Tools for Teaching and Learning

A study of how some teachers of English and History perceive the role of different educational materials with regard to their own teaching and pupils’ learning

Verktyg för undervisning och lärande

En studie av hur några lärare i engelska och historia uppfattar olika läromedel i förhållande till deras undervisning och elevers lärande

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Abstract

Tools for teaching and learning
- A study of how some teachers of English and History perceive the role of different educational materials with regard to their own teaching and pupils’ learning

The main purpose of this qualitative study is to investigate and analyse how teachers of English and History at two compulsory schools in the south of Sweden perceive the role of different educational materials, with regard to their own teaching and pupils’ learning. To obtain a deeper understanding of the complex user-process that educational materials are a part of, frame factor theory serves as a tool that facilitates the interpretation and understanding of the collected data. The theory, which consists of different divisions, describes factors that control and interfere with education.

Our results are based on a qualitative method where thirteen surveys initially were answered by teachers of English and History, eight teachers were then also interviewed about their perception of educational materials in relation to their own teaching and pupils’ learning.

The main result of our study is that socio-cultural factors have the clearest effect on teachers’ selection of educational materials, such as pupils’ background and previous experiences.

Keywords: Educational materials, teaching, learning, teachers’ perception, compulsory school
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1 Introduction

During our time as teacher trainees we have been confronted with a wide range of various educational materials in all shapes and forms. Lpo94 provides a broad view of educational material and Swedish teachers have great freedom when it comes to selecting and using educational material. This freedom can, however, also be problematic at a local level and we have found that many factors may interfere and affect teachers’ selection of materials such as content, pupils’ level of knowledge and time restraints. Most of the studies done on educational materials so far have focused on content and in contrast to that, this study aims to spotlight teachers and their thoughts and attitudes, in this case teachers of English and History. Consequently, the thesis is written from the perspective of teachers, and it seeks to identify teachers’ reasoning regarding educational materials and, more specifically, their thoughts on educational materials in relation to teaching and learning.

Since educational materials play a crucial role in today’s schools and learning environments,¹ we furthermore feel that this is an area that has been neglected and as teachers-to-be, we are also driven by curiosity and a genuine interest in finding out how teachers at a local level deal with these issues.

1.1 Background

Since the decentralization of the educational system in the 1990’s, Swedish schools have experienced a continuous period of adjustment to the changes brought about by the shift from a highly controlled and centralised model to one where many decisions have to be taken at a local level. Some examples of these changes:

- Lpo94 was introduced along with management by objectives
- Municipalities were given the responsibility for employing teachers
- Teachers were given the role of change agents: national policy documents should be interpreted at the local level and developed into local work plans

• Democracy should not only be taught, but applied in the classroom and for each school subject, ways of working and contents should be negotiated between students and teachers

• Educational materials can be chosen: teachers can choose to use a textbook or to use other educational materials instead.

Another change is linked to the organisation of teachers into cross-curricular teams, which has led to less attention to subject-based conversations, something that we as teacher trainees also have witnessed during our teaching practice.²

This study concerns two disciplines, English and History. All disciplines have their own traditions and draw on different ideals and beliefs that change over time. In the following, we provide a brief outline of the two subject areas.

History

The overarching responsibility of education “lies with the municipalities, meaning that the municipality is ultimately responsible for issues related to democracy and fundamental values. The municipality shall distribute resources and organize activities so that students achieve the national objectives.”³ In History this means that society is given a historical context which enable pupils to understand their present and themselves, and other cultures so that they actively can take part in the building of the society.

“There are not any specific methods […] for the subject within the social science subjects, which all in a way describe mankind in time and space. […] With support from the curriculum, learning therefore has to derive from a fluctuated train of thoughts and methods, which in some ways connect to the pupils’ interests and needs.”⁴ As Hermansson Adler writes in his book, Historieundervisningens byggstenar:

Läraren bär det akademiska ämnet historia med sig till sin undervisning. Men nu styr inte längre endast det vetenskapliga perspektivet innehållet, utan även elevernas intressen och behovet av en

³ http://www.skolverket.se/sb/d/374/a/1288, 2006-01-03.
Education in history is also often characterized by the genetic perspective where historical events are chronologically placed on a timeline, with its structure inherited from the textbook:

As described by Klas-Göran Karlsson in Historiedidaktik och historievetenskap – ett förhållande i utveckling, the teaching of History has often been perceived as an objective science, where scientific findings have trickled down via teachers and textbooks. This stands in contrast to the post-modern or post structural view on History where there are no universal truths about the past that exist outside of our own experiences, identities and interests.

Thoughts that have influenced today’s educational subject of History, which has resulted in a shift in focus towards a more functional aimed teaching where historiemedvetande and historiebruk have become key concepts.

English

Whereas History traditionally can be said to be a content-based subject, English on the other hand in the same view is language driven, focusing on communication. According to the syllabus for English, the pupil should: “utveckla sin förmåga att delta aktivt i samtal och skriftlig kommunikation, uttrycka sina egna tankar på engelska samt uppfatta andras åsikter och erfarenheter.”

Language learning and communication is here the genuine goal, and the

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content in itself is more of a tool for attaining that knowledge.\textsuperscript{10} However, the situation has not always been like this, as McGrath writes in \textit{Materials Evaluation and Design for Language Teaching}:

In the global ‘structural’ (audiolingual) textbooks of the late 1960s and early 1970s, lessons typically began with specially written dialogues and stories about fictional people. While these texts where sometimes interesting and occasionally amusing for the most part they were contentless. They were no more than language-teaching texts.\textsuperscript{11}

Lundahl describes the situation before the communicative approach in English broke through during the 1980’s in terms of knowledge \textit{about} the language being viewed as a precondition for pupils’ opportunities to develop knowledge \textit{in} the language.\textsuperscript{12} The turn from the grammar-oriented approach to a communicative model, paved the way for a situation where content is negotiated between teachers and their pupils.

English can also be viewed as a cultural subject that includes various possibilities, since it includes everything from popular culture to literature from different epochs and knowledge about everyday life and society systems of different English speaking countries.\textsuperscript{13}

\section*{1.2 Aim and research questions}

The overall aim of this thesis is to interview teachers of English and History about their thoughts and reasoning on different educational materials, what criteria they go by when they decide what to base their teaching on and what they feel influence them in doing so, something that we hope to achieve by interviewing teachers in these two subjects. The reason for choosing English and History, apart from the two subjects being part of our degree, is that they also represent what can be said to be two different subjects with different aims and objectives. It is, however, significant to emphasize that this study does not primarily aim at comparing the two subjects and draw any final conclusions concerning their differences.

Our more specific aim is instead to relate teachers’ attitudes towards educational materials to their own teaching and pupils’ learning. By doing so we hope to reach a better understanding

\textsuperscript{10} Lundahl, Bo, 2005, Unpublished material.
\textsuperscript{11} McGrath, 2002, p. 205.
\textsuperscript{12} Lundahl, 2005.
\textsuperscript{13} Lundahl, 2005.
of how teachers reflect on the relation between educational materials, teaching and pupils’ learning.

Along with the curriculum we also intend to use a broader definition of educational materials and include all the material that is used in a learning situation, such as textbooks, music, pictures, articles, movies, internet, and literature and so on.

The study sets out to answer the following question:

- How do some teachers of English and History perceive the role of different educational materials with regard to their own teaching and pupils’ learning?

1.3 The Frame Factor Theory

Since the aim of our research has been to explore teacher’s thoughts and attitudes on educational materials we have used theory as both an explanatory and a problem generating tool. Another important aspect of our use of theory has to do with the fact that it has helped us interpret and understand our collected data, which will be displayed later.

As an overall theory we have used the frame factor theory, presented in 1967 by Urban Dahllöf with the purpose to “explain differentiations within the Swedish compulsory comprehensive school.” It was originally intended as a tool for “the study of precise and well defined problems concerning the conditions, realisations and outcomes of the teaching process.” The essential meaning of this being, as Christina Gustavsson points out in Frame factors and the educational process, that “this process has to be interpreted to factors limiting the process.”

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The theory has thus, since the late sixties, been developed and modified further by researchers such as Ulf P. Lundgren and Arfwedson and Arfwedson, and even though the theory was developed during a period when the Swedish school system was still controlled by the state, many researchers argue that it is still useful when analysing educational processes.

[...] there is no point in arguing that the frame factor theories fit more to a centralized and regulated education system and that deregulation and decentralisation implied an increased space for teachers and head teachers. On the contrary, in a decentralized and deregulated system there is an increased need to capture implications of differences in constraints for educational measures and their outcomes, e.g. in terms of equity.19

The later development of frame factors can nowadays be said to consist of a division of different factors, such as the division between the inner and outer system. These two systems can to a large extent be said to consist of a categorisation of internal and external factors that has a continuous affect on the teaching content. These factors also make teachers involved in processes that takes place outside of their teaching domain and make them involved in other areas outside of the classroom, which is clearly demonstrated in local work plans, syllabuses and grading criteria.20

The figure shown on the next page is adapted from Arfwedson and Arfwedson and it aims to illustrate the enormous complexity both behind and within education. The model thereby tries to categorize all those factors that control and interfere with the content in schools and the teaching concerning this content.21

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Den övre delen av figuren (fälten 1 -11), med staten och kommunen i centrum, beskriver skolsystemets yttre ramar; det har styrmedel (bl.a. skollag och läroplaner resp. ekonomi och skolplaner) och kontrollorgan. Den nedre delen av figuren (fälten 12 – 15) beskriver det inre ramssystemet, som kännetecknar varje enskild skola och som skapar dess unika situation inom ett skolsystem bestående av flera tusen skolor.  

As displayed by the figure above, the outer frame system consists of factors affected by decisions made by the state and the local authorities, such as the national curriculum, economic resources, etc. It can therefore be said to lie outside and within, as a more indirect and non-figurative effect on teachers’ everyday situation. The outer frames do not only deal with the needs of the society, it also deals with the demands of it, something which could be explained by the high influence of legal, economic and ideological factors of the society.

The inner factors consist of features that have a direct and daily impact on teachers and pupils in schools, such as teachers, school management, physical buildings, etc.

The inner system also includes the performing field, which is defined by every particular school and the teachers and pupils operating there. The school code is another category included in this system that concern ways of thinking and action strategies.

Arfwedson and Arfwedson point out that their model is a shortened version but that it even so gives a hint of the educational complexity in a school system. In regard to our own research, where we have investigated teachers’ thoughts and reasoning on educational materials, we also felt that the model was useful since it mirrored the conditions surrounding the teacher and the intricacy of the process involved. The model also helped us understand and give meaning to our material as well as assist us in structuring and placing the results in a wider context.

Gustavsson is one of the scholars who think that the frame factor theory is highly applicable on a theoretical level, but at the same time she also acknowledges that the model could do with a more practical approach where “data material which […] illustrates how the actors interpret the conditions of the teaching- and learning-processes” is highly valuable. It is therefore also our hope that this study will be a step in that direction, as we in our research are directing the focus on the practical reasoning of the teacher. As Lindblad, Linde and Naeslund point out in *frame factor theory and practical reason*, “the actors, their intentions, judgements and strategies are of importance in order to capture the meaning of teaching and the outcomes of this process,” while they at the same time criticize the frame factor theory “since [the theory] have little interest in the meaning of teaching from the actors’ point of view.” And they continue: “In this sense the frame factor theory approach can thus be understood as part of increasing cleavage between frame factor theorising and research on the one hand and the practical reasoning of teachers on the other”. Having said this, it is however important to point out that our research has a clear focus on teaching materials and that all research conducted has been done within this context and that the data collected thereby also are context based.

2 Literature review

The definition of educational material as being synonymous with the textbook is a common perception which to a high extent also seems to be frequent among teachers within the school domain. A lot of the research today still focuses on the textbook, and disregard, other educational material. The research conducted on textbooks has traditionally been divided into these three categories:

- Process-oriented textbook research
- Use-oriented textbook research
- Product-oriented textbook research

Ann-Christine Juhlin Svensson describes these three categories as follows. The first category, *process-oriented textbook research* focuses on the history of the textbook as such. Research concerning this area has to do with the process of writing, directing, advertising, selections and distributions. *Use-oriented textbook research* focuses instead on the textbook as a tool for teaching and how it is used by teachers and pupils. This research is based on questions concerning power, availability, and efficiency. *Product-oriented textbook research* has to do with the content of the textbook; it provides information on a special object that is studied with a focus on underlying values and the purpose of the content. As Svensson also points out, the research can either be within one of the three categories or function across these boundaries.

Previous research has often focused on the content of educational materials, and more specifically of textbooks. It is therefore difficult to place our research completely into one of these categories, since we are interested in teachers’ thoughts and attitudes on educational materials in a broader context, not placing the textbook itself in focus. Since the study of educational materials is not a study of its own, the category of “use-oriented textbook research” can be said to be the research area most closely related to our own.

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A study that also sets out to use the broader definition of educational material is the earlier mentioned dissertation by Svensson. Her main purpose is to describe and analyse the function and use of educational media in teaching through the understanding of teachers and librarians at upper secondary level. The study has been very useful to us due to its extensive field of study. However, her thesis is coloured by its time (the late nineties) and its blind belief in the positive outcome of IT-integrated education. She writes in her abstract: “More flexible learning strategies for pupils appeared when teachers had a positive attitude towards informational technology.”

*New Educational Media and Textbooks* by Selander, Tholey and Lorentzen is another book within this area. With anthology texts like “The exit of textbooks, the rise of flexible educational media” by Joseph Klep, it gives the theme of educational media an interesting focus. It also focuses on the challenging choices that teachers are confronted with when deciding suitable educational material for their lessons. The book brings up ideas with references to the IARTEM conference in Utrecht in The Netherlands that even though “textbooks are still of great importance, [there is also a] necessity of looking at new media and new forms of distribution of, in a wide sense, educational ‘texts’.” Even this book focuses mainly on textbooks and information technology, and does not fully recognize the teachers that use them, and what criteria they go by when choosing educational material. However they acknowledge that it is not only for educational reasons that you have to adapt your educational material, social reasons are also important.

Two reports that similar to our own study investigate educational material from a teacher perspective are; *Engelska i åtta europeiska länder* by Skolverket, and *Lärarens attityder till läromedel: Rapport om enkätundersökningar bland lärare om läroböcker och läromedel* by Sören Levén at the initiative of Föreningen Svenska Läromedelsproducenter, FSL in 2003. *Engelska i åtta europeiska länder* is an extensive survey involving some 12 000 participating 15-16-year old pupils and 561 teachers. Its aim is to investigate pupils’ knowledge and

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29 Juhlin Svensson, 2000, Abstract
30 International Association for Research on Textbooks and Educational Media
31 Selander, Staffan, Tholey, Marita, Lorentzen, Svein, *New educational media and textbooks*, back cover
perception of English at the end of compulsory school in eight European countries. It also includes teachers’ thoughts on the English subject. The questions concerning teachers include many aspects of teaching and learning English, one of them being the use of textbooks and other resources. The surveys clearly indicate that a majority of teachers use a textbook when teaching English (94%).\(^{34}\) It also gives an overview of what other materials are used by teachers of English.

Levén’s report consists of eighteen questions concerning educational materials and deals with the accessibility of educational material and how they function. The web based survey was answered by 766 teachers ranging from grade four- to upper secondary level. Even though 563 teachers in this report gave their personal views on teaching materials, quantitative research often neglects or gives the participants a limited opportunity to express and explain their thoughts and reasoning. In addition researchers do not have the opportunity to ask for elucidation or follow up questions. Even so, this type of research is also valuable, not least when relating research, such as our own, to a broader context. Concerning the use of textbooks, Levén found out that 82% of the teachers questioned used them regularly.

3 Methodology

Since we were interested in reaching teachers’ thoughts and attitudes about educational materials the method that we felt best lent itself to answer the research question was the qualitative one. In contrast to the quantitative method it aims to: “capture the perspectives that actors use as a basis for their actions in specific social settings.”35 Through qualitative procedures we thereby hoped to get a better understanding of the teachers’ didactical considerations.

3.1 The fields of study

We conducted our research at two compulsory schools situated in the south of Sweden. Due to the need for anonymity, we decided to name the two schools, School A and B.

School A is one out of nine compulsory schools in a town with approximately 30 000 inhabitants. The school has about 500 pupils and 50 teachers in a sector that integrates pupils from preschool to grade nine. The school’s vision is to reflect a society in all its positive shapes and forms. Even though the average age among teachers is still high, a number of younger teachers have been employed the last few years.

School B on the other hand is located in a town with about approximately 102 000 inhabitants and it is one out of ten compulsory schools. The school includes pupils from preschool to grade nine. The school has an academic reputation and a majority of the pupils come from a middle or upper class background. Many of the teachers have been employed at the school for many years and the average age among the teachers is high. From talking to the pupils and the teachers, they all seem to appreciate the school climate and the fact that learning is given a primary role.

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3.2 Participants

The participants in this study are all teachers that we have come in contact with during our teaching practice. The fact that we thereby already knew all of the participants of course also coloured our description of them and later also our analysis of their answers. The brief portraits found below present facts that have been brought forth by the surveys, the interviews but also from our relationship with the teachers. We have also had the opportunity to see many of the teachers in numerous teaching situations, during our teaching practice, which has made it possible for us to relate their answers to their teaching and thereby get a better understanding of their reasoning.

Due to the need for anonymity the teachers participating in this study were given pseudonyms, names with the initial letter E signifying English teachers and H signifying teachers of History

School A

Ellen
Ellen is a calm and positive person who teaches English and Swedish. She is 52-years old and has worked as a teacher for 34 years. She emphasizes the importance of pupils having a positive view on learning and she wants her pupils to see English as something beyond the school subject.

Elisabeth
Elisabeth is an energetic and social person, who has worked as a teacher for 30 years. She is 63 years old and teaches English and Swedish. As a teacher she is both competent and creative and well respected by her pupils.

Hannah
Hannah is 29 years old and she has worked as a teacher at school A since 2004. She graduated in 2002 and she teaches Swedish, History, Religion, Geography and Social Science. An important aspect of History for Hannah is to draw parallels from historical events to some of today’s occurrences, and come to the insight that you can learn from the past.
Henry

Henry is a teacher of History, Geography, Social Science and Religion. He is 30 years old and has worked as a teacher for 5 years, 4 of them at school A. Much of his own interest lies in 20th century History and he brings forth themes like human rights, democracy and the little lonely man/woman’s voice against the establishment.

School B

Eve

Eve teaches French, English and Gymnastics. She has worked as a teacher for 29 years and is 56 years old. She is a committed and creative person who is well updated on current research on educational issues, and has partly combined her profession as a teacher with studies.

Emily

Emily is 54 years old. She is a positive and outgoing person and has worked as a teacher for 35 years. She teaches English and German and you can tell that she has a genuine interest in doing so. Her pupils regard her as a good teacher and she is indeed popular and well thought of by them.

Helen

Helen is a well prepared and structured teacher that clearly takes great interest in her subjects, History, Social Science and Geography. She is 61 years old and has worked as a teacher for 35 years. It is of importance to her that her pupils understand today’s society and connect it to what has happened in the past.

Harriet

Harriet has worked as a teacher for 22 years and she is a talkative, sociable and friendly person. She is 56 years old and teaches in history, religion and geography. What she feels important is to create an urge for her pupils to learn more. She also, more specifically feels that it is important to have a past, present and future perspective imbedded in the education.
3.3 Surveys

As a first step in our gathering of data we handed out surveys, since we wanted to introduce the teachers to our area of studies and at the same time give them time to reflect on the questions at hand, something we hoped would prepare them for the interviews and also contribute to more exhaustive answers. The surveys were based on open-ended questions with a qualitative purpose which arose from the fact that we believe that by putting words on your thoughts, you also reflect and become more aware of them. This approach however also has its drawbacks which we are well aware of: it is time-consuming for teachers to fill in open-ended questions and teachers easily become stressed. If so, this will have an effect on the outcome. We therefore felt an extra need for the survey to be short and concise.

By informing the teachers about the aim of our research, and by handing out the survey in person, making it possible for them to take it home and reflect on it, we hoped to be able to receive carefully worded responses. Even though we orally introduced our area of topic and our aims and objectives, we also attached an information sheet to our surveys, describing the purpose of the research as well as pointing out that everyone participating did so anonymously. The information sheet also contained information on where the teachers could contact us if they had any questions and the reason for adding this to the survey was because we wanted everyone to be well aware of what they participated in and that they felt secure in doing so.

The surveys also functioned as what Johansson and Svedner call a “screening” – method, meaning that they beside the open-ended questions consisted of background questions concerning the teachers’ age, sex and work experience, which provided us with a wide background. The surveys were thereby an important part of our sampling; they made it possible for us to choose from a varied selection of teachers to interview.

The survey questions were formulated in Swedish, partly because the study is done in a Swedish context, but mostly because we wanted the respondents to feel comfortable and at

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36 See appendix 2.
39 See appendix 1.
ease when answering them, and not restricted by language barriers. We also wanted to be able to use the same survey for teachers of both English and History and it might have been odd for teachers of History to answer questionnaires in English, especially since English expressions and concepts might create misunderstandings.

Finally, the surveys also added new angles, and they brought our attention to limitations and difficulties within our study that we were able to improve prior to the interviews. However, we were also aware that by doing so we also ran the risk of the participants affecting our research in a certain direction, something that we tried to steer clear of. To sum up, the surveys were useful at an early stage of this study and they had not only prepared the informants for the interviews but also us.

### 3.4 Interviews

Based on the aims of our research we felt that the best tool for collecting data was by interviewing teachers of the two subjects, History and English. As Hatch points out this is by far the best way to understand the informants’ experiences, thoughts and reasoning.\(^{42}\) This also meant that there was not any material available and that we instead had to create our own sources, which relate to the fact that we as researchers never can bring our background and experiences under control, that we can never be fully objective.\(^{43}\)

The interviews used in this study have all been in-depth interviews characterized by a flexible structure, meaning “that they are designed to go deeply into the understandings of the informants.”\(^{44}\) They proceeded from guiding and topic based questions that were open to follow the leads of informants and probing areas that arose during the interviews.\(^{45}\)

In order to acquire the appropriate information we prepared an interview guide with question areas and open-ended questions to discuss.\(^{46}\) Since we wanted to receive exhaustive answers and also because the interviewees requested so, we also provided the informants with these question areas prior to the interview. Since the interviewees thereby were well prepared, we

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\(^{42}\) Hatch, 2002, p. 23.
\(^{44}\) Hatch, 2002, p. 94.
\(^{45}\) Hatch, 2002, p. 94.
\(^{46}\) See appendix 3.
were able to take on the role of listeners and the informants were able to speak freely around the topic areas. When necessary, we also used so called follow-up questions related to the informants’ responses where we asked the interviewees to clarify their answers or develop their point of views. During the interviews we also tried to avoid complex questions and concepts that might have confused the interviewee and resulted in limiting answers.

The interviews were carried out in the school environment, in a calm setting during school time and given that we already knew the teachers at our respective school placements, we decided to do the interviews individually. We felt this benefited our research since there was an already existing trust. Our relationship with the interviewees also affected the outcome of the interview since those who contributed to our research did so with their expectations and their views on what was expected of them.

In order to make the interviewees feel secure and willing to share their thoughts and experiences we carefully pointed out that we were there because of a genuine interest in their thoughts and reasoning concerning educational materials. All in all we did eight interviews with four English teachers and four teachers of History.

Since we knew the informants beforehand we also ran the risk of letting their thoughts and reasoning being left out or taken for granted during the interviews. Our relationship with the interviewees and the conversation did however change as we took on the role of listener and a tape recorder documented what was being said, a situation that initially restricted most of the interviewees. Our personal bond with the interviewees was nevertheless an advantage as it made the interview situation more relaxed and less informal. It is our hope that the already existing trust resulted in more sincere and honest answers. The relationship did however reinforce how difficult it is to balance the involvement and distance.

When analyzing the data collected, we used what Hatch calls typological a approach. He describes this as a process that “starts by dividing the overall data set into categories or groups based on predetermined typologies.” In our study this meant that we read through the

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47 Hatch, 2002, p. 95.
48 Johansson, Svedner, 2004, p. 27.
50 Johansson, Svedner, 2004, p. 27.
interviews and looked for recurring themes, patterns and relationships related to the interviewees’ answers, which resulted in eight categories under which the teachers’ thoughts and reasoning are described.
4 Results

4.1 Surveys

Since the surveys were used to prepare and introduce the participants to our area of study, the survey questions were clearly related to the interview guide, dealing with the same issues. As a result, the findings of the surveys are also important since they add to and complement the interviews. The presentation of the results is not given question by question; instead the outcome of the surveys is summarized under categories related to the questions. The exception is question number 7 which instead is presented in figures, with the purpose of giving the reader an overview of to what extent the participating teachers use different teaching materials.

As mentioned earlier, the surveys were handed out in person to 15 teachers whereof 13 responded. Those who did not respond were both female teachers and the reason given for not participating was because of a heavy workload. Among the respondents, 11 were female and 2 male. Divided into age-groups, three of them were between 25-35 years of age, four of them between the age of 46-55 and six of them were aged 56-65. The teachers had an average of 24 years of professional experience. All of them representing either English or History.

With regard to teachers’ use of different educational materials, the figures below illustrate how often teachers of English and History use the material mentioned in question number 7. We are fully aware of the fact that thirteen participants is not enough to get an general overview of teachers’ use of different materials. However, we still find the figures below useful since they in an obvious way indicate how often the contributing teachers of English respectively History use different educational materials in their teaching.

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52 See appendix 2
How often do you use the textbook in your teaching?

Teachers of English
- Never: 0%
- Sometimes: 0%
- Often: 0%
- Very often: 100%

Teachers of History
- Never: 0%
- Sometimes: 0%
- Often: 14%
- Very often: 86%

How often do you use TV or films in your teaching?

Teachers of English
- Never: 0%
- Sometimes: 100%
- Often: 0%
- Very often: 0%

Teachers of History
- Never: 0%
- Sometimes: 100%
- Often: 0%
- Very often: 0%

How often do you use computers in your teaching?

Teacher of English
- Never: 0%
- Sometimes: 100%
- Often: 0%
- Very often: 0%

Teachers of History
- Never: 0%
- Sometimes: 100%
- Often: 0%
- Very often: 0%
How often do you use articles from newspapers in your teaching?

Teachers of English
- Never 0%
- Sometimes 80%
- Often 20%
- Very often 0%

Teachers of History
- Never 0%
- Sometimes 86%
- Often 14%
- Very often 0%

How often do you use the Internet in your teaching?

Teachers of English
- Never 0%
- Sometimes 100%
- Often 0%
- Very often 0%

Teachers of History
- Never 0%
- Sometimes 86%
- Often 14%
- Very often 0%

How often do you use literature in your teaching?

Teachers of English
- Never 0%
- Sometimes 50%
- Often 17%
- Very often 33%

Teachers of History
- Never 29%
- Sometimes 29%
- Often 42%
- Very often 0%
Five of the thirteen respondents added to the alternatives stated. Two English teachers and one History teacher added that they every now and then use music in their teaching and another English teacher declared that she uses it often. Two of the History teachers also stated that they sometimes use older textbooks in their teaching.

**Interfering factors when selecting teaching materials**

Teachers of both subjects and the English teachers in particular, mentioned that materials should be interesting and motivate pupils, something that many teachers also associate with the material being “nytt och fräscht,” “uppdaterat och aktuellt.” Teachers of both subjects also point to the importance of structure, layout and language. They feel that the material needs to be well structured, clear and well arranged and that the language level must be appropriate to the pupils. It was also noted by teachers of History that the texts in textbooks need to be well interlinked with the pictures so that they can be used as a whole. Teachers of English on the other hand pointed out that texts should be useful in a communicate approach and that the material used (often the textbook) should be supportive and give continuity and a sense of security to both the teacher and the pupils.

What teachers of History felt affected their selection of material otherwise seemed to be very context based, depending on what event or period of time were being dealt with, meaning that depending on the historic context material such as literature, films, articles, etc would be more or less useful. The data also revealed that teachers in both subjects think it is important that the materials do not control or limit them too much in their teaching, but instead give them room to adjust and use complementing materials according to the needs of the pupils.
On the whole, a majority of teachers, of both English and History, bring forth issues that for the most part concern the material in itself, not so much the conditions surrounding the teacher and his or her teaching. Having said that, time and economy were also issues that were mentioned as factors that affected a minor group of teachers’ selection of material. Due to the restricted amount of lessons the teacher has with each class, time consequently has to be used wisely with help from efficient material. Economy was only mentioned by two teachers (one teacher of English and one of History at school B), who feel that they sometimes need to compromise when selecting materials.

**Teaching materials in relation to teaching and pupils’ learning**

All teachers who responded to our surveys acknowledged that their selection of materials has an effect on how they carry out their teaching. One teacher of History refers to how her lesson might change depending on what material she uses:

*Läroboken gör att det oftast blir läsa, svara på frågor, diskutera och rätta medan bilder till exempel öppnar upp för andra infallsvinklar och inte begränsar eleverna i deras tänkande.*

Other teachers, particularly of History, also relate pupils’ reception of the material to how they as teachers present it, meaning that the material used and the teachers’ presentation of it also will come to reflect the pupils’ views on it.

Furthermore, teachers of both subjects state that the textbook can either restrict or support teachers and learners. They also state that pupils often interpret the textbook as boring. A teacher of History also mentions that her pupils seem to appreciate whenever she uses other materials besides the textbook and a teacher of English claims that “en tråkig bok som är allför pluggig dämpar elevernas intresse och begränsar mitt annars (förhoppningsvis) stimulerande inflytande”.

A starting-point for many teachers seems to be that they have their pupils in mind when they select their material and plan their teaching and that they thereby hope to inspire their pupils into learning. A majority of teachers also mention how pupils learn in different ways and how you therefore need to vary your use of material. Other teachers also reflect on how a variety
of materials can motivate and inspire pupils into learning. Teachers of both subjects, but for
the most part English, also point out that you need to use different materials depending on
what language level the pupils are at and that you as they mature can give them more freedom
to choose and for themselves.

4.2 Interviews

The findings of the interviews are on the whole closely linked to the results of the surveys
since they are both based on the same type of questions. The results of the interviews did
however give us a deeper understanding of the teachers’ thoughts and reasoning.
To facilitate the reading of our results we decided to present the interview findings into
frequently occurring themes as displayed below.53

The role of the teacher

Many teachers state what might seem to be the obvious, namely that they as individuals
influence what material they select for their teaching. Elisabeth for example points out that if
she reads a good book or watches a good movie she often thinks about if, and how she could
use it in her teaching; she is always on the lookout for good material that she can use in her
teaching.

Jag vet för flera år sedan så var jag och såg den här Joseph and his amazing technicolor dream
coat och den gjorde ett makalöst intryck på mig den musiken, så sedan använde jag mig av den i
min undervisning i två omgångar efter det och sen så hade någon av eleverna någon tecknad film
om Joseph och hans bröder och då tittade vi på den givetvis. 54

Henry also indicate that his view on the subject influences what material he chooses: "det
måste stämma överens med min syn på undervisning och vad jag tycker är viktigt."55 He
values that pupils can reflect on what has happened in the past and draw conclusions from it
and he therefore also prefer materials and methods that convey this type of reasoning. Henry
furthermore adds that he as teacher also plays an important role in how well the pupils are

54 Elisabeth, 2005-11-16.
able to achieve these goals. His teaching has to complement the material he uses and assist pupils on the way.

Using materials that you believe in and enjoy is another aspect that many teachers feel influence how their pupils perceive the subject and the material. Harriet believes that this is something that will shine through when you present the subject and that you therefore need to present the material in an exciting way so that the enthusiasm rubs off on the pupils.

**Steering documents**

Most of the teachers interviewed do not feel that steering documents such as the national curriculum, the syllabus or local work plans affect their selection of material to a greater extent and none of the interviewed feel restricted by any of these documents when they select their material. Ellen does however reflect on her early days as a teacher and how she used to prepare materials for her teaching and how it then used to be different:

> De första åren så läste jag medvetet igenom kursplaner och lokala arbetsplaner och sådant där när jag skulle börja lägga upp mitt arbete och välja material, men sen så efterhand hoppas man, eller man förutsätter nog att tillräckligt mycket sitter kvar i bakhuvudet så att man behöver inte längre kontrollera sig.  

Henry also tells us that when he started working at School A, at that time as the only teacher of History, he decided to revise the local goals and grading criteria, since he felt that the previous ones were too detailed, telling him what periods in history to teach when, in what order and even what textbook to use and what chapters and pages to go through at what time. Other teachers of both subjects and at both schools also relate to the significance of the local work plans not being too detailed but that they instead should give teachers enough freedom to use whatever material he or she feels benefit the pupils.

**Collaboration within the subject**

An issue that was brought forth by all teachers, but with reference to different experiences has to do with how teachers of English and History collaborate with teachers within their subject.

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Henry, who can be said to be the only teacher teaching the subject History at School A, is used to working on his own and sees both advantages and disadvantages in doing so, one of the beneficial aspects of it being that he does not have to compromise when for example selecting material. Henry, however, feels that the drawbacks are more evident and he is aware that he misses out on a lot of useful discussions concerning the subject history and practical tips and ideas on good materials and methods from fellow colleagues. This is in contrast to Emily who describes her situation as fortunate due to the fact that she has a colleague in her cross-curricular team that shares the same subject as her, which she describes enables them to plan their teaching, select materials and exercises that they later can discuss and evaluate together. Helen, who also works at school B is not as positive as her colleague. She describes how there used to be a well established collaboration between teachers sharing her subject, with whom she selected materials and discussed topic issues, etc. Nowadays, she says, there is no time for that collaboration, as the cross-curricular team reform has shattered much of that relationship: "vi samarbetade mycket mer förr men vi har inte haft den tiden och det saknar jag, arbetslagen har förstört väldigt mycket av samarbetet inom ämnena."

Materials and methods

Early on in the interview Eve referred to the fact that she thinks it is difficult to separate the choice of material from the choice of method. She tells us that the textbook partly decides what she does and how she does it, but sometimes she also decides on a method and what she wants her pupils to practise before she decides on what material to use. Henry also sees this as an important concern. When he selects his material it is important to him that the material has well thought through guidelines and useful methods. Another teacher who clearly interlinks material and methods to each other is Ellen, who feels that it is significant for her to know what methods the pupils have used at an earlier stage in their learning, so that she can adapt material and methods to what they are used to. Helen also points out that History often can be interpreted as a print based subject whereas she feels that it all depends on what material and methods you use and she tries to vary her teaching so that her pupils are able to show their understanding both orally and in writing.

57 Helen, 2005-11-18.
Inspiring and interesting materials

All teachers interviewed point to the importance of choosing material that inspire and get pupils interested in the subject. Harriet tells us that it is a natural thing for her to use material that is current and relates to the pupils’ everyday life. “Visar eleverna ett intresse för någonting och det är möjligt för mig att förstärka det så är det en självklarhet,”58 she also informs us on how she prepares her teaching and how she tries to adapt the material to both herself and her pupils.

Påbörjar jag ett avsnitt om till exempel uppfinnare och upptäcktsresor, då lägger jag ner jätte mycket tid på att plocka material några veckor innan jag ska ha det, och på att läsa in det och formulerar det med ord och meninger som passar mig, som jag kan uttrycka och sen så givetvis så måste jag veta att materialet passar eleverna också, jag måste inriktta det lite, jag måste sälja det på något sätt och därför väljer jag lite material och lite ord som passar just de eleverna.59

Teachers of both subjects also mention that pupils often refer to the textbook as boring, that it has “en tråkighets-stämpel,”60 as Hannah expresses it. Emily does however feel that it is first and foremost her job to make sure that her pupils learn the English language and how to use it, and even though the textbook might seem boring to many pupils, she feels that they learn from it.

Mentioned by many is also the fact that the teachers’ profession is complex, and one of the complexities is to reach pupils at different levels, with different interests. Helen reveals that she has tried different educational materials and that she often chooses the one that she thinks best adapts itself to the pupils. Both Emily and Helen acknowledge that their pupils may be familiar with certain subject matters that may well affect what material they choose. They for example mention that many of the pupils at School B, travel a lot, and meet different cultures:

Dom har ju referenser, dom har ju så säga varit överallt i världen och känner till det och det, och man kan ta in det i undervisningen ganska mycket, så att det blir ju mycket mer utvikningar, mer bredvid grejor.61

60 Hannah, 2005-11-21.
61 Helen, 2005-11-18.
Dom har stora erfarenheter språkmässigt, dom har rest mycket, de flesta har till exempel varit i England, dom vet mycket erfarenhetsmässigt och det påverkar ju ens val av material.  

**Language, layout and content**

An issue that teachers bring much attention to concerns the language of different materials, the content and layout. A majority of teachers point to the importance of the content and language being appropriate to the pupils, so that they can grasp what is being said and understand the meaning of it. For Henry this often means that he has to compromise:

> Det kan tyckas tråkigt att texten hela tiden ska urholkas, man tar lite av det historiska innehållet när man förenklar, men ska man överhuvudtaget få fram något till eleverna så får man ta något som tilltalar dem, och visst då kommer man till böcker med lättare, luftigare text, med bilder som knyter an till texten.  

The text itself was also the reason why Henry decided not to use the textbook that had been used by the previous teacher of History at School A.

> Boken såg tråkig ut, det var en tunn text på något sätt, och om den inte tilltalar mig, som är så att säga är utbildad, och jag inte ser och förstår det som står där och jag ser att texten är för komplicerad, att den är svår, hur ska jag då få en sjunde klassare att förstå, den låg helt enkelt på en för hög nivå.

Hannah is another teacher who also acknowledges the problem with texts being too advanced or complex, she has however also experienced the shortcomings of the content being too simplified; “läromedel ska inte vara alldeles för kompaka för då finns det inga förklaringar och då är det svårt för eleverna att förstå sammanhang, de får inte vara för förenklade.”

She instead feels that a better way of assisting pupils is by presenting the text orally to them, explaining the difficulties so that they understand, she also adds that narration is an important part of History and that pupils often take pleasure in listening.

Both Harriet and Eve also tell us that they feel that it is significant that you adapt your language to the pupils and use your own words, and words that they are familiar with. Harriet

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62 Emily, 2005-11-16.
64 Henry, 2005-11-21.
however tells us that material that might be too advanced for the pupils might still be useful to her as a teacher.

Jag använder jättemycket mina gamla historieböcker som var otroligt mer detaljerande än vad dagens är, och använder dom när jag berättar, jag tycker mycket om att berätta, därför att texterna i läroböckerna är ofta för svåra för eleverna, inte att läsa kanske men att förstå, så därför gör jag väldigt mycket så att jag berättar, i varje fall i första hand så att de har en förförståelse och sen kan det då bli att de läser vissa avsnitt själva och tar in lite mer detaljer.66

The fact that the material has to address the pupils as illustrated above also account for the layout and not only the content or the language. Many teachers of both subjects tell us that colours, font and pictures play an important part in how pupils perceive the material. As Ellen has experienced, an attractive layout can sometimes deceive you and it is sometimes difficult to find a balance between layout, content and language:

Vi gjorde faktiskt ett felval därför att då vi köpte på layouten och tyckte att JA!, den här ser jätte trevlig ut, men när vi sedan hade följt den i en och en halv termin så kände vi att elevernas ordförråd var så litet, vi är fortfarande inte klara över varför […] man brukar ju alltid lägga till lite extra men på något viss gick det inte in där så plockade vi bort det läromedlet och gick tillbaka till det gamla där vi fick mycket bättre effekt […] och när man inte har mer pengar att röra sig med än vad vi har nuförtiden så vill man inte göra sådana missar.67

**Foundation, structure and sense of security**

Most of the teachers interviewed described the use of a textbook as a foundation that they add on to, and relate to other materials. Elisabeth feels that she might sound boring and traditional, but she thinks it is important that pupils at an early stage acquire a basic knowledge of the English language and she thinks a “good” textbook can give them that. She refers to the textbook as a useful tool, which gives pupils a structure in their learning, to which they can add knowledge, something that she feels give the pupils a sense of security. As they get older, develop their English skills and become more responsible she subsequently adds more additional materials to her teaching. Helen’s reasoning is in agreement with Elisabeth’s, she often starts using the textbook in grade six, because she feels that they need to start practising taking responsibility for their own learning, how to find information from different sources

and so on. As they reach grade eight and nine she then gives them more “freedom” and they work more individually or in groups with different themes and materials that either she or the pupils have selected. Both Helen and Elisabeth nevertheless point out that it all depends on the group of pupils they are teaching, some pupils they say, need more guidance, need to practise taking responsibility, whereas others early on work well on their own.

That the material used depends on the pupils is very clear and Henry is another example of this. He tells us that when he teaches an advanced group of pupils that “slukar material” he uses more material from different sources outside of the textbook.

**Variation**

During our interviews it became evident that many teachers advocate a wide use of materials in their teaching. Emily thinks this is one of the most important aspects of choosing material. She, as other teachers, is also familiar with pupils’ notion of “the boring textbook” and thinks it is essential that you as a teacher vary the material you use so that you get their attention and motivate them in their learning. Hannah tells us that she prefers to use materials that she can add to and do different things with depending on the pupils she teaches, it is important to her that she can use the same material but vary her methods and not feel limited by it.

Henry informs us that he often tries to vary his teaching by using pictures as a didactic tool and not just different texts, "bilder kan ju skapa en inlevelseförmåga som gör att eleverna förflyttar sig i tid och rum och lever sig in på ett annat sätt." However, he distinguishes between photography and animation and tell us that some pupils have a hard time separating fact from fiction/simulation if it is not authentic pictures. He also adds that as his pupils become more advanced he is able to vary his selection of material further and give them more responsibility.

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5 Discussion

So far we have recognized patterns among our data, a process that has helped us get a clearer view of the teachers’ thoughts and reasoning concerning educational materials. We agree with Juhlin Svensson that educational materials are a part of a very complex user-process and that it is not possible to make any definite statements concerning their use as tools for education.\(^{70}\) As the discussion below will display, we however feel that frame factor theory is a “practical, analytical device,”\(^{71}\) which can provide us with an insight into how the teachers interviewed relate educational materials to their teaching and pupils’ learning.

The most apparent result of our research can be said to be the effect that the inner factors have on teachers’ selection of educational materials. All teachers, regardless of subject belonging, relate their choices of materials to their pupils, for example the pupils’ background, previous educational experiences, level of understanding and so on, which can also be related to society and teachers’ ideological and philosophical viewpoint on teaching and learning. As teaching takes place within the performing field where pupils and teachers are situated, this is also where teachers shape their practise and adapt to the local conditions.\(^{72}\) The teachers make use of these conditions in their teaching to motivate and inspire pupils, by using materials that is authentic, current and relate to the pupils’ interests and familiarity.

The close link between the performing field, the situation dependent and the school code thereby become evident. The nearby society, the culture and the pupils representing it and their needs and abilities have a great impact on what goes on in classrooms: “den didaktiska problematiken kan faktiskt inte frikopplas från den konkreta verklighet, inom vilken den […] formas”.\(^{73}\) It is a reality that affects how teachers think and function, that also relates to how teachers reason with reference to educational materials and pupils’ learning. Emily’s and Helen’s reasoning concerning their pupils’ earlier experiences and references is a clear example of this.

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\(^{70}\) Juhlin Svensson, 2000, p. 9.
\(^{73}\) Arfwedson & Arfwedson, 2002, p. 149.
Similar to studies such as *Engelska i åtta europeiska länder* and *Lärares attityder till läromedel*, a majority of the teachers in our research use the textbook very often in their teaching. This is despite the fact that the teachers of both English and History are familiar with the expression “the boring textbook” used by pupils in both subjects, a result that might seem contradictory since teachers tell us that they at the same time attempt to use materials that encourage and inspire pupils’ learning. The interviewed teachers do however relate this to pupils’ learning and especially young or poor learners’ need for structure and sense of security. To which they add that the use of a variety of materials is important since it relates to the group of pupils they are teaching, what level they are at and how they as teachers can use different materials to motivate and inspire them. The results from both the surveys and the interviews also point to the actuality that teachers to a high extent use the textbook, while they at same time also use a lot of complementary materials.

Our interviews also indicate that teachers are well aware of their own influence regarding what material they choose and why. Both Harriet and Ellen for example admit that their interests and own liking affect what material they choose, something they believe helps them to present the subject and the material in a way that will inspire and motivate their pupils to learn. Henry also reveals that it is important to him that the material focus on what he feels is important knowledge in History. The survey findings also show that many English teachers want their materials to be useful in a communicative approach, as they feel that this is a central part of knowing a language. Not only the teacher’s ideological and philosophical view on teaching and learning but also his or her view on the subject can thereby clearly be interlinked with what materials the teacher chooses.

The results from our research also imply that external factors are both indirectly and directly noticeable in our participants’ reasoning, for example steering documents such as the national curriculum and the syllabus, which should permeate teachers’ teaching. During our interviews all teachers tell us that they do not feel that these interfere or limit their selection of material. Harriet, however, points out that she in the beginning of her career used to read them intentionally in relation to her selection of materials, whereas she now instead believes she relates to them unconsciously. It is likely that the other teachers also do so without thinking about it, since their reasoning concerning teaching and pupils’ learning in many ways clearly recount what is being said in these documents, that the objectives of the steering documents have become embedded in the teachers’ practice, thus functioning as part of tacit knowledge.
While the national documents were not perceived as restricting by any of the teachers, Henry on the other hand felt restricted by a too detailed local work plan, telling him what material to use and in what way, a predicament that can be said to be formed by the tension between the national and local level, where teachers at a local level are given the freedom to interpret the syllabus and state how the goals are best achieved due to the local conditions. All teachers interviewed also agree that the local documents should not restrict teachers’ selection of material or teaching, but instead have a guiding function.

Another example of an outer factor that teachers feel interfere with their use and selection of educational material has to do with the dividing up of teachers into cross-curricular teams, something that according to teachers such as Helen, has shattered a well established collaboration between teachers teaching the same subject. The fellowship between subject teachers seem to be most unfair to teachers of History, maybe because History is a minor subject in relation to English. Cross-curricular teams often only consist of one teacher of History and two of English. The dilemma can be related to the tension in today’s schools between the national curriculum and the syllabus, described by Lundahl as the tension or balance between “å ena sedan värdegrundsfrågor och det s.k. socialisationsuppdraget, å andra sedan ämnesstudier och det s.k. kvalifikationsuppdraget.”

The findings of our research indicate that teachers’ reasoning concerning many of the themes presented so far are very similar and there are no obvious differences related to teachers’ subject belongings. The only aspect of our research where such differences can be detected concerns teachers’ reasoning on language and content. The distinction between the two subjects, English and History appear more evident in the survey findings, where teachers of English seem to focus more on pupils’ language level whereas teachers of History instead bring attention to the content and the historical context. The results relate to the fact that English is a language-driven subject while History is content-based. The findings of the interviews did however reduce this difference between the two subjects, as we in our analysis of the collected data found that teachers in their reasoning notice the importance of both language and content. Teachers of English for example strongly emphasised the significance of using materials where the content is interesting and relevant to the pupils and relate to their everyday life. Content then becomes a tool for conveying language, while language in History

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74 Lundahl, 2005.
becomes a tool for understanding structures and processes from a historical perspective. The teachers of History point to the importance of pupils being able to understand, assimilate and communicate the historical content.
6 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate how teachers of English and History perceive educational materials and how they relate these to their teaching and pupils’ learning. Our conclusion is based on an interpretation of the results from both surveys and interviews, with support from relevant literature within the field of study and frame factor theory.

It is initially important to emphasize that the selection and use of educational materials is part of a complex user-process, which not least become evident in teachers’ reasoning concerning the close connection between method and materials. Teachers’ reasoning also clearly illustrate how the use of educational materials is context-based, how the local conditions and the people within the performing field influence what material is selected and how it is used. Results that also indicate that educational materials in themselves do not have a function and that they do not become useful and meaningful until they are used by teachers and pupils in a context where learning takes place.

Unexpectedly, factors such as time and economy are only mentioned briefly by teachers participating in this study. According to the teachers interviewed much of their selection and use of materials instead involve pupils and their learning, and teachers’ reasoning undoubtedly indicate that socio-cultural factors such as pupils’ background, surrounding and earlier experiences have great influence on what material teachers of both English and History choose and how they use it. Teachers’ focus on pupils’ learning is thereby clearly linked to their own teaching and teachers, irrespective of subject belonging, seem to be very conscious in regard to what material they use and why, something that also become evident with reference to teachers’ use of textbooks. Teachers’ accentuation of a variation of material being used to inspire and motivate pupils furthermore exemplify that they first and foremost proceed from pupils’ learning.

The similarities between how teachers of English and History reason thereby become obvious and even if our research also demonstrate differences between the two, the most prominent result of our study is the rapprochement between the two. Our findings show how English teachers point to the importance of content as a tool for pupils to convey language while
teachers of History indicate the significance of language for pupils to understand and express historical processes. These movements can be said to illustrate the change the two subjects have gone through, a change where History no longer is viewed as an objective subject concerning facts about kings and wars but also processes in History related to today and critical thinking, and English has become more than a grammar oriented subject where pupils should learn about the language, it also makes use of content to communicate meaning. The two subjects’ approach towards each other in relation to form and function is thereby one of the main results of this study, which we find relevant and interesting. The definition of English as a language-based subject and History as a content-based subject is according to our research not as straightforward as it might seem, language and content are instead negotiable and the balance between the two is often set by the teacher when selecting materials. As the national documents give teachers great freedom within this area, there is room for different selections and emphasise and we feel that this is an interesting research area which can be investigated further.
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Skolverket.
Appendix 1

Examensarbete: Lärarens användande och tankar kring läromedel

Syftet med denna undersökning är att få en inblick i hur lärare i ämnena historia och engelska tänker kring olika läromedel och vilka kriterier de använder sig av då de väljer material.
– Med läromedel avser vi allt material som används i en inlärningssituation, så som pedagogiska texter (läroböcker), ljud, bilder, tidningsartiklar, spelfilmer, skönlitteratur, osv.

Det är viktigt att påpeka att vår avsikt inte är att undersöka lärare personligen och inte heller att döma eller bedöma någon. De lärare som medverkar i undersökningen förblir också anonyma och inga namn kommer att nämnas i den färdiga produkten!

Att man på enkäten ska fylla i sitt namn beror endast på att vi i efterhand ska ha möjligheten att eventuellt kunna kontakta personen i fråga för kompletterande frågor eller förtydligande. Tanken är att vi i ett senare skede ska kunna komplettera våra enkäter med ett antal intervjuer, detta för att få en så kvalitativ insikt i ämnet som möjligt.

Vi hoppas att du vill bidra till denna undersökning och att den kan ge ett givande utbyte av reflektioner!

Har du frågor eller dylikt var vänlig kontakta oss antingen via mail:
cam_iller@hotmail.com, marcus_saxell@hotmail.com, eller på telefon 0413 – 54 00 33.

Tack på förhand!

Camilla Svensson och Marcus Saxell lärarstuderande på Malmö Högskola
Appendix 2

Enkät

1. Skola:______________________________________________________________

2. Lärare:______________________________________________________________

3. Kön:   Man  Kvinna

4. Ålder:  25-35   36-45   46-55   56-65

5. Yrkeserfarenhet (år):______________________________________________________

6. Vilka ämnen undervisar du i? :__________________________________________________

7. Hur ofta använder du följande läromedel i din undervisning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lärobok</th>
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<th>ibland</th>
<th>ofta</th>
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<td>Tv program och film</td>
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<td>ibland</td>
<td>ofta</td>
<td>mycket ofta</td>
</tr>
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<td>ibland</td>
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<td>ibland</td>
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<td>Bilder</td>
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<td>aldrig</td>
<td>ibland</td>
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8. Vad påverkar dina val av läromedel, vilka kriterier använder du dig av?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
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9. Hur tycker du att dina val av läromedel påverkar din undervisning?

___________________________________________________________________________
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___________________________________________________________________________

10. Hur tror du att dina val av läromedel påverkar dina elevers lärande?

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___________________________________________________________________________

Tack för din medverkan!
Appendix 3

Interview guide

Introduktionsfrågor

– Frågor rörande lärarens bakgrund, utbildning och erfarenhet: verksamma yrkesår, anställning på skolan, undervisande ämne, etc.

Undervisning och läromedel:

- Hur påverkar läroplan, kursplaner och lokala arbetsplaner ditt val av läromedel?
- Hur ser du på förhållandet mellan olika läromedel och den tid och planering du lägger ner.
- Hur ser tillgång på material ut på din skola och hur kopplar du detta till dina val?
- På vilket sätt påverkar innehållet i olika material vad du väljer?
- Hur tror du läromedel påverkas av elevers förväntningar på undervisningen och ämnet (engelska/historia)?
- Hur påverkas dina val av att du i slutändan ska bedöma och betygsätta dina elever?
- Samarbetar du med någon annan då du väljer material? Hur påverkar det dina val?

Elevers lärande och läromedel:

- Hur påverkas dina val av vilka elever du undervisar, deras erfarenheter, bakgrund, etc.
- Hur resonerar du kring elevers utveckling och läroprocess och hur kopplar du det till dina val av läromedel? (ålder, mognad, etc)
- Hur tycker du att dina val av läromedel relateras till elevers lärande och prestationer? (process/resultat)
- Hur påverkar arbetsform och arbetssätt dina val av läromedel? (hur påverkar de varandra?)
- Hur tänker du kring begreppet tid i förhållande till elevers lärande och det material du använder dig av? (tillgänglig tid, lektioner, i skolan/utanför skolan)

Erfarenheter rörande läromedel

- Utifrån dina erfarenheter vad uppfattar du som nackdelar och fördelar respektive begränsningar och möjligheter med olika läromedel?
Frågor rörande kunskapssyn och ämnessyn

- Finns det något som du tycker är speciellt viktigt att dina elever lär sig i engelska/historia?
- Vad skulle du säga är det viktigaste i ämnet engelska/historia? Något speciellt moment, någon speciell kunskap som du vill betona i din undervisning?
- Vad vill du att dina elever ska bära med sig från din undervisning i engelska/historia? (förståelse, färdighet – slutgiltigt mål)