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**Investigating possibilities to develop textbooks to
implement global education in basic education
instruction**

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Abstract

This article focuses on investigating the possibilities of developing textbooks to help implementation of global education in Finnish basic education (first nine years of education). The argumentation is supported by textbook research conducted in the field. Based on research findings, the textbooks guide teaching more than the official national curriculum at the grass-root level in Finland. Moreover, national research conducted in the field reveal that despite the published guidelines and goals, global education teaching has remained modest and uncoordinated. At the same time, national researches have revealed that Finnish pupils' negative attitudes towards minority groups and immigrants have increased and that regardless of their high level of citizenship knowledge and skills, pupils are not interested in participating in civic actions. Finnish textbooks evaluation studies, in turn, suggest that the above is mainly due to the pedagogical approach and the perspectives represented in the textbooks.

According to the findings of my recent research on global education referred in this article, current textbooks in use are not seen as helpful tools in implementing global education. At the basic education level, the respondents consider the main hindrances to be the lack of knowledge and skills in the field and the unavailability of textbooks that are used as main resources in teaching and planning in the country.

In conclusion, it is argued that textbooks have great potential to assist in the

implementation of the global education programme and to act as real agents of change. As a summary, a list of criteria for textbook evaluation from a global education perspective is suggested.

Key words: Global education, National basic education, Textbook evaluation

Introduction

Printed textbooks are widely used as the main resources in teaching and planning especially in basic education level (first nine years of education) in Finland. In reality, they are used so widely that it is not uncommon for teachers to rely on textbooks rather than on the official curriculum. The situation appears practical and natural especially in lower level (first six years of education) where a class teacher teaches all or most school subjects for his or her respective class. Even though teachers want to prepare their own teaching material they usually are not supported by the school as they have not enough time and resources. (Pudas 2012; Heinonen 2005; Syrjäläinen 2002; Korkeakoski 2001; Niemi 2001; Viiri 2000; Mikkilä & Olkinuora 1995; Syrjäläinen 1994; Korkeakoski 1990.)

In the light of recent international studies, it seems that Finnish textbooks have managed to fulfil their task when measured against the criteria for 'good knowledge and skills' defined for basic education. For example Finnish pupils score very highly with their skills and knowledge in the subject areas in OECD's (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) study and the IEA's (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement) Civic Education Study (CIVED) and International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS). (For PISA studies, see Sulkunen et al. 2010; Centre of Education Assessment 2006. For IEA ICCS, see Schulz et al. 2010; Suoninen et al. 2010; for CIVED, see IEA 2004; Suutarinen 2000.) However, when measured against the third commonly referred 'basic key competence' (European Commission 2006), 'the attitudes' of pupils, the findings reveal a very different situation. At the moment, it seems that the high scores in skills and knowledge are not essentially translating into intended attitudes and values.

For example with regards to their social activeness evaluated in CIVED study, knowledgeable and skilful Finnish youth seem to have adopted attitudes usually associated with those living 'on the margin of society' (Brunell 2002:136; Suutarinen 2002:55). Moreover, national research on pupils' attitudes in their final grade of basic education has revealed that the negative attitudes of girls towards immigrants and minority groups have doubled since 1998 whereas the negative attitudes of boys have steadily increased since the first survey conducted in 1990 (Virrankoski 2005). According to research findings in 2003, half of the ninth-grade boys considered themselves as racists and intolerant towards minority groups and immigrants and 20 per cent of the girls reported prejudice against them (Virrankoski 2005). Also the IEA study in 1999, as well as in the latest study in 2009, Finnish pupil's attitudes towards the rights of ethnic groups and immigrants have been found to be clearly more negative than the international average (Suoninen et al 2010; Suutarinen 2002). At this point, it is relevant to note that in Finland, national basic education is a significant socialising institution: it is compulsory for all children aged from seven to 16 permanently residing in Finland.

One of the main reasons behind the prevailing negative attitudes towards minority groups is suggested to be the perspective represented in textbooks: the deep-rooted idea of Us as opposed to the cultural Other. Especially through Finnish geography education, the Other from outside the Europe had been portrayed as less acceptable than the Western Other (Paasi 1998:245; Ruuska 1998). Also the textbook analysis included in the Civic Study in 1995 proposes that Finnish national identity expressed in textbooks is intertwined with an Eastern threat and suspicions towards other national groups (Suutarinen 2000:86). The above is especially noteworthy as the most common foreign mother tongues spoken in Finland are Russian, Estonian, and Somali (Statistics Finland 2012).

In consideration of the above, it is perhaps not surprising that the research on global education has revealed that current textbooks are not seen as helpful resources in implementing the Ministry of Education and Culture's (MEC) Global Education (GE) 2012 Programme (Ministry of Education 2007). On the contrary, the main challenge in implementing global education has been reported to be the lack of resources that is strongly associated with the lack of appropriate textbooks (Pudas 2012). This article strives to find ways to develop textbooks to help implement global education in Finnish basic education and to better support this education to reach the intended attitudinal learning goals.

In the GE 2012 Programme global education is defined as action that aims to guide 'towards individual and communal global responsibility' and to comprise such areas as 'human rights education, equality education, peace education, media education, intercultural understanding, questions relating to development and equity, and education for sustainable development' (Ministry of Education 2007:11). The programme assumes that learning occurs in a social context; that people learn 'from one another', in 'interaction', and through 'dialogue' (Ministry of Education 2007). According to the ministry, the focus of the programme is 'on the role of the educational sector in a globalising society and in governing of the global challenges' (Ministry of Education 2007). In this article, global education concept is defined according to the above.

The findings discussed are somewhat unexpected as the question is not that global education issues were not addressed in the national curriculum. On the contrary, international education has been part of the national curriculum since Finland moved into the present comprehensive school system in the early 1970s (Ministry of Education 2007:11). Since then, such aspects as human rights, equality, peace, and environmental and intercultural issues have been included in national education (Räsänen 2002:107). In the latest National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (NCCBE See NBE 2004) as well as in separate education programmes, emphasis has also been given to such areas as sustainable development, tolerance, international security, questions related to the globalisation (Ministry of Education 2007:11), and, more recently, to 'global responsibility' (MEC 2011:18). Taking into account the critiques and the study findings discussed above, the situation suggests that a) the global education issues are, for some reason, left out from the textbooks or b) that there might be a gap between the intended global education goals and the ways in which these goals are addressed in textbooks (see Voogt & Roblin 2012).

As most critiques regarding textbooks are made towards the decisions that fall under the responsibility of the editors and textbook writers, in what follows, I will firstly take

a look at the textbook publishing process in Finland. Secondly, I will focus on relevant school textbook evaluations and analysis and thirdly, I will consider possible actions that could be taken to enhance the textbook production process from a global education perspective. Finally, I will present some recommendations that should be taken into consideration in order for global education not be neglected in the textbooks in the future.

At this point, it is relevant to note that the only detailed guidelines for publishing houses regarding textbooks are expressed in the Finnish government's Equality programme (SHM 2008) that was published in 2008. According to the programme, it is the responsibility of the MEC to ensure together with publishing houses that the instructional materials will not support stereotypical images and gender roles of girls and boys, men and women, through texts or pictures and that they transmit unprejudiced, open minded depiction of what is suitable and possible for men and women (SHM 2008:22). In the NCCBE, the legitimate curriculum document, there is only one reference to textbooks: the 'physical learning environment' that includes 'school buildings and spaces as well as teaching resources and materials' need to enable 'active' and 'independent' study (NBE 2004:18).

About the process of making instructional material in Finland today

Currently in Finland, the textbook production and process decisions are made by independent publishing houses. This was not always the case in Finland where the National Board of Education (NBE) inspected all school books till 1992. Nevertheless, the material used in basic education still needs to be based on the current NCCBE that is formulated by the NBE.

In Finland, there are currently two main textbook publishing houses, SanomaPro (<http://ratkaisut.sanomapro.fi/web/guest/briefly-in-english>) and Otava Publishing Company (http://www.otava.fi/en_GB/). Correspondingly, almost all the textbooks, workbooks, and teacher manuals in schools participating in the global education research were published by the above publishing houses. SanomaPro is the largest educational publisher in Finland and Otava is the second largest general publisher in Finland and represents Finland in the European Educational Publishers Group (EEPG). It could be debated whether the government has managed to reach its goal in terms of diversifying the textbook market when it discontinued the inspection process. For example in England, where the introduction of the national curriculum was expected to increase the variety of textbooks, the choice and variety has actually diminished as the market has become concentrated in the hands of a small group of publishing giants (Crawford & Foster 2006). In this sense, although the teachers appear to have the freedom of choice or 'almost exclusive responsibility for the choice of textbooks' (Välimäki et al. 2002:44), the choice can be considered as Crawford and Foster (2006: 94) put it, 'an illusory one'.

The two main textbook publishing houses in Finland follow similar processes in preparing their instructional material. The publication process follows basically the order that was found practical in the late 1980s textbook research in Finland (Leino 1989:5). The following description is based on email correspondence with the Publishing Director of Otava (Otava 2012) and the Business Director of SanomaPro (SanomaPro 2012) and on phone interview with the Content Officer for English

material of Sanoma Pro. Surprisingly, a third textbook publishing house contacted for the research considered the information regarding writer selection criteria and publishing process falling 'in the area of business secrets' and no details could be received (Edita 2012).

According to the interviewees, after the publisher decides on what books will be published and when, a person responsible for instructional material in the publishing house gathers a working team by contacting suitable persons for the work. There are no specific requirements for qualifications of the team members. Traditionally, however, in public education lower level, the team includes class teachers currently teaching at schools in the respective year or grade level and possibly subject teachers who have strong command of the subject. Occasionally, also an expert who might be a person from one of the universities' teacher education departments would be included (note: this could not be confirmed by university professionals contacted). One textbook usually is written by one to three people and large series of books such as social studies or science may consist of a team of three to six people.

According to the interviewees, the first important work of the team is to agree upon the guidelines, the focus areas, and the pedagogical approach that will be taken. Usually this process takes one year before the actual textbook writing begins. When there are large knowledge content requirements defined for a specific year level in the NCCBE, the textbook writers and editors need to make the decision about the focus areas (what will be included and excluded) based on what they believe will best serve the everyday life and goals defined for each subject in the NCCBE.

The next task of the team is to prepare the first draft of the textbook followed by reflection and first content evaluation. According to the interviewees, no detailed guidelines are given to the evaluators. Reflection and evaluation is conducted by what the interviewees called 'professionals in the field': class teachers analyse the books from a pedagogical perspective and, especially in the higher levels and grades in terms of content evaluation, the work is completed by professionals in the respective textbook area of study. In whole six-year basic education wide book series, statements are often given by up to twenty people. As informed by the interviewees, the possible corrections and amendments will be based on their feedback and suggestions. The final phase, the layout with illustrations takes again one year per year or grade level.

Based on the above information, it can be argued that by discontinuing inspecting textbooks the NBE moved a large part of its responsibility and authority to the publishing houses and teachers. The decision does not only concern the final content and the scope and sequence of subjects taught at schools but also the pedagogical approach and perspectives.

In Finland, in order to facilitate the transfer of the new curriculum into practice representatives of publishing houses were chosen for teams responsible for drafting the latest NCCBE (Heinonen 2005:56). Engaging both sides in dialogue seems like rational decision from the government; textbook development needs to be closely linked to curriculum reform and development. However, it needs to be recognised that by being part of the process, the publishing houses also had a chance not only to learn but also to have an effect on the new NCCBE. While the interests of publishing houses might well be the development of national education, possible

personal and economic interests cannot be overlooked (Heinonen 2005:57). In Finland, as well as in other countries following similar textbook production policy, the decisions made during the process are criticised to be commercially driven and often non-pedagogical (Baqués 2006; Barbre 2012; Crawford & Foster 2006; Heinonen 2005). Moreover, it is relevant to note that in Finland, people writing school books do not have a work contract with the publishing house and they do not receive salary for their work but they will receive compensation afterwards from royalties from sales and possible licences sold.

Teachers involved in textbook reflection and evaluation were not interviewed for this article. This would, however, be an interesting and important aspect to be investigated. In principle in Finland, from the pedagogical point of view teachers can well be considered as professionals. All class teachers in Finland are required to have minimum of a university master's degree in education and large proportion of their studies are devoted to pedagogical issues based on the newest research findings and traditions. However, with regard to professionalism in global education, global education research has revealed that during university studies, global issues have received little attention and majority of teachers and principals reported lacking knowledge, skills, and training in this area (Pudas 2009; Pudas 2012). For example Bednarz (2004) has argued that in United States, when teachers do not have enough knowledge about the discipline to make enlightened judgments the textbook selection decisions are based on 'the flip test', where a teacher flips through the textbook, looking for 'a few familiar' and 'personally important' characteristics. Partially because of the limited evaluation and selection, textbooks are claimed to follow rather than lead educational change (Bednarz 2004).

Analysis of textbooks in use in Finland from global education perspective

Referring to his studies on history textbooks, Thornton (2006:15) argues that textbooks can be used for the three following purposes: as 'repositories of legitimated knowledge'; as 'proxy' of what students might reasonably be expected to learn; or as curriculum materials that are designed to be used in activities 'intended to have educational consequences for one or more students'. Thornton also further suggests that critiques usually fall into the first and second category. This seems to be the case also in Finland.

As all instructional material in Finland needs to be based on the NCCBE, the intended educational consequences for pupils should be found in the respective document. However, at the moment, the document does not explicitly include any goals for national education other than separate specific learning goals for each subject. Instead, the NCCBE states that 'local curricula should further specify values that should be transferred into goals, contents, and school activities' (NBE 2004:14). The document does, nevertheless, to some extent outline the intended educational consequences by defining what basic education is and should do under the 'value-base' and the 'tasks' defined to basic education (NBE 2004:14) that, at least on paper, mutually support the teaching of the concepts related to global education discussed earlier. Basic education is to 'promote communality, responsibility, and respect of individual rights and freedoms'; it is to 'support pupil's own cultural identity

formation and his or her participation in the Finnish society and in a globalising world'. Basic education 'promotes tolerance and intercultural understanding' and 'gives equal readiness for girls and boys with equal rights and responsibilities to act in the society, in the work life, and in the family life'. The tasks of basic education are 'to create new culture'; 'to revitalise ways of thinking and acting'; and 'to develop the pupil's ability to evaluate critically' (NBE 2004:14). Moreover, the NCCBE define, to some extent, how learning is understood. The document has been formulated 'on the basis of a concept of learning as individual and communal process of building knowledge and skills... learning results from pupil's active and purposeful activity... learning depends on the learner's previously constructed knowledge...' (NBE 2004:16).

However, even though the national document obviously promotes constructivism and action as a base for learning, the contents and goals and the criteria defined for assessment for each school subject seem to be in contrast with the approach. In the subject specific criteria, learning is argued to be mainly understood as quantity that is based on memory and memorisation (Vitikka 2010). Mikkilä-Erdmann et al. (1999) suggest using 'post-behaviouristic' instead of constructivism for the learning concepts in the NCCBE. When transferred into school textbooks, post-behaviourism demonstrates as mechanic repetition and control (right or wrong answer) where pupils are rather passive actors (about behaviourism and textbooks see Ahtineva 2000:25). Knowledge is understood as ready-made and objective that needs to be successfully transferred to pupils. This is obviously in contrast with the global education learning concept that assumes that learning and knowledge building occur in a social context. Textbooks that promote learning 'from one another', in 'interaction' and through 'dialogue' (MEC 2007) should promote classroom discussions and activities that encourage participation and interaction and offer comparative or contrastive approaches to the topics covered. Students should play an active part in their learning.

The evaluation studies on textbooks currently in use in Finnish schools support the above arguments: they reveal that the contents of textbooks are very subject oriented without clear overall educational goals and that they offer hardly any pedagogical alternatives for the teachers. For example Väisänen (2005) argues in his study on history textbooks that the practices the textbooks promote are only partially related to the goals defined for national education. Instead, he argues, the practices are actually representing the perception of knowledge and 'teacherhood' found in the textbooks, which allows teachers to use textbooks as if they were a direct 'translation' (kielellistymä) of the national education policy (Väisänen 2005).

The textbooks are also criticised to be very much facts-based (Vitikka 2010; Törnroos 2005) with the texts primarily consisting of long main clauses that are left as long lists of separate, individual pieces of knowledge (Törnroos 2005:35). Moreover, regarding the scope and sequence, the school textbooks are seen to live rather 'independent life' (Vitikka 2009:103) from each other and the contents of textbooks within one subject area are not necessary following any clear sequence (see also Törnroos 2005:225). Several recent textbook analyses have also been made that focus more directly on the areas of global education. For example the comparative analysis of how 'otherness is expressed' in meta-texts (for example maps, cartoons, pictures) in geography textbooks in three different countries

(Bavaria of Germany, Mexico, and Romania) suggest that a new regionalisation is emerging in textbooks (Bagoly-Simó 2012). National identity and 'cultural Other' is not necessarily portrayed only through cultural features anymore but otherness is constructed also through economical, ecological and social aspect (Bagoly-Simó 2012). Another widely discussed topic in 21st century is how minorities are represented in the textbooks. In connection with international textbook analysis Pingel (2010:39) argue that even though minorities are included in textbooks they hardly ever have been treated 'in a detailed and proper way'. This appears to be relevant also in Finnish textbooks.

For example Räsänen (2002:109-111) argues that it is very common only to give out information about different cultures and not focus on understanding and 'ethical aspects'. In her study on Finnish basic education lower level geography textbooks, Tani (2004:16) concludes that in the books, there exist generalisations of foreign people and cultures which can be interpreted 'as stereotypes without any clear factual content'. Also Huovinen (2010) argues that even though since early 2000, the immigration topic was already widely included in textbooks the topic is still treated rather superficially including mainly facts and basic information about such concepts as refugees, immigrants, minority groups, and racism. The biggest danger in the current practice is what Dale and Robertson call (2004:159) a 'sociology of absences' and a 'production of silences': there is a danger that something that is seen as non-existing (or being 'outside epistemological and social monocultures') can actively be produced as non-existent.

Finland's Social and Health Ministry (SHM) has evaluated instructional material from the Equality programme point of view discussed earlier in this article. The University of Helsinki has also conducted a research on how female and male are represented in school textbooks (Tainio & Teräs 2010). In their final report, the SHM concludes that good progress has happened especially on mainstreaming: there has been determined development in decreasing segregation in education sector. Regarding stereotypes in learning material, the SHM reports that it has organised a meeting with textbook publishers and published a guidebook for schoolbook writers in 2010. (SHM 2011:40.) However, Blumberg (2007) argues, an international comparative textbook study has shown that biased sex representations can often be very well hidden and not transparent. Accordingly, Tainio and Teräs (2010) argue that the analysis of year level three, six, and nine mathematics, Finnish language and literature, and student counselling materials revealed that sexual or ethnic minorities are not represented at all in textbooks excluding some random exceptions: these minority groups were left rather as 'Others'.

However, the critiques can hardly be targeted solely to the textbook writers and editors. As discussed, at the moment, the only clear goals that can easily be translated as educational consequences are defined subject wise and the subject specific goals can mostly be measured quantitatively. Similarly to England (Crawford & Foster 2006:102) and United States (Bednartz 2004), it seems that innovation and risk-taking has little place in textbooks in Finland. In the light of the above critique, it is not really surprising that the teachers and the principals participating in the on-going research on global education considered the best practice for global education to be 'taught in regular school subjects when it can easily be integrated' rather than integrated 'in all school subjects' or 'in all school activities' (Pudas 2012).

Furthermore, in the area of global education, the respondents found much easier to focus on knowledge and skills than in offering meaningful action or interaction based activities for the pupils (Pudas 2012).

The above findings suggest that global education issues are not, per se, left out from the Finnish textbooks but they are obviously not considered as important as the subject specific assessment criteria. Furthermore, it seems that there is not only a gap between the intended national education goals and the ways in which these goals are addressed in textbooks but also within the different sections of the NCCBE. When the value base and tasks defined for national education focus rather directly on global education goals, the textbooks are, however, based on subject specific criteria that focus on subject specific knowledge and skills. Bearing the above said in mind, it can easily be understood why teachers face challenges in implementing global education and in fulfilling basic education tasks such as 'promoting tolerance and intercultural understanding'; 'helping pupils discover their cultural identities'; 'revitalising ways of thinking and acting'; and 'developing the pupil's ability to evaluate critically' (NBE 2004).

How could we best ensure that the aspects of human rights, equality, peace, media, intercultural understanding, development and equity, and sustainable development will not be overlooked and treated fairly in the textbooks? Who can be considered as professionals in the textbook production process from global education point of view?

Developing textbooks from global education perspective

As a principle, textbooks are usually considered to be written in a way that writers own perspectives are not part of the text and the facts and statistics included are presented as neutral (Mikkilä-Erdmann et al. 1999:436–437). However, as discussed above, the production of textbooks is far from a neutral process.

There is no doubt that people involved in the textbook production and selection process have similar goals in mind that can also be found in the national global education programme: to prepare youth with knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for them to comfortably function in the current and future local and global world. Even though in Finland, the national government does not directly monitor or supervise textbook production it needs to be, however, recognised that the NCCBE is part of the nation's general policies and a political document. Textbooks, as Crawford & Foster (2006:100) put it, are 'powerfully illustrating the political economy of manufacturing legitimate curriculum knowledge'. Similarly, as discussed above, it should be taken into consideration that the textbooks are commercial products through which the publisher is trying to achieve as good as possible economic results. Based on the discussion above, it seems that also in Finland, the current textbooks do not support global education teaching and at times, they seem to even work against global education principles and goals. Some reasons for the current criticised perspective in textbooks can be found in the current situation: the separate subject contents are seen excessively dominating the textbooks and consequently, teaching at schools (Vitikka 2010; Heinonen 2005). Although the NCCBE at the moment states that 'a teacher chooses the teaching methods' (NBE 2004:19), the criteria for assessment is argued to strongly guide teaching not only in terms of

content but also in terms of teaching methods that restricts teachers' pedagogical freedom (Vitikka 2010; Heinonen 2005:36). The previous notion that the pedagogical expertise of the teachers involved in textbook writing and evaluation does not translate in the textbooks finds connection here: the suggested 'high degree of autonomy in pedagogical and curricular practices' in Finnish schools (Välimäki 2002:44) can be seen as illusory as the freedom of choice regarding the textbooks (see also Syrjäläinen 2002:61). Similarly, the argument that 'the way a teacher uses textbook shows his or her own understanding of knowledge and learning' (Heinonen 2005) becomes debatable.

From a global education perspective, the notion that the subject content and related quantitative assessment criteria define how education is organised and how learning is evaluated becomes even irrational. Skills and knowledge gained through memorisation are not the goals of global education but merely tools to achieve them (see Pudas 2012). Similarly, the facts-based texts can hardly offer comparative or contrastive approaches to topics. From global education point of view, well-designed textbooks should allow and support interactive curriculum enactment by teachers, students, and textbooks. Therefore, rather than teaching facts, the focus should be on 'the causal and temporal relationships' between the facts (see Karvonen 1995, quoted in Väisänen 2005:8) that would allow and support students to form personal opinions, to study phenomena in particular context from national, international, and global perspective. From a global education point of view, arguments in relation to teachers' control on the textbook selection process such as 'the only role for innovation is when teachers are ready to welcome such changes' (Bednarz's 2004) needs to be interpreted in the context. In addition to the lack of appropriate training, the global education research findings also reveal that in Finland, there exist several schools where none of the students have an immigrant background or belong to any of the ethnic minority groups and thus, a number of teachers have had no contacts with immigrant or ethnic minority pupils. This was also recognised as a real hindrance to teaching global education. Mainly due to the above, appropriate resources, especially textbooks, were considered vital by the respondents if global education is to become part of school's everyday practice as suggested by the MEC (Pudas 2012).

With regard to pedagogical discussion, a special committee set by the MEC for the renewal of basic education has proposed that teaching methods should be given more emphasis in lieu of subject content, which would bring the learning process into the core of teaching (MEC 2010:51). Furthermore, the committee suggests that teaching methods should be based on experiments and action that are connected to pupils' everyday life. One other concern for the special committee members is the identity development that currently is associated to be the responsibility of the home. However, due to the current cultural changes in the society caused by growing immigration and cultural flows via electronic devices that have an effect on pupils' identity formation and on their world views, the committee suggests the core task of the future pedagogy to be in individualisation, socialisation, and 'bildung' (sivistäminen). (MEC 2010:51.)

Bringing subject matter into the local level and connecting them with pupils' everyday lives was also considered significant by the respondents of the global education research. All activities described as 'successful' were related to actions in which the

pupils actively took part (Pudas 2012). Likewise, research conducted in England has shown that the schools that were most successful in fully implementing the children's rights education were those that connected their activities with pupils' daily lives and realities (Covell, Howe, and McNeil 2010). Also the research into pupils' social concerns conducted in primary school in Scotland revealed that those pupils who actively participated in investigating their immediate environment were genuinely concerned about their community and although focusing on local issues, they also demonstrated a very strong ability to establish links between these issues and more global concerns about sustainability (Deuchar 2008).

For example Vitikka (2009) has suggested similar fundamental change to be made in the national curriculum than the MEC that she calls 'a process curriculum'. It is characterised by wide general goals with the focus on understanding. In the new model, the contents are not based on current subject specific goals but they are made to support the actual learning processes. The process curriculum does not restrict teachers but includes pedagogical guidance; it is not based on ready-made knowledge and pedagogy but values unpredicted answers and different learning processes and encourages to and supports pupils in identity building; the evaluation and assessment is based on descriptions rather than on grades when teachers are the main evaluators (Vitikka 2009:268).

Vitikka's suggestion shifts the focus from the current pedagogical perspective closer to the humanistic point of view that highlights people's personal values and goals that guide them in searching for meanings for different phenomena around them (for humanistic view, see Ahtineva 2000:28). The above model would naturally better allow global education guidelines to become part of the general goals and thus, good potential also for global education perspective to be portrayed in textbooks. The shift would, naturally, also dramatically affect current textbook production and a writing process that is currently heavily dependent on subject content and goals. The suggestion is also very interesting when investigated in the light of national education, portraying the prevailing political context and the society's understanding of knowledge discussed earlier. The model would challenge basic education to genuinely work towards its much neglected task of 'revitalising the way of thinking', 'creating new culture', and 'evaluating critically' (NBE 2004). The model used in France supports Vitikka's suggestion. In basic education lower level in France, the curriculum already is only a referent providing rather loose guidelines and it is not essential for French teachers to 'follow and complete the curriculum' but they enjoy much pedagogical and didactic freedom (Baqués 2006:107). Correspondingly, for example, history textbooks emphasise, instead of specific subject content, the importance of developing specific competences (*ibid.*).

Textbooks and other instructional material are not to restrict teachers but to support their work, to encourage them to try out new teaching methods, to encourage and challenge them to think out of the box. Action research as suggested by the UNESCO (2005:23) where users of textbooks are invited and encouraged to identify problems, discuss options, and make constructive recommendations to authors, editors, and publishers has also been used in Finland. However, evaluations have rather concentrated on motivational and age-level appropriateness and comprehensiveness than for example on evaluation of perspectives or legitimate knowledge represented by textbooks. In recent research projects, when interviewed

about 'the teachers' perception of good education material' the following recommendations have been made: Education material in general should be interesting, motivating, and concrete enough; Teachers do not wish textbooks that are based on the principle of one topic-one lesson or one opening-one topic (Heinonen 2005:126-133) but they wish more freedom in planning their lessons. While the above without doubt are important issues to be taken into account when developing textbooks and would, at least to some extent, possibly answer the question of pedagogical freedom, the recommendations still overlook the other main problem: the perspective and knowledge.

However, even though information and communication technology and electronic media are bringing new possibilities for learning, there are no signs that textbooks will not remain important resources in teaching especially in basic education. Even though global education material is abundant and publicly available on the internet (also in Finnish), it is currently not widely used in schools and classrooms (Pudas 2012; MEC 2011: 51-52). The respondents in global education research reported this being mainly due to the lack of adequate technology, especially concerning the quantity and access to the school computers and to the internet (Pudas 2012).

However, even though the goals and core content in the current NCCBE are defined subject wise or subject group wise, the document gives the following option to the schools when formulating their school specific curriculum: teaching can be divided into separate subjects or it can be based on defined integration and cross-curricular themes that strive to guide to 'examine phenomena from different scientific perspectives' and 'building entities and highlighting common pedagogical and educational goals' (NBE 2004:38). If the above was implemented it would, without doubt, be much easier for a teacher to teach the wide concepts related to GE 2012 Programme such as 'understanding globalising economy'; 'social and cultural consequences of globalisation'; 'individual and communal global responsibility'; or 'the ethics of a world citizen' (Ministry of Education 2007:13). Nevertheless, despite the above option the publishing houses have continued to design school textbooks subject wise and the schools and teachers have continued to draft their curricula accordingly.

For the betterment of the situation, some prerequisites should be expected from people involved in the textbook production process. Especially from a global education perspective, it is not enough only to ensure that the contents chosen will appropriately cover the topic and to remove or correct factual mistakes and stereotypical gender images. There are also other important issues to be taken into account directly associated with long term attitude and value creation. Pedagogical aspects and legitimate knowledge (or the absence and silences discussed earlier in this article) the textbooks represent should not be overlooked.

Recommendations for textbook evaluation and reflection

Teaching material is usually considered as a secondary issue when developing education (Heinonen 2005:61). This should not be the case. After all, as discussed, the textbooks guide instruction more than the government defined national curriculum in the field. Therefore, the textbook itself, its form and use should be part of an analysis and evaluation of national education (see Thornton 2006: 16). People

involved in the process, however, cannot be expected to make refined decisions unless they are well aware of the context where the textbooks are published. This includes at least detailed and accurate information regarding the central position the textbooks hold in education and the critiques against the deficiency areas of the existing textbooks.

From practical point of view, the main problems in Finland seem to be that the textbooks contain factual mistakes; they are too facts-based without clear sequencing from grade level to grade level; they lack clear overall educational goals; and they offer hardly any pedagogical alternatives for the teachers. From global education point of view, the problem is the quality of the textbooks.

As discussed above, from a global education point of view, the main arguments from academics against textbooks have been targeted to their lack of pedagogical freedom (subject content and assessment oriented; concentration on quantifiable knowledge and skills) and to the perspective they represent (Us as opposed to the cultural Other; stereotyping; sociology of absences). Especially the latter has been argued to lead to the growing negative attitudes of Finnish youth's towards minority groups as well as to their social inactiveness, which are also the important areas of the national GE 2012 Programme. Therefore, if the intention is to take GE guidelines into consideration in national education policy documents, as requested by the MEC, it should be ensured that the publishing process also includes experts in global education. At the moment, as discussed above, one of the main reasons the teachers asked for better teaching material (especially textbooks) is because they feel they have not enough knowledge, skills, and training in the area.

Hence, for the evaluation of textbooks from the global education perspective, in order to avoid mere flip-tests discussed above and ready-made knowledge and to extend pedagogical freedom, I suggest two important aspects to be taken into careful consideration. In order to more effectively identify the perspective with the notion of legitimate knowledge, I wish to name the aspects as follows: Pedagogy and Knowledge. In Table 1 below, specific criteria are suggested in the form of guiding questions for evaluators together with global education perspectives addressed in the current education documents directly related to global education: the NCCBE (NBE 2004), the GE 2012 Programme (Ministry of Education 2007), and the SHM's Equality report (SHM 2011).

	Aspect	Criteria	Global education perspective
1	Pedagogy	<p>Does the book have clear pedagogical and educational goals?</p> <p>Are the pedagogical instructions varied so that they don't restrict teacher's pedagogical freedom?</p> <p>Does the book promote participation and interaction?</p> <p>Is the content concrete and connected with pupils' daily lives and realities?</p> <p>Are the scope and sequence of subject matter appropriate to the context?</p> <p>Does the book support and guide pupils' thinking towards proper understanding of the concepts?</p> <p>Does the book promote qualitative alternatives for evaluation and assessment?</p>	<p>Revitalise ways of thinking and acting (NBE)</p> <p>Learn from one another in interaction and through dialogue (GE)</p> <p>Learning results from the pupil's active and purposeful activity (NBE)</p> <p>Learning as an individual and communal process of building knowledge and skills (NBE)</p> <p>Learning as situational, interactive cooperation and participation in social activity (NBE)</p> <p>Promote communality, responsibility, and respect of individual rights and freedoms (NBE)</p> <p>Support pupil's participation in the Finnish society (NBE)</p> <p>Examine phenomena from different scientific perspectives and build entities (NBE)</p>

2	Knowledge	<p>Is the content based on scientific findings?</p> <p>Is the book free of factual mistakes or errors?</p> <p>Are the facts clearly defined from interpretations and opinions?</p> <p>Are the scope and sequence accurate and appropriate account of the core content of the topic?</p> <p>Does the book offer a comparative or contrastive approach to the topics?</p> <p>Does the book make transparent national, ideological, religious, and philosophical assumptions?</p> <p>Is the book free of stereotypical images and gender roles?</p> <p>Are all national and local minority groups represented in the book?</p> <p>Are all peoples and cultures presented fairly within their own context?</p> <p>Does the book allow and support forming personal opinion?</p> <p>Does the book offer a balance and appreciate the national, international, and global perspectives?</p>	<p>Develop the pupil's ability to evaluate critically (NBE)</p> <p>Critical and media-critical citizen (GE)</p> <p>Examine phenomena from different scientific perspectives and build entities (NBE)</p> <p>Promote tolerance and intercultural understanding (GE)</p> <p>Avoid stereotypical images and gender roles (MEC 2010)</p> <p>Support pupil's own cultural identity formation (NBE)</p> <p>Support pupil's participation in the Finnish society and in a globalising world (NBE)</p> <p>Understand social and cultural consequences of globalisation (GE)</p> <p>Promote individual and communal global responsibility (GE)</p> <p>Promote the ethics of a world citizen (GE)</p> <p>Understand globalising economy (GE)</p>
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Table 1 Aspects taken account when evaluating textbooks from global perspective.

Conclusion

This article discussed the importance of the textbooks in teaching and their potentiality to support implementation of global education in basic education (first nine years of education). Global education was defined according to the MEC's GE 2012 Programme when it is considered to comprise such areas as human rights education, equality education, peace education, media education, intercultural understanding, questions relating to development and equity, and education for sustainable development.

In Finland, even though the NBE provides a national core curriculum, the final curriculum drafting including goals, contents, and school activities has been returned back to the schools and teachers through decentralisation. However, based on the research findings presented in this article, it is not the NCCBE or the school specific curricula but the textbooks that guide teaching in the grass-root level. Even though all curricular material in Finland needs to be based on the NCCBE, the only clear guidelines are defined in the form of subject wise goals and assessment criteria in the document. These goals and criteria have been used as guidelines by people involved in the textbook production process. Based on the discussion in this article, it seems that the concern of the MEC is very relevant: textbook oriented teaching has resulted in a focus on studying separate subject contents instead of concentrating on skills development, understanding, and self-reflection on the actual learning process. The textbooks have also received much criticism from academics for the factual mistakes, perspective, and pedagogy they represent.

Even though Finnish pupils have scored very high in international studies with regard to their knowledge and skills their attitudes, however, reveal a different situation. The attitudes of the same age cohort towards the rights of ethnic groups and immigrants have been found to be clearly more negative than the international average and their social activeness has been associated to those living on the margin of society. The reasons behind the negative attitudes have been suggested to be found in the textbooks. Not surprisingly, as discussed in the article, the textbooks have not been found useful in teaching global education.

The SHM has published a guidebook on evaluation of the gender equality issues in 2008, which is a good start and appropriately follows the government equality policies. However, there is a need for a more detailed mechanism to review and control the learning materials used in classrooms also with regard to other aspects. As a summary, this article presented specific criteria for the textbook evaluation with regard to the pedagogy and the concept of knowledge.

As discussed in the article, there are no indications that the importance of the textbooks would be diminishing in the near future in Finland. By principle as well as by current education act, national education is a responsibility of the government. The government accepts the overall responsibility for the goals and contents, distribution of lesson hours, and evaluation of basic education. When the aim of the MEC is 'to include the global education perspective in major education, research, cultural, sport and youth policy lines and in social policy lines' in Finland (Ministry of Education 2007:11), the government also needs to accept the responsibility for the education materials that cannot be separated from the previous. The main education

material should strongly be perceived as public service (Askerud 1997; Heinonen 2005).

Even though this article focused on textbooks it acknowledges that developing education material only will not bring any real changes (Heinonen 2005: 63). Textbooks cannot be seen as the only source for attitude formation – nor is the school the only locus of learning. The pupils' attitudes are constantly changing and developing in accordance with the information which they receive from around them; even 'from Donald Duck' as one of the conference paper of Council of Europe (1995:27) reminds us. However, as discussed, national basic education is the major socialising institution in Finland and textbooks largely guide the teaching at schools today. Therefore, the government needs to consider the textbooks production process as an integral part of the national education development process. Based on the argumentation presented in this article, I believe the textbooks have great potential to achieve one of the national targets of the MEC: 'strengthen the realisation of global education in practice' at schools (Ministry of education 2007:13).

If the intention is to shift the educational focus from subject specific fact contents and memorisation into teaching methods, learning process, and understanding, as suggested by the MEC, the real change can only happen when the subject specific goals, assessment criteria and the value-base and tasks defined for basic education will be revised and made transparent. At the moment, as discussed in the article, the pedagogy and knowledge the previous represent are not in accordance. From the global education point of view, it is not enough to evaluate whether the document has been successfully translated into textbooks but whether the NCCBE itself acknowledges and promotes global education perspectives and goals.

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