

Sari Räisänen

CHANGING LITERACY PRACTICES

A BECOMING OF A NEW TEACHER AGENCY

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CHANGING LITERACY PRACTICES

A becoming of a new teacher agency

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Abstract

The general aim of this research was to explicate what kind of a process ‘doing things differently’ in the context of literacy practices is from the teacher agency perspective. The research was based on development work on literacy practices, which I as a teacher-researcher conducted in a Finnish first grade classroom during one school year. I based the new literacy practices on the concepts of a broad conception of text and the communicative view of language presented in the Finnish national core curriculum 2004. The new practices mirrored the affordances of ‘new literacies’ involving use of technology, diversified texts and collaborative learning. They deviated from the traditional Finnish ones, which are based on the use of text- and workbooks and teacher-directed interaction, and therefore their implementation brought forth a change process. The meaning was not only to challenge the prevailing practices content and mode wise, but also to transform the social structures of the classroom community towards being more pupil-centred.

It became evident that my agency involved the change in organising the possibilities for new kinds ways of working. The change also influenced my subjective level of being a teacher. The act of ‘doing things differently’ became a reflective learning process for me involving a struggle against traditional practices. The social structures changed in connection with literacy practices towards increased pupil participation and emancipation. The teacher agency transformed from instructor to guide, offering the pupils opportunities for learning. The findings showed that the change in the literacy practices was based on the choices I as a teacher made during the process, creating in this way a style for it. The style was characterized by relativity and ‘becoming’, as well as by the need for both professional and personal support.

The experiences of these kinds of change processes are currently topical in Finland. This is especially because there is a new curriculum coming out in 2016 and the principles and contents in it will emphasize the use of new technologies and their benefits towards practices and collaborative learning in even more extensive scale than the current one. Educators need knowledge of what kind of process the implementation of these principles and contents will be and what kinds of professional learning it involves.

Keywords: literacy practices, personal and professional learning, teacher agency, transformation

Räisänen, Sari, Tekstitaitojen käytänteitä muuttamassa. Kohti uudenlaista opettajan toimijuutta

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Tiivistelmä

Tämän väitöstutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli tarkentaa tekstitaitojen käytänteiden muutosprosessi opettajan toimijuuden näkökulmasta. Tutkimus perustuu kehittämistyölle, jonka minä opettajatutkijan roolissa toteutin suomalaisella ensiluokalla lukuvuoden ajan. Tekstitaitojen käytänteiden kehittämistyö perustui Suomen perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteiden 2004 laajaan tekstikäsitteeseen ja yhteisölliseen näkemykseen kielestä. Tältä perustalta luodut käytänteet sisälsivät monilukutaidollisia ulottuvuuksia rakentuessaan erilaisten tekstien ympärille ja sisältäessään teknologian käyttöä ja yhteistoiminnallisia työskentelytapoja. Nämä käytänteet poikkesivat perinteisistä suomalaisista käytännöistä, jotka enimmäkseen perustuvat opettajajohtoiseen työ- ja oppikirjojen käyttöön. Tarkoituksena oli siis sekä muuttaa tekstitaitojen käytänteiden sisältöä ja välineitä, että myös vaikuttaa luokkahuoneyhteisön sosiaalisiin rakenteisiin oppilaskeksisyyttä lisäämällä.

Tutkimusprosessin aikana kävi selväksi, että toimijuuteni oli tärkeä osa työskentelytapojen mahdollisuuksien järjestelyissä, mutta muutos vaikutti myös subjektiiviseen käsitykseeni itsestäni opettajana. Muutostyöstä tuli minulle reflektiivinen oppimisprosessi, jossa pyrin pois perinteisistä käytännöistä. Prosessin aikana luokkayhteisön sosiaaliset rakenteet muuttuivat tekstitaitojen käytänteiden mukana kohti kasvavaa oppilaiden osallisuutta ja emansipatorista vuorovaikutusta. Opettajan toimijuus muuttui ohjaavaksi, tarjoten oppilaille mahdollisuuksia oppimiseensa. Tulokset antavat ymmärtää, että muutos muotoutui prosessin aikana tekemistäni valinnoista, jotka loivat muutokselle omaleimaisen toteutuksen. Tätä omaleimaista toteutusta karakterisoi monitasoisesti suhteellisuus ja 'joksikin tuleminen' käsite sekä opettajan ammatillisen ja henkilökohtaisen tuen tarve muutostyössä.

Kokemukset tekstitaitojen käytänteiden muutosprosessista ovat tällä hetkellä erittäin ajankohtaisia Suomessa, sillä uusi opetussuunnitelma tullessaan voimaan 2016 painottaa monilukutaitoa. Kasvatuksen ja koulutuksen ammattilaiset tarvitsevat tietoa siitä, millainen prosessi uusin käytänteiden toteuttaminen on luokkahuoneyhteisön tasolla ja millaista ammatillista oppimisen prosessi opettajalta vaatii.

Asiasanat: ammatillinen ja henkilökohtainen oppiminen, muutos, opettajan toimijuus, tekstitaitokäytänteet

To Jarko, Lulu and Pauli

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Tornio, May 27, 2015

Sari Räisänen

List of original publications

This thesis is based on the following publications, which are referred throughout the text by their Roman numerals:

- I Räisänen S, Korkeamäki R-L & Dreher MJ (2015) Changing literacy practices according to the Finnish core curriculum. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*. Published online 12 Jan 2015. URI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1350293X.2014.996421>.
- II Räisänen S & Korkeamäki R-L (2015) Implementing the Finnish literacy curriculum in a first-grade classroom. *Classroom Discourse*. Published online 23 Apr 2015. URI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19463014.2015.1036900>.
- III Räisänen S (2015) Teacher emotions and change in literacy learning. Insights to literacy learning in the contemporary world through self-reflection of teacher emotions. *Reflective Practice: International and Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, 16 (2): 155–170. URI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2014.982527>.
- IV Räisänen S, Korkeamäki R-L & Dreher MJ (2015) A teacher's inner voice mediated by a video observation and discussion in the context of change in literacy practices. In: Ortlieb E, McVee MB & Shanahan LE (eds) *Video reflection in literacy teacher education and development: Lessons from research and practice*. *Literacy Research, Practice and Evaluation* vol 5. Bingley, Emerald Group: 173–190. URI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/S2048-045820150000005015>.

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1 Introduction

The affordances (Gibson 1977) of new technologies to learning have recently been the focus of interest in many national and international literacy studies (e.g. Marsh 2004, 2007, Merchant 2005, 2008, 2012, Palmgren-Neuvonen & Korkeamäki 2014). Literacy learning today is a lot more than merely reading and writing (Hobbs 2008: 1, Merchant 2008: 751–752). It is seen as a meaning-making social practice within cultural and institutional frames (Barton & Hamilton 2000, Selander & Kress 2010, Street 1995). Often the new forms of literacy are referred to as new literacies (Leu *et al.* 2004). Lankshear and Knobel (2012) pointed out, that new literacies involve both ‘new technical stuff’ and ‘new ethos stuff’. Both these types of ‘stuff’ should be recognised together in one frame, instead of introducing new technologies in classrooms without understanding their influence on the cultural context of formal education. Thus, ‘the ethos stuff’ – appreciating the values of participation, as well as engagement, sharing, and distributed expertise in education contexts and social structures – should be the dimension, which defines literacy practices as ‘new’. (Lankshear & Knobel 2012).

The way teachers and their pupils interact in classrooms influences literacy practices and the thoughts about literacy (Street 2012). New literacies offer a new space for learning, in which pupils can feel empowered and build their identities (e.g. Alvermann & Heron 2001, Kist 2005, Wohlwend 2011). Indeed, new literacies afford social and cultural changes in social actions, skills and knowledge, and therefore should influence the development of learning opportunities and practices for pupils in schools (Kress 2003, Marsh 2007, Selander & Kress 2010, see also Hakkarainen *et al.* 2004, New London Group 1996). In order to offer meaningful learning experiences, schools have to strive for change and to come closer to the literacy practices of the ‘outside world’ (Kist 2010: 6). That is, not only should educators pay attention to the modes and contents of literacy, but also the structures of education in creating new spaces for learning.

In fact, there are two principles in the Finnish curriculum (National Board of Education 2004) which mirror the affordances of literacy learning as a social practice and which offer frames for the required development towards the ‘new’. First, a community-oriented view of language is based on the understanding of an individual’s learning from a socio-cultural learning perspective as proposed by Vygotsky (1978) and hereby also as social practice. It holds that instruction should be built on various interaction situations such as one-on-one, small-group and whole class activities, which offer pupils opportunities to use and to develop their

cultural knowledge in meaningful contexts. The objective is that pupils become active communicators, who get involved in the culture and participate and have influence in society. Second, the broad conception of text specifies the content for the community-oriented view in classrooms. It is compatible with new literacies (Leu *et al.* 2004) and includes imaginative, factual, verbal, figurative, vocal, graphic, digital, printed, spoken and written texts, as well as combinations of these, in its concept. The texts should be connected through diversified literacy practices – including artistic subjects, drama, narrative, and play – to pupils’ lives and experiences, supporting pupils’ personal learning and interaction between the pupils.

However, despite these two topical aspects presented in the curriculum (National Board of Education 2004), literacy learning in Finnish schools is still mainly based on teacher-directed practices, such as reading rehearsals and exercises in schoolbooks (Huisman 2006, Korkeamäki & Dreher 2011). The literacy practices in the first grade, for instance, are based mainly on the use of ABC books called Aapinen, which apply the phonics approach to teaching and learning the alphabetic code by using teacher-directed paper-and-pencil activities instead of diversified, communicative practices. These activities are understood as old (Kalantzis *et al.* 2010) or traditional literacies. The pupils do not have opportunities to discuss their opinions, thoughts or to solve problems collaboratively (Korkeamäki & Dreher 2011: 29). Overall, Finnish school is relatively conservative (Simola 2005). This makes the implementation of new practices, which differ from the traditional culture hard to deploy (Luukkainen 2004). The problems in renewing literacy practices are not only national though. According to Merchant (2008), using technology in early literacy learning is still uncommon. Even if children have access to computers, the meaningful use of the technologies is limited and is based on old literacy practices such as letter recognition, enhancing reading fluency or reading electronic books (Wohlwend 2009: 118).

It seems that fitting the out-of-school practices into the traditional school environment and creating new kinds of meaningful social spaces for learning and identity building are problematic (Kist 2005: 139–140). Thus, changing current practices towards ‘new literacies’ requires investment in the professional learning of teachers (Merchant 2010). In Finland, teachers have these opportunities to learn professionally. Teachers are seen as reflective professionals, who connect theory and practice and learn in their own work (Kansanen 2007, Maaranen 2009). Teacher education has a research-based orientation, which offers teachers the knowledge and skills they need, for example, for studying, developing, justifying

and solving pedagogical questions (Jyrhämä & Maaranen 2012, Kansanen 2007, Krokfors *et al.* 2011). Indeed, teachers in Finland have the tools, skills and curricular framework, which support the change of the practices. The experiences of these kinds of professional learning processes are currently topical in Finland. This is especially because there is a new curriculum coming out in 2016 and the principles and contents in it will emphasize the use of new technologies and their benefits towards practices and collaborative learning (National Board of Education 2014). Teachers need to know what kind of process the implementation of these principles and contents will be and what kinds of professional learning it involves.

The research presented in this thesis dissertation offers an example of a professional learning experience when I as a teacher-researcher aimed to make changes to and develop the literacy practices in a Finnish first grade classroom community. I based the new literacy practices on the concepts of a broad conception of text and the communicative view of language presented in the Finnish curriculum (National Board of Education 2004) with the socio-cultural view on learning (Vygotsky 1978). The aim was to transform the traditional literacy practices emphasizing the use of text- and workbooks and teacher-directed learning towards new ones involving practices with diversified texts and collaborative learning. The meaning was thus not only to challenge the prevailing practices content or mode wise, but also concerning the social structures of the classroom. The social structures were the target of this research. By aiming for new practices I challenged myself by ‘doing things differently’, which holds assumptions for professional transformation in the change of the practices as well as for the personal, subjective transformation in being a teacher (*e.g.* Mezirow 2009). The research presented in this thesis dissertation unravels the change process in the literacy practices through studying and reflecting on my agency as a teacher in the classroom community.

The thesis consists of two parts. The first part comprises the introduction (including a description of my motives and of the arrangements in the classroom community as well as the aim of the research), the theoretical part, the research process, the main findings with discussion, and suggestions for the future literacy education. The second part consists of the four articles (I–IV), which report the results that the first part of this doctoral thesis is based on.

1.1 A description of my motives and of the arrangements for learning and teaching literacy in the classroom community

My interest in questioning the literacy practices in schools has developed during the years I have been working as a teacher (since 1999), or maybe even during the time I was myself a pupil. I remember being a first grade pupil and not understanding why I was supposed to read meaningless syllables aloud. While working as a teacher, I found that the teacher-directed interaction in classrooms (teacher talking, pupils listening) and the domination of book-based practices seemed to be incompatible with the children. The ways things were done at school did not meet the children's out-of-school practices and they did not embrace the curriculum principles or the Finnish teachers' research-based education. This discontent motivated me to take action through research and to aim at achieving changes in literacy practices. I enhanced my understanding of the practices I was aiming for by reading about new literacies, literacy learning and teaching, as well as collaborative practices. I also engaged in conversations with my doctoral thesis supervisor about the theoretical and practical issues concerning the new practices I could and would implement.

The development work of the literacy practices took place in a first grade classroom with 18 pupils (10 boys and eight girls) during one school year (from the middle of August until the end of May). All the pupils turned seven years of age during the year they started the first grade, and all of them had been in the same preschool classroom before the first grade. The preschool was located in the same building as the school, so the pupils and I had been able to get acquainted during their preschool year on different occasions. Before the school year began, I met with parents to explain why and how I was planning to make changes to the traditional first grade learning practices. The parents also had the opportunity to ask questions and they were asked to answer a survey about their child's interests and skills.

Because literacy is not only socially but also materially situated (Pahl & Rowsell 2010), I made preparations for the material environment. The parents participated in these arrangements. The materials were essential in establishing the environment for collaborative ways of working. Traditionally in Finnish classrooms, the teacher's desk is placed in the front of the classroom and the pupils' desks are arranged in rows facing it, leaving only a little space for pair- and group work or other collaborative activities (Kuuskorpi 2012). For example, according to Mercer and Littleton (2007) computer-based activities are seen as an important factor

in fostering collaboration and thus acquiring computers was essential for the classroom arrangements. With the parents' help I obtained five computers for the pupils' use (in addition to the one I had there already), computer desks, a sofa and some chests of drawers to split the classroom into small working areas. The pupils' desks in the classroom were organised into five groups. The local library was helpful in lending children's literature for the classroom library for the whole school year. I decided to reject the traditional ABC book to avoid the teacher-directed interaction, as well as the domination of book-based practices, which characterize the traditional literacy practices of the first grade curriculum. The books in the classroom library, as well as the texts produced in the classroom community worked instead as reading material. I planned the contents of the lessons according to the topics introduced in the curriculum (National Board of Education 2004) and integrated several school subjects (arts and crafts/religion/science) whenever it was meaningful and appropriate.

At the start of the school year concerning learning the alphabetic code, the practices were derived from Trageton's (2005/2007) model in Norway. According to this model, children start learning the code by writing, for example, letter strings with computers. During this form of practice, the pupils usually worked in pairs, supporting each other's learning of sound/letter correspondence, using invented spelling (Articles I–II, Clay 1991, Korkeamäki 1996, Sulzby & Teale 1991) and producing meaningful texts. As the school year proceeded, writing with computers followed the same procedure except that not all the pupils needed to sound out the letters anymore. In the classroom library, the pupils could choose their own texts and whether to read them with their peers or alone according to their own skills. They could just browse the pages, view the illustrations, or read by using memorisation or by making up 'non-sense' (for this kind of reading-like behaviour see Korkeamäki 1996, Sulzby & Teale 1991) or by sounding out letters and words. Shared stories were also an important part of the reading practice. That is, both reading and writing had the character of emergent literacy practices (Articles I–II, Clay 1991, Sulzby & Teale 1991). During the school year, the pupils were offered opportunities for playing and for drama activities. Furthermore, several larger projects concerning different topics were completed – for example, the pupils designed board games, made an animation and created an imaginary bakery blog site ¹. In the projects, the pupils also used other technological devices than computers alone, such as digital cameras and video cameras. However, it must be

¹ The literacy practices during the school year are listed in the Appendix 2 in the Article I.

noted that the development work did not focus only on the increasing use of technologies, but on diversified texts (also with traditional technologies such as pens, papers, *etc.*) and their affordances to structures of the classroom community in creating new spaces for processes of learning and teaching.

I was constantly looking at the literacy practices of the past (the traditional learning environment) and comparing them to the moment and to their direction in the future. I observed the use of cultural tools in the learning environment considering, for example, the proportion of handwriting to digital writing. The pupils' individual differences guided this reflective circumferencing (Scollon & Scollon 2004) as I constantly paid attention to their skills, interests, habits and interaction. I planned literacy practices according to these observations. My actions in guiding the pupils to learn using their own skills and in collaboration with their peers were based on Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD): a child can do a task which locates in the nearest zone of development first with others and later on his own. I followed the pupils' learning and organized pairs so that the pupils could both tutor their peers and become tutored by their peers. I paid attention to ensure that each pupil had the chance to learn at his/her own pace and with his/her own skills. However, 'skill' was understood to have a broader meaning as it originally was meant to. Indeed, researchers have claimed that an expanded perspective of ZPD is needed in the area of new literacies (McClay & Mackey 2009: 116). By 'skill' I referred, in addition to the cognitive skills, to the pupils' contexts for learning. This included their experiences and assumptions, as well as the expectations of literacies they had gained before school and gained constantly in their home environment, and which were embedded in the social relations the pupils were involved in with each other. I also paid attention if some pupils needed a specific kind of partner in order to concentrate or to interact.

1.2 The aim of the research

At first, the idea of the research was to follow the pupils' actions in the classroom community. However, during the research process I realised that the literacy practices and the ways of working in the classroom were connected to my agency as a teacher. Interestingly, the aim of changing literacy practices in the classroom towards being more pupil-centred ones, led me into carrying out more teacher-centred research. Indeed, such a kind of teacher-agency perspective is essential in clarifying the change, because educational changes, as well as the values the pupils work with depend very much on the teachers' actions (Fullan 2007, Grenfell 1998).

I was ‘forced’ to shift the perspective. Furthermore, I noticed that my agency did not involve only a change in establishing the new practices, but also influenced my subjective level of learning (see also Lanas & Kiilakoski 2013, Mezirow 2009). The ‘doing things differently’ became a reflective learning process for me, concerning not only my agency in the transformation of the social structures in the classroom community, but also the transformation in being a teacher in this context.

Therefore, the general aim of this research is *to explicate the process of ‘doing things differently’ in the context of literacy practices*. The perspective on the process is in the teacher agency. The research is based on four studies in articles I–IV, which answer the following research question:

What kinds of elements were embedded in the change process of literacy practices in the classroom community (I, II) and in being a teacher (III, IV)?

The theoretical, methodological and pedagogical aims are unified and connected to the general aim (see Chapter 2): the theoretical concepts used also work in practice and as lenses for the analysis and interpretation. The studies in the four articles I–IV also had their own specific aims and research questions, which are presented in connection with each article in the second part of this thesis.

2 Thinking companions building up the research

This thesis presents a transformation process from the prevailing culturally expected literacy practices towards ones, which are new and not fixed. This process is studied from a poststructuralist perspective involving an understanding that theory *is* practice: theories emerge in practices and cannot stand without them (see Williams 2005). In this research, theory and practice are connected in the understanding of literacy as a social practice, in following how the implementation of the new practices transforms the social actions and structures of a classroom community, and in the teacher's being in this transformation. The theoretical concepts, which were used in this research process, also build the research approach, revealing new insights, understandings, perspectives and arguments. The concepts connect the subjective teacher experience with the objective structure of learning and teaching literacy (see for relation of structure and agency in poststructuralist research see *e.g.* Collinson 2006).

The theoretical concepts chosen by the researcher are in poststructuralist research sorts of 'thinking companions', which constitute one another in never-ending processes (see Jackson & Mazzei 2012). In the context of this research, I have discussed, and still discuss, with my thinking companions both during the different phases of and throughout the research. Each of the companions offers a new perspective on the change process. It must be noted however, that I do not aim here to present any theoretical concept as a 'true' interpretation; I interpret the concepts in the context of the research during its different phases. Indeed, instead of building theoretical consistency – the concepts are not ontologically or epistemologically cohesive – my thinking companions form a selection of tools, which complement each other and enhance understanding of the entity of the transformation process. Additionally, they confirm and define my participation, agency and position in the research (Jackson & Mazzei 2012).

The French social philosopher and poststructuralist Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002) ² is my most important thinking companion (see for Bourdieu as

² In the early years of his career Bourdieu's thinking was structural, but that the perspective changed later on and he paid more attention to the agency's dispositions in society and criticized structuralism (see *e.g.* Brubaker 1993, Reed-Danahay 2005). Bourdieu (1990) self also brought forth this turn in his thinking. Indeed, there are interpretations, which recognise Bourdieu's 'anti-structuralism' (Lash 2014: 254) and post-structuralist thinking (*e.g.* Grenfell 1996). Bourdieu is also placed as a practice theorist (*e.g.* Ortner 1984, Rouse 2007). Whatever the arguments may be, Bourdieu's contribution is acknowledged valuable and significant in explaining society and individuals' positions/ dispositions in

poststructuralist in Grenfell 1996). To think with Bourdieu in this research means intersubjective negotiations in and of the classroom community interactions and reflexive thinking also about my own position and actions as a teacher during the change process (see Blommaert 2015, Chapters 2.1–2.6). However, there are no readily formulated inquiries for using the Bourdieusian procedures and thus researchers are encouraged to reconstruct Bourdieu's concepts as well as to integrate them with other influences and experiences (Blommaert 2015, Robbins 1998). In this research, the reconstruction and integration involve several concepts or influences, which reinforce my thinking with Bourdieu, and which have also some similarities to how other literacy researchers have used the Bourdieusian perspective in their studies (see *e.g.* Pahl 2012, Wohlwend 2011).

Bourdieu's (1977, 1990) concept of habitus (Articles I–IV, Chapters 2.1–2.2) is the concept I use the most in this research to build up my understanding about the phenomena I am investigating. It must be noticed though, that habitus is a complex concept, which has often been misunderstood and misinterpreted (Maton 2012). I share the perspective Blommaert (2015: 8) pointed out of habitus as a nexus concept, which combines the 'micro' and 'macro' elements of a society; in other words, the individuals' interactions with society. From this perspective habitus is a tool for analysing change in the social structures in actual moments of interaction, in which people negotiate their social positions such as the teacher/pupil positions in the context of this research (Blommaert 2015). Furthermore, I use such a concept as pedagogic habitus (Grenfell 1998, Pahl 2012) to limit the habitus to pedagogical work and action in clarifying teacher agency in the classroom community (Articles I–III, Chapter 2.2).

The integration of the Bourdieusian influence with other theoretical constructs or influences concerns in this research several aspects and different phases of the change. Teacher emotions and other subjective experiences of being a teacher, especially in the context of change are connected with habitus and pedagogic habitus (Articles III–IV, Chapters 2.1–2.2). The development work in the classroom was based on the socio-cultural view on learning by Vygotsky (1978), to which the Bourdieusian stance gives a slightly different perspective (Chapter 1.1, Chapter 2.3). The concept of interaction order by Goffman (1982), together with the concept of habitus guides the analysis and the interpretation involving micro-level interaction (Articles I–II, Chapter 2.4), which has importance in socio-cultural

it (*e.g.* Blommaert 2015, Brubaker 1985, Moon 2003). Especially, in the contemporary world of technology, Bourdieu's concepts have been proved to work as useful tools in research (Sterne 2003).

learning environment. Indeed, the methodological strategy used in this research called nexus analysis (Articles I–IV, Chapter 3, Scollon & Scollon 2004) is partially based on these concepts of the socio-cultural view on learning, habitus, and the interaction order. Habitus and interaction order are also linked to Grundy's (1987) curriculum theory for enhancing understanding of the social structures and teacher agency in establishing it (Article II, Chapter 2.5). Furthermore, the research is framed by reflective practice (Chapter 2.6), which is essential in Bourdieusian thinking of teaching as well to Grundy (1987). Reflection is also an essential character of a nexus analysis (Articles I–IV, Chapter 3, Scollon & Scollon 2004).

2.1 Habitus

Bourdieu's (1977, 1990) concept of habitus is an analytic tool for understanding social activity and thus not only has implications for educational practices, but also for research in practice (see also Grenfell & James 1998: 15). Namely, pedagogical work produces habitus and thus, through pedagogical work and actions, habitus can be observed (Bourdieu & Passeron 1977). In the area of research in new literacies, there are many studies where the concept of habitus has been used as an analysis tool from the perspective of individuals' identity building or of material artefacts constructing these identities (*e.g.* Pahl & Rowsell 2010, Wohlwend 2011). According to Pahl (2008: 191), habitus offers possibilities for studying the relationships between identity, texts and practices.

But what does habitus mean then? In brief, habitus constitutes expectations for social practices, for individuals and their actions in that particular society. Habitus is possessed and lived out by individual people; it guides how objects are used in meaning-making in particular physical and social contexts. (Bourdieu 1977, 1990). However, habitus is not determined, it aims always at reproduction. It is both durable in lasting over time and transposable in becoming active in social actions (Maton 2012). Habitus is a 'structured and structuring structure' of principles generating and organizing practices, a system of transposable dispositions. It is structured by an individual's past and present circumstances, it is structuring as it constructs an individual's present and future practices and it is a structure because it is systematically ordered, not random or unpatterned. (Bourdieu 1977: 72, 1990, Maton 2012: 50). Habitus is relational, linking the objective and subjective, not as a mechanical reproduction of conditions or a creative process guided by freedom, but as limited to historically and socially situated conditions of different times (Bourdieu 1977, see also Grenfell & James 1998). The dispositions of habitus,

‘ways of being’, shape all human action and give practices a certain style (Bourdieu 1977, Swartz 2002: 635). Even subjective actions or experiences are always connected and influenced by language, culture and social practices when understood in the Bourdieusian sense. Therefore, feelings or emotions are understood in this research as socially structuring and structured principles – as part of emotional habitus – not from a psychological affective perspective (*e.g.* van Veen *et al.* 2005). My emotions as a teacher were and are not only my individual concern: the emotions operate in the interaction with the social environment and integrate the micro-level of the ‘teacher self’ and the macro-level of social, cultural and political aspects of schools. The changes in the either one of the levels mirror changes in the other. (Zembylas 2011: 31). Emotions are part of human action (*e.g.* Tappan 2006) which, similarly to any other social action, constitutes social practices which are accepted and recognised in the habitus (Bourdieu 1977, 1990). Emotional practices constitute emotional rules, which influence all human actions and govern what kind of emotional behaviour is acceptable as well as affect the way people think about themselves and their social practices (Zembylas 2003, 2007b).

Habitus does not act alone though; it operates together in relation to the social arena, the field, where the practices are actualized and with capital³, one’s position (Bourdieu 1990, Grenfell & James 1998: 15–16, Maton 2012: 50). In the field of education, institutions and/or schools generate social practices. Bourdieu (1990) explained the field to structure the habitus and the habitus to contribute to the constituting of field by investing to practices. Thus, habitus and field are mutually constituting (Grenfell & James 1998: 16) and in continuous change (Bourdieu 1977, Hardy 2012a, Robbins 1998). At the meso-level of the educational field, in a classroom community, which this research is interested in, habitus constitutes expectations for learning and teaching practices, as well for teachers and pupils and for their actions. Teachers are in a position of being able to make changes to the practices and to influence on reproduction of practices through (and with) their pupils (Robbins 1998).

³ Bourdieu derived the concept of capital from Karl Marx’s economic capital, which together with social capital defines individuals’ class or status in society (Bourdieu 1984, 1990). However, Bourdieu also brought up other capitals in explaining inherited or achieved elements, which define individuals’ positions in the social order, such as cultural and symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1977, 1984). In the field of education, Bourdieu concentrated on cultural capital rather than economic or social capital and understood the capital individual achieves through education to have particularly reproductive influence on individual’s status in the society (see Bourdieu 1984).

The valued and accepted products in the field of education, in schools and classrooms, are cultural capital, a 'status', which includes individuals' embodied educated characters connected to objects (books, machines, *etc.*) with institutional connections (Grenfell & James 1998: 21, Moore 2012). According to Bourdieu (1984), capital contains also emotional resonance which produces practices and which can be adapted by individuals in right positions similarly as other resonances or products. Thus, cultural capital offers spaces and resources for all social actions, and positions in the field. These spaces and resources are mediated by habitus, in the individuals' tendencies to act and to be in a particular arena (field). In this research, the cultural capital can be understood as framing the actions in the particular arena that is, in the classroom community. Habitus works as a tool for analysing the change in the social structures and positions in connection to the pupils' and my actions in that community.

2.2 Pedagogic habitus and change

This research concentrates on investigating habitus (the ways of being and doing) of literacy practices in the social structures of a Finnish classroom community, where the teacher – I – was an active agent putting change into action. To understand the concept of habitus in a classroom context and the establishment of literacy practices as pedagogical work, I used the concept of pedagogic habitus (Grenfell 1998, Pahl 2012). Pedagogic habitus helps to define my teacher agency in connection to the classroom community and being a teacher through pedagogic actions (see Bourdieu & Passeron 1977). That is, to separate the actions in the classroom from the life stories outside the school as well as it is possible to do consciously. The pedagogic habitus of any teacher is (re)produced culturally and shaped by earlier experiences, by what s/he understands as valuable practices and materials, as well as by the pupils (*e.g.* Pahl 2012). This way, the pupils also contribute to the reproduction of the pedagogic habitus and the classroom practices: the way a teacher responds to the pupils shapes her/his pedagogic habitus. Indeed, pedagogical action always takes place in interaction, in relation to others, to the self, and to the practices in question. It is in the interaction that the dominative interests in social structures are observable (Bourdieu & Passeron 1977).

Thus, the pedagogic habitus connects the teacher agency strongly with the field and becomes deployed in the actions, social practices and materials in the classroom (Grenfell 1998, Pahl 2012). In this research, the literacy practices were implemented in the field setting of the classroom and in my agency and positioning,

in my pedagogic habitus (Grenfell 1998, Grenfell 2012, Pahl 2012). My pedagogic habitus is produced by the cultural capital (Bourdieu 1993) of the Finnish school culture involving values, beliefs, feelings, actions, practices, and material, by my experiences in and of it as well by my experiences, attitudes, feelings and knowledge of the need of change in literacy education in contemporary world, which shape my agency and positioning during the implementation (see also Chapter 1.1). In this space my pedagogic habitus was and is transposable (see Moore 2012).

The aim of the development work I established in the classroom was to influence the social structures, to offer the pupils opportunities to express their own (pedagogic) habitus, their ways of thinking, doing and being, which differed from the traditional teacher-dominated practices. In this kind of situation, when new practices (which shake the established social structures) are brought to the classroom, the teacher's pedagogic habitus faces a tense situation when the traditional, expected practices (and materials) and the new ones meet. Individuals attempt to maximize their position in the field, they have it hard to get involved in changes, which would jeopardise their dominating position (Maton 2012: 53). Therefore, making changes to the practices of a classroom community, to the social structures and actions, is hard for a teacher and may even drift to confusion of not knowing how to be and act (see Hardy 2012a). Indeed, changes in the practices also influence the subjective level of personal processes of transformation (Lanas & Kiilakoski 2013).

It was thus expected that my pedagogic habitus would face tension and confusion involving both the objective and subjective: the ways of working in the classroom community and my personal subjective experiences. Without processing the tension on both these levels, the change in the pedagogical process would not be completed (Kitchenham 2008, Lanas & Kiilakoski 2013, Larrivee 2000, Mezirow 1991). My pedagogic habitus would stay in confusion, leaving me uncertain of how to be and act (see Hardy 2012a). In order to understand the change process and my learning during the process, it was thus important in this research to investigate the way I responded to the 'turn-around' in the social structure, both in the classroom social actions and on my subjective level.

2.3 Bourdieusian stance and Vygotskian view on learning

The classroom development work was based on a socio-cultural view on learning by Vygotsky (1978), which characterizes the Finnish curriculum principles and

involves understanding of literacy as a social practice (Chapter 1). Bourdieu also partially shared the Vygotskian view on language in his thinking, despite the differences in epistemological and ontological backgrounds (Hardy 2012b: 155–156). Namely, for Bourdieu words always relate to the socio-cultural context (Garton & Pratt 2009: 507, Grenfell 1998: 78). Thus, he was not as much interested in classroom interaction as Vygotsky, but in the construction of structural relations and in these relations' consequences on practices (Hardy 2012b, see also Mouzelis 2007). According to Bourdieu (1977: 81), 'the truth of the interaction is never entirely contained in the interaction'. Children are seen as social agents who struggle to figure out their positions (Zacher 2008: 255–256, 276) and mimic (rather than model) other people with desirable skills and learn this way from others in social relations and in a continuous process (Bourdieu 1977). The transformation of the social structures is thus embedded in the interaction.

In this research, the Bourdieusian view is used to expand the original Vygotskian view on learning. I reflected on and analysed the pupils' and my learning and the ongoing literacy practices in relation to my aim of influencing the social construction of learning and teaching literacy in relation to the old and new literacy practices, and in relation to the pupils' circumstances. In addition, I used an expanded understanding of Vygotsky's concept of ZPD and followed how the social structure made a difference to the pupils' actions in the classroom during the school year (see for more explanation of ZPD in the classroom actions Chapter 1.1). By giving in this research the Vygotskian view on learning a Bourdieusian 'stamp' by emphasizing the relativity of interaction does not mean that I would not be interested in the interaction between the pupils and me, but in the interpretation the positions and the context play a role in.

2.4 Bourdieusian stance and Goffman's interaction order

Bourdieu and Goffman had a personal relationship and Bourdieu became influenced by Goffman's ideas (Blommaert 2015, Bourdieu 1984, Calhoun 1996). However, Goffman was by no means a poststructuralist – nor can he be placed in any other -ism either – though some of his ideas may be interpreted as having similarities with the poststructuralist movement (Collinson 2006: 184, Kirby *et al.* 2000: 531). Scollon and Scollon (2003) saw dialogicality especially in the concepts of habitus by Bourdieu and interaction order by Goffman. Indeed, Bourdieu emphasized the importance of interaction in presenting, creating and sustaining social structures (Blommaert 2015) and therefore in this research the

transformation in social structures in the teacher-pupil interactions is reinforced by Goffman's (1982) concept of interaction order. The concept of interaction order offers micro-level lenses for interpreting how the teacher/pupil positions and domination appear during literacy events, in those small moments of interaction in the classroom community.

According to Goffman (1982) people form relationships in interactions, singly, in pairs, groups or in crowds *etc.* In this way, they have different roles depending on the expectations embedded in social actions. The expected roles involve interactions in face-to-face situations, from speech to expressions, and even physical environments. People tend to keep the roles they have (just like they try to maintain their habitus consciously or not) therefore, it is difficult to move towards the 'unexpected' and to change the interaction order (Goffman 1982). In a classroom, the teacher and the pupils are expected to act and to interact in a certain valued way in the habitus of that community. These values become visible in individuals' positions in interaction (Bourdieu 1977). The interaction order reveals in a classroom community whose – the pupils' or the teacher's – role is expected to have more power or whose language is more legitimated in the social structures of the classroom community and whose is less important.

According to Mouzelis (1992: 128), Goffman's interaction order unifies the activity and the field; that is, the micro and macro levels of all social games. In this research, the micro level of interaction order between the pupils and myself was connected to the macro level of literacy learning education. In Finnish classrooms, the teacher is expected to dominate the interaction order: the literacy practices are mainly based on a question-answer relationship between the teacher and the pupils. Even the physical environment sustains and creates the teacher's power (Kuuskorpi 2012). Studying the pupils' and my own positions within the concepts of interaction order as defined by Goffman (1982) is thus an important factor in explaining the transformation in the literacy practices at the micro level of the classroom community.

It must be noticed in the frames of this research that according to Goffman (1982) adult/child interaction order is also partly biologically formulated. The relationships between children and adults involve nurture, which places the children in the need of adults (Wohlwend 2011). This is especially true, when children in their early years are concerned. Thus, the equality in the power relations of a classroom can always be questioned, although the pupils' power concerning making decisions about their own learning or concerning the expertise they may have compared to the adults (especially in the area of new literacies) would be

recognised and appreciated in the classroom community. When nurturing, the adults can hide their power by making suggestions (consciously or unconsciously) instead of giving direct instructions or, on the other hand, by allowing children to act in a way they had suggested not to (Wohlwend 2011). The adults have in a way always the strings in their hands, which they control the situation either by tightening or loosening then in relation to the situation and individuals involved. The nurturing aspect of the interaction order may have also influenced my analysis and interpretation of the classroom literacy practices.

2.5 Bourdieusian stance, Goffman's interaction order and Grundy's curriculum theory

In order to widen the understanding of the implementation of literacy practices, the concepts of habitus (Bourdieu 1977, 1990) and interaction order (Goffman 1982) were linked to Grundy's (1987) curriculum theory. The main aim of Grundy's (1987) curriculum theory is to support teachers to develop their implementation from product-oriented and teacher-directed practices towards process-oriented, communicative and pupil-centred ones. Grundy's (1987) theory is thus in coherence with the aim I had in my implementation of the literacy practices. Bourdieu had a similar kind of perspective to education as Grundy, as he aimed to democratize the product and process by questioning which one of these capitals is more valued and by challenging agents to reflect what the pedagogic reason is behind the values (Grenfell & James 1998: 22)⁴. In the theory, Grundy introduced three curriculum interests: technical interest, practical interest and emancipatory interest. The interests contain values that teachers, as active agents, establish in their classroom community and reflect a certain kind of (pedagogic) habitus (Bourdieu 1977, 1990, Chapters 2.1–2.2) where positions in interaction order (Chapter 2.4, Goffman 1982) play a role⁵. Thus, in investigating how the

⁴ Several connections can be made between Grundy's theory and the Bourdieusian stance. The proponents of Bourdieusian stance (Albright & Luke 2008) and Grundy's (1987) curriculum theory both encourage teachers to develop their practices by linking theory with practice. In addition, Grundy's (1987) curriculum theory is based on Habermas's ideas of understanding society from a practical perspective, which according to Calhoun (1993) has similarities to Bourdieu's interest in theorising social practices (see also Albright 2008). But instead of formal systemic theorising, like Bourdieu saw in Habermas's thinking (Bourdieu 1998: 138), Bourdieu was interested in tools for understanding social practices in habitus (Albright 2008) and Grundy's (1987) curriculum theory can serve as such a tool.

⁵ Grundy's theory is created in an educational system, where curriculum strongly controls teachers' implementation of the various teaching practices. The Finnish system is quite the opposite; it is called a system of trust (Sahlberg 2011), which allows teachers to implement the curriculum according to their

implementation of the practices in a classroom informs the interests, habitus and interaction order can work as analytical tools (Chapter 3.2.1).

Grundy's (1987) technical interest describes practices, which are characterised by interaction order dominated by teachers, as found in traditional Finnish literacy practices. The practical interest emphasises teachers' interaction with pupils in helping individual pupils to find meaning, the experiences of learning in adult/child interaction order (Grundy 1987). From the Bourdieusian perspective, the practical interest focuses too much on the individual, not on the social or cultural context, which makes the individual's actions possible. However, Grundy's (1987) third interest towards the curriculum, the emancipatory interest, attempts to change the learning structures towards equality and thus is to be considered as a desirable direction in improving practices when aiming to influence the social structures of learning. The emancipatory curriculum implementation is innovative and focuses more on how to learn instead of what to learn. The teacher has a role of a learner, who makes decisions based on the interaction with the pupils and who guides the pupils to solve problems by themselves. It is important that the pupils also have opportunities to contribute to the social structure in order to become curriculum designers together with their teacher (Grundy 1987).

However, making changes to curriculum implementation does not occur by itself. Grundy (1987) emphasized that a conscious transformation through reflection is required from teachers for emancipatory implementation. The Bourdieusian stance also strives for emancipatory learning and teaching as well as emphasizing the meaning of reflexivity (Hill 2008). Thus, both these proponents share the idea, which the Finnish teacher education prepares the teachers for: seeing teachers as reflective professionals, who research and learn in their own work (Chapter 1, Chapter 2.6, Kansanen 2007, Maaranen 2009).

2.6 Reflexive approach in enhancing the awareness of the social structures

One cannot be totally aware of the influence of habitus produced in a socio-historical context nor the influence of the individual's actions on habitus (Bourdieu

circumstances and their pupils' needs. Therefore, Grundy's theory concerning the macro-level of understanding curriculum as an educational system, for designing and evaluating teaching and learning, is beyond this research. However, Grundy's theory is relevant in this research in developing the curriculum at the classroom level because of the domination the traditional practices with teacher-directed and book based instruction have in Finland.

1990). As a tool for enhancing the awareness of and for influencing on culturally embedded practices and social structures, Bourdieu (1977, 1990) brought up reflection. Bourdieu (1977, 1990) used the concept of a 'reflexive approach' as a research stance, which involves the researcher's own positioning in relation to the field in question. The Bourdieusian stance in literacy education brings forth teachers as researchers of their own practices on the micro level of the classroom with institutional interactions (Kramsch 2008: 46). Grundy (1987) understood reflection quite similarly to Bourdieu, as kind of a tool for teachers to make sense of their teaching experiences. Indeed, according to several studies, change processes always require reflection, which helps teachers to analyse the transformation (Blakeney-Williams 2011, Caena 2011, Webster-Wright 2009).

The Bourdieusian reflexive approach is especially relevant in recognising and in offering emancipatory opportunities in resisting the domination in social practices (Hoy 2002). In a school context, it strives for emancipatory learning and teaching (Chapter 2.5, Hill 2008). It engages teachers in processes of transformation, to democratize the product and the process by questioning which one of these capitals is more valued and by challenging teachers to reflect on what pedagogic reason lies behind the values (Grenfell & James 1998: 22). In other words, teachers should acknowledge the importance of those learning processes and practices, which are characterized by emancipation. The aim of this research was to transform the domination of teacher-directness by paying attention to the pupils' participation and to the process of learning. Thus, it coincides with the Bourdieusian and the Grundy's (1987) aim to influence on positions of the classroom and strives for emancipatory pedagogy (Article II). In this research, in order to develop and to change literacy practices, to recognise and to study my agency, to move towards more emancipatory practices and to learn from my experiences, I constantly needed to reflect on my own actions and experiences in connection to the classroom community. The thinking companions and the methodological strategy used in the research enhanced this reflective process (Chapters 2–3). Reflection is thus embedded in every phase of this research.

3 Research process

Nexus analysis (NA) (Scollon 2001, Scollon & Scollon 2004) is an ethnographic methodological strategy used in mediated discourse analysis (MDA) which connects the thinking companions building up this research to a set of heuristic tools (see also Articles I–IV). Rather than being a strict methodology, NA guides researchers to position themselves. Any data or analytical tool(s), which the researcher finds useful for studying the wide range of social actions, is appropriate in NA's methodological framework. (Norris & Jones 2005: 201). NA is quite a new approach in the field of qualitative studies, but has proved useful in understanding unpredictable knowledge about social actions (Larsen 2009, Mäkelä 2010, Raudaskoski & Rasmussen 2003, Wohlwend 2007, 2009). In a poststructuralist manner, NA does not try to find the 'true' motives for acts. It aims to find ways to influence and change the nexus of practice – the group being studied – by emphasizing reflexivity (Norris & Jones 2005, Scollon & Scollon 2004). In NA, research as a whole is a continuous intervention, where the cycles of discourses and actors contribute to understand the change in social actions. This way NA is always participatory and action-based, although it does not follow the usual procedure of doing action research as suggested by Carr and Kemmis (1986) for example, nor does it aim at a certain product or goal ⁶.

NA understands society to be connected with social, cultural and historical patterns and developments emphasizing the social interaction and relationships among social groups and power interests in society, unifying the micro and macro levels of social life (Scollon & Scollon 2004). In a classroom environment, the micro level social actions in learning events mirror the macro level actions of learning practices and curriculum implementation, which in turn mirror the cultural values, traditions and aims of society. In NA, the unit of the analysis is the mediated action in sociocultural environments and contexts. Scollon and Scollon (2004) have developed the term 'mediated action' from the perspective of sociocultural psychology grounded in Wertsch's (1991) interpretations of Vygotsky's work to describe any social action taken by an individual in social networks. The mediated actions are carried out via material and symbolic mediational means – cultural or

⁶ The research mediates my learning as a teacher and therefore it also has characteristics of self-study methodology (e.g. Loughran *et al.* 2004, Loughran & Gunstone 1996, Samaras & Freese 2006). However, my professional learning was not the original aim of this research, rather I became conscious of my learning during the process. In addition, there were no concrete learning outcomes I set for myself as a teacher, rather I was interested in the process of changing the practices that prevailed at the time.

psychological tools, which become visible in habits and practices (Scollon & Scollon 2004: 11–12, 181). In other words, mediation is a process in which people use language to create meaningful products also changing themselves in the process (see also Wohlwend 2009). The mediated actions in this process constitute social practices; such as literacy practices. It must be noted, that in poststructuralism and in Bourdieusian way of thinking, mediation is understood from a cultural and social context, also producing values and norms related to social practices (Chouliaraki 2006: 60, de Abreu *et al.* 2002: 234–235).

In addition to Vygotsky's (1978) theory, Bourdieu's (1977, 1990) habitus and Goffman's (1982) interaction order are essential constructs of NA (Scollon & Scollon 2004). According to NA, it is important for the researcher to examine the historical body of the social issue being studied and to pay attention to the interaction order between the participants. It is also important to consider different discourses in place. Historical body describes the social actions in tense change situations by considering their origins in the past, their influence on the present, and their future direction. (Scollon & Scollon 2004). The historical body is in brief habitus (Bourdieu 1977, 1990), in which the ways of doing become valued and accepted. The nexus of practice refers to these valued and accepted practices as it marks the participators, who automatically know how to behave or act according to the expectations of habitus (see Wohlwend 2011: 13). Discourses in place work together with the historical body (or habitus) targeting the situational characters of knowledge. Social actions are to be seen in connection with social, cultural and historical patterns in various places in order to follow the actions in multifaceted ways. Interaction order in NA provides tools for investigating the development in the positions of the studied group in micro level interaction between the participants.

3.1 Data production

According to nexus analysis, data should be produced in communication in (not with) the nexus of practice, which emphasises the researcher's role as an active participant in the change within the group. My pupils and I produced the data in this research. My agency as a teacher-researcher was based on intensive participation, which also brought forth unpredictable turns in the research process. My aim to study the pupils' actions changed to the aim of studying my own agency both at the classroom community level and in my subjective experiences (Chapter 1.2). The connection between the objective and the subjective in the process of change in literacy practices brought multiplicity and complexity to the research

process (Chapter 2). These characteristics have been proposed as being able to offer conceptual, analytical and interpretative solutions, which answer the needs of communities in change (Koro-Ljungberg 2012).

During the school year, I video recorded literacy events during one or two weeks each month throughout the school year targeting different kinds of literacy activities in different places of the classroom (*e.g.* by the computers, in the classroom library, next to the desks, in the play corners, drama or storytelling areas). Because I had the role of teacher-researcher, producing the data during the school year was challenging. I planned the periods for video recording for about every second/ third week in order capture the changes in practices. There was only one video camera that I put on a tripod to the rear of a pair or a group engaged in different actions and used a microphone in the observed place in order to make sure the speech was properly recorded on film. I moved the video camera when needed to be able to view the ongoing actions of different pupils.

However, using only one video camera influenced the recording of the pupils' gestures and facial expressions, because often the video camera had to be placed at a certain angle, which caught the computer screen, but only captured the pupils' back. This limited the use of the video recordings as visual data during the analysis (Chapter 3.2). Additionally, working as a teacher-researcher had an effect on data production, as it required instant decision-making about any changes in plans. This meant that I deviated from the original plan by video recording literacy events, which I had not planned to include. For example, if there was an event where the pupils demonstrated interesting collaboration in their work, I recorded that although the event was not on the schedule. The recorded learning events last from about half a minute to one hour and consist in total of 26 h 18 min of the literacy actions taking place in the classroom.

I kept also a diary during the whole school year and it consists of my notes of my experiences and observations of pupils' learning, activities and expressions. According to O'Reilly (2005) a diary can enable the researcher to think about her/his role in the research process and the decisions made. In a diary, the researcher is able to log things that seem at the time to be irrelevant for the study, but which can later turn out significant. A diary enables an iterative-inductive approach 'where research develops, unravels, and proceeds in a messy process of doing, thinking about, redesigning and constantly reflecting on research practice'. (O'Reilly 2005: 170). At the end of the school year, my diary consisted of 74 handwritten pages from the autumn term and a 45-page Word document from the spring term.

Whilst researching the change in the literacy practices in the classroom community, I noticed that I also became emotionally involved in the transformation and on my personal level as a teacher. The analysis of the literacy practices influenced my subjective experiences. The supervisor and I viewed data from selected learning events in video recordings and reflected on the classroom literacy practices. Our purpose was to observe interesting theoretical questions about the implementation. Although, the focus of the discussion was on the practices, their development, the Finnish school system, and on theoretical questions, I experienced the situation emotionally and became confused about my thoughts surrounding literacy practices and being a teacher.

To make sense of my inner experience, I engaged in literature concerning teacher emotions generally. On that basis I wrote a self-reflection ⁷ where I expressed my own voice (Bakhtin 1986) by connecting my thoughts, feelings, and experiences with the knowledge of teacher emotions and being a teacher presented in the literature I had engaged with (Article III, *e.g.* Hargreaves 1994, Kelchtermans 2005, 2011, Zembylas 2003, 2007a, 2007b). This way, I moved from non-verbal text to symbolic representation (Bruner 1957) of my inner experience. Writing is noted as being an important tool in dealing with emotions, reflecting on experiences, and finding solutions (Moen 2006, Richert 2002). Although I had been writing a diary during the school year, the levels of reflection in the diary and my self-reflective text were different. The diary was concentrated on the classroom practices, the pupils' actions and their learning, whereas the self-reflective text involved my subjective thoughts and emotions.

3.2 Analysis

The NA action of circumferencing (Scollon & Scollon 2004) was essential in this research in following and reflecting on how the change process in literacy practices proceeded and what kinds of elements were embedded in it in the classroom community and in my way of being a teacher. That is, in the analysis process I was constantly looking at the literacy practices in the past and the traditional learning environment, and comparing them to the moment and to their direction in the future. However, it must be noted that because this socio-historical context always remains partly unconscious to the agents involved (despite the fact that I tried to consciously act in order to change literacy practices), part of the influence may still be

⁷ The self-reflection is presented in the Appendix of the Article III.

misrecognised (Bourdieu 1990). The analysis thus brings forth elements, which I was able to recognise with a reflexive approach (Chapter 2.6). In order to give an answer to the research question about what kinds of elements were embedded in the change process of literary practices in the classroom community and in being a teacher, I conducted two analyses. One focused on the classroom community level (Articles I–II) and the other one on being a teacher (Articles III–IV). In both analyses I used Bourdieu’s (1977, 1990) habitus as an analytical tool, but the analyses also deviated from each other in the choice of data and in the analysis process.

3.2.1 *What kinds of elements were embedded in the change process of literacy practices in the classroom community?*

In order to target the elements, which were embedded in the change process of social structures of literacy practices in the classroom community I analysed the data produced in the classroom: the video recordings and the diary (Articles I–II). As delineated by Barton and Hamilton (2000), the social practices embedded in literacy practices can be observed in literacy events or activities. Thus, the teacher agency in the classroom community was also observable in the events. The actions in the classroom reflected this (*e.g.* Grenfell 1998). The data was filtered first by viewing video recordings of the events. From the events, how the literacy practices reflected my agency in the classroom community and how the pupils and I were positioned in it were searched for. Those events (or instances from them), which presented the most common actions during the school year, were transcribed. The diary was handled similarly and the transcriptions were organized in chronological order. Those instances, which involved tension between the traditional practices and new ones, constituted the units of analysis.

At this point the analysis concentrated on Bourdieu’s (1977, 1990) concept of habitus (Chapters 2.1–2.2) and Goffman’s (1982) concept of interaction order (Chapter 2.4). With the concept of habitus, the change and the development of literacy practices and my agency in the situational context were possible to follow. Because the role of the positions in the interaction was essential in the transformation of literacy practices and teacher agency, the interaction order became central in classifying whether the traditional teacher-dominated positioning and instruction were present in the learning events, or whether the interaction reflected equality in position.

A table of criteria (presented in the Appendix 1 in Article I) was made, involving characteristics of habitus and interaction order. The criteria helped to analyse the macro-structure units of interaction or sequences of sentences (van Dijk 1977a, 1977b, 1980) as well as some microstructure units of specific words or sentences (e.g. Bloome *et al.* 2005). The pedagogical language used in the classroom was understood as a product of the field context my pupils and I found ourselves in (Grenfell 1998: 79). Therefore, the socio-historical field context influenced the interpretation.

Although the analysis this far had provided some answers regarding the elements embedded in the change process of the social structures in the classroom community, more attention was still needed for explicating the teacher's role. Thus, the analysis was reinforced with Grundy's (1987) theory of curriculum interests: technical, practical and emancipatory (Article II, Chapter 2.5). This was followed by how the habitus and interaction order reflected these interests (Article II, Chapter 2.5) and the dominant interest(s) during each event were marked. On some occasions, all the interests informed the same event, in some cases simultaneously. Links and differences in the actions of the learning events and curriculum interests were sought for: some events had the same characteristics and were informed by the same curriculum interest. As a result, they formed a semiotic cycle (Scollon & Scollon 2004) of a particular kind of implementation. In these cycles, there were transformations in the cycles during the school year. By investigating when the particular cycles occurred and how the classroom community actions alternated during these cycles (Scollon & Scollon 2004), it was possible to understand how my aim of implementing the Finnish curriculum in new ways proceeded in the classroom community.

3.2.2 *What kinds of elements were embedded in the change process of literacy practices in being a teacher?*

To answer to the research question about what kinds of elements there were embedded in the change process from the perspective of being a teacher, the self-reflection, which I had written because of the confusion I had experienced in the video discussion about the practices with my supervisor, became essential. The self-reflection connected my being a teacher to the classroom community, by reflecting on my agency in the change as a subjective experience.

While writing the self-reflection I used my pedagogic habitus (Grenfell 1998, Pahl 2012) as an analytical tool. My interpretation was emotional (Hargreaves 1998)

and involved on the subjective level reaching the feelings and the experiences I had had in the past and on the social level making sense of and responding to the feelings and experiences in my classroom community, and more generally through studies of teacher emotions. My self-reflection worked as a mediational means (Vygotsky 1978) and represented the transformation in my emotional habitus. My self-reflection did not only reach the subjective level of my emotions and thoughts, but it also linked the social structures, actions and relationships of the classroom community and thus mirrored the macro-level of society. From this interpretation I made connections to the implementation of literacy practices in the contemporary world (Article III).

However, in order to widen the perspective of my teacher agency, to reach not only elements concerning the emotions, but also to clarify my subjective learning experience concerning the change, the self-reflection text was analysed and reflected on further collaboratively (with my supervisor Professor Korkeamäki and Professor Dreher). Text units were searched from the text, which mirrored my habitus, as well as units, which reflected the literacy practices. The focus was especially on the interrelations between these two units connected to my emotional confusion during the video discussion with my supervisor. There were both macro- and microstructure units, which described the confusion in my subjective ways of being a teacher. Two different ways of being a teacher, produced either by the old or the new practices, became the nexus of the analysis. From the nexus two cycles of actions were identified. (see Scollon & Scollon 2004). These were two dispositions (my ways of being), which combined: 'knowing' and 'not knowing'. These cycles and their contents were interpreted further by collecting the most relevant units from the self-reflective text and by engaging in a collaborative reflective dialogue with them in the study (Article IV).

The results of the two analyses are presented in the overview of the four studies (Chapter 4) in articles I–IV. In the main findings and discussion (Chapter 5) the results are unified in the light of the aim of the research.

3.3 Ethical considerations

This research is based on accuracy and integrity throughout the research work according to principles of the National Advisory Board on Research Ethics (2009). The aim during the school year was to enhance the pupils' role as social actors in the classroom community and to increase their participation in their own learning processes through the new practices. That is, to create an emancipatory learning

environment, which in itself is an ethical decision for better education. The implementation of new literacy practices followed the principles, contents and goals of the Finnish National Core Curriculum (2004) for the first grade of school in learning literacy, and had thus an institutional ratification. The practices were also based on research evidence (e.g. Korkeamäki 1996) and not on any experimental practices. If I had aimed for similar kinds of activities in the classroom for the role of teacher only, I would not have needed to obtain consent from any persons or authorities. In this case, consent was obtained from all the pupils' parents and from the local school authorities for conducting the research and for data production. I could have also obtained consent from the pupils, which would have strengthened the pupils' participation (e.g. Christensen & Prout 2002).

My participation as a teacher-researcher was intense in the classroom community and the pupils influenced my actions, feelings and thoughts, through their actions. The teacher/pupil relations made my role as a teacher-researcher a complex one and involved not only procedural, but also relational ethics (Lanas & Rautio 2014). During the school year, similar kinds of reciprocal relations were built with the parents. I met with the parents of each pupil (with their child if they decided so) four times and discussed their child's learning, the classroom activities and the community. These discussions mainly revealed comments that encouraged me to continue the research. If there was anything, which worried the parents, I did my best to pay attention to it. I had paid attention to each and every pupil's learning process not only during the classroom literacy events, but also tested their progress in reading and writing with a standardized testing pattern for first-graders called Armi (Lerkkanen *et al.* 2006). These test results were always with me during discussions with the parents.

To keep the pupils' anonymity, their names are pseudonyms throughout the research in transcripts, analysis and publishing data. The data did not include any personal information from the pupils' lives. Any other identifiers, such as the place where the school in question is located, or the exact time the new practices in the classroom were used *etc.* are not mentioned anywhere. Extracts of the qualitative data that included a risk of identification to the pupils were not included in the original research publications (Articles I–IV). Overall, the emphasis in the study is on the teacher's, my, actions, and their connection to the classroom social structures and actions, and not on any individual pupil.

4 An overview of the studies with a focus on the results

In this chapter I present the results based on the four studies presented in articles (I–IV). The results answer the research question of this thesis research (Chapter 1.2) in following way: articles I and II concentrate on the change in the literacy practices at the classroom community level of and articles III and IV in the level of being a teacher.

4.1 Article I: Räisänen S, Korkeamäki R-L & Dreher MJ (2015) Changing literacy practices according to the Finnish core curriculum

The study brought up elements, which were embedded in the classroom community, when I implemented literacy practices according to the two Finnish core curriculum principles: (a) a community-oriented view of language, and (b) a broad conception of text (National Board of Education 2004). The implementation according to these curriculum principles established the transformation in the social structures of learning and teaching literacy from the beginning of the school year. Reading and writing had characteristics of emergent literacy practices (Clay 1991, Korkeamäki 1996, Sulzby & Teale 1991). Instead of sounding out or writing down syllables under teacher-directed instruction, the pupils were understood as competent readers and writers. They were using their own skills and strategies and made meanings with and through texts. Not only written text had importance in meaning-making. There was an appreciation for diversified texts including cherishing the pupils' own drawings and illustrations in books. This also extended to pictorial information available on the Internet, as well as playing, and drama. The pupils did not work alone, but rather in pairs or groups. When they produced texts, they collaborated and supported their peers. Reading also afforded communication between the pupils, for example, by sharing books. Instead of teaching in the front of the classroom, I moved around and guided the pupils. The literacy practices became creative play (Merchant 2003), which supported the pupils' learning together.

However, the influence of the past was observed in the literacy practices. That is, my pedagogic habitus (Grenfell 1998, Pahl 2012) existed in a continuous state of tension: I balanced my instruction between the ways I was used to and the ways I aimed for. For example, I aimed for increasing the use of new technologies, but I could not totally abandon the old ones. However, my approach to using them

deviated from the traditional ways of teaching literacy. Whether the pupils wrote with computers or with pencils I guided them to use their own knowledge of sound/letter correspondence or gave them opportunities to copy texts. Tension in positions of interaction order (Chapter 2.4, Goffman 1982) was also observed while the pupils and I were involved in negotiations and assistance. Occasionally, I slipped into teacher-dominated interaction, or offered readily made solutions for pupils. However, over the school year, the influence of the old practices gradually diminished. By trying new practices, I enhanced my own understanding of the implementation and became more secure in challenging the pupils to work together. The pupils' actions consequently influenced my pedagogic habitus as I learned more about the practices through them. Gradually we all became more secure in our positions.

Both the pupils and I became learners and shared the same expectations about how to act in the classroom community (Scollon 2001, Scollon & Scollon 2004). This way the classroom community little by little moved towards a community of practice (Lave & Wenger 1991): the pupils could collaborate, use their own ideas and participate in their own learning process and I assisted when needed.

4.2 Article II: Räisänen S & Korkeamäki R-L (2015) Implementing the Finnish literacy curriculum in a first-grade classroom

In the study, the analysis based on Grundy's (1987) curriculum interests specified the elements of literacy practices in the classroom community during the school year, especially concerning my agency as teacher in the social structures (Chapter 2.5). The tension between the traditional and new practices reflected the implementation and my pedagogic habitus (Grenfell 1998, Pahl 2012), which was at the beginning of the school year, in the autumn, shaped by the technically informed, traditional, and teacher-directed ways of being. The move away from the traditional ways of doing things in the classroom was not expected to happen straight away; people tend to keep the roles they are used to (Chapter 2.4, Goffman 1982). Thus, to engage in such a process was challenging. I instructed the pupils and left only a little room for their participation. However, this role of mine was connected to the organisation of the classroom and most likely also to the 'nurturing' aspect of teaching, to the biological adult/child – pupil/teacher relationship (Chapter 2.4, Goffman 1982). I needed to ensure that the rules of classroom became clear for everybody in order to establish a learning environment that would be

appropriate for working. That is, the technical interest was actually sometimes needed.

However, the new ways of working with texts gradually afforded a change compared to traditional literacy learning and teaching as the school year proceeded, and as the new ways of working influenced the pupils' and the teacher's (my) positions in the interaction order (Chapter 2.4, Goffman 1982). These new ways of working encouraged the pupils towards active participation and use of their own skills, as well as to develop individually based on these skills. This process mirrored my aim in understanding learning as a practically informed process rather than a technical product, and I was able to gradually focus on each pupil's individuality. The emergent literacy practices afforded all pupils opportunities to explore and to produce texts by using their own strategies (for emergent literacy practices see Chapter 1.1, Clay 1991, Korkeamäki 1996, Sulzby & Teale 1991). This brought equality in the social structures of the classroom community. At this point, the curriculum implementation even moved partially towards an emancipatory interest. The pupils could work in a socio-cultural manner getting help from and/or assisting their peers.

During the spring, practical interest characterized the implementation in the classroom. The pupils' individual learning processes were paid even more attention to. I guided each pupil to work with her/his own skills and to improve those skills. For example, I challenged some pupils to read the texts they have produced and to correct them if they had misspellings, but not all. Some pupils were not ready for this kind of action yet. I also offered more opportunities for collaboration between pupils and independent problem solving when the pupils engaged in larger projects or in play and drama. The pupils' discussions and negotiations of texts characterized the classroom community, even in situations when I was not physically present. It was as if I understood from the pupils' participative role that the pupils were capable of taking responsibility for their own learning. My pedagogic habitus (see Pahl 2012) and the classroom community were inseparable in this change. I became empowered and also more innovative in trying new methods or ways of working. There was a change in the interaction order from teacher-directed talk to reciprocity. I was a consultant or coach who gave the pupils ownership of their own learning (Savery & Duffy 1995). The pupils became curriculum designers and the curriculum implementation moved this way towards emancipatory interest (Grundy 1987).

However, the study also showed that there was alternation in the interests during the overall school year and even during individual events. It was not by any

means a linear development. The move from technical interest towards the practical and emancipatory interests was not a simple process for me. It required reflection. I had to constantly reflect on my teaching and the pupils' learning in order to make decisions about learning and social structures, and also to influence and to learn from my own actions and to improve the curriculum implementation (Chapter 2.6). My pedagogic habitus was not coherent. Even a small deviation from the aim I was reaching for influenced the actions in the classroom. Often I had to change my actions during a learning event, when I noticed that I was not acting as I expected myself to. My actions were relational and situational; sometimes I used teacher-directed instruction when the rules of behaviour in the classroom were concerned or when I introduced a particular theme before the pupils started to work on it in particular ways. The curriculum interests reflected these actions. In these situations, and in fact, during the whole school year, I could have paid even more attention to the pupils' own ideas and given them more freedom in planning the practices. Eventually however, the process of learning became more important than the product and the practical and the emancipatory interests were observed more frequently towards the end of year.

4.3 Article III: Räsänen S (2015) Teacher emotions and change in literacy learning. Insights to literacy learning in the contemporary world through self-reflection of teacher emotions

The results of the study reflect the change in the social structures embedded in literacy practices from the perspective of being a teacher. The change had made me feel extremely uncertain and sent my pedagogic habitus (Grenfell 1998, Pahl 2012) into confusion. This confusion 'burst out' when I viewed the literacy practices in my classroom with my supervisor. The change in literacy practices was definitely not only a process, which involved the classroom community but was also linked to the subjective part of my habitus (Chapters 2.1–2.2).

As a matter of fact, no one can be sure about what is 'right' in teaching and this causes dubiety (Hargreaves 1994). According to Hargreaves (1994), this uncertainty is rooted in the concept called competence anxiety, which is based on the expectations of society regarding teachers as being perfect, all-knowing persons who do not make mistakes (Hargreaves 1994). Competence anxiety is quite an instrumental view on teaching (Kelchtermans 2011), because it involves an assumption that there could be some sort of an outcome, which could be proven as

a failure. The competence anxiety I was feeling thus indicates that I considered the learning events my supervisor and I were viewing as a type of final product that stemmed from my teaching. My perspective on my own learning was instrumental (Kelchtermans 2011), although in my teaching I had reduced the instrumental aspect and emphasized the importance of the process in my pupils' learning. I had managed to make changes to the practices, but my emotional level of understanding had not yet altered to fit into the new practices. Thus, I found it hard to reflect upon the literacy practices with my supervisor and experienced an inner conflict.

The competence anxiety alone did not explain my experiences. Another factor that influenced my feelings was the responsibility of teaching, which is natural when there is commitment to teaching (Kelchtermans 2005, 2011). Responsibility involves care, moral commitment, and personal engagement in the ethical relationships between teachers and pupils (Kelchtermans 2011). I took on the responsibility of teaching in my implementation process as I based my change of practices on the principles of the Finnish curriculum as well as on the needs of contemporary society. My emotions indicated that I was ethically committed to my work and that I cared about my pupils. Therefore, to reflect only on the cognitive aspects with my supervisor felt inadequate for me. I was also bound to reconsider the ethical and emancipatory aspects and to make connections to my personal relationships with my pupils. However, relationships make teaching vulnerable: one can never prove how the other party has experienced the relationship, or which results follow from teaching or from the relationship (Kelchtermans 2011).

Understanding of the vulnerability is simultaneously a way to deal with the uncertainty, the competence anxiety and the responsibility, which all belong to teaching. Vulnerability may offer new insights into learning and teaching, as because of this, the relationships, roles, and positions can undergo 'new and unforeseen developments' (Kelchtermans 2011: 121). This should be seen as a chance to change, or a sigh of passion, which brings positive energy. This kind of passionate perspective on change can, according to Zembylas (2007a: 144), be understood as 'becoming of learning', which in a sense is made possible because of vulnerability – of not knowing where one will end up, and at the same time being in the process of transformation (Kelchtermans 2011, Zembylas 2007a). This being in the process creates opportunities for developing alternative emotional responses promoting passionate, effective, and adventurous teaching and learning practices (Zembylas 2007a: 136).

My aim to change the practices was also led by passionate ideas of doing things differently. Thus, the passion was important for me. For Bourdieu (1998: 86–87)

passion was also a powerful force, although spontaneous, something that is 'stronger than me' and guides one to act against his own interest, not improving his own position, but paying attention to others. Thus, passion for Bourdieu as well is of 'becoming something else'. The self-reflection I engaged in made me to realise that I would always be somewhere in between, in 'becoming', where the future remains uncertain and unknown. This way I moved myself from a technical perspective of 'knowing how' towards 'becoming' (Kelchtermans & Hamilton 2004). The same concerns the literacy practices as well. Making changes to literacy practices thus should be understood not as a need, but rather as a positive possibility for creating something unexpected and extraordinary that can lead to unforeseen developments emotionally, cognitively and politically. 'A pedagogy of unknowing', which Zembylas (2005) derived from the work of Emmanuel Levinas, coincides with this idea of 'becoming'. It emphasizes ethical responsibility and it is connected to the concepts of passion and vulnerability. It challenges teachers to develop new tools, activities and practices in emancipatory frames (see Grundy 1987) by cherishing the process of learning and pupils' participation. That is, literacy education based on this pedagogy has the potential of becoming more ethical and morally sustainable.

4.4 Article IV: Räsänen S, Korkeamäki R-L & Dreher MJ (2015) A teacher's inner voice mediated by a video observation and discussion in the context of change in literacy practices

The teacher's ways of being between teacher dispositions of 'not knowing' and 'knowing' were the focus of this study. These dispositions were identified from the self-reflective text produced in the study 'Teacher emotions and change in literacy learning. Insights to literacy learning in the contemporary world through self-reflection of teacher emotions' (Article III, Chapter 3.2.2). The dispositions reflected that it was like I did not know how to be a teacher, although I knew a lot about literacy practices. The dispositions needed more investigation for making sense of the elements embedded in the process of change in being a teacher.

I engaged in collaborative reflection with the other two authors of the article (Chapter 3.2.2), Professor Korkeamäki and Professor Dreher, in order to clarify my subjective learning process about the literacy practices. I had to cope with all my experiences on the subjective level in order to be able to fully understand the theoretical and practical issues concerning the change and consequently to be able to continue in my learning process (see *e.g.* Larrivee 2000). That is, habitus

(Bourdieu 1977, 1990) also involves a subjective level (Chapters 2.1–2.2). According to Lanas and Kiilakoski (2013), this kind of ‘inside out’ process in teachers’ transformative learning is usual (see also Larrivee 2000). Changing practices indeed does not only involve the practical pedagogical level of teaching, but also the subjective level of personal processes of transformation (Lanas & Kiilakoski 2013).

The collaborative reflection involved understanding of the ways teachers face in their being especially during a change. The teachers do not know how to ‘be’ because of the tension in their habitus (Bourdieu 1977, 1990). Teachers need to try to find a way to fit their ‘not knowing’ and ‘knowing’ in the challenging situations of educational change for the best of themselves and their pupils (*e.g.* Larrivee 2000). However, these kinds of efforts are not easy for teachers. In the collaborative reflection, the significance of support was revealed as an essential factor in the teachers’ learning processes. In addition, the support should not only be professional but also personal. I had not received (or asked for) any kind of support from other teachers during the school year I had been changing my classroom practices and thus, the subjective aspects connected to teacher’s profession, which the change brings up, were unprocessed. Thus, I had to cope with them in the context of research.

However, it might have also been, that I had not recognised the need for support earlier, during the school year. I had just aimed for change, but had not been ready to transform in my subjective level. Indeed, according to Lanas and Kiilakoski (2013) the teachers need to recognise their need for support in order to transform. Finally, in the self-reflection I realised my need. The collaborative reflection in turn afforded me a safe space for receiving that support. The collaborative reflection connected in the situation my personal and professional self and influenced my learning process. It eased the confusion in my habitus (Bourdieu 1977, 1990). The safe space is thus also important in processing subjective learning experiences (Lanas & Kiilakoski 2013).

5 Main findings and general discussion

My teacher agency during the process of ‘doing things differently’ in literacy practices was a balancing act between traditions (conscious or unconscious) and more creative learning in the situation and place. According to Bourdieu (1977, see also Swartz 2002: 635), the disposition of my pedagogic habitus (Grenfell 1998, Pahl 2012 2.2) was not determined by or a repetition of my past habitus, but it was my capability to take action professionally and personally in practice at an intersection of the resources available and the field. The reflective approach to my experiences in the research increased my awareness of my capabilities and led me towards transformation (see Taylor 2009) in enhancing my understanding of the ways of being a teacher and of the new practices towards increased theoretical understanding, building coherency to the pedagogic habitus.

Through investigating and reflecting the classroom actions, the community and myself, I was able to choose a certain *style* (Bourdieu 1977: 86, Swartz 2002) in the change of literacy practices, in ‘doing things differently’. Because I chose my way during the process, it is not possible to present exactly how to make a turn from the traditional literacy practices towards new ones cherishing pupils’ participation and expertise (see Lankshear & Knobel 2012). Thus, the change was an illusion, which mattered to all who were in the game, to the pupils and me (Hill 2008: 156). I could have also chosen otherwise. However, I present and discuss in this chapter the three main elements, which I ended up with by unifying the results (Chapter 4) and which help to understand the complex process of change: becoming, relativity and the need for support (Chapters 5.1–5.3). The elements cannot be understood as existing individually, but building up the change in connection with each other. After the elements, I discuss the limitations of the research (Chapter 5.4). The limitations also concern the change and thus, they can be considered as the fourth element of the process.

5.1 Becoming

Based on this research the fitting of the new practices into the habitus of a classroom community and being a teacher is a long, multi-layered and continuous process of ‘becoming’ (Chapter 4.3, Kelchtermans & Hamilton 2004). The ‘becoming’ characterizes the whole research. It always involves uncertainty, which causes tension in the pedagogic habitus (Grenfell 1998, Pahl 2012). This tension should not be understood negatively, but as an opportunity for democratic and

ethically sustainable education (Chapter 4.3). One has to accept that there are factors, which are beyond our consciousness in society and still ‘to invest in the game’ (see Bourdieu 1990). Even when it is not possible to know what solutions are the right ones in the situation, it is important to strive for better education for the pupils.

5.1.1 Passion as a force for creating emancipatory possibilities in learning and teaching

During the research process I was in a state of continuous ‘becoming’ (Kelchtermans & Hamilton 2004) both at the classroom community level and in being a teacher. I identify myself in Freire’s words in his dialogue with Shor (1987: 82): ‘The more I approach critically the object of my observation, the more I am able to perceive that the object of my observation is not yet because it is coming’. The teacher-researcher habitus–field construction was for me a form of passion, which set me to act against the traditional habitus and to attempt to influence power relations in the classroom (see Bourdieu 1998: 86–87, Chapter 4.3). It was an emancipatory attempt to pay attention to the positions of others rather than my own position and developed gradually (Chapter 2.6, Chapters 4.2–4.3). In Bourdieu’s words (1998) I played the ‘game’ differently, as I tried to give at least some of the power I have as a teacher to my pupils. The ‘game’ did not follow any structures nor did it come to its end. In fact, my learning process varied between ‘inside-outside’. The change started on the inside, from my own interests in investing in the change (Chapter 1.1). It continued on the outside, in organizing the physical environment and in implementing the practices (Chapter 1.1, Chapters 4.1–4.2). Then, the process moved back to my inside, to my subjective experiences (Chapters 4.3–4.4). All the time my habitus was tightly connected to the classroom community. According to Lanas and Kiilakoski (2013) a change, which starts from one’s own desire, often makes the transformation permanent. I suggest also, that *continuous change driven by passion is permanent*; it is a way of teaching, an element of teacher agency, when aiming for emancipatory learning communities. I am and will always be in a constant ‘becoming’ phase.

5.1.2 Literacies in ‘becoming’

And it is not only me, who is ‘becoming’ and in a state of change. The unknown future should be considered as a great possibility for creating something new. The

literacy practices are to develop perpetually. The technologies, which afford them, are also in change. If I would conduct the development work now, the technical resources in the classroom might have been quite different. Thus, the material artefacts (Pahl & Rowsell 2010) are also an important part of the ‘becoming’ in social structures. Research produces constantly new evidence for literacy practices and ways of working, which involve new possibilities for education. Already in this research, during one school year, the practices transformed and shifted shape. Furthermore, literacies are not only in transformation but they are also transformative (e.g. Martin & Grudziecki 2006). They transform us, creating new choices for ‘becoming’ and for teacher agency.

5.2 Relativity

This research brings forth the relativity of the transformation in social structures. The transformation was situational, connected to the actions and relationships in a classroom community, connected to resources, to the field in question, to the pupils, to my learning process, to my being (Chapter 4). One cannot really separate the subjective and the objective from each other. They were both embedded in the development of the literacy practices. My actions could not be understood without the classroom community and the classroom community could not be understood without an understanding of my agency in the tension between the new and the old practices. My pedagogic habitus (Chapter 2.2, Grenfell 1998, Pahl 2012) constantly alternated during the research process, as my beliefs and expectations were negotiating with the new practices and their affordances in the social structure of the classroom. On the one hand I knew a lot about the practices, but on the other hand, I could not be sure how my pupils had experienced them. One could even claim, that the literacy practices negotiated with the social structures of the classroom community, creating new spaces for learning. That is, relativity is closely connected to ‘becoming’.

5.2.1 Relativity in the relationships with the pupils

The importance of (dis)positions in the transformation process showed that the relationships between my pupils and myself played a significant role in the process (see also Grenfell 1998). However, the transformation in the positions of these relationships was not without negotiation (see Blommaert 2015). I needed to constantly reflect on my actions in relation to my pupils to be more aware of my

agency (the relationships were thus also ‘becoming’). In the classroom community, this negotiation was present in the interaction order (Chapter 2.4, Goffman 1982), which existed during literacy events between the pupils and myself. I learned to give the pupils more power in their actions, in collaboration and in their use of knowledge (Chapters 4.1–4.2). Gradually, the pupils’ participation and equality became evident in the social structures. Consequently, the power transformation had an effect on me, in building my pedagogic habitus (Grenfell 1998, Pahl 2012) more coherent with the new practices and alternated my style (Bourdieu 1977) in the classroom community.

The interaction in the relationships was also in relation to the individual skills and knowledge of each pupil. I followed the pupils’ learning in an intensive way and adjusted the practices and my actions in relation to their progress, based on the way I interpreted Vygotsky’s (1978) zone of proximal development (Chapter 2.3). The pupils’ learning was also in ‘becoming’ and my agency was both structuring and structured by the learning processes. The relationships involved my subjective experiences too and the ethical aspects of my teaching (Kelchtermans 2011). I realised that the change I had made in the classroom community was also in relation to the pupils’ life circumstances and the way I experienced those relationships (Chapter 4.3). The relationships thus involved both my actions in the classroom and my subjective being a teacher.

5.2.2 Desirable position as a teacher-researcher

The change in the social structures was also in relation to my teacher-researcher position, where I was able to reflect on and to research the change process (Articles I–IV, Chapter 4). That is, often only those who have desirable positions in a new field, are able to produce a coherent habitus with the field changes (in this thesis literacy education in a classroom community), others stay in confusion (Hardy 2012a). My position as a teacher-researcher involved me expressing myself and finding balance in my dislocated habitus (Chapter 2.2).

Teacher education in Finland emphasizes a reflective, research-based approach to teaching (Chapter 2.6), and because this education is part of my past, it is surely also part of my pedagogic habitus (Grenfell 1998, Pahl 2012). As I took an action role in this research and used the approach I am trained to carry out, ‘the reflective research-based part’ alternated in my habitus and shifted my position. It is now almost impossible for me to settle myself into a teacher agency, which would not cherish reflection and the enquiring mind.

5.3 Need for support

One reason for why some are not in the right position for transformation is the lack of support or a lack of recognising the need for support (Chapter 4.4, see also Lanas & Kiilakoski 2013). The research-based approach was my support in the change process and balanced the tension in my habitus. Indeed, support is an integral part of change, awakening new perspectives and offering chances to learn. However, not all teachers are in the position of carrying out research, which could make a complex change easier to implement. In order to enhance their learning they would need somebody to offer them new perspectives, and chances to reflect on both personal and professional experiences (Lanas & Kiilakoski 2013). Howe and Barry (2014) have come to a similar conclusion when they found that collaborative literacy coaching for teachers enhanced the understanding of literacy, the beliefs on literacy efficacy, and the implementation of new techniques.

However, it must be remembered, that support is not enough in pushing the transformation forward if the implemented practices are too distant from that they are fitted. In this sort of case, the changes will be faced with negativity and will not get acceptance (Bourdieu 1977: 78, 1990: 62). If the gap between the new practices and the pedagogical habitus of a teacher, for example, is remarkably large, the more difficult it is for the teacher to implement new practices and the opportunities for creating something new and unpredictable are lost. Thus, the transformation should be implemented gradually during a long time period, which of course means that the support should also be long-termed.

5.4 Limitations in changing the literacy practices in this research and generally

According to Bourdieu (1977: 85–86) the personal style or individual characteristics – like the ones in this research – are nothing but ‘a deviation’, which relates to ‘the common style’ and most likely describes the confrontations of people in similar situations in society. That is, the style during the change process is generalizable (see Blommaert 2015). Everything that a teacher does or experiences speaks about teacher agency and positioning in that particular society. However, the relativity of the transformation in that agency and positioning can be understood as a limitation. In this research, I acted in the habitus of the moment, in relation to the experiences I had connected to the field, to the pupils, and to myself as a teacher. One limitation is also the fact that one cannot ever know what one’s actions may

lead to in the future. Despite my aim of being reflective I cannot be totally aware of the change. Thus, there is no point in asking whether I did things either the right or wrong way in choosing my style, as one cannot really know about the reproduction of habitus.

It might also be interesting to ask about my motivations in conducting the new practices. Did I try to improve my position elsewhere when I aimed for reciprocal actions in the classroom and gave up my dominative position in the classroom community? Maybe I tried to improve my position as an academic, a literacy researcher, who aims to implement literacy into practice according to the needs of the contemporary world and tries to gain success in that field. Does dividing up the power in other fields strengthen the (dis)position in another? Did I have a double interest in the field of literacy education (Bourdieu 1998: 77, 84–85)? Perhaps as a teacher making the changes to the classroom literacy habitus I had an illusion of struggling for the things important in that field, but as a researcher I played the game to gain capital in the area of literacy education. Was this the reason for my uncertainty on the subjective level of being a teacher? Or maybe, on the contrary, was giving up my power actually a deliberating experience, which improved my position after all? Did I simply gain a different kind of power position in the classroom?

It is thus interesting to ponder if the change towards new literacy practices is yet only a step to a new dominative school culture? Maybe it even divides the pupils (see Kist 2005, Leu *et al.* 2009). There is no equality in economic, cultural or social factors between people and these factors are embedded in people's practices (Marsh 2005). New literacies may contribute to strengthen the social inequality and to increase the gap between the rich and the poor. Not all people have access to technologies; instead they struggle with basic needs and with rights and possibilities to (any kind of) education. Thus, educators and policy makers should be aware of how their decisions affect social equality.

6 Suggestions for the future literacy education

In this chapter I unravel the findings of this research by offering suggestions for the future literacy education for practitioners, for researchers and for policy makers.

6.1 For practitioners

Based on the findings of this research, I recommend teachers, who engage in similar kinds of change processes in the social structures of the classroom community to consider who they can rely on during the process, both personally and professionally. The process of change in literacy practices is a complex one and involves teachers to evaluate their dispositions on many levels of the change. In addition, one cannot know what kind of process to expect. However, the fact that one does not know, can in the light of this research mean that there may be developments that no one could even imagine. Thus, the goal of literacy education should be in the change itself. The change should however not be understood as a need, but rather as an opportunity, which offers emancipatory (Grundy 1987) and passionate possibilities for pupils as well as to teachers. If teachers stay using the traditional ways of working in literacy, all those interesting opportunities will not take place. If teachers do not take action now, it is a danger that the gap between the practices at home and in school will start to differ from each other so much, that both the teachers' and pupils' habitus becomes dislocated and both may end up in a state of confusion and of not knowing how to be (Hardy 2012a).

6.2 For researchers

The deep connection in this research between theoretical, methodological and pedagogical aims enhanced understanding of the complexities of change in literacy practices. Thinking with selected theoretical concepts provided tools for drawing meaning from the complex aims of the research. However, I suggest other researchers reinforce the tools, and invent other solutions, and use other thinking companions, both on an individual and institutional level of education. Then it would be possible to explicate more or different kinds of elements in the change in literacy practices than it was possible to recognise in this research. Furthermore, literacy education is in a continuous 'becoming' -phase, which means that the assumptions and expectations for teaching, learning, material artefacts, teachers and pupils should be reconsidered. This reconsideration also means, that research

in the field is needed. The pupils', the parents', the classroom assistants', as well as the whole school community's positioning in these kind of educational changes would broaden the perspective of how the change in the social structures is experienced.

6.3 For policy makers

The new National Core Curriculum of Finland is about to be put into practice in 2016 and then teachers will need to engage in change. The principles of the new curriculum in literacy learning will emphasize, for example, the use of digital tools and learning environments and pupils' communication (National Board of Education 2014). Based on this research it seems that the teachers will need multifaceted and long-term support during the school reforms. Not to mention, that when the change is instigated from the outside via institutional reform, the teachers will find it hard to fit the change into their pedagogic habitus. That is, teachers should be provided with personal and professional mentoring (see *e.g.* Jokinen *et al.* 2014), safe spaces to learn from their experiences, and opportunities (and time) to reflect their own experiences alone and in collaboration with others. Teachers are often left alone as soon as they leave university. While working in schools, they adapt their ways of being from that community, and this affects their practices. It is hard to stand out as a new teacher and thus, when new practices require efforts, without support the new teachers will not have the courage required to take the action necessary.

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- I Räisänen S, Korkeamäki R-L & Dreher MJ (2015) Changing literacy practices according to the Finnish core curriculum. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*. Published online 12 Jan 2015. URI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1350293X.2014.996421>.
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