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TEXT LINGUISTICS AND THE TEACHING OF FINNISH

- SOME EXPERIENCES

1. General considerations

One of the aims of the school is to train children to make better use of their native language; the basic unit of language use is the text. The obvious conclusion from the juxtaposition of these two statements is that text linguistics ought to have some relevance for the teaching of the mother tongue. The exact nature and form of this relevance, however, deserve more empirical research than has been carried out so far. The present paper is a report of the work of a Finnish language textbook group, in which linguistic expertise was combined with didactic skill and teaching experience. The work of the group cannot be unequivocally characterized as empirical research, but rather as experimentation in the classroom. For the past six years, the present author has been a member of this group, which has been designing new kinds of text books for the teaching of Finnish in the new comprehensive school (grades 1-9, ages 7-16).¹

Some of the general problems encountered by anyone wishing to apply ideas from text linguistics to practical teaching can be formulated in the following series of questions: Is it possible to treat textual examples in class without giving the pupils any systematic background in grammar? Is the benefit gained from the teaching of the use of language greater, if part of the teaching is explicitly devoted to the structure(s) of the language? What are the cognitive consequences for the pupil if he is taught without the "backbone" of linguistic terminology? Can we prove that they have learned anything when they have

1. The series is called *Toisin sanoen* ('In other words'). The co-authors are Mervi Miettinen (grades 1-4), Leena Kytömäki (3-9) and Raija Ruusu-
vuori (5-9). Before printing, the books were in extensive use in classes selected for this purpose by the National Board of Schools. After the trial period, they were rewritten on the basis of the comments received from the teachers and pupils.

not learned the terminology as we know it? - As there is practically no empirical research being done on such questions, there are no reliable and empirically verified answers either. The solutions that have been adopted in syllabus design or textbook production are based on a a priori conceptions about the nature of learning and decisions about placing the priority in teaching on either the structure or the function of language, possibly supplemented by teaching experience and experimentation.

The British project Language in Use (Doughty, Pearce and Thornton 1972), which was inspired by the thinking of the linguist M.A.K. Halliday, laid the emphasis on the pragmatic side, as is indicated in the title. According to Doughty and his colleagues, it is possible to teach how to use language (as a listener, speaker, reader or writer) by studying and discussing and working on systematically selected and organized text material under the guidance of a (very competent) teacher. No textbooks are needed, as fresh texts abound anywhere the teacher cares to look. The need for metalanguage is no greater than that of everyday usage. Almost the only terms used were word, clause, text and dialogue, plus occasionally the names of the parts of speech. No terms were introduced that would not be used in the course of text analysis.

Our view has not been quite that pragmatic.² In the application of different theories, we adopted an eclectic approach, drawing insights and inspiration from both structuralist and generative grammars, text linguistics and sociolinguistics, traditional and current semantics, etc. In the present paper, some examples are given of our applications of textual and pragmatic ideas. - The danger inherent in an eclectic program is, of course, that it will split into innumerable unconnected items. If we have managed to escape this danger, it is due to the overall didactic approach which we have adopted, that teaching should stress the importance of insight and heuristic learning rather than rote memorizing. There is nothing wrong in memorizing as such, but its role seems to be very marginal in the teaching of the mother tongue. In normal cases, the seven-year-old school beginner has already mastered quite a large number of the structures of his native language, but a relatively much smaller proportion of its

2. It should be pointed out in this connection that our work was bound by the blueprint of the official syllabus, POPS, and its semi-official interpretation, "AKKE". The former is grammar-oriented, the latter more functionally oriented, but it includes all the grammatical terminology that was suggested in the official syllabus.

functions. One of the tasks of teaching, then, is to make the pupils become conscious controllers of already "known" structures, or of what they so far know as receivers rather than as active producers. It is possibly of secondary importance whether or not each discovery or every new experience is subsequently labelled by its "official" name.

2. Teaching how to read: the first grade

The two most frequently used methods of teaching reading are the synthetic, or the from-sound-to-letter method, and the analytic method, which starts from the sentence and arrives at words as the smallest units to be observed and memorized. The former, which has traditionally been the only method used in our country, is best suited for languages with spelling systems like the Finnish, where the correspondence between phonemes and letters is close to 1:1. The latter has been devised for languages like English, where orthographic complexity discourages a letter-by-letter method. The synthetic method is not, however, altogether satisfactory. The concentration on one (and the least meaningful) level of language will often produce very artificial and boring learning material. The method can, however, be supplemented by certain ideas from other methods. For shorter words - which do not abound in Finnish - one might well use a more holistic method, and not always split the word into its constituent letters. The sentences should make sense and they should relate to the daily life of the seven-year-old. What we have added to these modifications is an immediate application of the idea of speech acts in the initial stages of the ABC book. This means that, right from the start, each letter is introduced in a meaningful situational context, in which the stretch of speech is an integral part of the whole situation, but where the content of the speech act, given in a speech bubble, cannot be guessed by the pupils as was the case in the more traditional ABC books. Initial reading material in such books typically consisted of small pictures with a word under each of which - normally a noun. This situation tempted the pupil to guess what the name of the picture was rather than deciphering the meaning of the word under the picture. For an illustration of the speech act method, see the pictures on the following page. The message written in the speech bubble adds a contribution to the situation, but does not give it away. Thus the learner will be highly motivated to understand all of it, while being able to read perhaps only one or two letters. As has

been pointed out, e.g. by Paolo Freire (1972) in connection with adult programs, high motivation is a driving force in the initial phase of the reading process. In small groups and under good guidance, children will best learn from each other's writings by exchanging messages, with no need for a specific book for the teaching of reading (for this method, see inter alia Leimar 1974). The present approach to teacher training in Finland makes the adoption of this kind of loose program impracticable. The next best alternative, however, is to offer the children, from the outset, tasks which show how the ability to read immediately adds a new dimension to their life. With this new skill, they can get more out of their environment without the aid of grown-ups.

The illustrations of the first pages in the ABC-book are hardly likely to remind the average teacher of the speech act theory; nor is it necessary for them to do so. The text linguistic or pragmatic inspirations of the writers of the textbook need not be of any interest to the teacher, even less so for the pupil, at least in the initial stages. The higher the grade, the more obvious the theoretical background will become to the more highly specialized teacher, and towards the end of the comprehensive school, some of the theoretical background will be revealed for the pupils as well.

An interesting problem that relates to text linguistics and cognitive learning theory is brought up by the first continuous texts in the ABC book. Like all writers of reading material, we also originally assumed that pupils will be able to interpret a series of sentences as a text, i.e. as constituting a whole. But this may be too bold an assumption, at least in more problematic instances, such as Finnish immigrant children in Sweden, or "linguistically deprived" children in cities, that is to say children in general who have not been sufficiently exposed to adults' reading or adults chatting with them before school age. It may thus well be the case that the following text, which is the second continuous text in our book to be given to the new readers, will prove too difficult, unless it is taken as a group of separate sentences:

JAANA PELKXX KOULUMATKAA.

JOKU VOI KIUSATA.

PASI EI PELKXX.

SIKSI HE KULKEVAT YHDESSX.

'Jaana is afraid of the way to school.
Someone might tease her. Pasi isn't
afraid. So they walk together.'

The problem is interesting because of the "novelty" of the type of linguistic deprivation it displays. Usually, linguistic deprivation is

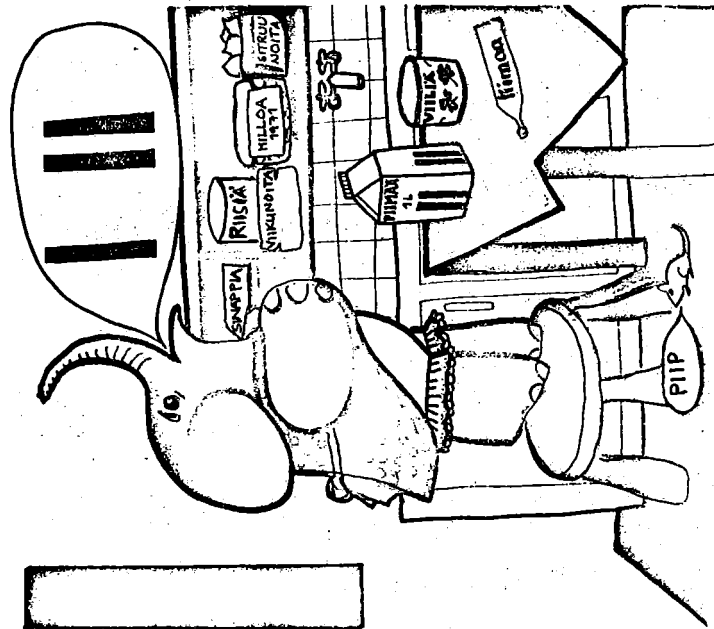
thought of in terms of poverty of vocabulary, or a limited choice of structural alternatives in syntax. If children cannot interpret elementary texts, our observations would indicate that deprivation can also appear as an inability to interpret cohesive textual links (ellipsis, anaphora, lexical cohesion, etc.). This hypothesis should not be too difficult to test; so far, however, it must be treated as an intuitively felt state of affairs by some practising teachers. It is also clear that if textual deprivation is a fact, the five weeks of bookless orientation now used in our schools in the first grade will not be adequate for those who are textually deprived.³

3. When can one read? The problematic grades 2 and 3

Recently, some educationists have become increasingly concerned with post-initial reading problems. The pupils may be able to recognize each letter; they can make their way through sentences; yet they do not seem to be able to read. They cannot profit from the wealth of textbooks on different subjects offered to them at the beginning of the third grade. Such a situation will obviously impose demands on the teaching of Finnish precisely in these grades, which will need to try and facilitate the understanding of texts in the social subjects. (Some of the textbooks are too difficult, to be sure, and the revision of books is of course another line of attack.) This means that the texts treated in Finnish lessons ought not to be too different from those in the social subjects. What also proves to be difficult is maintaining reading motivation beyond the initial phase. This, too, will place demands on the types of texts used. And finally, the reading programs should continue to be interwoven with the writing programs, as they are in the beginning. Decoding will be aided by encoding and motoric practice. We need, then, plenty of variation in the types of text to be used, and we need writing programs which will go beyond the routine orthographic exercises plus "creative writing" so common in these grades.

The textbooks developed for the second and third grade are of the same type as those used for the teaching of initial reading in the first

3. This state of affairs can be compared to the observation by Wertsch (1973) that young children do not possess the pragmatic experience necessary for a full-blown conversation. For this reason, adults tend to simplify their ways of speaking to children also in relation to conversational principles. Cf. also Hackman (1977).

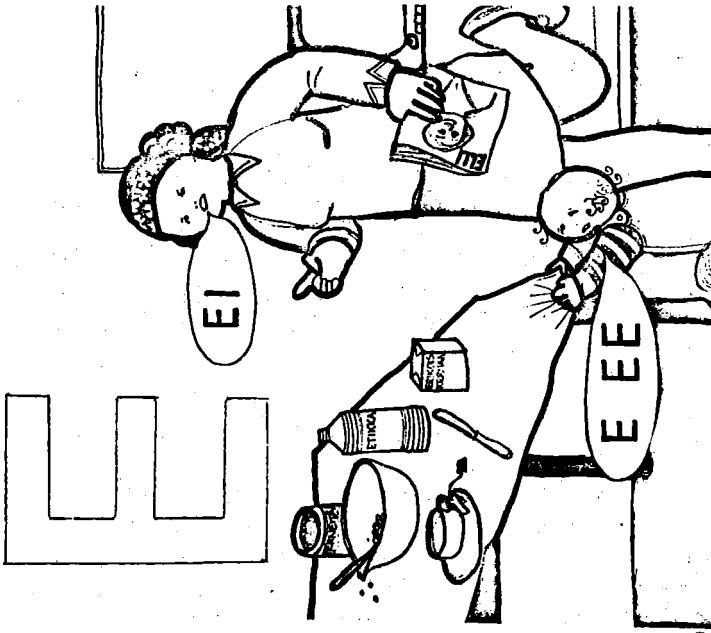


sinappia
viikunoita
hillloa
sitruunoita

mustard
figs
jam
lemons

piimää
villiä
liimaa

buttermilk
junket
glue



herngitä
etikka
erikois-
kermaa

peas
vinegar
special
cream

EI
EII
veitsi
tee

NO
(woman's name
as magazine title)
as
knife
tea

class. In other words, the bulk of the book consists of reading material, but the texts also form a basis for different writing tasks. The main difference is that the range of subject matters will be more varied and the writing tasks less mechanical. The number of fairy tales included will be minimal. The universe of discourse in a fairy tale differs considerably from the daily life of children, and its vocabulary is often weird and complicated, with referents (witches, fairies, etc.) not found in the world surrounding the pupils. This kind of material is good for listening but not for reading practice. Therefore most of our texts discuss everyday events, or give information about such topics as bacteria, immigration, China, Kenya, money, jobs that grown-ups have, children's homes, etc.

The topic is not the only aspect of the texts that needs to be varied through the years. It is important that texts should also differ in terms of the tasks to be performed on them. Some texts require imaginative reading, others understanding and critical assessment; some are used as a basis for making inferences, or just picking up some facts from. Another type of text requires quick but efficient skimming. In this way, when teaching different ways of approaching texts, we are also introducing the pupils to different text types or genres, and beginning to look at different modes of textual composition. Thus we learn to skim through the newspaper columns containing small news; we follow up a recipe or instructions how to use a machine or some equipment more thoroughly; and we distinguish, by careful comparison, between an announcement and an advertisement. From very early on, there should be exercises in how to distinguish fact from fiction. By studying different beginnings of childrens' books, and different endings for fairy tales, the children will get an idea of recurring patterns in certain text types, even if this is a side product from tasks that aim at encouraging children to read on their own.

The writing program proceeds stepwise. Production tasks such as filling in speech bubbles, inventing captions under pictures, writing an end to the beginning of a story, designing a poster or finding a rhyme or a whole line for a poem, are interspersed with tasks which look more mechanical, but are still aimed at improving textual skills. These include interpunctuation of continuous texts (full stop, question mark), adding the missing parts of speech to otherwise "complete" sentences, and practising the recognition and use of antonyms, general nouns and other elements that

have potential textual value. The essentials of story writing can be practised by writing one sentence for each picture in a series of pictures. Both for reading and for writing it is useful to look at how to form mini-texts by combining two "kernel" sentences in various ways (cf. below). It is also possible, at a very early age, to get children to start practising their pragmatic intuitions, for example, by making them distinguish between sentences that are used to inform and those which are used to express an opinion, to try to influence another person or to issue a command. Moreover, the skills of textual interpretation can be put into action by altering the texts in various ways: mixing the paragraphs, taking away one sentence from the middle of the text, altering the plot into an unlikely form, etc. For the slow learners, the program will be rich enough to take up all their time; with the quicker ones, one needs to resort to complete books, extra story writing tasks, etc.

4. Grades 4 to 9: knowledge of language forms the core

From the fourth grade on, the textbooks include less of the reading material necessary, the emphasis being placed on exercises which involve properties of different levels of language. The content of these will be bound to a certain extent by the official syllabus. In its general part, POPS lists the overall aims for the teaching of the knowledge of language as follows (p. 44):

1. It should give the pupils linguistic and stylistic information about the mother tongue which
 - will help the pupil to speak and write his language accurately and in a natural manner;
 - may arouse his interest in language as such;
 - will support the learning of foreign languages,
2. It should make the pupils familiar with the lexical and structural characteristics of their native language.⁴ The most obvious relevance of text linguistics is, against this background, to facilitate the writing and reading process, i.e., the pupils' practical skills. Hardly any piece of

4. These aims have been slightly revised for the AKKE version of the syllabus, according to which the teaching should aim at enhancing the practical skills of the pupils, improving their thinking, and should lend support to learning foreign languages.

information about text composition can be thought of as having intrinsic interest for the pupil without having any practical value for their reading or writing. On the other hand, some textual devices that are characteristic of Finnish will be useful both in order to increase awareness in writing Finnish and in order to increase understanding of the devices used by the foreign languages to be learned.

The official syllabus ignores text linguistics; the relevant linguistic levels that it mentions are sound/letter, word and clause. The syllabus does recognise texts themselves, though. This becomes evident when one studies the requirements that are stated for writing. The list of the text types that the pupils are expected to be able to produce includes items like letters, instructions, advertisements, poems, diaries, reports, stories etc. We thus notice a lack of connection between the requirements for the teaching of the linguistic core, the factual part, and those of the practical skills compartments. This bipartition is no longer so evident in AKKE. This program acknowledges the following "levels of language" (e.g. on p. 31-32): letter/sound, syllable, word, clause, clause complex/sentence, embedded clause, text, situation. All these should turn up in one way or another in the discussions about language. AKKE also formulates the more specific aims for grade 9 in more or less textual terms (p. 70):

"The pupils should be able to distinguish between fact and fiction; they should know how language is used for instrumental purposes and manipulation; they should be able to distinguish between different clause types, and know about ways of forming clause complexes and embeddings; ..."

Anyone who wants to include the textual aspect in a textbook of "the knowledge of language", then, has their hands relatively free. We have approached the issue from three slightly differing points of view. In the rest of this paper I shall illustrate each of the three aspects.

Texts as illustrations. It is vital not to lose sight of the fact that the basic unit of language use is a text. What this means for the textbook writer is that as large a proportion as possible of the illustrations used should be in the form of authentic texts or extracts. At the risk of producing quickly outdated material, we have tried to follow this principle. An increasing number of the texts consist of literary material: poems, excerpts from short stories, novels, plays, and folk tales. This selection serves a twofold purpose: while it illustrates the use of particular linguistic means as a literary device, it also introduces

the pupils to a number of authors. The non-literary texts include newspaper headlines, articles and readers' columns, announcements and advertisements, book reviews and sports commentaries. From the more official field, we have included statutes, acts of parliament, instructions and minutes. Very useful material can be obtained from the writings of the pupils themselves: stories, poems, news, food recipes, reviews and commentaries. For certain purposes, the texts will need some editing or revision, but mostly they can be used in their authentic form.

From function to form. The purpose for which the various textual illustrations are needed is, of course, to show how language works. In this program, we have tried to follow the principle of "from function to form". Accordingly, we do not for instance discuss the division of sentences into declaratives, interrogatives and imperatives in an academic way, with examples dreamed up by the authors themselves, but try to show, from the start, how they are employed in different texts. Thus, we spend some time on the declarative sentence in Book 5 showing first that this type of sentence can be used either to deliver factual information or to express a subjective opinion. Next, we show how these sentences are used both for describing states of affairs and for reporting events, and finally, how the same topic can be treated either factually or fictively by means of the same sentence type. All this is done in order to avoid giving the impression that one form is used for one purpose ("declarative sentences make a claim", according to the traditional grammatical definition). In a comparable fashion, we take up ways of commanding, exhorting, etc., in Book 6. While mainly illustrating the use of the imperative sentence type in commands, exhortations, and legislation, we also show what alternative linguistic devices can be used to produce suasive texts: rules, regulations and instructions.

Even such grammatical categories as tense and verbal mood (conditional and potential forms of the Finnish verb), which have usually been taught in the form of memorizable paradigms, have in our program been incorporated into this functional-textual treatment. Thus we have picked up descriptions, and simultaneous sports reporting, to illustrate the use of the present tense; sports news in the newspaper, historical writing and personal letters referring to past events, to illustrate the use of the past tense, etc. This approach to the teaching of morphological features may be subject to the criticism that the pupils will not acquire an overall grasp of the temporal or modal system in this way. That is

certainly true, but in our program, a synthesis will be presented later, in grades 7 and 8, not right at the outset. There are, naturally, many items of grammar that do not fit into the textual approach. Thus, if we are to teach, say, that a sentence can be divided into NP and VP, or how to classify words into parts of speech, or to examine the variation in the case of the Finnish object, textual aspects will be of marginal use. On the other hand, the discussion of the attributive vs. the predicative complement can already be made more palpable by a textual or functional approach.

The presentation of textual devices. While it is at least possible to illustrate certain intra-clausal phenomena with the aid of texts, it is mandatory to do so when discussing linguistic elements that are used for the purpose of incorporating sentences into texts. Thus there is no point at all in taking up the phenomenon of word order in Finnish in isolation the textual aspect. As Finnish is a language where the syntactic functions of the major NPs in a clause are mainly expressed by means of case endings, it is seldom necessary to employ word order for this purpose and word order is thus mainly used for thematic purposes. A subject NP with a new referent can be postponed until after the verb; an object or an adverbial with a given referent can be thematized by fronting; a finite verb can be brought to the front or postponed to the end, depending on the textual role of the sentence, and so on. Most of these operations are used by the pupils automatically when they are speaking. Their writing, on the other hand, is often fettered in this respect, possibly by a too rigid early reading program with simplified sentences, or by over-simplified teaching of grammar. Later on, their textual skills are handicapped by the overflow of non-Finnish textual devices (Swedish, English, or German) such as Cleft, Pseudo-cleft, Tough etc. For these reasons, it will be useful to go through the main types of word order variants in Finnish showing the essential role they play in the formation of a text. We illustrate this, for example, by means of the following two types of exercise. First, we take an authentic text, pick up a couple of key sentences from it and print them in the margin of the book. Each of these sentences is also given a variant word order by its side. The pupils have to choose between the sentences in the margin and find the right place for them in the text. In another version of the exercise nothing is taken out of the text, but some of the sentences are altered within the text so that they become textually unsuitable. For example, a sentence which clearly presents a new referent in its subject-NP

will be altered so that its subject is sentence-initial. The pupils must try and correct the text and find a reason for the unsuitability of the word order of some of the sentences.

Word order is an illustration of one of the three dimensions of a sentence that have textual relevance, namely what could be called thematization. The other two dimensions are linking (sequencing, conjunction, subjunction and embedding) and cohesion. In what follows I shall present some illustrations of the ways these two dimensions have been realized in our program.

The simplest type of linking exercise consists of tasks that have to be performed on two sentences. These sentences have to be combined in several alternative ways, resulting in a series of mini-texts differing both in meaning and in textual strategy. For example, we have, in the 5th grade, the task of combining the sentences I EAT A DOUGHNUT. and I AM HUNGRY. The textual devices to be used are sequential ordering of the sentences, and their linking alternatively with the conjunctions for, when, if, although, or but. This type of exercise will be made more complicated in later grades, and the learning benefit at any level is very obvious. The practice really explicates the general wish to "make the pupils aware of the linguistic means at their disposal" so that they thereby become better users of their language.

In the seventh grade, sentences as parts of texts are looked at from a different point of view. There we offer the pupils separate sentences with obvious links showing that the sentence cannot stand alone as a text but requires something around itself; e.g. the children have to produce a suitable context for sentences that have anaphoric pronouns, connectors (like therefore, however, or in other words), pragmatic particles (Fi. -kin, -hAn), and general nouns which can be interpreted either anaphorically or cataphorically.

In the eighth grade, the exercise with two kernel sentences is taken up again, this time in a more systematic way. In this manner, we introduce the pupils to some essential building blocks for texts: different ways of expressing temporal relations, as well as causal and adversatory relations between statements. The text acts of exemplification and justification are also taught by means of looking at alternative ways of expressing them (e.g., for example, in other words, that is to say, as follows, namely, etc.).

In the following short text, the illustrations of the cohesive devices of pronominalization, comparison, ellipsis and lexical cohesion

have been encircled, and their antecedents are all underlined. The children have to recognize which anaphoric item goes with which antecedent. This kind of task will make the pupils aware of the close-knit texture of even the simplest kind of text.

korvaaminen: Matti ja Maija halusivat leipoa cowboyn kahvikakun, jota
 pronominit Kirsti oli tarjonnut syntymäpäivillään. He eivät onnistu-
 vertailu neet saamaan aikaan samanlaista, vaikka kuinka
 poisto yrittivät . Kokeileminen ei siis ollut hyvä
ratkaisu. Matti keksi paremman : Kirstillä-
 hän on resepti. Soitettaisiin hänelle ja pyydettäisiin
 sitä. Maija huomautti, ettei Kirstillä ollut puhelinta,
 sama merkitys- joten loppujen lopuksi kirjoitettiin kirje ja jäätiin
 kenttä odottamaan vastausta.

substitution Matthew and Mary wanted to bake the cowboy's coffee cake
 pronouns which Christine had served at her birthday party. They
 comparison didn't succeed in achieving exactly the same, however
 deletion hard tried . Experimenting wasn't
 the right solution, then. Matthew thought of a better
 : Christine must have the recipe. They
 same semantic could ring her and ask for it. Mary pointed out that
 field Christine hadn't got a phone, so that in the end they
wrote a letter and waited for the answer.

This task can be varied in an endless number of ways. Let me give just one more example. The following text has been prepared for the purpose of concentrating on lexical cohesion. All the cohesive lexical items have been encircled, and the pupils have to find their antecedents. Furthermore, all the pronouns have been replaced by full lexical items, and the pupils have to reverse the process: find a suitable pronoun for each expression that has been put within parentheses.

Joukko turisteja odotteli pääsyä Halleinin suolakaivok-
 sille. Kun köysiradan vaunuun mahtui vain neljä henkeä,
 meitä kehoitettiin odottamaan puolisen tuntia kahvilassa.
 (Kahvilassakin) oli turisteja, osa (turisteista)
 tyhjensi olutkolkpakoita jotkut (turisteista) joivat kahvia.
 Otimme kupillisen kahvia ja istuuduimme ikkunan luo. Lä-
 hellä meitä oli pöytä, (pöydän) ääressä oli viisi henki-
 löä. Puhuttiin saksaa ja ranskaa. Puhetta johti kovaääni-

nen, lihava mies, (mies) oli pukeutunut (tälle miehelle) sangen huonosti sopiviin lyhyisiin nahkahousuihin ja merimieslakin tapaiseen pikkupojan lakkiin. Miehen seurassa oli kolme naista. Yksi (naisista) oli harvinaisen kaunis nuori tyttö. (Tyttö) puhui ranskaa nopeasti ja livertäen, mutta (tyttö) ei (puhunut) pariisilaisittain korostaen. Minä arvelin (tytön) olevan Etelä-Ranskasta. Tytön vieressä istui vaaleaverikkö, (vaaleaverikkö) ei ollut enää aivan nuori. (Vaaleaveriköllä) oli omituiset vihreät silmät ja (vaaleaveriköllä) (oli) liikaa huulipunaa. Räikeänpunainen takki ei lainkaan sopinut (vaaleaverikölle).

There was a crowd of tourists waiting to enter the Hallein Salt Mines. Since the funicular car could only take four people at a time, we were advised to wait for about half an hour in the café. There were tourists in the café too, some (of the tourists) were draining beermugs, other (tourists) were drinking coffee. We took a cup of coffee and sat down by the window. Near us was a table. Round (the table) were five people. They were speaking French and German. The conversation was dominated by a loud-voiced, fat man, (the man) was wearing leather shorts, which fitted (this man) very badly, and a boy's cap like a sailor's cap. The man was accompanied by three women. One (of the women) was an unusually beautiful young girl. (The girl) spoke French rapidly and musically, but (the girl) (did not speak) with a Parisian accent. I guessed that (the girl) was from the South of France. Next to the girl sat a pale-complexioned woman, (the pale-complexioned woman) was no longer very young. (The pale-complexioned woman) had strange green eyes and (the pale-complexioned woman) (had) too much lipstick. A glaring red jacket did not suit (the pale-complexioned woman) at all.

5. Concluding remarks

An essential fact about texts that has to be brought home to the pupils is that the text is a meaningful whole, with the rest of the text always acting as context to any one part, even a word, inside it. The statement that any text is a whole may sound trivial, but the consequences for a learner of realizing what this means, both for the use of his native language and for the reading of texts in a foreign language, are far from trivial. Let me finish by telling about three types of exercise that might be useful in practising the integrative skill of seeing a text as a whole.

First, to get rid of the old idée fixe that, for a text to be

understood, every word would be "known" beforehand, the pupils are put to work on a cloze task in Finnish. A good text for this purpose is some simple short story, from which, say, every tenth word has been left out. The pupils make their guesses at each point, and the outcome of the task is the insight that the context and our ability to make sensible guesses, predictions on the basis of what is hitherto known, will take us a long way towards a missing word, and thus also when an unknown word turns up in the middle of a text. The pupils will also realize that certain minimal facts of the missing word can be guessed more easily than others: what part of speech the word is, what semantic field it must belong to, etc. Thus, a "cloze text" will help also in arousing discussion about the behavior of words in texts.

A genre in which the text is practically always cut into separate sentences, each interpreted without taking recourse to the text as a whole, is biblical language. We have included a textual analysis of one biblical text (the Prodigal Son) to illustrate the difference in interpretation that is brought about by a holistic approach. Our third exercise deals with poetry - another genre where a grasp of the totality is vital for the understanding of the use of almost every word. This quite sophisticated type of exercise aims at illustrating how a special context can alter the everyday interpretation of a word, or bring out only one semantic aspect of a word.

The linguistic devices that have been touched upon in this paper are ones which form the building blocks for almost any type of text, and thus they can be considered to form the basic material for learning. As the maturity of the pupils develops, the approach will become more analytic, and the range of genres wider. Some textual features are more closely related to grammar than others. For example, when we study the language of law and bureaucracy in Book 9, we find ourselves discussing multiple embeddings, gerundives, complex NPs and the like. On the other hand, when discussing Finnish poetry from the last few decades, the devices that will be emphasized are phonological (the iconic use of alliteration, rhythm and rhyme) or semantic (the exploitation of semantic features for the building of metaphors) rather than grammatical. Text linguistics in its pure form remains far removed from these considerations. When we move on to discussing the devices of suasive language, we soon realize that the linguistic means are so subtle and varied that they cannot be grouped and categorized under headings known in linguistics. Here we approach the borderline of text linguistics and content analysis.

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