English Teachers’ Views on the Use of the Target Language in the Classroom
A study at Upper Secondary Level

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Date: 01 June 07
Author: Helén Sjöberg
Tutors: Torbjörn Jansson, Ole Olsson
Co-examiners: Jörgen Johansson
                      Kristina Gustafsson
Examiner: Anders Persson
# Table of Contents

1 INTRODUCTION ........................................................................................................... 1  
1.1 Background – the English language in context ....................................................... 1  
1.2 Background – this study in context ......................................................................... 4  
1.3 Terminology and abbreviations............................................................................... 5  
1.4 Aims ....................................................................................................................... 7  
1.5 Limitations ............................................................................................................ 7  
1.6 Method .................................................................................................................. 8

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH ........................................... 11  
2.1 Rules and regulations................................................................................................. 11  
2.2 Theories and teaching methods................................................................................ 19  
2.3 Previous research ................................................................................................... 27

3 INTERVIEW RESULTS .................................................................................................. 32  
3.1 Teacher A ............................................................................................................... 32  
3.2 Teacher B ............................................................................................................... 34  
3.3 Teacher C ............................................................................................................... 36  
3.4 Teacher D ............................................................................................................... 37  
3.5 Teacher E ............................................................................................................... 38  
3.6 Teacher F ............................................................................................................... 39  
3.7 Teacher G ............................................................................................................... 40

4 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION .................................................................................... 42

5 REFERENCES .............................................................................................................. 51

6 APPENDICES ............................................................................................................. 54  
6.1 Appendix 1 Notes for semi-structured interview .................................................. 54  
6.2 Appendix 2 Notes for semi-structured interview, Swedish version ....................... 55  
6.3 Appendix 3 Grid overview of the teachers’ views .................................................. 56
ABSTRACT

In our ever more international world, the English language plays an important role. This is also reflected in its prominent position as a core subject in the Swedish school system. It is therefore important that English teachers offer students an environment in which they have the best possible opportunities to be successful in reaching the goals specified in the syllabuses. One variable in a successful foreign language classroom is the teacher’s usage of the target language.

This study is about English teachers’ views on the issue of target language usage in the classroom, versus usage of the mother tongue. In this study, at Upper Secondary level, the interviews show that the teachers are, more or less, in agreement that the target language should be used all the time in the classroom. There are, however, occasions in which the interviewed teachers do not work according to their own beliefs and methods and revert to using Swedish. The main such occasions can briefly be said to be: explanation of grammar, non-subject related “mentor’s issues” and classroom management issues. In addition, this study argues that the governing documents, previous research, as well as well-known theories on the subject support a high usage of the target language by the teacher.

Keywords: foreign language use, foreign language usage, foreign language teaching, immersion program, immersion theory, second language use, second language usage, second language teaching, target language use, target language usage.
1 INTRODUCTION

To be at the right place at the right time is a good recipe for success. This is perhaps also the best explanation there is to how a language that as “recently” as 1582 made a scholar glumly note that “The English tongue is of small account, stretching no further than this island of ours, may not there all over” (Bryson 1990 p. 59). According to Bryson (1990) it was the fact that English was transported to the New World that led it to the “inexorable rise to becoming the foremost language of the world” (p. 59). Nowadays English is spoken by more than 300 million people in the world (ibid), and a great majority of the rest of the people in the world either can or would like to speak it (Svartvik 2001).

Below follows the background, firstly the English language in a broader context and secondly the more private background, that led to this thesis. Additionally, under this heading are also terminology, aims, limitations and method.

1.1 Background – the English language in context

In today’s global society the use of our time’s lingua franca1, English, is becoming even more important. Not only do we often use English as a means of communication in e.g. business and politics, but also when traveling to foreign countries. It also seems that we more and more encounter English in different ways here in Sweden.

It is not uncommon nowadays to see stores advertise sale instead of the Swedish rea. In the window of a shoe store (Wedins in Halmstad) it says “Spring Collection...,”, and the Danish-owned clothing store Jack&Jones (Halmstad) has an extended text in English in their main shopping window explaining how they “mistreat” jeans to get “that cool and worn look”. It also seems popular to mix English and Swedish, as on a rack sign at Jack&Jones saying “Underwear” as a headline, and then followed by the Swedish “kalsonger”. It seems evident that these stores do not cater to those who do not have a fashion vocabulary of English, or is it perhaps expected that everyone in Sweden nowadays

1“A language used between peoples whose native languages are different” (Longman Dictionary 1978).
has a good enough knowledge of English? An advertisement, in the local newspaper Hallandsposten (28Mar07), for a solar heating company, perhaps represents the new hybrid language. It starts with “We proudly present to you”, and most people would at this point expect a famous artist name to follow, but it is instead followed by the **Swenglish** “Solvärme in Sweden”. The rest of the text in the advertisement is in Swedish. There are even some TV commercials here in Sweden that are in English or half in English and half in Swedish. The clothing chain Kapp Ahl has this spring been using a number of English speaking, very famous, American actors and actresses in their Swedish commercials. Again it seems obvious that these companies and advertisers take for granted that English is understood by people in Sweden.

In addition, in spoken colloquial Swedish one can hear English utterances in an amalgamation with the Swedish. They are mainly four-letter words, and the most popular, nowadays heard more often than any “traditional” Swedish swearwords, and seemingly used by adolescents and adults alike, is the word *shit* – probably much to the astonishment and wonder of visiting native speakers of English!

We have also imported other types of words. With the development of IT (information technology) followed many new English words, such as e.g. *web* and *site*, sometimes used in a “Swenglish” version such as *webben* (or rather pronounced *webben*) and *situn*, or rather spelt the Swedish way, *sitten*. Not only are these words used in colloquial Swedish, but they are also used by newsreaders on TV.

In other words, it is safe to say that English is not only a foreign language good to know when traveling abroad or when we in other contexts are dealing with those who do not speak Swedish, and when there is no other language in common. English is becoming a very important language to be able to comprehend and use in order to be part of our more and more global Swedish society.

Perhaps it should be mentioned that this phenomenon, English becoming an important language as a way of communicating in a non-English speaking country, is by no means
unique to Sweden. It is rather a worldwide phenomenon. Bryson (1990) writes, “For non-English speakers everywhere, English has become the common tongue” (p. 3) and he gives a long list of examples of countries, such as Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, Japan and more, that have imported words and phrases from English. He continues with big corporations, one of them being ASEA, a Swedish company that in 1988 merged with the Swiss company Brown Boveri. At the time of the merger it was decided that the official language of the company would be English. Bryson (1990) continues with saying that “English has become the most global of all languages, the lingua franca of business, science, education, politics, and pop and music. For the airlines of 157 nations (out of 168 in the world), it is the agreed international language of discourse”(p. 2). He concludes that “English is, in short, one of the world’s great growth industries”(p. 3).

That a powerful culture influences other cultures by way of its language has been known to happen throughout history. Britain, the “birthplace” of English, is no exception to being influenced by other languages. Among the languages having had a lasting impact on the English language are Latin and French, but also the Scandinavian and Norman languages (Normans being descendants of Vikings) brought words to the English language – surviving today are fundamental words like: “man, wife, child, brother, sister, live, fight, love, drink, sleep, eat, house, and so on” (Bryson 1990 p. 50).

Nowadays, however, it appears that the situation is reversed – English is now the language that has the most impact on other languages in the world. Svartvik (2001) points out that never before in history has a language held such a strong position in the world, never before has a language been spoken by so many and in so many places.

It is then perhaps no wonder that English seems to have a special status in the Swedish school system – it holds a position as a core subject (English course A)\(^1\) at Upper Secondary Level. Furthermore, the National Agency for Education (Skolverket) states in the Curriculum, LpB94 (Skolverket 2007a), under the headline Goals to attain, that it is the

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\(^1\) In addition, the B course is common in most programs such as the Arts, Natural Science, Social Science and Technology programs. The English C course is an optional course as stated in the document Aims of the Subject (Skolverket 2007b).
responsibility of the school to ensure that the students “...can use English in a functional way in vocational and daily life and for further studies”. Perhaps we should all ponder over what is meant by “...being able to use English in daily life” – does it mean daily life abroad, in English speaking countries, or here at home, considering the prominent position that the English language has in our Swedish society? In the document *Aim of the subject* the National Agency for Education (Skolverket 2007b), after explaining e.g. that English is “…the dominant language of communication throughout the world”, also directly states that “The subject of English thus plays a central role in the Swedish school”.

Although there is no consensus on best practice or best method on second language teaching/learning, it is nevertheless of utmost importance that English teachers offer and provide the students with the best conditions possible in order for them to gain a good command of English - today's lingua franca and perhaps tomorrow's “world language”.

1.2 Background – this study in context

After more than twenty years in an English-speaking industry, tourism (more specifically the airline industry), I embarked on the *Teacher training program*, choosing English as my main subject. It was not my own experience of English studies at school that was the basis for the decision to become an English teacher, but rather the fascination for other languages and cultures in general and for English in particular, especially English as a means of communication when traveling to remote places of the world. It was also the realization that languages are tools to help us to understand, as well as an important instrument of power, that made the choice of the main subject quite easy.

Included in the Teacher training are “practice periods”, much like a work placement under supervision by a teacher, perhaps like an “apprenticeship of teaching”. It was a great pleasure to be able to meet, observe and work with many English teachers. Many good practices and ways of working were learnt and the knowledge gained during these periods will hopefully be of use to me in the future.
One particular occurrence did, however, not go unnoticed – the fact that some English teachers use mainly Swedish in the classroom. This might not seem strange and particular to all teachers, or students for that matter. Having had the opportunity to study several languages abroad, where only the target language had been used, this way of teaching was the more familiar way for me. Consequently, when encountered with a lot of Swedish during English lessons, it was somewhat of a surprise. Evidently, there are many ways of teaching a second language, all of them not necessarily implying that the target language should be used as the main language of communication in the classroom.

For various reasons, the habit to use mainly Swedish in the classroom (when teaching English) was never discussed with any of the teachers at the time, whether they used mainly English or mainly Swedish. With time it became increasingly interesting to find out about the views and theories on this subject, and the degree thesis handed an excellent opportunity to do just that.

1.3 Terminology and abbreviations

Several of the terms used in this study are terms frequently used in the world of language learning/teaching. They do, however, carry slightly different meanings depending on the author who uses them. To minimize the risk of ambiguity, the meaning of these terms in this study will therefore be defined and clarified in this chapter.

In this study the term English teacher means someone with a teacher degree in English. As far as the interviewees are concerned, they are also at present holding a position teaching English at an Upper Secondary school.

By classroom this study understands a teaching/learning situation, which could take place in a physical classroom, but not solely. It could also take place in another physical room at school, be it the library, group rooms or the teacher’s room etc.
Within the linguistic field of study the terms *first language* (abbreviated *L1*), *second language* (abbreviated *L2*) and *foreign language* (abbreviated *FL*) are frequently used. In this thesis the abbreviated forms will be used henceforth. The abbreviation *TL*, which means *target language*, will also be used in this study. While the *L1* term is quite clear, ones first language is ones mother tongue, the term *L2* is used dissimilarly by different authors and researchers. More specifically, some authors differentiate between *L2* and *FL*, the former term being a new language to the learner, with the learner in the environment of the *target/new language*, and the latter being a new language to the learner, with the learner in an environment lacking the *target/new language*. Unless otherwise specified, the term *L2* will also be used in this thesis to cover both *FL* and *TL*.

There are also those who suggest that there is a distinct difference between the terms *acquire* and *learn*. Lightbown & Spada (2003), with reference to the well-known linguist Stephen Krashen¹, write that “...we *acquire* as we are exposed to samples of the second language which we understand. This happens much in the same way as children pick up their first language – with no conscious attention to language form. We *learn*, on the other hand, via a conscious process of study and attention to form and rule learning” (p. 38). In this thesis there will be no difference in meaning between *acquire* and *learn*, unless otherwise specified.

Finally, a word or phrase that is meant to be emphasized is done so by being *underlined*.

¹ Krashen is associated with innatism and communicative language teaching (CLT), which will be brought up in chapter 2.2. Krashen’s own theory and method, the *Natural approach* includes e.g. the hypothesis of acquiring and learning, is by some considered as one of the most influential theories for the past half century. In the blurb of Krashen’s & Terrel’s book *The Natural approach* it is mentioned that Krashen’s previous book on the subject was praised for its importance in TESOL Quarterly, Vol 17,2, 1983, “probably the single most important book to be published in the field of language teaching since 1945...” (Krashen & Terrel 2000).
1.4 Aims

The aim of this study is to find out and explain English teachers’ views on their use of the
target language in the classroom, versus their use of Swedish. In addition, the aim is also to
find out if they work according to their views and beliefs.

To fulfill the above aims, this paper will strive to answer the following specific questions:

- What are the teachers’ views on their use of the L2 and L1 in the classroom?
- Do they, in their role as teachers, work accordingly – if not, how come?
- Are their views based on a theory, a method, or is it simply their way of working?

1.5 Limitations

The study is limited in such a way that the study took place at Upper Secondary level, a
non-compulsory form of education in Sweden. The writer is aware that had the study been
performed at a different school level, the results would possibly have been different.
Furthermore, no consideration has been taken to the teachers’ training as regards to when it
took place and what was then the current paradigm of teaching - different times and
different universities possibly having proposed and taught different methodologies and
theories on teaching/learning. This is something that most likely has influenced the
different teachers in their way of teaching. It is however not the aim of this paper to study
the role of their training as such, but merely to note if any teacher mentions their training as
reason for using or not using the L2 in the classroom. Nor has any consideration been taken
to the mother tongue of the teachers – something that perhaps influences their views on the
use of language in the classroom.

The writer is aware that the term communication as well as use/usage of L1 and L2 could
t entail different types of communication, e.g. body language and written communication.
For the purpose of this study the focus is on oral communication, unless otherwise
specified.
The selection of schools and teachers is based on a principle of convenience, i.e. the teachers were contacted either by way of a previous contact at a school or directly approached when at different suitable venues for teachers.

The time allotted to the work of this thesis makes for a "natural" limitation, i.e. the time spent on searching for literature and research has been restricted to the data bases available at Halmstad University. In addition, some search has been done on the web site Google scholar as well. The writer is, however, aware that there might be additional relevant literature and research available which perhaps could have been of use in this study had the time and financial situation been different.

1.6 Method

Research about people’s views can be done in different ways, one of them being surveys. Ednarsson (2005), who refers to Worcester, mentions that surveys have five goals: knowledge, behavior, opinions, attitudes and values. This alone would then seem to point in the direction of surveys being a suitable method for this study. However, as Wolf (2001) points out, surveys are suitable as a method to decipher tendencies and general patterns. This study, however, is not looking for tendencies or general patterns. On the contrary, a somewhat deeper answer is sought after, more of an understanding than finding a pattern. The chosen method is therefore interviews.

According to Johansson & Svedner (2001) there are two types of interviews, the first is the structured interview, which is based on set questions being asked to all the interviewees. The second type of interview, the qualitative interview, is based on more open questions. In this type of interview the authors write that the questions may vary from interview to interview depending on the answers. In addition Johansson & Svedner (2001) say that the aim of the qualitative interview is to get the interviewee to give as complete an answer as possible.
The qualitative interview could perhaps also be referred to as a semi-structured interview. According to Kvale (1997) interviews can also be called conversations and he explains that the interview is a structured conversation with an aim. Kvale (1997) mentions that the interview as a method is typically used by anthropologists, sociologists and psychologists. Since teaching can be considered as a multi-purpose discipline, bordering on e.g. sociology as well as psychology, it can then also be suitable to use interviews as a method in certain types of studies in the educational sphere. Johansson & Svedner (2001) specifically mention the qualitative interview as a method suitable for the degree thesis in the Teacher training program, since it offers the possibility to understand the student’s, the child’s or the teacher’s views on education, aims, planning etc.

Something that speaks in favor of interviews, compared to surveys, is that there is less of a risk of misunderstandings with this method. Björklund & Paulsson (2003) point this out and explain why by stating that when conducting interviews the participants can more easily ask for clarifications and explanations.

A possible objection against the use of interviews - a qualitative method - is that it can be said to be subjective, i.e. that there is a form of interpretation of the interviewees’ answers. According to Johansson & Svedner (2001) there are two main reasons for an interview to go wrong. One pitfall is that the respondent, for one reason or another, does not give truthful answers. The other is that the interviewer’s beliefs and viewpoints are made clear and obvious and that these may influence the answers. Additionally, the writer of this paper feels that there might also be a risk of the respondent trying to decipher what is “the correct” answer, i.e. what may be considered “politically correct”.

It is the aim of this study to let the interviewees give as complete answers as possible on the subject of usage of the target language in the classroom, without having been asked specific and direct questions. Hence a semi-structured interview has been chosen as opposed to a structured. It is the writer’s belief that a semi-structured interview, as opposed to a structured one, may open up the opportunity for unforeseen answers and information,
unforeseen in the way that they have not beforehand been thought of by the writer/interviewer.

The interview has been constructed with a set of “wide” and “open” questions at the beginning (questions A-C in the document Notes for semi-structured interview, appendix 1 and 2). The reason for this is twofold, firstly that they will serve as a “warm-up/introduction” to get the interviewee to feel comfortable and open to talk about her/his views. Secondly, it will give the respondent the opportunity to already at this stage bring up her/his views on the use of either L1 or L2, without having been asked a direct question on the subject. In other words, this will then give them the opportunity to answer in a more complete way (which, as mentioned before, is the intention of a semi-structured interview). By doing so, it will be a more “natural way” of receiving a reply compared to using the direct questions (D through H). These more direct questions will, nonetheless, be used in case the interviewee’s answer does not include their views on subject about the use of L1 and L2 in the classroom.

To question H (if the teacher is using Swedish in the classroom and in what kind of discourse it is then used) there is a set of categories in brackets – these will only be asked in case of the teacher not specifying her/his own categories. The categories are based on the writer’s own experience working as a substitute teacher as well as on observing other teachers at work.

Lastly, on the subject of method, the interviews were recorded with the permission of the interviewed teachers. As a courtesy, the principal/s of the schools were asked for permission to carry out the interviews with the teachers. A total number of seven interviews were made, including one pilot interview that was subsequently used in the study, since it was deemed successful.

1 At one school, an administrative staff member was asked permission, in lieu of a principal available at the time of the visit.
2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH

To guide teachers in their everyday work there are, in addition to possible local documents, governing documents published by the National Agency for Education. Another source of guidance is also scientific theories and methods surrounding language teaching and learning. Below follows a chapter on rules and regulations, followed by another on theories and methods concerning second language teaching/learning. The third chapter brings up a couple previous studies on the subject of use of the target language in the classroom.

2.1 Rules and regulations

The governing documents most essential to a teacher and her/his subject/s are two types of documents published by the National Agency for Education. The first document is the curriculum, with fairly broad guidelines about the visions and goals of the current school system. The others are the syllabuses for, in this case, the different English courses. The syllabuses can also be said to contain fairly broad guidelines, leaving room for a lot of interpretation – which in turn, it seems, has led to a specific book shedding some light on language teaching and language learning.

After requests from teachers, the National Agency for Education has published a book called Språkboken, an anthology on language teaching and language learning. At the beginning of this book it is explained that previous curriculums contained specific instructions on methodology on how to teach. In the new curriculum (Lp94\(^1\)), however, this is no longer the case and that the responsibility is now rather that of the teacher (Ferm & Malmberg 2001). In Språkboken (Ferm & Malmberg 2001) it is also stated that the basis of the teacher profession should be an interaction between the teachers’ theoretical viewpoints and the profession’s empirical practice. It then goes on to say that the many theories on the subject are so extensive that it may seem overwhelming and many teachers have therefore requested guidance on the subject. Språkboken serves as an answer to this request. One may therefore conclude that the contents of Språkboken are a complement to

\(^1\) Lp94 is the curriculum for the non-compulsory school system, including the Upper Secondary level education.
the curriculum and the syllabuses, and that they all together govern rules, regulations and guidelines on how to teach English. This chapter will therefore deal with the contents related to the skill “speaking” in these three types of documents: the curriculum, the syllabuses (including the document *Aim of the Subject*, that is an introduction to the syllabuses) and *Språkboken*.

In the first type of document, Lp94 (Skolverket 2007a), i.e. the curriculum for the non-compulsory school system, in the chapter about knowledge, under the heading *goals to strive towards* it is stated that the student should “…have knowledge about international co-operation and global interrelationships and assess events from Swedish, Nordic, European and global perspectives” (p. 11). Under *goals to attain*, English is specifically mentioned - it is the schools’ responsibility to ensure that the pupils “…can use English in a functional way in vocational and daily life and for further studies” (Skolverket 2007a p. 11).

Furthermore, the curriculum says that the *teacher shall* among other things: “…reinforce the pupils’ self-confidence as well as their willingness and ability to learn”…, “…organise and carry out the work so that the pupils: “…receive support in their language and communicative development” (Skolverket 2007a p. 13).

In the document *Aim of the Subject* (as an introduction to the syllabuses of the different English courses) it is stated,

> The ability to use English is necessary for studies, travel in other countries and for social and professional international contacts of different kinds. The subject of English thus plays a central role in the Swedish school. The subject aims at developing an all-round communicative ability and the language skills necessary for international contacts, and an increasingly internationalised labour market, in order to take advantage of the rapid developments taking place, as a result of information and communications technologies, as well as for further studies.

(Skolverket 2007b)

Furthermore, in the *Aim of the Subject*-document (Skolverket 2007b) there are also various “goals to aim for” described, including the following:

> The school in its teaching of English should aim to ensure that pupils:
develop their ability to communicate and interact in English in a variety of contexts concerning different issues and in different situations,

develop their ability to take part in conversations, discussions and negotiations and express with subtlety their own views and consider those of others,

develop their ability to speak in a well structured way, adapted to the subject and situation, take increasing responsibility for developing their language ability.

Moreover, the Aim of the subject-document also specifies that the students need to be able to use strategies when their current vocabulary is not sufficient, such as “...reformulating or using synonyms, questions and body language” (Skolverket 2007b).

The second type of document is the syllabus itself. First follows a few words about the syllabus for the English A course.

With focus on speaking (one of the four skills\(^1\)) the student should, upon completion of the English A course, have attained the following:

- have the confidence and be able without preparation to take part in discussions on familiar subjects and exchange information, personal views and experiences

- be able with preparation to verbally provide information about or describe a subject or area of interest, and show evidence of adapting their language to the requirements of the situation (Skolverket 2007c)

Furthermore, the criteria for the grade “pass”\(^2\) in English A, in relevance to speaking skills, contain the following:

- Pupils exchange information and views in discussions and can successfully use different strategies to solve language problems.

- Pupils express themselves orally with clear and distinct pronunciation, and are able to adapt to some extent their spoken language to both informal and somewhat more formal contexts. (Skolverket 2007c)

Considering that the above criteria are for the mandatory A course, it can be said to specify a minimum of skills/knowledge in regards to speaking.

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\(^1\) The four skills are listening, speaking, reading and writing.

\(^2\) "Pass" is the Swedish Godkännet.
Although it is only English A that is a mandatory course, quite a few students continue with English B, since it is a common course to several programs, such as e.g. the Arts, Natural Science, Social Science and Technology programs. English C is an optional course. Below follows the criteria for pass in English B, in regards to speaking.

English B criteria for pass:

Pupils introduce and maintain a discussion, obtain and provide information, put forward arguments, as well as express their own views and examine the merits of arguments put forward by others.

Pupils adapt their spoken English to different situations and audiences, as well as express themselves with variation and clarity, and use different strategies effectively to promote communication.

Pupils express themselves orally with good pronunciation and clear intonation.
(Skolverket 2007d).

In the third type of document, Språkbocken, the well-known Swedish linguist Jan Svartvik\(^1\) (2001) draws attention to how important the English language has become. He also says that Sweden belongs to the increasing group of countries where English is a foreign language, i.e. it has no official status. Svartvik (2001), however, points out that in spite of English not having an official status, it is nevertheless very important in areas such as international communication, industry, technology, education, science and research, data, diplomacy and tourism. In addition, he explains that the aim of the Swedish education of English is to develop a versatile communicative ability/competence.

Furthermore, Svartvik (2001) writes that communicative ability/skill means an appropriate use of the language in a wider sense – he does, however, mention that this does not necessarily mean to sound like a native, but rather that one can socialize with natives without causing linguistic misunderstandings or irritation. He concludes that communicative ability makes for high, but achievable, demands of the teacher and learner.

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\(^1\) Among other books he has written, Svartvik is one of two authors of the well-known Engelsk Universitetsgrammatik. As the name of the book reveals, it is frequently used at universities. Incidentally, the book goes by the nickname the Silver bible.
alike. Svartvik (2001) continues by saying that a person with good communicative competence should be able to master a great variety of situations, and he mentions social chatting at the coffee break as well as holding a speech and answering questions afterwards.

Another author in the anthology Språkboken is Per Malmberg (2001). He mentions that the study of language teaching has developed from having had a focus mainly on the formal part of the language, such as grammar and translations, to a more functional focus of the language, the use of the language. As an explanation to why the former focus was on e.g. grammar and translations he suggests that teachers perhaps felt they were on safer ground, whereas when they nowadays work with more communicative exercises they may feel more frustrated because of an insecurity in regards to being able to judge if the students are “correct or not”.

Malmberg (2001) writes that already in preceding curriculums (as early as in Læg70) it was pointed out that the role of grammar was to be functional and of no intrinsic value. In the context of verbal communication, Malmberg (2001) speaks of different types of competence, e.g. sociolinguistic competence, i.e. to be aware of what type of language to use in a certain social setting and when to use another type of language with perhaps a different vocabulary or other types of expressions. Another competence he mentions is the strategic competence, i.e. when the learner lacks the relevant or correct word/expression and instead rephrases, using known words and phrases (as well as non-verbal communication) to explain.

Furthermore, in regards to focusing on communication, Malmberg (2001) says that the criteria for the grades pass with distinction\(^1\) and pass with special distinction\(^2\) are completely aimed at the communicative receptive, interactive and productive skills, “När det gäller kriterierna för Väl godkänd och Mycket väl godkänd är de helt inriktade på de kommunikativa receptiva, interaktiva och produktiva färdigheten” (p. 24).

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\(^{1}\) Pass with distinction = VG (Väl godkänd).
\(^{2}\) Pass with special distinction = MVG (Mycket väl godkänd).
Another author who agrees with the aforementioned authors in *Språkboken* on that the syllabuses of today have a focus on the communicative competence is Håkansson (2001). She mentions that the current syllabuses have an all-around communicative competence and that they show awareness about language learning, the usage of learning strategies, with emphasis on the meta-cognitive strategies, i.e. planning, “carry-out/doing” and evaluation, as well as an emphasis on the students’ own responsibility of the learning process. She then says that in order for the students to be able to take this responsibility, we have to give them the tools. In addition, Håkansson (2001) explains that *communicative competence* includes both linguistic and sociolinguistic competence and quotes Hymes who says that it is to know “when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner” (Håkansson 2001 p. 60). She concludes that a meaningful content is therefore important in language teaching, and gives examples, e.g. to give the students ample opportunity to use (both by speaking and writing) the vocabulary they have learnt, and to let them practice the pronunciation of words and phrases.

Håkansson (2001) writes that it is the student’s responsibility to learn the new vocabulary and the teacher’s responsibility to give her/him the chance to use it in a context. She concludes with the “wish-thinking” that the teacher often would assume the role of a native speaker, i.e. to (in the target language) say when she/he does not understand what the student is saying and ask the student to explain and clarify. She argues that conversations like that would be “real conversations” among people who are interested in content and not form.

Author Hedström (2001) brings up the importance of that the students should receive enough comprehensible input in the FL classroom. He says that FL learner’s opportunity to interact and communicate is mainly restricted to limited classroom time.
Hedström (2001) links comprehensible input to grammar and he offers two different ways as explanation to how one takes in the grammar of another language - one of them being based on a theory by Krashen and he quotes him saying,

If input is understood, and there is enough of it, the necessary grammar is automatically provided. The language teacher need not attempt deliberately to teach the next structure along the natural order – it will be provided in just the right quantities and automatically reviewed if the student receives a sufficient amount of comprehensible input” (Hedström 2001 p. 71)

Aijmer (2001), an English professor at Gothenburg University, writes that the new syllabuses call for high demands on teachers to be able to analyze and judge students’ ability to take part in conversations. She then poses the question, what is it that the students need to learn and how should the teaching be conducted, in a classroom environment, in order for the students to learn how to communicate and interact in a foreign language. Her view is that it is likely that one can best learn to communicate through authentic interactive situations with native speakers. She also points out that that there seldom arises an opportunity for a genuine conversation in the class-room.

A similar view – that one can best learn to communicate in a foreign language by authentic speech situations – is expressed by Brodow (2001), who writes that a common theory on language learning is that the foreign language is developed in dialogue with others. She gives examples of different dialogue relationships such as the one between teacher and student, as well as the one between students.

The issue of the multicultural school is also brought up in Språkboken (Fern & Malmberg 2001) and questions asked are: what knowledge is required by the teacher in order to function in the role as teacher and supervisor in the multicultural classroom and what does a new approach involve, one that is built on more than only a comparison between Swedish and the target language.

On this issue, the multicultural school, Ohlander (2001) highlights that an English teacher could previously, when working with grammar exercises, explain the use of the different past tense forms of verbs by making a comparison between Swedish and English. The
reason being, that most students had a fairly homogeneous background as far as the mother tongue (Swedish) goes. Today's language teachers must be prepared to teach students of a more heterogeneous background, thus must find different strategies.

According to the different authors in Språkboken, the focus nowadays of L2 learning/teaching is on communication. Erickson & Börjesson (2001) say that this center of attention also is in mind when it comes to the issue of judging and grading the language ability on the National test. They write that the main focus is the student's communicative competence/ability, and that the primary matter should always be how the student wants, dares and is able to use the language for different purposes.

Finally, on the matter of focus on communication in Språkboken, Nixon (2001) says that "the prevailing philosophy behind teaching for the past 30 years and more is the communicative approach" (p. 225). In addition, he writes that this approach has taken three distinct forms: problem based learning, learning portfolio and language and content integrated learning" [Italics by the writer of this paper].

Content integrated learning, sometimes called integrated curriculum - in Swedish, often referred to as to work tvärvetenskapligt or språk och innehållsintegrerad undervisning - is a subject that by some is regarded merely as a new buzz-word and by others as the new gospel. The title of Nixon’s (2001) article explains what it is - *Integrating the teaching of language with the teaching of content* (p. 225).

Nixon (2001) says that at one end of the continuum of content integrated teaching/learning is immersion programs – with the objective of the “learners to achieve a native-speaker competence in two (sometimes more) languages” (p. 227). This is however not the aim of English studies in Sweden, as stated by our syllabuses. Nixon (2001) stresses that “it is essential that study of the language as a subject in its own right should continue parallel with language and content integration” (p. 227) - he bases this recommendation on e.g. research results from Canada (the “homeland” of immersion programs) that shows, “that to
concentrate on teaching content through the medium of a target language to the exclusion\footnote{Italics by the writer of this thesis.} of teaching the language as a subject, may lead to ‘fossilisation’” (Nixon 2001 p. 227).

Nixon (2001) explains that the success of the Canadian immersion programs can be attributed to various different reasons, and mentions as an example that all teachers are required to be bilingual and concludes that few teachers in Sweden reach this standard. He therefore suggests that we here in Sweden, where immersion, språkbad, språkdlusch or variants of the same are used, rather call them a form of partial immersion, or better, a form of language and content integration.

As a final point on the communicative approach, Nixon (2001) writes that this approach attempts to make the language learning “as active and as real as possible within the safety of the classroom” (p. 230). At the same time, he also states that “Sadly many of our language lessons fall short of this goal” (p. 230).

Immersion programs (and other related programs or methods) are one way to teach a foreign language. This leads us into the next chapter that will deal with theories and methods on language learning.

2.2 Theories and teaching methods

Historically, second language development and research have turned its focus during the past decades from a primary interest in teaching, to now be more focused on learning (Ferm & Malmberg 2001). Furthermore, it appears that the focus of second language learning of English, has moved from the traditional types of methodology, i.e. the grammar translation and the audio lingual approach, with focus on form and learning through repetition, to a more communicative focus and approach. Lightbown & Spada (2003) describe the traditional instructional environment as one in which “The teacher’s goal is to see to that the students learn the new vocabulary and the grammatical rules of the target language. The goal of learners in such courses is often to pass an examination rather than to
use the language for daily communication” (Lightbown & Spada 2003 p. 92). In the authors’ description of the *communicative approach* they mention e.g. that “…the style of instruction places the emphasis on interaction, conversation, and language use, rather than on learning *about* the language” (Lightbown & Spada 2003 p. 92).

Lightbown & Spada (2003) present language learning based on three main theoretical approaches, *behaviorism*, *innatism* and recent psychological theories such *connectionism* and *interactionism*. There is no consensus as to one theory explaining all processes of language learning. Perhaps it lies in the very complex and intricate nature of language learning, that several of these theories may be working as an explanation for different parts of the language learning process. As an example Lightbown & Spada (2003) write that behaviorism - a theory that explains language learning on the basis of imitation, practice, feedback on success and habit formation - although it can account for some parts of language learning, it cannot alone explain all processes. On the contrary, considering the complexity of language learning it is likely that the way it works can be explained by several types of theories and hence different types of methodologies may suit different goals and needs.

The goals in today’s Upper Secondary English education have a clear emphasis on *communication*. According to Lightbown & Spada (2003), “The communicative approach is based on *innatist and interactionist*¹ theories of language learning and emphasizes the communication of meaning both between the teacher and students and among the students themselves in group or pair work” (p. 95).

In general, many of the theories of language learning are based on L1 acquisition, but have then been applied to L2 acquisition as well. Thus, some of the different language learning approaches/theories in this thesis are described from an L1 learning perspective.

¹ Underlined by the writer of this thesis.
is Universal Grammar (UG). Lightbown & Spada (2003) explain innatism by “the fact that children come to know more about the structure of their language than they could reasonably be expected to learn on the basis of the samples of language which they hear” (p. 15) and that language samples merely trigger the UG device to start. Furthermore, the authors mention that Chomsky has drawn attention “…to the fact that children seem to develop language in similar ways and on a similar schedule, in a way not different from the way all children learn to walk” (p. 17) There seems to be one requirement for the UG to be employed in a child, it is that the children are surrounded by people using the language and communicating with them.

Lightbown & Spada (2003) also link the ideas of innatism to those of biologist Eric Lenneberg who, according to them, argues that the language acquisition device (equivalent to UG), “…like other biological functions, works successfully only when stimulated at the right time” (p. 19). This time he calls the critical period, consequently, his hypothesis is named CPH, critical period hypothesis. Age therefore seems to be a factor for communication to contribute successfully to the acquisition of an L2. Although there is no complete agreement on what this age is, it seems to point in the direction of puberty, which will be brought up below.

In the context of innatism & UG, as well as the hypothesis of critical period (CPH), it is perhaps appropriate to also bring up a psycholinguistic view on the matter. Steinberg (1993) writes about the critical age, by which he means “an age beyond which language learning will be difficult or even impossible” (p. 184). He says that the biologist Lenneberg (mentioned above) claims that age to be around puberty, but he says that Krashen maintains that it is around the age of 5 years. Of the two different views, Steinberg rather leans towards that of Lenneberg. In regards to second language learning, Steinberg (1993) clearly expresses the opinion that age 5 cannot be a critical age, and he points out that we only know for certain “that children are generally better than adults at acquiring native-speaker pronunciation in a second language” (p. 185). He moves on to explaining that pronunciation is a motor skill and that adults’ difficulty in acquiring native-like speech most likely therefore can be referred to the overall decline in motor skills which occurs
around puberty. The decline in motor skills, he says, is in turn related to the maturation of the brain. Furthermore, Steinberg (1993) writes that other aspects of second language learning, such as abstract rules and principles of grammar seem unaffected by this “critical age” (CPH or brain maturation) and he concludes that it therefore may be that “…as far as language is concerned, only motor skills and rote\footnote{Writer’s footnote. Steinberg (1993) explains \textit{rote} memory as the term used by psychologists for “The kind of simple memorization where words, phrases and sentences are remembered just as they are” (p. 207).} memory decline as the result of brain maturation” (p. 186).

Except for age as a factor having an effect on L2 acquisition, exposure time (to the TL) may also play an important role. Steinberg (1993) brings up a counter argument to that of Chomsky’s claim – that it is thanks to the innate device or UG (Universal Grammar) that the acquisition of language (L1) is made with such ease, and so quickly, seemingly so without effort. Although referring some of his counter arguments to Putnam, Steinberg (1993) offers his own mathematical example\footnote{He assumes that a child is exposed to its L1 about 10 hours per day, that figure multiplied by 365 (days in a year) makes 3650 hours per year. Over a period of four years that equals 14,400 hours. He then applies the 14,400 hours of language exposure to a student at a school and comes to the conclusion that if the student attends a language class and studies on her/his own a total of 15 hours per week, and one term is 18 weeks, that would make a total of 270 hours for the entire term. If the student then studies all year round (three terms) that would make a total of 810 hours in one year. Taking the 14,400 hours of language learning (during four years for the child) divided by 810 hours for the student would mean 17.8 years of studying! (Steinberg 1993).} as clarification to that it is perhaps not at all such an effortless or quick acquisition as one might think. He comes to the conclusion that a child’s exposure to its L1 equals 17.8 years of studies when compared to a student learning an L2! He then asks “Is 17 years long enough for an adult to learn the essential grammar of a language?” (Steinberg 1993 p. 141) and he seems to think so, but refers to that Putnam’s reply to that query would have been affirmative.

Except for that age and exposure time (to the TL) are factors that can play an essential role for communication as a tool for L2 acquisition, there are also those who mean that how we learn (in a conscious or unconscious way) also makes a difference in the L2 learning process. This view will be explained in the paragraphs that follow.
Krashen, associated with innatism and communicative language teaching (CLT), applies different meanings to acquire and learn. Krashen & Terrell (2000) write that acquiring a language means to simply pick it up, i.e. “developing ability in a language by using it in natural communicative situations” (p. 18). They compare the process to that of a child learning its L1. Furthermore, the authors say that this way appears central to gaining linguistic skills also for adults. To learn, on the other hand, they say is “…knowing the rules, having conscious knowledge about grammar” (Krashen & Terrell 2000 p. 18). Lightbown & Spada (2003), referring to Krashen, explain it by saying that acquiring is an unconscious way (exposure to understandable samples of the TL) and that learning is a conscious way to learn a language focusing on form and rules.

Lightbown & Spada (2003) write that Krashen claims that acquisition by far is the more important process and that “He asserts that only acquired language is readily available for natural, fluent communication” and that he also says that “…the focus of language teaching should be on creating conditions for ‘acquisition’ rather than ‘learning’” (p. 38). Furthermore, Krashen emphasizes that one can only acquire a language by exposure to comprehensible input – and he says that if the input contains forms and structures only slightly above the learner’s current level of competence, then both comprehension and acquisition will occur (Lightbown & Spada 2003).

Continuing with “how” we learn, there are also arguments based on interactionism. Lightbown & Spada (2003) explain that interactionist theorists argue that much L2 acquisition happens through conversational interaction and their theories are mainly based on L2 research (as opposed to some other theories that are mainly based on L1 research). The authors refer to the interactionist Michael Long and his observation of interactions between learners and native speakers, in which he concludes that modified interaction is necessary for input to be made comprehensible and that comprehensible input promotes acquisition.

1 According to Lightbown and Spada (2003) CLT’s primary focus is on “using language for meaningful interaction and for accomplishing tasks, rather than on learning rules” (p. 40).
Modified interaction does not necessarily mean linguistic simplification. Lightbown & Spada (2003) write that “It may also include elaboration, slower speech rate, gesture, or the provision of additional contextual cues” (p. 43).

Moreover, another interactionist perspective is that of a Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory, that claims that all cognitive development, including L2 acquisition, takes place as a result of social interaction between individuals (Lightbown & Spada 2003). Associated with Vygotsky and interactionism is the term *zone of proximal development* – described by Lightbown & Spada (2003) as “…the level of performance which a learner is capable of when there is support from interaction with a more advanced interlocutor” (p. 44). Although based on different theories, there could perhaps be similarities between Vygotsky’s *zone of proximal development* and Krashen’s views, that the comprehensible input should ideally contain forms and structures slightly above the learner’s level in order for best development of the TL.

As to communicative language teaching methods, one of the most successful programs, described by Krashen as a program “par excellence” (Lightbown & Spada 2003 p. 130), is the *immersion program*. It is mainly associated with Canada and its French immersion programs, where English speaking children were taught completely through the medium of French, i.e. all other non-language subjects were taught in French. In Swedish this method could be described as a *språkbad*.

According to Johnson & Swain (1997) the goal of immersion programs is to ensure a high level of proficiency of the target language by providing quantity as well as quality of involvement in the use of the target language.

There seems to be a great variety of immersion programs that are introduced for different purposes and goals in many countries and places, thus perhaps the different kinds of immersion programs can hypothetically be placed on a continuum, rather than only being one type.
Johnson & Swain (1997) have, however, presented core features in order for a program to be labeled an immersion program,

A prototypical immersion program is one that uses the L2 as medium of instruction although students have little or no L2 proficiency on entry of immersion. The academic curriculum of the "home" education system determines the content, and the classroom culture is that of the local L1 community. The learning context is one where exposure to the L2 is largely confined to the classroom. Teachers are bilingual in the students' L1 and the target L2. The target bilingual proficiency of the students is "additive", with normal L1 development a requirement, and high level of L2 proficiency expected. L2 proficiency, however, is not fully equivalent to the proficiency of a native speaker either in grammatical features or in its functional range (p. 15).

As regards to the success of immersion programs, Johnson & Swain (1997) say, "When L2 proficiency is evaluated against students who have studied the target language as a subject, immersion students are frequently considered to be highly successful" (p. 11). At the same time they point out that as far as developing a native-speaker competence in the L2 an immersion program may be perceived as having failed.

Researchers seem to agree that immersion students generally perform very well in linguistic fluency, but that there are problems with the accuracy of the target language [although not quite clear, it seems that the immersion students' level of accuracy is compared with that of native speakers]. Johnson & Swain (1997) write that research now is increasingly centered on how and why immersion works and also on the factors that may inhibit optimized achievements. In this context Johnson & Swain (1997) mention that there are immersion teachers who add focus on form of the TL, as well as at the same time continuing the task-based production.

According to Lightbown & Spada (2003), results of the French immersion research show that students develop good comprehension as well as confidence and fluency. They also mention, however, that there is no support for that "...an exclusive focus on meaning in comprehensible input is enough to bring learners to high levels of accuracy in their second language" (p. 134).
As conclusion on the subject of second language learning in the classroom, Lightbown & Spada (2003) voice the opinion that it is not necessary to choose between form-based and meaning-based instructions – the best way is rather to find a balance between the two orientations.

In regards to teaching/learning with focus on communicative approach method, the discourse of the classroom is also of importance. Altamiro Consolo (2000) says that the language in the classroom has both social and pedagogical function. He then adds, referring to Bygate, that the language spoken in classrooms also is a medium by which much language is learnt. Additionally, Altamiro Consolo (2000) also refers to Krashen and Ellis, when he says that that classroom interaction is believed to enhance language acquisition. In his own research on student contribution to classroom discourse – students taught by both native speaking teachers and non-native speaking teachers - one of his major assumptions\(^1\) was that “...the quality of teachers’ classroom language can contribute to language development, inasmuch as it fosters regular patterns of CD\(^2\) that favor learners’ verbal contributions and active participation in discourse” (p. 92). The result of his study showed that both students of native speaking teachers and non-native speaking teachers showed very similar patterns of classroom discourse. Altamiro Consolo concludes, “It may be suggested that individual teaching style makes a difference, rather than the teacher’s mother tongue” (p. 105).

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\(^1\) Altamiro Consolo says he bases this assumption on work by Allwright & Bailey and Ellis.  
\(^2\) CD means classroom discourse. Footnote by writer of this paper.
the basis for the renowned Berlitz schools, Alliance Francaise and the Goethe Institute. Krashen & Terrell (2000) write that unlike public schools, these famous institutions basically cannot tolerate failure since their very existence depends on the success of the students.

2.3 Previous research

Although several data bases, as well as Google scholar, were looked into for research on teachers’ use of target language in the classroom, only one article was found that, more or less, deals with the subject of this thesis. At the very beginning of this article it says, “VERY LITTLE RESEARCH HAS BEEN CONducted [sic!] on the amount of target language used in the foreign language classroom, a language learning context which has only recently received attention from applied linguists” (Duff & Polio 1990 p. 154). The authors point out that as there is very little exposure to the TL outside the language classroom when learning a FL, “…the quantity of L2 input is especially important, as it provides a necessary but insufficient condition for language acquisition” (Duff & Polio 1990 p. 154).

In the background chapter of their study, Duff & Polio (1990) say that several researchers have not put enough emphasis on the need for high quantity and high quality FL input from the teachers, and they recommend that “…as much language as possible serving as many functions as possible should be presented in the L2” (p. 154). This, they claim, is a well-established viewpoint in applied linguistics and they back it up by referring to several other researchers (such as Krashen, Chaudron and Ellis).

One of their referrals is to Chaudron, who writes that “…in the typical foreign language classroom, the common belief is that the fullest competence in the TL is achieved by means of the teacher providing a rich TL environment, in which not only instruction and drill are executed in the TL, but also disciplinary and management operations” (Duff & Polio 1990 p. 154). By referring to Ellis, the authors (Duff & Polio 1990) then point out that the teacher by using the L1 is depriving the learners of valuable L2 input.
Duff & Polio (1990) also point out, that it is a fundamental part of language learning to work out and comprehend what others are saying and they argue that using translations ruins that opportunity.

In their study, Duff & Polio (1990) say that they endeavor to contribute with empirical research to what actually occurs in FL classes, since few data exists on this matter. In their study they sampled thirteen FL classes out of the thirty-one offered at the UCLA\(^1\). Only classes with native speaking\(^2\) (NS) teachers were chosen.

Their main finding was the wide range of target language usage, varying from 100 percent to 10 percent. As far as student perception of their own understanding of the target language used by the teacher, the study showed that in every class over seventy percent of the students claimed to understand “most” or “all” of the teacher’s L2, and that did not seem to vary with the actual amount of L2 used. Another result was that in every class 71 to 100 percent of the students were pleased with the current amount of L1, and this regardless of the actual amount that was used.

In regards to the interviews with the teachers, Duff & Polio (1990) describe and explain the results of three teachers, who, according to the researchers, exhibit very different behavior of TL usage - the teacher who displayed the most usage of the TL, the teacher who demonstrated the least TL usage and the one who used a great deal of mixture of L1 (English) and L2 (various foreign languages).

When asked if he never used L1, the teacher who used the most TL (100 percent) in the classroom explained that he only uses it when he has to explain difficult concepts about the TL that do not exist in the L1. This teacher also advised that his department has a policy that forbids the use of L1 in class, and Duff & Polio (1990) point out that the teacher spoke

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\(^1\) University of California at Los Angeles.

\(^2\) Native speakers of the target language. In this study English is the L1.
highly of the program. The teacher said that his department works according to the Direct Method which according to him does not allow any use of the L1 (Duff & Polio 1990).

Duff & Polio (1990) say that they were surprised by the fact that the classes of the teacher who used only 10 percent of the TL meant to develop all 4 of the students’ skills\(^1\), as did all the other classes that were studied. As an explanation, the researchers write that the teacher reported that he thinks grammatical awareness is of great concern. Furthermore, his department has no guidelines or recommended methodology. In addition, this teacher thought it important for the students to know the history and culture of the country in which the target language is spoken, as well as full connotation of L2 words. Why he thought it best to explain this in the L1 is not revealed. Duff & Polio (1990) write that this teacher expressed genuine concern about the students’ progress and that he worries about the fact that there are not enough areas outside of school where the students can use the target language. The teacher perceived that he uses the TL 45 percent of the time in class and he plans to continue doing so.

Finally, the teacher mixing L1 and L2 the most showed that he used the L2 fifty-three percent of the time in class. This teacher’s department also has no policy regarding the use of L2 or L1. The teacher said that he tends to use the L1 when teaching grammar and for classroom management. Duff & Polio (1990) then write, “He knows he should use only the TL in the classroom but gave three reasons that [sic!] he does not” (pp.160-161). The first reason he mentioned is that as the students in the foreign classroom are “...linguistically and culturally deprived” (Duff & Polio 1990 p. 161) they would not understand him if he speaks only the L2. His second reason was that the L2 is so different from the L1 that the students would be confused if he used only the L2. The third reason was that he was given so much material to cover for the exam and that he would not have been able to go through it all if he spoke the L2 only.

\(^1\)Listening, speaking, reading, writing.
teacher training. They do however, in regards to lesson content, point out that “Six of the thirteen classes observed had as their teaching objective the grammar of comparative forms, yet the L2 use across these classes varied considerably. Thus, the lesson objective did not appear to determine the amount of L2 used” (Duff & Polio 1990 p. 161).

In the Duff & Polio (1990) study it was also concluded that teacher’s opinions varied as to why they did or did not use L2 more often. Among those teachers who supported greater use of the L2, some said that they had been trained that way. Others based their beliefs on theories, and one teacher based it on her own experience. Duff & Polio (1990) also mention that those teachers who used L2 more than ninety percent of the time had stated that “…it was not at all problematic for them or the students to use the L2 for all classroom functions, from grammar to explanations to classroom management” (p. 162). Some of these teachers also recommended strategies that had helped them and that they thought might help other teachers as well. Strategies such as e.g. “Make input comprehensible through verbal modification…” (p. 162), and also that the teacher establishes an L2-only policy from the very beginning. Duff & Polio (1990) commented this by saying that the teachers, whose departments were positive to this type of policy, also were the teachers who were more effective in using a higher quantity of the L2.

Although it is clear that Duff & Polio (1990) recommend high quantity of the TL (and quality) by the teacher, they also write that much of the literature on L2 learning stresses that “low-level learners should not be forced to produce the L2 prematurely” (p. 163), hence students should be allowed to use the L1 when necessary.

According to Duff & Polio (1990), those teachers who hesitated to use more L2 explained it by e.g. that they thought it took too long time to get their message across. One teacher claimed that FL students, who do not have to interact in the L2 every day, do not need to learn it so quickly, and some teachers said that because “…students didn’t (or wouldn’t) understand more of the L2, they restricted their L2 use” (Duff & Polio 1990 p. 162).
Duff & Polio (1990) end their paper by exclaiming that it is crucial that "...the effect of teachers' L1/L2 behavior on language acquisition now needs to be examined" (p. 163).

Another study\(^1\), albeit on the same level as this thesis, brings up a related issue – how much or how little the students speak the TL (English). The authors Larsson & Nilsson Lång (2003) say that one of the most important factors, in order to get the students to become active in oral production in class, is the role of the teacher. They state that it is the teacher's responsibility to provide a good linguistic environment, one that enhances language learning. A behavior that speaks against such an environment is the fact that the teacher is generally the one who does most of the talking, and also that it is not uncommon that the teacher switches over to the L1. Among other things, they say that it has been proven when the teacher increases her/his use of the L2, so do the students (Larsson & Nilsson Lång 2003).

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\(^1\) A teacher program degree thesis from Luleå University.
3 INTERVIEW RESULTS

In view of the fact that gender is not an issue in this study, and for the sake of simplicity, all teachers are referred to by female pronouns only. Furthermore, since the results are based on semi-structured interviews, and it is a form of understanding that is sought after, the results are presented in this chapter teacher by teacher, as opposed to divided up by subject. A grid overview\(^1\) can, however, be found in appendix 3. The different issues in the grid are based on either the questions supporting the aim or other related information that came up during the course of the interviews.

Although the issue of a policy of L2 usage (as mentioned in the Duff & Pollio research in chapter 2.3) never came up during the interviews, it is an issue important enough to be mentioned in this context. All the schools visited are familiar to the writer of this thesis and it is a known fact that none of the schools have such a policy. In addition, it rather seems to be “normal procedure” for schools in Sweden not to have such a policy.

3.1 Teacher A

Regarding “best method” teacher A said that it rather depends on the class and the teacher’s personality. She then added that what she is always very particular about is that she uses English as much as possible. When asked, “how come?”, teacher A replied that she thinks it absurd not to speak English as much as possible when you have English classes. She also said that she thought it natural to speak the TL in class and added a story about an old colleague, who had spoken Swedish all the time, with only a few sentences from a textbook in English. The teacher’s comment to that was she thinks that it is “insane”. This teacher also expressed that as far as she can remember there were no recommendations during her training about the use of L2 and L1.

\(^1\) The grid is abridged and edited by the author of this thesis, but based on the interview results.
innan dess... så man hejar i korridoren, växlar några ord på engelska”. When asked if she feels that this works well, she replied that it definitely does, and that the students speak more English that way, although it differs from student to student. She also claimed that she feels that it really is no problem to get the students to speak English, although she had heard that some other teachers thought differently. To this statement she added that if only you are persistent enough, the students will speak English.

Teacher A uses L1 when teaching grammar and specifically if it is with a class that is not particularly “high performing”, in which case she feels that it works best to do it in L1. One other situation in which teacher A feels it is better to use L1, is when she as a mentor\(^1\) has to talk about some kind of serious issue or pieces of information that are non-subject related.

A strategy that teacher A seems to use is to not reply when students speak to her in Swedish (unless it is regarding grammar). Another strategy used by teacher A appears to be to let the pupils rephrase and explain new vocabulary (in English) instead of simply translating the new words for them. This is a strategy she would use e.g. when checking the homework of new vocabulary. If working with a “less high achieving” class she would let them write the new words on the whiteboard (in English) but then also, if need be, let them translate into Swedish – the teacher pointed out that the students have to come up with the translations themselves.

Furthermore, teacher A also said that it is important that the teacher is a sort of role model, “Att det e viktigt att man som lärare hela tiden använder sig av korrekt engelska, så korrekt engelska som möjligt alltså...”. She also highlighted that it is extra difficult with the formal type of language, and that it is essential that she as a teacher keeps to the more formal language style, since the students receive the colloquial style from TV.

At the end of the interview, teacher A explained that she does not want the pupils to merely reply to her questions, but that it is important that there all the time is a kind of

\(^1\) The Swedish word \textit{klassförståndare} translated by the author of this paper into \textit{mentor}.\n
conversation going on (in English), hence she very often lets them work in pairs (the teacher’s preferred form of working) or smaller groups. Teacher A then told a story from her university days when she had received information about a classroom research that showed that a student speaks English on average approximately one minute and thirty seconds a week, to which she then commented, “Då kan man fråga hur bra man blir med att prata engelska en minut o trettio sekunder i veckan. Tanken e ju att dom hela tiden, de ska va en engelsk miljö, de ska sitta o prata...”. She also talked about that she would tell those who she catches speaking Swedish, to switch over to English.

Teacher A remarked that it is important to have a lot of communication. She tries during class to keep the focus on the conversation as such, not just reiteration of a specific text. In conclusion, teacher A specifically mentioned the use of the target language as a strategy, a way of working.

3.2 Teacher B

Teacher B expressed that she consistently tries to find a “better way” of teaching since she finds that the students change from year to year, and what she has done before does not work in an optimal way with her current students. This teacher brought up her concern that this year’s students were different in the way that they have enormous problems with writing and that they have a highly deficient vocabulary, consequently she has to change her way of teaching.

When teacher B was asked how she gets the students to communicate in English, she responded by saying, “...det e ju det svåra, att få dom att diskutera nåt vettigt...”. She did, however, also say that the students express that they want to speak more, but when given the opportunity, they seldom do. Teacher B went on to mention that she has found good speaking exercises (“vettiga” as she described them) and that the students find them fun to work with. According to the teacher, these speaking exercises are also meaningful, in that they are about “real” subjects.
When asked if she uses English and Swedish, Teacher B said that she speaks English in class, but that as the term proceeds and the students reply and ask questions in Swedish, she then uses Swedish. This she explains is a question of time, and rather than being consistent and sticking to English, she reverts to Swedish. Teacher B perceives this a difficult situation, when she finds herself speaking Swedish – she then attempts to switch back to English. The teacher mentioned that the issue of language usage had been brought up at a meeting recently and it is apparently quite common that teachers find themselves using Swedish when the students do. The teacher also explained the use of the L1 by the fact that “…när man har mycket att tänka på så försvinner det bitar alltså ibland”. It was understood that situations when teacher B uses the L1 are mainly when giving instructions. Although she also mentioned that she starts out giving instructions in English, but then sometimes reverts to Swedish after a while.

When asked if there are other situations where she would use Swedish, teacher B answered that when teaching grammar (which does not happen frequently) she uses Swedish, since the students have difficulties with grammar as it is. She said, “…de vet inte vad verb o substantiv o sånt e…”.

In addition, teacher B said that using Swedish is not done on purpose, “De e inte medvetet o det e inte meningen heller”. The teacher was asked about social situations (greetings etc.) and her reply was that it depends on if the lesson has started or not, “…kommer dom in innan lektionen har börjat, då e dom ju så där, dom vill snacka lite, så då känns det dumt att göra det på engelska…”, but when the lesson has started she would use English.

Teacher B said she adheres to no specific method or theory, but has her own way of teaching, which could be said to be that she adapts her teaching to the students and their abilities and skills.
3.3 Teacher C

In regards to the “best way” to teach English teacher C said “doing”, and she added that when the students investigate and do things by themselves, they learn better as opposed to when she tells them. Teacher C explained that her students are always reading, and listening to taped stories, and of course to her, and that she does not allow them to speak Swedish with her. When asked why, she replied, “Well, they are there to learn English. They speak Swedish almost twenty-four seven, so this is the one little hour, you know, twice a week, that we get, where they can speak English”. Teacher C said that the students do speak English for the most part, although some of them start off not wanting to. She also mentioned that sometimes the students wonder if she understands Swedish (since she never speaks a word of Swedish in the classroom) to which she replies to them “Jajamensan”.

To the fact that she speaks only English in class, Teacher C admitted that some A-course students might find it a bit tough, if they had teachers who never spoke English to them in grade school. She then brought up a situation where a couple students in her English C-course told her that they were nervous about a presentation they were to have. When she asked them why, they replied that their English B teacher never spoke English with them and that they therefore were not used to “doing it [speaking English]”. Teacher C thought it a pity, “I think it’s a pity really, that you don’t take the opportunity, it’s not fair on the kids really”.

When teacher C was asked if there is any context where it’s easier, better or more appropriate to speak Swedish, she replied that when she teaches grammar (which does not happen often), she accepts them using Swedish terms. She would, however, then ask them for the equivalent English terms, and would thereafter use those. She explained that they then get used to hearing the English terms.

In addition, teacher C said she would speak Swedish in her position as a mentor. She then pointed out that it is in a context outside the classroom and that it is the only exception she makes. Furthermore, when teacher C was asked about if she uses the L1 or the L2 when
she meets the students outside the classroom, she promptly replied “English!”. She then added, “That also gives them those casual interactions which they’ll be having more than [formal]
interactions, they will be having those casual interactions when they go abroad or whatever and that’s exactly what they need to be familiar with and be comfortable with...even if it’s not the classroom it’s still learning”.

Teacher C also spoke of teaching by example and how she consciously tries to use a lot of idiomatic words, phrases and concepts. She pointed out that if they do not understand, they can usually get it from the context. Additionally, she tries to gauge her speaking to the receivers, e.g. she gradually introduces idioms since they are quite difficult to “…get hold of”. She then added that “I think they find me fairly challenging, because I don’t say anything to them in Swedish, well, at least the A-classes I think”.

3.4 Teacher D

Teacher D declared that she adheres to no specific method, but she feels it is of the utmost importance to vary the lessons, and she rather uses her own material than the textbook. This teacher said that she uses Swedish only when teaching grammar. The reason for this is that she does not regard grammar as having anything to do with language knowledge as such, but rather that it is something they must understand. Except for when teaching grammar, the teacher declared that she tries to use English as much as possible in class. Teacher D, however, expressed that many students, unfortunately, do not want to speak English at all - “Många vill inte prata engelska överhuvudtaget”. As an explanation to that she offered the fact that the students (this term) are not very good – “E man svag i nånting så vill man inte gärna visa sig, så att det är jättevärt att få de dom att prata engelska”. Her solution to this is to keep at them as much as possible. She added that she had heard from other teachers as well, that they also have the same problem with students not wanting to speak English. However, she also mentioned that she reverts to Swedish sometimes, “…när jag glömmer mig för dom håller på o tjatar på svenska”, but this is done unintentionally.

1 Semi-unintelligible, but it is most likely the word “formal”.
One additional occasion when teacher D uses Swedish is when she, as a mentor, has to bring up non-subject related issues. Then only Swedish is used and this is normally done before or after class.

3.5 Teacher E

Teacher E started the interview expressing her great interest and passion for the English language, emphasizing that it is British English that she prefers. She said that the ultimate would be to teach her second subject in English.

This teacher stressed that the most central thing when teaching English is that it is “real”, that the language is related to something real, “…koppla allting till verkligheten”. When teaching grammar she might not call it grammar, but rather mixes it with something real, something that they can use in real life. She highlights to the students that they do not have to speak with perfect pronunciation, or with a certain accent. They only need to speak so that it is understandable. The teacher, nonetheless, admitted that it is very difficult to get the students to speak English. She said that firstly she gets the feel of the class, if it is “permitted” or not to speak English. If it is a class where it is “permitted” to speak English she then encourages them to use English all the time. Teacher E also said that she sees it as her responsibility to create the atmosphere that “permits” the pupils to speak English. Secondly, she said, “…sen pratar jag alltid engelska”. When asked ”how come” – she replied “…så dom hör, det blir en stor lyssnarrövning varje lektion. Jag håller igång min engelska. Det lockar alltid nån att hänga på…” In her communication with the students she notes possible language problems, but does not correct them at that time. She then, when needed, brings up some of those issues in general with the whole class. Teacher E also emphasized that it is important to make the students think that it is fun to speak English.

Teacher E’s tactics with students who do not volunteer to speak English is to do specific tasks/exercises, in which everyone has to present something in English. The teacher pointed out that she never forces a student to speak in front of the class. She gives them a chance to either do their presentation in front of a small group, or alternatively in front of
her only. Teacher E said that the only time she uses Swedish is when she realizes that the pupils have not understood at all - “Ja det e när jag har tjugo fågelholkar som sitter så...!”.

Furthermore, teacher E stated that when teaching grammar she starts off using English and only reverts to Swedish if the students do not follow. In addition, non-subject matters can sometimes be done in English, but if she then sees the “fågelholkarna” she repeats the information in Swedish. If there are serious non-subject related issues that need to be brought up, it will be done in Swedish.

Teacher E said that all social chatting with the students is done in English, e.g. “How have you been, how was your weekend, how was your Easter...”. She mentioned that some of the students automatically answer in English. Others, she said, may answer in Swedish first, and that she then asks what that is called in English – and eventually they learn.

This teacher’s “rule”, to always speak English, starts as she walks into the classroom - the threshold is the limit. At the beginning of the term, all her students are advised of that she will use only English in class, so that they know what to expect.

One other situation when teacher E said that it happens that she reverts to Swedish is when she gets angry (which she assured happens very seldom), “…sen e det svårt att bli arg på ett annat språk, kan jag tycka...”.

3.6 Teacher F

Teacher F expressed that the best way to learn a language is to spend the summer holiday abroad or even a year in an English speaking country as an exchange student. This opportunity is available to the students, and some have followed her recommendation and gone abroad. Teacher F said that the second best is to read (what they find interesting) and watch movies (with English subtitles). When asked how she gets the students to communicate in English she explained that it is important to choose interesting subjects and to “provoke” them into a response.
As with the other interviewees, teacher F said that she uses Swedish when teaching grammar, "...de frågar ändå för mycket, då måste man översätta stup i kvarten o då kör jag hela alltet på svenska...". Teacher F emphasized that, apart from grammar, "man ska inte använda svenska helt enkelt o de försöker jag alltid i början på nya skolfåret, nu ska jag inte tillåta svenska i klassrummet...när du pratar med mig så e det engelska som gäller, även om de e i korridoren. Men det funkar inte, så jag släpper det alltid efter ett tag". Teacher F ascribed her giving up on her principle of speaking only English to that one cannot force the students to speak English when they do not want to. As an example of why the students do not want to she described a student reaction, "Ja men jag kan inte, de e för svårt, ah då ger jag upp".

Nevertheless, teacher F, said that it does work to speak only English with some students and that they enjoy it. This teacher also expressed that the time spent with the TL is so short that she means that the students need to take every opportunity they get and speak English.

3.7 Teacher G

Teacher G started off expressing her great interest in English, as well as an interest in both the UK and the US, and their respective cultures, as well as literature. When asked what she believes is "the best way" to teach English, she rapidly replied, "...att dom får ta reda på det själva". She perceives herself more as a tutor/supervisor (handledare). Furthermore, she spoke of how she "guides" them, mostly with grammar and vocabulary, since the students have the other language parts all around them the whole time. Teacher G said that her focus is more those students who are not "high achievers". Those students who say "Vi fixar det här", they study a lot on their own.

Further on the subject of teacher G’s way of working, she finds that the students via computers, film etc. are exposed to a lot of English and even at times "beat" her with new expressions. Teacher G then posed a rhetorical question, "...varför ska jag då lära dom skolengelska, helklassmässigt. Varför inte gå in individuellt o möta dom?"
When asked her views on the use of English or Swedish, teacher G simply said that she uses English all the time, with the explanation “Ja, men det ingår, det heter engelska på schemat, so we switch over and speak English all the time, unless we have some grammar to explain”. In addition, teacher G said, “Jag ger mig inte, resultatet ska vara på engelska i alla fall” – by this she meant that when a student cannot find a word in English, the word is first said in Swedish. The teacher, however, then encourages the other students to help and find a suitable word/ expression in English, hence the result is always in English. As far as trying to get also the students to use the L2, teacher G expressed, “Jag måker ju på dom, dom kan ju, de e bara lättjan som gör att dom vill ta de på svenska ibland”.

Social chatting at the beginning of a class is fun to have in English, teacher G said. She also believes that this can help them becoming more fluent, and that they get into the right “gear” by speaking English instead of Swedish. This teacher does not perceive it to be difficult to get the students to communicate in English and finds that there are only a few students who think it is hard.
4 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter the grid overview (appendix 3), along with the information in chapter 3, has been used as a basis for analyzing and discussing the interview results and the issue of TL in the classroom. The grid contains the views of the interviewed teachers in an abridged and edited form.

All teachers seem to be of the opinion that it is the L2 that should be used. The different teachers’ views range from the most adamant believers who appear to think it natural and obvious that the TL should be used, to those who seem more to believe it “a should be situation”. Out of the 7 interviewees, 4 of them (teachers A, C, E and G) clearly expressed their belief in that it is essential to use the L2 only. To speak English all the time seems to be part of “how to best teach English” for these teachers. Their explanations to how and why the L2 should be part of how to “best teach” English appear to be mainly the following:

- by creating an English-speaking environment
- by the principle of teaching by example
- by creating “real” situations where English can be used
- that it actually says English on the schedule, thus English should be used

These four teachers (A, C, E and G\(^1\)) seem to have made their usage of the L2 into a tool of its own, albeit a tool amongst others. It even appears to be a major tool for them since they so clearly emphasized that they speak English all the time.

To make use of the utilization of the L2 itself, can be linked back to the governing documents, as well as the theories and methods. As we have seen in chapter 2.2, both the curriculum and the syllabuses have at their core an emphasis on communication.

According to the English A syllabus, the student should on completion of the course “…have the confidence and be able without preparation to take part in discussions on

\(^1\) Perhaps also teacher F, although that is not completely clear from the interview.
familiar subjects and exchange information, personal views and experiences” (Skolverket 2007c). It seems clear that this can only be achieved in an environment where the TL is used. Teacher A in particular said that she believes that the classroom should be an English speaking environment. Also teachers C, E and G can be said to have created a, more or less, English speaking environment.

In addition to the curriculum’s and syllabuses’ focus on communication, the authors of Språkboken also bring up the communicative ability/competence. Svartvik (2001) even mentions that the ability to have a social chat during the coffee break forms a part of the communicative competence. One teacher in particular would then be completely in line with Svartvik’s view - teacher C could be said to use occasions also outside the physical classroom to practice social chatting. She pointed out that it is exactly this type of conversations the students need to be familiar and comfortable with. In addition, teacher A also specifically mentioned that she uses English in the corridor before going in to the classroom. Teacher E also said that she uses English for social chatting with her students.

Teacher A, as well as teacher C and F, seem to have extended their English speaking environment to outside the physical classroom as well. For example teacher C said that when she meets her students outside the classroom, and they converse in English, that is also a moment of learning for the students. Teacher E, who also uses the TL as a tool in its own right, has mainly set her English speaking environment to that of the physical classroom.

Teacher B, however, expressed the view that it feels “silly” to use English when having that initial social chat before the lesson starts. Perhaps this teacher states what many L2 teachers may feel - that it is awkward to have a social chat in a language other than the L1. Social chatting with the students might be perceived more as a “social bonding or contact” than an opportunity to learn the L2. Referring back to Svartvik (2001), social chatting is actually part of the communicative ability and the conclusion is that it therefore should be “taught”, i.e. the pupils should be provided opportunities to listen to, and to learn and practice social chatting, as well as other forms of the language.
The feeling of awkwardness in using the L2 for social chatting and perhaps taking the opportunity to even practice it outside the physical classroom, maybe stems from the fact that none of the schools where the interviewees work (or any other Upper Secondary schools that the author of this thesis is aware of) have a policy of “L2 use only”. The lack of this type of policy may even be part of the reason why some teachers tend to use the TL less than one hundred percent of the time. This was also seen in the study by Duff & Polio. What stood out in their study was that the teacher who used the L2 most of the time was the only teacher whose department had a policy of L2 use. Perhaps such a policy would be a support and help for teachers to harmonize their way of teaching. The lack of such a policy could have the consequence that the students are not offered a consistent L2 environment - with teachers at the same school using the TL in varying proportions. Some may be using the TL 100 percent of the time, whereas others may be speaking the TL as little as 10 percent of the time (as was the range in the Duff & Polio (1990) study). A lack of policy can then ultimately be said to not support the students in their attempts to reach the goals specified in the syllabuses, since they might not have been provided with a TL rich environment. That would then not be fair on the students, which is what teacher C also pointed out. In addition, teacher C as well as teacher F also highlighted the fact that the students spend so little time using English, only a few hours a week. Therefore one can draw the conclusion that it must be of the utmost importance that those few hours are spent using the TL. As the author Håkansson (2001) in Språkboken points out, it is the teacher’s responsibility to see to that the students get the chance to use the L2, e.g. new vocabulary. She also writes about the dream scenario in which the teacher would assume the role of a native speaker. This role is what mainly four of the teachers (A, C, E and G) appeared to have incorporated in their own way of working.

In regards to theories and methods, many of them speak in favor of the TL being used as much as possible since they have communicative skills as their main goals. Such goals are completely in line with the goals of the governing documents for the English courses at Upper Secondary level. In short, these goals can be said to be that the students develop an all-around communicative ability and thus can use English in a functional way. As
presented in chapter 2.2, both the innatist and the interactionist theories emphasize the communication of meaning between the teacher and the students (as well as between students). If the teacher uses the TL only (perhaps even assumes the role of a native speaker), then it would appear a normal consequence that students would have to use strategies for rephrasing, using synonyms etc. in order to be understood (as would the teacher). As mentioned in chapter 2.1. the strategies of rephrasing etc. is mentioned in several documents – for example in the English A syllabus for the grade pass, it is specified as one criterion to “…use different strategies to solve language problems”. When teacher G said “Jag ger mig inte, resultatet ska vara på engelska i alla fall” it can be interpreted in such a way that she lets the students use a strategy of reformulation or using synonyms etc. in order to explain what they want to say.

Moreover, the way to work with letting students use strategies of rephrasing is also supported in the Aim of the subject document (mentioned in chapter 2.1). It is highlighted that the students should be able to use strategies when their own, current TL vocabulary is not enough. They should e.g. be able to use synonyms to make themselves understood as well as ask questions in order to understand others. In addition, as mentioned in chapter 2.1, the author Malmberg (2001) in Språkboken points out that strategic competence is important. Quite clearly, the strategic competence, can best, if not only, be practiced in an English speaking environment.

Finally, when a teacher uses the TL only, the type of learning that takes place can be said to be of the kind that Krashen refers to as acquiring (an L2), rather than “merely” learning – the former term being the unconscious and more natural way of learning. Acquiring gives the impression of being the most optimal way to learn an L2 when the goal is to use the L2 in a communicative and functional way.

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1 As mentioned previously, although not clear, this appears to be in comparison with native speakers.
explained by the lack of focus on the TL as a subject in its own right. That would then be
easily remedied by adding teaching about the language itself. As Lightbown & Spada
(2003) point out, one way of teaching does not have to exclude the other. Although a way
of teaching that makes use of the TL as a means of communication, during English lessons
only, cannot be compared directly to an immersion program, the principles are nevertheless
the same – the pupils are surrounded by the TL during the few hours of English that they
have¹. By combining the principles from the immersion program of using the L2 only (as
the Direct method proposes as well) with adding lessons about the formal parts of the TL,
one may perhaps be able to create the best possible environment to learn English in order
for the pupils to reach the goal of being able to use English in a functional way.

There are, however, occasions and situations in which all of the teachers said that they use
the L1. All of them agreed completely that only the L1 is used when they bring up non-
subject issues in their position as mentors. In addition, several of them, said that they use
the L1 when teaching grammar. To use the L1 when teaching grammar is a finding that has
a common denominator with a finding in the study by Duff & Polio – at least two of their
respondents mentioned grammar lessons as one of the occasions when they would use the
L1.

In the study of this thesis, teacher C, said that she might use Swedish terms in the
beginning, but then she translates them and henceforth uses the English term. Since the
level of the grammar lessons most likely only entails the basic terms such as noun, verb,
adjective, adverb, pronoun, conjunction and preposition, and the fact that they are basically
called the same in Swedish², one might suggest that even grammar can be taught using the
L2. The use of one new term cannot explain why it would be too difficult for the students
to understand grammar taught using the L2. It is perhaps the fact that many pupils are not
familiar with these basic terms even in Swedish that makes it easier for the teacher to
explain them in the L1. The conclusion might therefore be that the one teaching occasion

¹ To be surrounded by the TL would in Swedish be referred to as språkbud, as mentioned earlier.
² The exception is noun, which in Swedish is substansiv.
on which it perhaps is more beneficial for the students to hear and use the L1 is when the teacher needs to explain grammar.

Except for non-subject “mentor matters” and when explaining grammar, one other occasion of L1 use was mentioned by the respondents in this study – one teacher revealed that when she gets angry she uses Swedish as she finds it difficult to find the “correct” word or phrase in the L2 right at that minute when it is needed. This could perhaps be referred to as classroom management – one category of occasions when at least one of the teachers in the Duff & Polio (1990) study also said that he used the L1. Duff & Polio (1990), however, very clearly recommend as much FL as possible serving as many functions as possible, including e.g. disciplinary and management operations. As mentioned in chapter 2.3 they even go as far as to say that the teacher by using the L1 is depriving the students of valuable L2 input.

It is often said that it is very difficult to learn to swear in a L2 and that one should be careful, so as to not say something that could offend a native speaker, or just cause an unintended effect. Perhaps the teacher would then be the best person to “guide” the pupils in the use of strong language and even swear words, and advise the students of when and where it would be appropriate to use them. Instead students seem to be left with learning from TV, quite often from films “rich” in profanities. This might not be the best option. Not seldom can pupils be heard using these swear words left, right and center, and in completely inappropriate circumstances and situations.

Most of the teachers work according to their own beliefs. Four of the teachers (A, C, E and G) said that they, more or less, use only the TL. The common reason, as to why the three other teachers (B, D and E) do not use as much English as they think they “should” do, seems to be that they find it difficult when the students use a lot of the L1. This causes them, quite unintentionally, to fall back into also using the L1. This can be interpreted as a “habit” and may perhaps be a natural consequence of not having a policy proclaiming that the TL should be used as much as possible. Instead of a synchronized way of working in regards to TL usage, teachers then develop their own habits and ways of working.
Considering that the goals of the English courses mainly are that the students should be able to use the language in a functional way and that the focus lies on the communicative skills, perhaps a recommendation (of L2 only usage) should be added to the teacher shall proclamation found in the curriculum. This would then ensure all students a better access to an English speaking environment, yet leaving it up to the teacher to work according to her own way or method.

This leads us over to the teachers’ specific method or way of working. Firstly, there appeared to be a view shared amongst all of the interviewees, that there is no “single best way” of teaching English. Secondly, none of the teachers said that they adhere to a specific method, yet they all worked according to their own way or own method\(^1\). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, four of the teachers seem to have made their usage of the TL into a tool and strategy of its own, as part of their way of teaching. This way of working most likely creates an environment rich in the TL and this would then support the pupils to reach the goals of being able to use the language in a functional way. To use the TL “all the time” is also similar to that of the immersion programs, one of several methods that would propose a communicative way of teaching, based more on acquiring than learning.

What also came up during the interviews was that the teachers use different “boarders” for their English speaking environment. Teacher C appears to be using the TL wherever she meets her students. As she pointed out, this gives the pupils the opportunity to hear and practice those vital social phrases that they need when going abroad. Contexts in which they will be using such social phrases are e.g. when communicating with native speakers, and when using English as a lingua franca while communicating with speakers of other languages. For example in the world of business, a deal can easily be said to depend on whether the communication between the parties involved have been working properly – in this context social chatting skills are vital.

On the issue of L2 usage by the teacher, also all of the aforementioned authors of Språkboken can, in conclusion, be said to write about issues that support a high quantity

\(^1\) Teacher G’s way of working can be said to be similar to that of the autonomous teaching method.
usage of the TL by the teacher. Svartvik (2001) says that communicative competence means to master a great variety of situations including social chatting and Malmberg (2001) writes about the strategic competence and the center of attention on communicative skills. Furthermore, Håkansson (2001) highlights the teacher responsibility to provide the pupils with the chance of using the language, and Hedström (2001) points out that the students should have enough comprehensible input in the FL classroom. In addition, Aijmer (2001) writes about authentic and interactive situations with native speakers as the best way to communicate in English. Second best to a communicative situation with native speakers must then be that the teacher assumes the role of a native speaker and that way offers an opportunity for a more genuine type of conversation. An author who also maintains that it is important to have genuine, authentic speech situations when learning an L2 is Brodow (2001), who says that an FL is developed in dialogue with others. Finally, Nixon (2001) speaks of the communicative approach, content integrated learning and in particular about the immersion program and its success, but adds that it also is important to teach the TL as a subject.

One additional piece of information from Spågboken also points to the advantage of using only the TL in L2 teaching, that is that we today have a multicultural school. Many students do not have Swedish as their L1. Thus, Ferm & Malmberg (2001) as well as Ohlander (2001) remind us that teachers need a new approach - one that is built on more than just a comparison between the TL and Swedish. One such approach could perhaps be to use only the TL, since many students would not benefit from a comparison between the TL and Swedish.

As a conclusion of this study, it could be said that the English teachers in this study believe that the TL should be used all the time, and the L1 only at a few and certain occasions/situations. The teachers do, however for various reasons, not always work according to their beliefs. Some use the TL all the time, others seemingly less. It is also the conclusion of this study that all of the governing documents, in different ways, support a way of teaching that speaks in favor of a high quantity usage of the TL by the teacher. In
addition, although their study was not about the effect of teachers’ TL usage, Duff & Polio are proponents of a high quantity usage of the TL by L2 teachers.

Furthermore, there are successful methods of L2 teaching that also support a proportionally high usage of the TL by the teacher. In addition, the views of this study’s interviewees also seem to support a way of working with basically only TL usage. Nonetheless, there seems to be a discrepancy between their views and the way they work. Speaking in general terms, what is necessary for it to be a standard way of working is perhaps, firstly, that it should be incorporated in the teacher training. A TL rich environment must start in the training of the teachers and the teachers to be should themselves be encouraged and supported to use English in a functional way. This way teachers would be in the habit of using the TL, thus also be more comfortable doing so when they start teaching. Secondly, it could be added to the teacher shall part in the curriculum that “A TL rich environment shall be created”. Finally, to ensure a TL rich environment for the students, it would also be of help if the schools had a policy that would support the teachers in creating such an environment.

As closing words, I would like to join Duff & Polio in their wish and request for future studies to shed some light on the effects of the teachers’ usage or non-usage of the TL. Without such research we can only strongly believe and assume that it makes a significant difference to the students’ success if the teacher uses the TL 100 percent of the time compared to 10 percent of the time, as some did in Duff & Polio’s study. Without a doubt, there are many variables/factors that have an impact on successful language learning/teaching, many of them depending more on the student than on the teacher – which is in line with today’s focus of attention on learning rather than on teaching. As teachers, we may not be able to influence all the different factors. One important variable is, however, more or less in the hands of the teacher – to build and provide a good TL environment for the learners, and that includes offering the opportunity to listen to and to use the TL as much as possible.
5 REFERENCES


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6 APPENDICES

6.1 Appendix 1 Notes for semi-structured interview

(inform about anonymity)

- A) What is your background as far as teacher education?

- B) What is your view/what are your thoughts on how to “best” teach English? (any specific way/method/theory or own method?)

- C) Do you adhere to this method/way in your way of teaching? (if not – how come?)

- D) What are you views on the usage of either the target language or the mother tongue in the classroom (what language/languages do you use – how come?)

- E) Do you use L1?

- F) If no, how come?

- G) If yes, how come?

- H) If yes, when do you use L1, what kind of discourse?

(Mainly subject related;
Social discourse
Instructions (subject related)/Task related discourse
Translations
Grammar explanations)

Mainly non-subject related;
Instructions (non-subject related)
Other utterances)
6.2 Appendix 2 Notes for semi-structured interview, Swedish version

(informera om anonymitet)

- A) Vad är din bakgrund, gällande lärarutbildning?
- B) Vad är din åsikt/dina tankar om hur man ”bäst” undervisar i engelska?
   (något speciellt sätt, någon speciell metod/teori eget sätt/metod)
- C) Följer du denna metod/sätt att undervisa i din undervisning (om inte – hur kommer det sig?)
- D) Vad är dina åsikter/tankar om användandet av målspråket och modersmålet i klassrummet? (Vilket språk/vilka språk använder du – hur kommer det sig?)
- E) Använder du svenska?
- F) Om inte – hur kommer det sig?
- G) Om ja – hur kommer det sig?
- H) Om ja, när använder du svenska, vid vilken typ av kommunikation?

(Mestadels ämnesrelaterat;
Social kommunikation
Instruktioner (rörande ämnet) / Uppgiftsrelaterad kommunikation
Översättningar
Grammatikkförklaringar

Ej ämnesrelaterat;
Instruktioner (ej rörande ämnet)
Andra yttranden/annan typ av kommunikation)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Teacher A</th>
<th>Teacher B</th>
<th>Teacher C</th>
<th>Teacher D</th>
<th>Teacher E</th>
<th>Teacher F</th>
<th>Teacher G</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) General view of use of L2 (in this study L2 is EN = English).</td>
<td>Believes in an EN speaking environment. Uses EN as much as possible, basically the whole time.</td>
<td>Tries to use EN but finds it difficult at times.</td>
<td>Believes in the principle of “doing” and “teaching by example”, hence speaks only EN.</td>
<td>Tries to use EN as much as possible, unintentionally forgets at times.</td>
<td>Believes in creating a “real” EN speaking environment. Uses EN all the time. Advises students at the beginning of the term that she will use EN only. Sees her usage as a listening comprehension.</td>
<td>Believes EN should be used, tries in the beginning of the term, sometimes later lets go of it a little. Says time with TL is so short, thus students should take every opportunity to speak it.</td>
<td>Believes EN should be used – it says EN on the roster, hence she uses it all the time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Exceptions/occasions when L1 is used.</td>
<td>Grammar lessons, non subject related matters as a mentor.</td>
<td>Giving instructions, grammar lessons, some social chatting if before lesson has started.</td>
<td>Mentors information, grammar (although only initially, then L2 terms are used).</td>
<td>Grammar since she regards it as not having anything to do with language knowledge as such.</td>
<td>Serious non-subject issues. Grammar, but she starts off in EN and only reverts to L1 if they do not follow. When she gets angry.</td>
<td>Grammar is done using L1 only.</td>
<td>Grammar explanations</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) Works according to beliefs, or reasons why not.</td>
<td>When students reply &amp; ask questions in L1 she finds it difficult to use L2. She says that sometimes when she uses the L1 it is unintentional. Regarding social chatting before start of lesson, it feels silly to use the L2.</td>
<td>Works according to beliefs and uses only EN basically.</td>
<td>Unintentionally uses the L1 when students speak a lot of L1. Says many students do not want to speak EN at all since they are so &quot;weak performing&quot;.</td>
<td>Works much according to her beliefs, uses only EN in class with few exceptions.</td>
<td>Tries to keep to EN but finds that it does not always work. Not quite clear if this teacher uses the L1 then or perhaps that she permits her students to do so.</td>
<td>Works according to her beliefs and uses EN all the time. Lets the students use strategies when they do not know or find the word they want to use. She never gives up – the end result is always in EN.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4) Foundation of belief; (specific theory/methodology?) or use of own strategy.</td>
<td>Own way of working is to adapt her way of teaching to that of the level and knowledge of the students (this year’s students lacking severely in writing skill and vocabulary.)</td>
<td>Own way of working is doing and teaching by example, including using EN only.</td>
<td>Own way of working with focus on variety.</td>
<td>Own way of working, where the most central is to try to use the L2 in a context that is as real as possible.</td>
<td>Own way of working, with center of attention on choosing interesting subjects for discussions in L2.</td>
<td>Own way of working that seems to be according to the principles of &quot;autonomous learning&quot; (which briefly means the student takes more of a responsibility for her/his own learning process. Students work mainly individually and on their own).</td>
<td></td>
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<td>5) Appears to be using the TL itself as a tool</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>Perhaps.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
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<td>6) &quot;Boarders&quot; of the EN speaking environment</td>
<td>EN also outside the physical classroom, e.g. in the corridors.</td>
<td>When the lesson has started. EN seems to be used mainly in speaking exercises, perhaps also some social chatting if the lesson has started.</td>
<td>Wherever she encounters the students, in the corridors, in the line for lunch etc. Says that social chatting is an important learning situation even if it is not in the classroom.</td>
<td>During lessons.</td>
<td>The threshold of the classroom is the limit, yet she also mentioned that she sometimes would use EN in the corridors when she encounters her students on their way to class.</td>
<td>Not directly discussed, although it appears &quot;during lessons&quot;.</td>
<td>Not directly discussed, although it appears mainly &quot;during lessons&quot; – this seems to at times also take place outside of the physical classroom.</td>
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