Engelska och lärande
15 högskolepoäng

Reading Comprehension

English reading instruction and comprehension in grade 6

Engelska läsundervisning och läsförståelse i årskurs 6

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Preface

This paper is written as part of our teacher training. We wrote it in collaboration with each other. This entire project was divided equally between us and we wrote almost the whole project in each other's presence. Only minor details were written while we were apart from one another. Some parts of the literature review were written individually by us, however, we want to stress that this entire project was based on cooperation and dedication between us.

We would like to express our gratitude for the three teachers who agreed to be interviewed by us and who allowed us to observe their lessons. Moreover, we want to thank our supervisor Björn Sundmark for his feedback on our degree project.
Abstract

The aim of this degree project is to examine how three 6th grade teachers implement reading instruction in their lessons. Furthermore, the aim is to investigate how they describe their work with reading comprehension. Our investigation is based on qualitative semi-structured interviews and observations. The results indicate that teachers do not explicitly teach reading strategies. Furthermore, teachers showed an awareness of students’ interests and took them into consideration during the lessons. For instance, the teachers argued that in order to motivate students to read, they must be provided with interesting texts. The findings also showed that all teachers emphasize vocabulary and they argue that the bigger the vocabulary is, the more effortless reading becomes.

Key concepts: Reading, reading comprehension, reading strategies, reading instruction, vocabulary, teaching
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1. Introduction

The English language has emerged as an international language as a result of the world becoming more globalized. Therefore, learning English is becoming more important in today’s society because it provides people with life-changing opportunities. It enables people from different countries and in complete opposite sides of the world to communicate with one another (McKay 2009, p. 5). Being able to read English and comprehend the content is essential in order to manage daily life where different types of texts surround us. Urquhart and Weir (1998) underline that second language (L2) readers of English from Western Europe have more shared knowledge to bring to English texts than other countries (p. 33). For instance, Swedish readers will bring more to English texts compared to, for instance, Spanish readers since both Swedish and English derive from the Germanic roots whereas Spanish derives from the Latin language. Therefore, English has a high status in Sweden. There is a high exposure to it, not only in school but outside of it as well (Skolverket 2012, p. 11).

In Swedish schools, English is one of the core subjects and it is taught in the early school years. One of the goals that Swedish schools must work towards is providing children with “a wealth of opportunities for discussion, reading and writing, all pupils should be able to develop their ability to communicate and thus enhance confidence in their own language abilities” (Skolverket 2011a, p. 11). The Swedish curriculum for the compulsory school underlines in the syllabus for English that pupils should develop their ability to “understand and interpret the content of spoken English and in different types of texts” (Skolverket 2011a, p. 32). It is also stated in the core content of English in year 4-6 that students need to develop “strategies to understand key words and context in spoken language and texts” (Skolverket 2011a, p. 33). Developing reading skills and improving reading comprehension is thus, a growing demand in today’s modern society. Teachers’ work to develop students’ reading skills is crucial. Moreover, teachers need to motivate their students to read in order for them to learn and get new experiences from reading (Westlund 2012 p.10)

Since reading is significant to lifelong learning, teachers’ work with developing students’ reading ability becomes essential. Successful reading comprehension can be achieved by, for
example, setting up goals for reading, previewing and predicting, activating prior knowledge and reading aloud and visualizing (Duke, Pearson, Strachan & Billman, 2011, p. 71). According to our experiences during our own school years and VFU, we have rarely seen teachers work explicitly with reading in English in grades 4-6. We seldom see teachers use reading strategies to improve and/or promote reading comprehension. Most of the times, students read a text in isolation and then translate it to Swedish without reaching for meaning or deeper understanding of the text. Moreover, the texts are usually neither motivating nor authentic in relation to students’ interests and experiences. There are many elements of reading that need to be taken into consideration in order to develop students’ reading ability.

We believe that we have a very important role and a big responsibility as future teachers to plan our lessons so that they benefit all students. Instead of neglecting reading comprehension, we want to work actively in finding solutions to support students in their reading. Since reading is essential in both school and daily life, we became interested in investigating how teachers describe their work with reading comprehension as well as how reading instruction is implemented in three 6th grade classes. In order to achieve our goal, we interviewed 3 teachers that teach English in grade six. Moreover, we observed one English lesson per teacher in order to see how teachers work with reading comprehension.

1.1 Aim and research question

The purpose of this paper is to investigate how some English teachers in Sweden describe their work with reading comprehension in the subject of English. We want to find out what material teachers use in their English classes, how they view knowledge, how they work towards developing students’ reading comprehension as well as see whether they work explicitly with reading strategies. Furthermore, the aim of this study is to observe how teachers implement reading instruction in their classes. Our research is based on these questions:

- How do some Swedish 6th grade teachers describe their work with reading comprehension in the subject of English?

- How is reading instruction implemented in three 6th grade classes?
2. Literature review

This chapter provides a literature overview and a theoretical background on reading, reading comprehension and reading strategies. Furthermore, this chapter will touch upon the sociocultural theory, the syllabus for English, and the study “Students’ Foreign Language Proficiency in an International Perspective”.

2.1 Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory

Lev Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory is relevant to this research study since the theory underlines that learning in social and meaningful setting is beneficial. Furthermore, many teachers that we have encountered base their instruction on the sociocultural theory. Many of the teaching methods that teachers use in their instruction is based on this theory.

Lev Vygotsky views learning and development as taking place in a meaningful and social setting. By interacting with the child when playing, reading stories, and talking with the child, adults convey an understanding of how the world works for the child. Children can, with the support of adults, understand and do more than they can do individually. This is what Vygotsky refers to as the zone of proximal development. The people that children interact and communicate with, affect the way children see the world as well as the language and culture they are exposed to (Cameron 2002, pp. 7-8).

Vygotsky believes imitating is an active process in a social context. When children imitate the elders, they develop “opportunities for intellectual development” (Vygotsky 1978, p.129). In this way, children internalizes the elders’ language and actions.
2.2 The syllabus for English

The syllabus for English is relevant in this study since it is the steering documents that teachers need to follow, and it consists of several goals regarding reading that students need to strive towards. The core content in the syllabus for English (2011a) consists of among other things “listening and reading- reception”. Reception is the “ability to understand and interpret what you read or listen to” (Skolverket 2011b, p.11). This ability is important in order to interact and produce something. By the end of grade 6, students should be able to “understand the most essential content in clearly spoken, simple English at a relaxed pace in simple texts about daily and familiar topics” (Skolverket 2011b, p. 39). By “reporting content in a simple form with comments on content” (Skolverket 2011b, p. 35), students can show their understanding. To facilitate students’ understanding of the content of texts, students can select and use a strategy for reading.

The use of strategies is mentioned often in the curriculum for the compulsory school (Skolverket 2011a). A strategy can be intentional or unintentional, planned or spontaneous and it can be effective or less effective. “All humans need and use strategies to understand, make themselves understood, communicate and learn” (Skolverket 2011a, p. 15). Using a dictionary can be a helpful strategy. The syllabus for English underlines the importance of using reception strategies for years 4-6: “strategies to understand key words and context in spoken language and texts, for example, by adopting listening and reading to the form and content of communications” (Skolverket 2011b, p. 33).

2.3 Students’ Foreign Language Proficiency in an International Perspective

In order to form an idea of Swedish students’ English skills from an international point of view, we decided to include the study “Students’ Foreign Language Proficiency in an International Perspective” (ESLC). The purpose of the study ESLC was to collect information about students’ foreign language proficiency. The study was conducted in 2011, and Sweden was one of the countries that participated. One of the languages that were tested in Sweden was English, and the
students that participated were in year 9. Moreover, the three abilities that were tested were reading, writing, and listening in both languages. ESLC used a framework from *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) to analyze the results from the study.

The results for reading and listening showed that the majority of Swedish students performed on the highest level. Regarding reading ability, the results showed that 66 percent of Swedish students achieved the highest level on the tests. Whereas, for listening ability, 77 percent of Swedish students performed on the highest level. However, when it came to writing ability, Maltese students performed better than all the other countries, including Swedish. For writing ability, the results showed that 28 percent of Swedish students achieved the highest level (Skolverket 2012). Since this study showed that Swedish students performed well on reading and listening, it indicates that teachers work with reading comprehension is essential to improve students’ English language skills. This also indicates that teaching reading comprehension benefits Swedish students’ development in the subject of English.

### 2.3 To read and to understand

Cameron (2001) defines reading as bringing together “visual information from written symbols, phonological information from the sounds those symbols make when spoken, and semantic information from the conventional meanings associated with the words as sounds and symbols” (Cameron 2001, p. 125). “Reading plays a critical role in development in any academic domain; thus, competence in reading is key to competence in other human endeavors” (Fox, Dinsmore & Alexander 2010, p.165). Liberg and Geijerstam (2012) argue that reading is required to participate in all the subjects in school in order to learn and develop new skills (p.8). Moreover, Lundahl (2014) writes that reading “is the ability to understand, use and reflect on written texts in order to achieve one’s goals, to develop one’s knowledge and potential, and to participate effectively in society” (p. 129).

According to Carol Read (2007) children develop positive attitudes through learning to read English. She explains that reading competence involves “constructing meaning and making sense of written text.” (p. 48). Reading competence call for a complicated interaction of knowledge
and skills at several levels. These include, for example, “the recognition of shapes of letters of
the alphabet, grapho-phonemic correspondences and the direction of text.” (p. 48). Furthermore,
these levels involve a comprehension of the structure and organization of texts.

When defining what literacy skills means, Cameron (2001) explains that it includes “being able
to read and write different sorts of texts for different purposes” (p. 124). A “literacy event”
include an activity such as reading a storybook and people are constantly involved in several
literacy events in which they use skills that go beyond just reading and writing text. Literacy is
especially about readers constructing a meaning for themselves in order to comprehend texts. A
skilled reader builds up an understanding of the text as he/she reads along, sometimes called
“text base” that can be explained as a kind of momentary meaning for the text. This is an
effective way of processing a text at different scales. Furthermore, a skilled reader approaches a
text with a purpose for reading as well as expectations about how the text will be structured
(Cameron 2001, pp.127-128). Moreover, Lundahl (2014) refers to three different key levels of
reading comprehension that were taken from five levels that PISA established. The first level is
“the ability to read a text as a fact”, the second one was “inferring or drawing conclusions”, and
the last one was “to reflect on and analyse a text’s content and form, including understanding it
critically” (Lundahl 2014, p 135).

2.4 Fluency and vocabulary

Automaticity, a part of reading fluency, deals with the ability of readers to decode words
automatically. Once readers recognize words automatically and effortlessly, they are able to
dedicate their cognitive resources to comprehension and meaning, which are the essential tasks
in reading (Rasinski & Samuels, 2011, p. 95). Through rereading texts and reading together with
the teacher as he/she reads aloud, students can develop their word-recognition fluency (Grabe
2009, p. 336). Prosody, the melodic features of oral language can signify whether or not a reader
comprehends the text they are reading aloud. In order to read a text with prosody, the reader
must have a sense of meaning of the text to be aware of when to take a pause, raise or lower their
voice, emphasize certain words and so forth (Rasinski & Samuels, 2011, p. 96).
Lundahl (2014) emphasizes the importance of vocabulary in order to be able to understand a language. He stresses that, for example, fifth graders need to have a vocabulary that coincide with the vocabulary used in the texts that they read. If students’ vocabulary is lacking in comparison to the texts they read then they need to guess the meaning of them based on their comprehension of the rest of the texts (p. 131). Westlund (2012) also stresses that having a large vocabulary is one of the most important factors when it comes to developing one’s reading comprehension (, p. 157). To support reading comprehension in a second language, one does not only learn through learning words from context, but also through a combination of five different ways. One way is through extensive reading in which the reader learns new words from context. Another way is through “providing direct instruction of vocabulary words” (Grabe 2009, p. 276). Furthermore, one can also teach strategies for learning words and develop word-recognition fluency. Finally, vocabulary can be taught by “developing word appreciation (and motivation) on students’ parts” (Grabe 2009, p. 276). Grabe (2009) gives many recommendations of how teachers can promote vocabulary learning through direct instruction. One of these recommendations include “attending to glosses in texts” which has proven to be beneficial for reading comprehension (Grabe 2009, p. 277). Further recommendations include “learning key words before reading”, and “developing strategies for independent word learning” for example through using a dictionary (Grabe 2009, p. 277).

2.5 Providing motivating texts and creating meaning

Providing motivating texts and contexts for reading, teaching strategies for comprehending and engaging students in discussion are some elements that teachers need to engage in to promote and teach reading comprehension. When students value and engage in the act of reading, they are showing signs of motivation (Duke, Pearson, Strachan & Billman, 2011, p. 52). Motivating students to read can be achieved, for example, by asking students to share their reading interests (Grabe 2009, p. 337). Moreover, students’ motivation will be enhanced if they are provided with contexts, materials or tasks that catch their attention or trigger their interest. However, interesting texts are not the only way to motivate and engage students in reading. Westlund (2012) argues
that teachers need to work actively to motivate their students to read in order for them to learn and get experiences of reading (p.10).

Some strategies that have proven to be worth teaching are: setting purposes for reading, previewing and predicting, activating prior knowledge and reading aloud and visualizing. An effective teacher of reading comprehension recognizes that “comprehension is an active and often collaborative process of making meaning” (Duke et al., 2011, p. 71). Duke et al. (2011) write that in order to create meaning, learners need to be given the opportunity to work together and discuss the texts they encountered (p. 71). Gibbons (2015) argues that in order to become a good reader, one must use a number of strategies to comprehend the meaning of written text (p. 136). Findings from a study examining classroom talk conducted by Wolf, Crosson and Resnick (2004) have shown that when students discuss a text using critical thinking, they usually listen and link to others’ ideas. They do so while supporting their ideas and thoughts with evidence from the text (pp.33-34). Therefore, it is essential that teachers gives the students the opportunity to talk about texts and analyze them critically in order to develop their reading ability.

### 2.6 Reading strategies

Teaching reading strategies plays a big role in developing students to become strategic and active readers. By teaching them how, when and why to apply particular strategies, they are a step closer to becoming effective readers (Duke et al., 2011, p.63). The Swedish curriculum for the compulsory school (2011a) states that one of the aims of the English subject is to allow students to “use language strategies to understand and make themselves understood” (p. 32).

Brabham’s and Lynch- Brown’s (2002) findings showed that “vocabulary acquisition was facilitated most by interactional reading aloud” (p. 470). Read - aloud experiences in which words are explained and students interact with one another result in an increase of vocabulary acquisition. Westlund (2012) points out that when teachers read aloud, students can expectedly become motivated to read more books. Moreover, when teachers choose a book to read aloud, they need to contemplate on when, where and how the book should be read and dealt with (p. 107). They should consider how they read the text and how they talk about it. Westlund (2012)
argues that “[i]f reading aloud should be considered a pedagogical tool, it should meet certain criteria” (p. 156). She explains that reading aloud should have a bond to the students’ own experiences and it should invite them to discussions and reflection as well as give them new experiences. Read-aloud experiences are also effective when students are the ones reading aloud. However, some students may feel uncomfortable reading in front of a big group. Therefore, reading aloud in pairs or smaller groups may be more effective when it comes to fluency and reading comprehension (Westlund 2012, p.202).

Another strategy that has been proven to improve students’ comprehension is “thinking aloud”. This strategy is most beneficial when both the students and the teacher think aloud when they read texts (Duke & Pearson 2011, p.214). When teachers think aloud, they share effective comprehension strategies with the students. The teachers demonstrate how to overcome difficulties in reading by using relevant reading strategies, for instance thinking aloud, which supports students in reading more complex texts (Westlund 2012, p.90). Furthermore, teaching students to summarize a text they read is an additional way of improving their reading comprehension (Duke & Pearson 2011, p.220). However, summarizing a text can be difficult for children and many require practice before they can produce an oral and written summary.

Moreover, visualizing is yet another strategy that benefit readers. Park (2012) suggests that teachers might ask students to imagine, for example, the race or gender of the book character and thereafter reflect on the presumptions that students have on the text. Other teachers might encourage students to visualize characters so that it might aid them in the discussions (p. 637). Moreover, she claims that teachers should ask students to visualize parts of a text that engage them. She argues that teachers should consider what they invite students to visualize and if their invitations will stimulate students to discuss real issues (p.638).

Giving students the opportunity to activate prior knowledge and previewing will encourage them to “use their existing knowledge to facilitate their understanding of new ideas encountered in text” (Duke & Pearson 2011, p. 213). Moreover, Gibbons (2015) refers to Goodman's (1967) idea of how readers gain meaning from a text using their knowledge of the world, and calls it semantic knowledge (p. 137). Gibbons (2015) writes that in order to be an efficient reader it is significant to be able to apply prior knowledge, and that without it, one would have to rely on only decoding words (p. 138).
3. Method and methodology

The aim of this section is to present and discuss the methodology of this research study. The study is based on qualitative research method and the data was collected through semi-structured interviews as well as through observations. The reasons why the study is based on qualitative research is because we are interested in seeking to understand the setting and social phenomenon from the perspectives of the teachers and students (Hatch 2002, p.72). We chose to combine observation and interviews because we wanted to learn more precise information about the setting that may not be mentioned or visible in interviews alone. An observation is the “researcher’s take on social action” (Saldan 2011, p. 46). An interview on the other hand is the participant's take on social action.

Firstly, we contacted three principals at three elementary schools in the south of Sweden. We explained the purpose of our research study and we presented our research questions. However, we did not specify what we wanted to observe. It is more likely that participants hide things from us or stage actions to benefit them (Taylor, Bogden & DeVault 2015, p.75). Moreover, we requested a visit to the schools in order to interview 6th grade English teachers regarding how they describe their work with reading comprehension as well as observe them to see how they implement reading instruction in their classes. When the principals approved, we contacted some English teachers through email. Three teachers agreed to meet with us. However, one of them had to cancel due to the school having a day off the day we were going to visit. This caused us to contact four other principals, whereof one principal agreed to let us observe and interview one of their sixth grade teachers. Once all the teachers gave their approval, we began preparing what we wanted to focus on when observing and interviewing.

3.1 Participants and context

All the teachers we selected for our research study are English teachers. They were selected because they agreed to contribute their time to be observed and interviewed. We wanted to focus primarily on students in year 6 in order to limit our study and focus on older learners as they have developed their reading ability further than for instance fourth graders.
We will from now on refer to the schools, and their respective teachers as A, B and C. The principal at the schools suggested that we contact the English teachers at their schools. Teacher A has worked as a teacher for approximately 27 years and has a certificate to teach in all subjects except for technology. Teacher A and another English teacher divide the English lessons between them. Teacher A is responsible for grammar while the other teacher takes care of other aspects of the English subject, such as speaking and reading. Teacher B has worked as a teacher for 15 years, and she teaches in grades 1-7. Moreover, she is certified to teach in three subjects: Swedish, social studies and English. Teacher C has been a teacher grade 1-6 for six years. He has a certificate to teach in all subjects except for science.

School A’s sixth grade that we observed consisted of 23 students, while grade six at school B had 19 students and at school C there were 21 students in the sixth grade. All the students knew of our presence and they were aware of the purpose of our visit. All schools are located in a city in the south of Sweden.

3.2 Observation

Before entering the field to observe, we had specific interests in mind. We wanted to examine specific questions regarding reading comprehension. The purpose with observing teachers and students is to be present in the social setting. Moreover, the idea with observation is to make a careful documentation of what the teachers and students say and do (Hatch 2002, p. 73). The participants in our research study were aware of our presence and they were informed about the purpose of our observation. However, we remained passive observers and did not participate in any of the activities of the participants.

Hatch (2002) provides some dimensions and questions that may be used when researchers observe participants:

- What individual activities are people engaged in?
- What group activities are people engaged in?
- What are the objects people use?
- What things are people trying to accomplish?
- What emotions are expressed?

(Hatch 2002, p. 79)

We took Hatch’s (2002) questions into consideration while observing the participants at the three schools. In addition, we observed the classroom environment such as the board, the posters on the walls and the seating. In general, we observed how the teachers arranged their lesson. (Appendix 5). When documenting our observations, we took notes on a laptop and a note pad.

3.3 Interviews

Interviews are an efficient way of documenting “an individual’s or group’s perspectives, feelings, opinions, values, attitudes, and beliefs about their personal experiences” (Saldan 2011, p. 32). Semi-structured interviews were chosen for this study. Alvehus (2013) explains that during a semi-structured interview, the interviewer follows a form that consists of a few open-ended questions or broad themes that the conversation circles around (p. 83). Having open-ended questions is a way to guarantee more detailed answers (Saldana 2011, p. 36). In addition, semi-structured interviews give the participants a greater opportunity to affect the content of the interview (Alvehus 2013, p. 83). The interview questions were based on five themes: teacher’s background, perception of knowledge, learning materials, work-method and student-perspective (appendix 1).

Since our time was limited, we were not able to interview and observe many teachers over a longer period of time. For that reason, we used sampling which is defined as “the strategic, referred, random, and/or serendipitous selection of participants” (Saldana 2011, p. 33). During the interviews, we used our smartphones to record the interviews. Before recording, we asked the participants for their permission to record what they said and all of them approved. In order to be certain that the recording apps on our smartphones worked properly, we tested them beforehand.
**3.4 Procedure**

We contacted the first and third school by emailing the principals. Regarding the second school, we called the principal instead of emailing since we were not able to find his email anywhere. We presented ourselves and explained what we wished to accomplish with our research study as well as ask them if we could carry out our observations and interviews at their schools. They all agreed. They provided us with the teachers’ email addresses. We contacted the teachers via email and they all welcomed us.

We negotiated an interview date with the teachers. Our first visit took place at school A on the 1st of February 2016. The lesson lasted for an hour. During that hour, we observed an English lesson in grade six. We took notes, documenting what we saw in the classroom, how the teacher carried out the lesson and what activities the students were involved in. The interview for the first observation took place on the 9th of February 2016. We decided not to interview the teacher the same day in order to give ourselves the opportunity to form questions based on what we had observed. Between the observation and interview for school A, we went to school B for observation and interview.

The observation at school B took place in a grade six on the 3rd of February 2016. The lesson lasted for approximately 40 minutes. Similarly to the first observation, we documented the same things using both a computer and a notepad. The day after, we interviewed the teacher, asking her questions regarding her view on learning, what materials she uses in her English classroom and how she works towards developing students’ reading comprehension. However, before asking her these types of questions, we asked her to tell us shortly about how long she has worked as a teacher, providing us with a short background about herself. The interview lasted for 25 minutes.

We had scheduled a visit for our third and final observation and interview on the 12th of February. However, the teacher had to cancel due to the students having a day off on the 12th. We were unable to reschedule and decided to contact four other schools, hoping that one of them would approve our visit. One school did approve which completed our participants. The third and final teacher met with us on the 17th of February 2016. The lesson we observed lasted for 45 minutes and the interview took approximately 20 minutes. Once the final observation was over,
we interviewed the teacher, asking him the same questions as the other teachers. All the interviews were in Swedish. After the interviews were conducted we transcribed them. We did this by listening to the whole interview and then determining what we wanted to quote so that we could transcribe it. In this research study, any quotes presented from the interviews will be translated from Swedish to English.

3.5 Research ethics

In this study, we adhered to Vetenskapsrådet’s (2002) guidelines for research ethics by taking the information requirement, the consent requirement, the confidentiality requirement as well as the requirement of usage into account. We were very clear with the purpose of the visit. Both the principals and the teachers received information from us regarding why we wanted to observe an English lesson as well as why we wanted to interview the teachers. The participants knew beforehand why we were there as well as the aim of our visit and they were all expecting us. Hatch (2002) claims that “full disclosure of research intentions and the clear message that participation is voluntary are essentials elements of genuine informed consent” (p. 67). We also made it clear that the participant could at any time withdraw from this study.
4. Results

We expected to experience similarities between how teachers work with reading comprehension, and our own experiences from our own school time and our VFU. According to our experiences during our own school years and VFU, we have rarely seen teachers work explicitly with reading in English. However, the observations did highlight some effective work with reading comprehension.

4.1 Teacher A

Our interview with teacher A started 13.10 and lasted to approximately 13.30. She has been a middle school teacher since 1989. Furthermore, she is in charge of the grammar part of English while another teacher teaches other aspects of English, such as speaking. Moreover, she explained to us that the purpose with her lesson that we observed was to rehearse grammar in order to prepare the students for the national tests. She believes that the learning process is individual since all humans are different. “Some people feel better about working for themselves, learn better. Others are happiest in pairs, or in a large group... Have more exchanges with the people around them and can exchange ideas and discuss” (appendix 1). Teacher A feels strongly about trying different things as a teacher in order to determine what is appropriate for different students. Moreover, she argues that knowledge is “knowing something and being able to put it in relation to other things” (appendix 1).

When asked what her opinion is regarding reading skills, she stated that it involves “being able to read a text and comprehend what it says and retell it. That is a good reading skill” (appendix 1). However, she argues that it can vary depending on the difficulty of the text as well as where the students are in their reading development. She concludes that reading is one of the most important aspects in today’s schools. Although, she informed us that the students do not read literary books in English. Some students, however, read literary books in fifth grade. The reason why her students do not read literary books is because she claims there is not enough time for
that part. Instead, she uses teaching materials such as “Second step” which is a workbook. Even though teacher A only focuses on grammar, the other teacher, who is responsible for the non-grammar part, focuses more on other aspects of the English subject, such as reading, speaking and listening.

Regarding what theories she uses in her education, she told us that she sometimes follows the Genre Pedagogy Model. She explains that when working with this model, the students can write texts and at the same time learn the grammar and vocabulary of that text. Teacher A states that if you “improve the vocabulary in a specific subject, your comprehension of that subject will improve and it will become easier to read” (appendix 1). Moreover, we asked teacher A if she uses any reading strategies. Her answer was that students sometimes read different texts aloud.

“The students read aloud. As for my part of the English subject, we do not have a lot of reading aloud because we have… or I have the grammar part. What they read aloud to me is often the tasks or if they have written a text themselves, that they read it aloud to me or something. But when I had them in fifth grade… in fifth grade I had all the English lessons myself and they read… either they read after me first and then they read in the book, namely these texts that are in the book, and their own texts. So, that is the reading training…” (Appendix 1)

4.2 Teacher B

The interview with teacher B began at 8.05 and ended at approximately 8.35. When asked to tell us about her background as a teacher she gave us the answer that she has been a teacher for 15 years. She is certified to teach grades 1 to 7 in Swedish, social studies and English. She views knowledge as a way to communicate through speech and writing. According to her, glossary and grammar are important parts of knowledge. When the students were in fourth and fifth grade, they worked substantially with vocabulary and grammar as a preparation for grade six when they had to read literary books and comprehend the content. After the students have finished the book,
they present it orally or in written text. According to her, being a good reader means to achieve the knowledge requirements mentioned in the syllabus for English.

Teacher B uses a method called “EPA” which stands for the Swedish words “Enskilt, Par, Alla”. These words can be translated into “Individual, Pair, Everyone”, and they are equivalent to “think-pair-share”. Teacher B explains that this method allows students to, for example, read a text individually, discuss it in pairs and then discuss it with the entire class. However, when we asked her if she uses “EPA” during her English lessons, she answered that she has only used the method during her social studies classes and Swedish classes. She states that she has noticed that the students have developed their comprehension skills through this method as well as their vocabulary in Swedish. Furthermore, she criticizes the constant use of textbooks and workbooks and believes that they are “strange and distorted” (appendix 2). Therefore, she began using literary books with her current students. She continues to express her dissatisfaction with textbooks and states “I am tired of them and there are some efficient students that are not challenged enough. Even the less efficient students find the texts boring” (appendix 2). She wants the students themselves to choose the books they have to read.

Moreover, when the students worked with textbooks, the teacher read the text aloud sometimes while other times the students listened to the text on a CD. She says: “Either I read it or had a CD where they could hear it. Sometimes the students would read aloud because otherwise, they cannot train their pronunciation.” (Appendix 2). Furthermore, students sometimes read an English text and then translate it into Swedish. The students also talk about the text by answering the teacher’s questions about the content of the text. This gives the teacher an idea of which students really comprehend the text.

We asked her if she has introduced reading strategies to the students and if the students used them consciously when reading texts. She answered that if the students do not understand a word in a text, they can look it up in a dictionary, Google it or ask the teacher. Teacher B encourages her students to keep reading if they are unable to understand a text. By doing so, perhaps they can understand the word in its context.
4.3 Teacher C

The interview with Teacher C started at 15.25 and ended at approximately 15.40. Teacher C believes that his students’ skills have improved and he assumed it is due to having English lessons with half the class on Fridays. Teacher C argues that students dare to be more active when they are in a smaller group. For example, his purpose with the lesson we observed, was to give the students opportunity to “dare to analyze a text and dare to talk about it” (appendix 3). In order to do so, the students must be provided with interesting and engaging texts and that is why he chose to use a song lyric. He also stressed the importance of providing the students with texts that they can relate to. Furthermore, teacher C maintains that having good reading ability means to comprehend what you read. He points out the difference between being able to read aloud and to actually comprehend the content. Moreover, teacher C has given the students the story “The ugly duckling” as a homework. The purpose with the assignment is to be able to read, comprehend, and retell the story in English as well as to identify verbs and difficult words. He claims that the assignment requires prior knowledge. He places a great deal of importance on teaching verbs. According to him, being able to use the right verb form is important in order to make oneself understood in English. He also encourages his students to read different texts aloud at home to improve their pronunciation. However, teacher C does not teach the students to use different reading strategies.

Just like teacher A, teacher C uses the Genre Pedagogy Model which he finds is an interesting model. Teacher C uses the learning material “Happy” which consists of a textbook and a workbook. He thinks that “Happy” has clear goals and guides the students through what they need to achieve. However, he combines “Happy” with other materials such as song lyrics and stories. He uses “Happy” as an inspiration and he tries to “think outside the box”.

4.4 Observations

While observing teachers’ lessons we noticed how reading is included into the lessons both intentionally and unintentionally. Even when students were practicing grammar, reading comprehension was needed in order to complete the task. We noticed how some teachers gave
students the opportunity to work in pairs or groups when discussing texts. Furthermore, all teachers had extra learning material, other than the textbooks and workbooks.

We took Hatch’s (2002) dimensions into consideration during the observations and here is what we noticed:

- **What individual activities are people engaged in?**

  At school A, most of the activities during the lesson we observed, were carried out individually. However, at one point during the lesson the teacher asked the students to discuss the task with their classmates. As for school B, students were engaged in solely individual activities throughout the entire lesson. Every student had his/her own book to read and his/her own book review to write. Teacher C asked his students to look at the lyrics for the song “Tears in heaven” by Eric Clapton and underline difficult words as well as verbs. The students were also told to reflect on the meaning of the song.

- **What group activities are people engaged in?**

  The students at school A were asked to discuss which verb form was correct in which sentence with their classmates. At school B, there were no group activities. However, as for school C, the students were engaged in both pair and group activities where they discussed the lyrics of the song “Tears in heaven”. In pairs, students discussed what kind of song it is and what the song is about. They had 10 minutes to discuss these questions. Afterwards, the whole class discussed the song together. All the verbs they found in the lyrics were written on the board.

- **What are the objects people use?**

  In school A, the teacher used textbooks and workbooks called “Second step” during the lesson. She also used papers where students had to fill in the blanks (Appendix 4). They were told to read a text and fill in the appropriate verb form of “have”. Furthermore, the teacher used a 3-minute YouTube clip in which the verb form “have” is explained through text with no voice (only music and animation). The students at school B read English fictional book that they
borrowed themselves from the local library next to their school. Furthermore, teacher B used textbooks/workbooks published by The Swedish National Agency for Education called “Tummen upp”, which is Swedish for “Thumbs up”. These books provide students with tasks and activities in order for the teacher to assess students according to the knowledge requirements in the syllabus for English. Teacher C used two learning materials during the lesson. He handed out song lyrics to the students and played the song twice during the lesson.

- What things are people trying to accomplish?

During the lesson we observed, teacher A wanted her students to know when to use the correct form of the verb “have”. In order to do so, she had a short briefing about that verb form. The students tried to accomplish the same goal by doing the exercises listed in their workbook as well as filling in the blanks where they had to decide which verb form was appropriate for the specific sentence. As for teacher B, her main goal with the lesson was to check whether or not the students had understood the content of the texts they read. One way for the students to show that was by having a short oral presentation in which the students showed their comprehension of the text through a book review they wrote earlier. However, the oral presentation was not obligatory. Only the written book review was. Finally, teacher C focused mostly on verbs during the lesson. He did so by making the students analyze a song lyric. As for the students, they focused on understanding the lyric and the meaning behind it.

- What emotions are expressed?

The sixth graders at school A listened most of the time to what the teacher had to say. Nevertheless, some students protested at the beginning of the lesson against all the homework they had during that week. When the teacher had her short briefing at the beginning of the lesson, the students were active. They raised their hands to answer the teacher’s questions. All the students were concentrated when they were watching the short YouTube clip. There were two students who raised their hands to either ask a question or ask for help, but the teacher did
not notice them. However, at the end of the lesson the teacher did affirm that she will continue with the verb “have” the next lesson.

During the oral presentation at school B, students listened politely to the student presenting his book review. The student standing in front of the class seemed somewhat nervous and spoke in a slightly quiet voice. His English was not fluent. When the presentation was over, the teacher began asking students questions regarding the book review that the student presented. She asked questions concerning the content of the book. One such question was “why did he go into the jungle?” Few students raised their hands. One student answered the question in English. She also asked the student who presented his book what certain words meant to see if he understood the text. Thereafter, students took out their fictional books or their “Tummen upp” books and started reading. However, some students were unfocused which caused the teacher to raise her voice at them. While reading, some students interrupted their reading to ask the teacher what a specific word meant.

When teacher C played the song, the students seemed interested in it. Teacher C asked the class what they thought the song is about and who it might be written for. They discussed the questions for approximately 10 minutes. Thereafter, some students raised their hands to express their opinions about the lyric. One student said that the song is about someone’s crush. Once the students finished discussing the questions, the teacher revealed what the song is about and who it was written for. The students seemed surprised that the song was about the artist’s deceased son. One student asked the teacher if they could listen to it again and the teacher agreed.
5. Analysis and discussion

In this section, we will answer our research questions: *How do some Swedish 6th grade teachers describe their work with reading comprehension in the subject of English?*, *How is reading instruction implemented in three 6th grade classes?*. Some of the findings of this study showed that there is an alignment with the theories mentioned in the literature review. For example, through the observations we concluded that teachers do take students interests into account when choosing learning material. However, we also observed and found out through the interviews that the teachers do not work explicitly with reading strategies in the subject of English. In this part of the paper, we will go more in depth in discussing the findings, connecting them to our literature review, and we will do this by following the major themes in the literature review.

5.1 Learning in social and meaningful contexts

According to Vygotsky’s sociocultural learning and development takes place in a meaningful and social setting. Through interviews and observations, we can conclude that the three teachers advocate individual, pair, and group work. Teacher A claimed that the learning process is individual where some learn best individually while others learn best in pairs or groups. During the lesson we observed, we noticed that she gave the students the opportunity to work both individually and in pairs. Even teacher B uses the method EPA, which include students working individually, in pairs and then with the whole class. As for teacher C, we noted how he allowed the students to work individually and in pairs during the lesson we observed. Working with others, whether it is classmates or the teacher, may support and develop the students’ abilities further compared to if they only worked individually. We argue that, just like Vygotsky’s *zone of proximal development*, students are able to accomplish more with others than they could on their own.
During the interviews, teacher A and C mentioned the Genre Pedagogy Model and is based on Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory where students learn best through cooperation and support by the teacher. They claimed that they use it in subjects such as Swedish and Social studies, however, they do not use it as much in the English subject. The purpose with the model is to make the students aware of how language works in different genres. For example, when teaching students how to write an argumentative essay, they must learn what language is appropriate to use when arguing for or against something as well as how it needs to be structured. The aim of the model is to process different types of texts, and this model can be used in all subjects (Johansson & Sandell Ring 2012, pp. 25-28). Teacher A expressed the positive impact that this model has had on vocabulary acquisition as well as grammar, while teacher C stated that he finds this model interesting.

Duke et al. (2011) mention that in order to create meaning, learners need to be given the opportunity to work together and discuss the texts they encountered. We noticed how during two of the lessons we observed, students reflected both individually and in pairs/groups on texts that they were given (song lyric and “fill in the right verb form”). They were given time to first reflect on the content individually and thereafter discuss it in pairs/groups. Working like this allowed the students to be more engaged and active during the lessons. Furthermore, as teacher A claimed: “Some people feel better about working for themselves, learn better. Others are happiest in pairs, or in a large group... Have more exchanges with the people around them and can exchange ideas and discuss” (appendix 1). From our own experiences as teacher students, we agree with teacher A’s statements regarding how students learn best. We believe that if students reflect and discuss texts together with others, they are able to develop their reading comprehension further as they are sharing their experiences and interpretations.

5.2 To read and to understand

Lundahl (2014) explains that reading “is the ability to understand, use and reflect on written texts in order to achieve one’s goals, to develop one’s knowledge and potential, and to participate effectively in society” (p. 129). Both teacher A and C maintained that being a good reader means to read a text, comprehend it, and be able to retell it. Teacher C gave his students a homework
which required them to read a story and be able to retell it and teacher B demanded her students to retell the books they read. Furthermore, we noticed how teacher C gave his students the opportunity to “read a text as a fact”, make “inferring or drawing conclusions”, and “reflect on and analyse a text’s content and form, including understanding it critically” which can result in better reading comprehension (Lundahl 2014, p 135). By allowing his students to analyse a song lyric, they are able to activate their prior knowledge and learn English in a meaningful context as well as “use their existing knowledge to facilitate their understanding of new ideas encountered in text” (Duke & Pearson 2011, p. 213). Teacher C also allowed his student to think aloud after reading the text. This strategy has proven to be most beneficial “when both the students and the teacher think aloud when they read texts”. This strategy resulted in students becoming more interested in the song leading to one student asking the teacher if he could play the song a second time.

Furthermore, the knowledge requirements for English underlines that students need to be able to “report[ing] content in a simple form with comments on content” (Skolverket 2011b, p. 35). Teacher C gave the students the opportunity to comments on the content of the song lyric. We noticed how it resulted in a deeper understanding of the lyric as students asked questions about the content signifying an increased interest. His students were engaged in a literacy event in which they went beyond just reading a text. They analyzed the text as well as commented on the content. Teacher A’s and B’s students on the other hand, read a text and summarized its content. They neither analyzed the content nor expressed any feelings regarding what they read.

Moreover, another strategy that teacher C used during his lesson was visualizing. By asking the students who they think the song was written to, they engage in a thinking process where they imagine the person whom the song is about which aided them in their discussions and stimulated them to talk about subjects such as love and romantic crushes. The use of strategies is mentioned often in the curriculum for the compulsory school (Skolverket 2011a). This signifies the importance of adopting some kind of strategies when approaching a text. Moreover, a strategy can be intentional or unintentional, planned or spontaneous and it can be effective or less effective (Skolverket 2011a, p. 15). When all the teachers were asked about reading strategies they all said that they do not work explicitly with reading strategies, however, they include reading strategies in their lessons but they are not aware of it. Duke et al. (2011) emphasizes that
teaching strategies for comprehending is one element that teachers need to engage in to promote and teach reading comprehension (p. 52). We agree with Duke et al. (2011) regarding the point they raise on teaching strategies to students and showing them how to use them. This would support them much more in their reading comprehension rather than just ignoring to work with reading strategies on a conscious level. We believe that if you put a name on something and teach it, it would make students aware of their own learning and development.

Westlund (2012) argues that read-aloud experiences are effective when students are the ones reading aloud (p. 202). As teachers, it is important to motivate students to read not only in school but at home as well. Teacher C told us during the interview that he encourages his students to read aloud at home to improve their pronunciation as well as their comprehension. We believe this is a beneficial way to motivate students and improve their comprehension of the texts they read. If students also reread the same texts they can also develop their word-recognition fluency (Grabe 2009, p. 336). Read-alouds also allow students to imitate and internalize the teacher’s language such as his/her prosody and pronunciation (Vygotsky 1978, p.129). However, in order for read-alouds to lead to positive results, teachers need to provide students with texts that bond to their own experiences and the texts should invite them to discussions and reflection as well as give them new experiences (Westlund 2012, p. 157). Therefore, we believe it is beneficial that teacher C gave his students the story “The Ugly Duckling” as a homework, which is a rather familiar story that the students have most likely encountered.

As for the learning material the teachers use, it is essential to provide students with texts that are authentic and that the students can relate to. According to Duke et al., (2011) it is essential that teachers provide students with motivating texts that engage them in order to foster reading comprehension (p. 52). As far as we are concerned, the content in textbooks such as “Happy” are mostly unauthentic and do not present situations that Swedish students can relate to. Furthermore, teacher C expressed to us that he prefers to use “Happy” as an inspiration rather than using it as his main learning material. This sentiment was also expressed by teacher B when she told us: “I am tired of them and there are some efficient students that are not challenged enough. Even the less efficient students find the texts boring” (appendix 2).

As for teacher A, she maintained during the interview that if students read aloud, they usually read texts that they have written themselves. According to us, by allowing students to read their
own texts, the task becomes more authentic which may lead to an increased interest in reading English. However, if some students feel uncomfortable reading aloud to a large group, Westlund (2012) suggests that the students should be given the opportunity to read in smaller groups or in pairs which may be more effective regarding fluency and reading comprehension (p. 202).

Teacher B on the other hand, did not mention anything about encouraging her students to read aloud at home. However, she stated that she loves to read aloud to the class. Brabham’s and Lynch-Brown’s (2002) findings showed that “vocabulary acquisition was facilitated most by interactional reading aloud” (p. 470). By reading aloud, teacher B have the opportunity to interact with her students and discuss the content as well as explain difficult words which may result in an increase of vocabulary acquisition.

5.3 Fluency and vocabulary

Rasinski and Samuels (2011) stress the importance of readers adapting automaticity in reading in order to be able to dedicate their cognitive resources to comprehension and meaning, which are the essential tasks in reading (p. 95). This made us reflect on the student who presented his book review in school B. His English was not very fluent and we noticed how it affected his presentation. He was more focused on pronouncing the words correctly rather than focusing on the meaning of the words and the prosody. When teacher B asked him what certain words meant, she was primarily focusing on form instead of meaning. This might affect how the student read other texts and he may have the idea that this is the best way to read and comprehend a text.

However, we believe vocabulary is essential to comprehend texts and become fluent readers. All teachers expressed how important vocabulary is in order for students to become better readers. That is perhaps what Teacher B was trying to accomplish when she asked the students what the words meant. She may have been trying to develop the student’s word appreciation (Grabe 2009, p. 276). Lundahl (2014) emphasizes the importance of vocabulary in order to be able to comprehend a text. He argues that students need to have a vocabulary that coincide with the vocabulary used in the texts that they read. If students’ vocabulary is lacking in comparison to the texts they read then they need to guess the meaning of them based on their comprehension of
the rest of the texts (p. 131). Based on Lundahl’s (2014) argument on vocabulary, we believe all three teachers are developing the students reading comprehension when they devote their time to teach vocabulary.

During the interview with teacher C, he emphasized the significance of learning new vocabulary and verbs in order to support their comprehension and speaking. The observation made it clear to us that he actually implemented what he told us into his lesson. He provided students with materials that caught their attention and triggered their interests. At the same time, he wanted them to notice verbs and difficult words. This is a way to work towards achieving some of the goals in the knowledge requirements where students are given the opportunity to “understand the most essential content in [...] simple English at a relaxed pace in simple texts about daily and familiar topics” (Skolverket 2011a, p. 39).

In conclusion, we have noticed that even though that teachers do not teach reading explicitly, students are still provided with the opportunity to improve their reading comprehension. Teachers aware of the different elements that needs to be taken into account. Their awareness as well as their lesson plans indicate that teachers are on the right track regarding reading and how it can be improved. This may explain the results of the study Students’ Foreign Language Proficiency in an International Perspective (ESLC) in which Swedish students performed better than other countries on the English tests. For reading ability, 66% of Swedish students performed on the highest level. A reason for this may be that, in Sweden, the English subject is taught in the early grades as well as being one of three compulsory subjects in the Swedish school. Both the results of the ESLC and our own study make us more motivated as future teachers to support students in their English learning. Our study has proven to us the importance of reading which we must take into consideration when we plan our lessons in the future.
6. Conclusion

The purpose with this project was to investigate and examine how three 6th grade teachers describe their work with reading comprehension and how they implement reading instruction in their lessons. During the interviews, we asked the teachers about their view of knowledge and their opinions on reading and how they work towards improving reading. The observations helped us see the teachers’ lessons and gave us an insight into how they implement reading instruction in their lessons. The project was based on qualitative semi-structured interviews and observations.

The results indicated that teachers do not teach reading comprehension or reading strategies explicitly. During the observations, we noticed how even a grammar lesson included reading instruction without it being the primary focus of the lesson. This indicates that in order to improve students reading comprehension, it is not necessary to dedicate several lessons to teach reading explicitly. Before investigating teachers work with reading comprehension, we were under the impression that reading instruction must always be planned in order to improve the students reading skills. The observations, however, proved us wrong. Furthermore, we were not aware of the huge role vocabulary plays on reading comprehension. We are aware of vocabulary being essential to improve reading, however, we did not expect it to have the huge impact that the result showed. All teachers expressed their opinions regarding teaching vocabulary and stated that it is essential to teach vocabulary in order to improve students’ reading comprehension.

Most of the teachers’ opinions on reading seem to be similar. They all agree on vocabulary being essential and they all underline the importance of providing students with interesting texts that motivate them to read. Furthermore, all teachers showed an awareness regarding how students learn best. Both interviews and observations showed that teachers allow students to work either individually, in pairs or in groups. The lessons we observed demonstrated that teachers work towards achieving the goals in the syllabus for English even though they seemed to be unaware of it during the lessons. We believe the teachers’ lessons had a purpose and they were planned well. However, we wish that the teachers would have been clearer with the purpose of their lessons and explained it to the students. We are aware of what the teachers wanted to accomplish.
with their lessons because we asked them about it during the interviews. The students on the other hand, were not. We argue that students need to be exposed more to the syllabus and become more aware of their own learning, especially at their age. A way to do so, is by setting up goals, linked to the syllabus, in which the teacher points out why they need to, for instance, learn reading strategies. Although the results showed that reading comprehension improves even though it is not the main goal of the lesson, we conclude that students’ reading abilities would improve even more if they worked with reading comprehension explicitly.

Since our time was limited, we were unable to observe several lessons which we wish we would have had the opportunity to do as it may have provided us with a deeper understanding of how teachers work with reading comprehension. We would have liked to follow some teachers over a longer period of time to thoroughly investigate their work and observe their lessons as well as follow the students’ development. Since the results of this study indicated that teachers do not teach reading strategies explicitly, we would have found it interesting if we were able to interview and observe a teacher that taught reading strategies explicitly. Finally, we want to stress that the results of this study provide a limited insight into teachers’ work with reading comprehension.

After conducting this research study, we believe that it is important to explicitly teach students reading strategies because if you make students aware of how they learn, it may improve their abilities further. If for instance, a student reflects on his/her learning and realizes that one particular reading strategy is easiest for him/her, then he/she may use that strategy in a way that improves their reading comprehension rather than not teaching these strategies explicitly.

Another aspect that has affected our view on learning and language development is that it is important to provide students with interesting, authentic and engaging texts that students to read.

6.1 Limitations

Our study can be critiqued for not including any of the students’ own opinions on reading. The reason why we chose not to include their opinions is because we wanted to focus more on the teachers’ perspectives on reading comprehension and how they implement reading instruction in their lessons. However, the observations provided us with the opportunity to see how students
work during the lessons. Moreover, we were aware of the so called “observer effect” which comprises of “the observer in one way or another affecting what is happening, thus making the observation less representative” Alvehus 2013, p. 93). We did not experience any major issues regarding the “observer effect”. Alvehus (2013) points out that the participants usually forget that there is an observer present. We did notice some students looking at us, but they seemed curious rather than disturbed or unfocused. Finally, we want to stress that because our time was limited, we were unable to observe more than one lesson per teacher. Therefore, we are aware that the validity of this study may be affected.
7. References

Primary sources

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Appendix 1

**Question:**
Vi tänkte fråga lite, hur ser du på kunskap? Vad tycker du… Hur eleverna lär sig bäst? Tänker du att de lär sig bäst när de jobbar individuellt? Eller i grupp?

**Teacher:** Menar du den inlärningsprocessen eller menar du vad jag tycker kunskap är för en elev?

**Interviewes:** Både och


**Question:** Vad anser du då är god läsförmåga?

**Answer:** Att kunna läsa en text och kunna förstå vad där står och kunna återberätta det. Det är en god läsförmåga. Sen kan det variera beroende på hur svår texten är, beroende på hur långt eleverna har kommit i sin läsutveckling helt enkelt. Men överhuvudtaget så är läsningen kan man säga en av de viktigaste sakerna för det är ju därifrån mycket av kunskapen kommer i dagens skola genom att läsa.
**Question**
Sen tänkte vi fråga, utgår du från några specifika teorier när du planerar din undervisning.

**Answer:**

**Interviewes: kunna?**

**Answer:** Ja! För att matten har det, svenskan har det, geografin har det... Alltså att man bygger mycket på det. Och sen vilka... hur man skriver, hur man använder sig av det. Alltså det är ju en av de här som jag tycker är bra att jobba efter.

**Question**
Då tänkte vi fråga lite om hur… om du använder några specifika strategier, lässtrategier i engelska. Till exempel, har ni högläsning?

**Answer:** Ja, det har vi

**Question:** Alltså, du läser högt eller eleverna? Eller både och?

**Answer:** Eleverna läser högt. När det gäller min del av engelskan, så blir det ju kanske inte så mycket högläsning eftersom vi har den… eller jag har den grammatiska delen. Utan det de läser högt för mig, det är ju oftast uppgifterna eller om de har skrivit en text själv, att de läser texten för mig och så här. Men när jag hade de i femman… i femman hade jag all engelska själv i
klassen. Och då läste... antingen de läste efter mig först och sen läste de i boken, alltså de här texterna som finns i boken och sina egna texter. Så att det är den lästräningen där…

**Question:** Fick de sen översätta det till svenska?

**Answer:** Ja, det får de

**Question:** Vad menar du med egna texter?

**Answer:** De skriver egna texter utefter bilder eller ett tema eller någonting sånt. Och sen får de läsa det högt. Sen blir ju de här texterna mer avancerade ju äldre de blir. I början är de ju väldigtorta och så. Men… det får de.
Appendix 2

**Question:** Du har redan nämnt det här innan, att du använder skönlitterära böcker i din undervisning. Men hur tänker du när du, liksom, när eleverna ska jobba med just skönlitterära böcker? Får de själva välja eller är det du? Jobbar du med bibliotekarien på något sätt? Samarbetar kanske?


**Question:** Har du märkt någon effekt, en god effekt på deras läsförståelse när de använder skönlitterära böcker?

**Answer:** Det ena är det att jag får se mer av det eftersom de redovisar. De som är lite duktiga, känns det som att de tycker att det är lite roligare för att de blir mer utmanade och att det är mer intressant. Sen är det vissa som inte är så duktiga där det inte alls har gått de första gångerna men där det ändå känns “nu börjar det lossna”. Så ja, jag tycker nog att jag kommer fortsätta prova det förmodligen nästa gång jag har en sexa men inte från början för då blir det för svårt. Då har jag

**Question:** Nu när du har… nu är det svårt kanske med att ha högläsning nu när alla har olika böcker men innan, brukade ni ha högläsning i klassen, när ni kanske hade läromedel? Gick ni igenom texterna tillsammans eller fick de läsa och sen arbeta med uppgifter i arbetsboken? Och vilka för- och nackdelar märker du med det på deras läsförståelse?


**Question:**
Men samtalar ni kring texten när ni läser?
Answer:
Jo, jag ställer frågor på innehållet och såna saker
Appendix 3

**Question:** Men den här lektionen som vi observerade, vad var målet? Kan du berätta lite mer om lektionen?


**Answer:** Doing by learning. Alltså, det gäller ju att prata
Appendix 4

Have – Has – Had

Once upon a time there was a frog who ________ a key. This key was a big and mysterious key.

The frog said to himself:

- I ________ to find out to where this key leads. Maybe it can open a big door into another world. Maybe it opens a room full of treasure, the frog thought to himself. The frog didn’t ________ any money and hardly any food to eat.

So to find out about the key the frog went to his best friend the bird. He asked the bird:

- Do you ________ any idea of where this key could lead? The bird ________ one suggestion and said:

- Deep into the forest there lives a man in a small house, this man ________ a secret box that no one can open. Maybe your key leads to this box? The frog decided to look for this man who ________ a secret box. He jumped and jumped, deeper and deeper into the dark forest and never before ________ he been so afraid as now. He thought to himself:

- I should never ________ listened the bird who told me about the man. But right at that moment the frog saw a little house in the middle of the big trees. The house ________ no windows, it ________ a small chimney with smoke coming out of it and it ________ a small door in the front. The frog stopped and looked at it and thought about how he could get to the secret box. But when the frog thought about it the door opened and out came a small, old man. The man ________ a cane to lean on, he ________ grey hair and a long beard. In his hands he ________ a box and the box didn’t ________ a key. The frog jumped closer and closer until he was in front of the man. The frog asked the man if he ________ a key to the box. The man answered angrily:
- This box doesn’t ____________ a key and it never ____________ because it’s a secret box.

The box ____________ many secrets that cannot be told. That’s why the box doesn’t
___________ a key.

Then the frog said:

- I ____________ a key, but I don’t know to where it leads. Could I ____________ a try if
my key can open your box?

- My secret box, you mean. I told you that my box doesn’t ____________ a key.

The frog insisted until the old man let him try the key to the box.

The frog put the key that he ____________ into the keyhole of the secret box and turned the
key and opened it. But when he ____________ opened the secret box there was nothing but a
small note in it. The frog took the note and read it, it said:

You who ____________ opened this secret box ____________ to live in

the forest for the rest of your life, in a small house that doesn’t ____________

any windows but only a small chimney with smoke coming out.

Then the frog understood why the man ____________ a small house that didn’t

___________ any windows and why he ____________ the secret box that didn’t

___________ any key. The frog remembered where he ____________ found the

key, deep into the forest, where he ____________ seen a small house that didn’t

___________ any windows. Then the frog asked himself:

- Why ____________ this key come to me? Why did I ____________ to find it? Why
___________ my new house no windows?

And the bird never saw his best friend the frog again.
Appendix 5

Observation

- Vilka böcker/material använder eleverna? *What books/material are the students using?*
- Hur många elever finns i klassen? *How many students are there in the class?*
- Hur ser klassrummet ut? *What does the classroom look like?*
- Vilka aktiviteter (individ och/eller grupp) utför eleverna under lektionspasset? *What activities (individual and/or group) are the students engaged in?*
- Vilka känslor har eleverna? *What emotions are expressed?*
- Vad försöker eleverna och lärarna uppnå på lektionen? *What are students and teachers trying to accomplish during the lessons?*
Appendix 6

Intervjufrågor/ Interview questions:

Lärarbakgrund och bakgrund/ Teacher background
- Berätta lite om din lärarbakgrund. Hur länge har du jobbat som lärare? Engelsklärare?
  *Tell us a bit about your background. How long have you worked as a teacher? English teacher?*
- Hur många elever går i klassen? *How many students are there in the class?*

Kunskapssyn/ Perception of knowledge
- Vad är god läsförmåga enligt dig? *What is good reading ability according to you?*
- Utgår du från några specifika teorier när du lär ut? *Do you base your teaching on specific theories?*

Material
- Hur mycket tid spenderar eleverna på att läsa skönlitterära böcker på engelska? *How much time do the students spend on reading English literary books?*
- Hur ofta utgår du ifrån läroböcker i engelskundervisning? *How often do you use textbooks/workbooks in your English lessons?*
- Vad tänker du på när du ska välja en engelskbok som klassen ska läsa? Har du några krav? Samråd med bibliotekarie? *What do you consider when choosing an English book that the whole will read? Do you have any requirements? Do you consult with the librarian?*
- Använder du ett speciellt material när du jobbar med läsförståelse? *Do you use specific learning material when you teach reading comprehension?*

Arbetsmetod/ Work method
- Brukar ni ha högläsning? För/nackdelar? *Do you have read-alouds? Pros/cons?*
- Lär du ut specifika läsförståelsestrategier. Till exempel: visualisering, användning av förkunskaper, förutspå. *Do you teach specific reading strategies such as visualization, previous knowledge, predicting?*
- Brukar ni diskutera eller samtala kring texterna ni läser? Om ja, vilka resultat ser du? *Do you discuss or talk about the texts that you read? If so, what results do you notice?*
- Berätta om hur du jobbar på engelska lektionerna med läsförståelse. *Tell us about how you organize your reading comprehension lessons."

**Elevperspektiv/ Student perspective**

- Hur ökar du elevernas motivation att läsa? *How do you motivate students to read?*