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An International Language?
-Cultural Representation in English textbooks for Swedish Schools

Ett Internationellt språk?
-Kulturell Representation i Engelska Läroböcker för Svenska Skolor

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Abstract

Culture and language are intrinsically linked, and the question of how to approach teaching culture whilst teaching a language is always going to be one teachers have to ask themselves. A textbook is a tool which is meant to aid teachers and remove some of the burden of decision-making from their shoulders. A good textbook should thus give a teacher all of the tools needed to teach a language, including answers to the aforementioned question. This study was a content analysis of four English Language textbooks used in Swedish high schools. The main focus was on how these textbooks present different cultures. This was then contextualized by comparisons with previous research, with cultural theories, and by a comparison with the guidelines which are presented in the Swedish curriculum. The study found that the textbooks contain little representation of cultures which are not natively English-speaking or which exist outside of the so-called Inner circle of English language, and that even when non-Inner circle cultures are represented, they are either viewed through and Inner circle lens or as a minority culture in an Inner circle context. Furthermore, the literature which is included in the books adheres strictly to the English literary canon as it is generally defined. The textbooks thus do not encourage the teaching of English as an international language, and they therefore go against the guidelines of the Swedish curriculum. They are also representative of a global issue of conservatism in ELT which has been highlighted previously by other authors—and to the existence of which they provide further and current proof.

Key words and phrases: “culture”, “cultural representation”, “textbooks”, “inner circle”, “outer circle”, “expanding circle”
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1. Introduction and Research Questions

1.1 Introduction

English is the most widely used language on earth. Whilst it has quite a few native speakers, it stands out in comparison with all other languages on earth mainly by the amount of people who speak it as a second or third language. It is the undoubtedly the “lingua Franca” of the modern world. And yet, English is still closely connected with the countries in which it is a native language when it is taught to people around the globe. Culture and language go hand in hand in many ways, and the English language has not yet broken its cultural chains to become culturally neutral in the same way that it is linguistically universal. Textbooks are the primary tools used by many teachers to aid in their teaching. The importance of the textbooks following the curriculum guidelines can hardly be overstated. It is thus, if one aims to teach English not as a national language but as a global one, important that these textbooks present a multitude of cultures and different contexts in which English is used, rather than getting hung up on, and focusing almost exclusively on, the Inner circle context in which the language is the native one.

It is certainly the intent of Swedish lawmakers, at least, to teach English as an international language, not a national—regardless of whether that “nation” is Great Britain, America, or Australia. According to Läroplan för gymnasieskolan (Gy11) del 1 och 2 (2011), Swedish students of English 5 are expected to learn about

Living conditions, attitudes, values and traditions as well as social, political and cultural conditions in different contexts and parts of the world where English is used. The spread and position of the English language in the world. (p.54)

The phrasing in the curriculum is intentionally broad here, in that it draws no line between countries where English is a primary language and ones where it is not, signalling that English is to be taught as an international language. This then opens up the question of whether or not the authors of the textbooks which are currently in use in Swedish high
schools have adhered to these guidelines, and what choices they have made regarding what texts and themes to include.

On the English 6 level, students are additionally supposed to learn about “Themes, motifs, form and contents in film, and literary fiction; authorship and literary eras” (Läroplan för gymnasieskolan (Gy11) del 1 och 2, p.60). Further choices thus have to be made by the authors of these higher-level textbooks in regards to which works of film and literature to include, and which authors and other culturally significant personages to cover. Literature and film are cultural products, and one could see a dominance in representation when it comes to these aspects as being representative of some partial cultural hegemony of the arts, whether that hegemony be British, American, or otherwise.

Context 1 and Pick and Mix 1 are both textbooks aimed towards students reading the English 5 course—a course aimed at first year students at the high school level. Each of these books also has a sequel aimed at students of English 6. These textbooks are intriguing in that they carry individual messages about what kind of information is important to impart a child, and with which methods and perspectives to approach a given subject, whilst teaching his or her a new language. At the same time, a textbook which is written or compiled in order to be used in a Swedish school has to, at least in part, follow the guidelines of the Swedish curriculum such as they are defined in the documents and guidelines drawn up by Skolverket to be of any real use to a teacher who is bound and guided by those same documents and guidelines. It is thus of interest to teachers who plan on using textbooks to find out how well, and in what ways, these textbooks adhere to the Swedish curriculum.

This essay is an analysis of four books—Context 1 & Context 2, as well as Pick & Mix 1 and Pick & Mix 2—which has as its primary aim to gain a deeper understanding of textbook-based English language teaching in Sweden. The focus of the analysis is on cultural representation, and specifically such representation in the texts which are included in the textbooks—listening exercises, writing tasks, grammar exercises, and the like have been excluded due to a lack of relevancy considering the focus.

On the English 6 level, students are additionally supposed to learn about “Themes, motifs, form and contents in film, and literary fiction; authorship and literary eras” (p.60). Further choices thus have to be made by the authors of these higher-level textbooks in regards to which works of film and literature to include, and which authors and other
culturally significant personages to cover. Literature and film are cultural products, and one could see a dominance in representation when it comes to these aspects as being representative of some partial cultural hegemony of the arts, whether that hegemony be British, American, or otherwise.

1.2 Research Questions

Summarized, and put into a main question with several sub-questions, the aim of this study is to answer the following:

❖ What different cultures are represented in the textbooks? How are they represented? What does this say about the textbooks used in Sweden in comparison to those used in the rest of the world?
  ▪ Is English presented as an international language or is the focus on countries and cultures where English is a primary/native language?
  ♦ From what cultures are the literary works presented in the textbooks drawn? How do they conform, or not conform, to the English literary canon (and/or the western canon)?
    ➢ Is there a difference in level of representation here? Do certain countries still have cultural hegemony when it comes to the arts?
      • How does all of this relate to curriculum guidelines?
2. Background and Theory

2.1 English as an International Language

English has changed from being taught as a language tied to cultures and countries—those of the Inner circle, which is generally taken to include the UK, Ireland, the US, New Zealand and Australia—to being taught as an international means of communication—a world language. This is reflected in the Swedish curriculum, as will be described in greater detail in section 2.3. One of the basic viewpoints of the educational school of thought which is English as an International Language (EIL) is essentially that language and culture is no longer as intrinsically connected when it comes to the English language as other languages such as Italian or German are. According to McKay (2018), what this means, according to those who subscribe to EIL teachings, is that English should be taught in a way and in a context which is culturally neutral, in the sense that no culture is presented as the "standard" or as representing any kind of "status quo". (McKay, 2018, pp. 17.18)

Students of EIL are encouraged to make comparisons between cultures—those represented in texts, their own, and others—but since some texts may be dependent upon "culture-specific schema" to be understood, a great deal of time has to be dedicated to analysing these schemas when foreign cultures are presented. (McKay, 2018, p.19) In textbooks which promote teaching of English as an International Language, context and background information would thus be given alongside texts. A textbook which assumes that the reader understands the cultural context, or one which is specifically targeted towards readers who exist within one such specific context, and which presents texts selected to align with that context, is thus a failure as a tool meant for teaching EIL.

There is evidence to support the notion that a cognitive conflict in the students—in the case of textbooks created by an encounter with a strange and foreign culture—promotes learning. This further reinforces the fact that it is important that students of EIL read about cultures and are introduced to thought patterns which are different to their own. In being forced to break away from established cultural boundaries to understand the mindsets of others, the students” learning process is positively affected. (Wikman, 2004, p.101-103)
Naturally, a textbook which possesses those culturally diverse attributes, or is lacking in them, can still be of use to a teacher who aims to teach EIL to his/her students, but he/she would have to complement the textbook with other, more contextualizing, sources of information in order to promote comparisons, understanding, and learning.

2.2 Cultural Terms and Theories

Culture can be defined in many ways, but for the purposes of this essay, the definition by Kramsch (1998, cited in Nault, 2006) is the one which will be used. He defines culture as: “Membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and a common system of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and acting” (p.315). Nault (2006) himself goes on to state the intrinsic link which exists between language and culture, and the impossibility of teaching the former without implicitly teaching the latter (p.315).

In the following section is presented a way of looking at divisions in the English speaking world, a theory on the ideological dominance of a “western culture” in the ELT community, and as well as a way of categorizing cultural representations are presented. These all hold relevance for the results of this essay, and are referred back to in the discussion- as well as the conclusion section.

2.2.1 The Three Circles of English

One way of dividing up the English-speakers of the world is through the circle system defined by Kachru (1996) as consisting of an inner, outer, and expanding circle. In the inner circle, one finds the native-speakers of English and those countries in which a natively English-speaking diaspora settled and became the dominant cultural group. In the outer circle, one finds countries in which English—through colonialism and the like—have gained a special status. The expanding circle are countries in which English is increasingly used for the purposes of trade etc. (pp.135-138). This division provides the basis for the tables in part four of this essay.
2.2.2 Native speakerism

Holliday (2006) writes that so-called native speakerism is “a pervasive ideology within ELT (English Language Teaching), characterized by the belief that ‘native-speaker’ teachers represent a “Western culture” from which spring the ideals both of the English language and of English language teaching methodology” (p.385). As up-to-date textbooks carry of information about current views on ELT, they either promote or take stances against this concept and in doing so say something about its pervasiveness, outdatedness, etc..If the definition of culture presented above holds true, and its link to language does likewise, this means that this native speaker ideal is self-perpetuating, which explains why cultural representations in ELT have lagged behind the internationalization of the language, which is being taught on the basis of native speakerism around the globe.

2.2.3 Big C and small c Culture

A common way of looking at culture in the context of textbook studies is through the lens of the "big C” and "small c” division. Big C is culture which is objective, codified, explicit, and external. It is history, arts, food, music, behaviours and the like. Small c culture is more psychological; it is the subjective, the implicit, and the internal—the similar emotional and cognitive structures which people who come from similar backgrounds and have similar life experiences naturally share (Lee, 2009, p.78).

Big C culture is easier to convey and easier to understand for those from other cultures. Small c is harder to discern, harder to understand, and actively challenges the notions and behaviours of those from other cultures. True cultural understanding can thus only be achieved through encounters with, and study of, the small c of cultures other than one’s own. Simply presenting external, Big C aspects of a culture could enforce stereotypes rather than promote understanding (Lee, 2009, p.87).
2.3 Cultural Aims in the Swedish Curriculum

Textbooks are written to be used in specific contexts, and thus have to be adapted to the rules and regulations of that context. For textbooks which are meant to see usage in Swedish high schools, this means that said textbooks must be written according to the curriculum guidelines as they are defined in the steering documents written by Skolverket. In these curriculum guidelines a significant change can be seen in the approach taken to the subject of English on the high school level. In the most recent steering documents, published in 2011, the purpose or aims of the subject were defined as follows:

Give the students the opportunity to develop knowledge about living conditions, societal issues and cultural phenomena in different contexts and parts of the world where English is used. The teaching should stimulate the students” curiosity about language and culture. *(Läroplan för gymnasieskolan (Gy11) del 1 och 2, 2011, p.53)*

The paragraph above is taken from the general purpose statement regarding the subject of English as a whole. In the specific aims of one of the specific courses—English 5—of which the subject consists, the following is stated:

Living conditions, attitudes, values and traditions as well as social, political and cultural conditions in different contexts and parts of the world where English is used. The spread and position of the English language in the world.*(Läroplan för gymnasieskolan (Gy11) del 1 och 2, 2011p.54)*

On the English 6 level, the above paragraphs are still included, albeit with the addition of ”history” in the list of things which the students should learn about ”in different contexts and parts of the world where English is used”, and the following lines are introduced:

Themes, motifs, forms and contents of movies and literary fiction; authorship and literary epochs. *(Läroplan för gymnasieskolan (Gy11) del 1 och 2, 2011, p.60)*
These, the most recent guidelines and purpose statements, contrast somewhat with those of the previous curriculum, introduced 11 years earlier, in terms of the stated goals of the subject of English in particular. In the purpose statements, which also aim to clarify the role of the subject of English in the education of high schoolers, this earlier steering document echoes the current one to some extent, in that it points out the great number of different cultures which make use of English, as well as the language’s position as a dominant method of communication throughout the world. The exact wording of the gy2000 curriculum guideline is as follows:

English is the mother tongue or an official language in a great number of countries, conveys many wildly different cultures and is a dominant language of communication in the world. (Skolverket, 2000, p.84)

The education in English has as an additional purpose to widen perspectives on a growing English-speaking world with its multitude of different cultures. (Skolverket, 2000, p.84)

The wording here seems to imply that English is to be considered, and taught as, an international language. However, if one reads the actual, more concrete, goals towards which teachers and students are supposed to work, doubt is cast upon that interpretation:

The school shall in its teaching of English strive to make the student [..] reflect on ways of living, cultural traditions and societal conditions in English-speaking countries and develop deeper understanding and tolerance of other people and cultures. (Skolverket, 2000, p.85)

Here, there is no longer any implication of a multiculturalism which extends to non-native-English-speaking countries. There is thus a marked contrast between the 2000 and the 2011 curriculum guidelines. This contrast shows the move towards teaching English as an international language which the Swedish curriculum has made in the last 20 years. Whilst there were signs of the international perspective breaking through in the general purpose statement for the subject of English in the 2000 curriculum, the stated goals
towards which teachers and students were supposed to work still clung to a focus on "English-speaking countries".

In the most recent curriculum, the focus has been shifted towards "parts of the world where English is used" instead, signalling a shift towards an international perspective on the teaching of the language. This is confirmed to be a deliberate choice on the part of Skolverket in the additional commentary material to the main steering documents, or to the main syllabus, in which it is written quite clearly that “Language areas are not always congruent with national borders ("Språkområden sammanfaller inte heller alltid med nationsgränser")” (Skolverket, 2011, p.8) and that “Language should be viewed from a social perspective ("Språk ska ses i ett socialt perspektiv")” (Skolverket, 2011, p.8). It is also worth noting that the Swedish curriculum is greatly influenced by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), in which the importance of intercultural communication is given a great deal of focus (Skolverket, 2009, XIV-XVI).

2.4 The Literary Canon

A "Canon" is originally a religious term that defines which Christian texts are considered legitimate and part of the church’s official doctrine. It has also, however, gained a different connotation in the past few hundred years. A "literary canon" is a term which denotes a number of important works of literature which act as a sort of yardstick against which all other such works are measured. Works which are included in such canons are generally those which are seen as "classics" (Thompson, 1988, p.60). Whilst there is no one true objective list, in a classical "English literary canon", one would likely include Chaucer, Shakespeare, Austen, Twain, Shelley etc, and it is these works which are often focused upon when English is taught in schools—both in natively English-speaking countries and in non-native ones. (“English Literary Canon”)

A common criticism against both the classical English canon and the somewhat broader "Western" canon with which it overlaps has been that it focuses almost exclusively on the work of Dead White European Males, or "Dwems", with a few Dead European Females thrown in for good measure. With the advent of postmodernism in the
20th century, a move has been made towards an expanded canon in which minorities find greater representation (Morrison, 1994). If a "Global canon" is the end goal, one still has to consider—in the context of English language teaching—the value of reading works which are originally written in the language in which they are read. It might thus be a stretch to expect the inclusion of Japanese or Nigerian authors in English textbooks, at least if these authors write in their native tongues. However, whether or not the textbooks adhere to a more "classic" version of the canon, or whether some room is left for that same multiculturalism which is demanded by the Curriculum guidelines for Swedish high schools—and which is influenced by those promoting the teaching of English as an international language—is still an interesting question to ask.

2.5 Culture in Textbooks – Previous Research

McGrath (2013) among others has written about the evaluation of educational materials—and about textbooks in particular—although his texts are more about the meta theory than about analysing specific textbooks. However, a lot has been written on the subject of culture and cultural representation in specific textbooks, although research on the subject can be seen as something of a perishable product—the Swedish school system is ever changing, as are those of other countries, and thus textbooks also have to change in order to keep up. Since this essay focuses on textbooks which are currently in use, and thus generally eschews the historical perspective, this is especially important to keep in mind. There is not enough room in this essay to present every single study on the subject, but a select few—those deemed most relevant in terms of temporality and subject matter—are summarized below.

Jackie F. K. L. & Xinghong L. (2019) take a similar approach to this essay in their study of cultural representations in textbooks used in Hong Kong and mainland China respectively. The focus here is mainly on comparisons between these different geographical areas, but in doing so the three circle model of English is applied, and the results—that the representations are highly centered on British culture, and that cultural
representation is shallow and “congratulatory (p.6)—are similar to other studies of its kind.

Lee (2011), as an example, finds in her study “Teaching How To Discriminate: Globalization, Prejudice, and Textbooks” that textbooks in South Korea are often skewed towards a western cultural context, and that minority cultures are mainly included as stereotypes and in comparative contexts, where western culture is held up as the norm (p.56). From this, Lee (2011) concludes that teachers “need to be vigilant and redo to develop counter-discourses” (p.59), which they can present to their students in order to give said students a more nuanced perspective on the cultures presented. Raigón-Rodriguez (2018) reaches much the same results in a study conducted on textbooks used in Spain. Concluding that representations of other cultures than the Inner circle ones is shallow and stereotypical and merely anecdotal—a cultural ”decoration”. (p. 297)

Medina (2008) utilizes the previously mentioned big C/small c model when she examines culture in English textbooks used in Colombia (pp. 170-171). She concludes that there is a lack of representations of other cultures than the Inner circle one, and that what representation there is is stereotypical and shallow (Medina, 2008, p.188).

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2.5.1 The Swedish context

Many of the studies which are closest to this one in terms of material and angle are written on the bachelor level, and should thus be taken with a grain of salt—the basis for the conclusions drawn in such essays is not as solid or extensive as it would be in higher-level dissertations. With that said, it is still important to place the results of this essay into as contemporary a context as possible, and a few of the most relevant bachelor-level
essays on the subject of English textbooks in Swedish schools are presented here, amongst other types of peer-reviewed texts.

English textbooks for Swedish students have been studied in a couple of bachelor-level dissertations in recent years. Among these is one by Nilsson and Hovart (2018), who have employed a similar theoretical framework and similar methods compared to this essay when they wrote their essay, entitled *An Analysis of Swedish EFL Textbooks - Reflections on Cultural Content and English as an International Language*. However, they focused on books aimed at a significantly younger age group—children in the Swedish "lågstadie"—ages 7-9—making their findings interesting but not strictly comparable to those of this essay. The theoretical framework of Nilsson and Hovart’s essay has a lot in common with that of this essay, however, as it focuses on culture and English as an international language. In their study, Nilsson and Hovart (2018) find that the textbooks focus mainly on Inner circle and Swedish perspectives. International and intercultural aspects are present, but are deemed to be too few and too inadequate to truly teach English as and international language (p.34).

Hakander (2018) uses much the same model for analysing the cultural contents of textbooks as Medina, utilising the big C and small c divisions to construct tables from which to draw conclusions in her essay, *Cultural Representations in English Textbooks: A Content Analysis of Viewpoints 1, 2, and 3* (pp.11-12). The Viewpoints series is a popular one in Swedish high schools, and is published by Gleerups, just as Context and Pick & Mix is, meaning that Hakander’s source material is very close to that of this essay. As the title of Hakander’s essay implies, though, Hakander focuses on only these three textbooks from the same series. This gives her the opportunity to go more in-depth, but it also means that no comparison can be made within the essay itself with a contemporary textbook series of a similar kind. The results of Hakander’s essay are very valuable as a point of comparison for the results of this essay, however. Hakander (2018) concludes that the books in the Viewpoints series still focus on culture as being tied to countries, with Great Britain and British culture as well as America and American culture seeing far more representation than any other countries or cultures. (pp.34-35)

Demir (2007) has done a study on English textbook usage in Sweden. Her study contains an analysis of the textbooks themselves, but she also does a survey of the extent to which different textbooks are used, as well as why they are used. To this end, she
interviews teachers. Demir wrote her dissertation, which is at the magister level, in 2007. Since Sweden has introduced an entirely new curriculum—"läröplan"—since then, the textbooks in her study are somewhat outdated; they are no longer being sold, and likely see only sporadic use in today’s schools. Demir’s study, then, is primarily relevant as a point of comparison for anyone making a similar textbook study with a similar focus on English as an International Language. What Demir finds in her study is that the textbooks promote the Inner circle cultural hegemony and deals in stereotypes, though she argues that this does not “constrain negotiation and reflection” on the part of the students (p.26).

To summarize both this section and section 2.5: the majority of studies on how culture is represented in English textbooks meant for teaching English as a foreign language find that the textbooks studied, regardless of country of origin and/or intended usage, adhere to representations of a mainly Inner circle cultural context, with other cultures being represented mainly through stereotypes and surface-level references—big C rather than small c—and/or mainly in contrast to British or American culture.
3. Method and Material

3.1 Method

Considering the relatively small sample size of books to which the research questions formulated in the introductory section of this essay are put and in which answers to these questions are sought, a primarily qualitative content analysis was deemed to be most appropriate for this study. A mainly qualitative approach also leaves room for an adjustment to the research questions as new interpretations are made and new answers are found, in a hermeneutic feedback loop (Krippendorff, 2018, pp. 81-83). However, a basic quantitative system of dividing up the cultures which are represented in the book—“Country” and “culture” is used synonymously here, as a country is assumed to have one main, dominant culture which, whilst potentially having much in common with those of other countries, is exclusive to it—has to be constructed in order to gain a simple overview from which further conclusions can then be drawn. A highly useful theoretical framework which acts as the basis for said spreadsheet is that of the so-called “three circles of English” which are described in greater detail section 2.

Since the goal is to evaluate the contents of the textbooks, to “get inside” the books, the main method used will be a form of materials analysis, such as described by McGrath (2013) who, among others, have argued for the usefulness of the “checklist method” of evaluating textbooks (pp.55-56). “Discovering what is there”, as Littlejohn (2011, cited in McGrath, 2013, p.53) puts it, is the first step, and the most important one. Since only a very specific aspect of the textbooks is studied in this essay, the following, similarly specific checklist is used to identify cases of cultural representation:

- Re any countries mentioned?
- Can any specific cultural markers be seen in images?
- What are the nationalities of the authors of individual texts, if mentioned?
- Are there any mention of objects, ideas etc. which are strongly linked to one or more cultures?
The things found by going through the books using this checklist are tallied up and divided based on the three circles of English, in order to provide the basic statistics of cultural representation. After that, a series of open questions can be put to the representations which have been identified. Some of these questions are closely linked to theories presented in section 2.

To start with, there is an obvious division between implicit and explicit representations of culture which needs to be looked at: are the texts actually about a culture or is culture only a secondary aspect to what is being conveyed? Is the goal of a text to teach the reader about a culture? Or is the goal simply to tell a story about something universal, whilst being set in the context of a particular culture? Is the author writing about his or her own culture or is he/she writing about another culture, from the outside looking in—could the author be guilty of cultural appropriation? For example: a natively British or American author of a story which is set in his or her native country is likely mainly going to include implicit cultural references in the text, whilst the same author writing about an African country is likely to be more focused on and aware of the cultural markers which he/she includes in said story/text, which might very well, although not necessarily, be about the culture of that country specifically. Also, are the cultures represented in the form of big C or small c culture? These questions are all discussed and answered in part 4, in relation to the theories presented in part 2.

The images in the books have to be analysed along the texts, of which they can be considered an extension, mainly because of the prominent roll images of various kinds play in this type of literature; in many cases the images say even more than the texts that accompany them. Although the imagery can contain additional dimensions when compared with the written word, in this study the assumption is made that each aims to convey its information in a certain way which is congruent with the other. In other words: the imagery and the text go hand in hand, and the interpretation of one helps with the interpretation of the other. In semiotics, a theory with roots in linguistics and language research, an image is regarded as something that can be "read", and as a message or expressions that confidently communicate something to the "reader" (Eriksson, Y. & Göthlund, A., 2004, pp.34-35).
As mentioned in the introduction, the results are also compared to the curriculum guidelines set by Skolverket, in order to evaluate whether the textbooks stay true to said curriculum when it comes to how they approach English language teaching—is it taught as an international language?—and thus the textbooks’ relevancy and level of appropriateness for use in Swedish schools. As these curriculum guidelines also reflect trends and developments in pedagogy as a whole, insights into how these trends manifest in and affect the textbooks are also gained (Ammert, 2011, p.51). These guidelines are also gone through in greater detail in section 2.

3.2 Material

Four textbooks are analysed in this essay, divided between two series: Pick & Mix 1 and Pick & Mix 2 and Context 1 and Context 2. The first book in both series is aimed towards English 5, while the second is aimed at English 6. Neither book series has a book meant for use on the English 7 level. Both series take a similar approach to the subject of English: a number of different thematical areas are covered, ranging between wildly different subjects. Importantly, both series were first published in 2011 or more recently, meaning that they are meant to follow the gy11 curriculum guidelines.

*Pick & Mix* is published by Gleerups, one of the largest publishers of textbooks in Sweden. Gleerups offer a couple of different textbooks of a similar type, the most popular being the *Viewpoints series*. *Viewpoints* goes up to English 7 however, meaning that it is not equivalent to the *Context series*. It has also been studied recently by Louise Hakander in her essay *Cultural Representations in English Textbooks: A Content Analysis of Viewpoints 1, 2, and 3*. Due to these reasons, *Pick & Mix* was chosen.

The *Context* series is also published by Gleerups. The *Context* series is similar to the *Pick & Mix* series in a lot of ways—both in length and in approach—and was chosen in large part due to the potential for comparison a similar structure and scope as well as similar aims would provide. A larger study along the same lines as this one might include books from other publishers, such as the *Worldwide English* and *Short cuts* series from
Sanoma. However, the inclusion of further textbooks would make the scope of this particular essay far too wide.

In both of the books aimed at English 6, a greater focus is put on literature, likely due to the curriculum’s demands for the inclusion of “Themes, motifs, form and contents in film, and literary fiction; authorship and literary eras” (*Läroplan för gymnasieskolan (Gy11) del 1 och 2, 2011*, p.60). What exactly is included in these sections is naturally of particular importance to a culturally focused study such as this one, seeing as works of literature are cultural artefacts. This being the case, a break from or an adherence to the established canon of English literature says a great deal about what culture(s) possesses the cultural hegemony within the world of English textbooks.
4. Results and Discussion

In this section, the results of the basic quantitative study on representation based on the theory of inner-, outer-, and expanding circle English is presented, and the results are expanded upon somewhat, and discussed, in text. Each textbook is given a section, and each series has a third section in which general conclusions are drawn from the textbook-sections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Inner circle</th>
<th>Outer circle</th>
<th>Expanding circle</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
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<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pick &amp; Mix 1</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pick &amp; Mix 2</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7</td>
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*Table 1.* The representation of inner-, outer-, and expanding circle countries in the textbooks. This is a summary of a more detailed table, which can be found in Appendix 1

The textbooks are, as can be seen in table 1 above, almost completely focused on those countries which belong to the inner circle of English. This means that the books promote native speakerism. They can also be said to broadly promote the teaching of English as not an international but rather a national language, albeit of more than one nation. There are some texts which stand out as exceptions, and some which highlight specific kinds of representation. In the following sections, these notable patterns, which are not seen in the rough division of the table above, are covered.
4.1 Context

Context 1 is mainly centred around 15 texts with accompanying exercises of varying kinds. It also has a "Resource Pages" section as well as a section for "Grammar" and one for "Word lists". These last three sections are largely ignored in this essay, as they are mostly purely technical in nature and contain no real cultural references. Only the "Resource pages" is touched upon briefly, as it contains cultural markers and is thus relevant to this essay. Context 2 is structured in much the same way as Context 1, albeit with different texts, naturally. It also includes a "Literature Section". Both books are between 300 and 400 pages long.

The contents and themes of the texts in these two books range from a story about being new in a city like London (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, pp.120-133) in the first volume to a tale about taking sports fandom too far in the second (Cutler, T. & Holmberg, K., 2012, pp.140-146), and covers everything in between. The main difference between the two volumes is the inclusion of the previously mentioned "Literature Section" in the second volume. Here, texts which span a period of time from the 600s to the 1900s are included, with the common theme which connects them being ”youth” (Cutler, T. & Holmberg, K., 2012, p.307). This section reflects the increased focus on literary epochs and historical authors which is introduced on the English 6 level in the Swedish curriculum guidelines, which is covered in section 2.4 of this essay. The Context series has a clear focus on fiction literature, and both volumes include many established authors and their works. This contrasts fairly heavily with the Pick & Mix series, which mostly includes non-fiction texts seemingly written mainly by the textbook writers themselves.

4.1.1 Context 1

"Panic not, mother” is about Ghana, but it is told from the perspective of Americans on gap-year trips (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, pp. 6–11). It is the only text in the books which is mainly about a non-natively-English-speaking country. It is also the only text which touches upon a non-Inner circle culture and/or country in its own context, as opposed to such a culture being represented by the immigrants who bring it with them to
the natively English-speaking world. As such, it stands out as the kind of text which would be apt to include in a textbook meant for the purposes of teaching English as an international language.

"Dad, can I come home” is a science-fiction story, and not explicitly about any one culture. It is, however, very Anglophone in in terms of tone and the naming of characters. It is written by a British female author, albeit one with a Barbadian background (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, pp. 20-25). The more grounded ”Arthur” is a text by a British Author about a satellite dish of the same name, situated in Cornwall in the UK. In the text, multiple references are made to author Arthur C Clarke, and a single reference is also made to author JK Rowling. It is thus a very British text in a literary and more broadly cultural sense and it hinges on the reader’s possession of British cultural knowledge to make any real sense (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, pp.149-154).

"Dashed hopes” is a very obviously British text, in that it focuses on a British athlete whose career has been cut short by injury (pp. 32-25). In the same section, some focus is also put on Australian sports, including the native aboriginals (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, p.42). Australia, being a part of the commonwealth, still falls safely within the bounds of the inner circle. Similarly, although it focuses on a completely different thing—young love—”Going Steady” is an American text, though only implicitly cultural. It mentions New York and takes place in an American school context, but is at its core a fictional, or semi-fictional, story set in the authors’ own default cultural context (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, pp.45-50). The same can be said for ”City of Angels”, which is written by an American and set in New York (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, pp.59.64).

In a similar fashion, ”Swinging London” deals with a Dubliner’s experiences moving to the city of London, and is Semi-biographical—author Marian Keyes is Dublin-born and spent her twenties in London.( Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, pp. 120-125). Likewise, ”The Landlady” is steeped in British culture and written by famous British Author Roald Dahl, and so is ”Going Through a Phase” by British mystery writer Robert Barnard (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, pp.72–81, 176–185). ”Deep Breath” consists of extracts from a Q&A column which is part of a UK based science magazine. The subject matter is itself is culturally neutral, but the context is British, and one of the men behind the ”Answer” part of the Q&A is Australian (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, pp.111-113). ”A Great Day” takes place in New Zeeland and is written by a New
Zealandic author (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, p.142). It is not a text which is explicitly about culture, although it does give a glimpse into the lives of two New Zealanders on a fishing trip (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, pp.134-142). New Zealand belongs to the Commonwealth, what implicit culture is there is still distinctly part of the culture of the Inner circle, as is the country itself. "Molluscs” is American in much the same way (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, pp.163-169).

“Red Sari” is more explicitly about culture, and more specifically the clash of cultures which is commonplace in the lives of immigrants or those with an immigrant background. It is still firmly tied to Britain, but it does represent another culture, and it does so in a way which is explicit—the very point of the story is to demonstrate cultural differences (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, pp.88-94). The author is herself an immigrant to Britain (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, p.95).

“Coolhunters” is about culture—or perhaps more accurately ”sub-culture”—but not about one which is tied to any one country. In fact, it is very much international at its core. The sub-culture in question is that of trend-spotting, or fashion research (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, pp.103-104). One could potentially argue that the concept itself is ”western” if not Inner circle, and the accompanying image, depicting a white woman with red hair, certainly enforces that interpretation (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, p.102). The term ”western” as it is used here mainly includes western European and North American—minus Mexican—culture. However one looks at it, though, the text is less typically ”British” or ”American” than most others in the textbook. Its authors are Italians based out of Rome. The text would thus have to be considered as being representative of an expanding circle country or culture, albeit with some reservations (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, p.104).

In the additional material which follows the ”Arthur” text, there is a mention of Stockholm, in the context of a brief exercise centred on environmentally- and health-focused technological innovations in said city (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, p.158). This is one of few examples in the book of the culture or country of the intended readers—the ”source culture”—being represented. It is also another representation of a country and culture which belongs to the expanding circle, albeit a representation which focuses purely on the big C culture of physical environments and buildings/architecture.
In The chapter ”3xMusic”, three short texts about music are presented. The first is written by an American author about a Hungarian song. Whilst the song is originally non-English, the text focuses mainly on its adoption into the American musical mainstream. Famous Americans like Marilyn Manson and Ray Charles are mentioned, as is Icelandic singer Björk (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, pp.196-197). Here we have two mentions in a single chapter of artists hailing from the expanding circle of English. The second is about so-called ”earworms”, and is once again written by an American author and steeped in American culture, mentioning MTV repeatedly (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, pp.198-200). The third text is about how you write a pop song. The author is Indian, and it is thus counted as a representation of an outer circle country/culture, but the text itself is very much empty of actual information about said culture.

Also worth mentioning are the short quotes which are spread throughout the book. These are overwhelmingly from Inner circle celebrities and/or historical figures. Prime examples are ones from John Lennon, Margaret Atwood, and J.R.R. Tolkien. There are a couple examples of non-English-Speakers being quoted—Lao Tzu and Plato being the only examples who are completely divorced from the Inner circle context—but these are few and far between (Cutler, T. & Skoglund, S., 2011, pp. 209, 191, 83, 12, 143). It could also be argued that, since these are ancient figures from ancient cultures, neither Plato nor Lao Tzu really represent a break from the Inner circle context into which they have been adopted over many hundreds and even thousands of years.

4.1.2 Context 2

In context 2, similar patterns to those of the first volume can be seen. A great many texts are implicitly Inner circle in culture—”I'm Sorry but I'll Have To Let You Go”, ”The Greatest Man in the World”, ”The Framing of John Lennon”, ”Discipline”, , ”Minus One”, and ”The Drover’s Wife” are all texts of this type (Cutler, T. & Holmberg, K., 2012, pp. 6-11, 98-103, 113-118, 126-132., 172-179, 188-195). There is, however, a clear variance in terms of focus culture/country within those boundaries, with commonwealth countries such as the inner circle Australia seeing representation in the texts. Also represented is the outer circle India—if in a somewhat muddled, cricket-focused form in ”The Confessions of a Sports Fanatic” (Cutler, T. & Holmberg, K., 2012pp.140-147).
Two sections of text are about Animals and Astronomy respectively, and both are mainly culturally neutral, but they do contain a brief mention of Alaska and Hungary in the former and a number of different countries in a scientific context in the first half of the latter (Cutler, T. & Holmberg, K., 2012, pp.28-32, 84-87). A second text on Astronomy focuses on two American scientists, and it could be argued that it is implicitly culturally American (Cutler, T. & Holmberg, K., 2012, pp.88-91).

There are also examples of that same kind of another-culture-clashing-with-the-Inner circle-one-stories. "Homesick" is a tale of coming to London as a young Chinese girl, told from said girl’s perspective and written by a female author born in China, meaning that it is semi-autobiographical at the very least (Cutler, T. & Holmberg, K., 2012, pp20-23). This text, whilst still holding up Inner circle culture as the norm, does highlight cultural differences and allows a person belonging to a culture from the expanding circle to tell about said culture.

"Two Per Cent" is interesting in that it focuses on personal identity as a product of, amongst other things, ties to different cultures and countries (Cutler, T. & Holmberg, K., 2012, pp.38-48). Whilst the text does namedrop a number of countries and cultures—in fact, countries from all three circles are mentioned—it can also be said to be a very American text. One could indeed argue that the personal obsession with ancestry and with clinging to national identities which one no longer has any real connection to is, at its core, a very American thing.

There is also a tale told from the perspective of an immigrant to Great Britain in "My Son the Fanatic". More specifically, the story focuses on the Islamic radicalization of a second-generation immigrant (Cutler, T. & Holmberg, K., 2012, pp.54-64). The text itself has fairly little to say about culture, however. There is condemnation of “western” culture on the part of said immigrant, and Islamic ideology is spouted, but very little else. The culture of Britain is the norm in the story, and it is railed against by one of the two main characters and exalted by the other. No cultural alternative is offered, however, only an ideological. In stark contrast, "Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother", focuses exclusively on cultural differences between American and Chinese culture—specifically when it comes to parenting (Cutler, T. & Holmberg, K., 2012, pp.73-78). Whilst this is still an example of a culture being represented only as an "other" in contrast to the Inner circle norm, it still gives a good amount of insight into this "other" culture, much like the previously
mentioned "Homesick". Both texts are written by authors who themselves come from immigrant backgrounds.

"Wheels" stands out as a text which is about an outer circle country—South Africa—but which almost completely focuses on the non-Anglospherical culture within that country. South Africa is highly divided culturally, and "Wheels" falls mainly on the African side of this division, being told from the perspective of a black African man (Cutler, T. & Holmberg, K., 2012, pp.157-163) It still has to be noted that the story takes place in a country in which English is an official language, and one which belongs to the Commonwealth of Nations. Also noteworthy is the fact that the text is written by a female Scottish author (Cutler, T. & Holmberg, K., 2012, p.163). It could thus be said to be "cultural appropriation" in a way which none of the other texts, which are generally written by authors who are themselves part of the culture which they write about, are. Whilst this is a somewhat uncharitable view of the text and its author, the fact remains that it is somewhat damning that one of the few representations of a non-inner-circle-culture stems from an inner circle source.

"In the Beginning was Vincent" is about Vincent Van Gogh, the famed Dutch painter, and—to a lesser extent—about modern art in general (Cutler, T. & Holmberg, K., 2012, pp.202-205). It is a text written by an Australian, but the specific culture and accompanying sub-culture it covers is not Inner circle per se (Cutler, T. & Holmberg, K., 2012, p.206). It is, however, western European, and whilst technically representing the expanding circle, it is closely related to Inner circle culture. Van Gogh himself—being a cultural icon of sorts—can be said to have a cultural reach which goes far beyond the Netherlands.

The Literature section—see appendix 2—is wholly focused on British and American authors and their works. There are extracts here from Shakespeare, Rosetti, Twain, Dickens, and many others of a similar calibre (Cutler, T. & Holmberg, K., 2012, p.309). An extract from Beowulf has seemingly been chosen because it mentions Swedes, in an attempt to rouse interest in the target audience of Swedish high schoolers (Cutler, T. & Holmberg, K., 2012, p.310). Overall, the section sticks completely to the English literary canon.
4.1.3. The *Context* Series in Summation

The two *Context* books show some signs of attempting to follow the Swedish high school curriculum’s guidelines in that there is a reasonably wide variety of cultures represented in the texts which have been included in the books. However, the two books are still overwhelmingly dominated by texts which originate in and/or are set in Inner circle contexts; this context is always the ”default”, and any other cultures or countries mentioned are mainly decorative. As previously mentioned, the books promote native speakerism.

The stats do not tell the entire story, however. In addition to the obvious discrepancy in representation, the texts which focus on non-Inner circle countries and cultures—”Panic not, mother”, ”Red Sari”, and ”Coolhunters” in the first volume and ”Homesick”, ”My Son the Fanatic”, ”Wheels”, and ”In the Beginning was Vincent” in the second—are either told from the perspective of those originating from Inner circle countries, is about immigrants to an Inner circle country, or are written by an Inner circle author about a country which is either part of the outer circle or highly similar culturally to those of the inner and/or outer circles. As previously stated, “Wheels” in particular can even be seen as a kind of cultural appropriation, in that it is written by a Scottish author about the non-Anglospherical culture of an outer circle country.

A pattern also emerges throughout both books of any mention of a non-inner circle country being just that—a mention. There are only a few examples of any countries or cultures than those of the inner circle being given more than a sentence, if that. The representation of the outer and expanding circles of English are thus shallow. Applying the big C and little c distinction to *Context* 1 & 2 further reinforces this shallowness. Cultures outside of the Inner circle are mainly represented through big C culture, meaning objective and explicit cultural markers. This could also be seen as a form of stereotyping—representing groups of people in a way which gives no insight into their thought patterns and no deeper understanding of their inner workings, be it as a group or as individuals. External behaviours and cultural anecdotes take precedence over beliefs and worldviews.
What little culture there is to be seen is also generally Inner circle. The main exceptions to this rule are the texts "Red Sari", "Homesick" and "My Son the Fanatic". However, these still only give insight into the subjective culture of immigrant communities, which are obviously influenced by the Inner circle context to which they have transplanted themselves. This means that no culture is represented in a way which is completely divorced from Inner circle influence. These results generally tally with those of similar studies, as presented in section 2.5, and essentially show that very little has changed in recent years, despite changes to the Swedish curriculum, and that Swedish schools are no closer to teaching English mainly as an international language than the rest of the world.

4.2 Pick & Mix

*Pick and Mix 1* is divided into 10 thematic sections of exactly 20 pages each. *Pick & Mix 2* is divided somewhat less evenly, with each section—of which there still are ten—ranging from 20 to 28 pages in length. Each section contains multiple shorter texts. Both books are slightly shorter than those of the *Context* series, with a page count in the 200s. The themes of the *Pick & Mix* books range from "Weird hobbies", "Fabulous Foods", "Plastic surgery", and "Conspiracy theories" in the first volume to "Shop till you Drop", "pure Psychology", "A Common Wealth" and "English Literature" in the second volume. The very last of these thematic sections signals, just as was the case in the *Context* series, an adherence to the greater focus on literature which is introduced by the Swedish curriculum on the English 6 level, and which was covered in section 2.4. As is also mentioned in a previous section, the *Pick & Mix* series is less focused on fiction literature than the *context* series is. Most chapters contain one short text followed by grammar-, listening-, and writing exercises which follow the same theme as the text.
4.2.1 Pick and Mix 1

"Culture shock", the very first theme in Pick & Mix 1, specifically highlights stereotypes and cultural differences. The main text-based section of the chapter is an extract from an internet forum thread in which people from different countries discuss both their own culture and those of others. Sweden, Japan, and "the middle east" are discussed by, amongst others, people native to those countries/areas, whilst Korea and Switzerland are mentioned without such representation (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2013, pp.10-12). It is thus represents many countries which are part of the expanding circle.

"Weird Hobbies” is mostly culturally neutral. The only one of the mentioned hobbies which is distinctly tied to a culture is origami, which has still become somewhat of a worldwide phenomenon. The culture represented is technically part of the expanding circle, however, and is counted as such, even if it is only a brief mention (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2013, p.32). "Fabulous Food” follows along the same lines, although three out of the five countries which are mentioned in the main text of this thematic section are part of the Inner circle—those three being the US, Britain, and Scotland. (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2013, pp.50-52). The fast foods which are mentioned and shown—hamburgers, pizza, mars bars, chips, milkshake etc.—might have been inherently "western” at one time, but have all been spread across the world to an extent which has essentially removed any possibility of them being considered cultural markers. In a brief introductory text in the same chapter, "Ben” and "Anna” eat spaghetti Bolognese. These very Anglophone names accompanied by a picture of a European-looking man gives an impression of the text taking place in an inner circle context (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2013, pp. 45-49).

The above is a recurring theme in the shorter texts throughout the book—very English names are used, and pictures of ethnically British and/or European—i.e. “white”—people are often used to accompany these texts. ”Working Life”, for example, contains no actual texts, and is in a sense as culturally neutral as can be, but it does contain pictures of only very white, ethnically British-looking people. (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2013, pp.197, 199, 206). These instances have not been counted as cultural representations. If they had, the results would have been skewed even further towards the pattern of native speaker ideal and inner circle focus which is emerging.
In the "Animal Rights" section, one can find a text about UK activists fighting against animal testing. (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2013, pp. 72-73). In "Behind the Scenes" a film extra describes in vague terms his/her experiences on a film set. The movie being filmed is seemingly about a music festival in the 60’s. This nugget of information, along with a picture of hippie-looking people in a field, gives one the impression that the whole thing is about Woodstock—an iconic American music festival (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2013, pp. 90-92). A sub-heading in the text references Shakespeare, which someone not immersed in Inner circle culture, or western culture more generally, might miss (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2013, p.93).

"Conspiracy Theories" focuses on Alien sightings, which is very much an American thing. The famous Roswell incident is the primary focus, but the theories which state that the moon landing was a hoax and that the CIA killed John Lennon are also mentioned (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2013, pp.119-120). In "A World of Sports", the main text is about an Australian cricketer, whilst the chapter as a whole has a fairly American flavour, with listings of sport earning from Forbes and pictures of American footballs and basketballs. (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2013, pp. 130-132, 128-129, 139). One section is specifically about "Sports in the English-Speaking world" (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2013, p.146). "Plastic surgery" also focuses on the Inner circle, although an anecdotal fact about Chinese plastic surgery and how it contrasts with western in terms of the aim of nose jobs is dropped casually (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2013, p. 153). This is an example of representation, but it is a very shallow one which gives no room for the deeper, small c aspects of the culture. "Crime and Punishment" focuses completely on laws in the UK/England and the US. (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2013, pp. 168, 170-173).

4.2.2 Pick and Mix 2

"Shop till you Drop" is completely focused on Inner circle shopping culture. Money is talked about in terms of £, one of the two main texts is a think piece sent in to an Ohio newspaper which references both Ford and the American dream, and the other text references the Victorian Era and Camden market (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2015, pp.8, 10-11, 14-17). "Flying the Nest” has a text about working in Australia as a student.
Its main text is about two UK women—childhood friends—who are separated by their choices in life (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2015, pp.220-222).

What few cultural markers there are to be found in "In the Name of Science" are generally Inner circle or western. Here, scientific breakthroughs are discussed, and all of them are either American, English, or Dutch—making this section count as containing a representation of an expanding circle country and culture, though only a very shallow one. A picture of motorcyclists driving in the desert beneath a text about "bacon fuel" further makes clear the main focus of the section (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2015, pp.84-89).

The "Power Play" section contains a short text set in an office which is likely American or British, judging by the names of the people working in it. A slightly longer text about power which follows upon the office text is accompanied by a picture of American civil rights icon Martin Luther King Jr. and quotes from American actress Roseanne Barr and Niccolò Machiavelli, an author and philosopher who, whilst he himself is Italian, is firmly entrenched in the literary tradition of the Inner circle countries, and was ultimately not counted as a representation of Italy, a country which belongs to the expanding circle (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2015, pp.131, 133).

"Philosophize this" also focuses on people with Anglophone names—"Charlie" and "Emma"—and though the section mainly focuses on philosophy as a general concept, there is still a greater focus on "Modern western culture” and "today’s secular society” than on any other cultures or societies (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2015, pp.172, 174). Pictures of Celtic crosses and Michelangelo’s The Creation of Adam further nudges the thoughts of the reader towards Christianity and western philosophy (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2015, pp.175-176). Hinduism is mentioned, but only very briefly (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2015, p. 174). In the same section, there is a task which consist of composing a Haiku, a kind of Japanese poem (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2015, p.185). This section thus contains representations of cultures from all three circles of English.

"Forever Young” references F. Scott Fitzgerald and George Bernard Shaw (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2015, p.32). The primary focus of the section is on Oscar Wilde, who is given both a short biographical section and an extract from one of his most famous works: The Picture of Dorian Gray, a canonical work of English literature (Phillips, S. & Phillips,
"Labour of Love" is fairly culturally neutral in its first section, where the concept of love is discussed generally. Pictures of both an ethnically Asian couple and two ethnically European-looking females are included. (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2015, pp.56-59). The longest text of the section, however, is an extract from the manuscript to the famous play *A Streetcar Named Desire*, with accompanying pictures from the movie of the same name starring Marlon Brando and Vivien Leigh. (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2015, pp.62-69). If there is such a thing as a "western canon of movies", it would very likely include this film. This section is thus counted as one which contains representations of inner circle countries.

"A Common Wealth?" gives a brief historical overview of Queen Victoria, of the Victorian Era, and of British colonialism. Colonized countries are mentioned, but only in the context of British history (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2015, pp.104-108). An extract from Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, a text which is a definite part of the English literary canon, is also included (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2015, pp.128-129). "Pure Psychology" puts a good amount of focus on another canonical author and her work. It includes an excerpt from To the Lighthouse, which is perhaps English author Virginia Woolf’s most famous book (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2015, pp.150-153). Another subsection references the United States’ Declaration of Independence as it deals with happiness and how it is attained. (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2015, pp.156-158). In both of these sections, only the inner circle is represented.

"English Literature" contains no actual extracts from English literature, but is instead a brief history of it. The focus is thus naturally on England. The western canon is addressed in the chapter, and in the very last of several lists of canonical work from different eras, a couple non-Inner circle authors and their works are included, that couple being Chinua Achebe and his *Things Fall Apart* and Arundhati Roy and his *The God of Small Things*. (Phillips, S. & Phillips, T., 2015, pp.202-203). That said, the textbook does stick very close to the mainstream canon, and although it highlights the fact that the authors of the “classics” are middle-class white men, little is done to challenge that notion.
4.2.3. The *Pick and Mix* Series in Summation

*Pick & Mix* is not structured around famous authors and their works in the same way as the *context* series, and it contains far less text overall. It is thus harder to judge whether the book is guilty of promoting cultural appropriation or of going deeper into the small c of inner circle cultures than it does in the case of cultures belonging to the other circles— the *Pick & Mix* books are simply less textual and more shallow.

What texts there are focus mainly on representations of the Inner circle of English cultural context, however, in much the same way as in *Context*, and if anything, the *Pick & Mix* series is even less focused on the expanding circle in particular than *Context*, although about as much space is given to the outer circle. There is barely any non-Anglospheric cultural representation to be found. The few mentions there are of people or concepts such as Hinduism, Machiavelli or spaghetti Bolognese, which do not originate from inner circle countries, are not given any real context and are simply mentioned in passing in texts which are largely focused on other things. Just as with the *Context* series, this seems to tally up well with what previous research there is on similar textbooks. The native speaker ideal—native speakerism—is upheld.

When it comes to literature in particular, both series stay firmly within the English literary canon when they present the ”classics”. The authors who are mentioned —and even other important figures such as film directors and actors—almost all belong to the Inner circle cultural context. Most of the exceptions to this rule—such as Machiavelli and Plato—are important figures in the larger ”western” cultural sphere which includes said Inner circle countries in addition to western European countries such as France, Germany, and Sweden.
5. Summary and Conclusions

All things considered, the two textbook series both follow the Swedish Curriculum to a certain extent, but not fully. Lip service is paid to the curriculum guidelines and their more international approach, but both series are still focused mainly on teaching English as a national language, rather than an international one. Regardless of whether one looks at big C- or small c aspects, the main cultural representations are almost always those of the inner circle with very few exceptions. The rest of the world, and even the rest of the Anglophone world—those countries which belong to the outer circle but have been strongly affected by the inner circle historically, such as South Africa and India—sees little representation. The textbooks promote native speakerism instead, and are even, at times, guilty of cultural appropriation. If these two book series can be seen as being representative of other books of their kind, the available textbooks are thus, in the context of Swedish high schools and when it comes to the aspect of cultural representations, deficient in giving teachers all of the tools they need to teach English according to curriculum guidelines.

Put into a wider context, however, this also highlights a pattern of issues which are not exclusive to Sweden or Swedish education, but which falls in line with previous international research, and is thus global: English, despite being used around the world by both native speakers and non-native speakers, is still taught as a national, culturally bound language. English teachers across the globe need to be aware of these biases as they choose between and work with different textbooks. Since culture and language are intrinsically linked, English teaching can only be considered successful if the learners gain an understanding of all of the different cultures and contexts in which English is used, and in which they might one day be expected to use the language themselves. As was mentioned in section 2.2 and its sub-sections, the problem is self-perpetuating: the English Language is taught in a way which also, both explicitly and implicitly, teaches about the native speaker cultures of the inner circle of English, and so the next generation of English speakers make that same connection, and fail to fully grasp the language’s international nature and to learn how to utilize it outside of these inner circle contexts.
As has been shown here—exemplified by the Swedish situation—even changes to national curricula do not necessarily effect a change in the materials used for teaching. As popular or mainstream views on education and English language teaching are ever changing, and as new textbooks are being written constantly, it is important to continually monitor the development of the teaching materials and make sure that they change and adapt in a similar way in order to be useful.
6. Literature


Appendices

Appendix 1: Cultural Representation in the textbooks by section

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**Pick & Mix 1**

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