiin syksyllä 2024 suomeksi kasvotusten tai etäyhteyksin. Haastattelut nauhoitettiin, ja niiden keskimääräinen kesto oli 24 minuuttia. Haastattelujen alussa osallistujia muistutettiin oikeuksistaan ja antamiensa vastaustensa käytöstä tutkielmasta. Haastateltavien opetuskokemus vaihteli 10 vuodesta 37 vuoteen. Opetettavia kieliä olivat englanti, ruotsi, saksa ja viro. Viisi haastateltavista opetti tai oli opettanut alakoulussa, neljä yläkoulussa, kolme lukiossa ja kaksi ammattikoulussa. Opettajilla oli monenlaisia taustoja ja opetuskokemusta myös yleisopetuksen ulkopuolelta.

Tutkielman aineistoa analysoitiin käyttäen sekä kvalitatiivisia että kvantitatiivisia menetelmiä. Kyselyaineisto analysoitiin enimmäkseen kvantitatiivisesti hyödyntäen tilastollisia tunnuslukuja, ja kyselyn luotettavuutta mitattiin laskemalla Likert-asteikollisten kysymysten Cronbachin alfat IBM SPSS Statistics -ohjelmalla. Kyselyn avoimet vastaukset sekä haastatteluaineisto analysoitiin aineistolähtöisesti laadullisen sisällönanalyysin keinoin, jossa aineistosta ilmeneviä teemoja luokiteltiin omiin kategorioihinsa.

Selvä enemmistö opettajista vastasi käyttävänsä oppikirjojen ulkopuolisia autenttisia tekstejä opetuksessaan. Tulokset näyttävät, että opettajat käyttävät monia eri tekstilajeja, yleisimpinä internetsivut, laulut ja vlogit tai videot, joita enemmistö kertoi käyttävänsä usein. Seuraavaksi yleisimpiä tekstityyppejä olivat uutiset, dokumentit ja sanomalehdet. Harvinaisimpia tekstityyppejä olivat radio, draama ja podcastit, joita enemmistö kertoi käyttävänsä harvoin tai ei koskaan. On huomionarvoista, että myös osa niistä, jotka vastasivat, etteivät käytä oppikirjojen ulkopuolisia autenttisia tekstejä opetuksessaan, mainitsivat avoimessa kysymyksessä käyttävänsä kuitenkin joitakin autenttisia tekstejä oppikirjan ohella.

Kyselyn tulosten perusteella suurin osa opettajista kannattaa autenttisten tekstien käyttöä vieraiden kielten oppitunneilla ja uskoo niiden rikastavan oppitunnin kieltä. Opettajat uskovat, että oppijoita tulisi kannustaa autenttisten tekstien käyttöön luokan ulkopuolella, ja niitä voi nykyään löytää helposti internetin ansiosta. Autenttisten tekstien nähtiin olevan hyödyksi oppijoiden neljälle kielelliselle perustaidolle, mutta pikemmin ymmärtämiselle kuin tuottamiselle ja enemmän kirjalliselle kuin suulliselle kielitaidolle. Autenttisten tekstien ei myöskään nähty olevan liian vaikeita oppijoille ymmärtää, ja niiden nähtiin motivoivan oppijoita. Suurin osa vastaajista oli kuitenkin myös samaa mieltä siitä, että oppikirjan ulkopuolisten autenttisten tekstien käyttö vaatii opettajalta vaivannäköä ja on aikaa vievää. Suurin osa vastasi myös, että on vaikeaa löytää tekstejä, jotka ovat sopivia oppijoiden taitotasolle. Myös suurin osa haastateltavista vastasi ottavansa oppijoiden taitotason huomioon arvioidessaan tekstien soveltuvuutta opetukseen.

Tutkimukseen osallistuneet opettajat uskovat, että oppijoiden tulisi altistua autenttisille kohdekielisille teksteille kaikilla osaamisen tasoilla, erityisesti edistyneempien oppijoiden. Kysymys siitä, voiko kieltä oppia hyvin ilman autenttisia tekstejä, jakoi mielipiteitä. Niukka enemmistö oli kuitenkin eri mieltä väittämän kanssa, eli näki autenttiset tekstit tarpeellisina oppijoiden kielenoppimisen kannalta. Toisaalta enemmistö näki autenttiset tekstit oppikirjojen lisänä. Autenttisten tekstien nähtiin olevan haastavampia kuin oppikirjojen, ja oppikirjojen nähtiin olevan tehokkaampia opetuksessa ja oppimisessa kuin autenttisten tekstien. Enemmistö näki myös oppikirjoissa olevan riittävästi autenttisia tekstejä. Autenttisten tekstien ei nähty olevan oppijoiden kielenoppimiselle hyödyllisempiä kuin oppikirjojen. Avoimissa vastauksissa useat vastaajat toivat esille, että sekä autenttisilla teksteillä että oppikirjoilla on paikkansa kieltenopetuksessa, ja että niitä käytetään eri tilanteissa sekä eri tarkoituksiin. Avoimissa vastauksissa sekä haastatteluissa tuotiin myös esille erot eri kielten ja niiden oppikirjojen välillä, varsinkin englantia ja muita kieliä verratessa. Haastateltavien mukaan

englannin materiaaleja on runsaasti tarjolla, ja niiden koetaan olevan laadukkaita. Ruotsin oppikirjojen laatu ja sisältö on puolestaan vaihtelevaa, ja kirjasarjojen tarjonta on suppeampaa pitkän oppimäärän kohdalla kuin keskipitkän. Saksan oppikirjoissa ei myöskään nähty olevan paljonkaan valinnanvaraa, mutta oppikirjojen laatu on kuitenkin kehittynyt vuosien varrella.

Tutkielmassa kävi ilmi opettajien erilaiset kokemukset tekstien autenttisuudesta, kuten lähdekirjallisuudessakin esitetään. Muutama opettaja mainitsi avoimessa kysymyksessä kyselyn lopussa, että tekstikirjojen tekstit ovat usein samankaltaisia kuin autenttiset tosielämän tekstitkin, eikä niiden arvoa tulisi vähätellä. Vastausten perusteella opettajat kuitenkin sisällyttävät myös autenttisia tekstejä opetukseensa ja uskovat, että oppijoita tulisi rohkaista löytämään näitä myös vapaa-ajalla, kuten tämänhetkinen Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelmanikin edellyttää. Kirjallisuuden eri lajit eivät kuitenkaan kuuluneet käytetyimpien tekstien joukkoon. Tähän voi vaikuttaa esimerkiksi ajanpuute tai joidenkin opettajien kohdalla myös lyhyt kokemus opettajana. Internetistä vapaasti saatavat tekstit voivat saavutettavuutensa takia olla yleisimpiä. Vähiten käytetyt tekstityypit saattavat jäädä vlogien tai videoiden varjoon, kuten podcastit ja radio-ohjelmien tallenteet, tai ne voivat olla huonommin saatavilla luokkahuoneesta käsin, kuten draama. Tässä tutkielmassa ei kuitenkaan kartoitettu syitä sille, miksi opettajat käyttävät tai eivät käytä tiettyjä tekstilajeja. Tämän tutkielman perusteella ei siis voida päätellä, miksi joitakin tekstilajeja käytettiin enemmän ja joitakin vähemmän.

Opettajien näkemykset autenttisten tekstien käytöstä olivat samankaltaisia kuin aiemmissa tutkimuksissa muissa maissa. Kuten aiemmassakin palestiinalaisessa tutkimuksessa, autenttisten tekstien nähtiin rikastavan oppitunnin kieltä ja lisäävän oppilaiden motivaatiota. Samalla niiden nähtiin myös vaativan enemmän aikaa ja vaivannäköä. Autenttisten tekstien nähtiin molemmissa tutkimuksissa olevan hyödyllisimpiä oppijoiden lukemisen ja kuullun oppimiseen. Aiemmassa pakistanilaisessa tutkimuksessa kaksi viidesosaa opettajista pysytteli neutraalina, kun heiltä kysyttiin, voiko kieltä oppia hyvin ilman autenttisia tekstejä. Tässä tutkielmassa ei ollut neutraalia vastausvaihtoehtoa, ja vastaukset kuvastivat jakautuneita mielipiteitä. Aiemmassa tutkimuksessa suurin osa vastaajista näki, että autenttiset materiaalit ovat hyödyllisempiä oppijoiden kielenoppimiselle kuin paikalliset oppikirjat. Tässä tutkimuksessa tulos on kuitenkin päinvastainen, mikä voi johtua suomalaisten ja pakistanilaisten oppikirjojen eroista laadussa ja sisällössä. Aiemmassa suomalaisessa tutkimuksessa opettajat saivat alhaiset pisteet autenttisten tekstien käytöstä kielenopetuksessa. Tämän tutkimuksen mukaan opettajat kuitenkin käyttävät monia erilaisia

autenttisia tekstejä opetuksessaan, vaikkakin oppikirja toimii opetuksen selkärankana. Lisäksi enemmistö näki oppikirjoissa olevan riittävästi autenttisia tekstejä. Yksi haastateltava toi myös ilmi, ettei Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelma tarkenna, mitä sisältöjä tulisi käydä minäkin vuonna ja missä järjestyksessä. Siksi opettajien täytyy tukeutua oppikirjojen kaltaisiin materiaaleihin opetuksen oppaina. Aiemman tutkimuksen mukaan suomalaisten kieltenopetus oli myös hyvin opettajajohtoista, mikä vaikuttaa ristiriitaiselta kommunikatiivisen kieltenopetuksen periaatteiden valossa. Tässä tutkimuksessa haastateltavat käsittelivät autenttisia tekstejä sekä opettaja- että oppilasjohtoisesti. Oppijat voivat kuitenkin kokea tekstien autenttisuuden eri tavoin erilaisten tehtävien yhteydessä, eri luokkaympäristöissä ja eri opettajien opettamana.

Tutkimuksen tulosten yleistettävyyteen on kuitenkin suhtauduttava varauksella. On mahdollista, että autenttisia tekstejä opetuksessaan käyttävät opettajat vastasivat todennäköisemmin kyselyyn kuin opettajat, jotka eivät niitä käytä. Kyselyn reliabiliteetti oli myös osin vajavainen. Kysymyssarjalla oppikirjojen ja autenttisten tekstien rooleista opetuksessa oli kokonaisuudessaan alhainen Cronbachin alfa. Lisäksi vastaukset vlogien ja videoiden käytön osalta korreloivat huonosti muiden tekstityyppien kanssa. Kysymys siitä, voiko kieltä oppia hyvin ilman autenttisia tekstejä, antoi myös ristiriitaisen tuloksen, ja sen poistaminen nosti mittarin reliabiliteettia. On huomionarvoista, että Likert-asteikolla ei ollut neutraalia vastausvaihtoehtoa, mikä pakotti osallistujat valitsemaan, ovatko he samaa mieltä vai eri mieltä väittämän kanssa, jolloin heillä ei ollut mahdollista pysyä neutraalina. Haastattelujen puolestaan ei ole tarkoituskaan tarjota koko ammattikuntaan yleistettävää tietoa, vaan valottaa yksittäisten opettajien kokemuksia ja näkemyksiä asiaan liittyen.

Tutkimuksen perusteella opettajat mieltävät autenttisten tekstien käytön vieraan kielen opetuksessa positiivisesti, vaikkakaan eivät ongelmattomana. Autenttisten tekstien käytön helpottamiseksi opettajat tarvitsisivat välineitä ja koulutusta siihen, kuinka he voisivat tehokkaasti löytää, arvioida ja sisällyttää autenttisia tekstejä opetukseensa. Tutkielman tulokset kannustavat myös oppimateriaalien kehittäjiä sisällyttämään autenttisia tekstejä oppimateriaaleihin kaikilla osaamisen tasoilla. Tulevaisuuden tutkimukset voisivat tarkastella ilmiötä oppijoiden näkökulmasta ja tutkia autenttisten tekstien käyttöä erilaisilla pedagogisilla interventioilla. Tällainen tutkimus voisi tuottaa hyödyllistä tietoa niin opettajille ja opettajankouluttajille kuin oppimateriaalien kehittäjillekin, sillä se voisi auttaa kehittämään toimivia ja tutkimustietoon perustuvia opetusmenetelmiä, jotka motivoivat oppijoita ja tarjoavat heille myös siltoja kohdekieliseen maailmaan koulun ulkopuolella.